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Vol. X



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UNESCO CHAIR FOR INTER RELIGIOUS AND
INTER-CULTURAL DIALOGUE
St. Andrew's College of Arts
Science and Commerce
Mumbai, India

**Ethics and Society: An International Journal
Religions and Cultures for Peace and Harmony**

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Teresa Joseph

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**Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for
Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue
St. Andrew's College, Dominic Road,
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THE CARDINAL PAUL POUPARD FOUNDATION

The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation has been constituted under Italian law and recognized by the Republic of Italy. It has legal base at Crema, Via Dante, 24.

In a world oscillating between indifference and fanaticism, His Eminence Cardinal Poupard, collaborator of the sovereign Pontiffs John XXIII, Paul VI and Benedict XVI, is one of the most qualified representatives for the way of dialogue, identified by Popes as being able to establish peaceful and long-lasting co-existence between nations and different civilizations.

The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation intends to conserve and make use of the considerable patrimony of culture and relations that the Cardinal created over many years, in seeking to create and encourage cultural initiatives that can foster the coming together and understanding between traditions and religions of all the world.

It seeks to promote congress, conferences, publications, create Chairs in universities throughout the world, help students with grants and promote the Prize “The Dialogue of Cultures”.

In order to do this, it is composed under the direction of His Eminence Cardinal Paul Poupard, who as President, will have the responsibility for all the activities of the Foundation, assisted by a scientific Committee made up of men and women from the field of culture and the world of business and finance, and it will be a place of contact, able to erect solid bridges between countries and cultural institutions. The members of this Committee witness, by their adherence, to the richness of different cultures across the world: France, Italy, Russia, United States, Latin America, India and the Middle East.

INSPIRED BY AN OPEN HUMANISM:

One can synthesize the specific character of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation, saying that it is inspired by an open Humanism and it is committed to its spread.

It is *Humanism*, because at the core of its concerns there is the human being, that means the one who has to defend himself from all the ideological, political and economic forces which tend to enslave him. It is *Open*, because it recognises within each human being the spiritual openness, that means the religious dimension which constitute man's nature.

Therefore, it works through the initiatives that I am going to illustrate [or: that I have illustrated]; valorising man in his spiritual dimension, hoping that the different expressions of it do not become an occasion for violent conflicts, but rather a loyal and constructive comparison, for reciprocal enrichment and a common search of truth.

Adv. Giuseppe Musumeci is President of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation and also a Chair Holder of the UNESCO Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue. He supports and encourages all the activities undertaken at St. Andrew's College

**Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation
Chair of Inter-religious and
Inter-cultural Dialogue
St. Andrew's College, Bandra**

Vision

To promote peace and harmony for a holistic development of society.

Mission

The Chair of Inter-Religious and International Dialogue at St. Andrew's College aims at promoting:

- The exchange of knowledge concerning religions and cultures in dialogue with one another
- Advanced studies and research in Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue
- A space for dialogue so as to foster social harmony and national integration
- The transformation of society by training people to live in peace and harmony.

Programmes Offered

Seminars: To promote study and research among the students with regard to the major religious and cultural traditions.

Certificate / Diploma Courses: University of Mumbai approved diploma course in the area of inter-religious dialogue, religious pluralism and cultures so as to enable the participants to get to know various religions and cultures.

Local, National and International Seminars and Conferences: On a variety of issues to foster Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue and to sensitize teachers / students on the significance of the same.

Lectures: Lectures by distinguished persons of various religious traditions and cultures. The lectures will aim at creating better understanding among the students and participants, and promote peace and harmony.

Research: Offers the possibility for scholars to work on research papers and publications.

Inter-Collegiate Programmes: Essay and Quiz competitions, Seminars, Debates and Exhibitions.

Editorial

Globalization, migration and modern technology has created a global village in our recent times. But with the confluence of cultures and interests also comes misunderstanding, suspicion and hostility. Unfortunately the voices of the latter are often louder and headline grabbing as they seek to mislead or bully minorities, underprivileged communities, the differently abled or simply those with different cultural norms. In this context it becomes more relevant than ever to uphold and celebrate diversity. We need to recognize that culturally diverse societies which embrace their complex milieu and build co-operative models are those which truly prosper and create a better tomorrow.

Our journal begins with Dr. Gilbert D’Lima’s article the *Coexistence of Religions for Peace and Harmony to build a New World*. Dr. D’Lima succinctly traces the concept of Coexistence from J. Nehru’s Panchshila of the 1950’s to Pope Francis’ call to build bridges in 2019. What was a pragmatic approach to foreign policy between neighbours is now seen as a global creative force amongst diverse religious leaders to create a worthy future for our children.

Dr. S. M. Michael in his article *Building Intercultural Communities Through MBI Method* identifies the complexity of a global, multicultural world with seemingly different values and world views. He examines the successful MBI method of J. J. Di Stefano and M. L. Maznevski to build bridges and create solutions using cultural diversity to enhance productivity and foster the holistic development of all stakeholders.

Dr. Teresa Joseph reaffirms the necessity and importance of education in recognizing, promoting and protecting diversity in all forms. *Education to Diversity: A Global Challenge and an Ongoing Process* spells out the efforts of UNESCO, The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation and other initiatives to promote an expanded vision of education that empowers youth to think globally and act locally.

Phillipe Guillien in *Citizenship and Diversity* examines the dynamic concept of citizenship from its modern roots in the 18th century French

Republic to its hybrid concept in modern India. In doing so the article explores various attitudes to citizenship, a unidimensional citizen of the state or a multicultural model.

Dr. Mithu Alur's pioneering work in the field of special education comes to life in *Celebrating Diversity*. The grit, determination, obstacles and success stories are laid bare in this article. Mainstream education, public spaces and employment are yet to truly open up to those with different abilities, but a significant door has been opened. This is the challenge for educators, employers, governments and parents, that we empower our brothers and sisters to live dignified and fulfilled lives.

Dr. Avinash de Sousa's viewpoint on *Cultural Diversity and Mental Health* draws our attention to the complexity of mental health treatment in a multi-cultural society like India. Indeed so many "problems" may have their roots in cultural mores. Socio-economic disparity, location and the great Indian family challenges the therapist at multiple levels. This theme is continued in Ronica Rachel Sequeira's *Cultural Diversity & Mental Health* which explores the impact of socio-economic factors on mental health. Race, religion, globalization, migration...all become critically important to understand mental health challenges and successfully develop coping strategies. In *Mental Diversity and Psychology of Art*, Ashmi Sheth explores the emerging territory of Neuroaesthetics, the relationship between art and the human brain. She throws light on how different personality types, brain injuries and even cultural backgrounds perceive art in different ways. It leads us to admire the sheer dexterity and complexity of the human mind.

In India, *One country with Diverse States and People*, Savina Shenoy gives us a breath-taking panorama of India. As myriad languages, cultures, religions and costumes mingle, some commonly shared passions like film and music emerge. Janine Coelho's *Forging A Nation from Diversity : The Indian National Movement and Nation Building* examines how the national movement created an image of a single nation state for India, while embracing diversity as an integral part of the modern Indian nation.

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He has published three books: *Jnaneshvari, Path to Liberation; Journeying Together* (in English, French and Italian), a Marathi translation and short commentary on the Vatican II document, *Lumen Gentium*. He has also published over a hundred articles in various international academic journals of theology. On 16 Jan. 2008, Pope Benedict XVI has appointed as Bishop of Nashik with personal title Archbishop. He is now Archbishop of Vasai Diocese.

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He was General Secretary, Office of the European Economic Community Commission in charge of the relations with the European Council where he was entrusted to attend various international meetings with European Prime Ministers and Ambassadors and prepare the relative reports. He is also the co-founder of the Centre for Mediation, Kinshasa, recognised by the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2018. He has also served as Professor on Mediation at Georgetown University. He has his own law office in Milan and Rome, Italy and avails of seven assistants. The nature of the practice of the firm is the following: litigation including arbitration and mediation, corporate and contract law.

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In May 2006, he received the Pope John XXI International Award “Premium Deontologiae” for research on the occasion of the XXII World Congress of the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (FIAMC) in

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In his role as Secretary of the Board of Directors of CERBA, (European Centre for Advanced Biomedical Research Foundation), and advisor to the WellFare Pordenore Foundation of Microcredit and Social Innovation, he has conducted and presented at several seminars including the most recent *La Rivoluzione Digitale nel Mondo Dell'arte*, (The Digital Revolution in the World of Art), in 2019.

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The Coexistence of Religions for Peace and Harmony to build a New World

Dr Gilbert de Lima

Today, more than ever before, we realize that we need to forge a future together for the well being of society in order to avoid any catastrophe that may befall us if we work independently of one another. However, the value of living and working together seems to be under attack almost all over the globe. Nationalistic movements, for instance, have intensified all over the world. Intensifying the problem furthermore is the phenomenon of globalization which although it has brought people with disparate cultures and beliefs into close contact, it has even paradoxically drawn them into competition with one another.¹

In this scenario, coexistence can be an effective and timely means to foster greater unity and solidarity in society for the good of all. 'Peaceful coexistence' was first introduced as a principle of international relations in the Chinese-Indian treaty of April 29, 1954.² The preamble of that treaty set forth as the basis for communication between the two countries, five principles: respect for territorial sovereignty and integrity, mutual nonaggression, mutual nonintervention, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. At the time, India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru referred to the "five principles" as *Pancha Shila*, a phrase he had acquired on his 1952 visit to Indonesia. Originally *Pancho Shila* referred to the five moral principles of the Buddhist religion relating to personal behavior, but the Prime Minister referred *Pancha Shila* apropos to state behavior. The Soviets equated the five principles with peaceful coexistence, which was only one of the five. Indeed, from its very inception the Soviet State proclaimed peaceful coexistence as the basic principle of foreign policy. Later on the idea of coexistence came into common usage during the Cold War with the policy of 'peaceful coexistence' being used in the context of U.S. and U.S.S.R. relations. Although, initially, peaceful coexistence was perceived as a cover for aggression, gradually it developed as an instrument for reframing the relationship between the two powers. In the

late '80s, the policy of peaceful coexistence came to be founded on the principles of pacifism, respect for autonomy, independence, and noninterference in internal affairs.

However, gradually from understanding coexistence in a negative and a restrictive sense wherein nonaggression and noninterference were emphasized, coexistence began to be understood as the need to positively manage inter-group relations and the growing diversity within communities and nations. Hence, towards the end of the 20th century, a new and expanded understanding of coexistence began to emerge. Oxfam, (Great Britain), in 2002 defined coexistence as “recognizing each other’s status and rights as human beings, developing a just and inclusive vision for each community’s future, and implementing economic, social, cultural or political development across former community divides.”³

Promoting positive coexistence thus between nations and between peoples is a major challenge for the 21st century. There are fortunately movements, both within society and religion, which have begun to grapple with these issues, both at the international, national and the local level as well. In fact, this experience of co-existence at the grass-roots will enable us to build a multi-faceted approach to respond to issues thrown up by society at large.⁴

In the modern epoch with many religions claiming a universal validity with a sense of universal mission, every religion motivates its people to order their lives according to an ethical standard.... Christianity also seeks has to coexist with other religions and worldviews in the modern world, which faces many changes and challenges in terms of globalization, consumerism, materialism, mental problems, dehumanization, and an exploitation of nature. However, a comprehensive worldview, which can give meaning beyond the grave and provide viable ethical and moral guidelines to a world paralyzed by value relativism, is therefore much needed⁵.

The coexistence of religions however faces a fundamental challenge, viz., what makes the headlines are not the fruitful enrichment of society

that religions and ethnic groups offer, but incidents of violence, intolerance, discrimination and religious intolerance.⁶ Many contemporary sociologists imagined that modernization and globalization would cause society to become secularized. However, although all religions can be powerful means of bringing about peace and reconciliation, one realizes that religion is becoming increasingly important in the political sphere as shrewd politicians are manipulating religion for political benefit.⁷ For as they are rooted in a particular place, they tend to acculturate themselves and justify existing socio-economic and political structures ...And so religions in various ways can even be manipulated to provoke violence. However, peace or reconciliation has to be based on justice and fairness, not on appeasement of the powerful and violent. And the quest for justice and peace can come only from religions (s). This might be a long-drawn out process which involves collaborating with the inquiry, putting pressure on the government through all legal means to act on the inquiry.....and in the long-term creating a growing atmosphere of mutual understanding, acceptance and even collaboration among the believers of different religions.⁸

Pope Francis in his keynote address to 700 representatives of Islam, Christianity, Judaism and other religions at a high level interreligious meeting at an open-air gathering at the memorial to the founding father of the United Arab Emirates on February, 2019, pertinently declared: “Religions, in particular, cannot renounce the urgent task of building bridges between peoples and cultures. There is no alternative: We either build the future together or there will not be a future.”⁹

We also recall the insightful words of Pope Benedict XVI in his message for the World day of Peace (2011) when he pointed out that in a globalized world marked by increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, (the great) religions can serve as an important factor of unity and peace for the human family. He affirmed: “The contribution of religious communities to society is undeniable. Numerous charitable and cultural institutions testify to the constructive role played by believers in the life of society. More important still is religion’s ethical contribution in the political sphere. Religion, therefore, should not be

marginalized or prohibited, but seen as making an effective contribution to the promotion of the common good. In this context mention should be made of the religious dimension of culture, built up over centuries thanks to the social and especially ethical contributions of religion.”¹⁰

Indeed, a “common code of ethics” is the need of the hour. Now a “global ethic”¹¹ means neither a global ideology, nor a single unified global religion transcending all existing religions, nor a mixture of all religions. It does not also seek to replace the high ethics of the individual religions with an ethical minimalism. It rather seeks to work out what is already common to the religions of the world despite all their differences over human conduct, moral values and basic moral convictions. It represents the minimum of what the religions of the world already have in common in the ethical sphere. It is not directed against anyone, but invites all, believers and non-believers, to make this ethic their own and act in accordance with it. This global ethic¹² meant a fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards, and personal attitudes. Without such a fundamental consensus on an ethic, sooner or later every community will be threatened by chaos or dictatorship, leading to despair! While religions cannot solve the environmental, economic, political and social problems of the earth, they play a crucial role in working out this global ethic. They propose a change in inner orientations and conversion from a false path to new orientation for life. Hence the spiritual power of the religions can offer a fundamental sense of trust, a ground of meaning and ultimate standards for living.

Four irrevocable directives that most religions of the world offer in terms of formulating a global ethic are¹³:

- i) Commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life
- ii) Commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order
- iii) Commitment to a culture of tolerance and life of truthfulness
- iv) Commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women

This would consequently, consist of norms based not merely upon consensus, but rooted in the natural law inscribed by the Creator on the

conscience of every human being (cf. Rom 2:14-15). Pope Benedict XVI hence, pertinently asks, “Does not every one of us sense deep within his or her conscience a call to make a personal contribution to the common good and to peace in society?”¹⁴

To summarize our reflection, I wish to conclude with the inspiring words of Pope John Paul II in his message delivered on the occasion of the World Day of Peace (2001). He said, “In this perspective, *dialogue between cultures emerges as an intrinsic demand of human nature itself, as well as of culture*. It is dialogue which protects the distinctiveness of cultures as historical and creative expressions of the underlying unity of the human family, and which sustains understanding and communion between them..... Dialogue leads to a recognition of diversity and opens the mind to the mutual acceptance and genuine collaboration demanded by the human family's basic vocation to unity. (Hence, it follows that)..... dialogue is a privileged means for building *the civilization of love and peace*..... to inspire cultural, social, political and economic life in our time. At the beginning of the Third Millennium, it is urgent that *the path of dialogue* be proposed once again to a world marked by excessive conflict and violence, a world at times discouraged and incapable of seeing signs of hope and peace.”¹⁵

Footnotes

1. Cf. Bank Ki-moon, As Cf. Bank Ki-moon, Globalization draws People closer together, in [www.un.org › press › sgsm13220.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/sgsm13220.doc.htm) (21 July, 2020)
2. Cf. Richard J. Erickson, Development of the Strategy of Peaceful Coexisting during the Khrushchev Era, in *Air University Review*, January-February 1973 (in http://www.cvce.eu/obj/on_peaceful_coexistence_from_foreign_affairs_october_1959-en-a231db94-ad9e-430c8b61-12354f373ffc.html) Last updated: 03/07/2015)
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7. M. Amaladoss, S.J., *Beyond Dialogue: Pilgrims to the Absolute*, ATC, Bangalore (2008), pp.

- 15-41Ibid., pp. 30-33
8. M. Amaladoss, S.J., *Beyond Dialogue: Pilgrims to the Absolute*, ATC, Bangalore (2008), pp. 15-41Ibid., pp. 22-27
 9. Pope Francis, *We Build a future together....*, (ed. Gerard O'Connell), in [www.americamagazine.org › faith › 2019/02/04 › pope...](http://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/02/04/pope...) (4 February, 2019), (22 July, 2020)
 10. Pope Benedict XVI, *Religious Freedom the Path to Peace*, Message for the World Day of Peace (2011) 6.
 11. Cf. H. Kung and Karl-Josef Kuschel (eds.), *A Global Ethic. The Declaration of the Parliament of the World's Religions*, SCM Press, London, 1993, pp. 7-23
 12. For the first time in the history of religions, the Council of the World's Religions, in Chicago from 28 August to 4 September 1993, in which 6500 persons representing all possible religions participated, ventured to work out on a path-breaking initiative and presented a 'Declaration Towards a Global Ethic' (Cf. H. Kung and Karl-Josef Kuschel (eds.), *A Global Ethic....*).
 13. Cf. H. Kung and Karl-Josef Kuschel (eds.), *A Global Ethic. The Declaration of the Parliament of the World's*
 14. Pope Benedict XVI, *Fighting Poverty to Build Peace*, Message for the World Day of Peace (2009) 8; also John Paul II, *Address to the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences* (2001) 4
 15. Pope John Paul II, *Dialogue between Cultures for a Civilization of Love and Peace*, Message for the World Day of Peace, (2001) 10

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Building Intercultural Communities Through MBI Method

S.M. Michael SVD

Introduction

Today, millions of people are on the move within and across continents, fleeing poverty, war and famine, seeking new opportunities in distant places, struggling to build new lives in unfamiliar cultures and contexts. Our world is marked by pluralism, growing differentiation and complexity. The theme of multiculturalism has become central to the debate of various disciplines because the coexistence of different cultures in the age of globalization raises unprecedented challenges. In this context, the world becomes a multicultural village where many cultures characterized by a great diversity coexist, thereby presenting challenges and opportunities.

While as a result of sophisticated communication technology, we feel closer to each other and better understand one another and our differences, there is a parallel rise in xenophobic and racist attitudes. In this context, one of the most important aspect of peace-building is to promote inter-cultural understanding of mutual respect, to find answers to today's problems in dialogue together, to create a synergy to be more committed to common humanity rather than narrow nationalism. Here, we are reminded of the thoughts and vision of Rabindranath Tagore, "Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; my refuge is humanity. I will not buy glass for the price of diamonds, and I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live."¹

This article explores the ways in which we can promote inter-cultural understanding for building peace and transformation in today's world through a method of "MBI" (Mapping, Bridging and Integrating). J. J. Di Stefano, M. L. Maznevski² describe a set of skills and principles that turns culturally diverse teams from destroyers or mediocre performers into sustaining value creators. The Map-Bridge-Integrate (MBI)

approach is presented to identify and develop an operating mode that unlocks each team's own potential in a multicultural set up by reducing conflict and promoting peace and efficiency.

The paper is divided into four parts. The first part helps us to acquaint ourselves with the emerging global cultural diversity in today's world. This is followed by an elucidation on the importance of developing intercultural competency to face this emerging intercultural situation. The third part deals with the difficulties and hindrances which come in the way of building inter-cultural communities. With this foundation, the fourth part proceeds to deal with the required formation for intercultural living by taking recourse to MBI (Mapping, Bridging and Integrating) Method for renewal and transformation in today's world. The last part is the conclusion.

