International Journal of Applied Ethics

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Centre for Ethics and Values, Ramanujan College, University of Delhi is launching its second issue of 'International Journal of Applied Ethics (IJAE)'. Our aim is to reflect the views of the academia, community of ethicists, psychologists, researchers, professionals and spiritual seekers interested in the promotion of work-ethic, well-being of the individuals and cordial functioning of the society. The mission is to provide readers with outstanding articles that present international perspective and latest information, including best practices in the application of knowledge to the promotion of ethical values.

It is an inter-disciplinary journal that covers diverse areas of applied ethics and universal values. Committed to practical approach, this issue includes papers on 'holistic personality development', 'responsibilities of educators', and 'ethical issues of development'. We are of the view that ethical values can and should include educational, practical and behavioural aspects of life. Journal is aimed to cover papers and reviews dealing with operational values and practical affairs in business, education, information and technology, environment, government, health care, law, politics and economics. The aim of the journal is to contribute to a better understanding of ethics and values-based issues by promoting research into various areas of applied ethics, and by providing researchers, professionals and students with a forum for dialogue and discussion on ethical dilemmas raised in contemporary society. It welcomes papers from scholars in the field of applied ethics and universal values, as well as papers from those in related disciplines or field of inquiry.

EDITORIAL OBJECTIVES:

IJAE is dedicated to promoting and disseminating a broad range of scholarly inquiry relating to the areas of values and ethics, and their relationship to theoretical construct and practice in society. It is believed that the areas of values and ethics remain a critically important subject for research. Exploring its practicability covering wide range of disciplined empirical and conceptual works should be of interest to both scholars as well as professional administrators. IJAE is a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound, and conscientiously reflective practices in

society. Devoted to exercise that is knowledge-based and values conscious, the journal provides a forum for the publication and discussion of original research. It aims to examine ethical and universal concerns in research, teaching, administration, and governance. In response to the rapidly changing global environment, it also offers sustained inquiry into ethics, values, purposes, and functions of the institutions responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

The journal offers holistic perspectives and best practices to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity in complex and diverse environments. It provides means and methods for celebrating diversity across cultures while ensuring local relevance. It attempts to enlighten individuals and organizations on social, cultural and environmental responsibility. It provides an international forum for the exchange of ideas, principles and processes concerning the application of human values to individuals, organizations, institutions and the world at large. It aims to achieve an authentic synthesis of Western and Eastern approaches to management of human values, at the individual and organizational levels by creating frameworks of knowledge and methods of application of the same.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION: All articles will be reviewed by the editors to determine their suitability for this publication. In addition, at least two additional reviewers will conduct blind reviews of the article.

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS: The initial manuscript should be submitted electronically to the editor at the email address shown below. Manuscripts should be double spaced and leave wide margins. A separate page should be included which provides the author(s)'details, including contact information (address and e-mail). References and citations should be in alphabetical order, and chronological within alphabetical order. The editor reserves the right to make changes to the manuscript to ensure that it conforms to the style. Generally, manuscripts should be between 2,500 and 5,000 words in length. Prospective author(s) must include a statement which indicates they agree to the submission of the manuscript, and that the manuscript has not been published, and is not under consideration for publication, in part or in substance, elsewhere. The editor will communicate with the author(s) of accepted manuscripts to ensure that the final version of

the article is not only acceptable with the author(s) but also complies with the journal's requirements and format.

SRINIVASA IYENGAR RAMANUJAN: AN EXEMPLARY SOUL

Srinivasa Iyengar Ramanujan (22 December 1887 – 26 April 1920) was an Indian mathematician and autodidact who, with almost no formal training in pure mathematics, made substantial contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series and continued fractions. Ramanujan's talent was said by the English mathematician G.H. Hardy to be in the same league as legendary mathematicians such as Euler, Gauss, Newton and Archimedes. Born in India, Ramanujan first encountered formal mathematics at age 10. He demonstrated a natural ability, and was given books on advanced trigonometry . He mastered them by age 12, and even discovered theorems of his own. He demonstrated unusual mathematical skills at school, winning accolades and awards. By 17, Ramanujan conducted his own mathematical research on Bernoulli numbers and the EulerMascheroni constant. In 1912–1913, he sent samples of his theorems to three academics at the University of Cambridge. Only Hardy recognized the brilliance of his work, subsequently inviting Ramanujan to visit and work with him at Cambridge. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society and a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, dying of illness, malnutrition and possibly liver infection in 1920 at the age of 32.

