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JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA  
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# JAMIA JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

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Volume 11

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मौलाना मोहम्मद अली जौहर मार्ग, नई दिल्ली- ११००२५

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कुलपति

Prof. Mazhar Asif

Vice Chancellor

پروفیسر مظہر آصف

شیخ الجامعہ



### Vice-Chancellor's Message

The current volume of *Jamia Journal of Education* on the theme “*Education, Nationhood and Global Citizenship*” clearly brings to light the issues, central and core to the field of education. We are living in global times, where every citizen must be concerned with areas pertaining to environment, peace, ecology and global harmony. But all of these can be achieved through the role of education as a social responsibility. The mantra of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas” are the foundational values upon which rests the concept of nationhood. Putting all this together is a mammoth task and my best wishes to all members of the editorial board who have been instrumental in putting this together and weaved in a constructive narrative of education -in action, by linking the articles under the theme.

I understand that the *Jamia Journal of Education* is a prestigious publication of the Faculty of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia. The editorial board who not only meticulously selects articles for their contemporary essence but also for their academic rigour and relevance. The articles reflect a wide spectrum of issues, challenges, opportunities and concerns pertaining to the discipline of Education and its wider place in socio-political context of education.

I deeply appreciate and congratulate the Dean, Faculty of Education and all who have been a part in shaping the *Jamia Journal of Education*.

I hope the articles published herein will push forward the boundaries of knowledge and support researchers in advancing knowledge.

Best wishes,

(Prof. Mazhar Asif)

Vice-Chancellor

## जामिया मिल्लिया इस्लामिया

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**Prof. Sara Begum**

**Dean**



### From the Desk of Editor in Chief

I'm happy to introduce this edition of our journal which explores the relationship between Education, Nationhood and global citizenship.

The thought provoking articles has brought together scholars & researchers from diverse areas to examine the intersections of these concepts.

The world today to grappling with challenges of Globalization, Nationalism and cultural and political identity. Education plays an important role in shaping the understanding of Nationhood and global citizenship. This issue explores the ways in which Education can help foster a sense of nationalism and promote global awareness, empathy, peace & cooperation. The articles tackle question an 'how education help balance the need for nationalism & cultivate global citizenship, the role of education addressing issues of intolerance and preparing students to understand the concept of International, Peace & understanding to create more just equitable & interconnected world also respect local cultures & traditions.

I'm grateful to our contributor for their insightful exploration these complex issues.

With best wishes

  
**Prof. Sara Begum**  
(Editor-in-Chief)

## EDITORIAL

The local and the global influences can intersect in multiple ways to play a crucial role in shaping individual identities, societal world views and national imperatives. Promoting a strong sense of national identity and cultural pride has always been an important objective of Education in India. However, this has never been done at the cost of ignoring global concerns. Indian Education system while seeking to develop in its citizens a firm understanding of its history along with a deep - rooted appreciation for her cultural heritage is equally responsive to its duties towards preparing committed and concerned world citizens. While emphasizing constitutional ideals such as social-justice, secularism and liberty, it also works passionately towards developing global citizenship skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and communication. Indian universities and institutions are actively engaging in international collaborations, exchanges and partnerships, fostering global citizenship and cultural exchange. The Indian education system is incorporating the UN's SDGs into its curriculum promoting a global world view. The notions of nationhood and global citizenship are brought together to complement each other and prepare informed, engaged citizens. However there still remain challenges to be faced. Optimized global participation demands an equitable education but providing for it in the diverse context of India is a challenging task. Bridging the digital divide remains an abiding concern. As the phenomenon of globalization gains wider ground, national identities will need to adapt to incorporate global perspectives and Education systems and policies will need to suitably respond to the transformation. The present issue of the Journal aims to discuss and deliberate on such issues.

The present issue has 17 papers which approach the central theme in varied ways. There are three papers that take up the issue of inculcating national identity- Sana Afreen & Jessy Abraham dwell on parent's communication and teacher's role in developing national identity in early childhood; Shabnam Khan & Md.Fahim Alam discuss the various pedagogical strategies towards inculcation of national identity among school students and Nalini Verma reflects on the role of teacher education in integrating youth and developing nationally responsible teachers. Two articles focus specifically on the issue of global citizenship -Md. Fahim Alam & Naheed Zahoor discuss the various educational implementations aimed at shaping national identity and promoting global citizenship among youth and Pratheesh P. discuss in the Technology in Education: The Role of 'AI' in Transforming Geography and History Learning in Secondary Schools. Taking cognisance of the fact that diversity and inclusion concerns lie at the base of all efforts that seek to bring together nationhood and global well- being , six articles have been devoted to these core issues- Anam Zehra & Aejaz Masih reflect on various ways in which an inclusive curriculum can help address the issues of diversity and social justice ; Sarfaraz



Equbal & Sara Begum put forward Yoga as aboon for children with autism spectrum disorder ; Ashok Bachhar expounds on the ideas of Swami Vivekananda to provide a philosophical framework for redefining inclusion and diversity; Nibedita Sahoo brings in niche insights by carrying out aspatiotemporal analysis of Sambalpur district, Odisha to highlight the literacy level and educational attainment of Scheduled Tribes; Mohd Tariq and Md. Musa Ali describe the educational status of the Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir and Anurag Kumar scratches beyond the surface to reveal how the constructs of caste, diversity and inclusion play out in higher education. Technology-enhanced and web-enabled educational practices being the robust harbingers of globality, three of the articles cater to the subject albeit in different contexts-Pratheesh. P. & Mary Reema share the insights gainedby carrying out an assessment of technology-assisted Malayalam language instruction in Kerala's higher education set-up; Soumen Ghosh & C. Siva Sankar discuss the ICT integrated career orientation of prospective teachers from an innovative perspective and Sana Mukhtar Khan & Mariya Waseem choose to expound the various aspects of integrating blended learning in Special Education. Policy perspectives and prevalent programmes form the subject of four submissions. The themes were found relevant as India is still in the process of implementing NEP-2020 and the policy continues to form a subject of animated debate and discussion in various circles - Dania AbdulNaser JM & Shebeeb Khan Pstudy the relationship between constitutional values, curriculum and foundational education through the lens of NEP 2020; Sushil Subham Rout chooses to ponder over the dilemma over the duration of Pre-Service Teacher Education by reflecting on Indian policy perspectives and Munisha Thakur & Mool Raj assess the attitude of student-teachers towards internship.

As is evident, the articles cover a wide range of topics while still trying to bring out the interconnectedness of the national and global citizenship. National interests and global responsibilities need to be shouldered simultaneously and education needs to crucially mediate the process. Commonalities of shared values need to be recognized by people worldwide and individual responsibilities towards advancing global outlook need to be universally acknowledged. Faculty of Education is extremely pleased to place this issue in your hands and as always, we hope to have succeeded in providing to the academic community a vibrant platform for exchange of ideas.

**Editors**

## Parent's Communication and Teacher's Role in Developing National Identity in Early Childhood

**Sana Afreen<sup>1</sup> & Jessy Abraham<sup>2</sup>**

### Abstract

*Early Childhood is crucial for children's development. Children absorb skills from their families, schools, and communities quickly and effortlessly. During this period, when the brain is most active, it is important to instill the character of nationalism in young children and acquire a sense of national identity, teaching them to love and respect their nation and national symbols.*

*This study focuses on the role of parents and ECCE teachers in developing children's awareness and understanding of national identity and national symbols. It aims to provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of their role through the exploratory method. A questionnaire for parents and an interview schedule for teachers were administered to assess their role in developing national identity among children.*

*The findings suggest that parents' communication about the country's tradition and culture through books, games, storytelling, celebration of festivals and everyday conversations help instill a sense of pride and belongingness in their child from early years. Teachers also play an important role in instilling national values through classroom activities, and arts and crafts and providing them with hands-on activities and experiences. The study highlights the crucial role of parents and teachers in developing national identity in young children.*

**Keywords:** Early childhood, ECCE teachers, Nationalism, National Identity and National symbols.

### Introduction

The Early childhood period is a crucial period for shaping young minds, as children's holistic development is deeply influenced by the cultural values and environment in which children interact with individuals and their surroundings. Early childhood, between 0-6 years old, is also called "Golden Age" (Sujiono, 2012). During this

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period, developing a child's identity is an evolving process based on the child's experiences, activities, duties and relationships with others (Brooker & Woodhead, 2008). One of the crucial aspects of early childhood is the formation of a sense of self or personal identity. The formation of identity can be observed through a variety of interactions and daily life activities at home, in school and in the community. Identity is defined as a "Child's construction, building, and reconstruction through their emotions with parents, peers, teachers and other people around them". (Brooker, 2008). Identity development in early childhood influences a child's self-concept and belongingness. This development is affected by various factors like cultural and national identities. Cultural identity includes family and community values, practices and traditions which shape children's identity. A child's self-concept is also influenced by national identity which includes shared values, experiences and ideals. (Research in Practices, 2021). The influence of national identity plays an important role in shaping the holistic development of preschool children and the future development of a country (Hong & Lui, 2022).

**Identity:** The word identity originates from the Latin word *identitas* which means 'Identical' (Trebjesanin, 2012). The exploration of self-identity addresses the important question, "Who am I?" It involves reflecting on beliefs, values, experiences, and societal roles. Erikson (1968) conducted research focusing on the study of social effects, interactions and communication on the formation of identity (Willis, 2013). Identity is a notion that has ancient roots and is related to Plato's ideas (Gerson, 2012). Erikson and the majority of those who have studied the concept of identity accepted that people don't have predetermined identities when they are born, instead, identities are developed over the period (Willis, 2013).

Therefore, early childhood lays a solid foundation for forming a child's identity. National identity which includes common values, historical narratives and national symbols is an important part of individual, social and psychological development. It is important to understand how children form a sense of national identity and awareness of national symbols during early childhood as these early experiences contribute to their views and actions in future. The cultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) highlights the role of social interactions in cognitive development, emphasizing the role of parents, and teachers in the transmission of culture and national identity. Parents and teachers play a very important role in building national identity by actively participating in educational activities like discussion on national symbols, customs, traditions, songs and dances, that foster patriotic education and by instilling in their young children a sense of awareness of their national identity.

## Review of Literature

Blitch (2013) investigated the role of parents contributing to cultural awareness in their children between the age group zero to five from ethnically diverse backgrounds. The findings showed that parents play a crucial role in fostering cultural awareness through various practices and beliefs. This study also highlighted the importance of collaboration between parents and preschool teachers in promoting cultural awareness. Skarbalius

(2014) investigated the role of primary education in fostering national identity among students. The findings of the study suggested that teachers are actively engaged in fostering national identity and ethnic culture plays an important role in the development of national identity among children. Herliyana and Rosmiati (2018) explored the importance of songs and traditional dances as teaching strategies to develop national identity in young children aged 4-6 years. The findings of the study showed that early childhood is the crucial period for instilling values and developing national identity which can be achieved through the integration of songs and traditional dances. The study also highlighted the role of teachers in creating a stimulating environment that promotes cultural awareness and national values. Kaiser and Rasminsky (2019) explored how cultural practices shape the behaviours, and values of young children, involving families in educational practices to support children's learning. It also highlights the role of culture in shaping self-concepts, the behaviours of children and developing national identities. . Somitca and Stan (2019) explored the importance of intergenerational learning in fostering national identity among young children. The findings showed that educational activities successfully promote children's interest in national history and symbols. The involvement of multiple generations promotes the learning experiences allowing children to connect with their culture and heritage in a meaningful way.

### **Need of the Study:**

Understanding nationalism, national identity and symbols is crucial to a child's feeling of citizenship and belongingness. It is important to study parents' and teachers' roles in developing national identity and awareness of national symbols in early childhood because it is a crucial time for building attitudes and character in young children. The need of this study is to understand what role parents and teachers play in imparting concepts of national identity. Assessing how parents and teachers support children's development of identity allows us to understand the parents' communication techniques and teaching approaches of ECCE teachers. This Study is important for attitude formation and awareness of national identity and improves the national and cultural values among children, parents and teachers.

### **Research Questions**

- How do parents' communication influence children's awareness of national identity and national symbols?
- What are the approaches and activities employed by the teachers in promoting national identity?

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To examine the methods used by parents to communicate the concept of national identity and symbols to their young children.
- To investigate approaches and classroom activities employed by the ECCE teachers to educate children about national identity and symbols.

### Research Methodology:

The researcher used an exploratory method, using a mixed-method research design that integrated both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

### Population and Sample of the Study:

The parents, teachers and preschool students in the Delhi NCR region constitute the population of the Study. The sample consists of 32 parents, and 10 ECCE teachers teaching in the Delhi NCR region.

**Tools and Technique:** - A questionnaire was prepared by the researcher to collect data from the parents and validated with the experts. The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections: demographic information, quality and frequency of parental communication with children about national identity and parents' views on children's awareness of national symbols. The questionnaire was self-made and consisted of both open and closed-ended questions. An interview schedule for preschool teachers was also employed in the study consisting of open-ended questions.

### Analysis of Data:

The data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. To achieve objective 1, data was analysed quantitatively using a basic descriptive analysis technique, specifically percentage analysis to summarize the data obtained from parents (through a questionnaire) regarding their communication about national identity and national symbols. To achieve objective 2, data was analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis technique to explore the approaches and classroom activities employed by the ECCE teachers in educating children about national identity and symbols. Semi-structured interviews were held with ECCE teachers and responses were recorded and analysed. Three major themes emerged from the analysis: Celebration of National Festivals, Parents Involvement and Classroom Activities. Data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative to provide a deeper understanding.

### Results and Discussions

*Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents*

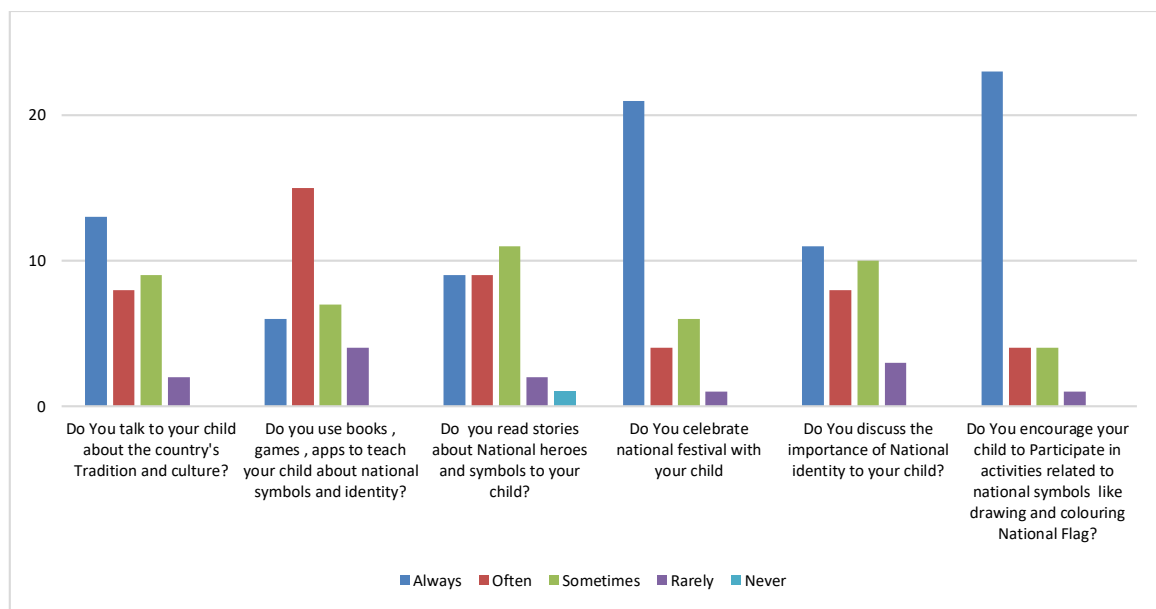
Parents	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	23	71.9%
Father	9	28.1%
Parents Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hinduism	4	12.5%
Islam	28	87.5%
Parents Native Place	Frequency	Percentage
Uttar Pradesh	14	43.75 %

Delhi	11	34.3 %
Bihar	7	21.9%
<b>Home Language</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Hindi	13	40.6%
English	1	3.1%
Urdu	1	3.1%
Bilingual	9	28.1%
Multilingual	8	25%
<b>Parents Age (in years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>21-25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9.4%</b>
25-30	7	21.9%
30-35	18	56.3%
35-40	4	12.5
<b>Parent's Academic Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High School or Equivalent	2	6.3
Bachelor's Degree	12	37.5
Master's Degree	16	50%
Other	2	6.3%
<b>Childs Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	17	53.1%
Male	15	46.9%
<b>Child's Age (in Years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
3-4	9	28.1
4-5	8	25%
5-6	15	46.9%

### **Objective 1:-Parent's communication regarding national identity and symbols.**

In terms of gender distribution, the sample consisted of 71.9% mothers (n=23) and 28.1% fathers (n=9). The majority of the sample 56.3%, (n=18) was between the ages of 30 and 35, and the next second largest age group 21.9%, (n=7) was between the ages of 25 and 30.

12.5 %, (n=4) between 35 and 40. Only 9.4% (n=4) were between the ages of 21 and 25. In terms of religion, the majority of the parents 87.5%,(n=28) belonged to Islam and 12.5 % ,(n=4)belonged to Hinduism.In terms of the Native place of the parents, the majority of them belonged to Uttar Pradesh (43.75%, n=14), Some (34.3%, n=11) belonged to Delhi and only 21.9%(n=7) belonged to Bihar.



**Figure 1: Parents communication with the child related to national identity and national symbols**

The findings revealed that a majority of the parents (40.6%) always talk to their children about the country's traditions and culture. While 25 % of them often communicate in such discussions. About 28.1% of parents sometimes talk to their children about the country's traditions and culture. Only 6.25 % of them rarely talk to their child on these topics. The study suggested that there is a strong tendency among parents to transmit cultural and traditional practices to their children.

About 18.75% of parents always use books, games, and apps to teach their children about national symbols and identity, and 46.8 % of them often utilize such strategies to make them aware of their children's national identity. 21.8 % of parents sometimes use books, games, and apps for this discussion while only very few (12.5%) of them rarely use these materials. This shows that they are taking an interest in transmitting cultural values through the medium of storytelling, books, games and apps. They play an important role in building national identity. This leads to what Somitca& Stan (2019) explored, the importance of intergenerational learning in fostering national identity among young children. The findings show that educational activities successfully promote children's interest in national history and symbols. The involvement of multiple generations promotes the learning experiences allowing children to connect with their culture and heritage in a meaningful way.

In response to the question “Do you read stories about national heroes and symbols to your child?” A few of the parents (28.1 %) always read stories about national heroes and symbols while 28.1 % often engage in this activity, 34.3% sometimes read stories about national heroes and symbols to their child, 6.25 % rarely engage themselves in this activity whereas only 3.1% do not engage in this activity. The study suggested that parents show strong engagement in making their children culturally responsive. The results are in line with the findings of Blitch (2013) who investigated the role of parents in contributing to cultural awareness in their children between the age group zero to five from ethnically diverse backgrounds. The findings showed that parents play a crucial role in fostering cultural awareness through various practices and beliefs.

The findings of the study showed that the majority of the parents always celebrate national festivals with their children while a few of them (12.5%) often celebrate, about 18.7% sometimes engage with their child in celebrating national festivals, and only 3.1% rarely celebrate national festivals with their child.

The study found that a significant portion of the parents (34.3%) always discuss the importance of national identity to their child, about (25%) of them often engage in discussion related to the importance of national identity while 31.2 % sometimes discuss this topic and only a few (9.3 %) rarely discuss the importance of national identity to their child.

In response to the question “Do You encourage your child to participate in activities related to national symbols like drawing and colouring the National flag?”, majority of the parents (71.8%) affirm that they always encourage their child while 12.5 % of them often motivate their child in this activity, 12.5 % of the parents sometimes do the same. However only 3.1% of them do not encourage their child to participate in activities related to national symbols. It shows that parents have positive attitudes toward transmitting culture and tradition to their children and they actively involve themselves to make their children aware of national identity-

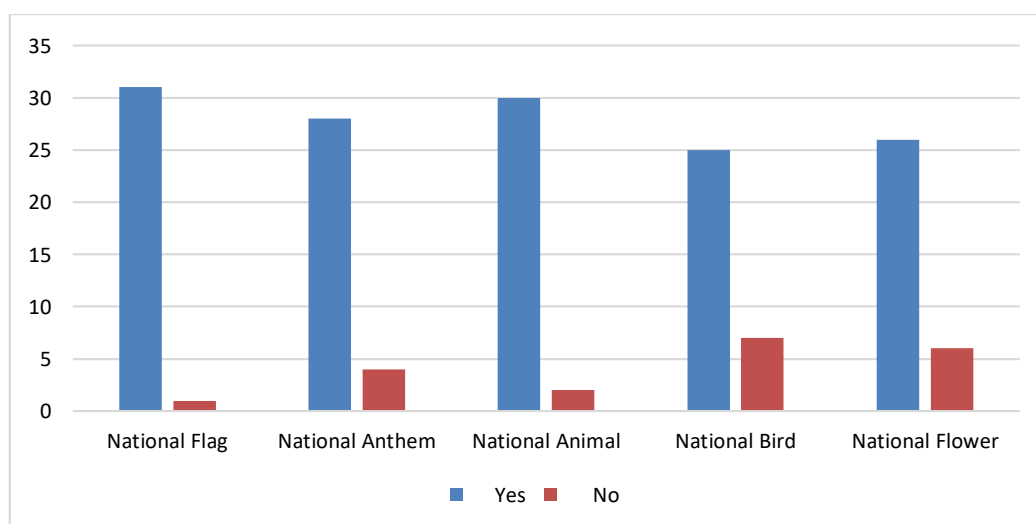
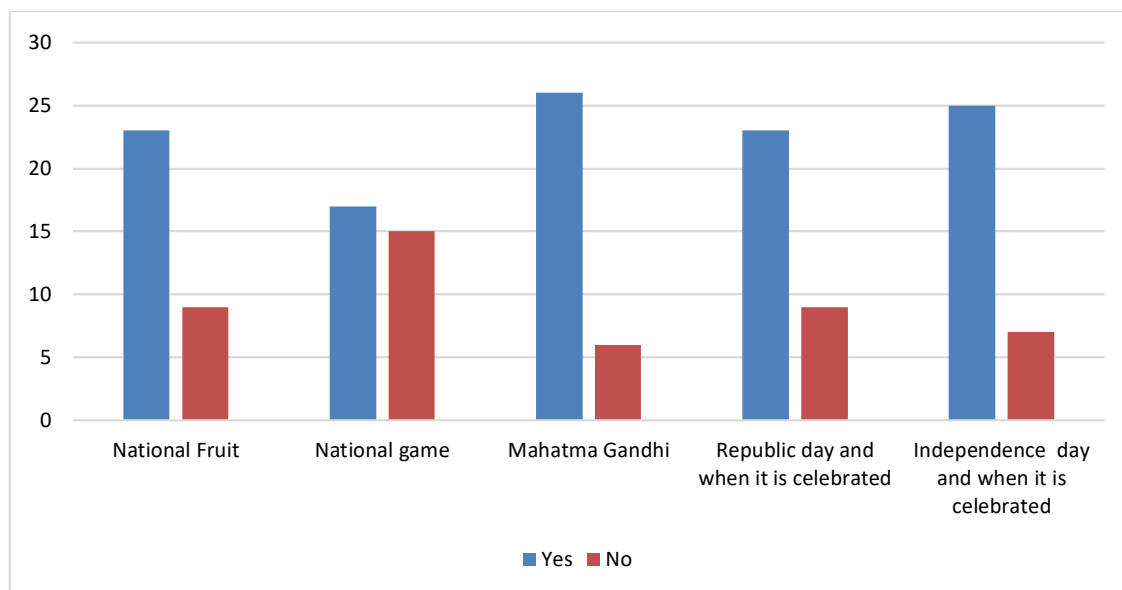


Figure 2.1: Awareness about National Identities



**Figure 2.2: Awareness about National Identities**

The findings revealed that the majority of the children (96.8) recognise the National Flag while only very few (3.1%) of the children do not recognise the national flag.

The study also indicates that a significant portion of children (87.5%) sing the national anthem, and identify its tune while only 12.5% do not recognise the national anthem, 93.75% of the children identify the national animal, while 84.3% identify birds easily, a majority of children (86.6%) recognises national flower, only few 18.7 % do not recognise it.

In examining the awareness of national symbols, study shows that most of the children (71.8%) are aware of the national fruit, 53.1 % recognise the national game, 81.25% recognise Mahatma Gandhi and 71.8% of children know about Republic Day ,78.1% of them are aware of Independence Day.

Awareness of National symbols	Response (Yes)	Response (No)
Recognise National Flag	96.8%	3.1%
Recognise National Anthem	87.5 %	12.5 %
Recognise animal	93.75 %	6.25%
Recognise bird	84.3 %	15.7%
Recognise flower	86.6 %	13.4 %
Recognise fruit	71.8%	28.2%
Recognise game	53.1 %	46.9%
Recognise Mahatma Gandhi	81.25 %	18.75 %
Know about Republic Day	71.8%	28.2 %
Know about Independence Day	78.1%	21.9 %

Some of the parents responded on “Can you provide any example where your child showed that he/she understood national symbols or identity”?

P 21: *“My child likes to draw a picture of Indian Flag and he feels proud of it. He celebrated National festivals with great enthusiasm, and participated in various activities.”*

P 29: *“Whenever she saw national symbols in books or TV or reality shows always mentions. She recognises the tune of the national anthem and always stands when it is played anywhere.”*

P 9: *“Yes my child draws the very carefully our national flag and is never mistaken when he colours the flag.”*

P 14: *“Whenever Hafsa listens to the national anthem, she stands in attention to give respect and understands national flag, national anthem, nation flower.”*

P 25: *“In many instances, my child showed that he understood and respected his national identity and loved his country, like, whenever he sees a picture of tiger, he used to say “this is our national animal, he always stands during National anthem, he loves to draw a national flag and sometimes he used to colour other pictures in tricolour. He loves the Indian army, I asked why, and he said because they protect us.”*

P 26: *“She likes to visit national monuments and whenever she sees the national flag she always salutes.”*

P 32: *“She loves her country flag and identifies Gandhiji and national emblem on the currency.”*

**Objective 2: -Approaches and classroom activities employed by the ECCE teachers to educate children about national identity and symbols.**

The interview was conducted with 10 teachers of ECCE from preschools.

Some ECCE teachers responded to the question, “What approaches do you employ to educate children about national identity and symbols”?

T1: *“We celebrate national festivals in our school by hoisting the national flag and singing the national anthem; some students do marches and parades, and children sing patriotic songs.”*

T 3: *“We celebrate Independence Day and Republic Day in our classroom, where my students sing patriotic songs and do craft activities related to the national flag and national symbols.”*

T 8: *“We celebrate all three national festivals with our students.” They all bring flags on these special days and dress up in tricolour and sing the national anthem and national song.”*



### I) Celebration of National Festivals.

All the teachers mentioned that celebrating national festivals like Independence Day, Republic Day, and Gandhi Jayanti is the key approach to educating children about their national identity and instilling a sense of pride in them. During the national festival celebrations, various activities take place.

- a) Flag Hoisting. Most of the teachers reported organizing flag-hoisting ceremonies for national festivals.
- b) National Anthem. Most of the teachers mentioned that they sing the national anthem along with children during flag hoisting.
- c) Parades and Marches. Most of the teachers organize parades in which children often march in national colour dresses.
- d) Patriotic Songs and Speeches. A significant portion of teachers reported that students sing patriotic songs and deliver speeches related to India's constitution, the freedom movement, and so on during national festival celebration.

### II) Parents' Involvement

Some of the ECCE teachers responded to the question, "Do you work with parents to develop national identity among your students?"

T 2: *"We invite parents to the national day celebration and communicate with them through various activities."*

T4: *"We organise PTM to discuss children's progress regarding character development and national identity."*

T 9: *"I share different activities with parents through WhatsApp and collaborate with them so that they can guide their child."*

Most of the teachers reported that they involve parents to help their children practice and memorize national songs, assisting in making national flags or other crafts related to national symbols.

However, only a few of the teachers reported that they don't involve parents in activities related to the national festival celebration.

### III) Classroom Activities

Some of the teachers responded to the question, "What activities do you use in your classroom to foster a sense of belonging and strengthen national identity?"

T4: *"We celebrate national festivals where children come in traditional dresses of our heroes, and we organize role-playing sessions for them."*

T5: *"I use puppets to tell the stories of freedom fighters in our country."*

T 8: *"I use storytelling, videos, and activity sheets, such as matching activities, to identify the national symbols."*

*T 9: "On the occasion of Independence Day, I ask students to colour the national flag and conduct matching activities related to national symbols."*

*T 10: "I decorate classroom walls. We decorate classroom walls with national themes, encouraging children to show interest and understand our national symbols and identity".*

Most of the teachers mentioned that they perform the following activities in the classroom to educate children about national identity and symbols.

- a. Colour the national flag and other national symbols.
- b. Recognizing national symbols.
- c. Matching Activity.
- d. Singing national songs.
- e. Role-playing by the children
- f. Put on a national hero's outfit.
- g. Storytelling about a country's freedoms, freedom fighters, or national heroes.

A few teachers also added that they use videos in the classroom to instil national values among children.

The study reveals that teachers use the celebration of national festivals, flag hoisting, singing of the national anthem, and patriotic songs as key approaches to developing national identity. The study also reveals that teachers collaborate with parents in nurturing the sense of belongingness and national identity. The study highlighted the various activities organised by teachers like storytelling, role-playing, singing national songs, and matching activities to help preschool children learn about national identity and symbols.



Figure 3: Board decoration on national theme



Figure 4 : Independence Day Celebration

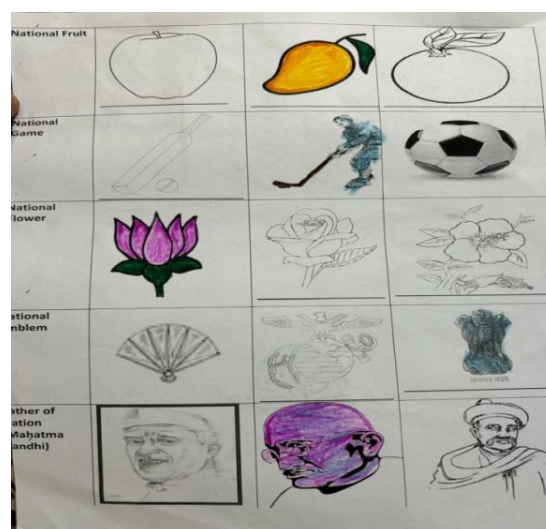
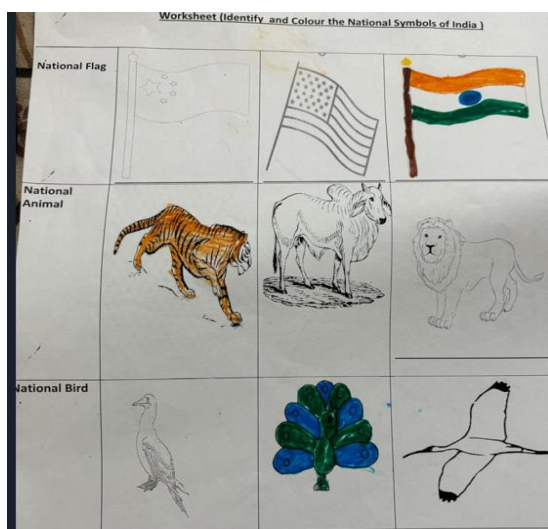


Figure 5: Worksheet for recognizing National Symbols.

## Conclusion

*Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded that both parents and teachers play a crucial role in developing national identity in young children. The study found that parents' communication about the country's tradition and culture through books, games, storytelling, apps, celebration of festivals and everyday conversations help instill a sense of pride and belongingness in their child from early years. Teachers also play*

*an important role in instilling national values through classroom activities, and arts and crafts and providing them with hands-on activities and experiences. Teachers should actively collaborate with parents and encourage children to foster national identity and belongingness in them.*

*Participating in hands-on activities and observing Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations on television, including flag hoisting, parade, fireworks, and air shows, holds significant educational value. However, fostering awareness about national identity and instilling pride in our nation's history is equally crucial. This involves educating children about the struggle for independence, the country's evolution, and its ongoing progress, thereby cultivating a sense of national pride.*

*All these things are important and need to be instilled from the early days. Hence it is crucial to develop national identity and awareness of national symbols among young children. Further research is needed to explore the role of parents and teachers in shaping the national identity of children.*

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## Addressing Diversity & Social Justice through Inclusive Curriculum: Some Reflections

Anam Zehra<sup>1</sup> & Aejaaz Masih<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

*Diversity comprises various distinctions that exist among persons, and it plays a key role in developing our society. To create an inclusive and equitable society, it is vital to understand and respect multiple dimensions of variety, including cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and ability diversity. This paper will provide an overview of these diverse facets, emphasizing their significance in promoting understanding and harmony in an increasingly diverse and interconnected global landscape, the challenges associated with it, relationships among Multiple Social Identities, a thorough examination of SDGs and NEP 2020 by exploring how they view Diversity and Inclusion, the potential of an inclusive curriculum to address diverse social groups.*

**Keywords:** Diversity, Multiple Identities, Social justice, learning to Live Together, Sustainable Development Goals, NEP 2020, Inclusive Curriculum, Inclusive Pedagogy, AI-Infused Strategy

### Introduction

Jacques Delors presented the '**Four Pillars of Education**' in a report for UNESCO in 1996. This report emphasized that education should revolve around four essential types of learning across an individual's lifespan: **learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be**. In the context of increasing global interconnectedness, the Delors Commission specifically emphasized the importance of promoting **learning to live together**. This concept encompasses the cultivation of attributes such as self-awareness and understanding of others, recognition of human diversity, acknowledgment of similarities and interdependence among all people, demonstration of empathy, and cooperative social behavior. Although this concept is new for other countries India had been embracing diversity for centuries. India is known

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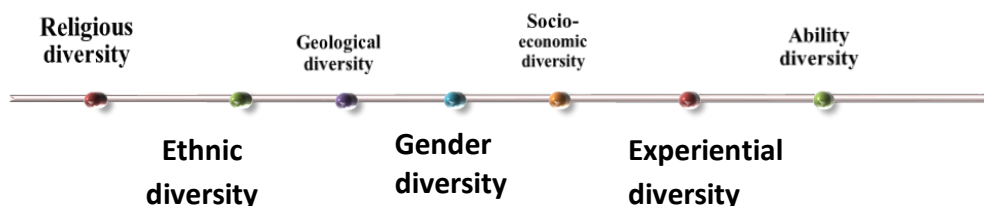
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for its vibrant diversity, which has been compared historically to a "bouquet" of diverse cultures, languages, and traditions that coexist harmoniously. However, over time, some people have started to refer India as a "melting pot, due to a surge in cases of religious intolerance, communal violence, discrimination, conflicts, etc. in recent times. However, this metaphor of a "melting pot" fails to convey the essence of India's pluralism. India's true strength lies in its capacity to remain a "bouquet," where each cultural "flower" maintains its distinct fragrance and color, enhancing the nation's collective identity rather than encouraging assimilation. With 22 officially recognized languages and over 1,600 dialects, India's cultural diversity is a testament to its rich heritage.

### **Multiple Social Identities & Diversity: Opportunity or Challenge?**

Multiple identities refer to our various self-concepts corresponding to our roles in different social contexts. These can be given to us, such as gender or ethnicity, or achieved, like a career position. Understanding the concept of multiple identities is important because it acknowledges that no single identity can fully represent an individual's entire experience. When discussing an individual's identity, it's important to recognize that it cannot be restricted to any one particular aspect. For instance, consider the following scenario: In New Delhi, a thief murdered the father of the judge's stenographer's wife in pursuit of money." In this case, the deceased is associated with four different identities. Similarly, in Indian society, identity cannot be limited to a single aspect. Every individual is born with 2-4 or more identities, such as a Muslim girl from Kashmir. It's important to understand that whether it's a Muslim from Kashmir or a judge's stenographer, both must equally carry all their associated identities with them. Due to their various roles, people typically endorse multiple social identities. (Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015)

These are just a few examples of diversity. At any given time, a person can be a member of multiple social groups. Keep in mind that diversity encompasses more than just apparent differences. Differences in personality, mental health, and learning styles, in addition to the previous three categories, frequently exist without being apparent. The word "diversity" in ordinary English word refers to variation or difference. In the 1970s, it started to acquire the political connotation that it has today, respect for others who are different from oneself. All facets of social identity, including ability, age, socioeconomic status, gender and sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity, are referred to as social heterogeneity. International social movements promoting racial justice and the empowerment of marginalized identities dominated the 1960s and 1970s. Diversity in the classroom refers to a variety of social identities. Age, race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and sexual orientation, all contribute to a person's social identity. Below are several instances of diversity that may be present in the classroom.



**Figure-01**



**Religious diversity:** It refers to the differences in affiliations and adherence to the values and practices of specific religions or sects.

**Ethnic diversity:** It encompasses variations in race, ethnicity, national origin, and domestic languages.

**Geological diversity:** It encompasses distinctions in local or regional identity and experiences.

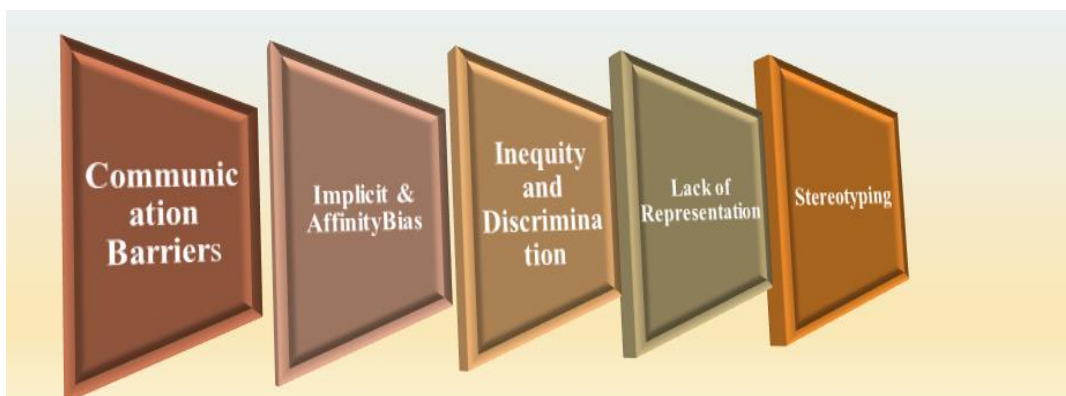
**Gender diversity:** This refers to how students identify and express their gender.

**Socioeconomic diversity:** It includes variations in student or family income, educational attainment, and occupation.

**Experiential diversity:** This includes the different life events students have gone through.

**Ability diversity:** This covers variations in the cognitive, physical, and learning capacities of the pupils.

#### Roadblocks Associated with Diversity



**Figure -02**

**Communication Barriers:** Language and accent differences that frequently result in miscommunication.

**Implicit Bias:** People typically retain unconscious prejudices that impact their judgment and interactions with persons from various backgrounds, potentially leading to discrimination.

**Affinity Bias:** People may be more likely to prefer people who share similar origins or qualities, which might hamper diversity among kids.

**Stereotyping:** Stereotypes can lead to incorrect generalizations about students based on their gender, color, age, or other attributes.

**Inequity and Discrimination:** Discrimination can occur when students are treated unjustly based on their background.



**Lack of Representation:** Students who feel they have a voice in class are more likely to feel motivated than those who do not but sometimes due to differences they are subsided and neglected by teachers and peer groups.

### **SDGs and NEP (2020): A Critical Review**

The idea of social justice is said to be the foundation of egalitarian pedagogies and curricula in 21st-century education. According to {Binns, Patton & Museus, 2019}, despite the emphasis on social justice principles and the commitment to diversity and inclusion, students are often seen through a deficit perspective, where their lived experiences and knowledge are regarded as needing correction, alteration, or dismissal. However, over the past ten years, a growing body of research has focused on these students' unique skills and characteristics, as well as how they enrich classroom environments, pedagogies, and social development (Slee, 2018).

For inclusive education to thrive and bring about true change, teachers must have thorough preparation in pedagogical knowledge and skills, delivered with a focus on inclusion and a strong understanding of diverse learners. Both educators and students must be willing to unlearn established knowledge and be open to learning and developing new understandings and ways of knowing.

### **Sustainable Development Goals**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals was approved by over 150 global leaders in September 2015 at the UN Sustainable Development Summit. These goals consist of 17 objectives and 169 targets that have been agreed upon by governments, focusing on sustainable development issues. The UN Sustainable Development **Goal 4:** Quality Education aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education & promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In addition, Sustainable Goals **5, 8, 10, and 16** are also connected with tackling the issues of diversity and justice and ensuring quality and inclusion leading to dignified life.



**Figure -03**

## NEP 2020

National Education Policy was introduced in 2020 to reorganize the country's educational system. It aims to revamp education at all stages, from early stage to higher education. It is designed to meet the changing needs of the 21st century while encouraging students' holistic growth. The new strategy aims to increase public investment to 6% of GDP, up from the current 4.5 %, in the educational sector. By eliminating social divides, and enhancing access, participation, and learning outcomes by 2030, it aims to achieve a 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio in school education. (Singh, 2020).

The NEP 2020 firmly emphasizes on social justice as a fundamental principle guiding its reforms in the education sector. The policy recognizes that access to quality education is essential to promoting social equity, inclusivity, and empowerment. The NEP 2020 emphasizes the promotion of social justice as one of its core principles (Kem, 2020). Several aspects of the NEP 2020 demonstrate its commitment to addressing social justice issues:

Equity and Inclusion	Holistic Development	Multilingualism	Reducing Disparities	Vocational Education	Inclusion of Community Participation
Technology and Access	Flexibility in Education	Equitable Access	Mother Tongue-Based Education	Multidisciplinary and Holistic Learning	Socio-Economic Equity

### Standardization vs Diversity: Is it a Threat for Inclusion??

The NEP 2020 has been criticized for potentially conflicting with constitutional values and social justice. Critics argue that focusing on mother tongue instruction up to Grade 5 may undermine linguistic diversity and access for non-native speakers. Additionally, there are concerns about its impact on affirmative action and reservation policies, which could affect social equity in education. (Saluja, 2022).