1. Increasing Cultural Diversity in Today's World

There is a 180-degree change in the population composition of the world today. Since the colonial era, from 16th century, many administrators from the Western world came to the colonized countries in Asia and Africa and Latin American countries. But the situation has completely changed and even reversed today. People from Asia, Africa, Latin American countries and Pacific are working across the globe. Migrants "from Asia constitute almost half of the permanent migration to the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Temporary migration, mostly to the Gulf countries, involves millions of migrants from South and Southeast Asia."³

This again brings new challenges of cultural adjustments among members of different cultural communities. Firms, industries and other global institutions recruit members from different cultural groups. In order to work efficiently with synergy, we need to form intercultural communities and working groups.

2. Importance of Developing Intercultural competency

A deeper reflection on the complex relationship between culture and intercultural relationship points out the importance of knowing the

intimate relationship between culture and its role in personality development in human relationship. A healthy and life-giving intercultural relationship is intimately related to the extent that we are able to understand the meaning of culture. Hence, cultural competence is very vital in intercultural life. In a multicultural society in order to be build a peaceful and life-giving communities, we need to develop skills in intercultural living which includes intercultural understanding, close acquaintance, empathy, and appreciation between people of different cultures. This is easier said than done! There are so many cultural, social, psychological and political factors which come in the way of building life-giving relationships between people of different cultural and linguistic groups. In order to overcome this, we need to incorporate anthropological, sociological and psychological skills to enhance the inter-personal relationships between persons coming from different cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups. The need of the hour is to train and form them to develop inter-cultural sensitivity and skills for effective intercultural living.

Inter-cultural living is understood as the sustained interaction and integration of people brought up in different cultural, ethnic, linguistic, social, economic, and other backgrounds to live in love and mutual appreciation of each other cultures. The emphasis is on sustained interaction and integration which implies that it is long-term living in reciprocal relationships among people of different backgrounds and that it deeply affects and transforms all involved. It is important for them to live together, to communicate and relate humanely with each other. It is also important to humbly listen to observations from others or from each other. Within this sense of intercultural living we can then transform, inspire, synergize communities and individuals. Intercultural living is not a problem but a challenge (opportunity).

3. Steps Towards Enhancing Inter-cultural Living

People from different cultures tend to perceive the world differently and are sometimes unaware of alternative ways of perceiving, believing, behaving and judging. Hall⁴ contends that most people hold

unconscious assumptions about what is appropriate in terms of space, time, interpersonal relations and ways of seeking truth. These assumptions may cause intractable difficulties in intercultural encounters. A conscious effort must therefore be made to overcome ethnocentric attitudes and to recognize the cultural differences between nations and ethnic groups. According to Bennet, this recognition process takes place in six stages: denial, defence, minimizing, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Inter-(cross-) cultural awareness is a prerequisite for the achievement of intercultural understanding that begins when a person realizes that he or she has a particular cultural identity that is one among many and becomes aware of the similarities and differences between them. The ability to differentiate enables people to compare and therefore evaluate their culture in relation to that of others, which means that they take a decisive step away from the ethnocentric position from which the discovery of cultural diversity started. Neither understanding nor true acceptance is likely when differences are only identified at a superficial level. Developing intercultural competence includes self-reflection, gathering information about your own and other cultures, appreciating cultural similarities and differences, using cultural resources and acknowledging the value and essential equality of all cultures.

In order to enhance inter-cultural living, we first need to understand that inter-cultural differences have both positive and negative values.

a) Inter-Cultural differences have both positive and negative values

Joseph Di Stefano and Martha Maznevski in their research “*Creating Value with Diverse Teams in Global Management*”⁵ suggest some important steps to enhance the efficiency of diverse teams. According to them understanding the cultural differences within a community is important for two reasons:

- First, cultural differences prove the greatest barrier to positive outcomes within teams. Each cultural group has a specific set of assumptions and norms under which they operate. Team members

from different cultures come to the group with very different notions of how a group should behave.

- Second, because of the nature of culture, cultural differences also provide the greatest potential for positive outcomes. Multicultural teams have an enormous potential to create innovative approaches to complex changes and a broad range of operating modes with which to develop new ways of implementing solutions. This can make the difference between success and failure.

The above observations make us understand that “cultural factor” may either disrupt or enhance the effectiveness of intercultural living. The efficiency of a team is the result of their ability to understand and address cultural, social and other differences. In other words, these teams have a high degree of intercultural competence and members of these teams exhibit strong intercultural skills.

b) Awareness of the Nature of the Community Members

In their study, Di Stefano and Maznevski noticed that we normally come across three types of people among the community members of different cultural groups: namely, “**Destroyers**”, “**Equalizers**”, and “**Creators**”. These individuals play an important role in the success or the failure of a group. Let us examine their roles:

i) The Destroyers

These individuals in a community are unmitigated disasters who mistrust each other, maintain guarded information, are very jealous and distrust other cultural groups. They use every opportunity to attack members of a different cultural background and find fault with all they do. They are continuously engaged with negative stereotyping of other cultural groups.

ii) The Equalizers

These individuals *assume* that they are handling cultural differences well, that they are able to resolve issues quickly and focus on the common goals and outcomes. However, even though they get things done, their performance and outcomes are just

average. They overlook and undermine the reality of cultural differences and they believe that it does not matter much for the efficiency of a group action. In other words, these teams are just mediocre. They do not allow differences to surface and subsequently do not come up with new and creative ideas that would have resulted in superior outcomes. They suppress differences to smoothen processes and by so doing compromise on the work of the team.

iii) *The Creators*

These individuals go beyond just valuing diversity; they explicitly recognize, even nurture differences and incorporate them into every facet of the group's life and work. They discover the value of cultural differences in a community and learn the richness of different perspectives to resolve the emerging challenges in a team work. Creators are focused on the vision and mission of the group and move the members from different cultures to concentrate on achieving the goal of the assemblage. They are like a top-performing orchestra. The players all recognize the mastery of the others and understand the potential for synergy arising from their combinations. They understand the importance of close acquaintance, empathy and appreciation between people of different cultures. They develop a constantly shifting dynamic that incorporates innovation into cooperative structures. The result is a highly effective team. The key to success is the team's interaction processes, i.e. how they understand, incorporate and leverage their differences towards the vision and mission of the group.

4. Building Team Work in Inter-cultural Living through MBI Method for Renewal and Transformation

We saw that among the diverse cultural teams there may be a few individuals who may be "*destroyers*" while some others may be "*equalizers*" or "*creators*". Personnel who have the characteristics of "*destroyers*" will not help towards peace building. They will destroy the

community and will not play a positive role in the promotion of intercultural living.

If there are more “equalizers” in a diverse cultural community, they will be more engaged in minimizing conflict and interested in the smooth running of the institution.

And overall, if the diverse cultural community has more “creators”; the communities will flourish. There will be a lot of synergy and creativity among people of different cultural communities.

Now the question arises as how to form more “creators” in these communities? We may be able to learn a few lessons from the work of Di Stefano and Maznevski⁶. The model developed by them is not only to effectively help manage differences in cultures among employees, but by leveraging the differences to provide added value. According to them, the “creators” engage in equipping themselves with the cultural knowledge of the team members. They use the following three principles, namely: i) Mapping, ii) Bridging, and iii) Integrating (MBI) to build synergizing teams. The MBI (Mapping, Bridging, Integrating) model put forward by Maznevski and Di Stefano, which is described below has gained wide acceptance in business, communications and management fields for its simplicity and adaptability to different contexts. The techniques are simple and easily taught, and apply to a wide range of diversity. They can be used in a variety of environments at all levels of the organizations⁷. This is the key to unlocking creative synergy in the teams’ interaction processes – how they understand, incorporate and leverage their differences.

i) Mapping: Understand the Differences

The principle of mapping requires a commitment to understand the cultural differences of the team workers. This will help to develop an appreciation of how and why members of different cultural groups behave the way they behave. Even though it may seem obvious that members have different perspectives, it is necessary to deliberately ‘map’ these differences, as it helps to develop an

appreciation of how they affect team work. These differences are generally related to personality, culture, reasoning style, thinking style, gender and so on. Mapping involves an understanding of “Who am I?” and “Who is the other?” Members who assume that they are pretty similar often realize during this stage how different they are in some of the dimensions. “The principles of mapping require a commitment to understand the underlying characteristics affecting each member’s approach to the team”.⁸

Intercultural differences can be classified according to type, or rather according to different ranges of emphasis; for example, from individualism to collectivism; or in terms of power relations, from hierarchal to horizontal; or in terms of gender relations, from masculine to feminine. These examples of possible classification of intercultural differences⁹ are not necessarily definite but at least give an indication of the intricate tapestry of cultural diversity and they could serve as a guideline and a useful aid to intercultural understanding.

The different views and especially evaluative perspectives of each group for the other can cause misunderstandings. Members coming from “**Individualistic Cultures**” view the world very different from the members coming from “**Collectivistic Cultures**”. In individualistic cultures, people are considered "good" if they are strong, self-reliant, assertive, and independent. This contrasts with collectivist cultures where characteristics like being self-sacrificing, dependable, generous, and helpful to others are of greater importance.¹⁰

A number of other models and theories have also been developed to understand the cultural differences of people which can help in our “Mapping”. Hofstede¹¹ suggests a framework for assessing cultures by identifying six value dimensions including “Individualism vs Collectivism” of National cultures of people working in multinational organizations. They are:

1. Individualism vs Collectivism

2. Power Distance
3. Uncertainty Avoidance
4. Masculinity vs Femininity
5. Long Time vs Short Time Orientation
6. Indulgence vs Restraint

People coming from the above cultural differences have their own way of understanding social relationships and tend to interact with members from others cultures in a similar manner. Different views, and especially evaluative perspectives of each group for the other, can cause misunderstandings. Therefore, we need to “Map” these differences.¹²

However, most teams do not take the time to map cultural differences and therefore cannot address differences objectively. Subsequently, the problems caused by the differences cannot be resolved. This “map” can then be used by the team in understanding its potential. This is the most difficult stage of the process. Often, teams become judgmental and dismiss the values and approaches of some members ‘as not valuable.’ This is what “*Destroyers*” do. At times differences are ignored and the focus is only on similarities. This is what “*Equalizers*” do. In contrast, the “*Creators*” recognize differences and start to acknowledge their potential.

ii) Bridging: Communicate across the Differences

The next step is the principle of bridging. If “Mapping” related to gathering “Knowledge” about oneself and others; “Bridging” is related to “Understanding” oneself and others and reaching out. It is a deep reflection and discernment of who “I” am and who the “Other” is; what is “good” or “bad” in me and what is “good” or “bad” in the other. Bridging is related to understanding the similarities and differences of “me” and “others” in a team. It is an understanding and discernment on the reasons for the commonality and differences of me and others and what I could learn from the “other” and myself; and what I should incorporate from this discernment in my life for my own growth and

enrichment. Bridging is an understanding to level the differences. It is a two-way process. Members belonging to a particular culture must make the effort to reach out to the members of other cultures. Members from other cultures must also make the effort to reach out to the members belonging to different cultures. Only by this reciprocated effort, can bridging be accomplished. An appreciation and deep understanding of empathy, openness to learn from others and good will are very important for this accomplishment.

The main objective of bridging is to prevent miscommunication. Bridging results in good communication among team members whose perspectives are different. It involves team members communicating, taking the cultural backgrounds of others into account and adapting their own behaviour to that of the team. It is because very often, people interpret messages of others using their own frames of reference which are usually shaped by one's own cultural background and professional affiliation. The frame of reference is also influenced by personal traits, which are shaped by social and personal experiences. Bridging is an attempt to minimize these differences by understanding the frames of reference of others as done in "Mapping".

In other words, the word "bridging" is more than just understanding differences between people; it is about overcoming the obstacle of differences between people and crossing over to the "other" side. The word "bridge" thus becomes a metaphor for good and effective communication among people of different cultures. Effective communication can be defined as "transmission of meaning from one person to another, as it was intended by the first person".¹³ But it is also about minimizing misunderstanding among a group of people working towards a common objective, since effective communication depends on "the degree to which the participants attach similar meanings to the messages exchanged".¹⁴ It requires that the parties involved share a common "vocabulary" and that they

all understand each other's "language".

Maznevski and Di Stefano through their research¹⁵ point out that there are three aspects to building a strong bridge, namely: 1. Preparing, 2. Decentring, 3. Recentring. Let us briefly see what they mean by these three aspects:

1. **Preparing** involves motivating people to communicate and building confidence in them to overcome problems. Both motivation and confidence are very important for bridging, since even after differences are understood, team members may not be motivated to use this understanding to improve performance, and if discouraged by the complexity of the problem, they may become even less confident after mapping than before.
2. **Decentering** requires team members to incorporate their understanding of differences in the communication process by changing their own behaviour and thinking in order to accommodate the culture of the people with whom they are working. One of the important elements of decentring is suspending judgment about the behaviour of others and not blaming them for being difficult. This is often a problem when ingroups have negative evaluations of outgroups. To avoid this and to understand each other, members of one cultural group must place themselves in the shoes of the other cultural groups to understand their feelings, emotions and their world view. This will help to bridge the different groups in a community.
3. **Recentring** is the final aspect of bridging where team members develop a new basis for interaction. It depends on having a good understanding of the differences and agreeing upon shared norms for interaction.

In short, bridging is to develop a shared ground upon which to build a new basis of interacting. Members of a community should explicitly agree on some common ideals for the members; its goals and mission, its approach, and so on. Also, the team should

explicitly agree on how to interact with each other.

With the symbol of a bridge, we can understand that if two mountains have to be connected across a valley, or if two lands have to be connected in the midst of a river, we need a bridge to connect them. Similarly, for members of different cultural groups to be connected, certain common symbols and rituals are required to link them on common ground. Here, the members of a community with different cultural groups must agree upon on some common rules and regulations by which the community will live. For example, the community may agree upon speaking a common language which everybody may understand. Successful communication is only possible on the basis of a shared code (symbols, manners, dress, rituals and gestures).¹⁶ To share a code, members must know the meaning of that code. Common vision and mission can also bridge the members of different cultures.

iii) Integrating: Manage the Differences

The final step of the MBI model is the principle of integrating. It ensures that team members leverage their differences and come up with good decisions. It is “where understanding (from mapping) and communicating (from bridging) get converted into productive results”.¹⁷ The processes of Mapping and Bridging provide the ability to differentiate and enable people to compare and therefore evaluate their culture in relation to that of others, which means that they take a decisive step away from the ethnocentric position from which the discovery of cultural diversity started.¹⁸ Neither understanding nor true acceptance is likely when differences are only identified at a superficial level.

There are three aspects to integrating, each of which requires good mapping and bridging. They are a) Managing the participation of all members, b) Resolving disagreement or conflict among members and c) Building on the ideas of the members to move ahead.

Let us elaborate on these three principles:

1. *Managing participation means* ensuring all members are given equal opportunity to participate by accommodating different norms of participation resulting from cultural differences. Any favouritism in terms of cultural, linguistic preferences of certain individuals in a community bring more conflict rather than synergy. Similarly, favouritism in power sharing may bring discard which will not help in building communities. Members must feel and perceive that there is no injustice done to an individual or a group.
2. *Resolving disagreement or conflict* means that conflicts are addressed before they become dysfunctional. Mapping helps to provide early detection of potential areas of conflict, while bridging and participation help make personal conflicts of the worst type, manageable. Differences should be addressed and resolved constructively. For this to happen, members must be motivated and committed to common vision and mission. If open and motivated, certain conflicts may help towards quality decisions.
3. *Building on ideas* is the final aspect of integrating. By viewing individual ideas as the starting point for discussion and letting go of 'idea ownership', "breakthrough ideas" can be produced. However, in decision making, it is very important that the "temptation to compromise" is avoided and the quality of the decision gets priority. In short, for 'Integration' to be true and effective, it is necessary to nurture participation of members. This helps to tap into their ideas, views and approaches.

Integration is much more difficult than it sounds as people with different cultural values tend to subscribe to vastly different norms for participation. The power dynamics, dominance of one or the other cultural group in the team or community and identity politics may challenge this integration. But if a community slowly and steadily learns to integrate, it will bring a lot of blessings and synergy. This integration is an on-going process, with many struggles and failures. Only a solid - founded spirituality committed to mission will help towards this

integration. Repeated forgiveness and reconciliation are very important ingredients of this process of integration. We may not achieve perfect integration, yet we can surely grow in it. Perseverance and determination become critical for the success of integration. Integration is an act of the will. It combines both the head and the heart. It benefits from differences. It seeks to do the best with differences for an effective and integrated life. It takes steps to resolve differences. It keeps the peaceful living as its centre of life and learns to live with and get enriched by the differences. Members get converted from their ethnocentric attitudes leading to renewal and transformation.

In short, “Mapping describes the differences among members and their impact on those on living and working together. Bridging communicates in ways that explicitly takes the differences into account. Integrating creates team-level ideas by carefully monitoring participation patterns, resolving disagreements, and creating new perspectives.”¹⁹ Intercultural living is not natural, perhaps “supernatural” yet it is possible. It is not easy but it is desirable and it is urgently needed. It needs full commitment and hard work; good will is not enough. It requires compromise, real dialogue and a clear and common vision.

Conclusion

The world is rapidly changing. The population composition of cities and global firms are increasingly multicultural. In order to build intercultural communities, we must find new ways to respond to this emerging situation. Cultural differences and conflicts could be a potential major concern in peaceful coexistence and forming synergetic communities. Hence, we need adequate training for people coming from different cultures in intercultural competency. What is required to achieve proper intercultural understanding is informed intellectual appreciation of and engagement with cultural and individual differences, which presupposes recognition and acceptance, in principle, of the existence and inevitability of cultural diversity. These requirements should be fulfilled with a spirit of love, tolerance, empathy and respect. We have suggested a few insights and skills to build intercultural competency in a multicultural situation of a firm or a company or

communities. Moving from our ethnocentric mindset to intercultural outlook will help in creating synergy among multicultural members through renewal and transformation. It is hoped that the insights outlined in this paper will benefit members of multicultural societies to build intercultural communities for peace, efficiency and synergized living.

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Education to Diversity: A Global Challenge and an Ongoing Process

Dr. Teresa Joseph fma

“Education is the most powerful weapon to change the world” affirmed the revered late South African leader, Nelson Mandela. Education is a process that awakens individual potential to creative knowledge, inculcating in young people the desire to raise the quality of service to excel in life in today’s multicultural societies. It is Educators together with parents who can nurture the students as insightful people with sturdy values, who will leverage their individual achievements, strengthen the fabric of the community, the nation and the world. While assisting in the pursuit of academic brilliance, educators can infuse dynamism, spirit of adventure, inventiveness and optimism into the students. By offering value-based education, imparting the ideals of academic excellence, sense of discipline and high moral and ethical values, leading to the development of well-integrated persons. Swami Vivekananda has expressed it eloquently: “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, and the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet is really made available to all.”

This article explores how education to diversity is a global challenge and an ongoing process and is divided into four parts. The first part is to recognize and acknowledge differences, UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, challenges and opportunities and diversity in its multifaceted forms. The second part considers the impact of education on societies facing diversity. The UNESCO and Cardinal Poupard Foundation Chair of Inter-religious And Inter-cultural Dialogue at St. Andrew’s College, Bandra is incorporated into this article with specific reference to the Diploma course and International Symposiums. The third part begins with multicultural competence with an interdisciplinary approach, The International perspective, how education to diversity is carried out at global level, how cultural difference is celebrated and how to transform class room teaching into a

style of living. The fourth part is towards a universal perspective, education to diversity and sustainability and generating a new culture.

Recognize and acknowledge differences

Education is one of the privileged means to recognize differences and acknowledge their potential. Educating students to grown to understand and cherish that sense of having a genuine cultural experience: yes to belonging to one culture or other; with an openness to belong anywhere that one can make home.

UNESCO'S Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity affirms: "In our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life" (Article 2, "From cultural diversity to cultural pluralism").¹

Challenges and opportunities

The greatest challenges today are: Globalization and the inequality among World Citizens, the ecological challenges, including the future impacts of climate change, conflict and lack of peace, disrespect for the fundamental rights of people, especially children. The unprecedented and quick outburst of covid-10 global pandemic is robbing the lives of many people. Technology has taken over interpersonal relationships. The arrival of social media was to strengthen family ties but there is a split even among closest member as each one remains glued to their phones.