Ramanujan independently compiled nearly 3900 results (mostly identities and equations). He stated results that were both original and highly unconventional, such as the Ramanujan prime and the Ramanujan theta function, and these have inspired a vast amount of further research. However, the mathematical mainstream has been rather slow in absorbing some of his major discoveries. Recently, Ramanujan's formulae have found applications in crystallography and string theory. The Ramanujan Journal, an international publication, was launched to publish work in all areas of mathematics influenced by his work. Ramanujan was a person with a somewhat shy and quiet disposition, a dignified man with pleasant manners. He lived a rather Spartan life while at Cambridge. Ramanujan's first Indian biographers describe him as rigorously orthodox. Ramanujan credited his acumen to his family Goddess, Namagiri of Namakkal. He looked to her for inspiration in his work, and claimed to dream of blood drops that symbolized her male consort, Narasimha, after which he would receive visions of scrolls of complex mathematical content unfolding before his eyes. He often said, "An equation for me has no meaning, unless it represents a thought of God."

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About this issue

Ethics is something which you can see in your own behaviour, judge with your own conscience and apply as a universal value. Ethical values are the principles which direct our actions and choices. These are inherited by an individual, applicable in our daily life and found at all times. Values have been classified differently by different educationists and philosophers. National Policy on Education (1986) classified all values into three main categories – Personal, Social and National values. All the three supplement one another. Adherence to personal values would promote better social values. Yet, ethical values are Eternal, Universal and Transitory values. The philosophy is that such values can help universally to any individual to seek the goal of life in a righteous manner. These universal or the core values, if deteriorated by the modern youth will hasten the breakdown of family, community and the nation as a whole. In addition, such deteriorating values will accelerate the risks to individual's health, peace and development, such as HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, violence, stress and suicides.

A national seminar on 'Ethical dimensions of governance' organized in 2010 laid the foundation for discussion and debate on practical aspects of ethical and universal values in education and administration. My experience as Director of the seminar was stimulating. The outcome of this seminar was published in the form of a book 'Ethics in Governance', which was released by the Vice-Chancellor of our University. Inspired by the all-round support from all the quarters, including the UGC, and with the initiative of our college Principal a Centre for Ethics and Values was established in our college. The inaugural issue of the journal was an outcome of an international conference on 'Restoring culture of Ethics and Values: The Holistic Education way' organized by our Centre for Ethics and Values in February, 2012. My experience as Director of this conference was even more stimulating as this was organized in association with Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi and the Baha'i Place of Worship, including participants from abroad.

This inaugural issue of the journal contained 25 articles – position papers,

and reports. Their purpose was to illustrate the diversity of fields within the ambit of 'Holistic Education' that pertains to universal values and human well-being. Holistic Education was considered as an essential component of health and value promotion. It might not be a panacea to all problems, but is an important aspect for addressing young generation's needs in the face of wide range of corruption and social problems, including drug abuse, violence, HIV/AIDS and a wide range of needs, including promotion of safety, peace and human rights. The concern about the career prospects and unfulfilled potential of students was one of the perennial issues and central foci of researchers within the education system. This issue of our journal is chiefly dedicated to contribute to this aspect of personality development.

We consider teachers role not only confined to educating the youth but also to act as crusader of character building amongst them. The task of a teacher is to nurture the curiosity, character, creativity and compassion elements of students. To eradicate the instincts of greed, envy, ego and aggression among students; we need a kind of education that forms the source of positive emotions, universal love, compassion, forbearance, equanimity and intuitive understanding of the very purpose of our existence. It is quite clear that modern education completely sidesteps the emotional and spiritual aspects of the human personality and caters only to physical and intellectual growth. Modern education has also in many ways failed to address the identity crisis of the youth. This gives rise to emotional or relationship crisis culminating into integrity crisis amongst them.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Unless the development of mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lopsided affair. By spiritual training, I mean education of the heart. A proper and all round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child.... Our children must from infancy be taught the dignity of labour. Thus, the true meaning of education is harmonious development of head, heart and hand, i.e. enlightenment of mind, compassion and dignity of labour". Swami Vivekananda proclaimed: "We must have life-building, man-making, character-building education".