There are concerns that the social justice principles might be affected by the proposed reforms. Even though vocational education is regarded as essential for skill development, critics worry that it may exacerbate existing social and economic disparities if implemented erroneously. Additionally, opponents have expressed concern that the policy's emphasis on institutional autonomy and self-regulation could result in the dominance of private educational institutions, excluding economically disadvantaged individuals. While technological integration is a crucial aspect of the NEP, concerns have been expressed concerning the digital gap that exists in India. Relying extensively on technology might disadvantage pupils without access to required resources (Saluja, 2022).

In addition, opponents worry that the policy's reliance on a single national assessment framework and standardized tests would disregard students' various learning styles, languages, and cultural backgrounds.

### Reconceptualizing Inclusion

“A process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.” (UNESCO, 2005).

A primary challenge in fostering an inclusive educational system is developing a curriculum that addresses diverse student needs. An inclusive curriculum identifies and accommodates these needs, recognizing that students may face unique challenges, such as those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or with disabilities. Rather than viewing differences as flaws, this approach emphasizes the collective strength that diversity brings. (Ainscow, 2020)

This point of view holds that to acknowledge diversity in the curriculum, distinct teaching materials, approaches, and resources must be utilized, which could lead to stigmatization and marginalization. As a result, strategies that can accommodate all students have frequently been sought such as Universal Design for learning. (Meyer et al., 2014). Others, however, contend that a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to the curriculum might be accused of failing to identify and respond to differences, with individuals who would require additional help possibly disregarded and restricted in terms of participation (Cigman, 2007). This has often been considered as the ‘dilemma of difference’ (Norwich, 2007).

The curriculum impacts both transactional and assessment methods, as well as the general aims of education. An inclusive curriculum proactively examines the various requirements of learners and tries to provide fair access to educational opportunities for all learners.

### Strategy to Address Diversity & Ensuring Social Justice: Educational Context

Educators today are likely to come across a variety of students with diverse backgrounds, learning capabilities, and cultural or religious affiliations. It is essential to effectively handle classroom diversity to promote educational equity and enhance both accessibility and outcomes. Recognizing and developing strategies to collaborate positively with individuals from different backgrounds offers an upper hand for students. A diverse classroom provides chance to learn and acts as a tool for teaching. To embrace the existence of distinct identities, and ensure social justice ***we should not only respect but celebrate diversity*** starting with inculcating the core principles and values of inclusion by practicing the following strategy in the educational context.

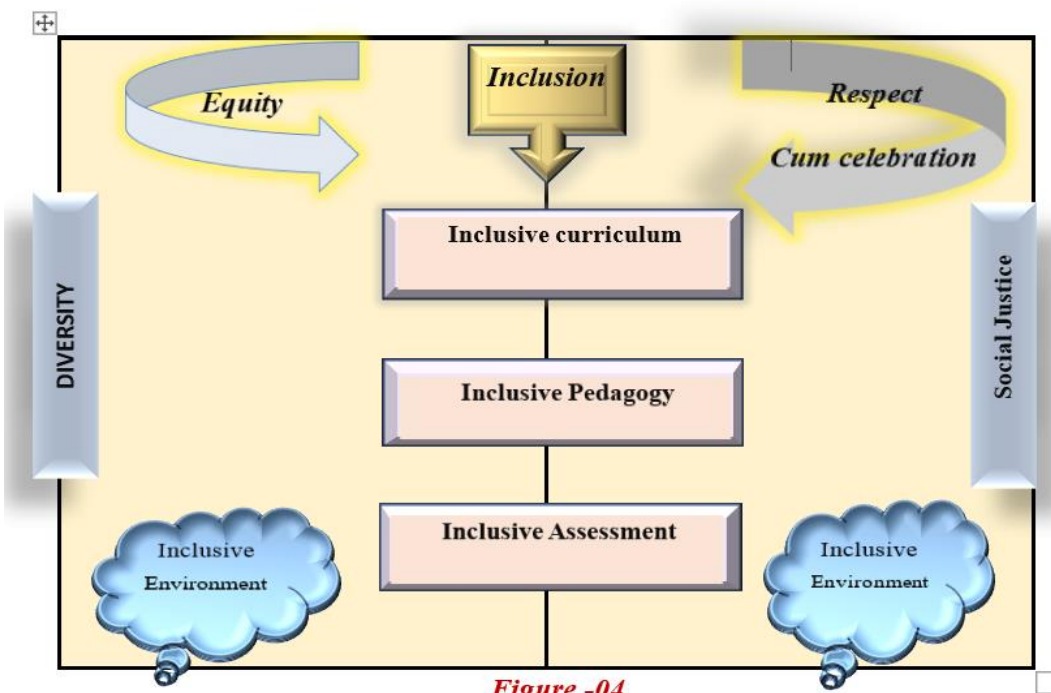
## Inclusive Curriculum

Inclusive curriculum takes into account the diversity of students and seeks to respond to the needs of all students. It is proactive and reasonable to the educative process. Customize the curriculum, learning materials, techniques, aids, and assessments to accommodate individual diversity. An inclusive curriculum encompasses several key features. It creates a welcoming environment for students to embrace their social identities and ensures accessibility for all learners. It challenges students, fostering personal growth and knowledge acquisition while being intentionally aligned with their needs and expectations. Additionally, it remains flexible to adapt to changing requirements and is authentic, reflecting the diverse contexts and cultural backgrounds of the students.

## The Guiding principle for Inclusive Curriculum

### Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

An organized collection of principles and standards, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a scientifically validated framework for curriculum creation in any educational institution or learning environment that offers equal learning opportunities to all students. Originally developed in the realm of architecture, Universal Design for Learning has found use in education because of the work of educational researchers and neuroscientists. UDL is an optimized framework to enhance universal teaching and learning, rooted in scientific insights into human learning



**Figure -04**

It was developed in the 1990s by Centre for Applied Special Technology (CAST) to address the disabilities of schools instead of the disabilities of the individual. It aims to

reduce inadvertent obstacles to learning, optimizing the educational process for as many people as possible, and enabling them to engage with the general curriculum. The three types of networks found in the learning- brainrecognition, strategy, and emotional networks. These are the foundation of UDL principles. Since humans have a propensity for both rational thought and constant emotional experience, UDL is adamant that learning is both emotional and cognitive.

CAST created three principles to direct the creation, choice, and use of learning resources, techniques, and settings based on its comprehension of the aforementioned networks. It developed three comprehensive recommendations under each principle to assist educators, curriculum developers, and instructors in creating lessons, curricula, resources, and assessments from a UDL viewpoint.

1. Provide multiple means of engagement (the “why” of learning)
2. Provide various means of representation (the “what” of learning)
3. Provide multiple means of action and expression (the “how” of learning)

**(Rose & Meyer, 2002)**

Although UDL places a strong emphasis on how technology may improve the process of learning and teaching, it is not only about using technology. Students do not have one universal learning capability, but many diverse learning abilities, which means a disability or difficulty in one area may be countered by extraordinary ability in another, according to neuroscientistHoward Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which coincides with his findings about the learning brain. **(Meyer,etal.,2014)**. According to **(Sweller,1997)**, multimedia training is important because employing two sensory modalities in instruction is preferable to utilizing just one. The individuals who were forced to study with both visual diagrams or tables and aural text demonstrated more progress than those who were forced to learn just with visuals.

UDL principles help diligent educators find more ways to help students learn **(Rose &Gravel, 2009)**. When using UDL approaches, a teacher must provide accommodating and non-disabled teachings, resources, and classroom activities. Additionally, curriculum designers must create courses that cater to "the margins" as well as the "mythical average learners" **(Meyer & Rose, 2005)**.

### **Inclusive Pedagogy and its Strategies**

Inclusive pedagogy is an educational strategy that addresses the diverse needs of learners while preventing the exclusion of any individuals within the classroom community. This teaching approach emphasizes educational inclusivity, allowing educators to support every student by thoughtfully implementing teaching methods that benefit all learners and promote a sense of belonging.**(Florian, 2014)**. Inclusive pedagogy is based on the understanding of foundational pedagogical practices:

**(a) Acknowledging Individual Learning Needs:** Educators appreciate that learning is inherently multifaceted and cannot be approached with a uniform strategy. Strive to

cultivate inclusive classroom environments that actively encourage participation from all students, accommodating various pathways to knowledge acquisition.

**(b) Employing Varied Learning Modalities:** To meet the varied requirements of students, educators utilize a variety of dynamic and immersive learning methods. This diverse strategy allows learners to engage with the content in manners that align with their individual cognitive styles and preferences.

**(c) Facilitating Differentiated Learning Opportunities:** By providing options for how students engage with content, educators promote differentiated learning experiences that empower individuals to take charge of their educational trajectories. This autonomy fosters deeper engagement and motivation among students.

**(d) Encouraging Collaborative Learning Structures:** Rather than relying solely on ability grouping, instructors create heterogeneous working groups that facilitate collaboration among students of varying abilities. This strategy not only enriches peer interactions but also cultivates a sense of community and shared responsibility within the classroom.

**(e) Recognizing the Value of Each Student:** Educators actively affirm that every participant in the classroom contributes unique strengths and perspectives. By valuing each student's contributions, instructors foster an atmosphere of respect and validation, enhancing students' self-worth and confidence.

**(f) Promoting Active Participation Through Social Constructivism:** Instructors integrate strategies that emphasize active participation within a framework of social constructivism, wherein learning is viewed as a collective endeavour. They prioritize asset-based learning, focusing on students' strengths and potentials rather than their deficits.

### **Bridging Inclusive Pedagogy with AI-Based Tools: Embracing 5.0**

#### **a) Tailored Learning Experiences:**

**Curipod and Nearpod** empower educators to develop interactive, personalized lessons that adapt to the unique learning styles and paces of students. By leveraging real-time data analytics, these platforms allow instructors to identify individual student needs and adjust instructional strategies accordingly, fostering an inclusive environment where every learner can thrive.

#### **b) Facilitated Communication and Collaboration:**

**Google Classroom and Forms.app** enhance collaboration by providing robust platforms for communication and feedback. These tools support diverse modes of expression, enabling students to submit assignments in various formats—text, audio, or video. This flexibility accommodates learners with different abilities and backgrounds, promoting active participation from all students.

**c) Accessible and Engaging Content Creation:**

**Platforms like Canva, Prezi, Gamma, and Visme** facilitate the design of visually appealing and accessible educational materials. By incorporating features such as alt text for images and customizable templates, these tools ensure that content is easily navigable and comprehensible, thereby enhancing inclusivity and ensuring all students can engage with the learning material.

**d) Multilingual Support and Accessibility:**

**Anuvadini and Bhashini** utilize advanced AI algorithms to offer real-time language translation and support, enabling non-native speakers to engage with educational content in their preferred language. This capability fosters a culturally responsive classroom where linguistic diversity is recognized and valued, ensuring equitable access to learning resources.

**Inclusive Assessment**

Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their acquired skills according to their learning abilities by employing multiple methods of evaluation. Different AI tools can be incorporated such as **EdPuzzle, Twee, and Elicit** that promote interactivity and engagement. Integrating multimedia elements and tools such as quizzes, polls, and instructional videos, offer a dynamic approach to assessment that caters to varied learning preferences. Immediate feedback mechanisms allow educators to pinpoint learning gaps and adapt their teaching methodologies, enhancing inclusivity in the assessment process.

**Inclusive Environment**

Attitude represents an individual's psychological judgment toward an object, person, or event, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions. The cognitive element pertains to beliefs and perceptions, the affective component involves feelings, and the behavioural aspect drives actions. In diverse contexts, negative beliefs and emotions can manifest as discriminatory actions, making it crucial to implement targeted educational interventions to reshape attitudes, foster inclusivity, and transform the school's culture to support students from different backgrounds based on cultural empowerment and educational equality. Encourage learning in an environment that includes all students, offering accessible resources, and a positive attitude, and facilitate social connections and interaction among students. Offer flexibility in school and class schedules to accommodate specific student needs.

**Conclusion**

Exploring the Four Pillars of Education, delving into the impact of diverse social identities and diversity within classrooms, and analyzing the SDGs and NEP2020 demonstrates the intricate nature and significance of establishing inclusive education systems. Education should not solely focus on imparting knowledge but also on nurturing understanding, empathy, and respect for diversity needs to be tackled through

inclusive curricula and teaching methods that acknowledge and cater to the varied needs of all students. NEP 2020 seeks to reimagine Indian education through a lens of equity, inclusivity, and comprehensive growth. However, its success depends on embedding social justice to avoid entrenching existing inequities. A curriculum attuned to diverse student needs would foster true educational fairness, equipping students for a complex, interconnected world. The integration of AI accelerates this vision, enabling adaptive, personalized, and collaborative learning frameworks. Through these comprehensive practices, instructors aim to cultivate a vibrant and inclusive learning environment that acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of their students, ultimately enriching the educational experience for all involved.

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## Yoga: A Boon for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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### Abstract

*Yoga is widely recognised as a beneficial method for building hope and empowerment among adolescents and their careers, owing to its comprehensive principles and execution. Yoga is growing increasingly popular, not only among adults but also among teenagers. Children with special needs have the potential to use yoga as an alternative form of therapy, which is perhaps the most crucial application. Autistic children may be receiving behavioural intervention, medical treatment, and therapeutic care, it is essential to recognise the potential importance of including yoga to improve the child's bodily awareness. Yoga-based therapy helps individuals to learn about themselves and develop at their own pace. Research has shown that yoga-based therapy significantly improves attention, reduces anxiety, enhances emotional regulation, and also helps manage sensory overload in children with autism spectrum disorder. By incorporating yoga into their daily routines, they can benefit from structured, predictable activities that help alleviate behavioural issues like hyperactivity, aggression, and self-injury. This article highlights the effectiveness of yoga in the treatment of children suffering from autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Overall, yoga is a simple yet effective solution for these children, improving their cognitive, emotional, and physical health.*

**Keywords:** Autism spectrum disorder, boon, yoga

### Introduction

Yoga is a self-improvement approach that focuses on mental and physical discipline and the pursuit of happiness. Traditionally, yoga has been used to integrate an individual's physical, spiritual, and emotional components, allowing them to achieve mindfulness. Yoga has three main components: the affective aspect, which involves breath control, the corporeal aspect, which involves various postures, and the transcendental aspect, which includes meditation. Yoga comes in numerous varieties, each emphasizing a different trait. Physically, it improves fitness by developing balance, flexibility,

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coordination, kinaesthetic awareness, and motor capacities. Yoga is beneficial to all of its practitioners, including children with special needs, particularly in terms of emotional health. As a result, this intervention helps children with special needs identify and manage their emotions, which improves their emotional regulation skills. This, in turn, encourages the development of empathy and provides them with methods for dealing effectively with feelings of sadness or anger. Individuals with disabilities gain improved interpersonal connections within their peer groups by cultivating shared comprehension and admiration. Finally, mental yoga improves one's concentration, attention span, and creativity. The development of these skills fosters resilience and provides children with special needs with the necessary coping mechanisms to maintain their mental health. In general, it allows children with exceptional needs to explore and develop their identities.

A large number of autistic children struggle to absorb and organize the sensory information acquired by their neurological systems. Traditional treatment procedures used with autistic children stimulate the tactile, vestibular, and proprioceptive systems. These approaches provide stimulation to the tactile (feeling of touch), vestibular (movement and gravity), and proprioceptive (awareness of one's body in space) systems, respectively. Every activity has been carefully designed to target the specific system that is experiencing an imbalance. Several treatments can be used, including the use of deep pressure massage and the construction of equipment, like as a swing, that provides vestibular input to the nervous system. The aforementioned activities are limited because the child's therapy is administered through external sources. Yoga has significant therapeutic intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) since it has been shown to improve sensory processing and promote a better feeling of personal space. In addition, practising yoga has been shown to improve gross motor abilities and promote easier transitions between activities. Furthermore, yoga has been demonstrated to boost self-esteem and encourage the development of communication and interpersonal relationship skills in children with ASD. In contrast to other treatment approaches, this intervention promotes self-soothing behaviours in autistic children, lowering their demand for external sources of comfort. Once a child has mastered the various yoga positions, breathing methods, and visualizations, they can practice them independently or with a parent. Yoga therapy helps strengthen the ability to share information bidirectionally across all sensory modalities and generate meaningful reactions. This process involves the integration of sensory inputs inside the central nervous system, which allows attention, emotion, cognition, coordination, arousal levels, and the autonomic system to function properly. Yoga practices include physical motions and breath awareness, which effectively promote the development of body awareness, attention, and memory. As a result, these approaches provide children with developmental difficulties with crucial skills.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Ramanathan, Eswari, Bhavanani, Prathima, and Sanguida (2019) conducted a randomized controlled study to investigate the benefits of yoga instruction on children

with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in India, with a sample size of 72 participants. The findings showed that a yoga training program lasting 60 minutes per session, five days a week, for twelve weeks resulted in significant improvements in the participants' audio and visual reaction time. These improvements can be interpreted as indicative of enhanced learning abilities and improved coordination of the central nervous system in children with ASD.

A randomized controlled trial by Sinha and Reddy (2017) explored the effects of a structured yoga program on social skills and behavioural issues in children with ASD. The study involved 30 children who participated in a 16-week yoga intervention, with sessions tailored to the needs of children with ASD. The major findings included improved social interactions, reduced aggression, and enhanced self-regulation.

According to a study conducted by Porters (2013), it was observed that autistic children who engaged in regular yoga sessions exhibited an increase in verbal communication, enhanced socialization with peers, and a greater frequency of eye contact compared to their pre-intervention levels. The efficacy of mindfulness in mitigating the intensity of anxiety and depression has been empirically demonstrated. Another case study conducted by Field et al. (2012) investigated the effects of yoga on children with ASD. The study included 20 children aged 6 to 12 who participated in a 12-week yoga program. The intervention involved twice-weekly 45-minute sessions focusing on postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques. The findings indicated significant improvements in social functioning, sensory processing, and motor skills.

Diamond and Lee (2011) conducted a study that revealed that practising yoga can help to reduce anxiety and improve several areas of well-being, such as relationships, sleep patterns, and general quality of life. Furthermore, their findings suggested that practising yoga can improve social communication, emotional management, behaviour, and cognitive performance.

The research examined suggests that yoga has various benefits for children with ASD. Yoga's disciplined character, combined with its emphasis on mindfulness and bodily awareness, is well-suited to the needs of children with autism. Integrating yoga into therapeutic interventions for children with ASD can bring considerable advantages while complementing established therapies. Various studies suggest that yoga helps improve social functioning, behavioural regulation, and sensory processing.

**Table of Key Findings from Studies**

Aspects	Key Findings	References
Motor Skills	Enhanced gross and fine motor abilities, improved balance, and coordination.	Ramanathan et al. (2019); Radhakrishna et al. (2010)
Social Interaction	Increased verbal communication, better social engagement, and improved peer relationships.	Porter (2013); Koenig et al. (2012)

Emotional Regulation	Reduction in anxiety, aggression, and improved self-regulation.	Sinha & Reddy (2017); Rosenblatt et al. (2011)
Cognitive Development	Improved attention span, executive functioning, and memory.	Diamond & Lee (2011); Field et al. (2012)
Sensory Processing	Improved sensory integration and reduced sensory overload.	Radhakrishna et al. (2010)

## **Yoga and Children with Autism-Spectrum Disorder**

Yoga neutralizes and calms the sympathetic nervous system, bringing inner peace to children with special needs. Children with ASD benefit from improved sleep and concentration. Soft chanting and proper sitting postures at the start of class are crucial for these children as they provide support sensitivities to the external world. Deep belly breathing is very beneficial as it is their natural way of calming down. Their breathing is often shallow and fast, and they frequently breathe through their mouths. Building mutual understanding and friendship with their yoga teacher is also beneficial for children with ASD. The free-flowing nature of yoga practice fosters the natural development of bonds. Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have several challenges in their daily lives and learning experiences. ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder defined by difficulties with social communication and interaction, as well as confined, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or hobbies. These issues emerge in a variety of ways and can have a substantial influence on a child's ability to learn, interact socially, and manage daily routine tasks.

### **1. Social Interaction and Communication Deficits:**

Children with ASD frequently have trouble interpreting and responding to social cues. They may struggle to establish eye contact, comprehend facial expressions, and engage in reciprocal conversation. This can make it difficult to communicate with classmates, participate in group activities, and build meaningful relationships (Baron-Cohen, 2008).

### **2. Sensory Processing Issues:**

Many children with ASD have sensory processing issues. They may be hypersensitive to sounds, textures, lighting, and other stimuli in their environment (Tomchek & Dunn, 2007). These sensory sensitivities can induce anxiety and distractibility in the classroom, making it difficult for students to concentrate on learning activities or participate in group discussions.

### **3. Repetitive and Restricted Behaviours:**

Children with ASD frequently exhibit repetitive activities, such as hand flapping, rocking, or echolalia (repeating words or phrases). These habits can disrupt learning and social interaction. Furthermore, students with restricted interests and an appreciation for routines may struggle to adapt to new or unexpected settings (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

#### **4. Difficulty with Executive Functioning:**

Executive functioning refers to the mental processes that allow us to plan, concentrate, remember directions, and handle many tasks. Children with ASD frequently show executive functioning deficiencies, which causes issues with organization, time management, and problem-solving (Hill, 2004). This affects their capacity to follow instructions, finish assignments, and navigate educational environments autonomously.

#### **5. Emotional Regulation and Behavioural Challenges:**

Students with ASD might find it difficult to manage their emotions, resulting in meltdowns, outbursts, or shutdowns, particularly when overwhelmed by sensory inputs, social demands, or routine changes. Emotional dysregulation can cause behavioural issues, disrupting their learning experience and social connections (Mazefsky et al. 2013).

Yoga is an invaluable intervention for addressing some of the complex challenges children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) experience. Mindfulness, controlled breathing, and structured movement patterns provide a predictable and soothing regime for physical and emotional well-being. Research shows the effectiveness of yoga in sensory processing, social skills, and emotional regulation of children with ASD (Radhakrishna et al., 2010; Porter, 2013). Through yoga, children increase their attention, self-calming, and tolerance for transitions, supporting typical therapies. For example, pranayama techniques reduce anxiety and overload of sensory input, while group sessions enhance empathy and peer communication (Koenig et al., 2012). These advantages make yoga quite affordable and accessible support for children with ASD.

#### **Ministry of AYUSH**

In this regard, the Ministry of AYUSH has highlighted yoga as an inclusive approach that will help address the specific needs of children with special needs, especially those diagnosed with ASDs. The holistic principles and non-invasive techniques of yoga, in its practice, make it precisely suitable to enhance the physical, emotional, and social well-being of these children. The obvious advantage of yoga lies in its promotion of self-sufficiency, practice during the early years allows children to become synchronized with the process of fine and gross motor skills. Such developments help them attain some level of independence in daily activities, thereby increasing their confidence and sense of autonomy. For example, balanced and coordinated asanas help children strengthen their motor skills, which are often at a challenging stage in ASD (Gol, 2017).

Yoga also provides significant enhancements in emotional stability. Practices like pranayama have a soothing effect on the nervous system, thereby helping alleviate emotional disturbances of worry, frustration, or aggression. With the ability to control their breathing, children can be armed with stress-reduction tools and a way to live an inner, peaceful life. Additionally, yoga supports optimized physical health by addressing common physiological concerns among children diagnosed with ASD, including drooling, obesity, and hyperactivity. Regular engagement in yoga poses facilitates muscle tone

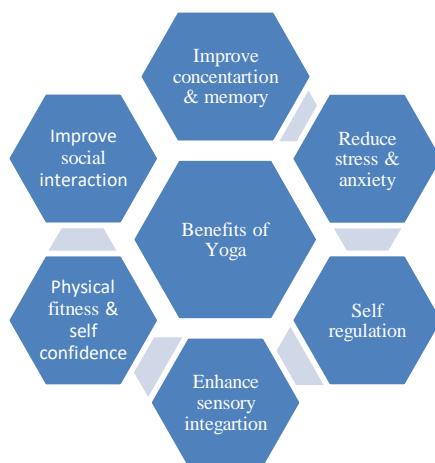
and flexibility and enhances levels of overall physical activity, leading to better health and the minimization of sedentary behaviours (Gol, 2017).

In addition to the physical and emotional benefits, it is in the proper understanding of cooperation and empathy built during group sessions that yoga strengthens interpersonal relationships. Children who share in group activities involve themselves with peers and follow instructions, learn to take turns and enhance their social skills by being meaningful contributors. Another significant benefit is the possibility of minimum reliance on drugs. By fostering well-being and emotional regulation, yoga reduces the intake of medicines for behavioural problems or anxiety. The intervention thus supplements medical practices with a possible effective and side-effect-free sustainable alternative. The implementation of yoga as part of holistic care plans thus strengthens the Ministry of AYUSH's mission of accessible and inclusive interventions. Nurturing self-confidence, social inclusion, and independence through structured yet flexible practices, such as those in yoga, helps children with ASD along with their families improve their quality of life (Gol, 2017).

### **Yoga acts as a Classroom Management Tool**

Yoga is becoming increasingly popular as a classroom management aid for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) because of its holistic approach to addressing the unique issues these students experience. Autism is frequently connected with limitations in social communication, sensory processing, emotional regulation, and attention, all of which can influence classroom behaviour. Yoga provides a disciplined, calming and sensory-friendly solution that can assist manage these issues, resulting in a more conducive learning environment.

Here are several particular ways yoga serves as an excellent classroom management tool for autistic children, backed up by studies and research.



#### **1. Improving Focus and Attention:**

Children with ASD frequently struggle to keep attention in classroom activities due to sensory disturbances or trouble regulating focus. Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness and

controlled breathing enhances concentration and mental clarity, which can help children focus on their current task. Regular practice of yoga postures and breathing methods improves the brain's attention span, which is an important feature of learning and classroom participation. Koenig et al. (2012) revealed that yoga dramatically improved attention and focus in children with ASD, allowing them to participate more effectively in class activities. Teachers can assist students in focusing during classes by setting a disciplined yoga therapy in the classroom.

## **2. Reducing Stress and Anxiety**

Students with autism frequently experience increased anxiety due to the difficulties of navigating social interactions and sensory settings. Stress can cause disruptive behaviours like meltdowns or emotional outbursts. Yoga offers a natural way to relieve stress by utilizing techniques such as pranayama (breathing exercises) that promote relaxation and soothe the nervous system. According to Goldberg (2015), yoga considerably reduces anxiety in autistic children, resulting in fewer behavioural disruptions in class. Teachers can assist in preventing or mitigating anxiety-driven behaviours by incorporating yoga breaks or mindfulness practices into the school day, resulting in a more tranquil and productive learning environment.

## **3. Promoting Emotional Regulation**

Children with ASD frequently have difficulty with emotional control, which might include emotions of irritation, aggression, or overstimulation. Yoga's mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing and body awareness, help youngsters understand and control their emotions. This is especially essential in the classroom; as emotional dysregulation can lead to disruptive behaviour or difficulties following directions. Rosenblatt et al. (2011) observed that children with ASD who practised yoga saw significant improvements in emotional regulation. This resulted in fewer emotional outbursts, more regulated responses to difficult situations, and overall better classroom behaviour. Teachers can utilize yoga to assist these students regulate their emotions throughout the day.

## **4. Enhancing Sensory Integration**

Many autistic children have issues with sensory processing because they are hypersensitive to stimuli such as light, music, or touch. This can cause sensory overload, which hurts classroom behaviour and learning. Yoga promotes sensory integration by stimulating the proprioceptive and vestibular systems through body motions and positions. These movements aid learners in processing sensory information more effectively, lowering the chance of sensory overload in the classroom.

According to Radhakrishna et al. (2010), yoga activities can help relax the sensory system, allowing youngsters to focus more on classroom tasks without being overwhelmed by sensory stimulation. Implementing yoga as a classroom routine can assist in creating a more sensory-friendly environment, allowing students with ASD to participate fully in educational activities.



## **5. Creating Predictable and Structured Routines**

Predictable routines and regulated environments help autistic children feel safe and comfortable. Yoga is a scheduled practice that can be regularly introduced into the school day. The repetitive nature of yoga postures, combined with the predictability of the sequences, contributes to a relaxing and consistent routine that autistic students can anticipate and rely on. Teachers can alleviate anxiety and meet students' demands for routine by incorporating brief yoga sessions at regular intervals throughout the day. This exercise can also be used as a transitional activity, allowing students to go more smoothly from one task to the next, according to Koenig and Buckley-Reen (2013). Yoga's framework helps autistic children manage transitions which are major triggers for disruptive behaviours.

## **6. Supporting Behavioural Management**

Yoga is also an effective approach for controlling problematic attitudes in the classroom. When agitated or overwhelmed, children with autism may exhibit repetitive behaviours such as hand flapping or rocking, as well as violent or self-injurious behaviours. Yoga reduces these habits by encouraging relaxation, attention, and body awareness. Rosenblatt et al. (2011) found that yoga therapies significantly reduced disruptive behaviours in children with ASD, such as hostility, hyperactivity, and repetitive activities. Teachers who incorporate yoga into their classroom management plans can reduce the frequency of these problematic behaviours and create a more peaceful learning environment.

## **7. Improving Social Interaction**

While social engagement is typically challenging for children with ASD, practising yoga in a group setting might help them gain social skills. Group yoga sessions involve taking turns, following directions, and sharing space with peers, all of which help to improve social skills. These skills are necessary in the classroom for cooperative learning and participation in group activities. Koenig et al. (2012) observed that yoga not only improved individual behaviour but also improved peer group relationships in children with autism. When incorporated into a classroom setting, yoga encourages children with autism to interact positively with their peers, resulting in a more inclusive classroom dynamic.

## **Conclusion**

Most people experience some form of difficulties that limit their daily activities, whether emotional, mental, or physical. Yoga is not a substitute for any type of therapy; it is a way of life and an art form that anyone may benefit from. Yoga is suitable for people who have different abilities. Yoga appears to be a cost-effective technique for teaching children with special needs and creating neuroplasticity by rewiring their brains regularly. Furthermore, yoga's holistic approach to a human being means that it has enormous but untapped potential to become an important means of self-development for the differently abled, helping to improve the quality of their lives and facilitating

their integration into mainstream society in the sustainable and holistic ways that will be required for the bright future that we all look forward to. Children with special needs should include yoga in everyday activities, urged experts, to increase their general health and quality of life. Since autistic children learn new motions and apply them to other activities, teaching yoga therapy increases their physical literacy. Yoga poses can get more sophisticated to fit students' needs as they grow more confident.

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# Transforming Education through Technology an Assessment of Technology-Assisted Malayalam Language Instruction at Kerala's Higher Education

**Pratheesh. P<sup>1</sup> & Mary Reema<sup>2</sup>**

## Abstract

*Language instruction is crucial in higher education, helping students develop into competent adults. Traditional classroom management has limitations, leading teachers to adopt cutting-edge tactics and technology to enhance language learning and classroom instruction. In Kerala, a state with high literacy rates, the integration of technology in Malayalam language instruction at higher education institutions reflects a trend towards enhancing educational outcomes through innovative pedagogical approaches. Malayalam holds significant cultural and linguistic importance, making effective teaching and learning essential for preserving the state's heritage and promoting effective communication among its population. AI and other technologies have shown potential in teaching Malayalam, a complex language with distinct alphabet and pronunciation guidelines, particularly in postsecondary settings like colleges and universities. This study explores the effectiveness of technology-aided instruction in Malayalam language learning using qualitative and quantitative methods, aiming to identify barriers, design effective programs, and enhance students' learning experiences through innovative approaches.*

**Key Terms:** Language Learning, Language Skills, Technology in Education, Technology Guided Language Education, Technology Tools

## Introduction

Language instruction is highly valued by higher education institutions because it equips students with the language proficiency and essential communication skills, they need to be successful in the workplace. However, one of the biggest barriers to language

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learning in Indian higher education is the lack of emphasis on practical application. Traditional teaching methods usually focus on the theoretical aspects of language, like vocabulary and grammatical rules, and neglect the development of practical communication skills (Dziuban et al., 2017). Because of this, students graduate with theoretical knowledge but lack the skills necessary to communicate with people in the actual world. To address this issue, we urgently need more immersive and interactive teaching methods that provide students the opportunity to practice their language skills in authentic settings.

Conventional practices and non-competent learners in higher education often poses limitations (Richards, 2017), hindering the effectiveness of learning of Malayalam language, the sole language of South Indian state of Kerala. Technology-aided instruction has emerged as a promising solution to address these challenges and enhance language learning experiences in Higher education, particularly in Malayalam like Indian languages. Malayalam, is a complex language with distinct alphabet and pronunciation guidelines, and is a challenging language for non-native speakers to learn. The modern techno-based approach can improve language acquisition results for learners with varying degrees of proficiency.

### **Review of Literature**

The teaching-learning process must undergo substantial changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to meet the changing needs of both educators and learners. The quick development of technology necessitates reconsidering the roles that educators and learners play as well as finding creative methods to use cutting-edge learning tools to further their academic and career goals (Veletsianos, 2010, 2016). The emerging learning technologies as tools, concepts, innovations, and improvements that have not yet gained widespread adoption in the education sector but have the potential to greatly improve teaching and learning. Artificial intelligence, robots, learning analytics, virtual, augmented, and mixed reality, among many others, are examples of these (Shadiev & Wang, 2022). According to Altinay et al. (2020), accessibility and inclusivity are important, and active engagement in education at all levels is crucial. The notion of global citizenship (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2023) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2023) need an all-encompassing approach to education that goes beyond conventional academic topics.

The following was observed in the literature review on technology-aided instruction and its potential to improve Malayalam language education. Increased language proficiency was highlighted in researches and that TAI can result in notable gains in speaking, writing, listening, and reading comprehension (Kumar, 2018; Suresh, 2020). Others quoted the increased motivation and engagement aspect. TAI can boost students' interest and engagement in language acquisition, especially for those who learn best visually or kinaesthetically (Rajesh, 2019). Personalized learning is made possible by technology, which lets students concentrate on their areas of weakness and study at their own speed (Lekshmi, 2017). The TAI approach also provides resources available to students. According to Vijayakumar (2019), TAI can give students access to a multitude

of online textbooks, videos, and language-learning apps. As a support for instructors, Sreedevi (2018) argues that technology can help teachers with lesson planning, monitoring student progress, and giving feedback.

Nevertheless, certain obstacles and restrictions were also noted. Technical difficulties, like hardware malfunctions or network problems, can reduce TAI's efficacy (Rajesh, 2019). To successfully incorporate technology into their lesson plans, teachers might require training (Lekshmi, 2017). Equity and access: A digital divide may result from some students not having equal access to technology (Vijayakumar, 2019). Language support: According to Suresh (2020), TAI might not be able to meet the demands of students who need extra language support or who have special needs. Based these works, this study seeks to bridge the gap in research on sustainable development education by focusing on unique theoretical contributions and practical uses of emerging learning technologies, particularly in Indian languages such as Malayalam. It will then investigate existing learning models and theories, actual implementations of technology-assisted instruction, and their efficacy, as backed by empirical evidence. It also intends to encourage and facilitate future research into the creation of novel technologies and their educational applications, bridging innovation, pedagogy, and practice in technology-supported sustainable development education.

## Methodology

This research endeavours to assess the present condition of Malayalam language instruction in Higher education, pinpoint the advantages and difficulties of technology-assisted instruction, appraise its influence on students' language ability, drive, and involvement, juxtapose its efficacy with conventional techniques, and offer suggestions for incorporating technology-assisted instruction into Malayalam language teaching.

The study's objectives are,

- To assess how technology-assisted instruction affects students' Malayalam language skills.
- To evaluate how well different technological resources and tools work for teaching Malayalam.
- To compile teachers' and students' opinions and experiences around technology-assisted language learning.
- To determine the difficulties and impediments of using technology in Malayalam language instruction.

A mixed-methods strategy is used for the study, integrating quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis techniques. Focus groups and interviews are two qualitative methods that is used to gather information about students' experiences and pinpoint obstacles to good teaching. Furthermore, the survey offers a methodical evaluation of the influence of technology on the results of language acquisition. A total of 1000 undergrad students from arts and science colleges throughout Kerala participated in the online survey conducted through a Google Form that was distributed via email and

WhatsApp. The interview and focus group participants included 300 college students and 100 language educators from various arts and science colleges located in the south and central districts of Kerala state.

The collected data was tabulated and analysed using the proper and strategic statistical tools, SPSS software, which provides a quick-visual modelling environment that can accommodate models ranging from the smallest to the most complicated and contains frequencies, cross-tabulation, and bivariate statistics. This study explores novel ways to language instruction by combining descriptive and analytical research methods. As a result, the study produces insightful data that improves students' learning outcomes and guides the creation of successful language training programs.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the discussion section of the study "An Assessment of Technology-Assisted Malayalam Language Instruction at Kerala's Higher Education" is to highlight the implications for educational practice, interpret and analyse the results in light of the body of existing literature, and recommend areas for further research. To give a thorough grasp of how technology affects Malayalam language training, this part will combine the quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the study.

Being able to learn and speak various languages is becoming more and more important in the linked world of today. Learning the language with essential competency is essential for forming people's cognitive capacities and their ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. Teachers are using technology to improve the learning process in order to address the increasing need for efficient language training. The youngest Dravidian language, Malayalam, is rich in literature and history and is mostly spoken in the Indian state of Kerala. In 2013, it was awarded the title of "Classical Language," designating a language having a history spanning over two millennia. Malayalam has a distinct script and grammar structure, making it a difficult but worthwhile language to master. Textbooks, lectures, and in-class interactions have historically been the mainstays of language education. Nonetheless, new avenues for captivating and immersive learning experiences have been made possible by the incorporation of technology into language instruction.

## **Conventional Methodology**

The foundation of teaching has always been the conventional techniques of transmitting knowledge and skills to students. But as new technologies develop and the educational landscape changes, it is becoming more and more clear that traditional teaching methods may not always be the best for motivating and empowering students. This opinion is especially valid when it comes to Malayalam language instruction at the undergraduate level, as the shortcomings of conventional approaches are becoming increasingly apparent.

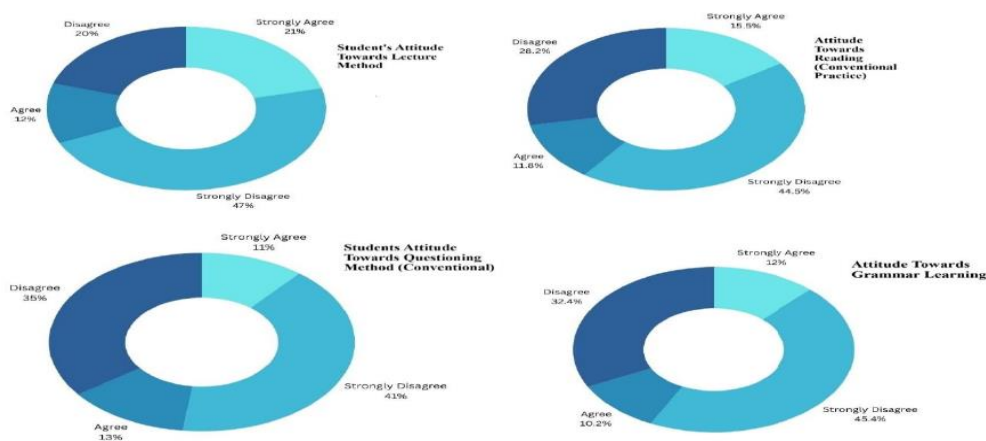
The interview and survey conducted with students and educators in the field of Malayalam language teaching shed light on the various problems and limitations

associated with conventional teaching practices at the undergraduate level. One of the primary issues highlighted was the teacher-cantered nature of traditional methodology. In conventional teaching, the focus is primarily on the instructor, with students expected to passively absorb information through lectures and textbook readings. This approach often leads to disengagement and lack of interest among students, who may struggle to connect with the material being taught.

**Table 1: Attitude towards Conventional Practice(n-1000)**

Component	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Disagree	% of Disagreement
Lecture	21%	47%	12%	20%	70%
Reading	17%	49%	13%	31%	70%
Recitation	18%	39%	16%	27%	66%
Story	29%	15%	27%	29%	44%
Question	11%	41%	13%	35%	76%
Explanation	23%	29%	27%	21%	50%
Grammar	13%	49%	11%	27%	76%

Grammar proficiency was seen as the cornerstone of traditional language education approaches, which placed an emphasis on explicit instruction and repeated practice. However, 76% of the participants disagreed with this widely held belief. Furthermore, 76% of the participants disapprove of the conventional method of asking questions in the classroom as a crucial part of teaching language. Almost all of the components included by this study, including reading, recitation, story, and explanation, had 60% and above rate of disagreement among the students. Even yet, they prefer story and explanation parts and have a lower percentage of disagreement with these elements.



**Figure 1: Comparative Analysis of Students Attitude Against Conventional Practice**



Students are dissatisfied with the boring learning environment and a lack of motivation and reinforcement. Traditional teaching methods, which often involve teacher-centered lectures, can lead to passive learning and reduced student engagement. While 74% of students accept these methods, this does not necessarily translate into high levels of motivation or engagement. Compared to innovative methods like student-centered approaches and online learning, traditional methods often fall short in terms of motivation and engagement

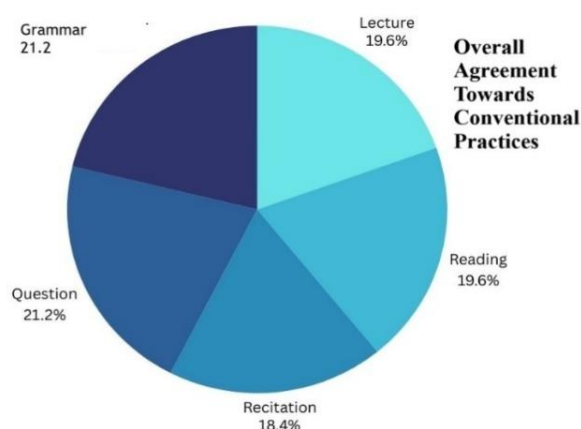


Figure 2: Overall Agreement of Students towards Conventional Practices

In every way—lecture, reading, recitation, question, explanation, storytelling, and grammar instruction—just one-fifth of the students supported traditional approaches. Traditional teaching methods are criticized for their monotony and lack of real-world application, leading to negative attitudes towards learning. Despite these challenges, traditional methods offer structure and familiarity, making them easier to implement and manage in educational settings.