The marvel of technology offers splendid opportunities to get to know different countries and cultures. Globalization multiplies Intercontinental flows of information, capital and people making 'trans-

national connections possible. Globalization is the ever-growing platform by which information is communicated among locals. How is it that McDonalds, that embarked as a local restaurant near Chicago in the United States has turned out to be the global domain that it is today? Its visible benefits persuaded individuals in other localities to launch their own franchises, emulating the model of the original success story. This paves the way to interconnectedness.

Diversity in its multifaceted forms

Diversity is visible in various forms and calls for acceptance and respect. “The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.”¹ The uniqueness of each individual and the possibility to explore these differences in a positive and constructive manner within an educational environment that promotes growth and development is the need of the hour. Maritain offers a renewed emphasis on the universal dignity of human beings therefore it is possible to value humanness regardless of time, place, and circumstance. The violence that has been inflicted on people because of their race, gender and ethnicity only makes us conscious of the fact that differences need to yield to a higher concept of the dignity of the human being. A well thought about education can develop and teach this concept from an interdisciplinary perspective. Dewey speaks of complete act of thought, or problem solving according to the scientific method. It is an effective method that transforms learning into an active process of intelligence. With Dewey, there is specific possibility for critical thinking, process and collaborative learning and interdisciplinary studies.

The impact of education on societies facing diversity

Writing on Education to Cultural Values Dr. Thuruthiyil Scaria confirms: “The capacity to discern and to transmit positive cultural values is an integral part of any educative system and educational process. Cultural values are so to say the DNA of every individual born in a particular culture. The sum of these values provides and identity to the individual as well as to a society or a nation. The feeling of being and having a cultural identity are necessary for social inclusion and for the growth of every individual and the entire society.”²

Today, at global level educational systems are open to acknowledge diversity. A mono-cultural society is unimaginable as the rapid process of globalization and migration is ever on the increase. There are human societies that accept diversity as natural and have a positive attitude towards it and those that try to eradicate diversity. Education in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies requires an attentive eye on diversity. Already in class V, the students in Maharashtra, India are taught that: “Diversity has a significant effect on our lifestyle, customs, traditions and culture. People of many different castes, tribes and religions live in our country. Many different languages are spoken. We also see differences in food, clothing and festivals and celebrations in the different regions.”⁴

John Paul II in his message to Cardinal Paul Poupard for the 20th Anniversary of the Pontifical Council for Culture wrote: “Your Eminence, I would like to make the most of this festive occasion to encourage the Pontifical Council for Culture and all its members to persevere on the path they have taken, ensuring that the voice of the Holy See reach the various ‘areopagi’ of modern culture, maintaining profitable contacts with those who cultivate art, science, letters and philosophy.”⁵

The Chair of Inter – Religious and Inter – Cultural dialogue was established in September 2009 in St. Andrew’s College in association with the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair of Inter Religious and Inter Cultural Dialogue. The Cardinal Poupard Foundation aims to

protect and make use of the remarkable patrimony of cultures and relationships that the Cardinal established over the past many years. This is done through cultural initiatives that bring together people of different cultures and religions round the globe. The Foundation has Chairs in Universities throughout the world to promote Congresses, Conferences and Publications. The students are encouraged with grants to get actively involved in the dialogue of cultures. Right from the beginning, Cardinal Poupard encouraged to get a diploma course endorsed by the Mumbai University. Approved by the University of Mumbai, a Diploma Course in Religion and Society, Peace and Dialogue was introduced at St. Andrew's College, Bandra with effect from academic year 2013-14.

The UNESCO Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue was established at St. Andrew's College on 8 September 2015. The UNESCO has renewed⁶ the agreement of this UNESCO Chair for an additional period of four years, until 8 September 2023 and also approved Mr. Giuseppe Musumeci of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation to remain as Chair holder of this UNESCO Chair.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias during his presidential address at the 9th International Conference of UNESCO and Cardinal Paul Poupard Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue at St. Andrew's College in Mumbai, speaking on 'The Role of Education to Foster Religious Harmony' said education means "learning to dialogue with people with whom they have conflicting interests." He called on education in the country to help to bring about "a moral revolution with a renewed ethic of justice, responsibility and community. Education should help people realize that national unity and integrity of the nation should be placed high above any divisive forces and sectarian interests."⁷

International Symposiums

The UNESCO & Cardinal Paul Poupard² Foundation Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue at St. Andrew's College of Arts, Science and Commerce continues to bring together for the International Symposiums a large number of students, teaching staff and a number of

representatives from various educational institutions. Relevant topics like: Water: Issues and Challenges (2011-2012), Significance of Life and Death in Three Major World Religions (2012-2013), Care for the Earth (2013-2014), Impact of Media on Religion and Culture (2014-2015), Relevance of Religion (2015-2016), Family and Nation Building (2016-2017), The Role Of Education To Foster Religious Harmony (2017-2018), A New Utopia: Promoting Dialogue for a Humane and Sustainable Society (2018-2019) are explored. The presence of eminent personalities from India and abroad offer quality touch to these Symposiums. Motivated by Dr. Marie Fernandes the Principal and accompanied by Professor Sharmila Dhote, responsible for Inter-cultural and Inter-religious activities at St. Andrew's the Students showcase competence and promptness to plan, organize and execute International Symposiums. The journal of the UNESCO and The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue: "Ethics and Society: An International Journal Religious and Cultures for Peace and Harmony" is released during the International Symposiums.

Multicultural competence with an interdisciplinary approach

One can gain deeper insights looking at culture diversity in individuals using social science disciplines of Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology. Cultural anthropology is much used to study and analyze the diverse cultures of the world. From a Sociological perspective, language, beliefs, norms and values in which humans live are what produce cultural diversities. The psychological perspective throws light on cultural diversity with its focus on internal factors that influence individuals and anthropology views cultural diversity from the perspective of humanity, aspects of social life like ethnicity, symbolism, politics, race etc. The social sciences offer an understanding of cultural diversity and a basic foundation for respecting other cultures. The pedagogical perspective has a significant role to indicate how the whole process of Education to diversity has to be shaped and implemented. An interdisciplinary approach is the best to help those who are educating and those being educated to achieve multicultural diversity competence. A

number of abilities form the basis of this competence: to learn to place culture in its original context, to manifest respect and understanding of one's culture and that of others, to communicate objectively and effectively, to motivate global team work, to work with people of different cultural backgrounds. Teachers own understanding of different cultures and religions is reflected in their classroom.

Modules, courses, for intercultural learning

Some Universities mostly in the US have made it mandatory for undergraduate students to complete a certain number of modules in subjects related to cultural diversity. World music, psychology of oppression, intercultural communication all form part of learning. In some other Universities chances for intercultural learning are optional.

Eric Deakins opines that research based teaching⁹ approach is effective for motivating university students to value cultural diversity. The question is: How effective are research-based teaching approaches for motivating university students to value cultural diversity?

There are International Residence Programs designed to promote intercultural exchange by offering the students from diverse backgrounds possibility to live together and participate in cultural, social and academic programs. Coupled with this is the growing trend to offer International intercultural learning outside of the classroom. International student houses in different countries run independently have a shared mission: to provide opportunities to live and learn together in a community in reciprocal respect, understanding and international friendship.

Worthy of mention are Intercultural Leadership Programs to raise an intercultural community of leaders who can make a difference, Most University Calendars have a sizable selection of cultures represented, marked with special events and celebrations with music and food, or a week-long programs of events.

Ways to celebrate diversity

In 2001 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared 21 May ‘World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development’, an ‘opportunity to deepen our understanding of the value of cultural diversity and learn to live together better.’ UNESCO’s campaign to ‘do one thing for diversity’ is praiseworthy. In his write up do one thing for diversity today, Rabbhi Yahiya¹⁰ suggests ways to celebrate diversity: Watch a movie with friends about a culture that’s unfamiliar to you. Set out to learn one thing in particular about another culture. For example, you could cook an international dish. Another thing is to ask someone you know about his or her cultural background. Listen to music from another culture etc. Most important is: What one thing will you do today to celebrate diversity in your life?

Celebrating diversity in the class room

An interdisciplinary and co-curricular approach is used while organizing cultural nights, intercultural celebrations etc. To celebrate diversity is a must today to make every student welcomed and accepted in the classroom community. Each class can build up a classroom culture that allows the possibility to share what makes them different. A cultural day is another plus point, can involve parents and add multicultural resource materials that celebrate diversity. Speaking about celebrating diversity in the University of Delhi, Sarthak Chauhan highlights diversity of perspectives¹¹ which he feels needs to be explored further. International pen friends and e-pals, connecting with schools in different countries is another initiative.

Academic contribution to celebrate diversity

Musical and theatrical performances, having different cuisines and possibilities for students to present aspects of their own culture are ways to celebrate diversity. Most Universities have policies in place to guard against discriminatory treatment of any group of people whether based on gender, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or any other factor.

Amazingly some universities have an Office for Diversity and Equality that accompanies students or staff who have particular concern regarding this, or are ready to promote equal opportunities and treatment within the university.

Universities with a sizable number of international students make special arrangements for students with important cultural commitments. This is especially when there are clashes of deadline or exam with a religious festival or time of fasting. Within a shared nationality there is need to acknowledge diversity.

The Diversity Celebration supports and enhances Appalachian State University's mission of "accepting the responsibility to be actively involved in addressing the educational, economic, cultural, and societal needs of the changing region, state, nation, and world, by providing a venue where diverse perspectives, cultures and values are accepted, appreciated and celebrated."¹² At Appalachian, diversity is recognized as essential binding agent of the interdisciplinary approach to education, as well as to the greater life experience.

Translating classroom learning into a style of living

Intercultural learning and dialogue has to become a way of life. The World Day for Cultural Diversity goes much beyond special events and in many educational campuses intercultural dialogue is a way of life; it is evident in lectures, library and student meetings, celebrations etc.

The diversity promoted and celebrated in the class room and the values of respect, acceptance and community assimilated applied into students and teachers homes and communities create a culture of being and operating. Some encourage the generating of an observance calendar requesting students to add the holidays to the class calendar for all to see, to talk about the different holidays they observe and the traditions that they may have. Those who hail from different cultures may have unique names and a particular way of pronouncing such names, learning to pronounce the names correctly is an expression of respect and interest in their cultural background.

Towards a more universal perspective

The quick and rapid expansion of communications offer better possibilities for people to know more and more about other cultures. The challenge in education is to ensure that young people are well aware of their own culture and that of distant cultures in other continents. Education to diversity equips teachers and students with ability and skills to recognize accept and welcome one's own culture, to step out of the confines of it and see things from a more universal perspective. With an educative nurturing presence¹³ that goes beyond dominant fashions and trends, educators truly contribute to make a real difference in educating to diversity. The privileged area of culture becomes the fertile place of encounter among educators and those being educated in a relationship with one another. Such an encounter binds us to our common humanity. Education to diversity at global level is gradually gaining a high profile in the agenda of Universities and Educational Institutions. Creative thinkers need to be nurtured. "Creative thinking cannot be purchased, downloaded or guaranteed but it can be fostered with the right environment. Developing individual conceptual frameworks for understanding and interpreting the world also means encouraging individuals to have the confidence to question and deconstruct dogma and traditional views, to possess the courage to make new associations without fears of the opinions or cynicism of others."¹⁴

Education to diversity and sustainability

Diversity, when applied in a human context, encompasses the inclusion of a wide variety of cultures, ethnicities and groups, races, religious beliefs, socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity. The diversity of life is made up not only of the wide realm of human cultures and languages, but also of the diverse world of plants and animal species, habitats and ecosystems. Therefore, a more sustainable world is one in which biological, cultural and linguistic diversity prospers through the strength of the system. It is upon the foundation of this diverse array of ecological and human cultures that a sustaining, resilient world can be built.

Pope Francis affirms: “We can no longer speak of sustainable development apart from intergenerational solidarity.” [...] “Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us.”¹⁵ The Pope highlights the urgent need for intragenerational solidarity of which Pope Benedict XVI has already spoken about: “Let us not only keep the poor of the future in mind, but also today’s poor, whose life on this earth is brief and who cannot keep on waiting¹⁶. Hence, ‘in addition to a fairer sense of intergenerational solidarity there is also an urgent moral need for a renewed sense of intragenerational solidarity¹⁷.’”

Generating a new culture

Shared meaning and value systems are the core aspects of culture. The *Weltanschauung* or world view handed down from one generation to the next is made up of the basic assumptions, the way solutions to universal problems on how to survive and how to stay together are found. Education to cultural diversity can contribute much to enhance the *Weltanschauung*.

The UNESCO’S Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, “cultural rights are an integral part of human rights”, everyone should have the right to communicate in the language of their choice, participate in their own cultural practices, and be treated with respect for their cultural identity. These principles applied to higher education gives rises to a new culture. Universities are privileged places of learning and diffusion of knowledge.

Education to diversity need to foresee strategies for promoting diversity in the workplace. Kathy Reynolds affirms: “promoting inclusiveness and diversity within your workplace is one of the best ways to foster an open-minded, global company culture. Not only does this make good business sense—helping your company to better understand colleagues, clients, and customers around the world—it also makes the workplace a more interesting and personally enriching environment for everyone.” The platinum Rule by Dave Kerpen: Treat others how they want to be

treated is the apt rule to be followed in a diverse professional environment. Pope Francis emphasizes: “In order to continue providing employment, it is imperative to promote an economy which favours productive diversity and business creativity.” *Diversity opens horizons for dialogue.*

The identity of a person is expressed as a member of a culture. Cultural questions are important to everyone. Diversity is regarded as the prerequisite for dialogue. Diversity opens new horizons to meet, encounter and dialogue. Our differences, challenges and possibilities spur us on to search for ways to enter into deeper and more committed dialogue, to inculcate respect for the life of every human being, to use the latest advances of science with clear ethical principle.

Education to Religious Harmony

Religion plays a very crucial and central role in everyone’s life. Religious harmony holds the key to a peaceful and progressive world. Many people misuse religion for their own vested interests. At times in the name of religion society is divided. Education is the effective instrument for uniting kingdoms and nations, bringing human beings closely together. There is urgent need to recognize the crucial role of education in building a culture of peace, unity.

Mr. Koffi Annan, former UN Secretary General, expressed concern that prejudice would continue to ruin innocent lives and make progress with the ambitious international agenda of peace, security and development unattainable. Mr. Annan consequently suggested restoration of trust among peoples of different faiths and cultures should be given the highest priority (UN Press Release, 2004).

Conclusion

William Butler Yeats has summarized the essence of education powerfully: “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” The progress of an educational institution is appraised not only by the academic excellence which the students achieve but also upon the role it plays in instilling discipline, sense of confidence, attitude of

cooperation and collaboration with others and upright commitment to the country and the people. Education has produced great academicians, scientists, statesmen, administrators, technological experts, eminent artists, renowned sports persons. Every child whom we educate is one such in the making. Education to diversity in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies opens new horizons for better dialogue and communication among peoples and nations.

The phrase, "Think globally; act locally," makes us understand that the world is a multicultural society of which we are a part. The systems of the world, its governments, economies, religions and cultures are interdependent. Differences become strengths in a collaborative effort. We live in societies where different value-systems compete for moral space. Today, we must courageously face a situation which is becoming increasingly diversified and demanding, in the context of globalization and of the consequent new and uncertain mingling of peoples and cultures. It has become an urgent necessity to disseminate values, attitudes and behaviours conducive to dialogue, non-violence and deeper knowledge of cultures in line with the principles of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Cardinal Paul Poupard often challenged his audience: to find a way of recognizing and facing 'questions of cultural sensitivity', to have dialogue between 'faith and culture.'

Various events are held on 21st May around the world to mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, which was established by the United Nations (UN) in 2001. The outburst of covid-19 has put many Institutions to plan and develop ways to celebrate diversity via online platform. As the rough waters of the covid-19 pandemic continue to flow, Education to Diversity is becoming ever more a Global Challenge and an Ongoing Process. Pope Francis has expressed eloquently: "As the tragic coronavirus pandemic has taught us, we can overcome global challenges only by showing solidarity with one another and embracing the most vulnerable in our midst."¹⁸

Footnotes

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Citizenship and Diversity

Phillipe Guillien

We live in a universe that is characterized by diversity. There is not just one planet or one star; there are galaxies of all different sorts, different animal species, different kinds of plants, and different races and ethnic groups. A human body is made up of different organs performing different functions and that it is precisely this diversity that makes it an organism. If it were only one organ, it would not be a human body.

In his speech to the United Commission on Human Rights, Desmond Tutu declared: “We live in a universe marked by diversity as the law of its being and our being. We are made to exist in a life that should be marked by cooperation, interdependence, sharing, caring, compassion and complementarity. We should celebrate our diversity.”

Our survival as a species will depend not on unbridled power lacking moral direction, or on eliminating those who are different and seeking only those who think and speak and behave and look like ourselves. That way is stagnation and ultimately death and disintegration. There is room for everyone; there is room for every culture, race, language and point of view.

As Gérard Toffin, a French anthropologist puts it, the importance of the matter of citizenship has grown due to the effects of migration, population displacement, issues related to minority rights, and the emergence of increasingly plural societies. The concept was at first an occidental one, and it referred to an abstract individual who was not bound to any group. It was initially used by social scientists working on Western and developed countries and was seen as a political concept that was suited to countries that had a strong nation-state tradition and supra-local identities. But through a period of intense globalization, transnationalism and the associated mass movement of people and goods, references to citizenship have extended to non-Western states. The concept of citizenship and questions concerning citizenship are therefore increasingly utilized by social scientists studying non-Western societies. There is a growing literature on, for instance, inclusion/

exclusion, education, migration and human rights. In the West itself, the increasing cultural diversity of American and European societies has given new momentum to the debate about the relationship between citizenship and identity. In this respect it is clear that the West and the East can no longer be considered in isolation from each other.

Citizenship is informed by culture in a number of different ways, which thus engender different models.

Citizens at the intersection of State and Society and political scientists consider this notion to be a central one, beginning with Alexis de Tocqueville, the French intellectual and sociologist who analysed democracy in the Western world.

As is well known, the word citizen, (from the Latin *civitas*, ‘city’), first designated a member of a city. It is only since the eighteenth century that it has referred to a member of a State. At present, citizenship can be broadly defined as the different modes of membership within a political community. In ancient states and civilisations, the notion of a citizen was in most cases limited to only a portion of the population. A number of non-citizens, (women, slaves, resident foreigners), were deprived of any rights. In pre-colonial India, there was no citizenship as such, just rajas, kings, and the praja, the subjects. The rights of individuals were subordinated to their bonds with the king. By contrast, modern democratic countries aim at granting citizenship to most of the people living within a specific territory.

This notion of citizenship can be studied in contemporary societies from three different angles: from the civil point of view: individual rights to think, to believe, to have access to justice; from the political point of view: the right to vote, to participate in the political debate; and from the social point of view: the right to enjoy social privileges, such as pensions, health care subsidies, minimum salary, free and equal access to education, social insurance, and so on and so forth.

The cumulative effects of these three levels ensure in principle fully fledged citizenship for all members of the community, each individual being equal in rights and obligations.

It is still useful to distinguish between two conceptions of citizenship. The first, chiefly civic and political, corresponds to the universalistic values dominant in Western countries. It is built politically around the individual. It is based on a free, voluntary, political association of citizens with a specific nation. The second conception, which is primarily collective or ethnic, is mainly associated with developing and emerging countries in which tradition is still extremely important. It emphasizes a common cultural community and relies on a strong collective ethos. In the first type of society, citizenship is defined as an unmediated relationship between the individual and the State. Other forms of attachment are thought to be secondary and subordinate to the main civic and political values. Religion itself is subordinate to political and secular values. In the second conception, the State is often characterized by weakness and the simultaneous multiplicity of an individual's attachments. Belonging to one's ethnic group, caste, family and religion plays a crucial role, sometimes even more important than one's links to the national State. There exists a wide range of intermediate regimes between these two opposing types of citizenship.