Rabindranath Tagore had a vision for such an education: "Education must aim at the development of moral, spiritual and ethical values and we should seek them in our own heritage as well as in other cultures and civilizations...It should be such that Indians do not lose sight of their rich heritage – their thought must be rooted to the ideals set forth in the great writings and works of our sages, poets and philosophers. The noble goals and high values set forth in our precious culture must be adhered to". 1966, the Kothari Commission recognized the need for inculcating social, Universal and spiritual values through education. It said, "A serious defect in the education system is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values. A national system of education that is related to life needs and aspirations of the people cannot afford to ignore this purposeful force". Pundit Nehru once remarked, "let us pursue our path to industrial progress with all over strength and vigour and at the same time remember that material riches without tolerance and compassion and wisdom may turn to dust and ashes". In 1986, the Draft National Education Policy acknowledged, among other things, that "India's political and social life is passing through a phase which poses the danger of erosion of long accepted values. Not only are the young ignorant of, and often contemptuous of the ancient Hindu vision of life, but the 'modern' values of secularism, socialism, democracy and professional ethics are coming under increasing strain." The document spoke explicitly of 'values education' that have a universal appeal and called for the fostering of values that could help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition, and fatalism. This issue is dedicated to the restoration of such values in society, crucial for the holistic development of human beings.

T.K. Mishra

CENTRE FOR ETHICS AND VALUES: OUR PERSPECTIVE

S. P. Aggarwal*

Growing erosion of human values and increasing cynicism in the society has brought to center the need for readjustments in the curriculum to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social and ethical values. For any positive change in the situation, a sea change is needed in our thoughts and perspectives on education. Quality education is about finding newer possibilities and brighter avenues in the society. Bringing excitement in the learning process and harnessing innate talents of the students, it's about creating good human beings and ensuring success in the real life. In our pluralistic society, quality education should foster values that can ensure unity and integration of the people. Such values should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism. Apart from such combative role, the Centre for Ethics and Values has a profound positive role. Our rich cultural heritage, humanistic national goals and universal perception of peace and solidarity should guide the path and destiny of our education. Our emphasis needs to shift from blaming the students for the erosion of values to helping them reflect and evolve core values that they can live and die for. But, this would be possible only when we move from entrenched mindset to wide open mind.

Attaching special importance to the Ramamurti Committee Report (1990), which laid much greater stress on Human Values and subtitled its Report as `Towards a Humane Society', this centre should lay particular stress on human values, namely truth, love, right conduct, and peace (including Non-violence). The centre should also take the cognizance of the report of Standing Parliamentary Committee on Human Resources Development (1996-99) under the Chairmanship of Late S.B.Chavan, which said: "Truth (*Sathya*), Righteous conduct (*Dharma*), Peace (*Shanti*), Love (*Prema*), and Non-violence (*Ahimsa*) are the core universal values which can be identified as the foundation stone on which the value based educational

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programme can be built up. These five are indeed universal values and respectively represent the five domains of personality: intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. They are also correspondingly correlated with the five major objectives of education, namely, knowledge, skill, balance, vision and identity."

The Supreme Court of India on introducing human values in education observed: ``…..The force and sanction behind civilized society depends upon moral values. Philosophy of coexistence and how to co-exist, not only with human beings but all living beings on earth, maybe animals, vegetation and environment including air and water is thought over and discussed by saints and leaders all over the world. If that is taught, it cannot be objected as it is neither violative of constitutional nor legal rights nor it offends moral values…..." On teaching of religion it observed: ``it appears to be totally wrong presumption and contention that knowledge of different religions would bring disharmony in the society. On the contrary, knowledge of various religious philosophies is material for bringing communal harmony as ignorance breeds hatred because of wrong notions, assumptions, preaching and propaganda by misguided interested persons."

OUR DIAGNOSIS: All is not well

All is not well with the quality standards of our education system and calls for immediate remedial measures. A common measure suggested is to integrate ethics and values in the course curriculum effectively. The young minds are becoming an easy prey to all sorts of ill-habits of smoking, drinking, bunking class, drug abuse, sexes, etc, resulting in stress, delusion, loss of interest in studies and dreadful depression. Solution to the problem lies in exposing students to more practical learning, choicest courses and ethical education. Ethical education through qualified, dedicated teachers needs to attract student's interest. These measures need to be taken without losing much time and before their interests are transformed beyond repair.