Table 2: Tabulation of Usefulness & Student's Satisfaction (n-1000)

Satisfied	Satisfactory Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	51% -64%	178	17.8%
No	29% - 41%	822	82.2%

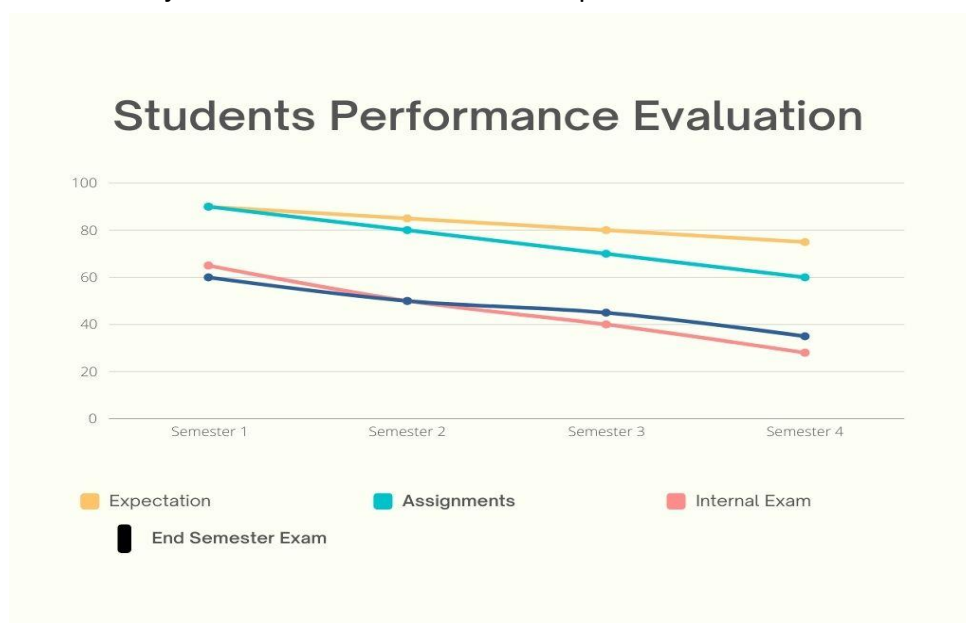
In terms of general usefulness and satisfaction with traditional language teaching-learning methods, 17.8% of survey respondents said they were satisfied, with an overall agreement ranging from 51% to 64% as satisfactory. While the majority of respondents rated the conventional method as poor, while agreement or acceptance of conventional practice is ranging 29% to 41%. This study found that the majority of students who want

to study in their native language at the Higher level are dissatisfied with traditional language instruction methods.

**Table 3: Student Satisfaction Index (n-1000)**

Scale	Mean	SD
Content	3.01	0.63
Transaction Method	3.20	0.65
Evaluation Pattern	2.71	0.57
Satisfaction	2.94	0.59
Self-Usefulness	2.81	0.51
Learner to Learner	2.50	0.47
Teacher to Learner	2.56	0.49

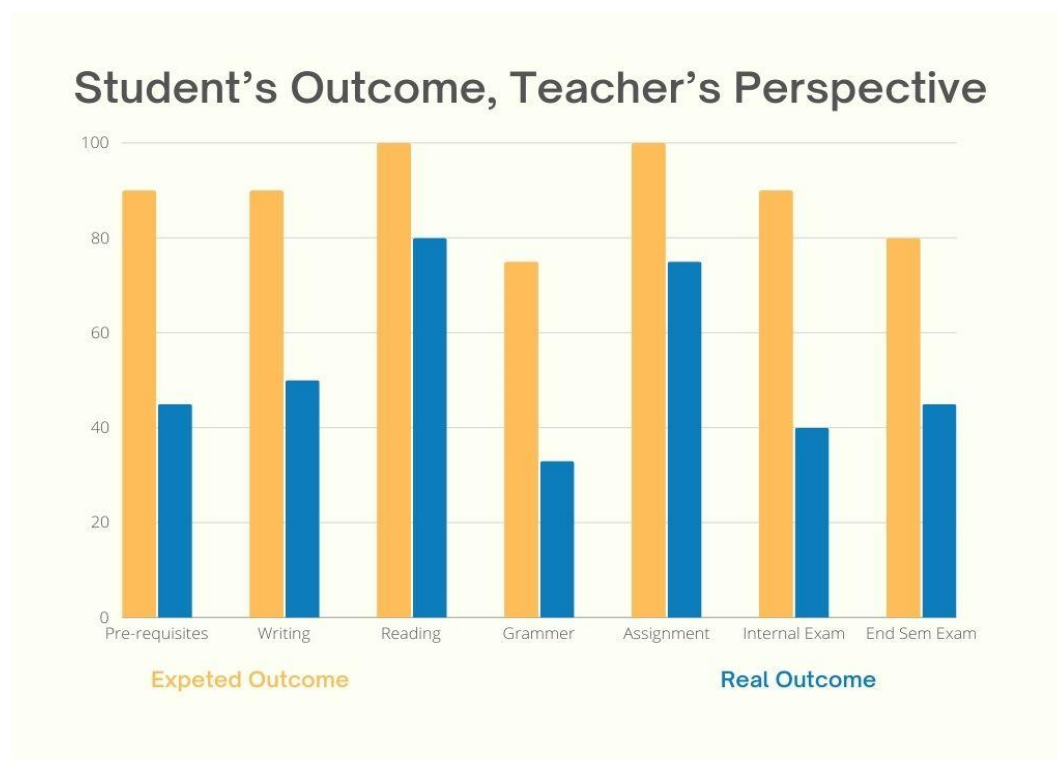
The average score for each scale falls short of the expected range. A standard deviation less than 0.72 indicates that participants were dissatisfied with the traditional pattern of language learning, and their replies indicated a need for methodological modification. The average score for content engagement is 3.01, and for content transactions it is 3.20. The mean difference between learner to learner and learner to teacher was minimal (Mean scores are 2.50 and 2.56). The average mean score for satisfaction is 2.94 and was somewhat higher than the midway of 1.50, while self-usefulness mean score is 2.81 and fell just short of the satisfaction midpoint.



**Figure 3: Students' Performance throughout Semesters (n-1000)**

It is evident that there is a sizable discrepancy between the expected and actual performance outcomes after analysing the students' reported semester-by-semester performance. Since Malayalam is their mother tongue and they believed they had mastered its reading, writing, speaking, and grammar, the students anticipated performing exceptionally well overall across the semesters and anticipated this to be reflected in their exam results. However, in practice, students' expectations of the traditional teaching-learning process are completely at odds with this, and they tend to have lower expectations for each semester because their performance on all evaluation components fell well short of expectations. The data also showed that, although teachers first scaffold their students by giving them lenient ratings for assignments and internal examinations, they eventually assigned true grades for these components after determining the average performance on the end-of-semester exam.

The following observations are made about how teachers perceive teaching languages in conventional mode and how well students succeed.



**Figure 4: Student Outcomes from the Teacher's Perspective (n-100)**

It is clear from the teacher's perspective (100 Malayalam language instructors from different districts of Kerala) that the actual and expected outcomes of students' performance varies significantly. The reasons differ depending on the particular environment in each of Kerala's districts, but the reality that students are not meeting expectations in the conventional manner of Malayalam language instruction stays the same. All participants—teachers and students alike—agreed that the traditional form of

instruction is the true obstacle to the teaching-learning process and that better results will follow if the mode of transaction is changed. It emphasizes the significance of revising traditional technique and bridging the gap between academic goals and practical necessities, as well as the importance of using technology into teaching and learning processes.

### **Alternate Methodology**

Traditional Malayalam language education has significant disadvantages, including heavy reliance on literature and a lack of focus on communication skills. This may hinder students' ability to communicate effectively in real-world settings. The exam-oriented approach promotes rote memorization, inhibiting creativity and critical thinking. It is anticipated that these challenges would be overcome by the technological integration of teaching methods in the digital era and the essential educational changes that link teaching methods with contemporary learning styles (Delen & Liew, 2016).

The teaching of languages like Malayalam is being reshaped by technology in higher education settings. Traditional methods are being replaced with innovative approaches that integrate technology, interactive software, online resources, and multimedia tools. This dynamic environment enhances engagement and fosters deeper understanding among learners. As educators use these modern strategies, they unlock countless possibilities for language acquisition that transcend conventional boundaries. These include blended learning methods, project-based learning, and storytelling techniques. Storytelling piques attention and improves understanding, but project-based learning gives students practical activities to boost confidence. Blended learning techniques offer for scheduling flexibility by combining in-person instruction with online resources. These teaching strategies improve student enjoyment while preparing them for a globalized society in which communication is cross-border.

An immersive experience is created by utilizing a technology-aided strategy that combines digital tools such as language applications and online courses with multimedia features like movies, audio clips, and animations to make complex grammatical rules and vocabulary more engaging. Technology-assisted instruction provides real-time feedback so that students can quickly assess their strengths and deficiencies (Broadbent & Poon, 2015). Through practice, collaborative platforms help students become more fluent in Malayalam by facilitating conversation among them and stimulating discussion outside of the classroom. Aspiring Malayalam speakers benefit from an enhanced educational environment that combines innovation and tradition.

The advantages of using technology in the classroom are numerous and significant. It makes individualized learning easier and enables teachers to adjust their lessons to fit the needs of each unique student (Eastin & LaRose, 2000). By the use of interactive tools, it raises student involvement and makes lessons more engaging and dynamic. Sophisticated assessment techniques facilitate efficient progress tracking and enable teachers to identify areas that need more attention. Digital platforms also make it easier for peers from other locations or backgrounds to collaborate, which enhances the

learning process by exposing pupils to a range of viewpoints on language use and cultural quirks. This method prepares students for challenges in the future by keeping education current and relevant in a world that is always changing.

### **Resources for Technology Aided Instruction**

**Centre for Malayalam Language Technology:** The Language Technology Centre's primary goal is to create fundamental digital materials for Malayalam language instruction. The Malayalam University created this centre after realizing that much work needs to be done in order to develop the technological resources necessary to make Malayalam more machine-intelligible. The Language Technology Centre is creating Android applications to help with language learning in addition to a variety of language software, a digital dictionary, and a digital library.

The first product of the centre is a complete digital voice archive of the Malayalam language. This resource is designed to help researchers and software developers accurately understand the phonetic structure of the language (Malayalam Phonetic Archive). 'Akshara Bhedini' is another product developed by Bhasha Technology Centre. As a part of the project to facilitate language learning with technology aids, the language learning app developed by the centre named 'Malayalampatham' is available on Play store. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.malayalampatham>

**ICT & Technology Lab:** Technology-based tools that promote learner autonomy, active participation, and successful language learning outcomes include language labs, online platforms, digitalization, multimedia devices, mobile phones, learning applications, flashcards, audio/visual multimedia content, EdTech solutions, and social media. ICT tools help instructors by improving the learning environment, providing a wider range of instructional strategies and materials, bridging the gap between the classroom and the outside world, streamlining lesson preparation and organizing, and boosting chances for ongoing professional development. Through increased motivation, flexible learning, adaptive learning, and a larger exposure to the target language and cultural contexts, technology in language learning improves student engagement, motivation, and achievement. Practice is improved by tools like speech recognition and interactive multimedia activities, and flexible learning lets students select their own pace and monitor their development. Customized lessons are offered via adaptive learning systems, which improves student learning outcomes overall.

**Language Learning Applications:** With the aid of Speak Malayalam 360, you may effortlessly learn and speak Malayalam using a natural language learning pattern. With the software, you may write in Malayalam on a writing pad that can identify every letter you type on the screen. Additionally, it will provide you with an audio answer in Malayalam, as well as the pronunciation of each word in Malayalam and helpful examples to guide you through each stage. An additional mobile application is Ling Learn Malayalam Language. It will provide security beginning with knowing how developers gather and distribute your information. The way the data is secured and privacy may differ depending on learner's age, location, and use.

The interview and survey findings underscore the urgent need for a paradigm shift in Malayalam language teaching at the undergraduate level. Moving away from the teacher-cantered, literature-heavy, and exam-driven approach towards a more communicative, student-cantered, and technology-enhanced model is crucial to fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the language among students. By addressing the problems and limitations of conventional teaching practices, educators can create a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment that empowers students to succeed in their language learning journey.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for further Studies**

The current study underlines the necessity of technology-assisted instruction and provides a broad assessment of Malayalam language teaching and learning at the post-secondary level. Future studies can, however, compare it to the teaching-learning process of other languages at the Higher level. Additionally, this study does not cover psycho-social characteristics such as learner attitude, aptitude, content difficulty level, etc.; instead, it suggests them for future research. Important variables including learner opinions toward the institutions they study, technology usage, mother-tongue preferences, socioeconomic level, and access to technology outside of school are also uncontrollable in this study. While tracing broad patterns in a population that has not received much attention, other differences within the population should also be looked into. Re-examining research on learner attitudes toward technology and language acquisition is necessary because of the substantial shift in technology usage in Higher classrooms brought about by the COVID-19 epidemic.

### **Conclusion**

*Malayalam language education in Kerala is crucial for students' identity and cultural heritage. Traditional teaching methods often focus on rote memorization and textbook-heavy learning, neglecting interactive involvement and student motivation. Technology-aided instruction significantly improves students' language skills, particularly in listening and speaking, and fosters a more collaborative and interactive learning environment. Students reported increased motivation and a greater sense of autonomy in their learning processes. However, challenges related to access to technology and the need for adequate instructor training were identified. This study highlights the potential of technology to transform Malayalam language education in postsecondary settings and provides recommendations for educators and policymakers to enhance language acquisition through innovative instructional practices. The incorporation of technology-aided instruction in graduate level institutions can elevate language learning outcomes and enhance students' educational experiences.*

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## ICT Integrated Career Orientation of Prospective Teachers: An Innovative Perspective

**Soumen Ghosh<sup>1</sup> & C. Siva Sankar<sup>2</sup>**

### Abstract

*Building from an emerging perspective, the study explored and understood the significance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its implication for career orientation. This study used a systematic secondary data analysis method and reviews through an in-depth analysis of adopting ICT in career orientation from multiple perspectives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century scenario. The study identified the values of career orientation or guidance programs that may disseminate insightful suggestions or knowledge with the integration of ICT by career practitioners to individuals or clients. The study showed the contribution of ICT in providing career orientation, addressing different ways of integration, and as an innovative or effective paradigm for contributing the best practices for individuals' future careers as well as advancing their decisions in their personal and professional fields of practice. In the continuing 21<sup>st</sup> century, ICT has emerged in a progressive role to manifest its implication towards career orientation and attainment of its user-friendly and inclusiveness pathway.*

**Keywords:** Career Orientation, Guidance and Counselling, Information and Communication Technology, Individual Needs and Innovative perspective.

### Introduction

ICT plays a significant role in various aspects of modern life, including education and career orientation (Paul, 2018). ICT-integrated career orientation implies a strategy or approach where technology, particularly ICT tools, is utilized to enhance the process of career orientation. Using ICT to provide students or individuals with information, resources and guidance about various career paths and opportunities (Watts, 2002). The process of assisting people in comprehending and examining the various career alternatives that are open to them is referred to as career orientation. It equips them with information, resources and support to help them understand their interests, strengths, goals, aspirations and values, enabling them to make informed decisions

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about their future career life. ICT tools can be crucial in providing valuable information about different professions, industries, required skills, job market trends and more (Masagca & Londerio, 2008). By integrating ICT into career orientation, educators and counsellors can offer a more dynamic and interactive way for students to explore potential careers (Kirpal, 2011). Narayan, (2018) stated that ICTs can improve the quality of education in various ways, such as boosting student motivation and engagement, supporting the development of fundamental skills, and enhancing teacher training. With this approach, trainees can engage in online career orientation practice anytime, at their convenience or flexibility.

The integration of ICT into career orientation can make the process more efficient, accessible and tailored to individual needs. It can also prepare trainees for careers in technology-driven fields by familiarizing them with the tools and platforms commonly used in those industries (Bimrose et al., 2015). The adoption of ICT has been expanding across various disciplines, and this approach is now widely accepted as part of career decision-making. Hence, it addresses trainees' career development needs and responds to the demand for appropriate transfer practices.

### **Operational Definition of the terms used**

**Career orientation:** Arthur et al. (1989) defined 'career is the progression of an individual's work experiences over time'. Here, career orientation refers to the process of helping trainees to understand and explore different career options available to them. It involves assessing one's skills, interests, and values to make well-informed decisions about future career goals.

### **The main Objectives of Career Orientation are:**

- i. Self-Assessment
- ii. Exploration
- iii. Decision-Making
- iv. Goal Setting
- v. Skill Development
- vi. Job Search Strategies
- vii. Adaptation
- viii. Career progression
- ix. Educational attainment and
- x. Opportunity awareness

**Prospective Teachers:** In the present study, prospective teachers are those trainees who are receiving formal training from a teacher education institution with the goal of becoming a teacher. However, they have not been awarded their degrees yet.

**Traditional-Based Career Orientation:** In the present study, traditional career orientation refers to the approaches and practices used for career guidance and

development before the general adoption of technology. These approaches are more individualized and often rely on direct human interaction, printed resources, manual assessments and community involvement. Here are the key procedures involved in traditional career orientation:

- i. **Classroom-Based Career Education:** Institutions often conduct classroom sessions where teachers introduce students to different career options. These lessons provide basic information about professions, industries and career pathways.
- ii. **Career Fairs and Exhibitions:** Schools, colleges and communities organize career fairs where representatives from various industries, colleges and vocational training institutes share insights into different career paths.
- iii. **One-on-One Counselling:** Students or individuals seeking career guidance meet with a career counsellor in person. These sessions allow counsellors to understand the individual's interests, strengths, weaknesses and aspirations.
- iv. **Manual Tests and Assessments:** Traditional career orientation often includes administering aptitude, interest and personality tests on paper. These tests help assess an individual's cognitive abilities, interests and personality traits to suggest suitable career options.
- v. **College and University Visits:** Schools often arrange visits to local universities or vocational training institutes where students can explore potential study programs, admission requirements and career prospects.
- vi. **Guest Lectures by Professionals:** Schools invite professionals from different fields to speak to students about their jobs, career growth and the qualifications required to enter various professions. These guest lectures help students gain insight into specific career paths.
- vii. **Workshops and Seminars:** Schools, colleges and career centers hold workshops and seminars on various topics such as resume writing, interview preparation, communication skills and workplace etiquette. These programs prepare students for job search and employment.
- viii. **Job Placement Assistance:** Traditional career orientation in higher education often includes placement programs where students receive help in securing employment after graduation.

**ICTs in Career Orientation:** ICT supports career exploration, planning, and development through cutting-edge tools and platforms that have a revolutionary effect on career orientation. ICTs greatly improve career orientation by offering a wide range of individualized, adaptable, and comprehensive tools and assistance. Consequently, ICT integration into career orientation procedures aids people in making better career decisions in a world that is becoming more and more digital.

### ICT Integrated Career Orientation:

In the present study, ICT-integrated career orientation leverages digital tools and platforms to enhance traditional approaches to career guidance and support. This approach offers a more dynamic, accessible, adaptable, and personalized method for career exploration and development.

### Several Online Platforms provide Career Guidance Services, such as:

- i. **Mindler:** Mindler is an online career guidance platform based in India that provides a range of services to assist professionals and students in making well-informed career decisions. It's a five-dimensional career assessment that offers a novel method of career counselling as well as individualized career planning and recommendations.
- ii. **Edumilestones:** Offering thorough career assessments and professional development services to people at all phases of their career journey, it's a popular platform for career counselling and assistance. With its combination of technology, data-driven insights and professional assistance, people can more successfully manage their career trajectories.
- iii. **CareerGuide.com:** It's a comprehensive platform that provides tools, career assessment and counselling to assist people in making well-informed professional selections. It is a priceless tool for professionals, career counsellors and students alike since it blends cutting-edge technology with knowledgeable human assistance to offer individualized career planning solutions.
- iv. **Mapmytalent.in:** It's a complete platform that helps people make well-informed job decisions by using psychometric evaluations and professional counselling.
- v. **Univariety:** Through partnerships with educational institutions and schools, Univariety offers specialized career and college planning services, as well as access to a large network of alumni and counsellors.
- vi. **Vidyartha:** It's an Indian educational platform offering personalized learning and career guidance solutions to students, schools and educators.
- vii. Apart from these digital tools, numerous Indian and global platforms are available to support career guidance. Indian-made career assessment platforms include Career Guide, iDream Career, Mentoria, and Lodestar. Global career assessment tools include the Career Interest Inventories, Career Interest Profiler, Career Values Scale, Strong Interest Inventory, and Career Fitter.

### Different Policies and Initiatives on ICT Integrated Career Orientation by the Govt of India

**National Education Policy (NEP-2020):** The NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of integrating technology in education and advocates for the use of ICT tools to facilitate

personalized and comprehensive learning. It also suggests that initiatives should focus on engaging the community and alumni in volunteer activities to enhance learning by providing career guidance and mentoring to students.

**University Grants Commission Guidelines (2024):** The UGC has issued a framework for higher education institutions to incorporate technology into teaching and learning processes. Institutions are encouraged to leverage online resources, e-learning and digital libraries, which can indirectly support career orientation activities.

**NCERT** suggested a one-year diploma program in guidance and counselling that combines a unique blend of online and in-person instruction. The course is designed for in-service teachers, teacher educators, school administrators, and untrained guidance staff, and it is open to candidates from across India. It has been developed and offered by the Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education (DEPFE), NIE, New Delhi, in collaboration with the Regional Institutes of Education (RIE) of NCERT located in Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru, and Shillong.

**NCFSE 2023 (Draft):** India has seen the publication of four National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs) by NCERT in 1975, 1988, 2000, and 2005. Recently, NCERT introduced the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023, a comprehensive guideline that focuses on helping students make informed academic and career choices after secondary school.

**National Career Service (NCS):** The NCS is a government initiative that was launched in July 2015. It provides an online platform to connect job seekers with employers. Under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, NCS and UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) have been offering free webinars on career awareness to everyone. This session has been held live every Sunday since 2015. The NCS portal has over 9,30,000 employers and 35 million job seekers registered, as well as more than 27,000 skill providers (NCS, 2016).

**Skill India Mission Initiative (2015):** Through the Skill India Mission, this program, launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), aims to enhance employability and provide skill training. The initiative incorporates the use of online platforms, digital content for skill development, and career-oriented courses.

## Review of Related Literature

This study carried out a review of the related literature on ICT-integrated career orientation. Also, areas related to the subject were studied, and an in-depth literature review was made. The goal of related reviews was to provide clear and valid knowledge about the conceptual meaning and understanding of ICT-integrated career orientation.

Jo et al., (2023) outlined a conceptual framework, looked at the processes by which professional skills are developed, investigated the ways in which career competencies affect career outcomes, and featured theoretical papers or reviews of the literature that focused on the three competencies: knowing-why, knowing-how and knowing-whom. Kaur (2020) revealed that parental education, parental occupation and family

income significantly influence the career orientation of female college students. Paul (2018) revealed that the current career counselling services and programs fall short of what is needed to help higher secondary school students develop critical self-efficacy in choosing career decisions. Nemeskéri (2016) emphasized the analysis of digital skills and labour market dynamics as components of lifelong learning and career orientation. Bimrose et al. (2015) examined important elements that successfully integrate ICT into career practice, and lessons from the creation and deployment of online services in Canadian career development programs are also highlighted. Gautam, (2019) stated that ICTs have the potential to raise educational standards in a number of ways, including by strengthening teacher preparation programs, encouraging the acquisition of foundational skills, and increasing student motivation and engagement.

### **Need for the Study**

Sultana (2022) suggested that the Ministry of Education should place significant emphasis on career education as an essential component of schooling for students as they grow up and only teachers can assist in guiding their students based on their career aspirations, awareness and self-efficacy. In the last decade, the economy grew at an annual rate of about 8%, but job growth remained low, below 1% (NCS, 2016). The unemployment rate for young individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 is 2.2% overall, and it is much higher for those with only a secondary education (NCS, 2016). However, govt. of India proposed 100 Model Career Centres in 2014. Calitz (2010) revealed that most students (86%) used the Internet to gather information on career choices, followed by fellow students (52%) and lecturers (43%). ICT has gained momentum through various projects and schemes launched by the Government of India over the years, such as the Educational Technology (ET) Scheme, which began in 1972 during the IV Plan (Narayan, 2018). Despite the growing integration of ICT in career practices, its primary use has been for disseminating information and handling various administrative tasks (Bimrose et al., 2015). The application of ICT is highly significant in the areas of learning, teaching and career advancement (Magallanes et al., 2024). Hence, the implementation of ICT aims to foster an effective learning process that enhances career prospects (De Bruine, 2020). Therefore, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, integration of ICT into career orientation enhances the career exploration of prospective teachers, and it's important to remember that direct interactions, mentorship and real-world experiences also play crucial roles in helping individuals make well-rounded career decisions in their knowledge or skills in respective fields.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To find out the different aspects of ICT integration into career orientation.
- ii. To compare the Traditional and ICT-integrated career orientation.

### **Materials and Methods**

Research articles that were published in scholarly or peer-reviewed journals served as the main sources of variables for this investigation (Torraco, 2005). Because it enables a

comprehensive examination of various methodologies. Also, teaches an innovative perspective and the significance of this approach. This study used secondary data-based sources (such as, various Scopus-indexed journals, Google Scholar, Research Gate and other sources), employing theoretical analysis and reviewing related literature on ICT-integrated career orientation. After reviewing multiple related studies, it was seen that the contribution of ICT to career orientation programs is a navigation of reforming innovative pedagogical approaches for prospective teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century scenario.

### **Different aspects of ICT Integration into Career Orientation**

ICT has enormous potential to provide significant outcomes, and after successfully collaborating or being integrated into career orientation, it becomes much more meaningful to endeavour to replicate existing ways of doing things. Here are different aspects that ICT can be integrated into career orientation:

#### **i. Career Information and Exploration**

- a. Online Career Portals:** Websites and apps that provide comprehensive information about various careers, including job descriptions, required qualifications, average salaries and career outlooks.
- b. Virtual Reality (VR) Career Simulations:** VR technology can simulate real-world job environments, allowing individuals to experience different careers virtually. This immersive approach helps users gain a better understanding of the tasks and skills required for specific jobs.

#### **ii. Skill Development and Learning**

- a. E-Learning Platforms:** People can learn new talents or improve their current ones by taking advantage of online tutorials and courses. These platforms often offer certifications that can be added to resumes or LinkedIn profiles.
- b. Webinars and Online Workshops:** Virtual seminars and workshops hosted by industry professionals can provide valuable insights and up-to-date knowledge on various career fields.

#### **iii. Mentoring and Networking**

- a. Online Mentorship Programs:** Platforms that connect individuals with mentors from their desired career fields. These mentors assist mentees in navigating their career paths, offer advice and share their experiences.
- b. Professional Social Networks:** Sites like LinkedIn allow users to build professional networks, join industry groups and follow companies of interest. This facilitates networking and keeps users updated on industry trends.

### Comparison between the Traditional and ICT Integrated Career Orientation

Both the traditional and ICT integrated program has some relatedness as well as differences in terms of their applications and perspectives, which are discussed in the following manner:

- i. **Requirements of the Role:** Traditional-based career orientation programs focus on individuals existing or learning new skills of practice, while in ICT integrated career orientation focuses not only on the role of learning new skills of practice but also on professional identity in roles and competencies of practice (Bimrose & Brown, 2019).
- ii. **Diverse Opportunities:** In the traditional based approach, individuals are provided with the perspective of a limited range of career guidance and opportunities. In the ICT-based approach, individuals get a wide range of assistance in terms of changing the world and career opportunities.
- iii. **Context of Orientation:** Traditional-based program have delivered their services or required orientation by considering the conventional way of subjective knowledge and analysis, and ICT-based programs have taken their orientation by analysing with the help of digital interventions and communication.
- iv. **Advancement of Perspectives:** The traditional-based approach has given it importance in the perspective of physical mode of orientation by complex interaction procedure, and in ICT-based approach has given it services by exploring online career practices and administering career assessment, information and experiences.
- v. **Bases of Orientation:** In traditional approach recognizes its services by addressing a limited set of evidence and its method, in ICT integrated approach is followed by addressing diverse fields of evidence and providing effective guidance.

### Discussion

To a large extent, one's career decision determines how time will be spent, what aptitude and values will be adopted, who to choose as a friend, who to choose as a life partner and where to live, and what kind of family life will be adopted (Paul, 2018). Goddard (2021) revealed that as our understanding of careers has evolved, career practitioners have increasingly engaged with individuals to support their career development needs. Chang et al., (2023) found that having a proactive career orientation positively influences subjective career success. Henderson (2020) reports that, in an increasingly technology world, it aids students in developing successful jobs and lifestyles by encouraging independent thinking and creative communication. Gautam, (2019) stated that from the teachers' perspective, incorporating ICT improves students' play and learning experiences and provides chances for metacognition and creative development. Although, online delivery of career guidance has traditionally served as a means of social activation, offering services that expand access both physically and psychologically (Goddard, 2021). Narayan, (2018) found that integrating ICTs into teaching, especially in teacher education, is essential in today's context. Thus, the integration of ICT has made career orientation resources and services more efficient,

cost-effective and accessible, enhancing their overall effectiveness (Nemeskéri, 2016). Kettunen and Sampson, (2019) concluded that ICT and career guidance highlight the potential for collaboration and transformation. Furthermore, Sultana, (2022) highlighted that policymakers should prioritize teachers' career education and continuous in-service training on career education should be provided for school teachers, enabling them to support students who seek career guidance in making informed future career choices. In this regard, career orientation is important to prospective teachers because, after completing the course, they directly enter the teaching profession. So, if they are already familiar with career awareness, opportunity and progression, then it becomes helpful to make the right professional aspiration as well as successful career growth.

The present study has studied various online platforms such as Edumilestones, BEYOND digital Careers Platform, MINDLER, Bodhami, PROTEEN, etc. Some government online platforms are National Career Service (NCS) and Model Career Centres (MCCs).

After reviewing various studies on ICT Integrated Career Orientation, it was found that no appropriate tools had been developed or recommended for the integration of ICT into career orientation. In Shodhganga (A reservoir of Indian Theses), has some developed and validated tools they used in their research:

- a) ICT Attitude Scale (ICTAS) for teachers (2018) by Gupta Surya Narayan.
- b) ICT Attitude Scale (ICTAS) for students (2018) by Gupta Surya Narayan.
- c) Information And Communication Technology Awareness Scale (ICTAS) for teacher educators (2006) by M. Anbuezhian.
- d) Information And Communication Technology Attitude Scale (ICTATS) for teacher educators (2006) by M. Anbuezhian.

Although, have some of the latest catalogues of National Psychological Corporation (NPC- 2024), Agra, India, Standardized tools on ICT:

- a) Information Communication Technology: Self Concept Scale for Prospective Teachers (2024) by Manmohan Gupta.
- b) Information Communication Technology: Attitude Scale for Prospective Teachers (2024) by Manmohan Gupta.
- c) Information Communication Technology: Competency Scale for Prospective Teachers (2024) by Manmohan Gupta.
- d) Attitude Scale towards Information Communication Technology for Students (2024) for Secondary level Students by Asha Sharma and Vikas Kumar Tripathi.

This strategy may encounter some integration problems or difficulties because it can also accommodate the tastes of tech-savvy generations who are used to utilizing digital resources for a variety of elements of their lives, such as:

- i. Accessibility is not adequate for ICT



- ii. Lack of access to information
- iii. Lack of skills and competencies and
- iv. Lack of integration

To successfully integrate ICT in career orientation, a few key measures must be taken to address each of these obstacles. These include providing policy support, a methodical approach to change management and engagement, and high-quality technical infrastructure and support.

## Conclusion

Therefore, to maximize the potential for making high-quality human capital or prospective teachers, need to reform the traditional approach of career guidance and adopt an innovative way of career orientation with the integration of ICT. In conclusion, ICT-integrated career orientation offers a thorough and adaptable approach to career development, fusing cutting-edge technology with conventional techniques to meet people's changing demands in the digital era.

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## Literacy Level and Educational Attainment of Scheduled Tribes: A Spatiotemporal Analysis of Sambalpur District, Odisha

**Nibedita Sahoo<sup>1</sup>**

### Abstract

*The Scheduled Tribes (STs) are considered an indigenous group and represent marginalized, backward, and deprived communities who remain distant from the mainstream of society. As one of the most disadvantaged sections, they often fail to benefit from government programs, partly due to socioeconomic barriers. Our study focuses on the Sambalpur district in the western part of Odisha, where more than one-third of the population belongs to Scheduled Tribes. The research aims to examine the literacy status and educational attainment of the Scheduled Tribes in this region and identify relevant changes over time and across locations. The study employs descriptive statistics, such as percentages, to analyse the occupational structure. The total sample size was 384, and data were collected through a primary survey using stratified random sampling in 2022. Secondary data from the District Census Handbook, Sambalpur (2001 & 2011), will also be utilized. Despite various programs and policies, most Scheduled Tribes in the study area are only literate, with minimal representation in higher education.*

**Keywords:** Literacy Status, Educational Attainment, Scheduled Tribes, Spatio-Temporal Analysis, Sambalpur District

### Introduction

India is a vast country with a homogeneous group of more than 1.4 billion population at present. According to the 2011 census govt of India, scheduled tribes constituted 8.6 per cent. The country is a homeland of several tribal communities with diverse geographical backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, and educational achievements. The Scheduled Tribes are also known as Adivasi, Janajati living in the fringe of river valleys, in the forested and hilly areas or the upland tracts and are also designated as Girijan (hill-dwellers), Vanyajati (forest-caste), Adimjati (primitive caste), Anusuchita Janajati (Scheduled Tribes) (Ota & Mohanty; 2015, Ahmad, 1999). These Scheduled tribe's populations are spread over the entire country but are highly concentrated in central,

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College of Teacher Education, Balangir (Rajendra University, Balangir), Odisha  
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eastern and north-eastern India (Manjutha and Gangadhar, 2018). In India, the ST population is mainly concentrated in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, West Bengal and these states show ST population between 20 lakhs to 1 crore 20 lakhs (Tatipamul and Shinde, 2011). India has 28 states and Odisha has occupied a unique place in the tribal map of the country having 9.2 percent of the country's Scheduled tribe population and 22.8 percent of the state's population (census, 2011). There are 62 tribal communities including 13 primitive tribes dwelling in different areas of the state (Mohanty, 2017). Odisha holds the third rank nationally having a 9590756 ST population after Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra (Census, 2011).

Literacy is a key indicator of development in any society. Not only literacy, but also the level of education, can determine the overall development of a community. Literacy status varies spatially and temporally, based on gender as well as different population communities.

The literacy rate of India was 74.04 percent, while it was 63.01 percent for the Scheduled Tribe population (Census, 2011). According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (July 2021 - June 2022), the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes in India is 72.01 percent. Although the literacy rate of the ST population has made a significant jump from 8.54 percent in 1961 to 63.01 percent in 2011, a considerable disparity still exists between the literacy rate of the total population and that of the Scheduled Tribe population.

At the state level, this disparity is evident in Odisha, where the literacy rate of the state's population was 73.45 percent, while it was 52.2 percent among the Scheduled Tribes (Census, 2011). The difference in literacy rates between the total population and the tribal population in Odisha stands at 21.25 percent (Behera, 2015). Odisha has a significant share of the ST population, but poverty and illiteracy remain high among the tribal people (Maharana & Behera, 2011).

In comparison to the literacy of tribes at the national level (63.01%), the state's tribal literacy (52.2%) is found to be far below. Being the marginalised and educationally backward communities, the tribes of Odisha need attention in educational and economic frontages. So far Government has been implementing different programmes on a time scale for the educational upliftment of tribes such as the Prematric scholarship, and Ekalabya model school are great incentives but despite these programmes, policies now they are the most social and educationally disadvantaged groups in India (Ramachandran & Deepan, 2019; Naqvi & Khan, 2018; Guha & Das, 2014).

It is observed that the Scheduled tribe's population of this state are backwards at the frontage of literacy at the national as well as state levels. Thus, at this juncture, the regional-level study is encouraged to provide more insight into the changing literacy status and educational attainment of Scheduled tribes.

The selected study area is Sambalpur district, which is located in Western Odisha. It is a tribal-dominated district where more than one-third (34.12%) of the total population belongs to tribal communities. In this district, tribals are majorly rural inhabitants (89.63%) with 57.72 per cent of literacy rate (Census, 2011).

### **Objective of the Study:**

To study literacy status and educational level attained by the Scheduled tribes on a gender basis in the census 2011 and 2001.

### **Method**

Descriptive Survey method (Quantitative Research) is used.

### **Sampling**

A stratified random sampling method is used to choose the required sample size for the study. The total samples surveyed from rural and urban areas of the district comprise 384 sample households.

### **Tools & Technique**

Structured Questionnaire has been used to collect data from sample households of villages, NACs, and municipality areas.

### **Data Sources**

The study's data sources comprise both primary and secondary sources.

1. The Primary data are collected through structured questionnaire from sample households of villages, NACs, and municipality areas.
2. The Secondary data are collected from district census, Gazetteers, and state Government publications. The Anganwadi records of surveyed villages are also used as secondary sources of information.

### **Data Analysis**

- Percentage analysis has been used for interpretation of data. Choropleth maps & bar diagram have been used.
- The tribal literacy of different blocks, rural and urban areas, for males and females are calculated as

$$\frac{\text{literates tribes (male/female/rural/urban)}}{\text{tribal population(male/female/rural/urban)}} \times 100$$

### **Literature Review**

Related studies of the literacy status and occupation of Scheduled tribes have also been assimilated into the study to determine their background.

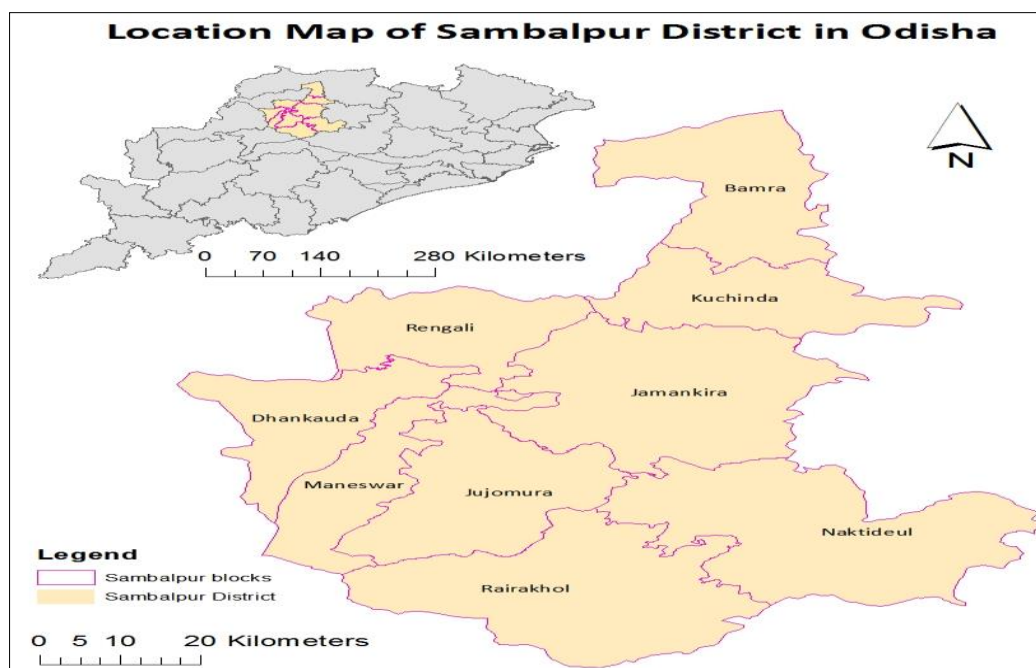
According to the census 2011, the literacy rate of Scheduled tribes in India was recorded as 58.96% and showed a record of 11.86% in the previous census. (Rout and Naik, 2017;

Deepan and Ramachandran, 2017; Brahmananda and Babu, 2016; Kumar, 2016; Suresh and Cheeran, 2015; Behera, 2015; Behera, 2014; Sahu, 2014; Panduranga and Honnarswamy, 2014; Andrabi, 2013; Gautam, 2013)

In 2011, the literacy rate of Scheduled tribe males in India was recorded as 71.70% and 54.4% for females. Between two census periods (2001-2011), the literacy rate increased by 19.3% for females and 12.53% for males. (Rout and Naik, 2017; Behera, 2015; Sahu, 2014; Panduranga and Nayakara, 2014)

Urban tribes are found to be more literate than rural tribes. According to the national 2011 census, about 70.8% of urban tribes are literate and 56.9% of rural tribes are literate in the same period. Govt. of India has launched many programs and policies for improving the literacy level and educational status of Scheduled tribes from elementary level to higher education. National Policy on Education 1986 has recommended for establishment of Ashram schools, and residential schools for the development of literacy among Scheduled tribes. Rao 2018. Satya Savitri and Honakeri 2018 et al. has studied different Govt. policies such as post-matric scholarships for higher studies abroad, and the Rajiv Gandhi National fellowship scheme of top-class education for ST students. This scholarship program and govt policies help boost the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes. (Swain, 2016; Behera, 2015; Panduranga and Honnarswamy, 2014; Barik, 2012; Shinde, 2012). Ashram schools play a great role in the educational development of Scheduled tribes. Since 1990-91 Ashram schools have provided education with residential facilities and free boarding and lodging. (Maharana and Behera, 2018; Garnaik and Barik, 2012; Shinde, 2012; Pradhan and Patnaik)

All India Survey on Higher Education (2010-11) reports that merely 4.3% of the total students enrolled at higher levels belong to tribal communities. (Pradhan, 2016; Gautam 2013).