When one wishes to explore the relationship between citizenship and diversity, between equality and difference, he has to do it in the light of these two extreme conceptions.

The key question is whether it is possible for religious minorities, indigenous people and disadvantaged groups to be members of a common society on equal terms with others. How does a particular state accommodate a diversity of cultures without contradicting its own equalitarian values?

In my opinion, cultural differences are not automatically the greatest danger to a country's internal cohesion. Is it necessary for citizenship to rely on a homogeneous culture ? Is this the only possible model ? Participatory pluralism, rather than a homogenizing ideology, can better serve democracy and an inclusive citizenship regime. Yet, from a different standpoint, and a very important one indeed, the dangers of communalism should not be underestimated. Similarly, the creation of a

discriminatory system which favours disadvantaged categories of people leads to difficulties in exercising citizenship. This challenges the foundational principles of citizenship.

I will start by presenting the fundamental principles of the French Republican system which appeared at the end of the eighteenth century, as well as the reactions it provoked. I have chosen the French case for practical reasons: I know it better than any other.

Then, I will try to analyse forms of citizenship in the more multicultural context of South Asia, in India in particular.

France can be considered to offer a paradigmatic form of the first civic, universalistic model of citizenship. Historically, the French Republican model originated at the end of the eighteenth century under revolutionary pressure from the people. The downfall of royalty and the upheaval caused by the French Revolution in 1789 are still today vibrant references of democratic political order. Admittedly, the Terror period (1793-94), during which time at least 16,000 priests, aristocrats, liberals and so called counter-revolutionaries (including peasants) were summarily put to death in the name of the Republic and the popular sovereignty of the nation, is being increasingly questioned by historians. For instance, François Furet has rightly rejected the earlier explanation (put forward mainly in left circles and among communist historians) according to which this time of civil war and state terrorism was a response to an aristocratic plot against the Revolution. On the contrary, he pointed out continuities with the former monarchical period and even with the spirit of the 1789 Revolution.

Yet the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen dated August 1789 still constitutes a major legacy of the French Revolution. It proclaimed basic civic rights such as equality before the law, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and freedom of speech. French society is no longer divided into 'orders', (Clergy, Aristocracy, 'Tiers Etat'). It is composed of individuals. The notion of citizenship that is deeply rooted in the text postulates the principles of a substantial identity among the different members of the Republic, who are granted the

same inalienable rights. Every individual has an equal claim to autonomy and respect.

Interestingly, these ideas are close to the conception of a nation as described much later by Marcel Mauss, the French sociologist: ‘The nation is an entity characterised by the allegiance which it receives from each of its individual constituent units, as a moral integration in which no other elements come between the nation and the individual’.

Over the following years, at the very end of the eighteenth century, a totally new political system was established, marked by universalistic values (valid for the whole of Europe and beyond), national citizenship, and state centralism. It sought to obviate the differences—of birth, wealth, gender, and faith—that the ancient regime had deployed to structure society. Liberalism argued that such differences were secondary to a universal humanity which afforded rights to life-chances to all. The linguistic and cultural diversity of the regions that made up France in pre-revolutionary times was assimilated to the ‘Old Regime’,

A new centralist division of the country into departments emerged. French was imposed as the national language to the detriment of other local or regional languages. Yet this policy was only fully enforced after World War 1.

The French Revolution was overtly hostile towards religion. In striking contrast with what happened in the United States of America, it opposed priests and religious institutions which, it was felt, maintained people in a state of backwardness and obscurantism. Religion was tolerated only if confined to one’s private life.

However, the republican State itself was granted an almost transcendental value, which competed with the old religion. Therefore, the Church and the State incarnated two exclusive, hostile institutions, each having its own imagery and culture.

Yet, in spite of this aggressively anti-clerical attitude, freedom of faith was endorsed and declared to be fully entitled to State protection. In the 1791 Constitution, the main religious minorities (Protestants and Jews)

were granted civic rights, on the condition that they respect laws instituted by the revolutionaries. Such a secularist policy gradually led to the separation of the Church from the State in 1905. Today, even practising Catholics admit the legitimacy of this division and no longer contest the Republic's non-religious stance (*laïcité*)

The present Constitution (promulgated in October 1958) ensures the legal equality of all citizens irrespective of their origin, race or religion. The French model of democracy thus emphasises individual rights and theoretically rejects all group-based rights. It is firmly committed to the notion of the unique individual: the person exists as a separate, unique, entity. With a typical utopian outlook, this belief system is based on the ability of autonomous, free-willed, and self-determining individuals to pursue their own plans and purposes. It focuses on the citizen's individual emancipation from all ascribed groups and community pressures, and from familial, ethnic, religious, social, or geographical links. The locus of this process is the secular (*laïque*) school, open to all. For Jules Ferry, an important politician during the Third Republic, it is the place where the country's unity is achieved.

Education is therefore a key element in the whole system.

The state school is conceptualized as the place where the future citizen is formed and becomes dedicated to reason and critical thinking.

In this context, it is constitutionally forbidden to set up any positive provisions for a group of persons on the basis of their ethnic or geographical origins. On 9 May 1991, the Constitutional Council rejected a law proposed by the government in favour of the inhabitants of the French island of Corsica. It was rejected because the text of the proposal used the expression 'the Corsican people'. The French people, according to the statement of the Constitutional Council, are one and indivisible, with no distinction of religion, race or region.

In March 2003, the Constitution was exceptionally revised to authorize the adoption of measures favouring job opportunities and the protection of private land for the inhabitants of overseas départements and territories (DOM-TOMs, former French colonies). These measures were

enforced for all persons working in the DOM-TOMs. It was a subtle way of assisting the local, decolonised populations, using a form of affirmative action. This centralistic and universalistic model also applies to questions of language. In 1992, France refused to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, on the grounds that the recognition of minority groups and their languages might be detrimental to the unity of the nation-state. According to the legacy of the French Revolution, the language of a free people should be one and the same for all. French, it is said, is the language of French citizens.

Since its independence in 1947, India has embraced a more multicultural model of democracy. India deals with diversity and difference in a much more comprehensive manner than the centralistic French State. Its federal structure, which grants substantial power to the country's various states, its reservation system, which dates back to colonial times and relates to a wide range of groups, and its language policy, which recognizes the plurality of languages in the Union, are devices that have been used to enforce a decentralized and unique political system.

Culturally or socially marginalised groups are granted rights in a much more direct manner than in France. More importantly, in India the State has not been given the same transcendental, religious value as it has in a country like France. India's long pre- independence experience of handling conflicts in a pragmatic manner through negotiation is of particular significance here.

The Indian culture of communitarian rights should be seen as an adaptation of democratic values to a society where the liberal language of individual rights and equality has hardly ever been used. Sociologically, it is based on a social structure where the notion of the unique individual is not a primary value in social life.

As revealed by most anthropological and sociological studies, India has traditionally been much more a society of castes and communities than of individuals. The paradox therefore lies in the following: the institutions of representative democracy have become deeply entrenched in India, to the extent that some commentators even speak of

a Tocquevillian revolution in that country. Post-independence leaders succeeded in establishing a modern State at the core of Indian society. Yet this democracy is based on social realities different from those of Europe. The familial, caste and religious groups still play a crucial role in all fields of politics and social life, even if they alone cannot explain every election result.

Indians have not yet been totally transformed into liberal political subjects. Primordial identities have so far not been dissolved.

Creating a secular state in a religious society where the great majority of people are active followers of one religious faith or another is one of the predicaments the Republic of India is facing. Despite Nehruvian secularist ideas, national identity is so far not only based on the secular criterion of common nationhood. The State's constitutional secularism lacks a popular ideological basis. Indeed, contemporary adjustments to society and religion can be seen as deviations from this national, secular, universal statecraft and type of citizenship.

The achievement of India's peculiar form of democracy relies on citizenship with differentiated rights.

As I mentioned earlier, definitions of citizenship oscillate between an Enlightenment impulse towards universal anthropos and a particularistic (or holistic) impulse towards a relative ethnos. In practice, no pure, unmixed system of any sort is to be found at present on the planet; only hybrid regimes prevail. Consequently, conceptions of citizenship are today marked in most countries by tensions and interactions between the two models mentioned above. A country such as India defends universalistic declarations in its Constitution (legal equality of all citizens irrespective of their origin, religion, caste) while at the same time it guarantees private laws for religious communities, in some private familial affairs. Furthermore, the Republic of India establishes various forms of constitutionally- approved positive discrimination in favour of disadvantaged groups, and protective measures for cultural pluralities. It has gone very far in this direction to accommodate internal diversity.

Even France, whose Revolution model is said to be blind to difference and minority cultures, is gradually starting to consider some forms of affirmative action. Solutions are being experimented all over the world which attempt to combine citizenship and diversity. Each country is trying to accommodate differences through measures such as decentralization, local autonomy, federalist structures, liberal language policies, and so forth. The result is a series of complex, even contradictory, arrangements and forms of citizenship that are peculiar to each state. A noteworthy dissimilarity is that national boundaries are being reinforced throughout South Asia, unlike in Europe, where a post-national policy is being conducted. The European Community is attempting to engender a sense of collective identity by developing symbols typically associated with a modern nation-state (flag, harmonized passports, etc.), though admittedly with only limited success. The multiculturalist model has its limitations, however. Contemporary expressions of cultural and religious identities pose a challenge to the very principles of civil equality and individual liberty. Forces of disruption and division and communal conflicts are on the rise in many countries and ethnic or religious absolutism is clearly a danger to democracy.

The notion of universally valid citizenship beyond cultural differences seems more like an ideal than a feasible objective. Theoretically, the universalistic model beyond cultures and identities safeguards individuals' rights to hold cultural conceptions of the good which may be conflicting and incommensurable. Wherever it is accepted, the primacy of citizenship over culture and of universalism over specificity has to be reaffirmed. It is, after all, the only way of preserving the rights of the individual and of ensuring equality for all.

Celebrating Diversity

Dr. Mithu Alur

This paper is talking about celebrating diversity. I am going to talk about people who may see, move or hear, speak or think, differently from us but they are people just like you and me. They tend to be forgotten and left behind, in fact we called them the Forgotten Millions.

There are four points I would like to talk about, why I got involved, what did I do to change the situation, what do I see as the way forward the future, and what actually is our philosophy and ideology behind our work. **How did it all begin and what was the raison d'être for my doing this work?**

A personal reflection

The first journey began when I became a parent of a child with disability. That event changed my life and she became the greatest teacher in my life. I came from one of those privileged highly educated bhadrolok families of Kolkatta, the influence was strong in my own family in Bengal. My parents were staunch nationalists as many people were during the pre-independence and immediate post-independence period.

It was 1966 when my daughter Malini was born with cerebral palsy. Knowledge of cerebral palsy was virtually non-existent in India at that time. Neither me nor my husband had any idea of what cerebral palsy was. In India's premier institute in Delhi, in front of a group of young interns staring at her and her weeping daughter Malini, the doctor examined my daughter and said brusquely told: *'Your child is a spastic. She will not be able to achieve very much as her brain is damaged. She will be 'a vegetable' and there is nothing much you can do about it... Once the brain gets damaged, it remains always damaged. The damage is irreversible. There's nothing you can do about it'*

We did not accept what they said. My husband and I were young parents 22 and 24 and we ran from pillar to post in desperation trying to understand what had happened to her... my husband who was also very educated and had just returned from finishing a Tripos in Cambridge was

very dynamic in his decision making ability and finding nobody who understood her, decided to go to England in search of treatment for Malini. My brother in law Dr Samiran Nundy, a leading gastroenterologist, presently Professor Emeritus of Sri Gangaram Hospital, was the Registrar at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge University and he arranged all the appointments. Both he and my sister Mita were living there.

There Malini was assessed as above average intelligence. For us, the time in England was key. I met people who treated her and me with great care and great sensitivity. Their whole approach to her changed our lives... my daughter flourished. I decided to study more on the subject and did my first course at the Institute of Education in London and became a special educator.

Because of the appropriate and effective management Malini received, today she has done her double Masters... one in Gender Studies and the other in Information Technology. She was a Senior Events Manager at the Oxford Bookstore, in downtown Bombay. It is her own courage and grit and determination combined with the best services she was exposed to that got her there.¹

In 1971, when we returned from England after six years there were still no Special Schools for children with cerebral palsy in India. My first thought was what about the other Malinis... what was happening to them and how to educate other children like her? They should get the same kind of services as Malini who was privileged enough to go to England.

However, it was not easy. The situation was fraught with negative responses from prominent people. I faced a barrage of opposition and barriers... The first question I was confronted with was... *Why educate them?* An eminent citizen of the city said, 'Why bother Mithu, there are hundreds of normal children needing education?' The Health Minister met me he asked me 'are you talking about plastics?' he hadn't heard of spastics! A Vice Chancellor said when Malini was ready for her Degree and I wanted to introduce reforms such as increase the time given,

introduce a writer she said... *'why do you want to bother to make her do a BA... it is such a useless examination let her stay at home?'*

Entrenched mindsets needed change and such questions made me more than determined to change the scene and I began the first special school for spastic children.

1. What is the situation in India?

Let us first of all look at the situation in India for the disabled. Historically we find that the issue of education of children with disability was addressed by John Sargent, an eminent British Education Commissioner who in 1944 recommended that provisions for the handicapped was to form an essential part of the national system of education, and should be administered by the Education Department that handicapped children should not be segregated from normal children. Subsequent commissions reiterated the same principle. The Kothari Commission again brought up the issue of children with disabilities in the Plan of Action in 1964 (Gupta 1984; Jangira 1995) and gave strong recommendations for including children with disabilities into ordinary schools.

However, State interventions in the sector were in stark contrast. The recommendations were not fully complied with. The GOI made it a policy to develop services through voluntary agencies. (GOI Planning Commission 1961:598)

In 1966 India put the clock backward. Disabled children and their education were thrown out of the Ministry of Education and became a part of the Ministry of Social Welfare (now called the Ministry of Social Justice) This removal of the responsibility for the education from the Ministry of Education to Ministry of Social Welfare (Aggarwal 1992) resulted in millions of children out of the safety net of education (Taylor and Taylor 1970; Miles 1994).

A Government of India source revealed that only 10 percent of people with disabilities are being provided coverage (Government of India 1989). This resulted in a systems' failure leaving a massive number of

children and people with disability out of school. Around 80% are still suffering the same fate in the poorest areas.

2. How did we change the situation?

MODEL 1: The First Phase: 1972 – 1998: The Spastics Society of India, Mumbai (to fill the gap when there was no school)

In 1966, very little existed in the way of education about a multiple disability like cerebral palsy in India. There were some medical facilities which were available but scattered across the city. Only one or two hospitals had these medical facilities in the same building. In 1972 together with a few friends and members of my own family parents of disabled children, we set up an organization called *The Spastics Society of India*.

On 2 October, 1972, or Gandhi Jayanti, the Spastics Society of India was born. This was the first special school for the education of children with CP and other physical disabilities. It combined education and treatment under a special school rather than a hospital setting.

Parents became our essential partners in the transition and ongoing process. Parents began to be empowered. In our new approach, parents are initially educated and trained to manage their child effectively and appropriately at home. In addition to managing their children at home, parents began to learn the various aspects of cerebral palsy helped the organisation as teachers, therapists, principals of schools, and are now in management positions. The Indian context also benefits from differences from the West, having large joint families consisting of parents-in-law, aunts and grand-parents. All these family members need training, but all can in time help to raise the child.

Among the most important and unique achievements was moving a chronic disability like Cerebral Palsy away from dreary hospitals to a special school model and providing a social setting where the children received social, emotional, therapeutic and academic support. We were able to humanize a group of people who were earlier neglected or patronized or sometimes and treated as morons and idiots. Certainly they

were grossly misunderstood. Through our models of intervention, we showed that they are individuals with potential and ability. Today they have passed out and become computer analysts, accountants, authors, lawyers; some have done their Ph.Ds. They now have the dignity they deserve despite being different. This then was our first contribution in celebrating diversity.

Parent Support System: parents in partnership

While focussing on therapy and education to the child, services of counselling and empowering the parent and the family became equally important. specialists were trained not to lose their compassion while assessing families and the child and we began with a new humane approach of combining *'professionalism with care'*. The team undertaking the assessment interacted with the child not as a *'handicapped person'* but *'as a child first'*. This has documented in a book published by Sage called *"A Birth That Changed A Nation – A New Model of Care and Inclusion."*

When SSI started in 1972, physiotherapy, occupational therapy or speech therapy was a specialization known only to these experts. Children were more of a "diagnosis" to be discussed amongst colleagues. As reported in this study, a leading doctor in Bombay said, "Parents are patients and you cannot share their file with them – they do not understand." We changed that and ensured that parents, rich or poor, got the status they deserved! Our work is mainly with the poor and the disadvantaged.

Discussion and conversation with the parents was non-existent. From 1972 a strong focus on parents as an important member of the team, was given. I introduced the concept that expertise and specialist knowledge is certainly necessary to achieve the desired progress, but should be given in a humane, compassionate manner. The interdisciplinary team kept in mind that in the early days, our patient who is an infant is not aware of what has happened to him or her. It is the parents who are caught in a quagmire of trauma. Their grief, their bewilderment and confusion about what is going to happen to their child, became their primary concern. The

concept of explaining to the parent why a certain exercise or activity was being done or what was the purpose of doing it, gave them the knowledge they needed to get empowered. In addition to managing their children at home appropriately, parents were encouraged to become professionals and help as teachers, therapists, sometimes becoming principals of schools and occupying management positions. Our close work with the families kept the work on the ground level with a bottom-up approach.

It was I thought a very crucial approach, as majority of our families are poor from the slums and impoverished areas unable to pay full fees.

A major outcome was the outreach and spread of services. Our idea was to decentralize services in this large country. A profusion of regionally based and autonomous Societies grew with help from SSI based on our first model. Nationally SSI has promoted the growth of services at Kolkata (1974), Delhi (1977), Bangalore (1980) and Chennai (1985) and through their courses the others. These centres in turn spun off peripheral services in their regions, which in turn created services catering to the individual needs of each child with treatment and appropriate rehabilitation techniques of cerebral palsy. 18 of the 31 states¹ have replicated the same model combining education and treatment under one roof.

A critical mass non political was developed with a strong technical base.

Today, no one is questioning whether they can be educated or not but how they should go about it in mainstream regular schools. Working in this area of darkness I think most important of our achievements has been our beneficiaries and stakeholders...with very little modification to the curriculum they were able to pass school leaving exams. In fact, the children who have taught us so much... they have pursued careers in accounting, journalism, finance, computing, and some have set up their own successful businesses. Others have pursued academics at the masters and Ph.D. level. Today, more than 400 models of employment have been started.

No one can seriously question the ability of our children to be educated. In fact they have taught us the important question... *who is disabled?*

MODEL 2: Transforming Community: Early Intervention: *A Whole Community Approach to Inclusive Education*

Substantial work was done with key persons from the community. The key persons involved at the community level are as indicated in this diagram:

- Siblings, Cousins, Mother, Father, Grandparents, Mother-in-law, Father-in-law, Joint Family Members. Aunty-Uncle, Local Leaders, Neighbours, Others in Community
- Local, State Level Bureaucrats, BMC, ICDS, NGOs, Schools

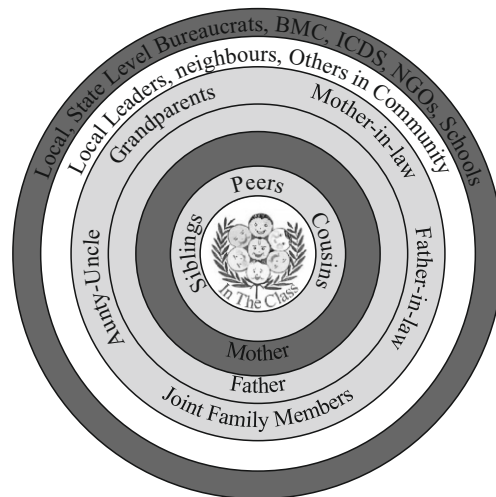


Diagram created by Sathi Alur, Member, NRCI-I.