**Literacy status of Scheduled Tribes.****Table No.1****Male-female literacy rate of Scheduled tribes in Sambalpur in 2001-2011**

Year	Total literacy of ST	Male	Female
2001	44.75	56.77	32.68
2011	57.72	66.50	48.94
Change between two national Census	12.97	9.73	16.26

**Source (District Census Handbook, 2001 & 2011)**

Following table-1 in 2011 the literacy rate of scheduled tribes in Sambalpur district was attained at 57.72 percent. It is nearer to the national figure. During 2001 only 44.75 percent of tribals were literate and there was significant growth of 12.97 percent in literacy found between the two census periods. Despite this growth, 40 per cent of the tribes of the district remained illiterate.

During the 2011 census about 66.50 percent of Scheduled tribes' males were found to be literate and 48.94 percent of females among the tribes were recorded as literate. The gap in literacy rate between males and females was found to be 17.56 percent. The result also states that during 2011 less than fifty percent of the female tribe of the district remained illiterate, due to lack of spread of education in tribal areas.

Between the two census periods, the literacy rate for females increased by 16.26 percent and for males by 9.73 percent. The growth rate was higher for female tribes.

**Literacy Rate of Rural and Urban Tribes****Table No. 2****Literacy of rural and urban Scheduled tribes of Sambalpur in 2001- 2011**

Sambalpur	Total ST population	Literates	Literate Rate	Rural population	Rural Literates	%	Urban population	Urban literates	%
2001	322770	144469	44.75	293534	130280	44.38	29236	14189	48.53
2011	355261	205068	57.72	318413	182583	57.34	36848	22485	61.02
% Change between census			12.97			12.96			12.49

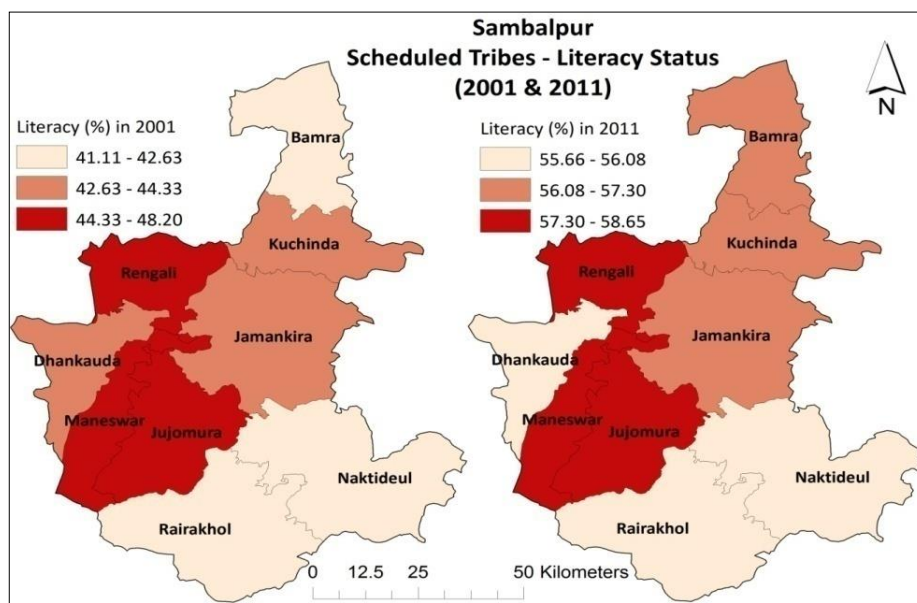
**Source: District Census Handbook, Sambalpur, 2001 & 2011**

As per the table in the 2011 national census, 57.72 per cent of tribals were literate in Sambalpur district. In this period 57.34 percent of rural tribes and 61.02 percent of urban tribes were found to be literate. Between 2001-2011, the growth in literacy of tribes is 12.97 percent. During 2011 about 90 percent of the scheduled tribes were



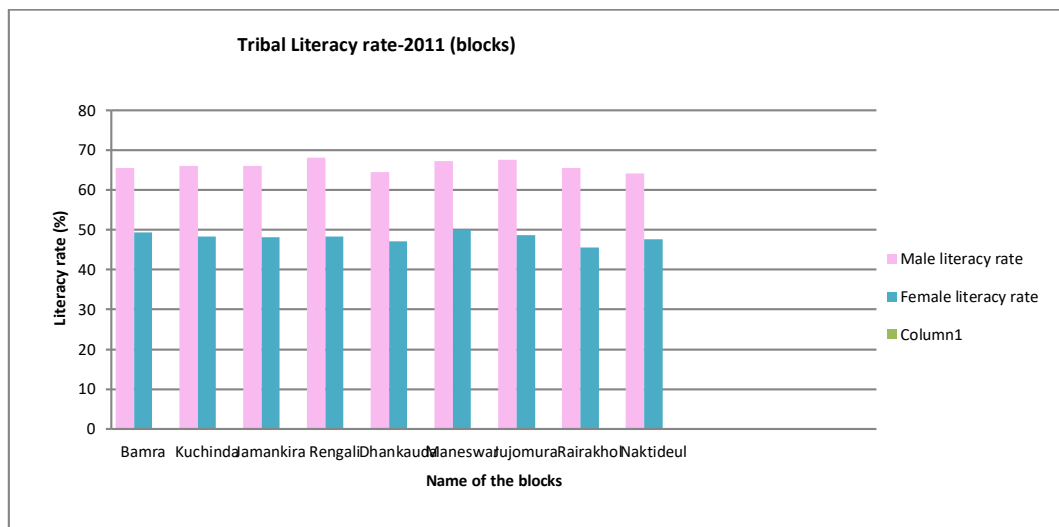
residing in rural areas and literacy among the tribes was found about 57.34 percent. In urban Sambalpur, 10 percent of the tribal people reside and 61.02 percent among them are literate. Between the study census period, the growth rate in literacy in rural and urban Sambalpur registered nearly 12.5 per cent.

**Map -1**



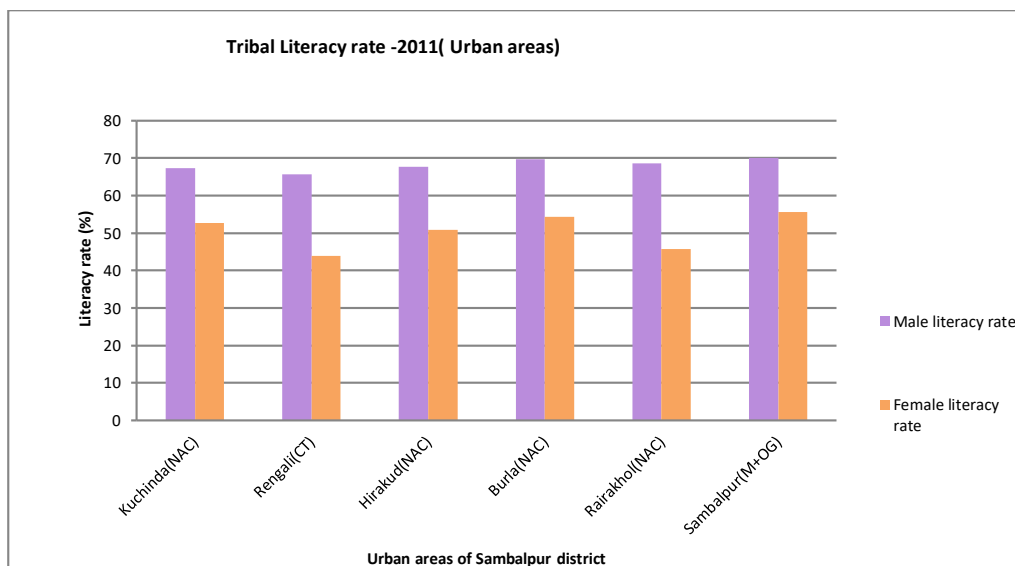
In 2011 the literacy rate of ST in all blocks of Sambalpur district was found to be above 55 percent. Maneswar, Jujomura and Rengali blocks had more than 58 per cent of tribals as literate. These blocks are nearer to the district headquarters of Sambalpur and under the Influence zone of Sambalpur town near to their proximity. Bamra, Kuchinda and Jamankira are other blocks having above 57 per cent of tribal literacy in the same period. Rairakhol, Naktideul and Dhankaruda are blocks of recorded literacy between 55 to 56 percent. Among all blocks, Maneswar block recorded the highest tribal literacy rate of 58.65 percent and Rairakhol block recorded the lowest tribal literacy rate i.e., 55.66 percent in 2011. Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, Bamra block emerged showing the highest rate of change in tribal literacy about 14.93 percent and Jujomura block recorded the lowest change at 10.03 percent.

Further among the urban tribes, Sambalpur town recorded 62.96 per cent of literates followed by Burla (62.12%) Kuchinda (59.95%), and Hirakud (59.43%). In Rairakhol NAC only 57.55 percent of tribes are found to be literate. This block represents the lowest literacy rate both in rural and urban tribal populations. Between 2001 and 2011 Kuchinda (NAC) registered maximum change (15.14%) in literacy among tribes of the district. The minimum increase of 8.31 per cent in Burla is registered during the same period



**Figure-1: Male and Female Literacy in rural and Urban areas.**

According to the 2011 census in all the blocks of the Sambalpur district tribal males are more literate than the tribal female. Tribal male literacy varies from 64.22 per cent to 68.11 percent. In Rengali block tribal male literacy was highest (68.11%) and the Naktideul block recorded the lowest literacy rate (64.22%). Female literacy in all blocks except Maneswar was recorded below 50 percent. The female tribal literacy was highest in Maneswar block (50.01%), Bamra block followed closely by Manesar block where female literacy was (49.31 %) in 2011 and the lowest female literacy rate was registered in Rairakhol block (45.56%).



**Figure-2**

The highest literacy rate (70.01%) for tribal males was recorded in Sambalpur (municipality and other urban growth) and the lowest rate (65.62%) was in Rengali CT. Among all the urban areas of the district highest literacy rate of female tribes was found in Sambalpur (municipality and other urban growth), and during the same period lowest literacy rate was recorded in Rengali CT (43.88%). The highest literacy gap between male and female tribes was recorded in Rairakhol NAC at 22.8 percent and the lowest gap was found in Sambalpur (M+OG) at 14.33 percent in 2011.

**Table- 3****Literacy Status of Tribes of Sample Villages/ Towns**

Total Household Population	Total Literates	Percentage of Literacy	Percentage of Male Literacy	Percentage of Female Literacy
1617	1255	77.61	84.46	70.49
Sambalpur District in 2011		57.72	66.50	48.94

**Source: Sample Households Survey, 2022**

Table 3 shows the literacy status of tribes of sample villages/ towns. About 77.61 per cent of tribes are found to be literate male literacy is about 84.46 per cent and female literacy is about 70.19 per cent showing a gap in literacy between two genders. It was found that in 2019, the literacy status of sample villages and towns was 77.61 percent. In 2011, the district literacy rate was 57.72 percent.

In comparison to the literacy status of the district in 2011, it shows a healthy percentage of literacy in surveyed villages and towns. In 2011 the tribal male literacy was 65.50 percent and female literacy was 48.94 percent. Male literacy of 84.46 percent and 70.49 percent of female literacy was found in surveyed villages and towns in 2019. This high percentage shows that education programs of Govt. and Govt. incentives have worked well among tribal populations and tribal society is open to education of both genders.

**Table-4****Educational Status of Tribal Villages and Towns**

1-12 Passed		UG Passed	PG Passed	Technical Degree Passed
Population 1255	1137 (90.59 %)	90 (7.17 %)	20 (1.59 %)	08 (0.63 %)
Male 696	617 (88.64 %)	61 (8.76 %)	13 (1.86 %)	05 (0.71 %)
Female 559	520 (93.02 %)	30 (5.36 %)	06 (1.07 %)	03 (0.53 %)

**Source: Sample Households Survey, 2022**

Table 4 shows that among the literates of scheduled tribes of surveyed villages and towns above 90 per cent of tribes have education up to +2 level. Only 7.17 per cent of

the literate people have completed their undergraduate course. 1.59 percent of the tribes are found to be postgraduate and 0.63 percent of the tribes hold a technical degree. 88.64 per cent of literate males and 93.02 per cent of literate females have a +2 level of education. 8.76 per cent of males and 5.36 per cent of females are graduates among the literate tribes. Technical education is less popular as 0.7 per cent of literate males and 0.53 per cent of literate females hold technical degrees.

### Findings

1. The literacy of the tribes in the district showed an increasing trend through the census period and recorded a 12.97 per cent change. So far, the survey is concerned; it is showing a further increase in 2022, indicating that more and more tribals are taking education as per government incentives.
2. As per NEP 2020 mandate, government initiatives to spread education among all have increased the literacy rate as it is shown that the spread of education among tribes shows a tremendous rise of 57.72 percent of literacy rate in 2011 and attained a literacy of 77.61 percent from the sample population in 2022. Considering tribal female literacy in particular, the growth rate was recorded as 16.26 percent higher than tribal males (9.73%). From the village surveys, it is found that 70.49 per cent of the tribal females are literate.
3. It indicates that as per NEP 2020, Govt. initiatives like scholarship, multi lingual education, preserving tribal knowledge boosted tribal literacy in general and female literacy in particular.
4. From primary survey as well as census recorded data, the rural tribes are found to be lagging behind the urban in achieving literacy as well as in work participation rate. The availability of better educational facilities and work opportunities in urban areas of the Sambalpur district are the major factors for this difference between rural and urban tribes. This may be the pull factor for rural-to-urban tribal migration for both higher studies and job opportunities.

### Suggestions:

1. Literacy of the Scheduled Tribes may be increased through proper supervision of Govt. initiatives at grassroot level.
2. Counseling programs for parents of scheduled tribes' children may help to increase their participation in Higher education & other professional education.

### Conclusion

The literacy rate among the tribes has made remarkable progress to date. It is a positive sign of development that tribes are consistently focusing on the education of females. Gender disparity in literacy attainment is gradually diminishing. Although most tribes are literate, they still have very low levels of attainment in higher and professional education. At this juncture, government interventions aimed at encouraging and providing professional education to rural tribes, particularly female tribes, should be

considered in the future. Therefore, the study could be extended to other parts of Odisha to gain a clearer understanding of the literacy status and educational attainment of Scheduled Tribes.

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## Constitutional Values and Curriculum: Bridging Foundational Education with NEP-2020

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### Abstract

*This paper investigates the relationship between constitutional values and educational curricula, focusing on Jamia Millia Islamia's contributions to realizing the vision of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Zakir Husain concerning Basic Education. The discussion emphasizes the ongoing relevance of this vision through the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020), which promotes a holistic, student-centric, and multidisciplinary education system. The paper underscores the importance of creating refined learning environments that develop 21st-century skills, encourage lifelong learning, and prepare students to be socially responsible citizens. The roles of teachers, curriculum designers, and policymakers in fostering such environments are critically examined, with an exploration of Jamia Millia Islamia's recent pedagogical methods, international exposure in academia, and inclusive, multicultural approach.*

**Keywords:** Educational Reform, Jamia Milia, Inclusive Education, Zakir Hussain, Mahatma Gandhi.

### Introduction

Education in India has always been more than a mere academic pursuit; it has served as a cornerstone for societal progress and national development. The vision of education as a transformative force was profoundly influenced by pivotal figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Zakir Husain. Their true educational philosophies underscored that education should always transcend academic instruction and serve as a tool for societal upliftment and national advancement. This vision is embodied in institutions like Jamia Millia Islamia, which has played a significant role in implementing these ideals through its emphasis on practical work, moral values, and community engagement. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) stands for a continuation and expansion of these foundational principles, building upon the educational reforms championed by Gandhi and Husain. This article delves into the historical context, philosophical underpinnings,

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findings and practical implications of these educational reforms, exploring how their legacies continue to influence India's educational framework and contribute to the nation's development.

### **Historical Context of Education in India**

To fully appreciate the impact of Gandhi and Husain on Indian education, it is crucial to explore the evolution of the education system in India. The ancient Indian education system, characterized by the Gurukul model, was an integrated approach to learning where students lived with their teachers in a close-knit environment. This system was deeply rooted in the Indian tradition, emphasizing a comprehensive education that included not only academic subjects but also moral and spiritual teachings. The Gurukul system fostered a rich intellectual culture and was integral in shaping the ethical and philosophical foundations of Indian society.

With the advent of the medieval period, Islamic education introduced through madrasas significantly enriched India's educational landscape. These institutions became centers of learning and scholarship, contributing to advancements in various fields such as mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. The Islamic educational system played a crucial role in integrating scientific knowledge with Indian traditions, leading to a period of significant intellectual and cultural flourishing.

The arrival of British colonial rule brought profound changes to India's education system. The British implemented an English-medium education system primarily aimed at producing a clerical class to support the colonial administration. This system, characterized by rote learning and a rigid examination structure, marginalized traditional Indian knowledge systems and created a disconnect between education and the cultural realities of Indian society. The focus on English and Western literature often came at the expense of indigenous languages and cultural practices, reinforcing social hierarchies and perpetuating a sense of cultural inferiority among Indians.

### **Educational Reforms of the Early 20th Century**

In response to the limitations of the colonial education system, leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Zakir Husain appeared as key reformers advocating for a new educational framework. Their efforts were pivotal in envisioning an education system that addressed the needs and aspirations of Indian society while promoting social justice and national unity.

Mahatma Gandhi's educational philosophy, known as 'Nai Talim' or 'New Education,' marked a significant departure from both the traditional and colonial systems. Gandhi's vision of education was grounded in his belief that it should be relevant to the community and foster all-round development. His approach integrated vocational training with academic instruction, promoting moral and ethical values while addressing local needs. Gandhi's critique of the British education system was centered on its role in perpetuating colonial rule and alienating Indian students from their cultural heritage.



Gandhi's educational philosophy was characterized by several key principles. He emphasized the importance of practical skills and vocational training, advocating for an education system that combined theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Gandhi believed that education should cultivate virtues such as honesty, integrity, and social responsibility, aiming to create individuals who were not only knowledgeable but also committed to the welfare of others. His vision included making education accessible to all, regardless of social status or background, and challenging the prevailing social norms that marginalized certain communities.

Dr. Zakir Husain, a contemporary and collaborator of Gandhi, played a crucial role in implementing these educational principles. As a prominent figure in Jamia Millia Islamia, Husain was dedicated to creating an educational environment that reflected Gandhi's ideals. Under his leadership, Jamia Millia Islamia became a pioneering institution in progressive education, blending academic excellence with social consciousness.

Husain's contributions extended beyond Jamia Millia Islamia. As an educator and policymaker, he advocated for educational reforms at the national level, promoting inclusivity and accessibility. His efforts were instrumental in shaping post-independence educational policies and laying the groundwork for a system that valued both intellectual and moral development. Dr. Husain's vision was centered on making education accessible to all and promoting a sense of social responsibility among students.

### **Gandhi's Vision of Education**

Mahatma Gandhi's vision of education was deeply rooted in his belief that education should be a transformative force for individuals and society. His concept of 'Nai Talim' emphasized learning by doing, integrating practical skills with academic knowledge. Gandhi argued that education should not merely impart knowledge but also cultivate ethical values, self-reliance, and social responsibility. His vision was a direct response to the British education system, which he viewed as a tool for perpetuating colonial rule and alienating Indian students from their cultural roots.

Gandhi's approach to education was holistic, focusing on the development of the whole person. He believed that education should encompass intellectual, moral, and physical growth. This vision included the integration of craft work, such as spinning and weaving, with traditional subjects. By combining practical skills with academic learning, Gandhi aimed to create self-reliant individuals who could contribute to the economic and social development of their communities.

Gandhi's philosophy also emphasized the importance of experiential learning. He believed that students should engage in hands-on activities that allowed them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts. This approach not only enhanced students' understanding of academic concepts but also helped them develop problem-solving skills and a sense of social responsibility. Gandhi's educational vision was grounded in the belief that learning should be an active and dynamic process, not a passive reception of information.

### **Dr. Zakir Husain's Contributions**

Dr. Zakir Husain's contributions to education were instrumental in translating Gandhi's vision into practice. As a key figure in Jamia Millia Islamia, Husain played a crucial role in shaping the university's curriculum and pedagogy. Under his leadership, Jamia Millia Islamia became a model for educational institutions that looked to blend academic excellence with social consciousness.

Husain's approach to education was multifaceted. He emphasized the integration of academic knowledge with practical skills, reflecting Gandhi's vision of holistic development. The curriculum at Jamia Millia Islamia was designed to provide students with a well-rounded education that included both theoretical and practical components. Husain's vision extended beyond the classroom, encompassing broader aspects of university life, including community engagement and social responsibility.

In addition to his work at Jamia Millia Islamia, Dr. Husain was a prominent policymaker who advocated for educational reforms at the national level. His efforts were instrumental in shaping post-independence educational policies that promoted inclusivity and accessibility. Dr. Husain's contributions to education were recognized through his appointment as the President of India, a testament to his impact on the nation's educational landscape.

### **Foundational Education and Constitutional Values**

The concept of Basic Education, as advocated by Gandhi and Husain, is deeply intertwined with India's constitutional values. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) stands for a continuation of these principles, emphasizing a holistic and inclusive approach to education. The policy aims to create a fair and vibrant knowledge society by promoting a curriculum that is responsive to the diverse needs of students and aligns with constitutional values such as justice, equality, and fraternity.

NEP-2020 introduces several key principles that align with Gandhi's and Husain's educational philosophies. It emphasizes holistic development, inclusivity, and a multidisciplinary approach to learning. The policy advocates for a student-centric learning environment that caters to individual needs and interests. By focusing on these principles, NEP-2020 aims to create an educational system that is both relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of society.

One of the key features of NEP-2020 is its emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy. ("National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for Students: A Review") ("National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for Students: A Review") The policy recognizes the importance of early childhood education in laying the groundwork for future learning. By focusing on foundational skills, NEP- 2020 aims to address learning gaps and ensure that all students have a strong academic foundation. This emphasis on early education reflects Gandhi's belief in the importance of practical skills and moral development from an immature age.

Another important aspect of NEP-2020 is its commitment to inclusivity. The policy advocates for measures to ensure that education is accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic background, gender, or disability. This includes provisions for fair access to quality education, support for marginalized groups, and efforts to reduce dropout rates. NEP-2020's focus on inclusivity aligns with Gandhi's vision of educational equality and his commitment to dropping barriers to education for marginalized communities.

### **Optimized Learning Environments**

Creating optimized learning environments is crucial for achieving the goals of NEP-2020. These environments must engage students actively and support their diverse learning needs. Innovative pedagogical methods are essential for fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity among students.

Jamia Millia Islamia has been at the forefront of creating optimized learning environments through innovative pedagogical methods. The university emphasizes experiential learning, which involves learning through practical experience and reflection. This method helps students apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations and develop problem-solving skills. Additionally, the integration of digital literacy into the curriculum prepares students for the digital age and equips them with the skills needed for future careers.

The university's approach to learning environments also reflects its commitment to inclusivity and multiculturalism. By incorporating diverse cultural perspectives and global best practices, Jamia Millia Islamia creates a rich and inclusive educational experience. This approach not only prepares students for a globalized world but also ensures that they are still connected to their cultural heritage. The university's emphasis on multicultural education helps students appreciate diverse perspectives and develop a sense of global citizenship.

### **The Role of Curriculum Designers and Policymakers**

Curriculum designers and policymakers play a critical role in aligning educational content with broader goals of social equity and national development. NEP-2020 provides a framework for this alignment, advocating for a curriculum that integrates India's cultural heritage with contemporary global challenges.

Designing a curriculum that balances traditional knowledge with modern advancements is a complex task. Curriculum designers must ensure that content is both culturally relevant and responsive to appearing global trends. This involves incorporating traditional values and practices while addressing contemporary issues and innovations. Collaboration with international institutions and academic partnerships can enhance the quality and relevance of the curriculum, providing students with a global perspective while supporting an intense sense of national identity.

At Jamia Millia Islamia, curriculum designers use international collaborations to enrich the curriculum and incorporate global best practices. This approach ensures that the university's curriculum is still current and responsive to the needs of students. By

integrating international perspectives and innovations, Jamia Millia Islamia prepares students to engage in global challenges and contribute to national development. The university's commitment to curriculum design reflects its dedication to providing a high-quality education that prepares students for a rapidly changing world.

### **Implications for Teachers and Educators**

Teachers play a crucial role in implementing educational policies and translating curriculum aims into effective teaching practices. Their responsibilities extend beyond the delivery of academic content to include the cultivation of students' moral and social development. Professional development programs are essential for equipping teachers with the skills needed to foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

At Jamia Millia Islamia, professional development programs focus on enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills and integrating technology into the learning process. These programs help educators stay abreast of new teaching methods and educational technologies, ensuring that they can provide a high-quality learning experience for students. Additionally, teachers are trained to be sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students, fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding.

The integration of technology into the classroom is another important aspect of teacher training. Educators are encouraged to use digital tools and resources to enhance teaching and learning. This includes incorporating multimedia resources, interactive learning platforms, and online collaboration tools. By using technology, teachers can create more engaging and effective learning experiences for students. Technology also helps students develop digital literacy skills essential for success in the 21st century.

### **Conclusion**

*The principles of Basic Education, as advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Zakir Husain, continue to hold relevance in today's educational landscape. The NEP-2020 stands for a continuation of these principles, emphasizing a holistic, student-centric approach to education that aligns with India's constitutional values. Jamia Millia Islamia's pedagogical innovations, international academic exposure, and inclusive, multicultural approach underscore the institution's commitment to these educational ideals.*

*The success of this educational vision depends on the collective efforts of teachers, curriculum designers, and policymakers to create optimized learning environments that prepare students for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. By embedding constitutional values into every aspect of the curriculum, educators ensure that India's educational system is still a powerful force for social equity and national development. As India continues to evolve, the legacy of the Muslim crown and its impact on the nation's educational framework will remain a testament to the enduring power of visionary educational reform.*

*The integration of these foundational principles into modern educational practices ensures that the legacy of the Muslim crown and its impact on India's formation continues to inspire and guide the nation's educational journey. As India faces new challenges and opportunities in the 21st century, the commitment to inclusive, holistic, and socially responsible education is still a cornerstone of national development. The enduring influence of Gandhi's and Husain's vision serves as a reminder of the transformative power of education to shape the future and build a more fair and prosperous society.*

*In summary, the legacy of the Muslim crown and its influence on India's educational framework highlight the profound impact of visionary educational reform. The principles championed by Gandhi and Husain have laid a solid foundation for an education system that is inclusive, holistic, and responsive to the needs of a diverse society. As India moves forward, the continued emphasis on these principles will be crucial in ensuring that the educational system is still a driving force for social progress and national development. By embracing the values of justice, equality, and fraternity, India can build an education system that empowers individuals, strengthens communities, and contributes to the nation's overall well-being.*

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## The Dilemma over the duration of Pre-Service Teacher Education: Reflections on Policy Perspectives

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### Abstract

*In the quest to reform education in India, the spotlight firmly rests on teacher quality, with the duration of teacher education programs emerging as a pivotal factor. While deliberating upon the problems of education in India and suggesting reform measures, several committees and commissions have also talked about the duration of pre-service teacher education. In tandem with the early efforts, the National Education Policy-2020 has reignited the focus on teacher preparation, envisioning an empowered teaching force armed with robust initial training and continuous professional development.*

*This paper critically examines the transformation of pre-service teacher education in India, with a particular emphasis on analysing the reform ideas related to the transition from one-year to two-year to four-year integrated pre-service teacher preparation programs. Thus, an attempt has been made to scrutinize the recommendations of three seminal reform documents—the Education Commission (Kothari Commission) from 1964-1966, the National Commission on Teachers (Chattopadhyaya Commission) from 1983-1985, and the National Education Policy (NEP-2020). The paper concludes by discussing the implications of prolonged teacher education programs, offering insights into the evolving landscape of teacher education in India and charting a course for future endeavours.*

**Keywords:** Duration of Pre-service Teacher Education, Kothari Commission 1964-1966, Chattopadhyay Commission 1983-1985, National Education Policy 2020.

### Introduction

Teacher education, the process through which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to become effective educators, has traditionally followed a well-established path characterized by set durations for programs. However, in recent years, a notable shift has occurred within the field of teacher education, drawing

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attention to what has now become an emergent and critical issue i.e., ‘the duration of teacher education programs’.

Teacher education programs have historically adhered to predetermined timeframes, typically spanning two to four years, with variations depending on the education level (e.g., early childhood, elementary, secondary) and national educational standards. These programs have served as the foundational stage for equipping prospective educators with the tools and knowledge required to excel in their roles as classroom instructors. Nevertheless, a confluence of factors has brought into question the adequacy and relevance of these conventional program durations, sparking a debate that has gained momentum in recent years.

Teacher quality is paramount in advancing education in India. The duration of pre-service teacher education programs is an essential factor in shaping the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation. Over the years, there has been a notable transition from one-year to two-year to 4 year integrated pre-service teacher education programs. This paper provides an in-depth examination of this transformation and discusses the implications of the way the duration problem of pre-service teacher education programs has been addressed by various policy initiatives.

The historical evolution of teacher education in India is a complex narrative marked by significant policy shifts and adaptations. This evolution is reflective of the nation's commitment to improving the quality of education through enhancing teacher preparation programs. To contextualize the transition from one-year to two-year teacher education programs, to an integrated model of teacher preparation, it is imperative to dive into the historical milestones and policy recommendations that have shaped this course of direction.

This paper explores the emergence of the "duration of pre-service teacher education" as a central concern within contemporary teacher education. It seeks to elucidate the key driving forces behind this transformation and its implications for the field as a whole. The discourse surrounding this topic is far from superficial, as it directly impacts the quality of education provided in schools and the preparedness of educators to navigate the ever-evolving educational scenario.

The NCTE document titled “Teacher Education: Reflections towards Policy Formulation” has contemplated and talked about the emergent issues of teacher education. The document has identified the prevalent issues in teacher education relating to the nature and structure of teacher education programmes. However, the list of the issues is long, as apart from all the nature and structure dilemma of teacher education, it has also identified other vital aspects of teacher education, such as, duration of teacher education programmes, teacher education curriculum, transaction of curriculum in TEIs, teaching practice, internship and quality assurance in teacher education, teacher preparation for inclusive education, professionalisation of teacher education, in-service education of teachers, preparation of teacher educators, and research in teacher education (Siddiqui, *et.al.*, 2009, p.4). Although, out of all these essential issues and



concerns that arise from the assumptions and issues that are by and large linked to the 'other aspects of teacher education' as mentioned above. Few broadly striking problems have widely been identified and requires unambiguous response, they are namely the duration of the initial Teacher Education programme, academic qualifications of teachers, stage-specific teacher preparation, entire teacher education within university jurisdiction, implications of the integrated model of teacher education, self-financing teacher education, guidelines for the expansion of teacher education, teacher education of specific subject streams, practitioners inquiry and reflective teacher education, preparation of teacher educators, professionalisation of teacher education, quality assurance in teacher education, ODL and teacher education, and lastly the professional development of teachers (Siddiqui, *et.al.*, 2009).

These range of issues and concerns need to be catered to and addressed with utmost urgency to restructure teacher education as a constructive step towards meeting the future needs of the education system. However, out of all the dilemmas, issues and concerns of teacher education that we have come across, through this paper, we are solely looking at one specific dilemma or issue *per se*, that in itself is responsible for the whole fate of teacher education, i.e., 'duration of teacher education'.

### Historical Evolution

The historical evolution of pre-service teacher education duration in India, leading up to the recent policy document i.e., NEP 2020, has been a significant journey of adaptation and refinement.

The journey commences with the Calcutta University Commission of 1919, which established the foundational standard. It recommended a one-year teacher training program after the completion of a bachelor's degree (Gol, 1919).

The Sargent Report of 1944 introduced the next significant phase, setting the stage for a more comprehensive approach to teacher preparation (CABE, 1944). This report advocated for a two-year teacher training program, marking a notable departure from the previous one-year model.

Building upon these developments, the Radhakrishnan Commission (1949) also known as University Education Commission recognized the pivotal role of educators in nation-building (MOE, 1949). It recommended a four-year integrated program for prospective teachers, encompassing both general education and specialized teacher training. This recommendation laid the foundation for a more holistic approach to teacher education.

While not explicitly addressing the duration of teacher education, the Mudaliar Committee, also known as the Secondary Education Commission (1952), emphasized the necessity of a balanced approach (MOE, 1953). This approach sought to harmonize theoretical knowledge with practical pedagogical skills.

The historical evolution of pre-service teacher education duration in India, up to the Kothari Commission, reflects a paradigm-shifting progression. It transitions from a concise one-year program to more comprehensive models. This evolution mirrors shifts

in educational philosophies, societal demands, and economic considerations, highlighting India's commitment to producing well-prepared educators.

However, now that we have got a glimpse of the historical evolution of the duration of pre-service teacher education in India, we will be looking at the problem of the duration of pre-service teacher education in a more detailed and nuanced way in three of the vital documents that have been a cornerstone for identifying, mitigating, and addressing the issues, concerns, problems, and dilemmas of teacher education as a whole. These documents are, Kothari Commission 1964-1966, Chattopadhyay Commission 1983-1985, and the National Education Policy 2020.

### **Kothari Commission 1964-1966**

The Kothari Commission, operating from 1964 to 1966, was instrumental in emphasizing the need for an extended duration of teacher training programs. Notably, it recommended a minimum of two years of training at the primary stage, recognizing the necessity for a comprehensive curriculum. At the secondary stage, where the duration of the course was only one year, the commission proposed an extension to two years, aiming to provide justice to the heavy course load (NCERT, 1966; p.72).

However, the commission encountered pragmatic challenges of financial constraints and practical feasibility. Extending the academic year from 180-190 days to 230 days was proposed as an alternative (NCERT, 1966; p.72). This shift, based on the success of similar academic year lengths in some secondary training institutions, reflected the Commission's nuanced approach to enhancing teacher preparation.

The Kothari Commission's recommendations carry significant implications. They reflect an understanding of the need for comprehensive teacher training while grappling with the realities of resource limitations. The consideration of financial and practical feasibility adds depth to the discussion, prompting questions regarding the effectiveness of extending the academic year as a substitute for a longer program duration.

### **Expansion of Training Facilities**

A critical aspect of the Kothari Commission's recommendations was addressing the variation in training facilities across different states in India. While some states boasted adequate infrastructure for teacher education, others faced severe shortages of trained teachers and inadequate training facilities. In order to meet the challenges posed by the expansion of school enrolments and the lengthening of teacher training courses, large-scale expansion of training facilities was seemed imperative. Further, the need to ensure that every teacher in a primary or secondary school is either already trained at the time of appointment or receives such training within three years emphasized the urgency of addressing this infrastructure gap (NCERT, 1966; pp. 81-82).

The Kothari Commission's recognition of these disparities in training infrastructure accentuates the complexities of standardizing teacher education across a diverse nation. While it is acknowledged that improving teacher quality necessitates a standardized approach, regional variations present formidable challenges. The call for large-scale

expansion reflects the urgency of bridging this infrastructure gap and highlights the interconnectedness of teacher quality with the broader educational scenario.

The expansion of training facilities inevitably raises questions about resource allocation and scalability. Effectively expanding training institutions while maintaining educational quality is a multifaceted challenge. To inform India's approach, it becomes pertinent to explore successful models of expansion from other countries and evaluate their applicability within the Indian context.

### **Recommendations for Clearing the Backlog**

The Kothari Commission's forward-looking recommendations extended to addressing the backlog of untrained teachers, particularly those below the age of 30 years. As a result, a flexible program was proposed, allowing teachers above the age of 40 years with at least five years of service to undergo a shorter training course. Similarly, teachers below 40 years of age with at least five years of service could opt for a shorter, specially designed course. Those below the age of 40 with less than five years of service would be required to undergo the full one or two-year training course (NCERT, 1966; pp. 81-82).

The Commission's recognition of the need to clear this backlog reflects a commitment to rectifying historical shortcomings in teacher preparation. The introduction of flexible programs acknowledges the diverse profiles of educators and their unique training needs. This adaptability is crucial in ensuring that all teachers receive the necessary training to meet contemporary educational standards.

The Kothari Commission's recommendations on teacher backlog management prompt us to consider their efficacy in practice. Did these flexible programs effectively address the backlog, and did they produce teachers of comparable quality to those following the standard training trajectory?

### **Size and Location of Institutions**

To ensure efficiency, the Kothari Commission recommended that training institutions should be fairly large, with a minimum size requirement for primary and secondary-stage institutions. It called for the expansion of existing institutions to meet these criteria and proposed that new institutions should not have a capacity of less than 400. Furthermore, the Commission emphasized the importance of locating training facilities, especially at the primary stage, in rural areas to facilitate practice teaching. It also suggested involving a variety of institutions, including IITs and agricultural universities, in teacher training programs to broaden the base and provide education with an orientation to agriculture and industry (NCERT, 1966; p. 84)

The Commission's recommendations regarding the size and location of training institutions reflect a strategic approach to resource optimization. Larger institutions and the inclusion of diverse educational centres are envisaged as means to enhance the reach and effectiveness of teacher training. However, practical implementation

challenges, financial considerations, and the impact on the quality of training need to be considered in assessing the viability of these recommendations.

### **Chattopadhyay Commission 1983-1985**

The Chattopadhyay Commission's report (Gol, 1985) emphasizes the necessity for teacher education to evolve in tandem with the changing roles and responsibilities of educators. It proposed an extended training period of five years for secondary school teachers, commencing after the completion of class XII. This comprehensive five-year program should be thoughtfully structured to enable the concurrent pursuit of both general and professional education, ultimately aimed at cultivating the desired New Teacher, capable of meeting the varied demands of modern education. (Gol, 1985, p. 82).

This forward-thinking recommendation acknowledges the dynamic educational landscape influenced by technological advancements and evolving teaching methods. By advocating for an extended training period, the Commission emphasizes the significance of equipping teachers with specialized professional knowledge and a strong foundation in general education. This holistic approach aims to ensure educators are well-prepared to address the diverse and evolving needs of contemporary classrooms.

Acknowledging the existing one-year training programs and the reluctance to extend their duration significantly, the Commission suggested a phased approach. It proposed the initial introduction of a four-year integrated program, drawing from successful models such as those available at the Regional Colleges of the NCERT. Importantly, the Commission anticipated the potential for a later extension to a five-year program, following the model of professional courses in fields like medicine, engineering, and law. This adaptive approach aligned with practices in other professional domains and underscored the need for meticulous program development and evaluation. (Gol, 1985, pp. 82-83)

In this context, it's pertinent to consider how educator roles have evolved since the Commission's recommendations in the 1980s and how these changes impact the duration and structure of teacher education today. Additionally, we should reflect on the specific considerations required in designing a curriculum that integrates both general and professional education effectively. Finally, addressing the challenges and opportunities for states in India to introduce and sustain extended teacher education programs, as recommended by the Commission, is a crucial aspect of shaping the future of teacher education.

The Chattopadhyay Commission (1983-85) entered the landscape with its own set of recommendations aimed at making the existing one-year B.Ed. courses more effective. It recognized the urgent need for reform, even if it entailed additional costs. The Commission proposed increasing the academic year by adding two summer months, resulting in a working year of at least 220 days (Gol, 1985; p. 83).

This recommendation addressed the need for a more intensive teacher training experience, aligning with the broader shift toward longer-duration programs. The willingness to incur additional costs signalled a commitment to improving teacher quality, even if it meant diverting more resources toward teacher education.

The Chattopadhyay Commission's emphasis on practice teaching as a substantial part of teacher training is particularly noteworthy. The shift from giving stray lessons to structured internships in teaching is indicative of a more immersive approach to teacher preparation (GOI, 1983-85; p. 94). The Commission's recommendations prompt us to consider the effectiveness of this practice-teaching in nurturing effective educators. Did trainees gradually taking on the full responsibilities of regular teachers result in better-prepared educators?

### **Justice Verma Commission 2012**

The Justice Verma Commission's Report of the High-Powered Commission on Teacher Education Constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has also significantly contemplated the issues of pre-service teacher education at all levels of school education. The Commission was more of the view that the improvement of teacher education could only be based upon the precise articulation of the redesigning of the pre- and in-service teacher education programs, and the institutional approaches. "In order to do it, it is important to reflect upon the following: (a) the existing scenario of the pre-service teacher education; (b) the conceptual and operational profile of the envisioned teacher; and (c) the need for change, and a road map for transforming the quality of teacher education." (MHRD, 2012; p. 10). The chapters of the report of the Commission altogether deal with the quality of the pre-and in-service teacher education, teacher audit and performance, strengthening of the regulatory functions of the NCTE, and the outcomes of the review of the 291 D.Ed. institutions of Maharashtra.

Additionally, the report of the Commission sheds light on the aspects of quality of pre-service teacher Education, where it puts special emphasis on the 'duration of teacher education' as it recommends teacher education to be a part of the higher education system. Moreover, the duration of the teacher education programmes needs to be enhanced, in keeping with the recommendations of the Education Commission (1966), the implementation of which is long overdue. (MHRD, 2012; p. 95)

The "Think Tank – Teacher Education" initiative in Odisha, which aims to reform the state's teacher education system, stands out as a distinctive endeavour. Odisha took pride in being the first state to introduce such a program, while other Indian states were still contemplating similar reforms. A notable feature of this initiative in Odisha is its significant reliance on the insights provided by an Expert Group. The success of this program hinges on ongoing support from key stakeholders, including the Department of School and Mass Education, UNICEF, SCERT, and teacher education institutions. There were also plans to address pending issues and explore new ideas for system restructuring, contingent upon the continued existence of the Think Tank-TE Odisha.

The "Action Taken Report" by the Think Tank on Teacher Education (2015), addressing the Justice Verma Commission's recommendations, details key actions taken to reform the duration of teacher education programs in India. In a significant policy shift, a high-level meeting chaired by the Development Commissioner on February 10, 2014, resolved to extend the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program from one year to two years, while maintaining the Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) at its existing duration. This decision was reinforced by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) through its 2014 regulations, which mandated a two-year structure for both the B.Ed. and the Master of Education (M.Ed.) programs (SCERT Odisha, 2015).

Several questions arise from these changes: Will the extended duration of these programs successfully address the gaps in teacher preparedness? How will the additional time spent in training translate into classroom effectiveness, particularly in diverse and under-resourced educational settings? Additionally, how will this shift impact the financial and logistical considerations for aspiring teachers, many of whom already face economic challenges in accessing higher education?

The rationale behind extending the duration was to enhance the professionalism and rigor of teacher education, addressing long-standing concerns about the adequacy of one-year programs in equipping educators with the necessary pedagogical skills and knowledge. However, the broader implications, such as whether this extension alone can foster a more reflective, research-oriented teaching profession, remain open for debate. The report highlights that these restructured programs were slated to begin in the 2015-16 academic session, with efforts to redesign the curriculum in accordance with NCTE guidelines (Think Tank-TE, 2015). Yet, how successfully have these redesigned curricula aligned with the evolving demands of India's educational scenario?

These questions suggest that while the policy changes mark a critical step forward, the outcomes depend on various factors, including the implementation of the revised curriculum, the quality of teacher educators, and the institutional support provided to pre-service teachers.

### **Post Justice Verma Commission Development in Teacher Education in India**

In the period spanning from 1995 to 2000, there was a substantial surge in the number of teacher education institutes in India, marking a seven-fold increase, predominantly within the private sector. However, this rapid expansion precipitated a notable decline in the quality of teacher education programs.

An important juncture arose in 2008 when the Western Regional Council of NCTE, Bhopal, indicated that 291 colleges in Maharashtra had initiated D.Ed. programs, contrary to the explicit directives from the Government of Maharashtra. The state government had clearly indicated that more D.Ed. institutions were not necessarily due to limited employment opportunities for graduates of this program. Upon a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) reaching the Hon'ble Bombay High Court (Nagpur Bench), the court, after careful scrutiny of the facts, annulled the recognition granted to these 291

colleges on January 7, 2009. The court's decision was grounded in the breach of directives issued by the Central Government under Section 29 of the NCTE Act.

During this period, in 2007, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, issued directives under Section 29 of the NCTE Act, 1993, instructing the NCTE that those cases where differences of opinion between the State Government and the Western Regional Council (WRC) of NCTE arose, should be referred to the NCTE Headquarters (Delhi).

The affected institutions contested the Bombay High Court's ruling and filed Special Leave Petitions (SLPs) [Nos. 4247 and 4248/2011 in the case of *Rashtrasant T.M.S. and S.B.B.M.C.A. Vidyalaya and Ors. Versus Gangadhar Neelkanth Shinde and Ors.*] before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Supreme Court permitted the institutions recognized by the WRC to admit students to the D.Ed. course, recognizing the 'considerable public importance' of the issues raised in these SLPs. During the SLP hearings, the Supreme Court constituted a High-Powered Commission under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Justice (Retd.) J. S. Verma, former Chief Justice of India, to comprehensively investigate the matters pertaining to enhancing the quality of teacher education and improving the regulatory functions of the NCTE. This Commission, comprised of distinguished members including Goverdhan Mehta, M. Anandakrishnan, R. Govinda, Mrinal Miri, A.K.S. Sharma, and Poonam Batra, was pivotal in addressing the challenges faced by teacher education.

The Justice Verma Commission submitted its report in August 2012. Subsequently, the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), the highest advisory body guiding central and state governments in the field of education, at its 60th meeting, endorsed the recommendations put forth by the Commission. Recognizing teacher education as a matter of profound national significance, the Commission underscored the imperative to establish a national-level academic body tasked with a continual review of teacher education programs and the development of requisite human and material resources to facilitate these programs.

In response to the recommendations of the Justice Verma Commission's report in 2012, the NCTE undertook significant measures. New Regulations were introduced in 2014, leading to the extension of the duration of the 1-year B.Ed. and M.Ed. programs by an additional year. Additionally, a 3-year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. program was proposed. Since then, the NCTE has made several revisions to its Act, Statutes, and Regulations, in 2017, 2018, and 2019, reflecting its commitment to improving the landscape of teacher education in India.

### **National Education Policy 2020**

The National Education Policy-2020 envisioned a comprehensive overhaul of teacher education in India, aiming to raise the bar for teacher quality. By 2030, the minimum qualification for teaching would be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree. This integrated program would encompass a broad range of knowledge content and pedagogy and include robust practicum training through student teaching at local schools. Two-year

and one-year B.Ed. programs would continue to be offered, but only for those who had already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects (Gol, 2020; p. 23).

The National Education Policy-2020 marks a significant milestone in India's quest for teacher quality. The elevation of the minimum teaching qualification to a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree signals a recognition of the multifaceted skills and knowledge required of modern educators. The emphasis on practical training through student teaching aligns with global best practices in teacher education.

Moreover, the policy's multidisciplinary approach to teacher education reflects a holistic understanding of teaching as a complex profession that transcends subject matter expertise. The envisaged dual-major holistic Bachelor's degrees (Gol, 2020; pp. 42-43) highlight the need for educators to be well-versed not only in their chosen disciplines but also in pedagogy and the socio-cultural context of education. This holistic approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical research emphasizing the importance of well-rounded teacher education.

## Discussion

The duration of teacher education programs in India has undergone significant changes over the years, reflecting the evolving understanding of what constitutes effective teacher preparation. The historical evolution of teacher education in India, as reflected in the recommendations of various commissions and the National Education Policy 2020, demonstrates a composite effort to enhance the quality and duration of teacher training programs. The transition from one-year to two-year programs signifies recognition of the complexities and demands of modern education.

The extension of the academic year, as recommended by the Chattopadhyay Commission, represents a pragmatic response to the need for more comprehensive training. However, implementing these changes requires careful planning, investment, and commitment from educational authorities. These changes, while promising, also raise questions about resource allocation and the feasibility of scaling such reforms.

The emphasis on multidisciplinary approaches in teacher education, as outlined in the National Education Policy-2020, aligns with global trends in pedagogical research. It recognizes that effective teaching requires a deep understanding of subject matter, pedagogy, and the socio-cultural context in which education occurs. However, integrating these elements into teacher preparation programs presents its own set of challenges.

The National Educational Policy 2020 has been basically drafted, keeping in view the earlier reform documents dating back to the inception and roots of formal teacher education. Now, even after The Justice Verma Commission's Report (2012), The NCTE came up with rules and regulations that revamped the whole structure of the duration of pre-service teacher education by suggesting vital reforms from 2014 onwards which included tweaks and also major changes, as the duration of the existing 1-year B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes were increased by one additional year which eventually made these



professional courses of 2 years duration. As a result of, all the courses in the country were revised in 2014, thereafter the duration of the courses even got revised in the subsequent years. Now, if we do the basic maths of counting from the year 2015 to 2020, it sums up to be 5 years. Interestingly, after all these years, the most recent policy document, i.e., National Education Policy (NEP-2020) has come up with recommendations to make 4 years of Integrated courses, as the duration of pre-service teacher education. However, with such an interesting recommendation, we as the change-makers need to reflect upon what has been offered, suggested, and thus, been recommended. Less do we realize that the 4-year integrated courses that are being offered, takes us back to where we actually started from, it dates back to the old times of Calcutta University Commission (1919) which recommended a one-year teacher training program after the completion of a Bachelor's degree. As the 1-year increase that we gained from the recommendations from the subsequent policies, committees, and commissions seemed to be undervalued, suppressed, and eventually got compressed. To be precise, in 4 years of integrated course, three years are by default dedicated to catering towards the requirements of fulfilling the 'graduation' course leaving behind a limited additional year for the fulfillment of B.Ed. degree, which narrows it to a structure of 3+1years, which is similar to what has been offered long back, almost 101 (One Hundred and One) years back since the advent of the Calcutta University Commission which by and large makes it 'back to one year programme' which makes us doubt the notable departure from the previous one year models.

Even though, NEP 2020 is recommending four years of integrated B.Ed. degree by 2030 however, at the same time, the policy is also recommending that the two-year and one-year B.Ed. programs would continue to be offered. As a result, it creates a lot of dilemmas and confusion, as these options provided by NEP - 2020 were already readily available earlier. So, what exactly is the National Education Policy (NEP-2020) talking about? If we see and perceive things minutely, we will get to understand that the 'question of duration' or the 'dilemma of durations' has not come to an end, it is still not addressed adequately nor has been resolved completely.

One wonders, whether the NEP 2020 has taken cognizance of the recommendations of the Chattopadhyay Committee, if it has, then it should rather be talking about the duration of pre-service teacher education to be of 5 years but why is it talking about meagre 4 years of integrated course and programmes which makes it to be a kind of regressive recommendation when compared to the Chattopadhyay Commission which came long back in 1983-1985, almost forty years back. In one way, the policy is talking about a range of contradicting things. It is enumerating that, after 2030 all programs will be integrated into 4 years. Again, at the same time, they are also recommending continuation 1-year and 2-year programs with some clauses. As a result, it is creating a lot of choices and unfortunately, such choices lead to dilemmas. 'Duration of Teacher Education' is already a debated field that already had an umpteenth number of dilemmas, confusions, and struggles seeking effective, redressal, and resolve. Adding to all of it, under a new cover and magnifying the pertinent issues made no sense.

To address all of the dilemmas, we need to elicit more responses from practitioners and maybe it should be left to the profession itself, as it has been left to medical, law, and other prevalent fields and areas. Last but not least, the 'dilemma' about the 'duration of pre-service teacher education' is still prevalent in today's context and this largely is for the teacher educators to decide.

As for any programme to take root and remain sustainable requires considerably more time. However, what is important is continuous monitoring of reform programmes put in place. More importantly, what is needed is a firm conviction, that goes by the maxim 'we can do better, we shall do better, and we must do better'.

## Conclusion

The shift from one-year to two-year programs and the multidisciplinary approach outlined in the National Education Policy-2020 hold the promise of improving teacher quality and, by extension, the quality of education in India. However, the successful implementation of these reforms will require sustained effort, investment, and collaboration among educational institutions and authorities.

This comprehensive analysis dives into the historical evolution of teacher education in India, emphasizing the transition from one-year to two-year programs and the recent multidisciplinary approach outlined in the National Education Policy-2020. The recommendations of various commissions and policy documents provide valuable insights into the ongoing efforts to enhance teacher quality and, consequently, the quality of education in India.

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## Swami Vivekananda: A Philosophical Framework for Redefining Inclusion and Diversity

**Ashok Bachhar<sup>1</sup>**

### Abstract

This paper addresses the critical research gap in contemporary discussions on inclusion and diversity by integrating Swami Vivekananda's philosophical insights, which have been underexplored in modern socio-cultural discourse. While current literature predominantly focuses on secular and policy-driven approaches to diversity, there is a lack of engagement with spiritual and holistic perspectives that could enrich our understanding and practice of inclusivity. The objective of this paper is to bridge this gap by examining how Vivekananda's concepts of universal brotherhood, unity in diversity, and holistic education can provide a comprehensive framework for fostering inclusion in today's globalized yet divided society.

The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, combining spiritual philosophy with contemporary social challenges. It offers a unique perspective by proposing that the inclusion of spiritual and educational dimensions, as advocated by Vivekananda, can lead to more sustainable and profound social cohesion. By analyzing Vivekananda's teachings within the context of modern societal needs, this paper contributes to the development of a more holistic model of inclusion that goes beyond conventional frameworks. This study thus opens new avenues for both scholarly inquiry and practical application, emphasizing the relevance of spiritual principles in addressing the pressing issues of diversity and inclusion in the 21st century.

**Keywords:** *Inclusion, Diversity, Swami Vivekananda, Spirituality, Universal Brotherhood, Education, Social Harmony.*

### Introduction

In a world increasingly characterized by its diversity—whether in terms of culture, religion, race, or ideology—questions of inclusion have become central to the discourse

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on social harmony and global peace. As societies grapple with issues of inequality, discrimination, and conflict, the search for sustainable solutions that go beyond policy-driven approaches is more pressing than ever. Traditional methods, often grounded in secular and economic perspectives, have not fully succeeded in addressing the deeper, more pervasive divisions that undermine social cohesion. In this context, the philosophical insights of Swami Vivekananda offer a fresh and transformative approach that could redefine how we understand and practice inclusion and diversity in the modern world (Vivekananda, 1989).

Swami Vivekananda, a 19th-century Indian philosopher and spiritual leader, has been celebrated for his profound understanding of human nature and society. His teachings are rooted in the Vedantic tradition, which emphasizes the inherent divinity of all beings and the unity of existence (Bhuyan, 2003). Vivekananda's vision of "unity in diversity" goes beyond mere tolerance of differences; it advocates for the recognition and celebration of diversity as a reflection of the divine multiplicity. This perspective challenges the often superficial and utilitarian approaches to inclusion that dominate contemporary discourse, offering instead a holistic framework that integrates spirituality, ethics, and education (Gupta, 2005).

One of the central tenets of Vivekananda's philosophy is the concept of universal brotherhood. He believed that all human beings are manifestations of the same divine consciousness, and therefore, fundamentally equal (Sharma, 2020). This spiritual egalitarianism forms the basis of his advocacy for social inclusion. According to Vivekananda, the divisions that exist in society—whether based on caste, race, religion, or gender—are artificial constructs that obscure the underlying unity of all life. He argued that true social progress could only be achieved when these barriers are overcome, and people begin to see each other as equal participants in the shared human experience (Ranganathananda, 1993).

Vivekananda placed great importance on education as a means of fostering inclusion. However, his vision of education was not limited to the acquisition of knowledge or skills; it encompassed the holistic development of an individual's character, values, and spiritual understanding. He believed that education should cultivate empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility, preparing individuals to contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious society (Vivekananda, 1989). This approach contrasts sharply with the current educational paradigms, which often prioritize competition and individual achievement over collective well-being and social cohesion.

Despite the relevance of Vivekananda's teachings to contemporary challenges, there has been a significant gap in the academic exploration of his ideas in relation to modern issues of diversity and inclusion. Most current discussions on these topics remain within the confines of secular frameworks, which, while important, often overlook the deeper spiritual and ethical dimensions that can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of inclusivity (Gupta, 2005).

This study employs a multidisciplinary research methodology, integrating philosophical analysis with socio-cultural critique. The primary sources of this research include Swami Vivekananda's writings and speeches, which are examined to extract key principles relevant to inclusion and diversity. These principles are then contextualized within the framework of contemporary social issues through a critical review of current literature on diversity and inclusion. The paper also adopts a comparative approach, contrasting Vivekananda's ideas with modern secular theories to highlight the unique contributions of his philosophy (Sharma, 2020). Through this methodology, the study aims to develop a holistic model of inclusion that incorporates both spiritual and practical dimensions, offering new insights into the challenges of fostering a truly inclusive society.

This integrative approach not only underscores the timeless relevance of Vivekananda's teachings but also provides a robust framework for addressing the complexities of modern social cohesion. By bridging the gap between spiritual philosophy and contemporary socio-cultural discourse, this research opens new avenues for both academic inquiry and practical application in the ongoing quest for a more inclusive and diverse world.

### **Unity in Diversity: A Foundational Principle**

Swami Vivekananda's concept of "unity in diversity" stands as one of the most significant and influential ideas in his philosophical teachings. Rooted in the Vedantic tradition, this principle posits that the diversity of cultures, religions, and traditions is not a source of division but rather a reflection of the multifaceted nature of the divine reality (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 32). Vivekananda asserted that the differences we see in the world are various expressions of the same underlying truth, and therefore, diversity should be embraced and celebrated, not feared or suppressed (Gupta, 2005, p. 76).

Vivekananda's philosophy challenges the notion that unity requires uniformity. Instead, he argued that true unity is found in the recognition and acceptance of diversity. This idea is particularly relevant in today's globalized world, where cultural and religious differences often become flashpoints for conflict. According to Vivekananda, the key to peace and harmony lies in acknowledging that every individual and every culture has intrinsic value as a manifestation of the divine (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 55). By seeing the divine in others, people can overcome prejudices and divisions, fostering a sense of global brotherhood (Sharma, 2020, p. 112).

In this view, diversity is not just a social or cultural phenomenon but a spiritual one. Each culture and tradition, while unique in its expression, contributes to the richness of the human experience (Ranganathananda, 1993, p. 45). Vivekananda's idea of unity in diversity encourages societies to move beyond superficial distinctions such as race, religion, and nationality, and instead focus on the deeper spiritual connection that binds all humanity. This approach has the potential to transform how we view and interact with those who are different from us, promoting a more inclusive and compassionate society (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 88).

The practical implications of this philosophy are profound. In modern times, where conflicts often arise from cultural and religious differences, Vivekananda's teachings offer a pathway to peace. By recognizing the shared divinity in all people, societies can begin to transcend the divisions that lead to conflict and violence (Gupta, 2005, p. 92). This recognition does not require the abandonment of one's cultural or religious identity; rather, it involves an expansion of perspective to see the common humanity in others (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 98).

Vivekananda's concept of unity in diversity enriches the cultural tapestry of humanity. Instead of seeing diversity as a problem to be solved, it is viewed as a strength to be harnessed. Each culture and tradition adds its own unique color and texture to the global mosaic, creating a vibrant and dynamic society (Sharma, 2020, p. 135). This perspective not only fosters mutual respect and understanding but also encourages creative and intellectual exchange, leading to the growth and development of all communities. Swami Vivekananda's concept of unity in diversity offers a powerful antidote to the divisive forces that threaten global peace and harmony. By embracing the idea that diversity is a reflection of the divine, societies can move toward a more inclusive and peaceful world. This foundational principle of Vivekananda's philosophy provides a timeless blueprint for building a world where differences are not merely tolerated but celebrated as essential components of a unified human experience (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 3, p. 210).

### **Spirituality as a Catalyst for Inclusion**

Swami Vivekananda's teachings on spirituality are deeply intertwined with his vision of an inclusive society. He believed that spirituality, when understood in its true essence, has the power to transcend the barriers that divide humanity, such as religion, race, and culture (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 45). For Vivekananda, spirituality was not about adhering to a particular set of rituals or doctrines, but about recognizing the divine essence within all beings. This universal spiritual perspective lays the foundation for an inclusive society where differences are not only respected but celebrated (Gupta, 2005, p. 56).

Vivekananda's concept of inclusive spirituality is remarkable in its openness and universality. He argued that all religions are different paths leading to the same ultimate truth. This idea, often encapsulated in his famous phrase, "As different streams having different sources all mingle their waters in the sea, so different paths which men take... all lead to God," highlights the interconnectedness of all spiritual traditions (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 89). By embracing this inclusive view, individuals can rise above sectarianism and embrace a broader, more compassionate understanding of spirituality (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 45).

In today's pluralistic societies, where religious differences frequently lead to tension and conflict, Vivekananda's approach offers a profound solution. By promoting a spiritual outlook that respects and values all religious traditions, he encourages people to look beyond their individual faiths and recognize the shared spiritual foundation that unites

them (Sharma, 2020, p. 110). This recognition fosters a sense of universal brotherhood and mutual respect, which are essential for building a truly inclusive society (Ranganathananda, 1993, p. 75).

Vivekananda's inclusive spirituality is not confined to the abstract or theoretical; it has practical implications for how we live and interact with others. When individuals internalize the belief that every person is a manifestation of the divine, they begin to treat others with greater compassion and understanding (Gupta, 2005, p. 112). This shift in perspective can help to break down the prejudices and stereotypes that often lead to exclusion and discrimination. Instead of seeing people as "other" based on their religion or cultural background, individuals who embrace this inclusive spirituality see the common humanity in everyone (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 3, p. 145).

Furthermore, this spiritual inclusiveness can serve as a powerful force for social cohesion. In societies marked by diversity, the ability to appreciate and value different religious and cultural traditions is crucial for maintaining harmony and unity (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 98). Vivekananda's teachings encourage individuals to move beyond mere tolerance of diversity to a genuine appreciation of it. This deeper level of inclusiveness is not just about accepting differences; it's about recognizing that these differences enrich the human experience and contribute to the collective spiritual growth of society (Sharma, 2020, p. 125).

Swami Vivekananda's emphasis on spirituality as a catalyst for inclusion is as relevant today as it was over a century ago. His vision of an inclusive spirituality that transcends religious boundaries offers a powerful antidote to the divisiveness that often accompanies religious and cultural diversity (Ranganathananda, 1993, p. 102). By adopting this spiritual outlook, individuals and societies can foster a more inclusive mindset, paving the way for a world where diversity is not just tolerated but cherished as a vital part of the human experience. Vivekananda's teachings thus provide a timeless and practical framework for creating a more harmonious and inclusive global society (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 4, p. 200).

### **Holistic Education: Building Inclusive Minds**

Swami Vivekananda's vision of education was far broader than the conventional understanding of academic achievement. He believed that the purpose of education was not merely to impart knowledge or prepare individuals for careers, but to foster the holistic development of character and values (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 3, p. 55). For Vivekananda, true education was about shaping individuals who are compassionate, empathetic, and respectful toward others, regardless of their background or social status (Gupta, 2005, p. 92).

In Vivekananda's view, education should be a transformative process that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit. He argued that without moral and spiritual development, education would be incomplete (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 40). This holistic approach is designed to cultivate not just intellectual capabilities, but also the ethical and emotional dimensions of a person. By focusing on the development of the whole individual,



Vivekananda's educational philosophy aims to produce well-rounded individuals who are not only capable in their professional lives but also conscious of their social responsibilities (Ranganathananda, 1993, p. 62).

In the context of modern education systems, which often prioritize competition, grades, and individual success, Vivekananda's approach offers a refreshing and necessary alternative. Contemporary education often emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge and skills at the expense of character building. This narrow focus can lead to the development of individuals who are highly competent but may lack empathy, social awareness, and a commitment to inclusivity (Sharma, 2020, p. 110).

Vivekananda's emphasis on holistic education addresses this imbalance by advocating for an educational system that instills values such as compassion, empathy, and respect for diversity. He believed that education should teach students to see beyond superficial differences and to appreciate the common humanity that binds all people together (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 105). By fostering these values, schools and universities can help create a generation of socially conscious individuals who are equipped to contribute to a more inclusive society (Gupta, 2005, p. 125).

This approach to education has practical implications for how students interact with others in their daily lives. When education emphasizes character building alongside academic achievement, it encourages students to value diversity and practice inclusion in both their personal and professional interactions (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 70). This, in turn, helps to create a more harmonious and cohesive society, where individuals are not just tolerant of differences, but actively embrace and celebrate them. Swami Vivekananda's vision of holistic education is a powerful tool for building inclusive minds. By focusing on the development of character and values, in addition to academic excellence, this approach to education can play a pivotal role in fostering a generation that values diversity and practices inclusion. Vivekananda's educational philosophy provides a timeless blueprint for creating an education system that not only prepares individuals for success but also equips them to contribute positively to the world around them (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 4, p. 200).

### **The Relevance of Vivekananda's Thoughts in Contemporary Society**

Swami Vivekananda's teachings on inclusion and diversity have gained renewed significance in today's interconnected yet fragmented world. As globalization brings diverse cultures and communities closer, the challenges of inclusion and diversity become more pronounced. Issues such as racial discrimination, religious intolerance, and social inequality persist, creating divisions that threaten social cohesion and peace (Sharma, 2020, p. 45).

Vivekananda's philosophy offers a holistic approach to addressing these challenges, making his teachings remarkably relevant to contemporary society. Central to his vision is the concept of "unity in diversity," which advocates for the recognition and celebration of differences as expressions of a shared underlying truth (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 65). This perspective encourages societies to move beyond mere

tolerance of diversity to actively embracing it as a source of strength and enrichment. By promoting this idea, Vivekananda's teachings provide a pathway to building a more inclusive world where every individual is valued and respected (Gupta, 2005, p. 92).

Vivekananda's emphasis on inclusive spirituality offers a powerful solution to the religious and cultural conflicts that often divide communities. He advocated for a spirituality that transcends sectarian boundaries, urging individuals to recognize the common divine essence in all religions (Bhuyan, 2003, p. 110). This inclusive spiritual outlook fosters mutual respect and understanding, which are crucial for maintaining harmony in today's pluralistic societies (Ranganathananda, 1993, p. 78).

Additionally, Vivekananda's call for holistic education further enhances the relevance of his teachings. He believed that education should develop not only intellectual capabilities but also moral and spiritual values, preparing individuals to contribute positively to society (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 3, p. 88). In an era where education often focuses on competition and personal success, Vivekananda's approach serves as a reminder of the importance of character building and social responsibility. By nurturing empathy, compassion, and respect for others, holistic education can play a pivotal role in creating a generation committed to inclusion and social justice (Sharma, 2020, p. 125).

Swami Vivekananda's teachings provide timeless wisdom for addressing the pressing challenges of inclusion and diversity in contemporary society. His vision of unity in diversity, inclusive spirituality, and holistic education offers practical solutions for creating a more just and harmonious world. By embracing these principles, societies can counter the divisive ideologies that threaten social harmony and work toward a future where every individual is valued for their intrinsic worth (Gupta, 2005, p. 150). Vivekananda's thoughts continue to inspire and guide efforts to build a more inclusive and equitable global community (Vivekananda, 1989, Vol. 4, p. 200).

## **Conclusion**

As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, marked by rapid globalization, technological advancements, and cultural exchanges, the teachings of Swami Vivekananda offer a beacon of timeless wisdom that can guide us toward a more harmonious and inclusive world. His philosophy, deeply rooted in the spiritual traditions of India yet profoundly universal in its application, provides not just a moral framework but a practical blueprint for addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time.

Vivekananda's emphasis on unity in diversity is perhaps more relevant now than ever before. In an era where differences often lead to division, conflict, and misunderstanding, his vision of diversity as a manifestation of a shared underlying truth invites us to rethink our approach to inclusion. Rather than viewing diversity as a challenge to be managed, Vivekananda encourages us to see it as a strength to be celebrated. This shift in perspective is crucial for fostering global peace and cooperation, as it moves us beyond the narrow confines of tolerance into a more profound embrace

of the richness that diverse cultures, religions, and ideologies bring to the human experience.

Vivekananda's inclusive spirituality challenges the divisive narratives that often emerge from religious and cultural differences. By advocating for a spiritual outlook that transcends sectarian boundaries, he offers a powerful antidote to the religious intolerance and bigotry that plague many parts of the world today. His teachings remind us that at the core of all religious traditions lies a common quest for truth, and that recognising this shared spiritual foundation can lead to greater mutual respect and understanding. In a world where religious and cultural identities are increasingly weaponised for political and ideological ends, Vivekananda's message of universal brotherhood and spiritual unity is both urgent and essential.

Education, as envisioned by Vivekananda, plays a pivotal role in actualizing these ideals. His call for holistic education—one that nurtures not only the intellect but also the character and spirit—offers a necessary corrective to modern education systems that often prioritize competition and individual achievement over collective well-being. By instilling values such as empathy, compassion, and social responsibility, holistic education can produce a generation of leaders and citizens who are not only knowledgeable but also committed to building a more inclusive and just society. This vision of education as a tool for social transformation aligns seamlessly with the growing global recognition that education must be reimagined to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world.

In reflecting on Vivekananda's teachings, it becomes clear that they are not relics of a bygone era but rather a living philosophy that can inform and inspire contemporary efforts toward inclusion and social harmony. His ideas challenge us to think beyond conventional frameworks and to embrace a more holistic, spiritually grounded approach to the complex issues of diversity and inclusion. As we look to the future, Vivekananda's wisdom provides a powerful guide for navigating the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly interconnected world, offering a vision of unity that is both deeply spiritual and profoundly practical. In this way, Swami Vivekananda's teachings continue to resonate, offering a transformative vision that has the potential to reshape our world for the better, if only we dare to embrace it.

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## Pedagogical Strategies towards Inculcation of National Identity among School Students

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### Abstract

The inculcation of national identity among school students is pivotal in fostering a sense of belonging, pride, and responsibility towards one's country. This paper explores the pedagogical strategies that educators can employ to instill national identity within the educational framework. In the context of secondary education, it requires the integration of national narratives into various subjects, the promotion of critical thinking about national issues, and the encouragement of students to engage with their national history and culture in meaningful ways. Moreover, educators play a crucial role in this process, as they are tasked with creating an environment that both respects diversity and emphasizes the shared values that underpin national identity.

Researcher tries to explore effective strategies for developing national identity within secondary education, emphasizing the multifaceted approaches necessary to foster a cohesive sense of belonging among students. The discussion begins with the integration of national identity themes across the curriculum, highlighting the importance of embedding national history, literature, and cultural studies into various subjects to provide a comprehensive understanding of a nation's heritage (Banks, 2008; Anderson, 2006). Civic education is identified as a crucial component, promoting active citizenship and a deep connection to national values through practical experiences such as student councils and community service (Kahne & Westheimer, 2003; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). The research explores theoretical frameworks, pedagogical strategies, case studies, and the challenges for fostering national pride and global awareness. By synthesizing theoretical perspectives with empirical evidence, this study offers a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in teaching national identity and provides practical guidelines for educators aiming to foster a strong and inclusive sense of national identity among school students.

**Keywords:** [Education, Pedagogical Strategies, National Identity, Curriculum, Secondary School Students]

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**Introduction:**

National identity is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses a shared sense of belonging, cultural heritage, historical consciousness, and common values among the citizens of a nation. It serves as a binding force, uniting individuals within a country by fostering a collective identity that transcends individual differences. In an era characterized by globalization and rapid cultural exchanges, the preservation and promotion of national identity have become increasingly significant. As nations grapple with the challenges of maintaining their unique cultural identities while engaging with the broader global community, the role of education, particularly at the secondary level, has emerged as a critical area of focus.

Secondary education, a pivotal stage in the academic and social development of adolescents, offers a unique opportunity to shape the values, attitudes, and identities of young citizens. The integration of national identity into the curriculum and pedagogical practices of secondary schools is essential for nurturing informed, engaged, and patriotic citizens.

The importance of inculcating national identity through education has been recognized by educators, policymakers, and scholars alike. Educational systems across the world have long acknowledged the need to embed national values, history, and culture within their curricula as a means of reinforcing national identity.

**Reviews of Case Studies:****1. Israel: National- Building through Historical Education**

**Case Study Overview:** In Israel, national identity is closely tied to the country's history, culture, and the Hebrew language. The education system places a strong emphasis on teaching the history of the Jewish people, Zionism, and the establishment of the State of Israel.

**Implementation:** Israeli schools use a variety of pedagogical methods, including textbooks, documentaries, and visits to historical sites. To teach students about their national heritage, National ceremonies and the celebration of national holidays are also integral part of process.

**Outcomes:** This approach has been effective in instilling a strong sense of national identity among Israeli students, though it has also been the subjects of debate regarding its impact on social cohesion in a multicultural society.

**2. India: Balancing National and Regional Identities**

**Case Study Overview:** India's educational system is tasked with fostering a national identity while accommodating the country's vast linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity. The curriculum emphasizes the values of secularism, democracy, and unity in diversity.

**Implementation:** Indian schools teach national identity through subjects such as social studies, history, and moral education and encourage students to celebrate regional cultures, and languages. The NCERT plays key role in developing a balanced curriculum.

**Outcomes:** While India's approach has successfully promoted a sense of national unity, challenges remain in addressing regional disparities and ensuring that all cultural identities are equally represented.

### 3. South Africa: Post-Apartheid Nation-Building

**Case Study Overview:** After the end of apartheid, South Africa reformed its education system to promote national unity and social cohesion. The new curriculum, introduced in 1997, emphasized the values of democracy, human rights, and social justice.

**Implementation:** South African schools focus on teaching the history of apartheid and the struggle for freedom, while promoting a unified national identity through subjects like Life orientation. Schools also encourage dialogue and reconciliation among students from different backgrounds. As Outcomes; the curriculum has played a significant role in promoting a sense of national identity and unity though the legacy of apartheid continues to pose challenges in achieving social cohesion.

**Discussion:** These case studies demonstrate the diverse approaches countries take to inculcate national identity through education. While each country faces unique challenges, common strategies include curriculum integration, the use of national symbol and narratives, and the balancing of national and global identities. These examples provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to develop effective strategies for fostering national identity in their own contexts.

**1. Smith and Lee's (2022)** offer a comprehensive exploration of how educational systems contribute to the formation of national identity. The authors systematically analyze a wide range of studies to identify the key mechanisms through which education fosters a sense of national belonging. They emphasize that education serves as a conduit for transmitting a nation's cultural heritage, values, and historical narratives to the younger generation. The review highlights that the content of curricula (History Education), the methods of teaching, and the overall educational environment are crucial in shaping students' national identity.

**2. Ahmed and Singh (2023)** examine the role of education in fostering national identity in multicultural societies, where the presence of diverse cultural groups leads both challenges and opportunities for national identity formation. They argue that in multicultural societies, national identity education must strike a balance between promoting a cohesive national identity and respecting cultural diversity. They highlight the importance of inclusive curricula that reflect the contributions of different cultural groups to the nation's history and culture.

**3. Zhang and Hoffman (2022)** explore the intersection of globalization and education, focusing on how global trends are influencing the formation of national identity within educational systems. They argue that the rise of digital media and international

exchanges has made it increasingly difficult to maintain a singular national identity. Instead, many educational systems are now promoting a hybrid identity that integrates national pride with global awareness. The review concludes that while globalization poses challenges to traditional notions of national identity, it also offers opportunities for students to develop a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of their place in the world.

**4. Thompson and Rees (2023)** review the role of civic education in fostering national identity within democratic societies. The authors examine how civic education policies are designed to instill a sense of national belonging while promoting democratic values and active citizenship. The review discusses various case studies from different countries, highlighting the diverse approaches to integrating national identity into civic education. Researchers find that successful civic education programs not only teach students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens but also emphasize the shared values and historical narratives that bind a nation together.

Cultural and heritage education is emphasized for its role in celebrating national traditions and promoting inclusivity by recognizing diverse backgrounds (Smith, 1991; Banks, 2008). The use of national symbols and rituals in the educational environment reinforces national identity through daily practices and special events (Billig, 1995; Hutchinson, 2005). Critical engagement with national identity, facilitated through reflective activities and critical pedagogy, helps students appreciate the complexities and evolving nature of their national identity (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1988).

### **“Theories and Frameworks Supporting the Inculcation of National Identity”**

National identity refers to the sense of a collective identity that is shared among the people of a nation, often linked to a common culture, language, history, and set of values. It is a social construct that plays a critical role in the cohesion and stability of a nation. The inculcation of national identity, particularly through education, is supported by various theories and frameworks that explore how individuals develop a sense of belonging to their nation.

#### **Framework:**

**1. “Social Identity Theory”:** Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s, is one of the most influential theories in understanding how individuals form a sense of identity based on their membership in social groups, including national groups. According to SIT, individuals derive a part of their self-concept from their perceived membership in various social groups, which can include family, community, ethnic groups, and nation-states.

Education plays a pivotal role in this process by categorizing students as members of a national community, teaching them about the nation's history, culture, and values, and fostering a sense of pride and belonging. Schools, as social institutions, often promote national identity through rituals (like flag salutes), the national curriculum, and the



celebration of national holidays, which all serve to reinforce students' identification with their nation.

**2. “Civic Nationalism and the Civic Education Framework”:** Civic education programs aim to develop students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, instil respect for democratic institutions, and foster a commitment to the common good. Through civic education, students learn about the principles of democracy, the functioning of government, and the importance of civic participation. This approach to national identity is inclusive, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to feel a sense of belonging to the nation based on their shared commitment to its civic values.

**3. “Cultural Transmission Theory”:** Cultural Transmission Theory, rooted in sociology and anthropology, posits that national identity is transmitted from one generation to the next through various socialization agents, including family, media, and, most importantly, education. Schools are seen as primary sites for the transmission of national culture, values, and norms.

**4. “Constructivist Theories of National Identity”:** Constructivist theories of national identity, which draw on broader constructivist approaches in social science, emphasize that national identity is not inherent but is constructed through discourse, social interaction, and institutional practices. In this view, national identity is continually created and re-created through educational processes, media representation, and political rhetoric.

Within education, constructivist approaches focus on how national identity is constructed through the curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture.

**5. “National Identity as a Social Construct”:** The idea that national identity is a social construct is central to many contemporary discussions of nationalism and education. Social constructivist theories suggest that national identity is not a fixed or natural phenomenon but is created through social practices, discourse, and institutional structure.

In this framework, the curriculum, textbooks, and pedagogical practices are seen as tools that construct a particular vision of the nation. For example, the way history is taught can emphasize certain events and figures while marginalizing others, thereby constructing a particular national narrative. The social constructivist approach also highlights the role of language in constructing national identity. The promotion of a national language in schools helps to create a common means of communication and a shared cultural identity.

### **“Challenges and Considerations in Inculcating National Identity”**

Inculcating national identity within secondary education presents several challenges and considerations that educators and policymakers must address to ensure effective and inclusive teaching. These challenges stem from diverse cultural backgrounds, historical narratives, and political contexts that influence how national identity is perceived and taught.

**1. Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity:**

One significant challenge is managing cultural diversity within increasingly multicultural classrooms. In nations with diverse populations, the national identity promoted in schools may not fully resonate with all students, potentially leading to feelings of exclusion or alienation. Ensuring that the national identity curriculum is inclusive and reflects the experiences of all cultural and ethnic groups is crucial (Banks, 2008).

**2. Historical Narratives and Bias:**

The representation of historical events and figures in national curricula can be contentious, as it often reflects particular political or ideological perspectives. For instance, history textbooks and curricula may emphasize certain events or narratives that align with dominant political ideologies, potentially marginalizing alternative viewpoints or controversial aspects of history (Hutchinson, 2005). It is essential for educators to present a balanced view of history that includes multiple perspectives and encourages critical thinking (Freire, 1970).

**3. Curriculum and Resource Limitations:**

Curriculum and resource limitations also pose challenges. Developing and implementing a curriculum that effectively promotes national identity requires substantial resources, including trained educators, educational materials, and funding. Inadequate resources can hinder the ability of schools to deliver a comprehensive national identity curriculum (Dewey, 1938). Additionally, the integration of national identity themes across various subjects may be limited by existing curricula that do not prioritize this aspect of education.

**4. Resistance and Identity Conflicts:**

Students may resist the inculcation of national identity, especially if it conflicts with their personal or familial beliefs and values. Such resistance can manifest in various forms, from passive disengagement to active opposition. The Challenge for educators is to navigate these conflicts sensitively and to create an environment where national identity can be explored and negotiated rather than imposed.

**Pedagogical Strategies: National Identity in Secondary Education**

Developing a strong national identity during secondary education is critical as it lays the foundation for students to understand their place within their nation and the broader world. National identity, encompassing shared history, values, language, and culture, is crucial for social cohesion and citizenship. In secondary schools, where students are at a formative age, educators can employ a variety of pedagogical strategies; are designed to engage students intellectually and emotionally, helping them internalize the values and narratives that define their nation.

**1. Curriculum Integration:** Most effective strategy for inculcating national identity is through the integration of national themes across the curriculum. This involves embedding national history, culture, and values into various subjects, not just in history

or social studies. For example, literature classes can include works by national authors that explore themes of national identity, culture, and social issues. Science classes can highlight the contributions of national scientists and the role of national institutions in scientific advancements.

"Integrating national themes across the curriculum helps students see the interconnectedness of subjects and their shared national identity, which is essential for fostering a sense of belonging (Anderson, 2006; Banks, 2008)."

**2. Cultural and Heritage Education:** Cultural education, which includes the study of national traditions, languages, arts, and customs, is crucial in building national identity. One approach to cultural education is through the celebration of national holidays, festivals, and commemorations in schools. These events provide opportunities for students to learn about their nation's history and cultural heritage in a meaningful and engaging way. For example, celebrating Independence Day, National Heroes Day, or other significant national holidays in schools can be accompanied by lessons on the historical significance of these events, helping students to connect with their national identity.

"Cultural and heritage education fosters a deep understanding of a nation's identity by celebrating its diverse cultural practices, which is essential for developing a cohesive national identity (Smith, 1991; Parekh, 2000)."

**3. Use of National Symbols and Rituals:** The use of national symbols and rituals in schools is a traditional and powerful method for instilling national identity. National flags, anthems, and emblems are visible representations of the nation and are often used in school ceremonies and daily routines. For instance, many schools begin the day with the raising of the national flag and the singing of the national anthem. These rituals, although simple, serve as daily reminders of students' connection to their nation.

"The daily use of national symbols and rituals in schools reinforces a sense of national identity among students, making these practices a powerful tool in education (Billig, 1995; Hutchinson, 2005)."

**4. Experiential Learning and Field Trips:** Experiential learning, including field trips and educational tours, provides practical experiences that connect students to their nation's history and cultural heritage (Dewey, 1938; Seixas, 2000). For example, a visit to a national monument, such as a war memorial, can provide a powerful emotional connection to the nation's history and the sacrifices made by previous generations. Museums that showcase national history, art, or cultural artefacts can help students to better understand the nation's heritage and the events that have shaped its identity.

Collaborative projects and group work foster a shared understanding of national identity, while incorporating technology and media enhances engagement and media literacy (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Buckingham, 2003; Jenkins, 2006). By employing these strategies, educators can create an inclusive and dynamic environment that

effectively nurtures national identity, preparing students to be informed and engaged citizens in a globalized world.

## Conclusion

The development of national identity in secondary education requires a multifaceted endeavour that requires careful consideration of pedagogical strategies, curriculum design, and student engagement. Through curriculum integration, civic education, cultural and heritage education, the use of national symbols and rituals, critical engagement, experiential learning, collaborative projects, and the incorporation of technology, educators can effectively foster a strong sense of national identity among students. These pedagogical strategies not only help students to understand their place within their nation but also prepare them to be informed, engaged, and responsible citizens who contribute positively to their national community.

By implementing these strategies thoughtfully and inclusively, educators can help students develop a meaningful and dynamic connection to their nation, preparing them to be informed and engaged citizens in a globalized world.

Remarkably these strategies, necessarily contribute to the ongoing discourse on the role of education in inculcating national identity and preparing students to navigate both their national and global identities.