Results and Outcome:

- More than 5,000, babies, children and young people have come for assessment and remedial programmes over the last 35 years.
- Over 3000 preschool children with and without disabilities admitted into inclusive nurseries 10,000 families in Mumbai.
- Government programmes and policies such as SSA, ICDS, RTE have been changed to include disabled children an inclusive discrimination.
- The demonstration units of NRCI are proving to be the most critical inputs of this project. It is becoming clear that the need to demonstrate how inclusion takes place is essential and an on-

going need to promote inclusion within mainstream community institutions.

MODEL 3: National Resource Centre for Inclusion (NRCI): *to fill the gap of massive exclusion*

Shift in Ideology: From Segregation Education to Inclusive Education

In 1999, we moved away from segregated education to the concept of inclusive education where children with or without disability studied together side by side. *The National Resource Centre for Inclusion* 'NRCI was set up in Bombay to change policy on a larger level to address the massive exclusion happening in the country as well as to *demonstrate practice on how to include children with disability into classrooms* and the programmes of the Government. Again we moved to address diversity. The idea was to show how all children can learn side by side regardless of disability, gender, class, religion or caste and to create a model that could be moved into the context of *Education For All including the child with disability*.

A unique model for transforming the situation both on the micro and the macro level was created and it was called The National Resource Centre for Inclusion, India.

We expanded the term disabled to a broader perspective. Inclusion means not only disabled children but also other children who are facing barriers to learning. In our case inclusion refers to children who are socially disadvantaged caught in the grip of poverty mainly Dalit children, the girl child who faces formidable cultural barriers and the child with disability, facing systemic bias.

Today, Inclusive education has taken center stage. IE is really at the heart of school reform and means *quality education and concerns* any child who is at risk of failure or facing barriers to learning difficulties due to socio economic background, gender, religion, disability... Children are not seen as one homogenous mass but individuals with their own levels of functioning at their own pace.

Inclusive education aims to include all children facing barriers to learning. The concept is not restricted to only children with disabilities.

The NRCI (as it is now known) has focused on how the mechanism of implementation can be actualized through change at three levels:

- Micro level of school and classroom, culture / policies / practice.
- Mezzo level of community; to study the mechanism or intervention strategies needed to put children with disabilities into the existing government's framework of services.
- Macro level of policy, ensuring change legislation, structural and political culture of the local, state, national, and global levels.

MODEL 4: Skills Development Centre (SDC), Chembur: to fill the gap “after school what?”

After sixteen years the question arose after school what were the children to do and where would they go? It was then that a Job Development Centre (JDC) was next set up in 1989 in another beautiful area given to the organisation by the Municipal authorities. This is the vocational branch of ADAPT and is recognized by the Disability Welfare Commissioners Office in the Social Justice department (Government of Maharashtra). It is an initiative in the area of *employment* for persons with disability, with a vision of empowering youth with disabilities with job skills and social skills thereby supporting them in their quest for employment.

Outcomes:

- Over 400 models of employment have been developed.
- The most important contribution was to move employment opportunities from ‘C’ and ‘D’ category jobs such as basket weaving, telephone operating and other stereotyped jobs in which the disabled adults have been put in, through the ages to ‘A’ and ‘B’ category jobs.
- Today our students have pursued careers in accounting, journalism, finance, computing, librarianship and some have set up their own successful businesses. Others have pursued academics at the Masters and Ph.D. level.

Success Stories and their testimonies

Malini Chib has a double Masters' from the University of London. One in Women's Studies from the Institute of Education and in Information Management and Technology, from the Metropolitan College. She has used this knowledge to expand the library at ADAPT into a Library and media resource Centre and moved the organisation's service delivery from Charity mould to a Rights Approach, forming a unique, inclusive group called the ADAPT Rights Group, bringing together people with and without disability to battle for their rights. She is a member of the Research Action Committee and a Trustee of ADAPT. An author, researcher and activist, Malini's debut autobiographical work, a book called 'One Little Finger' and she was awarded with the National Award by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for being a role model in spreading awareness about persons with disability.

Malini, who today works at Tata Sons, Mumbai and Tata Consultancy Services, London, has been one of the disabled pioneers who has paved the way for others who followed.

Lucas Baretto who has polio has been with ADAPT for over two decades. He first joined the Skills Development Centre as a faculty member, providing training in computer technology to trainees and corporates. He has continued contributing his IT skills to many national and international projects and conferences organised by us. Lucas, who has two children, is today the IT officer at ADAPT.

Vipasha Mehta was a unique student who I experimented with and she covered the syllabi of three grades in two years. She had earlier been taught in her mother tongue Gujarati and her communication was poor but within a year she was writing poems in English! She scored very high in her examinations and is the only person with Cerebral palsy who has done her Ph.D. She lives independently in Berkeley, California and continues to write.

Utpal Shah was referred to us by the Children's Orthopaedic Hospital and passes his SSC and HSC with the help of amanuenses provided by us and other concessions we had fought for. He went on to do his Masters in

Commerce, worked at our Skills Development Centre and later at a pharmaceutical company for ten years. He is now married, has a daughter who has passed her SSC with 96% and has rejoined ADAPT as a Senior Accountant.

Ruma Kirtikar wanted to go to school like her elder sister but no school would admit her because of her disability. She was taught at home up to Grade III and a chance meeting with me at the Children's Orthopaedic Hospital led her to join the Centre for Special Education where she received education and therapy under one roof. She passed her SSC with flying colours and graduated to college, breaking earlier barriers of travelling by public transport. Ruma completed a course in Library Science and returned to ADAPT to be an Assistant Librarian for many years.

Toshan Chatterjee a member of the ADAPT family since he was just 18 months old, Toshan says "Mithu Maasi made me take to computers as early as Std. II". Graduating with a first division from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai. Toshaan is now employed with Reliance and has recently received The Bhamia Foundation Award for his achievements.

"What the children and youth we worked for taught us through all their struggles, was about their courage, their grit their determination to succeed. Despite their differences, given little modifications has answered the important question ... who is disabled? *Is it them who may see, walk, think move differently... or is it us who cannot understand differences, who cannot see or hear them?*" (Alur, M., Indian Express Award Ceremony, 2009).

Most importantly we bought them out of homes, asylums and institutions and showed them as people just like us, celebrating diversities and showed how they can laugh, paint, dance and participate.

MODEL 5: Research 1998-2008: A policy shift from segregated education to inclusive education (to fill the gap where there is no policy)

A rationale for shift in policy and ideology

However, I soon found while this was only a tip of the iceberg working in Dharavi out that... where we had begun the community services... I found that in the largest programme for children in socially and economically disadvantaged areas run by Government the ICDS, it was found that children with disability were not included. Although an anti-poverty programme disabled children did not get even the basic nutrition etc. although equally impoverished like other children in the community. This was a violation of human rights and social justice.

... And we moved to the second phase of the journey

I moved then into studying the situation further and began a PHD on Policy in London targeting Government policy. I was invited to London School of Education as an Academic Visitor but seeing and hearing all the intellectuals there I decided to study further. The findings showed that there was a wider malaise and that no particular cohesive policy existed for disabled people in the country and millions of people were out of programmes and their families were amongst the poorest of the poor

The findings showed that voluntary agencies, however excellent their services may be, can only serve on a micro level, providing services to the few who can access them. 90% of the disabled in the country in the socially disadvantaged areas of the country in the rural, tribal and urban slums received no services at all. The findings further showed that the ICDS policy of non-inclusion of disabled children was symptomatic of the wider malaise that exists in India where there is no clear-cut policy of inclusion of disabled children and implementation strategies of how to include children with disabilities have not been worked out.

A Government of India source revealed that only 10 percent of people with disabilities are being covered (GOI 1989). On the larger level according to the World Bank¹ study nearly 60 million families are affected.

It became critical to change policy within the organization and to bring about a national level change and this was the rationale for the second innovative model.

... And we moved to the third phase of the journey...

MODEL 6: Transforming Pedagogy “Where there was no teacher or manpower”

The quality of any organization depends on quality of staff.

The National Resource Centre for Inclusion became committed to create the How of Inclusion or the mechanism of implementation that is culture specific and provide a framework of methodology in implementing inclusive educational practice together with the State and the Central Government infrastructure.

- To study the mechanism or intervention strategies needed to put children with disabilities into regular schools and existing programmes being run by the Government so that Inclusive Education can take place within regular schools and the Government’s framework of services.
- To indicate the HOW of inclusive practice we studied and worked out
 - ✓ How children with disabilities can be put into existing services
 - ✓ What kind of tools are needed to identify children with disabilities...
 - ✓ What are the modifications that needs to be done within the classroom which will ensure the children’s participation, within the class
- How can training be done...
 - ✓ What kind of capacity building has to be done to get children with disability in?
- HOW is the community empowered?
 - ✓ What kinds of awareness spreading AND sensitization programmes are to be done to facilitate the community’s acceptance of children and families with disabled children.
 - ✓ To demonstrate this within the existing programmes so that it has systemic implications.

Training and pedagogy on a national level was set up to decentralise the

services. SSI began offering training courses for teachers, therapists, community workers, parents and government officials affiliated to the Bombay University. The aim was to build capacity. A Post Graduate Diploma in Special Education (Multiple Disabilities: Physical & Neurological) was introduced in 1978. A Management Course in Therapy was introduced soon after for post graduate therapists. This was able to break new ground creating a much needed cadre of people to treat this very complicated condition and helped to spread awareness all over India.

Community-based Initiatives in the Asia Pacific Region

Inclusion has to be context and culture-specific. The ideology of inclusion and the methods to achieve it is different with each situation and each country. It is not necessary to transfer Northern paradigms and take them out of context as we have done during the colonial and the post-colonial period... inclusive education clearly needs to be context- and culture-specific to each country.

An Asia Pacific Course for Master Trainers have been set up. A 3-month certificate course aims to prepare Master Trainers, and Management personnel to train others in their various regions to promote inclusive education outside India into the Asia Pacific regions within the context and culture of different regions. The course is concerned with community issues and is firmly routed in the social model of disability rather than an impairment based medical model. With support from the Centre for International Child Health (CICH) London the Course is sponsored by the Womens' Council of UK. More than 400 Master Trainers has been produced. They are participant from from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Mongolia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, China, Tajikistan and Malaysia have completed the course.

Celebrating diversity successfully means that everyone feels their beliefs, values, and traditions are recognized and appreciated, and is a fantastic way to strengthen employee engagement.

Celebrating our differences, as well as our common interests, helps unite and educate us. ... People all around need to understand and learn to appreciate other cultures, and this is one way to accomplish that.

I am going to show you how we have celebrated their differences and made them a part of us.

MODEL 7: Macro level: Where there was no policy *Outcome of the researches & how it impacted policy & practice*

What is Policy? Legislation.

Policy is not made in a vacuum. Policy reflects a wider broader socio-economic, socio-cultural, historical, political and ideological framework in which it gets embedded. It involves the whole educational system, as well as, professionals working within the system, rather than simply the needs of individual children (Barton and Tomlinson 1984; 65-80). We were working with a small microscopic model of a special school dealing with only one type of disability.

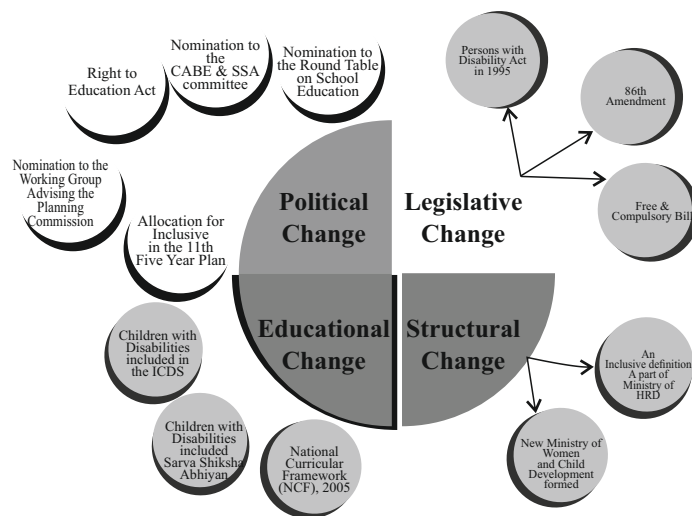
In the area of legislation, we worked with all the disability groups.

We had not looked at the broader picture. We NGOs had let Government off the hook. On a macro level we engaged with government and changed policy.

The Right to Education (RTE) Act includes children with disability: Another Milestone achieved

In November, 2009 the Government passed the RTE Act in Parliament... The Act extended the right to universal education for all children in the disadvantaged areas but left out children with disability. This after 40 years of service in the country showing how children with disability can be educated! After substantial lobby including media coverage, demonstrations, meeting high level authorities, an amendment of the RTE was done which brought the words '*including disabled children*' into the definition of weaker and disadvantaged group within article 2(d) of Chapter I of the RTE Act.

66 years after Independence children with disability got back their right to education... a historic moment and a landmark achievement. Engaging with Government at top levels was important. To conclude I would say simply what worked is that policies and practices needed to have a bottom-up, top-down approach. Fortunately, now there is legislation and constitutional instruments in place.



The Way Forward

There is a long way to go still. Transport, travel, museums, restaurants, is still not all accessible – so disabled people are imprisoned.

Anyway...it may be years before India’s disabled are accepted as citizens with their own rights and needs. There is a long way to go CSR which is today a mandate for industry, does not include disability in their policies. Disability needs to be positioned within the Company’s CSR Policy so that disabled people can get employed.

The Social Model:

Today all over the world, there has been a sea change.... There is a new approach to disability... The old Medical model where disabled people are regarded as people who are dysfunctional pathologised and need to be ‘fixed and fitted’ and normalized, is out. It has been replaced by the Social Model, which says that it is the Environment that needs

to be adjusted to create a barrier free environment.... Least restrictive environment as they say in the U.S.

Most importantly facilitating all this is Public spaces.

So the focus is on disability, as a social and societal problem rather than a medical and individual problem. This orthodoxy has made it imperative to change attitudes everywhere – including those of persons with disabilities themselves.

Universal Design:

Universal design is a new concept in the world today. This does not only deal with physical access but most importantly an accessible curriculum. Accessibility to education does not only mean physical infrastructure like ramps or toilets it means addressing teacher training, spending money strengthening the knowledge base of teachers through short and regular courses on Inclusive Education is what is needed. The teachers are ill equipped to address differences in the classroom hence what is critical is teacher preparation.

Ideology, philosophy which motivated me.

The overarching framework of our work is embedded in four ideas that I have pursued and that drove me and some of my team.

1. Humanism

An important lesson, in our philosophy of service and professionalism, is that it is crucial to make the disabled person, however rich or poor, feel emotionally and socially strong. They will always need determination, grit and moral stamina, to face up to the lifelong battle of having a handicap, a lifelong suffering. Human suffering needs a large dose of nurturing through love and care, to build up self-confidence and to rise up to the struggle for better understanding. Emotion and feeling is essential in the rehabilitation process and, most important, is the human contact between patient and specialist.

The service set up was essentially one of care and empathy kindness. It was a humanistic intervention where the parents the family was given

great status. When trying to overcome any kind of sorrow or suffering you need a healing touch. That is a critical time. Everybody or anybody can reach out. You need to be human. The main approach is to reach out with a large dose of love kindness and care.

2. Federalism

It is most important when one is working in a virgin territory to let many flowers bloom, to get a critical mass established one must work towards establishing ones ideas and knowledge in partnership with others. Knowledge must be freely shared and disseminated.

This needed what I called the three D's. Demystification, deinstitutionalization and in our area of darkness, decentralization.

3. Decentralization and the 3 D's

Services to the impoverished disadvantaged must be given with an approach to empower not for one's own power but for their power. Not for control and centralization but for spread and outreach as a major aim.

A critical mass was created with the setting up of organisations right around the country.

4. Altruism and Values

We need to move towards developing a value system which promotes philanthropy, altruism... we need to inculcate these values into schools, colleges companies. We need to look at our own social responsibility the value of giving, gifting reaching out beyond oneself... The political path is not the only way for change. ...one cannot leave everything to be done by the Government... change can be initiated, entrenched attitudes can be changed, reformative action is possible through socially constructed action and Civil society can play a valuable part in effective public private partnership. I am not suggesting that we let Government off the hook... we must engage with Government meaningfully.

No longer is it considered good enough only to be committed to one's own profits or to one's own shareholders... *a business cannot succeed in a society which fails to establish its good health.*

CSR is considered an effective tool which synergizes the efforts of Corporate and the social sector agencies towards sustainable growth and development of societal objectives at large.

Equally CSR is a concept we can apply not only to companies but to our own selves... in a country where there is no equity, acute disparities it is not enough to be thinking only of one's own and family needs.

Tenacity, perseverance, determination of effort, must be our ammunition. Faith in the righteousness of what we are doing, our guns. Then over the years we will have achieved what we set out to do. This can be done by developing strong moral values. A heart filled with compassion is an appropriate temple for God.

We urgently need to see beyond our own context to a broader perspective... in terms of our country's needs... for this we need a value system which is inclusive supporting economic inclusiveness.

5. Patriotism (Redefined)

What I have learnt from my struggle and from my work that one cannot leave everything to be done by the Government ...we must engage with Government meaningfully, Change can be initiated, entrenched attitudes can be changed, reformative action is possible through socially constructed action.

One's allegiance and loyalty is in service of the larger interest of the nation. It crosses all boundaries; it cuts across religion, culture, caste, and class. It is something which is inclusive.... including all people.

One must have commitment... the passion...the integrity... to serve not for personal wealth, not for personal ambition, not for personal power... but for the good of the country... and *believe that the right is to work only and not to the fruits.*

That the greatness and power of a nation is not how many billionaires it has, but how well it looks after the weaker sections of society and the commitment needed from each of us to make this happen, the poor the disabled... for the bigger goal... for the love of our country... to see the smile on the child's face. the poor the

disabled... for the bigger goal... for the love of our country... to see the smile on the child's face...

Civil society can play a valuable part in effective public private partnership. Entrenched attitudes can be changed each one can play a part.

The messages I can leave ... Our journey has been not for money, not for return on investments,... but to see the smile on the child's face. I am a Social Entrepreneur... I have built institutions... raised funds for the cause of the underprivileged and disabled people...

Gandhiji's famous words which helped us in initiating social change putting into practice through our work, come to my mind: *"A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history."*

"The greatest task before India today is to acquire a keener sense of national identity, to gain the wisdom to cherish its priceless heritage, and to create a cohesive society with the cement of Indian Culture.

— Nani Palkhiwala, *We, The People: India, the largest Democracy*

...we must engage with the private sectors... to see how we as individuals can change situations

Stay with our philosophy and ideology... we need you... India needs you... my last question to you is ask yourself whose disabled is it those who speak, see, hear move and think differently from us or is it us who cannot hear the suffering of others, or hear their helpless cries?

As a sage has said, "all religion is only true. if it is religion in action, real feelings of love are of value, if it is translated into some form of action and as the great thinker and philosopher Albert Schweitzer has said:

"That everyone shall exert himself in that state of life in which he is placed, to practise true humanity towards his fellowmen, on that depends the future of mankind."

The overall idea has been for us the bigger goal... for building a caring nation ... an India, that cares for its *needy, the helpless, the poor and the disabled*. Suffering, social injustice has no territorial barriers. To create

an India that celebrates diversity and includes all excluded and marginalized people, moving towards equal opportunity and equal participation as Tagore writes in his poem “Where the mind is without fear ... into that heaven of freedom let my country awake.”

Rabindranath Tagore who said,

“the problem is not how to wipe out the differences but how to unite with he differences intact”

Inclusion needs each one of us to reach out to people who are different, to value, respect, and celebrate diversity.....

The most important thing in Life is to Love Life even while one suffers because Life is ALL, Life is God and to Love Life means to Love God – Leo Tolstoy

Plato says, ‘Love is all that one needs’ Neither family, nor privilege, nor wealth, nor anything but Love can light that beacon which a man must steer by when he sets out to live the better life.

“Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on the future generation.” – George Bernard Shaw

In the broader aspect of our work, we have tried to sensitise people about the sorrows and suffering of disabled people who are misunderstood, marginalized and rejected by society and celebrate diversity

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Cultural Diversity and Mental Health – a viewpoint

Avinash De Sousa

Introduction

Culture can be viewed as the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow and the material goods they create. It is not a single static entity but is multi-layered and may be influenced by a number of aspects including national, regional, religious, gender, class and individual issues (Tribe, 2005). Culture influences our understanding of health and illness, modes of treatment as well as health-seeking behavior such as attitudes to preventative and curative care, attitudes to providers and expectations of the healthcare system (James and Prilleltensky, 2002).

There are differences in culture across nations and what does not go as per the accepted cultural norms is very often construed as abnormal. The psychiatrist and mental health professional must be open to various forms of cultural beliefs that patients may hold in their personal lives and towards their mental health. Patients many a times prefer to go to a doctor, psychiatrist and psychologist that harbors the same or similar cultural beliefs as they feel a sense of belonging and comfort there (Gopal krishnan and Babacan, 2015). This impacts on how effective mental health services and professionals can be in working with different cultural groups, and supports the contention that a ‘one size fits all model is neither appropriate nor effective (Swartz, 1988).

Cultural Diversity and Mental Health

There is significant evidence to show that not only does culture play a significant role in terms of how we *understand* health and illness, but that different cultures *perceive* these differently and that these differences can play a key role in terms of how illness is managed. One aspect of difference across cultures relates to what the cause or nature of disease or illness is perceived to be. This can vary from notions of possession by spirits, yin/yang imbalances, the ‘evil eye’, black magic, or the breaking

of taboos (and perceptions change with time, for instance homosexuality, which was identified as a disorder in the DSM-II until 1974). These concepts are very relevant for the genesis and management of psychiatric problems from an Indian perspective (Gopal krishnan, 2018). This is very relevant as now after the decriminalization of section 377, more and more members of the LGBTQ+ community are coming out and seeking help for their mental health problems as they feel they will be accepted and not discriminated against.

Knowledge of the range of culturally informed understandings should provide avenues for the practitioner to explore further, to come to a clearer appreciation of the issues. Culture modifies our *coping styles*, or the ways that we cope with everyday problems and to more extreme types of adversity. Not only are there cultural variations in the types of stressors that people experience but the assessment of stressors also varies, as do the choice of responses to stressors (Walton et al., 2010). For example, a maid residing in a slum may cope with depression differently versus an educated graduate from abroad.

Treatment-seeking patterns vary across cultures. People from the lower socio-economic strata are less likely to seek mental health treatment and also more likely to present in crisis compared with the upper strata of society. Some of these patterns can be examined in the context of how culture and the *history* of that culture modify how therapeutic systems, interventions and therapists are viewed or trusted (Fernando, 2004). Many patients from Dharavi in India do not seek help and believe mental illness to be a consequence of black magic and demonic possession.

The *historical context* can also play a significant role in terms of how mental health professionals perceive and work with their clients across cultures. Many of the assumptions of what is normal and what is abnormal that are central to Western therapeutic approaches are based in Western, middle-class constructions that may not be valid when working across cultures, adversely impacting on assessment, intervention and evaluation processes (Bhui et al., 2007). Many Indian cultures harbor the myth that depression is normal in old age and towards the end of life and

does not need treatment as well as that sexual issues need be addressed in old age as they are a sign of an old person that harbors perverted thoughts.

In terms of cross-cultural psychological testing, it is essential for valid clinical and psychological assessment to occur, it is essential that there be linguistic, conceptual, scale, and normative equivalence for the clients being tested or assessed. The use of standardized “Western” assessment instruments poses many risks. It is not simply an issue of language, but rather whether concepts are similar, scales (e.g. True/False) are appropriate, and norms are suitable for other populations. Without this equivalence, there can be many errors in service provision decisions, especially those related to classification, diagnosis, therapy, and medications (Verney et al., 2005). Most of the intelligence tests are developed abroad and need Indian adaptations. The same are true for picture cards and rating scales as many of the situations are adapted to the west and need modification for Indian settings.

Racism is an especially potent influence within culture and mental health. Racism and discrimination are “umbrella terms referring to beliefs, attitudes, and practices that denigrate individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics (e.g., skin color and facial features) or ethnic group affiliation. Racism or racial discrimination experienced in society is consequential for those who experience it, as it can cause isolation and marginalization, undermine trust, exacerbate trauma-related consequences (especially for refugees), undermine social capital and compromise access to essential services (Sarkar and Punnose, 2017). The caste system of India and religious divides have led to ragging and bullying in schools, colleges and the workplace that are based on racism and affect mental health adversely.

Gender raises a range of considerations across different settings. Within patriarchal cultures it may be inappropriate for a male therapist to work with female clients or vice versa. This becomes a vexed issue within the context of Western medical systems, even in low income Countries, which may impact on presentations to and disclosures within the system

(Prior, 1999). In an era where gender equality is advocated there is a large prevalence of gender based stereotypes prevalent in India that affect the way mental illness is conceptualized.

Family is another important consideration within the discussion on culture and mental health – there are clear differences in the roles that families may play within different cultures. In many cultural groups, the extended family is often very involved in all aspects of the individual's life, and for those contending with mental health problems and disorders the family can play a key support and provide a safe environment for recovery. However, family can also play a negative role if, for example, stigma and discrimination against the illness exists within the family. Family factors can either protect against, or contribute to the risk of developing a mental illness, as well as impact on recovery processes (Szapocznik and Kurtines, 1993). This is commonly seen in the form of expressed emotions that are exhibited by family members in response to mental illness.

Stigma and discrimination critically impact mental health and recovery. If particular cultures associate family shame or dishonor with the experience of mental illness there

can be significant effects on help-seeking behavior and also with treatment compliance. Lack of support from family could mean that the person can suffer total neglect as there may be no formal government social support to act as a safety net (Shrivastava, Johnston and Bureau, 2012).

Conclusions

Cultural differences clearly impact on different aspects of mental health including perceptions of health and illness, coping styles, treatment-seeking patterns, impacts of history, racism, bias and stereotyping, gender and family and stigma and discrimination. Besides these elements, there are others, such as communication, the use of cultural and linguistic interpreters, the marginalization of traditional positive resources in the community, and the nature of cultural competency and other cross-cultural training that are important considerations for mental

health practitioners and policy makers. The common issue that they all raise, however, is that simple mainstreaming of mental health systems and approaches will not serve the needs of culturally diverse people and communities. While cultural differences do raise a number of significant issues in terms of working with mental health, they also provide a number of opportunities to work in unique and effective ways towards positive mental health.

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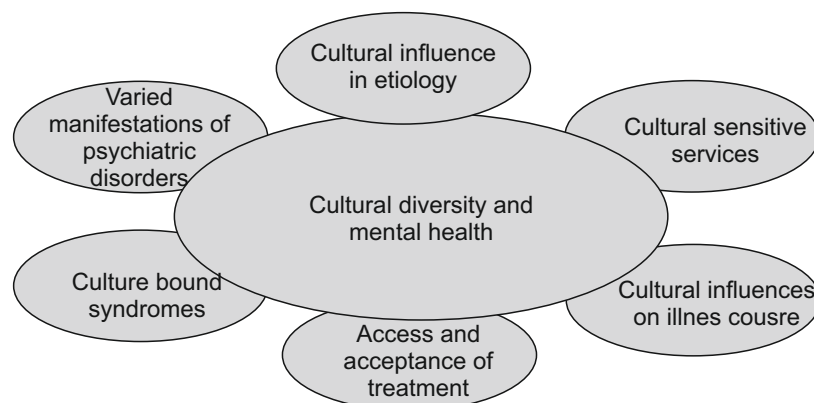
Cultural Diversity & Mental Health

Ronica Rachel Sequeira

Introduction

Culture is a broad term that is defined in a range of ways, depending on the field of study and the perspective of the person using the term. As Tribe argues, it is a multi-layered concept influenced by a range of issues such as gender, class, religion, language, and nationality, just to name a few. Giddens, from a sociological perspective, presents culture as the set of values that the members of a given group hold and includes the norms they follow and the material goods that they create.

Cultural diversity and mental health have a complex relationship. The figure below presents a simple overview of how mental health intersects with cultural diversity.



Mental health is often thought of as a personal matter that has to do only with an individual. Not everyone may have a mental illness but everyone has mental health. Like it is important to take care and precautions for your physical health and well being, it is just as important to ensure that mental health is included in that as well. However, mental health is also affected by a combination of biological and genetic factors, psychology and society. However, the impact of societal factors often goes ignored. An interesting aspect of society is the diversity in cultures and background that can affect an individual's mental health related experiences.

According to the report “*Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity: A Supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*”, there are many ways in which culture showed its influence on a diversity of experiences. For example, culture affects the way an individual describes symptoms i.e. whether they choose to describe emotional or physical symptoms.

Essentially, it dictates whether people selectively talk about symptoms in a “culturally appropriate” way that won’t reflect badly on them. For instance, studies have shown that Asian patients tend to report physical symptoms first and then later describe emotional afflictions if they’re specifically asked about it.

Furthermore, various cultures have different levels of importance they give to mental health and mental illness. Every culture has different understandings of one’s mental health. While some may think of mental illness as real, others consider it imagined. The level of stigma surrounding it is also different for different cultures. Mental illness can be present more in certain cultures but this is also largely determined by whether that specific disorder is rooted more in genetic or social factors. For example, schizophrenia is consistent around the world but depression, PTSD and suicide rates have been shown to be attributed more to cultural and social factors.

People decide their coping mechanisms with regards to mental illness based on cultural influences and ideals. For example, some Asian groups prefer to avoid upsetting thoughts about personal problems rather than expressing their distress to others. African American groups have shown to be more likely than white people to handle personal problems and distress by themselves. The support individuals get from their families and communities in coping is also determined by cultural factors. This plays a major role because if mental illnesses are left ignored, the quality of an individual’s life gets significantly impacted and this may result in distress and other health effects.

Additionally, research has shown that the experiences of minority groups in terms of mental health has been affected by culture and how

society views their culture. In the U.S., racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to seek help when it comes to mental health, or to delay treatment until symptoms are severe. This has been attributed to mistrust due to the history of discrimination and racism and a possible fear of being mistreated due to assumptions/stereotypes about their background.

This goes hand in hand with the difficulty of clinical stereotyping i.e., the biases that practitioners or mental health professionals have concerning certain cultures could influence a diagnosis. One more issue is that poor physical health also affects mental health, and often minorities have higher rates of chronic physical illness which is often a risk factor for depression and anxiety. Yet another issue is that of language barriers as an important component of mental health services is face-to-face communication i.e. therapy. Furthermore, affordability and insurance coverage of mental health services is also an area of concern.

Cultural Diversity & Mental Health

Cultural diversity across the globe has significant impacts on the various aspects of mental health, starting with the ways in which health and illness are perceived, health seeking behavior, attitudes of the consumer as well as the practitioners and mental health systems. As Hernandez et al. [2009] suggest “culture influences what gets defined as a problem, how the problem is understood and which solutions to the problem are acceptable.”

To start with, the *perceptions* of etiology of disease can vary across cultures. Some cultures may attribute the onset of disease to possession by spirits, the “evil eye,” black magic or the breaking of taboos, which then places the rectification of the problem within the orbit of traditional healers, elders, or alternative significant people within the community. Religion and spirituality play a key role in these perceptions by juxtaposing hardship with a higher order good and the solutions are, as a consequence, sought within the purview of these systems. Examples of these would be the healing temples in India or other

religious pilgrimage sites across the world that are visited daily by thousands of people who experience mental health issues.

It is also necessary to note that people from various diverse cultures may not make the same distinction between problems of the body and the mind as in Western therapeutic systems. In their research with Afghan refugees in the Netherlands, Feldmann et al. [2007] found that the participants made no distinction between mental and physical health. This is very unlike Western biomedicine, which has historically taken a reductionist approach that distinctly separates the body and the mind. Research in recent times clearly points to the relationship between body and mind, and areas of study like psychosomatic medicine and psychoneuroimmunology have provided substantial proof that methods working with a composite of the body and mind in the context of the environment are more probable to be effective than dualistic and reductionist approaches.

Hechanova and Waeldle suggest that there are five key components of diverse cultures that have implications for mental health professionals. The first element that they establish is emotional expression where some cultures may identify that lack of balance in expression may lead to disease. Further, this could be reflected in a perception that talking about issues which are painful in turn would lead to painful feelings. The second element is shame which Hechanova and Waeldle argue is one of the reasons why Asians are slow to access professional therapists. Shame may play an important role in this context because of the significant role that family plays in the lives of Asian individuals who have mental health issues. The third element that they discuss is power distance or the large differences in power that may exist in Asian countries between therapists and which may have implications in terms of the autonomy or lack thereof in the therapeutic relationship. Fourth they discuss the nature of collectivism and its role as a supportive factor to resilience and coping. And finally, they discuss spirituality and religion from the point of view of attribution as well as in terms of coping with disease.

Cultures vary additionally in terms of how they seek treatment from mainstream Western health systems. Biswas et al. [2016] argue that those seeking help from mainstream health systems in India tended to more often describe their physical symptoms whereas those in the United States tended to describe their cognitive based symptoms. Further, research in High Income Countries like Australia, Canada and the United States emphasizes that diverse cultures in these countries usually seek help much later as compared to those from the majority community and many of them tend to seek help in acute stages of mental distress. One of the reasons for this can be the nature of shame amongst diverse cultures. Hampton and Sharp [2013] have explored the nature of shame quite comprehensively using a framework of external, internal and reflective shame to argue that mental health systems, professionals, and researchers need to recognize and mediate the impact of shame on individuals from diverse cultures if they want to ensure that there is effective management of mental health issues. Hechanova and Waeldle [2017] suggest that shame related reasons for low access to mental health systems could be due to several reasons. The first possible reason is that there could be a desire to protect the family reputation and their own dignity. The second reason could be the possibility that the mental health professional would see them as “crazy,” similar to the notion of external shame, and finally that the person may be reluctant to open up to strangers, due to a number of factors such as fears of “loss of face,” lack of trust, or the fear of revisiting painful events. Research indicates that talking therapies may not be the most helpful form of intervention among several cultural groups. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network in the United States argues that “talking about painful events may not be experienced as valuable or therapeutic by refugees from societies where psychological models are not hegemonic”. This perception of talking therapies effectively increased the possibilities of more effective utilization of movement-based therapies, expressive therapies, online therapies.

Stigma may play an important role in terms of differences in treatment-seeking. Stigma can be viewed as a “mark of shame, disgrace or

disapproval which results in an individual being rejected, discriminated against, and excluded from participating in a number of different areas of society”. Stigma around depression and various other mental illnesses is often higher in some cultural groups and can be a huge barrier to people from diverse cultures when they access services for mental health. Stigma may result in people feeling so ashamed that they may hide their symptoms and do not seek treatment until the issue becomes acute. Stigma can be examined from a range of related issues such as the perceptions of etiology as well as notions of shame and the level of interdependence within the community. In the context of Low and Medium Income Countries, these problems become even more significant as the family is often the sole safety net that people have. Where government safety nets are minimal or do not exist, lack of support from the family due to perceptions of stigma may result in total neglect of an individual with mental health issues.

Treatment seeking is also closely linked to the *historical context* of cultural groups. This can be of special note in HICs with a colonial past. First Nations People in countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand struggle with endemic mental health issues which could be closely linked to histories of dispossession, oppression and intergenerational trauma and as Nelson and Wilson [2017] argue, carry a “disproportionate burden of mental and physical illness”. Gone [2013] uses the term “Historical Trauma” to argue that the trauma commonly experienced among First Nations People is complex, experienced more as a collective phenomenon, is cumulative and is intergenerational in its impacts. The severity and complexity of the mental health problem experienced with First Nations Peoples can also be intensified by the fact that in these countries, mental health professionals may be seen as part of the problem, both from a historical perspective as well as in their roles within the State. These perceptions could result in reduced utilization of mental health services as well as later and more acute-stage presentations. Similarly, research with African-American and Latino communities within the US also raises issues of mistrust of clinicians

as a result of historical persecution as well as the issues of racism and discrimination.

Racism and discrimination has quite a dramatic impact on many diverse cultural groups. While earlier forms of racism were ideologies which supported the ideas of biological “races” and ranked them in terms of superior and inferior, these have since been replaced by newer forms of racism which are built on more complex notions of cultural superiority or inferiority. Besides the negative attitudes and beliefs that are implied in all forms of racism, they also lead to discrimination and differential treatment of people of some cultural groups. Undergoing racism can lead to social alienation of the individual, a fear of public spaces, loss of access to services, and a range of other effects that in turn impact gravely on the mental health of the affected person. Williams and Mohammed [2009], based on their systematic literature review, argue that “the consistency of an inverse association between discrimination for an increasingly broad range of health outcomes, across multiple population groups in a wide range of cultural and national contexts is impressive, and lends credibility to the plausibility of perceived discrimination as an important emerging risk factor for disease.” In the current hostile environment towards Muslims in various countries, women who dress in a specific way that may identify them clearly with Islam could especially bear a significant amount of individual and institutionalized racism and discrimination, with significant impacts on their mental health.

Discrimination is also a barrier for Aboriginal Peoples to access mental health services, especially when the service is within a non-Aboriginal setting.

Coping and resilience are other areas to be considered in the context of cultural diversity and mental health. Coping styles refer to the ways in which people cope with everyday and more extreme stressors in their lives. The US Surgeon General posits that a better understanding of the ways diverse cultural groups cope with adversity has “implications for the promotion of mental health, the prevention of mental illness, and the nature and severity of mental health problems.” Different cultures often

place normally nerve wracking events as normative, or something that most individuals in their culture will experience, such as coming-of-age rituals. Further, they may allocate social resources otherwise, resulting in diverse experiences of these stressors. And finally, they may assess stressors differently, like in terms of breaking of taboos or other cultural norms. This difference in terms of dealing with stressors can be both, a protective factor and a risk factor. Hechanova and Waelde suggest that, in collectivist cultures, healing is a product of interdependence and that the health of the group is at least as important to the individual as his or her own health.

Often associated with coping, *resilience* is the ability of an individual to perform well despite facing adversities, and is often discussed in the context of traits of people. Kirmayer et al. [2011] argues that the psychological approaches to resilience have emphasized individual traits rather than the systemic or ecological roots of resilience. They go on to suggest that, in the context of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, resilience is embedded in cultural values, renewed cultural identity, revitalized collective history, language, culture, spirituality, healing, and collective action.

In various cultural groups, *an individual's family* may be very involved in every aspect of an individual's life. Family factors such as supportive extended families and strong relationships with siblings can act as protective factors in mental health, while perceptions of stigma, severe marital discord, breaking of norms and other such factors can be major risk factors. This suggests that interventions that include cultural renewal and community and family as support systems can be very helpful in few or most cultural groups.

Cultural impacts on the therapeutic relationship is a key factor to be considered while working with various cultures. The cultural context of the client and the practitioner are both important to the therapeutic relationship, a relationship that will not work without special consideration of the impact of cultural diversity. In an ideal situation, both the therapist and the client would be from the same culture and a few

of the pitfalls can be avoided. However, even in these circumstances, the therapist usually brings their own “professional” culture with them which may result in a cultural gap with the patient. In practice, there is a strong chance that practitioners would be working with clients from cultures very different as compared to theirs and therefore, making analysis without linguistic, conceptual and normative equivalence, which may lead to errors in service provision decisions. Further considerations involve the concept of culture as language. Language is central to any culture and to cultural understanding, and still, in some countries such as Australia the therapist and the client may not share the same language. While many countries do have policies in place to ensure that appropriate interpreters are used in similar situations, a continuous problem of non-utilization of interpreters still happens.