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## **Integrating Blended Learning in Special Education: Insights, Challenges, and Opportunities for Developing 21st-Century Skills among In-Service Teachers**

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### **Abstract**

*This study explores the impact of special education teachers' perceptions on the implementation of blended learning for students with special needs, with a focus on fostering 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and digital literacy. Using a quantitative survey approach, data were collected from 24 special education teachers working in government schools across Delhi. Analysis of means and standard deviations revealed that while teachers generally held positive perceptions of blended learning, its actual implementation in classrooms was moderate. Teachers recognized the potential of blended learning to significantly enhance twenty first century skills in special needs students, particularly in promoting problem-solving, critical thinking, and the ability to apply new knowledge to real-life scenarios. Despite these positive perceptions, the study identified a moderate correlation between teachers' attitudes and the degree of blended learning integration, suggesting that although educators value blended learning but its practical application in classrooms remains limited. This research underscores the need for targeted training and resources to bridge the gap between positive perceptions and effective practice, ensuring that blended learning can fully support the development of 21st-century skills in special education. This study serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers to create inclusive, technology-driven educational environments, fostering the holistic development of students with special needs.*

**Keywords:** *Blended learning, Special Education, In-Service teachers, Perspectives.*

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## Introduction

Adopting revolutionary teaching techniques has become essential in the continually changing field of education, particularly in the area of special education. Blended learning is a pedagogical technique that blends conventional face-to-face instruction with online features, made possible by the development of technology in education. Back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, students were just starting to understand technology, but now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students are using technology for learning. The current generation of students is really smart when it comes to technology because they are born into a world where everything is connected with technology. Clearly, teachers have chosen instructional strategies that they believe are most effective. In fact, certain teachers continue to teach in accordance with their own educational experiences, adopting methods that are systematic (Williams, 2018). When we talk about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, it means there are three main sets of skills: skills for life and work, skills for learning and being creative, and skills for dealing with information, media, and technology (Arora, 2010; Barr, Harrison and Conery, 2011; Cooper & Florida, 2005). Learners today are really good with technology. This makes it a bit tricky for teachers because they have to figure out how to teach these students and give them the best learning experiences. Teachers who used to mainly teach with textbooks tried blended learning and changed not just how they teach, but also how they think about it. They moved from focusing on what they like to focusing on what helps students learn better.

While blended learning has gained traction in mainstream education, its integration into special education settings remains a topic of exploration and inquiry. Blended Learning is great for students with special needs because it helps them learn better. It's like using a mix of online and offline ways to teach, and it helps students get better at language, physical skills, behaviour, social skills, emotions, and other important stuff. And, each student gets their own special way of using Blended Learning to make sure it works best for them. Special education classrooms cater to diverse learning needs, often necessitating tailored instructional approaches. Special needs children have the same right as mainstream students to an equal and high-quality education. Students with special needs have a variety of challenges with learning, which range from physical disabilities to problems with behaviour (Florian, L., & Hegarty, J., 2004). In the context of special education, blended learning presents an interesting path for inquiry due to its ability to provide personalised and flexible learning experiences. In order to shed light on the prospects, obstacles, and variables affecting the acceptance of this cutting-edge method, this research intends to explore how special education instructors perceive the use of blended learning strategies in their classrooms.

## ***Background of the Study***

The evolution of special education has witnessed significant milestones, from the establishment of the first special education schools to the implementation of inclusive education practices. Alongside this evolution, teaching methodologies have also

transformed, with a growing emphasis on leveraging technology to enhance learning outcomes. Blended learning, as a fusion of traditional and digital instructional methods, presents an intriguing prospect for addressing the unique needs of special education students. In many educational contexts, blended learning which blends traditional classroom instruction with online components has grown in popularity. In the field of special education, it is essential to understand the views of teachers about the usage of blended learning in the classroom in order to enhance the educational experiences of students with special needs.

The constructivist learning theory serves as the theoretical framework for this research. According to constructivism, learning is an active process in which individuals construct understanding based on their interactions and experiences with their surroundings. This idea indicates that in the setting of Blended Learning, a combination of conventional and virtual instructional approaches can create a more varied and customized educational experience, adapting to the distinctive demands of learners with special needs.

Furthermore, the TPACK framework serves as a guide by highlighting how technology, teaching methods, and subject knowledge work together. It focuses on how these three areas interact to enhance effective teaching. This framework emphasizes the importance of special teachers having an in-depth knowledge of how technology can be effectively integrated into their teaching practices, taking into account particular subjects and pedagogical strategies relevant to the varied needs of their students.

In addition, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework adds to the theoretical foundation. To accommodate diverse learners, UDL promotes for multiple modes of representation, participation, and expression. Blended Learning adheres to UDL principles by providing a flexible and adaptive strategy that allows special education teachers to accommodate to the diverse learning styles and abilities in their classrooms.

Finally, it is critical to recognize the socio-ecological model. This module examines the impact of several ecological systems on students' educational experiences, which include the classroom, school, and community. Understanding special education teachers' attitudes toward Blended Learning involves a knowledge of how these attitudes are impacted by the larger educational setting and the interactions that take place within these ecosystems.

### ***Rationale for the Study***

Despite the increasing prevalence of blended learning in mainstream education, there exists a noticeable gap in the literature concerning its application and impact within special education contexts. Understanding how special education teachers perceive and navigate the incorporation of blended learning is crucial for the development of effective strategies that align with the diverse needs of their students. This study seeks to bridge this gap by exploring the perspectives of special education teachers, providing insights into the factors that shape their attitudes towards blended learning and the potential benefits and challenges they encounter.



## Statement of the Problem

*"Using Blended Learning in Special Education Classrooms: Perspectives of In-Service Teachers."*

## Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the perceptions of Special Education Teachers on the use of Blended Learning in the classroom.
- To determine the level of use of Blended Learning by Special Education Teachers in the classroom.
- To find out the correlation between the perceptions of Special Education Teachers and the level of use of Blended Learning.

## Delimitations of the study

- The sample consists of the in-service Special Education Teachers working in govt. schools only.
- The sample of this study is limited to Delhi only.

## Review of Related Literature

The integration of online and blended learning has become increasingly significant, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as educators and institutions explore effective teaching methods to adapt to the changing educational landscape. Singh et al. (2021) highlighted the impact of the pandemic on higher education, emphasizing the need to explore hybrid and blended learning approaches. Their study provides a comprehensive overview of these methods, addressing the challenges faced by educators and offering practical solutions for their successful implementation. Similarly, Bordoloi et al. (2021) examined the shift from traditional classroom learning to technology-based methods during the pandemic, particularly in the Indian context. Their findings suggest that while blended learning has the potential to expand educational opportunities, challenges such as low participation, poor internet access, and the digital divide must be addressed. Islam et al. (2021) focused on promoting studentcentred blended learning in higher education, proposing a model that emphasizes active teacher involvement, technical skills, and student engagement. Their research underscores the importance of tailoring blended learning methods to fit local contexts, particularly in Asian countries like Bangladesh. Additionally, Saboowala&Manghirmalani-Mishra (2020) explored in-service teachers' perceptions of blended learning as the "new normal" post-pandemic. Their findings indicate that factors such as gender, educational qualifications, and participation in online professional development significantly influence teachers' attitudes toward blended learning. Together, these studies provide valuable insights into the evolving educational landscape and the necessity for thoughtful integration of blended learning methods to meet the diverse needs of learners and educators in a post-pandemic world.

## Methodology

This study is quantitative and uses a survey design. The survey method was chosen because it's effective for gathering people's opinions on current issues (Creswell, 2012). The researcher used a cross-sectional survey for this study to accurately measure how Special Education teachers feel about using a blended learning approach. According to Lay & Khoo (2012), To provide an extensive overview of educational practices and ideas at a particular moment in time, cross-sectional surveys are employed. Since the study's sample was selected from a specific group and all data was collected at one time, the cross-sectional survey method is appropriate for this research.

## Population

The population of this study include all the in-service special education teachers who are teaching in different government schools of New Delhi.

## Sampling Procedure

The sample of this research constitutes a total of 24 special education teachers and Purposive sampling technique is used by the researchers to select a sample from the population.

## Tool of the Study

Five-points Likert Scale is developed by the researchers to explore the perception of special education teachers towards use of blended learning in their teaching-learning process. A total of 18 statements were made for the tool, 8 for perception and 8 for level of use.

## Findings

1) What are the Special Education Teachers' perspectives on the implementation of blended learning in the classroom?

**Table1. Perceptions of Special Education Teachers regarding the implementation of blended learning in the classroom**

ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	LEVEL
Blended learning adequately prepares to address the individual needs of students with disabilities.	3.79	0.83	High
Teachers face significant challenges related to technology when implementing blended learning in special education class.	3.88	0.85	High
Blended learning allows to effectively address the individual learning needs of students with disabilities.	4.00	0.65	High
Blended learning enhances student engagement in special education classroom.	4.08	0.65	High
Teachers can seamlessly integrate assistive technologies into blended learning activities.	4.08	0.50	High
Blended learning positively impacts student motivation in special education classroom.	4.13	0.68	High

Teachers can easily customize learning materials to meet the specific needs of students in a blended learning environment.	1.00	0.00	Low
Adequate resources (e.g., devices, software) are available to support blended learning in a special education classroom.	3.17	1.09	Moderate
Blended learning encourages increased parental involvement in the education of students with disabilities.	3.96	0.81	High

**Overall mean**3.56 5.32 **High**

Introducing Blended Learning in school environments enhances the educational experience of children with special needs. While blended learning has a positive influence on the progress of students with special needs, its implementation in the classroom is still ambiguous.

The study's results indicate that Special Education teachers demonstrated a strong level of awareness regarding the implementation of blended learning in the instruction and education of students with special needs, scoring 3.56 on the scale. The Special Education teachers' strong understanding suggests that they have a positive view of Blended Learning and are interested in integrating it with their teaching and learning practices.

The elevated average suggests that Special Education instructors in Delhi's government schools are of the opinion that Blended Learning equips them with the necessary skills to properly cater to the requirements of pupils with special needs. Special Education teachers encounter numerous hurdles when incorporating technology into the classroom, as indicated by a mean score of 3.88. Despite the average score of 4.08, Special Education Teachers are confident in the ease of integrating assistive technology in the blended classroom. Among them are Subject Matter Experts (SETs) who concur that the utilization of blended learning amplifies student involvement and has a beneficial influence on student motivation, with mean scores of 4.08 and 4.13, respectively. The implementation of Blended Learning, which allows students to access educational material online, has led to a notable rise in parental involvement, with an average score of 3.96. The SETs have indicated a significant worry about the availability of sufficient resources to undertake blended learning, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.17. This raises awareness about the varying levels of infrastructure in schools. The limited acceptance of customizing learning materials by the SETs creates opportunities for in-service teacher training programs conducted by the authorities.

2) What is the extent to which Special Education teachers utilize blended learning?

**Table 2. Levels of Blended Learning use by Special Education teachers**

ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	LEVEL
I incorporate online resources (e.g., videos, interactive modules) as part of my instructional materials.	3.67	1.17	Moderate
I use a Learning Management System (LMS) to organize and deliver course content.	3.58	0.78	Moderate
I integrate multimedia elements (e.g., images, audio)	4.13	0.68	High

into my blended learning activities.			
I provide students with access to digital learning platforms to support their individualized learning needs.	3.83	0.76	High
I customize learning paths or activities based on students' abilities and learning styles.	3.92	0.93	High
I encourage students to take ownership of their learning through online activities and resources.	4.04	0.69	High
I utilize blended assessments, combining traditional and online evaluation methods.	3.63	0.82	Moderate
I have access to all the hardware and software required for effective implementation of Blended Learning in my school.	3.42	0.97	Moderate
I find it easy to assess student progress and provide feedback in a blended learning setting.	3.50	0.71	Moderate

**Overall mean****3.75High**

The survey revealed that special education instructors at government schools in Delhi demonstrated a high level of utilization of blended learning. The average score obtained from all relevant elements was 3.75. The SETs incorporate multimedia components throughout their blended learning programs. The mean of this statement is 4.13, indicating that SETs are effectively utilizing multimedia to meet the requirements of children with special needs. Furthermore, SETs employ internet resources, such as interactive modules, to enhance the efficacy of educational materials. The teachers reached a consensus that their usage level towards it is moderate, with a mean value of 3.67.

With a mean value of 3.58, the teachers indicated a moderate level of use of a Learning Management System to organize and deliver course content. This opens up various avenues for in-service teacher training workshops. With a mean value of 3.83, indicating a high perception, the SETs have affirmed that they provide students with access to digital learning platforms to support them with their individualized learning needs, which is one of the major challenges for children with special needs. Additionally, with a mean value of 3.92, the SETs have agreed that they customize learning activities based on the abilities and learning styles of students. It is because the classroom is full of diversity, and addressing the diverse needs of the learners is of utmost importance to the teacher.

The findings show that SETs encourage students to take ownership of their learning through online activities and resources, with a mean value of 4.04. This is a clear indication of how SETs are preparing their students to become self-sufficient when it comes to their studies. The SETs have moderately agreed, with a mean value of 3.63, that they combine traditional and online assessment methods to evaluate the performance of students. It could be because teachers are skeptical about whether the students will perform well in the online assessment or not.

Special education teachers have shown a moderate level of implementation of blended learning, with a mean value of 3.42 when it comes to accessibility of all the hardware and software required. It shows that either the school is not well equipped with the resources or the teachers are denied access to them. With a mean value of 3.50, the SETs are at a moderate level when it comes to providing feedback in a blended learning setting.

3) Is there a relationship between Special Education teachers' perceptions and how frequently they use blended learning?

**Table3. Relation between teacher perception and Blended learning usage**

Teacher perception	
Usage of blended learning	<b>Correlation</b> 0.37

The table shows that there is a moderate association between teachers' perceptions and utilization of blended learning, with a coefficient of 0.37. This result suggests that instructors' perceptions and the modest use of blended learning are significantly correlated. This shows that the hypothesis put out by the author—that there is no meaningful correlation between special education instructors' perceptions and their usage of blended learning—is not supported by the data.

The study's conclusions demonstrate a strong correlation between instructors' opinions about integrating ICT into the classroom. In this study, special education instructors' perceptions were highly subjective, but they were also highly utilized. This outcome is in alignment with the research conducted by Apeanti (2014)., which looked at the fairlysignificant association between instructors' perceptions and ICT use.

**Significance of the Findings**

The study "Integrating Blended Learning in Special Education: Insights, Challenges, and Opportunities for Developing 21st-Century Skills Among In-Service Teachers" holds significant importance due to its implications for enhancing education for students with special needs. The findings underline the following critical aspects:

1. **Enhanced Student Learning and Development:**
- The study demonstrates that blended learning fosters critical 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and digital literacy among students with special needs.
  - It highlights the personalized and flexible learning opportunities that address individual learning styles and capabilities, promoting better engagement and motivation in special education settings.

**2. Empowering Special Education Teachers:**

- Insights from the research reveal that in-service teachers possess a positive perception of blended learning, yet practical implementation remains moderate due to challenges like technological limitations and resource constraints.
- The findings stress the need for teacher training programs and resources to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application, enabling teachers to effectively utilize blended learning methods.

**3. Advancing Inclusive Education:**

- By showcasing the potential of blended learning to cater to diverse learning needs, the study supports inclusive education practices, ensuring students with special needs have equal access to high-quality educational opportunities.
- The integration of assistive technologies and customized learning materials aligns with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), making classrooms more accessible and equitable.

**4. Policy and Infrastructure Development:**

- The identification of barriers such as inadequate resources, insufficient training, and lack of infrastructure provides actionable insights for policymakers to prioritize investments in technology and professional development.
- A moderate correlation between teachers' perceptions and utilization suggests targeted strategies are required to boost the practical application of blended learning.

**5. Parental Involvement:**

- The research highlights the role of blended learning in increasing parental engagement in their children's education, fostering a collaborative approach to special education.

In summary, the findings emphasize the transformative potential of blended learning in special education while addressing the existing challenges. They serve as a valuable resource for educators, administrators, and policymakers to create an environment where technology-driven learning strategies can be seamlessly integrated, ensuring the holistic development of students with special needs.

**Conclusion**

The conclusion makes clear that, in general, special education teachers see the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into their lesson plans favorably. Even with this positive view, there is still variation in the real application of ICT in the classroom. This discrepancy implies that although teachers are aware of the potential advantages of ICT in improving student performance, a number of barriers stand in the way of its broad and efficient application. One of the main issues noted is

the overwhelming amount of work instructors have to do, which prevents them from experimenting with and incorporating new technology into their lessons. Their obligations are so demanding that they don't have much time to learn about and play around with ICT technologies.

Furthermore, there is evidence of inappropriate use of ICT resources, which might be the result of inadequate knowledge of how to successfully integrate these technologies into lesson plans or a lack of training. In addition to impeding the potential advantages of ICT, this inappropriate usage feeds the cycle of under-utilization. Furthermore, one of the biggest obstacles to the regular integration of ICT in special education is a deficient infrastructure. Teachers cannot completely utilize ICT in their teaching without the requisite technological tools, such as modern equipment and dependable internet connectivity.

The frequency of ICT usage is restricted by this lack of infrastructure, and the quality of its execution is also affected. It is crucial to give instructors the assistance they need to overcome these obstacles, including funding for infrastructural upgrades and professional development opportunities centred on ICT integration. By fixing these problems, teachers will be more capable of integrating ICT into their lessons regularly and successfully, which will improve the learning opportunities for kids in special education settings.

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## Educational Strategies for Shaping National Identity and Promoting Global Citizenship among Youth

**Md. Fahim Alam<sup>1</sup> & Naheed Zahoor<sup>2</sup>**

### Abstract

*Education is universally recognized as the cornerstone of a child's holistic development, playing a critical role not only in imparting knowledge of history but also in acknowledging contributions that have shaped the nation's progress and cultural identity. The construction of national identity and the cultivation of citizenship are closely tied to the effective implementation of educational curricula. The curriculum is designed to foster national identity among the students, addressing the contemporary needs. The matter of the fact is that today's students would be tomorrow's leader. So they should be inculcated with an awareness of Global citizenship. Yet such a role is muted in the context of three significant trends in education: Globalization, the standardization of curricula; Nationalization, the increasing emphasis on national curricula and Privatization, the growing influence of private institutions.*

*This paper explores educational strategies to bridge the gap between national identity and global citizenship, arguing that an integrative approach can empower individuals to contribute meaningfully to their nations while actively participating in global progress. By examining educational practices, policy frameworks and socio-cultural dynamics, this study aims to propose pathways for creating individuals who would be both patriotic and committed to global responsibility.*

*The societal values are embedded within subjects like language, arts and social studies. Such elements are presented in ways that foster students' understanding of their national identity and promote civic responsibility (Hahn, 1998). This also ensures alignment with broader educational goals of nation-building and cultural preservation (Durkheim, E. 1925). By embedding global perspectives, critical thinking, and intercultural competencies into the curriculum, students are engaged with and contribute to an increasingly integrated world, hence promoting the significance of Global citizenship.*

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**Key words:** *[National Identity, Education system, International Policies, Youth Development, Global citizenship]*

### **Introduction:**

National sentiment is inculcated through Educational process. It is designed to inculcate a sense of patriotism and commitment to one's country. Education plays progressive role in shaping national identity. It equips individuals with the skills for addressing global challenges while simultaneously transmitting shared values, cultural heritage. The basic elements tied to individual's National identities are cultural heritage, geographic origin, or civic membership. But the broad-based education encourages more to global perspectives by exposing students to diverse disciplines, cultures, and worldviews. It also fosters critical thinking and cross-cultural understanding. In this way it not only enhances students' ability to engage with global challenges but also equips them with the skills necessary to navigate an increasingly interconnected world, hence it fosters a holistic approach.

The dichotomy of both terms National identity and Global citizenship overlooks the potential for synergy between the two, where fostering a robust national identity can serve as foundation for embracing global perspectives.

### **Theoretical frameworks on National identity:**

**Greetz (1973)** quoted that national identity is rooted in immutable aspects of human association, such as ethnicity, language, and shared ancestry. This perspective views national identity as an intrinsic bond that strengthens social cohesion.

**Anderson, B. (1983)**, gave concepts of imagined communities by challenging the static view of national identity. Researcher argues that national identity is socially constructed through shared symbols, narratives, and institutions, such as education and media.

### **Theoretical Frameworks on Global Citizenship Education**

**Cosmopolitanism:** It emphasizes universal values and moral obligations that transcend national boundaries (Kant, 1795). However, Nussbaum (1997) advocates for cosmopolitan education, emphasizing critical thinking, empathy and global responsibility.

**Critical Pedagogy:** Feire (1970) in his book 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' summarizes about GCE, advocating for education that empowers learners to challenge power structures and address global inequalities. It also encouraged them to analyze the root cause of social and environmental injustices. Hence it fostered active global citizenship.

### **Literature Review: National Identity and global citizenship in Education**

- i) **Case study: critical Multicultural Citizenship Education in an afterschool program for immigrant and refugee girls.**

A qualitative case study conducted by Jie Y. Park examined an afterschool program designed for recent- arrival immigrant and refugee high school girls. The program aimed to promote critical multicultural citizenship through the use of graphic novels. Six participants engaged in discussions and activities centered on these novels, which depicted diverse cultural natives. The three objectives were i) to enhance English language proficiency through engaging literary mediums ii) to foster critical thinking about cultural identities and social issues and iii) to empower participants to contribute to a multicultural society. The data were collected through observations and interviews. The findings enumerated that participants got improved their English language skills and encouraged the girls to critically examine their own cultural identities and the societal structures.

#### **i) Malaysia: Language and Social Cohesion in National Identity**

A study by Idris et al. (2011) explored the relationship between Language education& social cohesion and national identity among youth in Malaysia. This research examined the language as a tool for both national cohesion and global integration. In the context of globalization, English is promoted for economic and educational advancements, while Bahasa Malaysia serves as a key element in shaping national identity and fostering social unity. The researchers surveyed 375 second-year undergraduate students from Universitas Kebangsaan Indonesia (UKI), examining the role of the national language in fostering national identity and unity. The study found that national identities of Students were significantly influenced by their communities. It also highlighted that the language is essential in the promotion of national solidity.

#### **ii) Ghana: Internationalization of the Curriculum:**

**Eten (2023)**, in his study tried to integrate the Ghanaian higher education with global citizenship education (GCE). This approach seeks to prepare students to thrive in a globalized world by fostering critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, and adaptability. Eten's study pointed out the complexities arising from the institutions' colonial foundations, current power dynamics in its internationalization efforts, and the challenge of balancing global engagement with local relevance. This study recommends constructing a clear institutional policy on curriculum internationalization, embedding the curriculum within Ghanaian and African contexts.

#### **iv) United States : global citizenship Education in K-12**

**Esser (2023)**, conducted a study entitled "Global citizenship Education: Research and Implications for Practical Application in the Primary and Secondary Setting". It tried to examine the readiness of K-12 students for global citizenship Education (GCE). The study conducted at an independent school affiliated with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It highlighted the key elements essential in preparing students for achieving global citizenship. Those are Co-operation, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. In order to foster Global Engagement, the researcher formulated the curriculum design after reviewing the design, implementation, and assessment of global studies programs.

**Discussion:** The researchers Idris et al. (2011) focused on the Global Education and National Identity. They also highlighted the complexities of multilingualism in nation-building. The literature review reveals how language policies mediate between global forces and formulation of national identity. These case studies of Malaysia, Ghana and United States of America illustrated how their institutions, were preparing students for an interconnected world. These studies resulted in fostering both global citizenship and a strong sense of national identity for their nations. Studies conducted by Esser (2023) and Eten (2023) emphasize the need of Curriculum design and focused on ethical considerations.

Both Eten (2023) and Idris et al explored the evolving nature of globalization, technological advancements, and socio-political changes. Researchers suggested the incorporation of such elements in the Global Education. Together, these studies address the ongoing challenges of balancing national pride with global responsibilities.

### **Educational Implementation in Shaping National Identity**

The National identity in terms of education states as how curricula, pedagogical methods, and school activities brings pride and allegiance to one's country. The curriculum plays a pivotal role in this, by emphasizing national history, cultural traditions, and core values (Anderson, 1983). Educational systems shape national identity through the content taught, language policies, and the promotion of national symbols and heritage. For instance, the adoption of Hindi as India's national language has contributed significantly to the creation of a unified national identity.

#### **Pedagogical Approaches:**

**a. Experiential Learning:** It is described as "Learning through reflection or doing," emphasizes hands-on experiences and helps in bridging the gap between theories and practices (Kolb, 1984). For instance, service-learning programmes which incorporate community engagement, is effective in fostering global citizenship. Students work with diverse communities to address social issues like poverty, education, or environmental sustainability (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

**b. Historical Awareness:** Learning for assessment, visiting historical landmarks, and participation in local cultural customs provide students with an enriched understanding of their nation's history and cultural heritage. Such initiatives enhance their appreciation for the historical context that shapes national identity. Students can acknowledge the importance of its heritage.

**c. Community Engagement:** Involving of students in community service projects helps in instilling civic responsibility and promotes national feeling. By engaging in projects, students contribute to their communities' well-being and reinforce their national identity. Community service often involves interactions with diverse groups, helping individuals appreciate cultural heritage and shared national values. Examples are NSS scheme, Swach Bharat Abhiyan.

### **Educational Implementation in Promoting Global Citizenship**

Global citizenship encompasses the development of learners who are well informed, empathetic, and proactive in addressing global challenges. It involves cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral dimensions. The critical thinking and global knowledge are inculcated by Cognitive development whereas the socio-emotional development is inculcated by exposing them to values, attitudes and respect for all communities around the world.

<b>a. Curriculum Design</b>	<b>b. Debate on Global Issues:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An Effective curriculum design is fundamental in shaping both national identity and global citizenship.</li> <li>2. "A well-designed curriculum fosters critical thinking about both national and global issues while promoting a sense of interconnectedness with the wider world" (Sleeter &amp; Carmona, 2007).</li> <li>3. For example, in India, the Preamble of the Indian Constitution is incorporated into textbooks, ensuring that students memorize and internalize the national values and responsibilities enshrined in the Constitution.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encouragement of students for engaging in debates on burning topics about global issues, such as environmental conservation and social justice, equips them with the tools to address and understand global challenges.</li> <li>2. Participation in such discussions and initiatives nurtures a global mindset.</li> <li>3. The reinforcing of civic duties toward national and international issues.</li> </ol>

### **Balancing National Development and Global Responsibility in Education**

Contemporary education faces challenges towards the promotion of national identity and students' preparation for global citizenship. As globalization continues to advance, there is increasing emphasis on equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become global citizens. Educators must design curricula that address both local and global contexts, fostering a sense of national pride while also promoting global responsibility (Merryfield, 1997).

Despite the importance of national development, individuals must also cultivate a sense of care and responsibility for others in the interest of humanity and global sustainability. Educators play a crucial role in adopting strategies that balance these dual objectives. Such strategies include integrating global themes into national curricula, promoting bi-lingual and multicultural education and encouraging critical thinking about both national and global issues (Davies, 2006).

### **Key Challenges and Potential Solutions:**

1. **Challenge: Cultural Barriers:** The world is characterized by diverse cultural norms,

values, and languages, which can impede effective communication and mutual understanding.

**Solution:** Intercultural educational programs that enhance cultural competence, alongside language learning programs, can help bridge cultural divides. Moreover, globalization, collaboration, and the privatization of education can foster intercultural, inter-lingual, and international exchanges, promoting a more cohesive global culture.

**2. Challenge: Economic Inequality:** Global economic disparities, exacerbated by national and international boundaries, as well as geographical and physical features, can limit access to the resources and opportunities needed for global engagement and development.

**Solution:** Various policies aim to reduce economic disparities, including progressive taxation, minimum wage laws, and Universal Basic Income (UBI) pilots. An example can be made of social protection programs of Brazil's Bolsa Familia and the Affordable Care Act. Through Education, Vocational training programs also contribute to diminish the Global inequalities. In addition there is Equitable need of GCE.

**3. Challenge: Political Resistance:** Political issues such as nationalism, racial tensions, and protectionist policies can hinder the promotion of global citizenship.

**Solution:** The political resistance can be reduced by promoting the benefit of inter-connectedness by means of Co-operation and Global meet. Through Education such obstacles can be solved as it fosters a spirit of democratic values, secularism, human rights.

**4. Challenge: Digital Divide:** Lack of infrastructures and Limited resources lead to unequal access to digital technologies. These hinder those students' in participation in global learning opportunities. The Pew Research Center revealed that 43% of U.S Adults with lower incomes lack home broadband access, compared to just 7 % among higher-income households (Report, 2021). The European Commission's 2020, Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) focused disparities in digital skills. It noted that 42% of the EU population lacked basic digital skills.

**Solution:** Investments in digital infrastructure and the promotion of digital literacy are critical. International collaborations can also facilitate the sharing of technological resources and expertise, thereby reducing the digital divide and emphasizing equitable education. For nation like India, the digital practice in school and institutional support for the common people can lead to the national development and minimise the digital divide.

### **Impact of Global Education on Youth: A Research-Based Perspective**

Youth is transmitter of fundamental values as they learn from diverse Educational Platforms. Even Cultural diversity and Global Heritage are preserved by adopting the global citizenship Education (GCE). This form of education nurtures an environment where individuals learn to respect diverse cultures, promoting intercultural exchanges and global understanding. Research has highlighted several key impacts of global education on youth development.

- 1. Cultivating Informed Citizens: The present** Educational systems that effectively strike a balance between promoting national identity and encouraging global citizenship, helps in cultivating informed individuals. Such dual perspective is dynamic for encouraging responsible and active involvement in both national and international matters (Noddings, 2005).
- 2. Fostering Critical Thinking and Empathy:** The global Education keep students sophisticated towards understanding of global issues by questioning assumptions, supporting diversity, and instilling an appreciation for various cultures (Rapoport, 2010). Global education encourages students to become empathetic global citizen. It allows them to contribute meaningfully to discussions on human rights, social justice and environmental sustainability.
- 3. Preparing for a Globalized Workforce:** The Global Education equips learners with essential skills, mindsets and values, needed to thrive in international workplaces. Research conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018) underscores the significance of global competencies in preparing young individuals for diverse work settings. It also highlights the importance of effective cross-cultural communication and collaboration.

### **Navigating the Future: Implications for Policymakers and Educators:**

The advancement of national identity alongside global citizenship is frequently viewed as a challenge within educational policies and practices. On one side, education systems strive to nurture a sense of national identity through the promotion of patriotism, cultural awareness, and social unity. Conversely, there is a growing necessity to foster global citizens—who are aware of those global issues and critical resolution on part of global network.

<b>A. Implications for Policymakers:</b>	<b>B. Implications for Educators</b>
<b>1. Reframing Educational Objectives:</b> a. Policymakers must adopt a nuanced approach to reframing educational objectives. b. Educational Policies should encourage educational institutions to respect	<b>1. Pedagogical Approaches:</b> a. Pedagogical approaches should encourage critical thinking and inquiry-based learning. b. Teachers can employ comparative analysis, to examine similarities

<p>Global cultural diversity globally.</p> <p>c. For example, the NEP-2020 emphasizes the importance of cultivating respect for constitutional values and alongside promoting critical thinking and global competencies.</p> <p><b>2. Curriculum Design and Content Development:</b></p> <p>a. The curriculum must reflect a balanced representation of national identity and global citizenship and must be enjoyed by students</p> <p>b. There is need of inclusion of local history, culture, and values alongside global issues such as sustainability, human rights, and intercultural understanding.</p> <p><b>3. Professional Development:</b></p> <p>a. For Educational development, Policymakers ensure the Instruction &amp; training, integrating national and global dimensions.</p> <p>b. There is need of Continuous professional development programmes such as workshops on global education and cultural competency.</p> <p>b. c. Academic Virtual exchanges to enhance global prospective.</p>	<p>and differences between their national &amp; International experiences.</p> <p>c. Service-learning projects that involve both local and global issues can help students connect their national identity with global citizenship.</p> <p><b>2. Inclusive Learning Environments:</b></p> <p>a. To promote global citizenship educators must create Global curriculum and inclusive classrooms that celebrate diversity.</p> <p>b. There is need of interdisciplinary teaching methods such as; Co-operative Learning, Inquiry based learning and Project method.</p> <p><b>3. Use of Technology and Global Networks:</b></p> <p>a. In today's digital age, educators must be leverage with technology so that they can connect students with peers around the world.</p> <p>b. There is need of Classroom projects engagement for sustainable development &amp; international competitions. It can provide students with firsthand experiences of global citizenship.</p>
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### **Conclusion:**

Education holds a vital role in shaping national identity while simultaneously promoting global citizenship among youth. National identity remains a foundational element within education, influencing students' understanding of themselves and their place in the broader world. The challenges presented by globalization, multiculturalism, and political influences are considerable, yet they also offer unique opportunities to craft more inclusive and well-rounded educational experiences. By reframing educational objectives, designing inclusive curricula, providing teacher training, and leveraging technology, educational systems can prepare students to thrive in both national and global contexts.



The process of balancing national identity with global citizenship is dynamic and ongoing, requiring careful attention from both policymakers and educators. Through the adoption of integrated curricula, the creation of inclusive classroom environments, and the promotion of both local and global perspectives, education systems can prepare students to navigate their dual roles as national and global citizens. The success of this endeavor depends on collaboration between policymakers, educators, and communities to ensure that educational experiences are grounded in local realities while being responsive to global challenges.

In summary, education shapes national identity by instilling cultural values while fostering global citizenship through critical thinking and intercultural understanding. This dual focus equips individuals to address global challenges and engage in civic responsibility, promoting social cohesion and preparing citizens for active participation in both national and global contexts.

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## Technology in Education: The Role of ‘AI’ in Transforming Geography and History Learning in Secondary Schools

**Pratheesh P<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

*Secondary school education is crucial for developing critical thinking, problem-solving skills, broad knowledge, and preparation for higher education. It prepares students for university and vocational training, enabling them to explore various career paths and make informed decisions, ultimately fostering a well-rounded individual. But the Indian secondary school education system, particularly in history and geography, faces challenges due to content-focused approaches, outdated technology, limited practical learning opportunities, and rigid curriculum structures. The technological infrastructure is lagging behind, despite the fact that constructivist tactics have been used at the school level since 2002. This has a significant impact on students' attitudes, interests, and even learning outcomes. The Kerala government-initiated curriculum reforms, teacher training, pilot projects, and strong policy support to improve students' understanding, retention, and application of knowledge. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a transformative tool in reshaping traditional teaching methods. This study explores the impact of AI tools on secondary school students' learning experiences, including virtual reality simulations, tutoring systems, historiophoty, and data analytics. It aims to demonstrate the benefits of AI in enhancing student engagement, understanding, and retention of historical and geographical knowledge. The study uses a mixed methodology approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to gather data. The study finds that AI enhances students' understanding and retention of complex historical and geographical concepts. However, successful integration requires teacher training, infrastructure and sufficient financial support.*

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Secondary Schools Education, Geography Education, History Education, Technology Integration, Personalized Learning, Student Engagement.

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## Introduction

Secondary school social science curricula promote critical thinking, analytical abilities, and inclusive history education, valuing all voices, viewpoints, citizenship, cultural empathy, identity, and social norms, while educating students about human behaviour, politics, geography, and economics. According to studies (Edgar, 1951; Johnson, 1963; Kincheloe, 1985; Loutzenheiser, 2006; Duschl, 2008; Srinivasan, 2015; Smith, 2017; Gaudelli & Laverty, 2018; Darder et al., 2023), social science instruction is vital in secondary schools because it develops critical thinking, human values, a thorough grasp of the world, and the social skills required for social interaction. It aids students in comprehending the globe, historical social, political, and economic structures, human interactions, the geographical contexts in which we live, the influence of geography on human development and life, and the economic system. Social science education, especially in history and geography, is crucial for secondary school teenagers as they explore their identities. However, traditional teaching methods, such as content-focused approaches, outdated technology, and rigid curriculum structures, can hinder student engagement and make social science classes unattractive due to factors like lack of engagement, monotony, and societal perceptions.

Under use of insufficient use of technology and outdated teaching tools also contribute to this issue. It is true that recitation and rote memory teaching methods, along with a lack of infrastructure and possibilities for experiential and practical learning, make it difficult for students to engage in class, especially in government-funded schools. Since teacher preparation, particularly in social science education, still uses antiquated practices and theories, there is frequently a lack of interdisciplinary integration and insufficient training in contemporary teaching techniques (Sayed et al., 2018; Joshi et al., 2020; Dhungana, 2020). Additionally, it appears that the social science curriculum is overloaded which restricts in-depth investigation, and conventional evaluation techniques frequently prioritize test preparation over worthwhile possibilities for learning. These problems highlight the need for history and geography teachers to adopt more creative, student-centered, and technologically integrated teaching methods.

## Literature Review

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has become a topic of increasing interest in recent decades. This literature review aims to provide a brief overview of existing studies and findings related to the use of AI in enhancing the teaching and learning of geography and history in secondary schools.

The following key information was gleaned from the scientific review of the chosen articles in the topic of artificial intelligence in education. Firstly, AI has significantly impacted the educational process, improving content development, teaching methods, student assessment, and communication between teachers and students today (Ayala-Pazmino, 2023; Darayseh, 2023; Adiguzel et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2024). Also, it reduced administrative and managerial tasks, allowing teachers to focus on core tasks and

improving content (Luckin et al., 2022; Igbokwe, 2023; Lim et al., 2023). It has improved course content dissemination, enabling increased learner participation, more online learning platforms and facilitated in monitoring learning progress. It is expected to work AI as an assistant, assessing students' performance and providing personalized instructional guidelines, reducing teacher effort and time and improving total efficiency (Kabudi et al., 2021; Chan, 2023).

AI in geography education enhances students' understanding of geographical concepts through interactive learning, such as virtual reality and AR (Almelweth, 2022; Rakuasa, 2023). These tools also aid in data analysis and visualization, enabling better understanding of geographical phenomena and informed decision-making. AI can enhance history education by analysing large datasets, creating interactive storytelling, and tailoring content to individual student needs (Sheng, 2023). Studies show that students who use AI-powered storytelling platforms show greater interest in history and improved critical thinking skills (Bertram et al., 2021). Overall, AI offers numerous benefits in social science education.

### **Methodology**

The primary aim of this study is to explore the role of AI in transforming geography and history learning in secondary schools. Other objectives are, to identify and evaluate the various AI tools available for teaching history and geography, to assess the impact of these AI tools on student engagement, understanding, and retention of historical and geographical concepts and to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of AI in secondary school education.

The study uses a mixed methodology approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative techniques to gather data simultaneously, to investigate how AI is transforming geography and history instruction at secondary schools. Students and teachers are given standardized questionnaire (researcher designed and standardised) to complete in order to collect qualitative and quantitative information about their expectations and experiences with AI tools, as well as their opinions about the current social science subject transaction in secondary schools. Additional data collected through observation (Rizvi's Schedule, 2010) of AI-integrated history and geography classes to assess student engagement and interaction. Also conducted structured interviews with educators and students to gain deeper insights into the perceived benefits and challenges of using AI tools.

The sample size is fixed as 300 students and 50 teachers of social science at secondary school. The collected data were analysed to identify trends, patterns, and significant findings related to the impact of AI on student learning outcomes. To identify and assess the significance of the data and ensuing conclusions, descriptive statistics such as ANOVA and t-tests are employed. Data analysis software used are SPSS and NVivo which facilitates efficient and accurate data processing and interpretation. Through this, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of AI in transforming

secondary school education in history and geography and ultimately contributing to the development of more effective and engaging educational practices.

### Various AI Tools Available for Teaching History and Geography

Today, it is a fact that artificial intelligence (AI) tools are transforming the teaching of geography and history in secondary schools. By offering individualized, immersive, and interactive learning experiences, these tools improve student engagement and retention (Rakuasa, 2023). AI-assisted teaching in secondary schools faces challenges like lack of training, reluctance from administrators, and policy limitations, but determined educators are utilizing advanced techniques for engaging lectures and video sessions. The results of the search for AI-based resources and applications for teaching geography and history are summarized as follows.

**Table 1: Available AI Resources for Teaching History and Geography**

Sl. No	AI Resource	Description
1	Hello History: Bring History Alive	Hello History is an AI-driven app that enables students to engage in personalized conversations with over 400 historical figures, allowing them to ask questions, receive responses, and adjust reading levels, despite being expensive.
2	Google Arts & Culture	The platform uses artificial intelligence to enhance our understanding of art through virtual tours of iconic structures, UNESCO treasures, Peru's National Library, and Egypt's Return of the Cat Mummy, fostering historical curiosity and appreciation.
3	The Historian's Friend	It is a GPT chatbot designed to enhance human expertise in historical research. It can analyse historical sources, connect themes, transcribe and translate manuscripts, and generate visual data. It will provide detailed discussions, analysis, and suggest relevant secondary sources.
4	Historia	Historia is an AI history assistant that provides detailed explanations of historical events, figures, and periods, using storytelling techniques and cross-referencing with reputable sources.
5	Character AI	It is an AI platform that uses advanced technology to create and interact with digital characters, allowing for prolonged and engaging interactions. It allows teachers and students to create simulations of historical personalities, allowing them to engage in dialogues with these figures.
6	iCivics	It is a non-profit organization that offers free, interactive educational games and resources for K-12 classrooms. The games explore government, the electoral process, and civic participation challenges.
7	History Timelines	It is an AI tool that enables users to create detailed timelines of historical events or topics. It allows users to input desired

		events or topics, organizes them, and generates a visual representation.
8	Parlay	Parlay Genie is an AI tool that facilitates class discussions, offers features like secret identities, peer feedback, and model submissions, allows teachers to choose online or live discussions.
9	Question-Well	The AI platform generates questions based on input reading material, allowing teachers to input any topic and choose from four types, aligning learning objectives and standards, and exporting questions for assessment or review.
10	Medha AI	The platform bridges the educational divide between urban and rural areas by providing real-time assistance in lesson planning, content delivery, and student assessment, reducing administrative burdens.
11	PamPam (Geography)	It is a user-friendly tool for creating maps, including geographical and historical ones. It allows users to type in a prompt, import a list of places, add annotations, routes, and highlight areas. The tool offers templates, import content, and a chatbot for questions.
12	Geography Guesser	The game is an interactive educational resource that encourages visitors to explore geography through visuals and instructional hints, fostering cultural literacy and knowledge.
13	Geopolitics	AI chatbot analyses global political dynamics, providing detailed insights for students, researchers, journalists, and professionals, breaking down complex geopolitical concepts and making them easy to use.
14	Century	The platform offers engaging geography resources for secondary school education, including bit-lessons featuring videos, slides presentation, and formative assessment questions.
15	GeoAI	GeoAI, the integration of AI technology with geographic data, enhances efficiency, reduces costs, and supports sustainable development in areas like farm and agriculture, navigation-transportation, urban planning, and environmental monitoring.
16	Where Is India	This geography activity introduces India allowing students to locate India, identify its continent, and research its capital city, etc.
17	Historiophoty	It is a sub-field of history that uses visual images and films to reconstruct history.
18	Google earth	Google Earth is a global teaching aid that aids students in understanding the world around them, connecting them to their daily lives, communities, and nations.
19	Google maps & street views	Google Street View, a popular tool in geography classrooms, enables students to explore historical monuments, natural monoliths, wildlife refuges, and even dive underwater, providing a joyful learning environment.

20	<u>Humy</u>	The platform allows educators to create personalized chatbots that reanimate historical figures through authentic conversations, providing real-time monitoring and engagement data for students.
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AI resources, such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and data analytics, are being used to enhance student engagement and understanding in education. These tools create immersive environments, allowing learners to access historical sites and landscapes (Lampropoulos, 2023). The integration of AI and AR in education is gaining ground to meet new needs and provide high-quality education. AR technology enhances understanding of complex ideas and extends beyond the classroom, enabling students with disabilities to access resources and participate in learning activities (Geroimenko, 2020). However, proper training and technical support are required. Data analytics tools help identify areas needing additional support, but raise concerns about data privacy and security.

### Role of AI in Transforming Geography and History Learning in Secondary Schools

The study reveals that geography teachers face challenges in implementing their curriculum due to students' lack of knowledge, school administration's neglect, lack of laboratory equipment, teaching aids like AV support, and a classroom setting that doesn't support student-oriented learning. History teachers face similar issues, as their overburdened curriculum limits their ability to offer extra resources. Current teaching methods focus on historical thinking and inquiry, but lack of AV support hinders students' learning. A responsive teaching environment is needed for today's learner-centered pedagogy, promoting student readiness and inclusivity for all learners. Artificial intelligence (AI) could potentially address these challenges.

**Table 2: Teacher Perceptions of AI Tools (n=50)**

AI Tool Used	HighlyEffective (%)	ModeratelyEffective (%)	Low Effective (%)
Virtual Reality	80	15	5
AI-Driven Tutoring	77	19	4
Smart Class	69	21	10
Data Analytics	68	25	7

The statistical test, chi-Square was employed to fix if there is a significant association between the type of AI tool used and teacher perceptions of effectiveness levels. The results were significant ( $\chi^2 = 14.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the type of AI tool used significantly affects teacher perceptions of effectiveness. The ANOVA test showed a significant difference in effectiveness levels ( $F(3, 196) = 10.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Post-Hoc Analysis results showed that Virtual Reality had significantly higher effectiveness levels compared to AI-Driven Tutoring, Smart Class, and Data Analytics. AI-Driven Tutoring had significantly higher effectiveness levels compared to Smart Class and Data Analytics.



It is found that Virtual Reality and AI-Driven Tutoring more effective than Smart Class and Data Analytics, with Virtual Reality showing the highest engagement levels among AI tools, suggesting that immersive and interactive tools are more effective in capturing and maintaining student interest in geography and history lessons.

**Table 3: Student Perceptions of AI Tools (n=300)**

AI Tool Used	Highly Satisfied (%)	Moderately Satisfied (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)	Mean Satisfaction Score
Virtual Reality	80	16	4	4.4
AI-Driven Tutoring	76	18	6	4.2
Smart Class	79	17	4	3.8
Data Analytics	63	23	14	3.4

The form of AI technology implemented and student satisfaction levels have been found to be significantly correlated. Chi-Square Test results were significant ( $\chi^2 = 14.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the type of AI tool used significantly affects student perceptions of satisfaction. The ANOVA test found a significant difference in student satisfaction scores ( $F(3, 396) = 12.44$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The post-hoc analysis showed that Virtual Reality had higher satisfaction scores compared to AI-Driven Tutoring, Smart Class, and Data Analytics. AI-Driven Tutoring had significantly higher satisfaction scores compared to Smart Class and Data Analytics. There was no significant difference in satisfaction scores between Smart Class and Data Analytics.

**Table 4: Observed Student Engagement Level (n=300)**

AI Tool Used	High Engagement (%)	Moderate Engagement (%)	Low Engagement (%)	AI Tool Used
Virtual Reality	76	20	4	Virtual Reality
AI-Applications	70	24	6	AI-Driven Tutoring
Smart Class	64	28	8	Personalised Management AI
Data Analytics	67	27	6	Data Analytics

It is found a significant association between the type of AI tool used and student engagement levels. Again, the chi-Square test was used to fix the significance of association between the type of AI tool used and student engagement levels. The results were significant ( $\chi^2 = 12.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the type of AI tool used significantly affects student engagement. The ANOVA results showed a significant difference in engagement levels ( $F(3, 196) = 8.45$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Post-hoc analysis (Tukey's HSD) revealed that Virtual Reality had higher engagement levels than AI-Applications,

Smart Class, and Data Analytics, with no significant difference between Smart Class and Data Analytics.

**Table 5: Student Understanding and Retention (Impact of AI Tools) – n=300**

Investigation Components	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)	Mean Score
Geography (Conventional)	31	37	32	2.8
History (Conventional)	37	39	24	2.9
Geography (AI)	61	33	6	4.3
History (AI)	63	35	2	4.8

It is found that AI-assisted teaching methods significantly enhance student understanding and retention of geography and history as compared to conventional methods. The mean scores for AI-assisted teaching were significantly higher, with geography showing a mean score of 4.3 and history showing a mean score of 4.8, compared to 2.8 and 2.9 for conventional methods, respectively. Chi-Square Test results were significant for both geography ( $\chi^2 = 22.44$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and history ( $\chi^2 = 25.67$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the AI integrated teaching method significantly affects student understanding and retention. ANOVA results showed a significant difference in scores for both geography ( $F(1, 298) = 18.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and history ( $F(1, 298) = 22.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Post-hoc analysis revealed that AI-assisted teaching had significantly higher understanding and retention scores in geography and history compared to conventional methods.

## Discussion

According to the study's objective, which was to identify and assess the different AI tools available for teaching geography and history, it discovered and compiled a number of AI technologies that have the potential to completely transform secondary school geography and history instruction by providing personalized, interactive experiences. Although there are obstacles such as a lack of training, administrative resistance, and policy restrictions, these technologies increase student engagement and retention. As a result, the first goal—to list and assess the different AI resources for teaching geography and history—is accomplished.

Nguyen et al. (2024) and Fufa et al. (2024) investigate the difficulties teachers encounter when instructing geography and history in secondary schools. Student involvement, curricular overload, scarce resources, and inadequate teacher training are major problems they identified. The findings of this study reveals that the use of AI tools in teaching Geography has led to a substantial improvement in student understanding and retention. The percentage of students with high understanding in geography is increased from 31% (conventional) to 61% (AI), and the mean score improved from 2.8 to 4.3. Similarly, in History, the use of AI tools resulted in a significant improvement. The

percentage of students with high understanding increased from 37% (conventional) to 63% (AI), and the mean score improved from 2.9 to 4.8. The percentage of students with unsatisfactory understanding decreased from 32% (conventional) to 6% (AI). The percentage of students with moderate understanding remained relatively stable, decreasing slightly from 39% (conventional) to 35% (AI). AI tools have been found to significantly improve student understanding and retention in Geography and History subjects. They have led to a significant increase in students with high understanding and a decrease in unsatisfactory performance. International studies have consistently shown that AI-based educational tools can improve student engagement, understanding, and retention. These tools often incorporate interactive and personalized learning experiences, increasing student engagement and motivation. They can also adapt to individual learning needs, providing personalized feedback and resources.

The study also found that Virtual Reality (VR) and AI-driven tutoring were highly regarded by students, with 80% rating them highly satisfactory. Smart Class was highly satisfactory by 79%, while Data Analytics had the lowest satisfaction level at 63%. These results are consistent with the references of Xu (2024) in the article AI in education: Enhancing learning experiences and student outcomes, and they demonstrate the advantages of VR and AI-driven tutoring in offering immersive learning experiences. The study further analysed the student engagement level and found that Virtual Reality (VR) and AI-driven tutoring are the most effective tools for secondary school geography and history learning, with 76% of students showing high engagement. AI-driven tutoring also showed high engagement, while Personalized Management AI and Data Analytics had moderate engagement. These results are consistent with the references in Chen et al.'s (2023) paper, which emphasizes how AI tools have the potential to revolutionize education. VR and AI-driven tutoring are especially good at sustaining high levels of engagement.

The results showed higher mean scores for both subjects, with a Chi-Square Test and ANOVA results indicating a significant impact on student retention. These findings were supported by the studies of Sasikala & Ravichandran (2024) and Zhu (2024). The objective of evaluating how these AI technologies affect students' engagement, comprehension, and recall of historical and geographical concepts is thus also met. Finding the link between AI and contemporary technology and students' engagement, comprehension, and retention of social science learning—particularly geography and history—also satisfies the study's main goal, which is to investigate how AI is changing geography and history instruction in secondary schools.

Teachers perceive Virtual Reality (VR) as the most effective AI tool in geography and history learning in secondary schools. 80% of respondent's rate VR highly effective, attributed to its immersive and interactive experiences. AI-driven tutoring is also highly regarded, with 77% rating it highly effective. These tools provide personalized learning experiences and immediate feedback, enhancing learning outcomes. Smart Class and Data Analytics are considered effective by 69% and 68% of teachers, respectively. These tools improve student performance and classroom engagement, but how well they work

relies on how relevant and high-quality the data is. The results are consistent with research by Kavita Roy and KhritishSwargiary (2024) on the transformative influence of AI on education, which similarly supports the idea that teachers see AI's potential to improve student engagement and academic performance.

The significant improvement in student understanding and retention in AI-enhanced Geography and History lessons can be attributed to several key factors. These include interactive and engaging learning experiences, personalized learning, data-driven insights, enhanced content delivery, increased accessibility, collaborative learning, and continuous improvement. Interactive content, such as simulations, virtual field trips, and multimedia resources, make learning more dynamic and engaging. Gamification techniques, such as quizzes, challenges, and rewards, motivate students and make the learning process more enjoyable. Personalized learning, which can analyse individual student performance and adapt the learning content to meet their specific needs, enhances understanding and retention. Real-time feedback on student performance helps identify and correct misconceptions immediately. AI tools in secondary school education offer performance analytics, multimodal learning, contextual learning, and collaborative learning. These tools provide detailed data on student performance, help teachers monitor progress, and provide predictive analytics for learning gaps. However, challenges like technical issues, extensive training, and high initial costs can hinder the effectiveness of AI tools. Continuous improvement and iterative learning processes are essential for a successful implementation.

## Conclusion

Learning social studies can now be individualized, effective, and easily available thanks to artificial intelligence (AI), which is transforming education. AI enhances teachers' abilities and presents flexible teaching methods like constructivist and adaptive learning. Additionally, it can benefit students with speech impairments who have particular needs, like Parrotron. Cost, a lack of qualified educators, and moral dilemmas like privacy and prejudice are obstacles, nevertheless. Nevertheless, AI has the ability to completely transform social studies education by offering a more engaging, effective, and individualized learning environment. The study shows that AI tools have significantly improved student understanding and retention in geography and history, with students showing increased understanding from 31% to 61%. Virtual Reality and AI-driven tutoring were highly regarded, with 76% of students showing high engagement, indicating AI's potential to enhance student engagement and academic performance in these subjects. This study aligns with existing research on the benefits of immersive and interactive learning environments, highlighting the potential of Virtual Reality and AI-Applications. However, less immersive tools like Smart Class and Data Analytics show lower engagement levels, suggesting they may not be as effective in maintaining student interest compared to more interactive options. The integration of more immersive and interactive AI tools, such as Virtual Reality and AI-Applications, can significantly enhance student engagement in geography and history learning in

secondary schools. Selecting the right AI tools is crucial to maximize educational outcomes and ensure a positive teaching experience.

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## Beyond the Surface: Caste, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education

**Anurag Kumar<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

*The paper aims to analyse the complexities of caste dynamics within academic institutions and how they influence the pursuit of diversity and inclusion. While diversity initiatives in higher education often emphasise measurable outcomes, this work delves into the less visible yet pervasive influences of caste-based discrimination and exclusion that persist beneath the surface. The paper explores the cultural, structural, and interpersonal barriers that marginalised caste groups encounter in accessing and succeeding in higher education. By going beyond superficial metrics, "Beyond the Surface" provides critical insights for dismantling caste-based inequalities and creating environments where diversity and inclusion are not just ideals but lived realities. While diversity and inclusivity can be examined from different perspectives, such as gender, religion, and ethnicity, this paper focuses explicitly on how caste acts as a barrier to genuine diversity and inclusivity on campus. This paper will specifically discuss barriers within the admission process, pedagogy, funding, campus environment, and the representation of diversity among students and faculty. The conclusion will summarise the insights gained from the analysis and offer suggestions for overcoming these barriers.*

**Keywords:** Caste, Dalits, Diversity, Inclusion, Higher education

### **Introduction**

The caste system is a fundamental aspect of Indian society, featuring a complex social hierarchy. It assigns inherited membership to different groups, with "Brahmins" at the top and "Shudras" at the bottom. The untouchables, also known as Scheduled Castes, are not even recognised within the varna system (S.Sharma, 2002). Traditionally, all social institutions were dominated by the caste system. In the modern era, caste continues to influence social institutions, including educational institutions. The higher education system of India perpetuates and replicates the traditional social structure,

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which is reflected in the privileged caste culture. (Rathod, 2023, p. 219)The Indian government introduced Quota policies and other measures to address caste injustices and improve access to the educational system. Despite these efforts, caste significantly impacts inclusivity in Indian social institutions, including higher education.

Higher education is often regarded as a pathway to social mobility and economic advancement. However, many individuals from lower caste backgrounds, particularly Dalits and Adivasis, face significant barriers to accessing and benefiting from higher education. These challenges are not simply the result of systemic biases; they stem from deeply rooted caste discrimination that impacts every aspect of their academic experience. Pinto (2002) argues that there is a deliberate effort to exclude Dalits while simultaneously promoting the idea of social justice (Pinto, 2002, p. 187).

On the surface, modern academic institutions are designed to be inclusive and diverse spaces where students from various socio-economic backgrounds can build social relationships. However, when we look beyond these superficial metrics, we uncover subtle forms of prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion that marginalised groups, particularly Dalit students, endure. This undermines the true diversity and inclusivity that these academic environments claim to offer. The educational institutions were intended to be open and secular, yet they have exhibited exclusionary practices, including barriers to academic entry, negative slurs, and caste discrimination even after admission (Guha, 2007). Jodhka (2015) contends that caste still significantly affects individuals' access to education, and the conventional glass ceiling challenges universities' ability to embrace diversity and inclusivity (Renukuntla & Ashok Kumar Mocherla, 2023).

In today's society, a Dalit student can gain admission to higher education, which may be seen as a step towards social inclusion. However, true inclusion extends beyond mere acceptance. It is essential to consider whether a Dalit student can fully engage in campus life without encountering discrimination or prejudice. We must also evaluate whether the pedagogy incorporates the concepts of diversity and inclusion. Are the campus environment and the learning experiences as welcoming for Dalit students as they are for their non-Dalit peers? Furthermore, does the financial aid provided by various state agencies genuinely promote diversity and inclusion, or does it merely serve as a superficial measure that fails to address the deeper systemic barriers faced by Dalits in higher education? Despite frequent claims of equal treatment and opportunity, are we truly creating diverse and inclusive spaces on campus that adequately reflect the representation of Dalits? This paper will explore these questions to gain a comprehensive understanding of caste dynamics in academic settings. While affirmative policies aim to ensure that Dalits have access to higher education, the transition is not as seamless as it may appear. Dalits often lack the social, cultural, and economic capital necessary to navigate these educational spaces effectively (Ray, 2022). Therefore, this paper will examine the complexities of caste-related issues in achieving genuine diversity and inclusivity.

### Contextual Framework

Indian higher education policies aim to promote diversity and inclusion through Quota policy, financial assistance, statutory and legal protections, and institutional support. The Constitution of India mandates reservation for disadvantaged groups to enhance inclusion. Financial support initiatives, such as post-matric scholarships and National Fellowships for SC students, are being implemented to provide monetary aid to Dalit students. Legal and statutory protections, including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, and UGC Anti-Discrimination Guidelines (2012), have been framed to address caste discrimination against Dalit students in higher education institutions. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020<sup>1</sup> also emphasises enhancing diversity and inclusion by promoting equitable access and participation for marginalised groups, including Dalits, and advocating for supportive institutional mechanisms and an inclusive curriculum.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, envisioning a more inclusive and equitable higher education system. By emphasising equitable access, the policy aims to enhance the participation of marginalised groups by promoting flexible learning pathways, increasing enrollment and strengthening institutional mechanisms such as SC/ST cells and remedial coaching. It also underscores the importance of an inclusive curriculum, research initiatives, and diverse faculty representation focused on promoting equity and equality. These frameworks are designed to address the inclusion and diversity of Dalits to address the systematic exclusion based on caste. However, these measures remain either defunct or working superficially as the persistent caste-based inequalities present systematic challenges to realising this vision and these policies.

Deshpande (2006) introduced the 'Exclusive Inequalities Framework' to explain the persistent caste-based inequalities in higher education in India. He argued that Indian universities often underestimate Dalit students, with faculty, students, and administration from upper castes frequently viewing them as inferior or less significant (S. Deshpande, 2006). Additionally, he identified discrimination as a prominent feature of Indian higher education, serving as a barrier to equity and inclusion for SC students. Building on this framework, Rathod (2022) applied critical race theory (CRT) to understand the dynamics of caste in higher education. By employing a comparative analysis framework, Rathod contextualised race and caste as social constructs in both the USA and India, illustrating how these constructs sustain systematic inequalities through institutional practices. Similarly, Sukumar (2022) utilised the concept of social exclusion to explore how caste-related discrimination manifests in universities, identifying various forms of exclusion that impede inclusivity and diversity. Together, these frameworks highlight the significant challenges facing higher education, and NEP

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<sup>1</sup> National Education Policy of India 2020 outlines the vision of a new education system in India, which was forwarded by the BJP government. The new policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986.

2020 was developed to address the underlying structural and cultural barriers that hinder inclusivity and diversity in this context.

### **Understanding Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education**

Diversity and inclusion are essential pillars of higher education, promoting success for students from various socio-economic backgrounds. Diversity encompasses not only the representation of students from different backgrounds—such as varying socio-economic statuses, caste groups, genders, ethnicities, and disabilities—but also involves incorporating their voices, experiences, and cultural perspectives into the academic environment. True diversity goes beyond mere representation; it requires creating an environment where differences are valued, supported, and actively integrated into the curriculum, teaching methods, policies, and campus culture.

Rathod (2022) identifies three dimensions of diversity in higher education: classroom diversity, structural diversity, and informal diversity. Classroom diversity gives students insight into social inequalities related to caste, religion, and gender. Structural diversity refers to the presence of underrepresented students, while informal diversity reflects social interactions influenced by caste identity. Sabharwal and Malish (2017) argue that merely increasing enrolment from marginalised social groups does not enhance campus diversity without a supportive learning environment, as marginalised students face significant challenges. True diversity requires that diverse experiences and perspectives be integrated into campus culture. Dalit students often encounter obstacles due to the dominant ideology upheld by upper caste groups in higher education and experience subtle discrimination from peers, faculty, and administration.

Inclusion, on the other hand, ensures that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, are not only present but also fully engaged and supported throughout their academic journeys. This includes providing equal opportunities for participation, success, and progression. However, genuine inclusion is often obstructed by structural and cultural barriers, such as tokenism, where institutions superficially meet quotas without addressing the deeper issues of inequity and discrimination that affect marginalised students, particularly Dalits. Inclusion goes beyond enrolment; it necessitates sustained practices that respect and integrate students from diverse backgrounds, creating an environment where all individuals feel valued and supported both academically and socially.

In India, efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in higher education primarily focus on increasing the enrolment of marginalised groups, as outlined in NEP-2020. This initiative aims to raise the enrolment rate to 50% by 2035. However, NEP-2020 does not address the elimination of barriers faced by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) or recognise caste discrimination as a fundamental issue. Achieving true diversity and inclusion is often impeded by structural and cultural barriers. Institutions frequently prioritise representation in the form of tokenism due to legal obligations rather than making genuine efforts. Indian policies intended to promote inclusion and diversity, such as quota policies and anti-discrimination measures, are often overlooked.

College management, typically dominated by privileged castes, frequently sidesteps these mandated obligations (Deshpande & Yadav, 2008). Bias and discrimination often manifest as microaggressions, particularly affecting Dalit students, where insufficient support mechanisms—such as inadequate financial aid, lack of mentorship, non-inclusive teaching methods, limited academic assistance, and a hostile campus climate—exacerbate disparities. This ultimately leaves the promise of inclusivity and diversity unfulfilled, as government agencies lack effective mechanisms for auditing these educational policies.

Moreover, the discussion often lacks inclusivity by emphasising only upper-caste scholars while neglecting the contributions of Bahujan educationalists such as Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, Periyar, Shahuji Maharaj, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Khair, 2020). Rathod (2020) argues that affirmative action policies, such as quotas, are intended to enhance diversity and inclusion in higher education. However, due to inadequate institutional support, diversity often remains limited to student identities (Rathod, 2020, p. 6). Consequently, rather than enriching the campus experience, current diversity efforts can generate social conflicts. Academic diversity and inclusion can be assessed through the representation of students and faculty, the admission process, pedagogy, financial aid, and campus climate in higher education institutions.

### **Student Representation**

The representation of Dalits is a critical aspect of diversity and inclusion in higher education. However, this representation remains limited due to the systemic barriers created by caste hierarchies that dominate academia. Quota Policy often seems superficial, as Dalit students are frequently included in a tokenistic manner. In many cases, the focus is solely on meeting legally mandated quotas, which are sometimes not even fulfilled, particularly in specialised programs like PhDs (Handa, 2024). Current symbolic representation perpetuates marginalisation, as the perceptions, concerns, and experiences of Dalit students are seldom acknowledged or included in the mainstream discourse of academia. The pervasive caste divide in Indian universities further contributes to a lack of inclusivity (Ovichegan, 2014). This lack of representation denies a voice to the voiceless, posing a significant barrier to achieving inclusive diversity among students in higher education. Rathod (2022) argues that Dalit students are often excluded from student representative committees due to subtle discrimination and the prevailing caste culture within these institutions, which are dominated by higher-caste groups. Additionally, university administrations tend to overlook the reasons why Dalit students rarely become part of student representative bodies.

### **Faculty Representation**

The representation of Dalit faculty on campus is crucial for democratising higher education, enhancing inclusivity in academia, facilitating counter-hegemonic discourse, and enriching overall institutional diversity. Research indicates that the presence of Dalit faculty members enhances the academic environment and introduces diverse pedagogical approaches, curricula, and perspectives (S. Hurtado, 2001). However,

various studies reveal inadequate representation of Dalit faculty on campuses. According to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), just 8.8% of faculty positions are held by Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 2.36% by Scheduled Tribes (STs), while the general category constitutes 56.7% (Mathew, 2021). Even among non-teaching staff, the general category occupies 54.7% of all positions (Mathew, 2021). This underrepresentation persists despite constitutional obligations in the form of reservations. In some cases, positions have remained vacant even when qualified SC/ST candidates were available and subsequently converted into open-category positions citing technical reasons. Moreover, the increasing privatization and contractualization within higher education reflect the tardy implementation of the Quota policy. This caste discrimination in the recruitment of Dalit faculty and non-teaching positions poses a significant challenge to achieving true campus diversity and inclusivity.

### **Admission Process**

The admission process frequently perpetuates caste-based hierarchies, particularly affecting Dalit students, due to systemic inequalities and institutional biases that serve as barriers to inclusion and diversity within higher education. During entrance examinations, students from SC/ST categories are often segregated for administrative convenience across numerous universities. Bureaucratic practices on various campuses assist in identifying SC students, as merit lists for entrance exams are typically organised according to caste, reflecting the hierarchy inherent in "Varnashrama Dharma," where the list commences with the general category and progresses downward to Other Backward Classes (OBC) and subsequently to SC/ST (Kumar, 2023, p. 88). Frequently, the attendance lists are prepared based on the admission lists, facilitating the identification of Dalit students by faculty, staff, and peers. Consequently, caste identity significantly influences the classroom environment, rendering it challenging for SC students to feel comfortable and integrated into the university community. This covert division fosters hierarchies and subgroups, leading to caste conflicts and impeding the attainment of genuine inclusivity.

Dalit students often experience discomfort as their caste identity is conspicuously disclosed, which prompts scrutiny from upper-caste peers and faculty regarding their merit and intellectual capabilities. Furthermore, administrative officials display a lackadaisical attitude towards providing support in the admission process and hostel accommodations (Kumar, 2023, p. 87). This scenario predominantly affects Dalit students, many of whom are first-generation learners deprived of social and cultural capital. As a result, often, the university experience can be daunting for Dalit students, who may feel overwhelmed upon entering the institution, leading to dropouts. This leads to increased exclusion on campus, as social groups are often organised along caste lines, with Dalits preferring to associate within their caste identity to evade humiliation, prejudice, and disparaging remarks —ultimately restricting efforts toward greater inclusivity and diversity.

## **Pedagogy & Curriculum**

Kumar (2021) argues that humiliation, discrimination, and exclusion are deeply ingrained in the pedagogy and curriculum of humanities and social sciences disciplines, where upper-caste values are predominant. Furthermore, Dalit icons and their contributions are often excluded from the curriculum. Even if a few of them found space, they still suffered reductionism and stigmatisation and were never discussed independently in the classroom. Kumar refers to this as “pseudo-inclusivity without any reflexivity” (Kumar, 2021, p. 38). This results in the marginalisation of Dalits, minorities, and Adivasis from academic discourse. Additionally, the recent trend of politicisation of education has led to the removal of books and thinkers from the Dalit community, further excluding Dalits from an inclusive education. Therefore, in many universities' curriculum, Dalit history is excluded. Kumar (2022) questions the "concept of Indianness" and who is deemed "Indian", criticising the New Education Policy, which seeks to reaffirm the "Indianness" of the educational system in the pedagogy and curriculum. (N.Sukumar, 2022, p. 169). He also questions whether this notion of “Indianness” will include Dalits and minorities. Thus, discrimination is built into the educational structure through pedagogy and curriculum.

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid, including scholarships, fellowships, and fee reimbursements, is a critical enabler of higher education access, particularly for marginalised communities. Dalit students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds rely on these resources to overcome systemic barriers and pursue academic aspirations. However, despite policies aimed at supporting SC/ST students, equitable financial assistance remains a challenge. A major issue is the selective nature of financial aid, where only high-achieving students qualify for scholarships, leaving many Dalit students without adequate support (Ovichegan, 2015, p. 62). Additionally, bureaucratic obstacles, red tape, and institutional neglect rooted in caste prejudice often result in delays or denials of funding. Reports suggest that funds allocated for SC/ST welfare are frequently diverted; for instance, the Madhya Pradesh government redirected SC welfare funds to religious cow preservation sites (Tomar, 2024). Such misallocation of resources exacerbates financial instability among Dalit students.

Furthermore, delays in disbursing fellowships, such as the National Fellowship for SC/ST (NFSC/ST), discourage marginalised students from pursuing higher education. Reduced funding for institutions and fellowship programs has significantly hindered diversity and inclusion, disproportionately affecting Dalit students. Inadequate financial assistance exacerbates educational disparities, forcing many to take up part-time jobs, which negatively impacts their academic performance, mental well-being, and access to academic resources like conferences, seminars, and skill development programs. This financial instability reinforces their marginalisation within institutions already shaped by caste-based discrimination.

## Campus Climate

The influence of caste might not be immediately apparent, but it is deeply ingrained within institutions that are structured on caste lines. The new forms of discrimination are emerging in the form of microaggression, which needs to be contextualised. Caste proximity significantly influences campus social bonds and student relationships. Dalit Students are treated inferiorly based on factors like food choice, dress, race, caste, and religion, which can negatively affect their self-esteem and limit their potential. Dalit students often feel humiliated when their upper caste batchmates mock them for merit, reservation, and quota. Dalit students often feel isolated as they do not receive academic support from their peers whenever they seek their help, or their upper caste peers do not share any academic information. The impact of caste is evident in the form of microaggressions, which hinder the inclusivity of academic environments. For many SC students, the most viable way to navigate campus life is to endure the challenges posed by their faculty, peers, and administration and strive for a sense of normalcy. Consequently, a 'culture of silence' becomes crucial for survival within the institution. Those who are unable to cope with the oppressive system often drop out or tragically resort to suicide as a silent form of protest, as tragically exemplified in the case of Rohit Vemula.

## Conclusion

The university is meant to embody the principles of social justice and secular democracy as outlined in the Indian constitution. However, India's current higher education system falls short of upholding these values. Instead, it perpetuates caste-based discrimination and exclusionary practices. Conflicts between different groups and suicides among Dalit students are often dismissed as isolated incidents when, in reality, they are systemic issues overlooked by university administrations, faculty, and policymakers. Caste-based discrimination in higher education takes various forms, including subtle and overt acts such as microaggressions, derogatory comments, stereotyping, hostility, and conflicts within groups. While there are policies to promote diversity and inclusion in higher education, there is a significant gap between these policies and the institution's ability to address the challenges. Diversity and inclusion have been reduced to mere demographic representation, with little attention given to campus climate. There is an urgent need to move beyond the current quota system and ensure that equity and inclusion are embedded in every aspect of higher education. The support system for Dalit students, such as the SC/ST cell, should be strengthened. Awareness and sensitisation programs should be implemented for all members of the university community to address the stigma and stereotypes associated with Dalit identity. The curriculum and pedagogy should be reformed to be more inclusive and accommodate diversity. A comprehensive restructuring of the educational framework is necessary, with a focus on prioritising caste equity as a fundamental component of diversity and inclusion. This approach will benefit students from underprivileged backgrounds, contributing to a genuinely inclusive and diverse campus.

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## Attitude of Student-Teachers towards Internship

**Munisha Thakur<sup>1</sup> & Mool Raj<sup>2</sup>**

### Abstract

*Teaching is an exciting and rewarding activity but like other professions it is demanding. Teacher training programmes are established to prepare prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, competencies and skills they need to perform their work efficiently in the classroom, school and community. A student-teacher is a college, university or graduate student who is practicing teaching under the direction of a specialized teacher. Internship is an essential component of teacher education programme which prepares the prospective teachers with specialized knowledge, competencies and skills, and develops positive attitude towards the teaching profession. The present paper reports about a research which is an attempt to study the attitude of student-teachers towards internship. The present descriptive study is basically quantitative in nature. The tool used in the study was - Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS) which was developed by the investigator for assessing the attitude of student-teachers towards internship. A sample of 150 student-teachers enrolled in the B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes of Government and Private institutions has been selected through Simple Random Sampling technique. The data collected was analyzed by using Percentage, and t-Test. The results of the study revealed that 70.7% student-teacher have favourable attitude towards internship and 29.3% have moderate attitude towards internship, however, no one has been found to have unfavourable attitude towards internship. Results of the study revealed significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to the type of institution they are studying in (Government and Private), the programme they enrolled in (B.Ed. and M.Ed.), and semester of the programme they are studying in (III and IV) in favour of private, M.Ed. and semester IV groups.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, student-teachers, internship

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## Introduction

The term internship has been acquired from medical education, which suggests the word to medical clinic experience where the clinical specialist needed to have field insight under the specialist direction of better experts before they are permitted to begin practice of their own. Consequently, internship is a vital component of one's expert readiness (Kumar, 2016). Internship is a specific learning practice that converts knowledge into specific skills irrespective of the field of study. It plays an important role to develop social and Job oriented skills among the students or learners. It develops practical knowledge, independent and creative thinking, increases experience and expertise among the learners and also enables the learners to think differently and enhance positive attitude towards the profession (Parveen& Mirza, 2012).

Internship course is an important component of teacher education programme which is designed to provide field experience to the teacher trainee as it provides an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge studied in pedagogy classes in practical field and also helps in individual development, development of teaching skills, attitude towards the profession, broaden their range of knowledge and gain relevant educational skills that empower prospective teachers to face the challenges of teaching profession and work in new context. The Acharya Ramamurthy Committee (1990) in its revisit of NPE 1986 concluded that an internship model for professional training must be implemented in teacher education institution as it is based on first-hand experience to the learners. It also develops teaching skills among the prospective teachers over a period of time (Deepali, 2009).

Internship includes five activities prescribed by National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, 2009 for preparing teachers at secondary level i.e. visits to innovative centers, classroom-based action research projects, school internship, developing and maintaining resources in internship schools and developing unit plans and maintaining reflective journals (Hans & Shah 2016).

### ***Student-teachers' Tasks during Internship***

During internship, several activities are done by student-teachers that are associated with classroom instruction, and organization as well as management of school-based setup and other local area-based exercises other than teaching. These activities are;

- Knowing the school and the local area around the school where student-teachers are sent for internship
- Analysis of the curriculum and textbooks of an institution.
- Observing the teaching of peer student-teachers in the classroom.
- Preparation of contextual investigation of the internship school and the inventive exercises that the school embraces.
- Preparation of lesson plans units and sub-units.

- Teaching the given units in two disciplines being recommended in the internship school.
- Teaching as an alternative teacher.
- Mobilization and advancement of teaching-learning assets.
- Preparation of question papers and other evaluation apparatuses.
- Preparations of a diagnostic test so that educators can recognize the regions where the student commits mistakes and then provide appropriate remedial teaching.
- Undertake case study of a child.
- Teacher trainees must take one problem from their school or classroom teaching as a project for action research.
- Community work, local area overview etc.
- Writing down positive or negative learned experiences by maintaining a reflective journal or diary to record everyday happenings and then thinking over it.

The institutions of teacher education training and internship schools may devise extra activities depending upon their specific requirements. The prospective teachers must follow the yearly educational arrangement drawn by the internship school while choosing the units of the syllabus (Hans & Shah, 2016).

### ***Phases of Internship in Teaching***

Internship in teaching field consists of three stages i.e. pre, internship and post phase.

Pre-internship begins in the initial year in the form of the practice teaching skills under the direction of the faculty. Pre-internship exercises incorporate choosing the school for the internship, creating teacher-trainees' group, framing and developing the timetable, composing the unit plan, allotment of guides, planning and arranging exercises etc. The teacher-trainees are guided with theoretical and practical information on various skills of teaching like abilities of composing educational targets, creating concept map, presentation, addressing, clarification or explanation, blackboard writing etc. Every skill is prepared and administered in the class. After fostering a theoretical and practical comprehension of the skills, student-teachers are sent for teaching practice in schools.

Internship is the important second stage of internship, which incorporates work on teaching and all exercises of the school. In this stage, an allotment of different schools to student-teachers is done. In this stage student-teachers design and develop lesson plan, select appropriate teaching strategies, and deliver the lesson, observe classes of peers, construct aptitude test, record school activities and arrangement of teaching aids and so on.

Post-internship being last stage is usually done at the end of internship. Overall report of the internship and assessment is also covered in this stage. The purpose of this stage is to examine the various parts of instruction in teaching and consider on it for advance

improvement. It is useful for organizer to do better organization in future (Deepali, 2009).

### **Review of Related Literature**

Herbert and Diego (2009) found that there was positive and high correlation between the perceived importance of the practicum and the pupils' demographic profile, structure of the practicum, and their future plans. Tuli (2009) found that the pre-service teachers viewed practicum as a significant instrument of learning to teach because it helps in the development of their teaching skills and prepare them for the teaching profession and also found that connection between theory and practice, growth in skills and confidence and socialization were the fruitful experience of the practicum course and insufficient budget, evaluation related experiences, lack of support inadequate and secondary school pupil misconduct were the most stressful experience of pupil-teachers' internship experience. Ghanim (2012); Parveen and Mirza (2012); Belete (2013); Dweikat (2013); Rama and Ready (2013); Mahato and Behera (2018) conducted studies on attitude of student-teachers towards internship and found that student-teacher had shown positive and favorable attitude towards internship. Singh (2013) found that student-teachers did not differ significantly in their attitude towards practicum due to gender, and locality. Parvez and Shakir (2013); Chakrabarty and Behera (2014) found that student-teachers differ significantly in their attitude towards practicum with respect to type of institutions they are studying in (Government and private). Jain (2015) found that practicum course enhances and upgrades teaching attitude of student-teachers. Kour and Gupta (2018) found that teacher trainees were satisfied with the extended duration of B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes because they were of the opinion that the reformed system is more organized and school internship provides teacher trainees first-hand experiences. Whereas discussing about assessment procedure, teacher trainees feel that assessment procedure is biased in the semester system. Kumar (2016) found significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards practicum with respect to gender. Mahato and Behera (2018) found that there were significant differences exist in the attitude of pupil-teachers towards internship based on gender, locality and type of institution they studied. No significant differences had been found in the attitude of pupil-teachers towards internship based on semester they were enrolled in, teaching experience, stream, religion and categories they belong. Patel (2019) found that practicum course enhances and advances student-teachers' instructional skills in real school environment. It was also revealed from the results that field experience and practical course enhanced student-teachers' pedagogical skills in a well manner. The obstacles faced by student-teachers throughout practicum and sessional work were non availability of school, no clarity of lesson plans among teacher educators, more lesson plans, short duration for completing practicum, more field visits etc. Jogan (2019) studied the effectiveness of a school practicum and found that student teachers have developed integrated skills of teaching with the appropriate guidance and support of school subject educators and supervisors. They were reported to be highly satisfied during the practicum course.

From the above mentioned review of related literature, it is evident that in most of the studies student-teachers have shown positive and favourable attitude towards internship programme and view internship programme as a real opportunity to refine and improve teaching skills in an actual school setting. The studies presented above have also shown that practicum that prepares the prospective educators with professional understanding, capabilities and skills, and develops positive attitude towards the profession.

### **Need and Significance**

It is evident from the above-mentioned studies that Internship course is an important component of teacher education programme which is designed to provide field experience to the teacher trainee as it provides an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge studied in pedagogy classes in practical field. It also helps in individual's personality development, development of teaching skills, attitude towards the profession, broaden their range of knowledge and gain relevant educational skills that empower prospective teachers to face the challenges of teaching profession and work in new context. So along with theoretical knowledge, practice is equally important and conducting a research on Internship is more important for getting insights on specific aspects of internship. There are number of studies that proved that attitude of learner is an important factor in teaching learning process because the whole process of teaching and learning is based on attitude of learner. So, it is important to identify the attitude of learner as it helps in generating an intervention policy towards the achievement of desirable ones. When we identify the attitude of learner, we may design internship as per their needs, capabilities, abilities and interests. Hence the researcher felt the need to conducted study on attitude of student-teachers towards internship. The present study is significant because it is the first time that the attitude of student teachers towards internship have been studied in different institutions of Jammu District of J&K UT. Moreover, the outcomes of present study may help the interns, supervisors, heads of the institutions and even other stakeholders to improve the process of internship by developing a positive and favourable attitude among the student teachers in colleges of education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives have been formed for the present study:

1. To assess the level of student-teachers' attitude towards internship.
2. To study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to their;
  - a. type of institution they are studying in
  - b. programme they are enrolled in, and
  - c. semester of the programme they are enrolled in

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study:

1. Student-teachers' have favourable attitude towards internship.
2. There is no significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to their:
  - a. type of institution they are studying in
  - b. programme they are enrolled in, and
  - c. semester of the programme they are enrolled in

### **Methodology and Sample of the Study**

Methodology is an organization of methods used in a particular area of study and design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. The current study was based on Descriptive Survey research design and questionnaire was used for data collection. Population of the present study comprised of all the student-teachers of Jammu District of Jammu and Kashmir UT (India). Sample for the present study comprised of 150 student-teachers' of B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes selected through Simple Random Sampling technique from Colleges of Education affiliated to Jammu University, Department of Education (University of Jammu) and Government College of Education (Cluster University of Jammu).

### **Tool used for Data Collection**

Self-prepared tool namely "Student-teachers Attitude towards Internship Scale" (STATIS) has been used to assess the attitude of student-teachers towards internship. It comprises of 30 statements scored on a five-point scale i.e. strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree regarding the attitude of student-teachers towards internship. A systematic procedure was adopted by the investigator for the development of tool. The procedure had following steps namely planning, preparation of preliminary draft, pre-try-out, and group try out for standardization.

### **Planning**

In this stage the investigator took decisions regarding the components of internship to be included in the tool and selection of the content areas to prepare the items.

### **Preparation of Preliminary Draft**

The investigators developed the preliminary draft of the questionnaire. Items related to internship course in B.Ed. and M.Ed. programme were written and computerized. Questionnaire developed for the purpose, consisted of simple, clear, and concise statements for better understanding of statements related to the subject under study. Care was taken to avoid ambiguity and repetition in the statements included in the tool. At the end of each statement, option was given. An effort was made to avoid vagueness.

### **Pre-Try Out of Tool**

The preliminary draft of the tool was printed and given to one student-teacher for the examination with regard to the clarity of statements, appropriateness of the language and the pattern of responses against each statement. Based on the suggestions and observation by investigator, the research tool was further refined. In the light of responses given by the student-teacher during the pre-try out stage, refinement in research tool was carried out. On the basis of suggestions of experts, statements were retained and further modification with regards to grammar, language, simplicity, conciseness etc. were incorporated in these tools.