Society as a patient is a term that Marsella (2011) uses to point out that not all problems are located within the individual, and that the patient's well-being or lack thereof is often a product of the impacts of the external environment. This is specifically the case with migrants and refugees or Indigenous populations in many countries who may undergo racism, discrimination, and attendant marginalization. Marsella also argues for mental health professionals who work across cultures to take up the roles of social activists and challenge some of the societal contexts that are impacting on their clients (2011). This societal context also involves globalization and the rapid change of systems and cultures over the years. Globalization is not a new process but the last 100 years has seen a rapid increase in global networks, increased velocity of global flows and an increased depth of global interconnectedness. Culture has been impacted by these global flows with the increasing domination of notions of individualism, materialism, and social fragmentation, and where “well-being may be a collateral casualty of the economic, social and cultural changes associated with globalization”. The loss of social networks as protective factors can be very significant in terms of increasing levels of distress in culturally diverse communities such as refugees and migrants in HICs. Traditional healers and healing systems are being replaced by Western systems that can suffer from inadequate

resourcing and may be culturally inappropriate. All of which points to the need for ways forward that build on these diminishing resources and strengthen the capacity of individuals and communities toward better mental health outcomes.

Culture-bound Syndromes

A unique facet of cultural diversity in mental illness is the concept of “cultural bound syndromes”. A culture-bound syndrome, culture-specific syndrome, or folk illness is a combination of psychiatric and somatic symptoms that are considered to be a recognizable disease only within a specific society or culture. There are no biochemical or structural alterations as such of body organs or functions, however, the disease is not recognized in other cultures. The term *culture-bound syndrome* was included in the fourth version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) which also includes a list of the most common culture-bound conditions (DSM-IV: Appendix I).

In India, *Dhat Syndrome* is one of the most well known and studied in India. The disorder has merited attention for searching the best ways to address the anxieties and concerns of young males suffering from this disorder. “*Hikikomori syndrome*” from Japan and “*brain fag*” from Nigeria are some examples of other culture-bound syndromes that are well known around the world.

The requirement for concentrating on culture-bound syndromes lies in the fact that most psychiatric classifications have to a great extent started from European–American conceptualization of psychological illnesses, and has been applied everywhere else. Such a methodology may have overlooked manifestations of psychiatric distress from other areas. In this way, culture-bound conditions can be considered as a niche diagnosis, which are relevant to specific geographical and cultural areas.

Conclusion

Clearly, cultural differences have an impact on the various aspects of mental health including how the illness is perceived, how it is coped

with, the treatment seeking patterns, the impact of one's history, racism, bias and stereotyping, gender, family, stigma and discrimination. There are a number of other factors such as communication and so on. These are all important considerations for mental health professionals. The common issue is raised, however, is that simple mainstreaming of mental health systems and approaches will not fulfill and serve the needs of culturally diverse individuals and groups. Much of the literature suggests that mental health professionals and institutions need to focus on ethno-specific approaches to mental health: approaches that allow for and adapt to these differences across cultures; approaches that integrate biomedical and Western ideas of health with traditional and community-based approaches, and approaches that incorporate the work of traditional positive resources in communities in terms of traditional healers and healing systems as well as elders in the community. While cultural differences do raise a number of significant issues in terms of working with mental health, they also provide a number of opportunities to work in unique and effective ways towards positive mental health.

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Mental Diversity and Psychology of Art

Ashmi Sheth

Introduction

‘Mental diversity’ refers to the idea that minds can differ from one another. It is also referred to as ‘Neurodiversity’ or being ‘wired’ differently. We know that each one of our brains and behaviour develops differently and this depends on the interaction of our nature and nurture ("Mental Diversity," 2017). This means that some people may be socially proactive, while some would be asocial; some people’s mood can be extremely sensitive to surroundings, while some others can adapt easily to different situations and settings. In order to fully comprehend mental diversity, one needs to understand how the brains of different clients are ‘wired’ and what factors might have contributed to their current state of ‘wiring.’ Although the term ‘neurodiversity,’ was coined as a movement for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) or Asperger’s Syndrome (Armstrong, 2011); in this paper, the term ‘mental diversity’ is expanded to incorporate all people, across all cultures, who differ in terms of sociability, learning, attention, mood and other mental functions in a non-pathological sense.

‘Psychology of Art’ or ‘Neuroaesthetics’ is an interdisciplinary field of study in which researchers attempt to understand how brain responds to art. Neuroaesthetics combines neuro-psychological research with aesthetics by examining the perception, production and response to art.

Mental diversity and the experience of ‘aesthetics’ are interrelated. The variations in the levels of a person’s sociability or exposure, for example, influence how he/she perceives an artwork. At the same time, the art produced by people with diverse moods and attention abilities varies widely in terms of its nature, content (Chatterjee,

2014) as well as complexity (Chatterjee, 2014; Chamorro et al, 2010). The focus of this paper is to study in brief, how people with certain mental illnesses, personality traits, reading habits, artistic knowledge and other personal differences differ in art production and perception.

Personality type

Studies provide evidence that a person's choice of art can be a useful measure of personality (Furnham & Walker, 2001; Chamorro et al, 2010; Zuckerman et al, 1993). These studies suggest that individual personality traits are related to aesthetic experience and art preference. Furnham and Walker (2001) studied which personality variables are most predictive of preference for particular types of paintings – abstract, pop art and representational paintings – using the ‘Big Five’ personality dimensions and questionnaires measuring sensation seeking (SS).

Several other studies have studied the personality predictors for artistic preference using the NEO Five Factor Inventory (the Big Five). The more open individuals are, the more likely they are to report interest in art and engage in art-related activities (Chamorro et al. , 2010). Some researchers suggest that Openness to Experience is a central component of what has been termed the “artistic personality” (Chamorro et al, 2010; p. 196). Rawlings’ hypothesis (2003) that a neurotic individual should show a preference for compositions that evoke negative emotions is consistent with Kazimierz’s (1983) finding that neurotics prefer dark and cold, over warm and intense, colors. Openness to Experience was positively associated with a preference for emotionally positive (i.e., paintings that evoked a positive observer response) and complex paintings (i.e., paintings that were perceived as comprising many intricate and interconnected parts), whereas Neuroticism was positively associated with a preference for emotionally negative paintings. Just as Openness to Experience, Extraversion was also positively associated with artistic preferences in general (Chamorro et al. 2010).

Sensation seeking (SS) has been defined as “an individual’s desire to seek varied, novel, complex and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take [...] risks for the sake of such experience” (Zuckerman, 1979). Zuckerman et al. (1972) found that the high sensation seekers liked designs that were complex, asymmetrical, sketchy, and shaded. The low sensation seekers liked more simple, symmetrical designs. In terms of content, it was inferred that high sensation seekers have a liking for paintings that portray nature in its violent forms (p. 564). In contrast, low sensation seekers enjoy realistic portrayals of nature in its more peaceful aspects. It was also found that the arousal value seemed to be more important than the positivity or negativity of the content in the pictures for high sensation seekers (Zuckerman et al, 1993), which is quite understandable. In a study by Furnham and Bunyan (1988), the style of the pictures was found to be more strongly related to SS scores than the complexity of the images (representational paintings or abstract pictures).

Preference for abstract art has been found to be associated with various personality characteristics including introversion (Cardinet, 1958), conservatism, sensation seeking, neuroticism, field dependence, and aesthetic value as opposed to religious value (Furnham & Walker, 2001). As mentioned earlier, factors such as variance in the content, emotional/affective tone, colour patterns, and complexity of the paintings have been shown to appeal to different personality types. In general, preferences for complex art were more related to individual differences than preference for simple paintings (Chamorro et al., 2010)

Psychological and neurological disorders or brain damage

Chatterjee (2014) has cited research on the effects of visuomotor deficits on artistic production (p. 484). It is also stated that in some instances, brain damage changes or even improves the production of art, while neurological disorders can improve art in several ways, such as: (1) the disposition to produce visual art, (2) the provision of a unique visual vocabulary and (3) changes in expressive powers. For example, a few

people with Fronto-Temporal Dementia (FTD) develop a propensity to produce art for the first time. Their art is not only realistic, but is detailed and has an obsessive quality (Chatterjee, 2014; p.485). Some people with autism show incredible artistic capabilities, the most intriguing examples include those of Iris Grace Halmshaw and Nadia; both autistic savants, the former producing breath-taking Monet-style landscapes, while the latter creating amazingly detailed drawings.

Ramachandran and Hirstein (1999) explain such artistic outcome of these autistic savants and people with FTD as the result of the principle of Isolation – the allocation of all attentional resources to a single module in the brain (p. 49). With most other modules in the brain not working, these individuals allocate all their attentional resources to the one module that's still functioning, the right parietal, the part of the brain that is concerned with one's sense of artistic proportion (Reith, 2003).

The stylistic changes in the post-morbid paintings of people who have suffered a brain damage or developed Alzheimer's disease have also been observed (Chatterjee, 2014; pp. 486-487). Chatterjee et al (2010) developed the Assessment of Art Attributes (AAA) that has been used to examine changes in art production as well as art perception following brain damage (Chatterjee, 2014; p. 489).

However, the field of neuroaesthetics should not be confused with the field of 'art therapy', which is an integrative mental health profession that incorporates active art-making, creative process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship (AATA, 2017).

Artists vs. nonartists

Gordon (1951) found that art experts and non-experts judged the merits of paintings in different ways, and Child (1965) suggested that personality variables become less important as knowledge of art increases. People who visited art galleries more frequently were found to be significantly more likely to prefer abstract art and pop art. The greater general appreciation of paintings by people with higher levels of art education and exposure can be related to a

number of sociocultural factors, such as social learning, peer influence, and cultural values (Furnham and Walker, 2011).

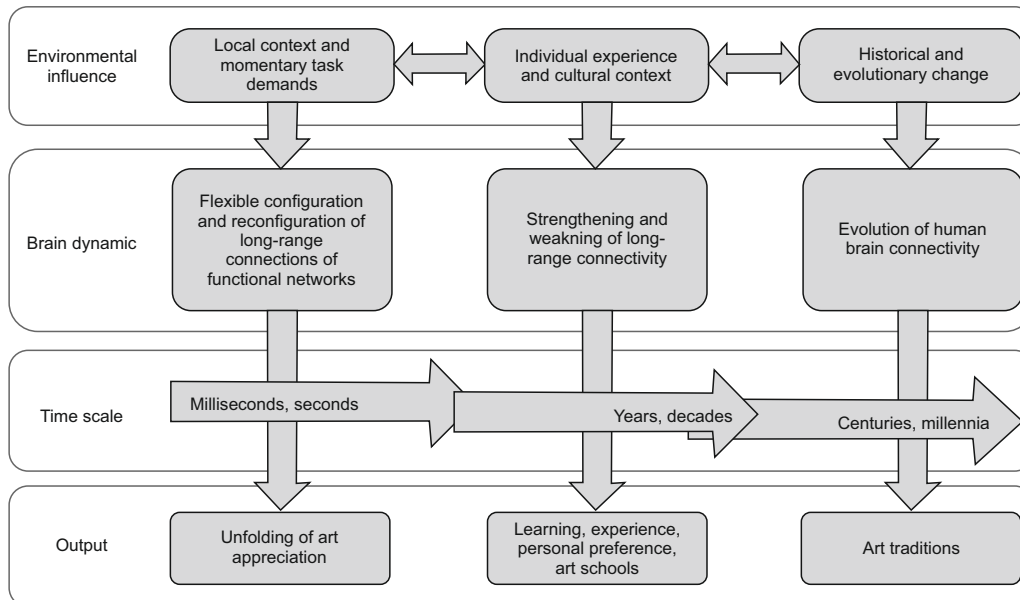
This highlights the interrelatedness of mental diversity and artistic preference – increased exposure to art may cause people to be mentally diverse (in relation to brain functioning), whereas some types of mental diversity (for example, people with the trait of Openness to Experience) may be a factor for a general liking, preference and increased exposure to art. Repeated encounters with art over the course of a lifetime lead people to develop personal preferences for art, as the network connections become strengthened in unique ways (Nadal and Chatterjee, 2018).

Demographic variables

Demographic variables are clearly linked to painting preference (Furnham and Walker, 2001). Research has been conducted to determine the diversity in art preference in terms of age (Chomarro et al., 2010) as well as sex (Zuckerberg et al, 1993; Chomarro et al., 2010). It is important to acknowledge that cultures are dynamic and they evolve over time. The socio-cultural conditions in which our parents blossomed would be quite different from the time we were taking steps towards adulthood. This, in part, can explain the changing artistic preferences of different generations.

A person's experience of art emerges from flexible arrangements of functional networks over at least three time spans: configuration of functional networks over milliseconds to seconds, long-range neural connections over years and decades; and finally, evolution over millennia of human brain features that enable art experiences (Nadal and Chatterjee, 2018, pp. 3-4). Thus, a person's aesthetic experience of art are shaped by their expectations, emotional states, and goals in the first level (*momentary*); individuals' lifetimes of encounters with art and aesthetic objects at the second level (*years and decades*), and selection of properties that are common and universal to humans (evolutionary; centuries, millennia).

Illustration of the flexible biological mechanisms that give rise to unique experiences of art appreciation or creation, distinct personal preferences or styles, and diverse art traditions.
 Image Source: Nadal and Chatterjee (2018)



Reading direction

Many studies have been conducted to determine the impact of reading direction on perception of art or the direction in which participants “read” a painting. The results of a research (Chokron and De Agostini, 2000) clearly indicate that left-to-right readers prefer pictures with a left-to-right directionality balance while the right-to-left readers exhibit a preference for the opposite direction. Other researchers found that individuals who are accustomed or socialised to reading in a certain direction (right-to-left in Arabic versus left-to-right in Italian) would display a bias in their own representational drawings reflecting the direction of their reading habits (Vaid et al, 2011). In judging the beauty of facial and bodily profiles (Nachson et al 1999), Arabic readers and Hebrew readers, who read/write from right-to-left, preferred profiles that turn to the left, whereas Russian readers, who read/write from left-to-right, preferred those that turn to the right.

Universality and variability

“Art is enormously varied and culturally diverse, and yet it is also universal, common to all humans. Art's universality is the product of our common evolution and shared experiences. Art's diversity is the product of our complex, culturally permeable, and flexible brain responding to different environments”

(Nadal and Chatterjee, 2018).

In an effort to link art and aesthetic appeal empirically, Ramachandran and Hirstein (1999) used brain imaging and galvanic skin responses to propose their theory of artistic ‘universals’ or the “principles of artistic experience.” These are the laws, they believe, which are used by artists either consciously or unconsciously to stimulate the visual areas of the brain. Although what people find ‘beautiful’ can vary through cultural and mental diversity, the experience of aesthetics or ‘beauty’ does have neural correlates that are universal. The aesthetic experience involves “an activation of the brain’s reward system with a certain intensity” (Kawabata & Zeki, 2004, p. 1704). Semir Zeki, founder of the Institute of Neuroaesthetics, exposed people from different cultural, gender and age backgrounds to works of visual art and music. After examining the MRI images of his diverse subjects’ brains, Zeki found that when people look at something they find beautiful, there is increased activity in the medial orbito-frontal cortex, a portion of the brain associated with pleasure and reward. By contrast, when people see something that’s aesthetically displeasing, it “lights up” the amygdala – which is also active with anger and when you look at frightening stimuli (Lebwohl, 2012). The study also raises questions about whether more exposure to art could improve mental health; or conversely, whether a diminution in our ability to experience beauty is a sign of depression (Sriram, 2016).

The variability of art experiences can be owing to a number of neurobiological processes. Thus, researchers assert that no two experiences are ever perfectly identical, even when the same person encounters the same object in the same place twice (Nadal and

Chatterjee, 2018). People's expectations draw on their memories and can enhance or diminish visual pleasure (Chatterjee, 2014). This, indeed, is an aspect of how various external and internal factors can diversify our mental functioning.

Conclusion

The apparent incompatibility between the subjectivity of art and the objectivity of science may account for the fact that despite aesthetics being the subject of psychological research for years, the study of its relation with art and art objects has only gained momentum in the recent years (Lindell and Mueller, 2011). The production and appreciation of art arise, as studied by researchers, from the interaction of broadly distributed sensory-motor, emotional, and cognitive systems. The formation of these networks, broadly shaped by evolution, is flexible, and sensitive to individuals' desires, expectations, memories, goals, mood, context, and the accumulated lifetime of experiences with art. This flexibility and sensitivity is what makes art and aesthetic experiences vary (Nadal and Chatterjee, 2018) and may be precisely why mentally diverse groups react differently to different types of paintings.

Rather than simply asking what an individual likes, research by Chomarro et al. (2010) shows that it is more informative to ask why an individual prefers a particular piece of art. The result of their research paves the way for future studies that further examine the taxonomy of individual aesthetic experiences.

Properties of artworks and strategies used by artists parallel the way the nervous system captures and organizes its visual world. Researchers studying the links between mental diversity and psychology of art seek to explore what differences in the brain areas and cells (pertaining to different personality traits, habits, socialization or culture) can lead to different stimuli to be considered as pleasing or beautiful. However, the field of neuroaesthetics has been criticized for a variety of reasons, and this controversial concept has received critics from areas not limited to philosophy, psychology and sociology (Zaidel, 2005). Yet, the findings of a variety of research studies in

neuroaesthetics provide data that can be of immense value to artists, advertisers, and designers alike as well as to mental health practitioners using art for therapeutic purposes with mentally diverse clients, as in art therapy.

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India, One country with Diverse States and People

Savina Shenoy

The longest serving Prime Minister of the country late Jawaharlal Nehru during the 1940's, wrote the book *Discovery of India*. He outlined in the book how diverse India was, which he understood while travelling the country from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

The Indian Constitution is quasi federal in nature as the Centre and State have rights which are equal excepting in certain strategic areas where the centre exercises its overriding powers. We have today 28 States and 8 Union territories. India, may be called a continent as it measures 3214 kilometers from North to South and 2933 kilometers from West to East. With more than 1.3 billion population, it is the largest democracy in the world. With varying degrees of differences in most part of their living styles, the people have maintained and have ingrained in their personality one motto, Unity of the country. It is therefore interesting to note that despite such vast diversity amongst the people of the country, all the states and the people living in those states have one thing in their heart, namely safeguarding the interests of the nation as a whole, leaving aside their self-serving or individual goals. An attempt has been made in the following lines to describe the experience of any one travelling throughout the length and breadth of the country on the vast and diverse India and its people.

Languages: India has Hindi as the main language being the lingua franca and is spoken by 44 % of the population of the country. English comes next though most of the current generation is veering towards English which was mostly inherited from the colonial rule in India till 1947. Surprisingly, apart from these main two languages, there are more than 120 languages though the constitution officially recognizes 22 languages. After Hindi, Bengali is the second most widely spoken Indian language. In the southern state, the languages have their roots from the Dravidian influence. Each southern state has its own language, different from the language used by people of a neighbouring state sometimes less than 100 kilo meters away. The northern states have

mostly Hindi as the main language but still because of the past traditions and influence of former kingdoms, many other languages are spoken. In such an environment, person travelling from one state to another may find it extremely difficult to acclimatise himself. Each language is characterised by a specific accent and a script. But we have continued unaffected over the years in such an environment of diverse languages.

Religions: India is the destination for many religions over the centuries apart from Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism which existed from the pre-medieval period. Hinduism is followed by nearly 80 percent of the population, followed by Islam at nearly 14.2 percent of the population. India is the second most populous Muslim country in the world. Other religions such as Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and a small percentage of population follow Zoroastrianism and the Bahai faith. Religion was historically influenced on a political, cultural and economic level. Unlike in the west, religion in India is more publicly visible for an outsider. This is evident when one comes across, mandirs, ashrams, shrines, fire temples, specific landscapes such as the Ganga river. The Hindu Epic narratives of Ramayana and Mahabharata are followed across the country even in villages and notably among most of the non-Hindus as well. The diverse culture and religions lead to an unbelievable number of occasions of celebration of new year by Hindus and followers of other religions. Practically each state has a day to celebrate the new year. For instance Muslims and Parsees have different dates for celebration of new year. Nowhere in the world can one see such diverse and different ways or basis for celebrating the new year. Festivals are one more area where one will be amazed to see the multifarious ways in which people celebrate. For instance, Hindus celebrate the festival of lights also called Deepavali not on one day, but spread on more than 5 days. This festival though emanating from Hindu culture, is surprisingly followed and celebrated by practically all the people belonging to different religions and even globally. Christmas too, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, is celebrated by Hindus. For Sikhs, Baisakhi is a major festival which is celebrated

with unmatched enthusiasm by Sikhs and Hindus across the country. The festivals of India give a varied and different footprint on the eclectic religious culture of the country.