### **Group try out of Questionnaire**

It was decided to statically standardize the tool namely Student-Teachers Attitude towards Internship Scale (STATIS). The refined tool entitled "Student-Teachers Attitude towards Internship Scale (STATIS)" in its print format was administered on the sample of 20 student- teachers. They were instructed to tick their responses on all the statements of the tool. They were given an assurance that their responses would be used for research purpose only.

### **Final Draft of the Tool**

Final draft of the tool was developed in both print and online forms. The tool consisted of two major sections. Section (1) consisted direction for respondents and personal profile of respondents which includes email address, name, gender, institution name, institution type, age etc. Section (2) of the tool comprised of questionnaire regarding the attitude of student-teachers towards internship.

### **Administration of the Tool**

Final draft of the tool namely Student-teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS) comprised of 30 items was administered on 150 student-teachers pursuing their B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes from Jammu District of J&K union territory. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, tool was converted digitally in Google Form in its simplest form, the instructions regarding the filling of questionnaire were clearly given on the top of the tool and the link was sent to the student-teachers of Jammu district via email and WhatsApp with the help of HODs and teacher educators and student-teachers of the concerned Departments.

### **Scoring procedure for STATIS Tool**

Scoring was done in accordance with the instruction given by the supervisor. **There were 30 items in the scale for each item five responses were given i.e., strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and the respondents had to mark anyone of the given five alternative responses. The procedure of scoring is shown in Table 1.**



**Table 1**

Scoring Procedure for STATIS Tool

Type of items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

**Validity and Reliability of the Tool**

The tool namely Student-Teachers Attitude towards Internship Scale (STATIS) for the present study was given to 5 experts in the field for establishing the Content and Face Validity. After getting their opinions on content and attributes of items used in the tool, the investigator analyzed their opinions and views, and it was found that the tool has adequate Content Validity. In addition to Content Validity, the tool has Face Validity also as no one (who ever went through the questionnaire) could object regarding irrelevance of the items regarding the attributes being assessed. All the persons whether they were experts, teachers and students were unable to find any irrelevance of the items with respect to domains to which they belonged.

The investigator also established the reliability of the Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS), for that data was collected from a sample of 150 student-teachers from Jammu district. There were 30 items in the tool namely Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS). The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach Alpha coefficient) and split half reliability for the tool was computed by using SPSS. The results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

Reliability (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient) for STATIS tool (N=30)

Scale Name	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability
STATIS	30	0.91

Table 2 shows that reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha,  $\alpha$ ) for the tool Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS) is 0.91. Hence, the self-prepared questionnaire was found to be internally consistent and it is suggested that it could be used as a reliable tool for data collection.

**Table 3**

Split Half Reliability for STATIS

No. of Items	Sr. No.	Split Half Reliability
Part 1 (15)	1 to 15	0.76
Part 2 (15)	16 to 30	0.89

Table 3 shows that part 1 of the STATIS contain 15 items from 1 to 15 and part 2 contain 15 items from 16 to 30. Table 3.6 displays that the value of Split Half Reliability for the scores obtained on part one of the Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS) is 0.76 and part two of the Student-Teachers Attitude Towards Internship Scale (STATIS) is 0.89. Hence, the self-prepared questionnaire was found to be reliable and it is suggested that it could be used as a reliable tool for data collection.

### Statistical Techniques Employed

After the collection of data, organization and presentation of data related to different aspects investigator has analyzed data by using the following statistical techniques;

- i. Percentage
- ii. t-Test

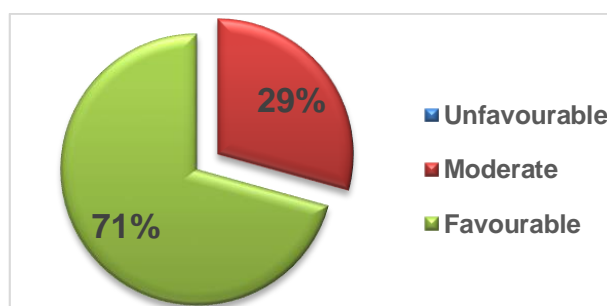
### Findings of the Study

After the statistical analysis of the data, the following interpretations are being drawn and an objective-wise presentation of the results is given below.

#### Objective 1

##### To assess the level of student-teachers' attitude towards internship

In order to, assess the level of student-teachers attitude towards internship, the raw scores have been converted in scores range by using quartile and on the basis of scores range three levels of the attitude have been formulated i.e. unfavourable attitude, moderate attitude and favourable attitude, frequencies and percentages were also computed for the data collected through the tool for the present study.



*Figure 1:* Percentage wise distribution of student-teachers having unfavourable, moderate and favourable attitude towards internship

Figure 1 depicts that no student-teacher had shown unfavourable attitude towards internship and 70.7% student-teachers have favourable attitude towards internship and 29.3% student-teachers have moderate attitude towards internship. Hence, the Hypothesis 1, student-teachers have favourable attitude towards internship has been accepted.

**Objective 2a**

**To study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to type of institution they are studying in**

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value for scores were computed to study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to type of institution they are studying in. The results are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1*

Type of Institution	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Df	t-value	Level of sig
Govt.	62	123.11	10.51	1.33	148	2.53	0.05
Private	88	128.09	12.72	1.35			

Table 1 shows that the mean score of student-teachers' studying in Government institutions is 123.11 and Private institutions is 128.09, and the calculated t-value (2.53) is statistically significant at 0.05 level. Thus, it can be inferred that significant differences exist in the attitude of student- teachers studying in Government and Private institutions towards internship. Hence, the Hypothesis 2a i.e., there is no significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to type of institution they are studying in has been rejected.

Thus, from the results it can also be seen that student-teachers' studying in Private institutions have comparatively higher mean score than the student-teachers studying in Government institutions. This means that attitude of student-teachers studying in Private institutions have more favourable attitude towards internship as compared to the student-teachers studying in Government institutions.

**Objective 2b**

**To study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to programme they are enrolled in**

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value for scores were computed to study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to programme they are enrolled in.

*Table 2*

Programmes of study	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t - value	Level of significance
B.Ed.	77	123.24	13.14	1.49	148	2.98	0.01
M.Ed.	73	128.97	10.11	1.18			

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of student-teachers enrolled in B.Ed. programme is 123.24 and M.Ed. programme is 128.97, and the calculated t-value (2.98) is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the results reveal that significant differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers enrolled in B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes towards internship. Hence, the Hypothesis 2b i.e., there is no significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to programme they are enrolled in has been rejected.

Thus, from the results, it can also be seen that student-teachers' enrolled in M.Ed. programme have comparatively higher mean score than the student-teachers' enrolled in B.Ed. programme. This means that student-teachers' enrolled in M.Ed. programme have more favourable attitude towards internship as compared to the student-teachers enrolled in B.Ed. programme.

### **Objective 2c**

**To study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to the semester of the programme they are enrolled in**

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value for scores were computed to study whether differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to the semester of the programme they are enrolled in.

**Table 3**

Semester of the Programme	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t-value	Level of significance
III	90	124.38	11.71	1.23	148	2.07	0.05
IV	60	128.50	12.28	1.58			

Table 3 depicted that the mean scores of student-teachers enrolled in semester III and IV of the programme is 124.38 and 128.50 respectively and the calculated t-value (2.07) is statistically significant at 0.05 level. Thus, the result shows that significant differences exist in the attitude of student-teachers enrolled in semesters III and IV of the programme towards internship. Hence, the Hypothesis 2c i.e., there is no significant differences in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship with respect to semester of the programme they are enrolled in has been rejected. As, the mean score obtained by student-teachers' enrolled in semester IV of the programme found higher than that of the mean score obtained by student-teachers' enrolled in semester III of the programme. This means that student-teachers enrolled in semester IV of the programme have more favourable attitude towards internship as compared to the student-teachers enrolled in semester III of the programme.

### **Educational Implications of the Study**

From the findings of the present study, the investigator has proposed the following educational implications:

1. The results of the present study show that majority of the student-teachers have favourable attitude towards internship and few student-teachers have moderate level of attitude towards internship. Student-teachers who have moderate level of attitude towards internship, teacher training institutions should find out the actual reason behind this and impart practical training regarding utilization of different methods of instructions, student-teachers should be trained practically for lesson planning in advance and allow them to utilize the existing resources, organize seminars. There should be creativeness in internship so that the student teachers do not feel it as a burden but enjoy the whole process. More exercises should be given on practical aspects.
2. Findings of the study showed that student-teachers enrolled in M.Ed. programme have more favourable attitude towards internship as compared to the student-teachers enrolled in B.Ed. programme. It reveals that when students enrolled in the B.Ed. programme they lack attitude, interest, but through the course in the B.Ed. programme, it was found that there is development in the attitude, and interest of student-teachers towards internship. In order to develop B.Ed. student-teachers attitude towards internship teacher training institutions should introduce internship courses in a proper and supervised manner, theoretical as well as practical orientation should be given to student-teachers prior to actual teaching practice, and curriculum should be based on need, interest, attitude, abilities, developmental levels and circumstances of learner. Teacher trainees must be sent to schools with conducive learning environment. The school location must be accessible both for supervisors and student-teachers.
3. From the findings of the study, it was also found that the student-teachers enrolled in semester IV of the programme have more favourable attitude towards internship as compared to the student-teachers enrolled in semester III of the programme. It reveals that when students enrolled in semester III of the programme, they lack attitude towards internship, but through the course in semesters III and IV of the programme it was found that there is a progressive development in the attitude of student-teachers towards internship. In order to develop their attitude towards internship teacher training institutions should made appropriate preparation for teaching practice before its beginning like consent of pupils, transportation facilities, orientation of teaching practice, available resources, and school rules and regulations, more emphasis should be on field work rather than theoretical aspect.

4. Internship has been very effective in the advancement of student teachers as a full-fledged teacher. From the findings of the present study and review of literature researcher found that student teachers face lot of challenges and restraints during internship such as transportation problems, allotment of schools in remote areas, skills of using and administering action research and psychological tests needs to be resolved for better outcomes of the internship programmes. Community involvement of the student teachers must be focused. Innovative and productive feedbacks should be provided to the student teachers regularly by teacher educators, guides, and school authorities like principal, skilled teachers etc. Internship programme must be done in private schools for some period to know about both private and government school. Internship can be made more effective by working on these matters.
5. Findings of this study directly or indirectly are beneficial to all stakeholders involved in the teacher education programme. It helps policy makers, teacher educators and student teachers to jointly prepare, design, implement and evaluate curriculum with an aim to improve it. Active involvement of each stakeholder could guarantee an authentic learning environment for student teachers. If stakeholders collaboratively prepare the material, it is believed they may consider the curriculum as their own product and not 'imposed' on them (Van den Akker 2003). Its findings help stakeholders to follow a grassroots approach to curriculum design which promotes its implementation because participants who prepare and design the curriculum may also implement and evaluate it. This will eventually lead to an effective curriculum for interns to acquire broad competencies where practical knowledge obtained during internship supports and complements the theoretical studies learned in the teacher training institutions.

### **Suggestions for further Research**

1. The sample consisted of 150 student-teachers belonging to three educational institutions of Jammu District of J&K UT only. It would be worthwhile replicating the present study involving a large sample selected from other districts of Jammu and Kashmir UT and from other states and union territories of the country.
2. Present study was conducted on attitude of student-teachers towards internship, further study can be conducted on attitude of engineering, business, medical, and other students towards internship.
3. Present study was conducted on variables as type of institution, programme and semester. Study can be further conducted on variables as locality and gender etc.
4. This study has been conducted only on B.Ed. and M.Ed. student-teachers. Similar study could be conducted on students enrolled in D.El. Ed., and integrated (ITEP) programmes.

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## Educational Status among the Pahari Community of Jammu and Kashmir

**Mohd Tariq<sup>1</sup> & Md. Musa Ali<sup>2</sup>**

### **Abstract**

*The Pahari community is a semi-nomadic tribe from Jammu and Kashmir, recognized as one of the largest semi-nomadic ethnic groups in the region. Recently, they were granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) status due to their primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, and social disadvantages. The community comprises an estimated 8.18% of the overall population in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. While the Pahari community is spreading throughout the UT, the majority is concentrated in the districts of Rajouri, Poonch, Baramulla, Kupwara, and Anantnag. Like the Gujjars, the Pahari are primarily nomads who migrate seasonally from the plains to the upper hills with their cattle.*

*The educational status of the Pahari community is not satisfactory compared to other mainstream communities such as Dogras and Kashmiris. This paper focuses on the educational status of the semi-nomadic Pahari community in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Data has been collected from secondary sources.*

**Keywords:** Pahari community, Educational Status, literacy Rate, Socio-Economic Status and Tribal Communities.

### **Introduction**

India is a highly diverse nation, consisting of people from various religions, castes, classes, and communities. The tribal population forms an integral part of this diversity, with representation across all states and union territories. Education is a fundamental tool for individual and societal development, playing a significant role in the overall progress of a country (Parav, 2020). The educational system of a nation reflects its level of development, motivating countries worldwide to strive for excellence in education. India has made significant strides in building one of the most robust educational

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systems globally, with numerous initiatives aimed at ensuring education reaches every individual, especially children. However, despite government efforts to improve the welfare of tribal communities, substantial challenges persist.

The Pahari community in Jammu and Kashmir represents an ancient ethnic group with origins traced to the Aryan race, which historically migrated to the region. This community primarily inhabits the southern upper hills of the Pir Panjal range, including areas near Nanga Parbat, Drawa, western Banihal, and Muzaffarabad. The term “Pahari” translates to “people of the hills,” referring to the inhabitants of hilly regions in Jammu and Kashmir. According to Motilal Saqi, the term “Pahari” encompasses distinct linguistic, historical, social, and political traits. It refers to a group whose mother tongue is Pahari and who reside in the Pir Panjal range, stretching from the mid-region of the Jhelum River to the Chenab River.

The Pahari community is distinguished by its unique physical features, traditional attire, and rich cultural heritage, all of which contribute to the preservation of its identity. While the majority of this community speaks the Pahari language, the region also includes members of the Gujjar and Bakerwal communities. The inhabitants of areas stretching from Badel to the Karna hills share a common cultural identity, despite minor linguistic variations. Many members of this community reside in villages near the Line of Control (LoC), where living conditions are exceptionally harsh. The local economy primarily relies on agriculture, which is heavily influenced by unpredictable weather patterns and the use of rudimentary tools. Due to the lack of electricity, modern transportation, and other essential facilities, establishing businesses or enterprises in Pahari-dominated areas remains a significant challenge.

This study examines the educational status of the Pahari community, with a particular focus on the Rajouri district. It analyzes the factors hindering their educational progress and proposes measures to improve access to and equity in education.



"Jammu & Kashmir Map." Adobe Stock. <https://stock.adobe.com/>

The arrows are indicating that these districts are the main heartland of Jammu and Kashmir where most of the Paharis live.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the educational status among the Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. To find out the challenges faced in education among the Pahari community in Jammu and Kashmir

### **Methodology of the Study**

The current study is mainly based on secondary sources like books, journals, research articles, census reports etc. Apart from this the data is also gathered from the official website of J & K Pahari Advisory Board for the development of Pahari Speaking People. The existing information was investigated on the basis of the main objective i.e. to examine the educational status among the Pahari community of the region.

### **Results and Discussion**

- The results and discussion of the study were based on previous studies.
- The census report and data gathered from Pahari Advisory Board's official website, which focused on the development of Pahari speaking people, also supported the study.
- The researcher studied the educational status of the Pahari community and identified the literacy gap.

### **Literature Review**

The educational status, challenges, and future solutions for the Pahari community have been the focus of various scholarly studies, emphasizing the socio-economic, linguistic, and cultural obstacles that hinder their educational progress. The following review makes key findings from these studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues and strategies identified in the existing literature.

Rehman (2015), in *The Paharis: Ethnography of a Genuine Tribe of Jammu and Kashmir*, identified the Paharis as a semi-nomadic tribe with a distinct cultural and linguistic heritage. Comparing them to other tribes across India, such as the Asurs of Bihar, Kinnaurs of Himachal Pradesh, Gonds of Madhya Pradesh, and Todas of the Nilgiri Hills, the author highlighted the unique identity of the Pahari community. The book extensively explores their social and cultural identities while also addressing their educational status and perceptions toward education. Rehman noted that economic factors significantly hinder the community's pursuit of education. Many tribal families, including Paharis, perceive school-going children as economic assets contributing to family income. Additionally, linguistic barriers further exacerbate the low educational attainment within the community.

Sharma (2020), in her study *Struggle for Identity and Rights: A Case Study of the Pahari Community in J&K State*, observed that the Pahari community lacks adequate educational facilities, which hampers their ability to compete with other communities, such as Kashmiris and Dogras, who have better access to education and reside in the plains of Jammu and Kashmir. In contrast, the Pahari community predominantly inhabits hilly and border areas, where access to educational infrastructure is limited.

Haq (2021), in *Origin of the Pahari Community and Their Demographic Characteristics, Educational Literacy, and Linguistic Composition: A Case Study of Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir*, analyzed the educational status of the Pahari community within the Rajouri district. The study explored the community's historical, demographic, and linguistic characteristics while identifying challenges and proposing solutions to improve their educational outcomes. The findings revealed that while the community performs relatively well at the elementary level, there is a significant decline in higher education attainment. Overall, the educational status of the Pahari community remains inadequate to meet contemporary demands, though it is comparatively better than that of the Gujjar community in the region.

Ahmed and Ahmed (2015) analyzed the socio-economic and educational conditions of the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities in Jammu and Kashmir. Their study highlighted significant challenges faced by these tribal communities, particularly in education and economic development. The authors emphasized the need for enhanced policies to support the overall development and well-being of these marginalized groups.

Ali and Kour (2023) investigated the educational status and challenges of tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir. Using secondary data, the study aimed to identify the barriers to educational attainment for these communities and compare their status with national-level benchmarks. The findings identified numerous obstacles to academic achievement, including poverty, parental illiteracy, inadequate infrastructure in rural schools, migratory lifestyles, and early marriages.

Bhat (2018) examined socio-economic disparities between the Gujjar and Pahari communities, focusing on caste, occupation, and education. The study revealed how caste influences occupational opportunities and educational outcomes, highlighting significant disparities between the two groups. The findings underscored the need for targeted social and educational interventions to address these inequities.

Gulzar (2021) conducted a case study on the impact of inclusive policies on the tribal communities of Jammu and Kashmir, with a particular focus on the Gujjar community. The study found that many mobile schools exist only on paper, with most in the Poonch district being non-functional and only a few in the Rajouri district operational for nomadic populations. Additionally, the literacy rate among the Gujjar community was reported at 37% in the 2001 Census, significantly lower than the general population's literacy rate of 55.5%. These findings paint a concerning picture of the educational progress of tribal communities in the region.

Suri (2014) explored the educational challenges faced by tribal communities in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Using both primary and secondary data sources, the study identified several critical issues, including the remoteness of tribal areas, poor infrastructure in mobile schools, teacher absenteeism, and early dropouts among girls from remote regions. The study also highlighted the lack of security provisions in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs), which were established in educationally backward blocks, further hindering female enrollment and retention in schools.

**Table 1.**

**District-wise Pahari Population of Jammu and Kashmir as Per the Census 2011 in the below Table 1.**

S. No	Districts	Total population	Pahari population	Population in %age
1	Anantnag	1078692	84742	7.86
2	Budgam	753745	5283	0.70
3	Bandipora	392232	16993	4.33
4	Baramulla	1008039	141157	14.00
5	Doda	409936	0	0.00
6	Ganderbal	297446	17497	5.88
7	Jammu	1529958	0	0.00
8	Kathua	616435	0	0.00
9	Kishtwar	230696	0	0.00
10	Kulgam	424483	3738	0.88
11	Kupwara	870354	103082	11.84
12	Pulwama	560440	3992	1.59
13	Poonch	476835	267194	56.03
14	Rajouri	642415	360409	56.10
15	Rambam	283713	0	0.00
16	Reasi	314667	0	0.00
17	Samba	318898	0	0.00
18	Shopian	266215	13427	5.04
19	Srinagar	1236829	540	0.04
20	Udhampur	554985	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>12267013</b>	<b>1018054</b>	<b>8.3%</b>

*Source: State Advisory Board for Development of Pahari speaking People of J&K. (2018), Data Based on 2011 Census.*

The 2011 Census data provide a comprehensive overview of the distribution of the Pahari population across various districts in Jammu and Kashmir. The region's total population stands at 12,267,013, of which the Pahari community accounts for 1,018,054 people, representing 8.3% of the overall population. The districts of Rajouri and Poonch shows the highest concentrations of Pahari community, with 56.10% and 56.03% of

their respective populations belonging to this community. Similarly, the districts of Kupwara and Baramulla also demonstrate significant Pahari populations, comprising 11.84% and 14.00%, respectively.

On the other hand, several districts, including Jammu, Kathua, Ramban, Reasi, Samba, and Udhampur, report an absence of Pahari populations. Moreover, districts such as Budgam (0.70%), Kulgam (0.88%), Shopian (0.04%), and Srinagar (0.04%) present a minimal presence of the Pahari community, each accounting for less than 1% of their respective populations. This distribution pattern highlights the uneven geographic concentration of the Pahari population, with a significant presence in specific districts and a notably less or absent presence in other districts.

### Literacy Composition of Pahari Community of Jammu and Kashmir

As there has been no official census available on the Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir, the exactness of literacy composition is unable to find because of the lack of data sources, the household survey was conducted by Mohd Aftab UL Haq (Haq,2021) in the Pahari dominated villages of the Rajouri Districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The villages of Lam, Sialsui, Galhutti and Kandigala were selected for the household survey. From the findings of the survey he found that these villages have a low average literacy rate of **27.57%**, with **Kandigala** achieving the highest at **33.68%**, followed by **Sialsui (28.02%)** and **Galhutti (26.31%)**. **Lam** reports the lowest at **20.88%**, reflecting significant educational disparities and need of the hour is to focused on their socio-economic and educational development.

**Table 2.**

**Literacy Rate of Pahari Community in Villages Of Rajouri District (In Percent)**

S.No.	Villages	Total No of persons	Total no of literate	Literacy in %
1	Lam	158	33	20.88
2	Sialsui	182	51	28.02
3	Galhutti	133	35	26.31
4	Kandigala	187	63	33.68
<b>Total</b>		<b>660</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>27.57</b>

Source: Household Survey was conducted by Mohd Aftab UL Haq (Haq,2021). The literacy composition of Paharis is low but it is relatively better in comparison to the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities.

### Educational Status of Pahari Community of Jammu and Kashmir

Education is a powerful tool for social transformation and empowerment, significantly contributing to advancements in social, educational, and economic domains. Recognizing its critical role, nations worldwide have prioritized education. In India, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, enacted in 2009, was designed to guarantee every citizen's right to education and ensure equitable access without

discrimination. However, even 14 years after its implementation, the intended objectives of the Act remain largely unfulfilled.

For the Pahari community, educational attainment remains relatively low. Their language is not incorporated into formal classroom education, and their socio-economic conditions remain substandard (Sharma, 2020).

The educational status of Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir is slightly better at elementary (up to 8th) stage, but it has been found that the less representation of the students at the higher secondary level and higher education. table 3.

**Table 3.**

Educational status of Pahari community in some of the villages of Rajouri district of J&K

S. No	Villages	Below primary	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Higher secondary	Grad& Post Grad
1	Lam	24.2	33.3	18.2	9.0	12.1	3.0
2	Sialsui	25.5	31.4	17.7	15.7	3.9	5.9
3	Galhutti	25.7	28.6	14.3	17.1	5.9	5.7
4	Kandigala	30.2	25.4	14.3	11.1	7.9	11.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>26.9</b>	<b>29.12</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.1</b>

**Source: Household Survey (Haq,2021). Note Sample size 150**

Based on the above-mentioned reviews and analysis of previous studies and statistical evidence, it is clear that the Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir has not received adequate attention from previous governments, remaining in a dormant phase since independence, which has led to their ongoing struggles. Most of the Pahari community was divided during the partition, with 70% migrating to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK). As a result, their representation on the Indian side of Kashmir was significantly reduced, which adversely affected their access to education. Both the state and central governments failed to improve the educational status of the Pahari community due to ground-level negligence, poor policy implementation, border conflicts, and the Kashmir crisis. This is reflected in the low literacy rates among the Pahari community, as they lack strong leadership at the central or state level. The border areas of Jammu and Kashmir, including the valley, have been severely impacted by political instability across the border, causing significant suffering for the Pahari community, most of whom live in these border areas.

## Conclusion

An analysis of previous studies indicates that the educational status of the Pahari community in Jammu and Kashmir is relatively low compared to other mainland communities within the Union Territory. The researcher observed that while the educational attainment of the Pahari community is relatively satisfactory at the

elementary level (up to 8th grade), their representation significantly decreases at higher levels of education. However, their participation in higher education is comparatively better than that of the Gujjar and Bakerwal communities.

The review of prior studies identified several factors contributing to the low educational status of the Pahari community. These include poverty, limited parental interest in education, seasonal migration, inadequate infrastructure in schools located in Pahari-dominated areas, early marriages, adherence to traditional occupations, long distances to schools, insufficient educational facilities, absence of mobile schools beyond primary education, the remoteness of the region, lack of road connectivity in rural areas, and teacher absenteeism. Collectively, these challenges hinder the educational progress of the Pahari community.

Targeted measures are required to address these issues, including the implementation of inclusive educational policies, the development of better infrastructure, and the effective execution of existing government programs. Strengthening local leadership and emphasizing equity in areas with high Pahari populations, such as Rajouri and Poonch, is critical for fostering the community's development. A holistic approach to addressing these challenges can help uplift the Pahari community, enabling them to contribute more effectively to the social and economic development of both the region and the nation.

### **Suggestions**

On the basis of the above-mentioned reviews and findings of the study the following suggestions are being made by the researchers which would help to improve the functioning of the government about the Pahari community of Jammu and Kashmir.

1. The government programs for the development of Pahari community should be made meaningful and successful.
2. Infrastructure should be developed with proper technological equipment as per the current demand of the society.
3. Prominent NGOs like Youth Association for Service of Humanity and Nation, Serving Nation, Help Foundation and Help Poor Voluntary Trust should be involved for the proper awareness about the educational schemes for the tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir.
4. There should be a community participation in the mainstream community
5. Efforts to enhance literacy level especially in the Pahari rural areas and should be given priority.
6. The department should increase the number of mobile schools in different places so that more children get benefitted.
7. Supervision of the tribal communities' schools in the remote areas should be time to time.



8. Number of seats should be increased in residential hostels or institutions
9. Meeting should be fixed with the parents of the students about the education of their children
10. Awareness programs should be organized about the role of technology in the professional development of the people.

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## National Responsible Teachers: How to Integrate Youth through Teacher Education

**Nalini Verma<sup>1</sup>**

### Abstract

*India has a huge youth population. Youth power is a strong link to any country's development. Therefore, there is a need to focus on providing better education to the youth and making them responsible citizens. Teachers play an important role in our lives. Everyone considers teacher's role models. Therefore, teacher education also provides a better opportunity for the youth. This paper examines the crucial role of teacher education in developing nationally responsible educators capable of effectively integrating youth into society. The research investigates how teacher education programs can be enhanced to produce educators capable of fostering civic responsibility and national integration among students. It explores current challenges in teacher preparation programs, innovative approaches to foster national responsibility, and strategies for youth integration. The study emphasizes the importance of balancing national values with global perspectives in teacher education. Recommendations are provided for policymakers and educational institutions to enhance teacher preparation for youth integration and national development.*

**Keywords:** Nation, National Responsibility, Teacher, Teacher Education, Youth Integration

### Introduction

The concept of nationally responsible teachers encompasses educators committed to fostering national integration, civic responsibility, and social cohesion among students. These teachers possess a deep understanding of the nation's diverse cultural landscape, historical context, and contemporary challenges. They are equipped to promote critical thinking, democratic values, and active citizenship in their classrooms. Nationally responsible teachers strive to balance local perspectives with national interests, encouraging students to become engaged, informed citizens who contribute positively to the nation's development while respecting its multicultural fabric. Youth integration

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is crucial for national development. Young people bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and energy to tackle societal challenges. Engaging youth in decision-making processes ensures policies reflect their needs and aspirations. Their participation in the workforce drives economic growth and fosters entrepreneurship. Investing in youth education and skills development creates a competent future workforce. Recent Indian studies emphasize youth integration through teacher education reforms. In the evolving landscape of Indian teacher education, the imperative to develop nationally responsible teachers who can effectively integrate youth into the social fabric has gained significant attention. Recent studies underscore the critical role of teacher education in this endeavor. Sharma and Patel (2023) documented Gujarat's transformative program, where specialized teacher training in youth leadership resulted in a 40% increase in student civic engagement. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2024) highlighted Delhi's innovative B.Ed curriculum reforms, which enhanced youth participation in national programs by 35%. Mehta's (2022) Maharashtra case study revealed that pre-service teachers trained in youth mentorship significantly improved student outcomes, while Verma (2024) demonstrated how teacher training modules of Uttar Pradesh fostered a sense of national responsibility among educators, directly impacting youth integration in educational settings (Sharma & Patel, 2023; Kumar et al., 2024; Mehta, 2022; Verma, 2024). Recent studies support youth integration through teacher education. Zhao et al. (2022) demonstrated how a Singapore program successfully trained teachers to foster youth civic engagement. Similarly, Martinez-Lopez (2023) documented a Spanish initiative where pre-service teachers developed youth mentorship skills, resulting in improved student community participation. Thompson's (2024) UK case study revealed that teachers trained in youth-centric pedagogies increased student involvement in national service programs by 42% (Zhao et al., 2022; Martinez-Lopez, 2023; Thompson, 2024). Youth involvement in community service and volunteerism strengthens social cohesion. Their digital literacy can accelerate technological advancement and modernization. Empowering youth as leaders and change-makers cultivates a sense of civic responsibility and national pride. By harnessing the potential of youth, nations can build a more inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future for all generations.

The researcher raises some questions. The first research question (RQ1) examines the role of teacher education in developing nationally responsible educators capable of effectively integrating youth into society. The second research question (RQ2) analyzes how teacher education programs can effectively prepare educators to engage and empower youth in national development. The third research question (RQ3) explores which types of pedagogical approaches best foster youth integration and civic responsibility in the classroom and also explores strategies that teachers can use to cultivate youth leadership and participation in community affairs. The fourth research question (RQ4) finds how teacher preparation programs can address the challenges of youth disengagement and apathy towards national issues.

## Literature Review

Theories of national identity and responsibility in education, as they pertain to integrating youth through teacher education for national responsible teachers, draw from various disciplines and pedagogical approaches. Social Identity Theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), provides a framework for understanding how teachers can foster a sense of national belonging among youth, emphasizing the importance of group membership in self-concept formation. This theory can guide educators in creating inclusive classroom environments that celebrate national identity while respecting diversity. Civic Education Theory underscores the crucial role of education in preparing youth for active citizenship, offering a foundation for teacher training programs to develop curricula that promote civic engagement and national responsibility. Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy encourages educators to facilitate critical consciousness among students, enabling them to examine and question their national identity and responsibilities thoughtfully. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory can be applied to teacher education, equipping educators with tools to facilitate transformative experiences that shape youth's understanding of their role in national development. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory informs how teachers can model national responsibility and influence youth through social learning processes, emphasizing the power of example in shaping behaviour and attitudes. Culturally Responsive Teaching provides a framework for integrating diverse cultural perspectives into discussions of national identity, ensuring that all students feel represented and valued in the national narrative. Constructivist Learning Theory guides teachers in helping youth construct their understanding of national identity and responsibility through active, experiential learning. Lastly, Social Reconstruction Theory offers a philosophical foundation for teacher education programs, preparing educators to use their role to address social issues and promote national development actively. These theories collectively suggest that effective teacher education for national responsibility should focus on developing educators who can facilitate identity formation, promote active citizenship, encourage critical thinking about national issues, model responsible behaviour, incorporate diverse perspectives, provide experiential learning opportunities, and address social issues as an integral part of the educational process. By grounding teacher education in these theories, we can prepare educators who are equipped to integrate youth into national development processes effectively and foster a strong sense of national responsibility among the next generation.

Teacher education programs worldwide are increasingly recognizing the importance of preparing educators to foster national responsibility and youth integration. Many curricula now include components on civic education, cultural competence, and youth engagement strategies. However, the depth and quality of this preparation vary significantly across institutions and countries. Some programs offer comprehensive courses on national identity and youth empowerment, while others only touch on these topics superficially. There is a growing trend towards incorporating experiential learning and community engagement projects in teacher training, allowing future educators to

practice youth integration techniques. Despite these advancements, many teacher education programs still struggle to keep pace with rapidly changing youth cultures and technologies. Additionally, the focus on standardized testing and subject-specific knowledge in many education systems often overshadows the importance of national responsibility and youth integration in teacher preparation. Challenges in integrating youth through teacher education include bridging generational gaps between educators and students, addressing diverse cultural backgrounds, and combating youth apathy toward national issues. Many teacher education programs struggle to equip educators with the digital literacy skills necessary to engage tech-savvy youth effectively. There is also the challenge of balancing national identity promotion with respect for individual and cultural diversity. However, these challenges present significant opportunities for innovation in teacher education. The rise of social media and digital platforms offer new avenues for youth engagement that can be incorporated into teacher training. There is an opportunity to develop more interactive, project-based learning experiences that simulate real-world civic engagement. Collaboration between education institutions, youth organizations, and government bodies can create more comprehensive and practical teacher education programs. Furthermore, involving youth directly in the design and implementation of teacher education curricula can ensure that the training remains relevant and effective. By addressing these challenges and seizing these opportunities, teacher education can play a crucial role in fostering national responsibility and youth integration.

### **Methodology**

This qualitative study employs a comprehensive systematic literature review methodology to examine the integration of youth through teacher education in developing nationally responsible teachers. The research process follows a structured approach beginning with the identification of relevant secondary sources through academic databases including ERIC, Google Scholar, and educational research repositories specific to the Indian context. The search parameters encompass recently published peer-reviewed journal articles, policy documents, government reports, and educational case studies, using keywords such as teacher education in India, youth integration education, nationally responsible teachers, and civic engagement pedagogy. The selected literature undergoes a rigorous content analysis using thematic coding to identify recurring patterns, challenges, and successful strategies. The methodology incorporates a critical discourse analysis framework to examine the underlying assumptions and power dynamics in teacher education policies and practices. To ensure reliability and validity, the study employs triangulation by cross-referencing multiple sources and perspectives. The analysis is guided by a constructivist paradigm, acknowledging the socially constructed nature of educational practices and the importance of context in understanding teacher education approaches. This methodological framework allows for a nuanced exploration of how teacher education programs can effectively prepare educators to integrate youth into national development while fostering a sense of civic responsibility.

## Findings

### Role of Teacher Education

Teacher education plays a pivotal role in developing nationally responsible educators who can effectively integrate youth into society. According to Darling-Hammond (2010), comprehensive teacher preparation programs must emphasize not just pedagogical skills, but also the social and civic responsibilities of educators. These programs should foster an understanding of national values, cultural diversity, and the importance of cultivating active citizenship among students. As noted by Zeichner (2012), teacher education curricula should incorporate modules on social justice, cultural competence, and community engagement to prepare educators who can guide youth towards meaningful societal participation. The effectiveness of such preparation is evident in studies like that of Cochran-Smith et al. (2015), which demonstrated that teachers who received training in culturally responsive pedagogy and civic education were more successful in helping students develop a sense of national identity and social responsibility. Furthermore, Nieto (2013) argues that teacher education programs must evolve to address contemporary challenges, equipping educators with the tools to navigate complex social issues and guide students toward becoming engaged citizens. It equips teachers with strategies to promote social cohesion and civic responsibility among students, ultimately facilitating youth integration into society (Zeichner, 2010). These educators become agents of positive social change. Through comprehensive training programs, educators learn to create inclusive learning environments, implement culturally responsive pedagogies, and instill a sense of national identity while respecting individual differences. This preparation enables teachers to guide students in becoming active, responsible citizens who contribute positively to their communities and the nation at large.

### Effectiveness of Teacher Education Program

Teacher education programs play a pivotal role in shaping educators who can effectively foster civic responsibility and national integration among students. Research indicates that incorporating specific pedagogical approaches and curriculum elements in teacher training can significantly enhance educators' capacity to promote these values (Johnson & Smith, 2022). By emphasizing culturally responsive teaching methods and providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to engage in community-based learning experiences, education programs can equip future educators with the tools needed to cultivate civic-mindedness in their students (Chen et al., 2023). A comprehensive approach to teacher education should include modules on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as practical training in facilitating meaningful discussions about civic engagement and national unity (Thompson, 2021). Additionally, integrating service-learning components into teacher preparation programs can help aspiring educators understand the importance of connecting classroom learning to real-world civic participation (Garcia & Wilson, 2023).

Moreover, teacher education programs should focus on developing educators' skills in creating inclusive classroom environments that celebrate diversity while promoting a shared sense of national identity. This can be achieved through experiential learning opportunities and reflective practices that encourage pre-service teachers to examine their own biases and develop strategies for fostering unity among diverse student populations (Lee & Roberts, 2024). Research suggests that incorporating experiential learning and critical pedagogy in teacher training programs enhances educators' capacity to promote active citizenship (Banks, 2017). Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2019) emphasize the importance of multicultural education approaches that prepare teachers to address diverse perspectives and cultural contexts. Additionally, integrating service-learning components in teacher preparation curricula enables future educators to model civic engagement and develop practical strategies for student involvement in community affairs (Mitchell, 2020). By emphasizing reflective practice and culturally responsive teaching methods, teacher education programs can equip educators with the tools needed to nurture students' sense of civic duty and national unity (Gay, 2018).

### Challenges

The integration of youth through teacher education faces numerous complex challenges that demand careful consideration. As noted by Johnson et al. (2022), one primary obstacle is the rapidly evolving technological landscape, which creates a growing digital divide between educators and students. Teachers must constantly update their skills to remain relevant and effective in engaging modern learners. Darling-Hammond (2023) emphasizes that teacher preparation programs often struggle to balance theoretical knowledge with practical classroom experience, leaving many novice teachers ill-equipped to address diverse student needs. Financial constraints also pose significant barriers, limiting access to quality training resources and professional development opportunities (Smith & Garcia, 2021). Cultural competency remains another critical challenge, as highlighted by Thompson (2024), who argues that teacher education programs must better prepare educators to work with increasingly diverse student populations. Additionally, the integration of social-emotional learning into teacher training curricula presents difficulties, as many traditional programs focus primarily on academic content delivery rather than holistic student development (Wilson, 2023). These multifaceted challenges underscore the need for comprehensive reform in teacher education to effectively prepare educators who can successfully integrate and engage youth in modern educational settings.

Recent research suggests various effective solutions to address the challenges of youth integration through teacher education in India. Rajendran and Kumar (2024) propose a comprehensive curriculum overhaul incorporating digital pedagogy and youth-centric teaching methodologies. To address resource constraints, Chopra et al. (2023) advocate for public-private partnerships in teacher education, which have shown promising results in states like Maharashtra and Karnataka. The generational gap can be bridged through mentorship programs, as demonstrated by Venkatesh's (2024) successful pilot study where experienced educators were paired with youth representatives to co-

design teaching modules. Singh and Mehta (2023) recommend a balanced approach to national integration by developing localized content within a national framework, ensuring cultural relevance while maintaining unified goals. To combat the overemphasis on academics, Dasgupta (2024) suggests implementing a credit-based system that equally values community engagement and youth leadership activities in teacher training. Technological adaptation can be facilitated through regular upskilling programs, with Sharma et al. (2024) documenting the success of micro-learning modules for in-service teachers. These solutions, when implemented holistically, show significant potential in developing nationally responsible teachers capable of effective youth integration (Rajendran & Kumar, 2024; Chopra et al., 2023; Venkatesh, 2024; Singh & Mehta, 2023; Dasgupta, 2024; Sharma et al., 2024).

### Recommendations

To enhance youth integration through teacher education, several evidence-based recommendations emerge from recent research. Anderson and Lee (2023) advocate for implementing mentorship programs that pair experienced educators with pre-service teachers, fostering practical skill development and real-world problem-solving abilities. Digital literacy training should be prioritized, as Roberts (2024) suggests, incorporating emerging technologies and social media platforms to bridge the generational gap between teachers and students. According to Chen et al. (2022), teacher education programs should adopt a more culturally responsive curriculum, ensuring educators are equipped to support diverse student populations effectively. Martinez and Thompson (2023) recommend integrating project-based learning experiences that simulate actual classroom challenges, allowing trainee teachers to develop adaptive strategies for youth engagement. Financial incentives and scholarships, as proposed by Davis (2024), could attract more diverse candidates to the teaching profession, ultimately creating a more representative educational workforce. Furthermore, Wong (2023) emphasizes the importance of incorporating social-emotional learning techniques into teacher training, enabling educators to support students' holistic development beyond academic achievement.

### Conclusion

*Teacher education is crucial for developing responsible educators. Programs focusing on civic education, national history, and cultural diversity are effective. Practical training and community engagement enhance educators' ability to connect with youth. Programs with mentorship, collaborative projects, and dialogue-based methods foster youth integration and civic responsibility. Strategies like community service projects and youth-led initiatives cultivate leadership skills. Programs addressing youth disengagement, digital literacy, and adaptive teaching methods stimulate interest in national affairs. Effective teacher education is crucial for developing nationally responsible educators capable of integrating youth into society. Programs should incorporate civic education, cultural diversity, and experiential learning to prepare teachers. Participatory pedagogies, community engagement, and adaptive teaching methods are key to*



*fostering youth leadership, civic responsibility, and interest in national affairs. Addressing youth disengagement through digital literacy and contemporary issues discussions empower teachers to connect with and empower the next generation. Future directions for integrating youth through teacher education should focus on developing adaptive curricula that responds to rapidly changing social and technological landscapes. Emphasis should be placed on fostering digital citizenship, global awareness, and emotional intelligence among future teachers. Additionally, incorporating youth voices directly into teacher education programs and policy-making processes could enhance the relevance and effectiveness of youth integration strategies.*

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