One of the astounding observations which a foreigner can make of the Hindu religion are the ways, customs and the number of gods. While Western civilisation believes in one God, Hindus have from Vedic period believed in 330 million gods. The main gods Hindus believe in are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv and their respective wives, Saraswathi, Laxmi and Parvati. It is interesting to note that the followers of these gods are spread across India but each of the gods have prominence in specific areas. The eastern and north eastern part of India believe in the female deity, Kali in different forms and observe the festival much more than festivals dedicated to other Gods. So also in the southern state of Andhra, the world famous and supposedly the richest shrine in the world, the temple is dedicated to lord Vishnu, considered the family God by those in the southern states. In the Himalayan kingdom, lord Shiva rules the roost, metaphorically speaking. People from all over the country once in their life time wish to visit the abode of Shiva in the Himalayas. One more significant variation in the culture of temples is following the age-old practices. Specially in the southern states, to enter the temple the males have to be bare chested ie without shirts and banians, and in some temples, though currently under judicial scrutiny and thus subjudice, ladies cannot enter the temples. These strict rules in the southern temples may have their origin due to Dravidian culture though one is not sure as the northern state do not have these restrictions.

Compared to Hindu temples, Jain temples, Sikh Gurudwara and the Buddhist temples follow simple rituals and practices. Muslims and Christians follow their traditional practices which are being followed globally. Which leads one to observe and experience multiform of prayer places and glimpses of temples practicing the rituals in different ways.

Culture: It is interesting to note the heterogeneity in the ways of life, practices etc. all taking the genesis from the word Culture. Each state is

like a country in Europe and this leads to inevitable changes in the ways people live and the society they belong. Languages, customs, traditions are some of the aspects of culture which in India varies from state to state. On food habits the people differ from state to state. Overall, 70% of the Indians eat non vegetarian food. With this macro analysis of non-vegetarian population, it is interesting to note that the north Indian states such as Rajasthan have 75 % of its people eating vegetarian while Gujarat, Punjab, and Haryana have more than 60% of population eating vegetarian food. In contrast, Telangana has 98% of the people eating non vegetarian followed by West Bengal, Odisha and Kerala where more than 90% of the people eat non vegetarian. What a contrast and variation in habits of eating in one country.

The marriages in Hindu customs is quite interesting to watch. First of all, the caste system forces the people to follow the same caste for both the girl and the boy. One more intriguing aspect of the Indian marriages specially in upper castes is the dowry system, simply mean consideration the boy has to get from the girl's parents. While this practice is legally prohibited, people from the southern states follow this age old unreasonable and coercive system. While the marriages in West are a simple and family affair, in India the marriage functions are held in very opulent ways, an indicator of the wealth of the girl's family.

The diversity of Indian traditional attire varies from state to state. The climatic conditions and geography are some of the reasons for diversity in dressing habits in India. In the southern states, males wear what is called the Munda, a white long cloth also called Dhoti. At the recent meeting of the Prime Minister Modi with Chinese premier Xi Jinping in the Coastal town of Mamallapuram, Mr Modi wore Dhoti which is the symbolic dress of Tamil Nadu. In other parts of the country, men use trousers, Indian turban, sherwani etc. ladies wear saris with choli tops or salwar kameez suits. The variation in dress culture as said above, is on account of traditions and climatic conditions.

One of the fascinating aspects of Indian culture is their interest in watching movies. Movies produced in Mumbai, popularly called

Bollywood movies, are watched across the country. The language used in the movie is Hindi, which is not used across the country, but the movies are liked and seen by movie buffs. One more interesting aspect is the southern movies which occupy an important part of the day-to-day lives of south Indian people. Unbelievably, not only the movies, but also the heroes of the movies are adored as gods in the South. One can see the huge hoardings of the heroes of movies just released practically in all the major southern cities. The diversity lies in the languages of movies but that has not deterred the people from watching them.

Music and dances occupy an important part in the lives of the people in India. There are however marked differences in the styles between the states. For instance in music we have multiple varieties such as classical music, folk music, filmi music, ghazals, Indian rock and Indian pop, albeit the last two are derived from the west. The biggest strength of Indian music is its diversity says Shubha Mudgal, the renowned Hindustani classical vocalist. Even in dance, one see variations amongst states, ie Bharatanatyam in Tamilnadu, Kathakali in Kerala, Kuchipudi in Andhra, Manipuri from Manipur, Dandiya Ras in Gujarat, Bhangra in Punjab, Tamasha in Maharashtra. Mind boggling and wide-ranging dance diversity in one country!!!

Education: The level of education varies from state to state in India. While the literacy rate in India is more than 70%, there is disparity amongst the states on the education levels, for instance Kerala has the highest literacy level at 94 % while Bihar is the least literate state at 64%. One aspect of people's goals of having education differs from state to state. While in the northern states having a government, job is considered as the final goal of the household, in the South the objective is to study to work in a private company in India or abroad. No wonder, the Telugu speaking people from Andhra and Telangana constitute the sizeable number in US, for studies or IT jobs. On the other hand, in the not too high literate state Bihar, people wish to acquire the highest administrative educational qualification like IAS/IFS Or IRS. With such a thought or intention as the main goal, in the corridors of New Delhi government offices, there are lot of Bihari IAS officers. Surprisingly, in

the villages, business centric families prefer their children to study up to a level and then take up the family business for their future. Sadly female education is limited and India has not progressed on this count. The female literacy rate is lower at around 60% which is on account of the opposition from the parents, society, tradition of family etc. Notwithstanding this, there are lot of women entrepreneurs, top ranking women in the corporates both in India and abroad who have made their mark in their respective professions. So the picture which emerges is that even in the sphere of education there are variations and diversity from state to state and gender wise.

Conclusion

The above lines give a bird's eye view of the great variety and diversity of India across all the spheres, amongst the people and even at the state levels. India is often called a geographical, social, etymological and cultural museum of the world. The Museum provides the inner picture of diverse and different India and its people.

With all the differences and diversities as explained above lines, what brings us together to serve the nation in the event of emergency or threat to national sovereignty? Time and again it has been proved that India as a political entity has survived as every part of its functioning is governed by the Magna carta, Indian constitution which is applicable to all the citizens of the country and it embraces all the rights and obligations of each citizen to lead a peaceful life despite there being heterogeneity or multiform understanding and practices across the country. The country's national emblem, national flag and national anthem remind the citizens that they are one in the midst of lot of discordant happenings and practices.

Unity amidst diversity is an appropriate thought used by Jawaharlal Nehru in his book *The Discovery of India*. In the book Nehru writes, India was always united in spite of geographical, religious and cultural differences. Indian unity is not something imposed from outside but it is something deeper and within its fold.

Forging A Nation from Diversity : The Indian National Movement and Nation Building, A Perspective

Janine Coelho

Nationalism, as defined in Political Scienceⁱ, assumes homogeneity in areas of ethnicity, religion, language and culture. Indeed 19th century European Nationalism was characterized by Nation-States strengthening their boundaries, governments and military might along these parameters. The Unifications of Italy and Germany in the second half of the 19th century are the text-book embodiment of such Nationalism.

While Europe was pre-occupied with its internal competitions of national might in the 19th century, an equally important development was taking shape in India and the rest of Asia. The introduction of Western Education and Liberalism and the Indian Socio-Religious Renaissance inaugurated a small, but significant spark of Nationalism in India. But how could a sub-continent as large and diverse as India hope to develop a National Identity based on the traditional European concept that appeared to stress homogeneity? The 'India' we referred to was defined by physical boundaries constructed by a foreign power. It included over 500 princely states, multiple ethnicities, languages, religions, castes, costumes, food habits and rituals. Thus the Indian National Movement had to construct an 'Indian National Identity' that could incorporate this mind-boggling multiplicity.

It is my premise, that the National movement succeeded because it recognized and embraced diversity as the hallmark of 'Indianess'. While British Raj might have provided the common bogeyman and the shared colonial experience the catalyst, there is no doubt that the National Movement succeeded in creating an Indian identity out of this diverse mixⁱⁱ.

Even before the inception of the INC, several political organizations like the Indian Association, Bombay Associationⁱⁱⁱ etc were already

prescribing a secular liberal attitude^{iv} while appealing to the shared human values and goals. This setting aside of narrower religious, caste, regional aspirations in favour of the greater good was undoubtedly influenced by Benthamist philosophy and reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Once the national movement was established more firmly with the birth of the Indian National Congress, the move to construct a national identity became stronger.^v

All India bodies and conferences, interfaith prayer and dining, the tricolor, the Gandhi topi; all these were adopted to be inclusive and embrace the diversity of Indians. When I look back at the National Movement, several examples stand out to me. For example, to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement, Gandhi selected to defy the Salt Act. Cancellation of the small but symbolic Salt Tax had long been on the Nationalist agenda, but in Gandhi's hands, Salt became a formidable weapon and a symbol of unity.^{vi} Gandhi correctly perceived salt as a humble unifying element in a nation of varied cultural and food habits. By selecting it, Gandhi clearly signaled that every Indian irrespective of religion, caste, ethnicity or region, became equally invested in the movement.

A decade before Civil Disobedience, Gandhi had shown equal foresight in securing the support of the larger Muslim community by extending support to the Khilafat Movement.^{vii} Indeed Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan's call to Muslims to avoid Congress activities^{viii} in the 19th disappointed the INC. The establishment of a separate Muslim League in the early 20th century and their growing demand for separate political recognition within the Raj alarmed many within the INC. Similar political advocacy from Dr. Ambedkar to recognize Dalits would endanger what the INC considered a singular 'Indian identity'.

In the face of this growing political awakening among so many groups, the INC strove even harder to incorporate everything and everybody in its national dream. There were of course huge limitations to this exercise. The rise of Socialist and Communist ideologies, the Akali party, the 2 Nation theory,^{xi} all would challenge this concept of a diverse but single

India. Certainly the success of this prevailed to a larger extent until the common goal of independence was achieved. But would it serve in Independent India?

The founding fathers clearly had their doubts too and strove extra hard to lay the national foundations so as to preserve their nation building exercise. The adoption of a Federal system with a Unitary bias all point to these efforts.

One only has to browse through Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India* to appreciate his vision of Unity in Diversity. While Nehru had no pretensions as a historian, his account is clearly a reflection of the story of India as he saw it – weaving a complex, diverse tapestry into a young dynamic nation. While it may be a slightly idealistic vision, it none the less became an important foundation upon which to model a culturally diverse nation which respects, serves and nurtures all its people

Footnotes

- i Oxford Learner's Dictionary: Nationalism, the desire by a group of people who share the same race, culture, language etc...
- ii Ernest Renan would argue that a heroic shared past creates a social capital which in turn builds national solidarity
- iii K.Panikkar: *Political Organizations in Bombay from 1850-1885*, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress Vol. 42 (1981), pp.439-443, pub Indian History Congress <https://jstor.org/stable/44141159>
- iv Bipin Chandra et al: *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, Penguin Books, Chp. 39, *The Indian National Movement – The Ideological Dimension*.
- v Bipin Chandra et al: *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, Penguin Books: Chp. 5, *Foundation of the Indian national Congress: The Reality*
- vi Ibid: Chp. 22, *Civil Disobedience 1930-31*, pgs. 263, 264
- vii Ibid: Chp. 15, *The Non Co-Operation Movement 1920-22*.
- viii Ibid: Chp. 32: *Communalism Liberal Phase*, pgs. 419, 420, 421
- ix It was British policy to consistently deny that India was a nation in making because Indian consisted of structured mutually exclusive and antagonistic, religion based communities. Bipin Chandra et al, *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, Penguin Books, Chp 31, *The Rise and Growth of Communalism*

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Rev Dr Gilbert de Lima completed his doctorate in Theology from the Pontifical Urban University, Rome. He is a resident professor at St Pius College, Goregaon, Mumbai. He was the Dean of Studies at St Pius College from 2006-2011. Dr. de Lima was the Chairperson of the Conference of Diocesan Priests of the Archdiocese of Bombay from 2009 to 2012. He continues to wear many hats as the Dean of the Borivali Deanery, Secretary of the Ecumenical Commission of the Western Region, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate Committee, Archdiocese of Bombay and the Vice-President of the International Diaconate Centre, Rottenburg-Stuttgart, Germany. He has authored books, articles and read papers at national and international symposia.

Dr. S.M. Michael SVD is the Director of the Institute of Indian Culture (IIC), a Post-Graduate Research Centre in Culture, Society and Religion. He is Professor Emeritus of Cultural Anthropology, University of Mumbai. Among his several books, his edited volume *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values* (1999) was best seller of Vistaar (Sage) Publications for the year 2000. It has been translated into several languages. Other books by him include *Anthropology as a Historical Science* (1984) co-edited with Mahipal Bhuriya; *Culture and Urbanization* (1989); *Globalization and Social Movements* (2003) co-edited with P.G. Jogdand; *Integral Anthropology* (2012) co-edited with Bernd Pflug; and *The Humanistic Relevance of Anthropology* (2017) co-edited with Bernd Pflug. He is a Consulter to the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, Rome. He is also the Secretary to the Bombay Archdiocesan Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue.

Sr. Dr. Teresa Joseph fma is a Salesian Sister in Mumbai, India. With extensive academic work from universities in Rome, she has taught university courses, held national, diocesan and congregational offices, revised catechetical texts, was member of the drafting committee of the Indian National Catechetical Directory and launched many creative programs for teachers, parents and students. She was one of the 20 panellists on the Global Sisters Report Panel, 'The Life' for 2019-2020.

Currently, she is animator of the community at Auxilium Convent, Lonavala.

As a freelance writer and has contributed numerous articles for various Indian and foreign publications. Her notable books include Dream Big Dream True, available in English, Marathi and Braille, Teachers are like Stars (both published by St Paul's, Mumbai). Family of Truth: The Liminal Context of Inter-Religious Dialogue - an Anthropological and Pedagogical Enquiry (Rome, 2005 and ISPCK, Delhi, 2009), John Paul II a Pilgrim on the Roads of the World, (ISPCK, Delhi, 2011), and Basking In Faith (Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore, 2012). Sr. Teresa has launched and co-edited together with Banzelão Teixeira sdb and others: Stay Connected in the Circle of Love (Media House, 2007), Teen Q's: On Love and Relationships (Media House, 2009), Teens Your Key to Success (Asian Trading, 2010), From Teenage to Adulthood (Better Yourself Books, 2012), Building Relationships, unusual questions teens ask (Media House, 2013), Celebrating our Faith, Prayer Moments on Faith, (Kristu Jyoti Publications, 2013) and Two Popes who knew how to Pope (Daughters of St. Paul, 2014). Currently, she is animator of the community at Auxilium Convent, Lonavala.

Philippe Guillien began his career as a teacher of English before specializing in French as a Foreign Language at Paris III Sorbonne University. He is currently a certified teacher of exceptional class. He is also an advisor for lifelong education of the French Ministry of National Education and his career has led him to alternate postings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director of studies and / or Cooperation Attaché for French Language in Tanzania, Sri Lanka-Lanka, Morocco, Romania, Greece, Spain and Israel, and periods in France at the Rectorate of the Academy of Poitiers. Since 1st September 2018, he is an Attaché for Cooperation in French at the French Embassy and the French Institute in India. Based in Mumbai, at the Consulate General of France, he is in charge of implementing the "Choose French" program for West India.

Dr. Mithu Alur is the pioneer founder of the Spastics Society of India in 1972 in Mumbai. Her model emphasizing professionalism with care and compassion has been replicated in 16 states of India and she is a member of the Central Advisory Board of Education, the Round Table on School Education and the National Monitoring Committee for Education of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Persons with Disabilities. She has organised numerous conferences on special education for representatives from South Africa, Brazil, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Canada, Norway, Chile, Pakistan and Russia. She initiated the Women's Council's (UK) Community Initiatives in Inclusion Course which has trained over 230 people in 14 countries. Dr. Alur has lectured and published extensively on disability rights, educating the disabled and disadvantaged and has been instrumental in revolutionizing attitudes, policies and education for the differently abled in India.

Dr. Avinash De Sousa is a Consultant Psychiatrist & Psychotherapist. He was awarded a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the University of Hertfordshire, UK, 2011. In addition, he also has a Masters in Counselling & Psychotherapy, an M. Phil in Applied Psychology and an MBA in Human Resource Development. Dr. DeSousa is the Founder Trustee of the DeSousa Foundation that works in the area of mental health awareness across sectors. He is an Associate Professor and Secretary of the International Institute of Organizational Psychological Medicine working in the field of organizational psychological medicine across 7 countries. He is also an International Faculty for the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics working in over 8 countries. Dr. DeSousa works with 8 mainstream and special schools in Mumbai as a visiting Psychiatrist, Counsellor and School Mental Health Expert and also is a visiting faculty at Teacher Training Courses across Mumbai and at multiple psychotherapy training programs across India. He is Chief Editor of the Indian Journal of Mental Health and Associate Editor of Annals of Indian Psychiatry and Industrial Psychiatry Journal. He is Assistant Editor of the Global Bioethics Enquiry Indian Journal of Psychiatry, has over 700 publications in national and international journals and is the author of 12 books in the area of mental health. He is currently also serves as a

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Ronica Rachel Sequeira is an Alumnus of St. Andrew's College who graduated with Psychology and Sociology. Ronica is currently working as a Customer Service Manager before embarking for further studies in Clinical Psychology. Ronica's interests include reading and caring for street dogs. Herself a pet parent to two adopted Indies, she is an active member of a local animal welfare organization which conducts vaccination drives and cares for street animals. Ronica was the Student in Charge of the UNESCO and Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter Religious and Inter Cultural Dialogue and thus spearheaded the student team in organizing two international symposia on A New Utopia and Celebrating Diversity in 2019 and 2020 respectively. She also oversaw various student activities under the foundation auspices including debates, competitions and field visits. Ronica's previous presentations include papers on Women and Social Media at the Socio-History Student Seminar, Representation of LGBT in Cinema, and Water Crisis. She has also contributed papers on LGBTQA and Mental Health and A Psychological Look at Priming and Consumer Behaviour.

Ashmi Sheth, a recent Alumnus of St. Andrew's College, is an artist, 3d animator and the Co-founder of a creative production start-up, The Colourful Grey. She is currently pursuing an M.A. in Counselling and Art Therapy from Edinboro University, Pennsylvania. Immensely passionate about the arts, Ashmi strongly believes in the therapeutic power of the arts to heal people and change lives. Her work—poetry, paintings, and digital artwork—reflect her belief and mission to provide people with a safe, unthreatening and empowering form of healing in their struggle towards mental wellness. Her debut poetry book, *Silence echoed: Poetries that heal*, is a collection of poems which aim to heal the wounded, motivate the depressed, and inspire the hopeless. Initially written as a means of catharsis, the poems are now instilling hope, feeding strength and healing minds worldwide. In addition to these accomplishments, Ashmi's poetry, paintings and

articles have been published in a number of journals and magazines worldwide.

Savina Shenoy is the M.Com Co-ordinator at St. Andrews College of Arts, Science & Commerce, completed her M.Com (Management) , Diploma in H.R (Welingkars) and Diploma in Public Relations from I.C.M.M. She specialises in Marketing, Human Resources Management, & areas of General Management and has over 18 years in diverse areas of aviation , human Resource Outsourcing and Education. She aims to devise captivating, fascinating, and unique practices of teaching that creates interest in the students. She is also a Trainer and a Motivational Coach whose interests include Painting, Travelling, Exploring, Mystery Shopping and Research. She is spiritual, follows rituals and believes in Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam.