With eyes firmly set on 'extrinsic motivation', today's youth lack entrepreneurial skill and motivation to do anything creative or innovative.

They think there mere enrolment as student will guarantee them a well-paying job. The craze for easy money and the corporate jobs have increased dramatically over the years. Our educators and policy-makers need to realize that solution lies in creating an enabling atmosphere where each student feels control over the choice of courses, career, interests, values and motivation.

OUR EXPERIMENTS: Human Values and Personality Development Course

The story of the Center running above courses show that a clear set of values, when articulated and lived authentically, can set the culture of the college.

a) Enhancing employability- The recently introduced above mentioned certificate courses sanctioned by the UGC not only provided integrative skill to the students but also enhanced their employability factor boosting their confidence level. About 30 students undergo training in such course under placement cell. Spoken English, personality development, public speaking and communication skills have been included in the curriculum to complement their skill development. Students are now using the knowledge centre and learning labs equipped with audio-visual aids.

b) Tackling absenteeism- The foundation of ethics and values that the college is trying to build has shown remarkable improvement in the class room attendance. Now they are showing much interest in studies and classes. This experiment has evoked positive response among students as well as the teachers of the college. These courses have also changed favorably their learning behavior, their attitude, manner of speaking, interest in studies and greatly enhanced their confidence level.

c) Popularizing events- Earlier large numbers of students were found to be indifferent towards academic activities like seminars, workshops and lectures or the extra-curricular activities. They used to feel shy in assuming responsibilities in organizing events and festivals in the college. Now, they welcome the environment in which ethics and values are central to the organizing principles.

d) Activating Alumni- The alumni association maintains continuous interaction sharing experiences and information with the objective of promoting relationship. Eminent guest speakers who are experts in their concerned fields are invited to deliver lectures and suggestions are invited from the students for adding good speakers as guest faculty. Such practice helps in making the learning activity more exciting.

OUR TASK: Educate through Ethics and Values

The attempt of our centre for ethics and values is to:

- Select persons with specialization in their respective fields as faculty;
- Generate literature and information on grooming children of character;
- Produce well researched literature to convey that the five human values are inherent in all faiths and all cultures;
- Prepare print and audiovisual material on outstanding individuals from history and the contemporary world, so that people can emulate their example;
- Develop techniques to reprogramme our character and values;
- Run workshops for teacher, master trainers, parents and students so that they can practice values and discuss how to practice human values in their daily lives.
- Develop a modern digital library with facility for instant access to leading libraries of the world to facilitate research work.

Enumerating the purpose and role of education, first, we need to highlight the changes that are necessary in the impetus of education today. Here, we need to talk about the kind of paradigm shift that is needed and the role that can be played by the teachers in this regard. Secondly, we need to identify the ways of making teaching more effective following the principles of ethics and values. We need to explain as to how adherence to ethics is vital not only for the education but also for satisfying individual needs of students, professional needs of teachers, and the needs of community. In redeeming the orientation and impetus of education, following gaps have been identified:

I.   Enlightenment and not Enrichment: Teacher should aim at enlightening the student with thoughtful analysis and proper introspection rather than aiming to enrich or augment the student with array of information and consequent implications. The basis of enlightenment process is wisdom-based knowledge, while the basis of enrichment is information-based knowledge. Moving from product-era to marketing-era and then to information-era, we are now in the knowledge-era. The knowledge-era led by science and technology is soon going to reach its saturation level. Now, we should prepare ourselves to enter wisdom-based knowledge-era. Those who would operate with wisdom would be able to command power in the society. Hence, teacher needs to take on the role of 'enlightened masters' to attract students and meet futuristic needs. Those who embrace enlightenment have nothing to sell. They simply share their understanding and experience. Enrichment breeds exclusion, while enlightenment is shared through friendship. When the goal is seeking enlightenment, not just the final stage of enlightenment but the journey or the learning itself becomes exciting. Learning, not rooted in the process of enlightenment, creates distance between teacher and the taught. It is said, 'a poor teacher tells; a good teacher teaches; an excellent teacher demonstrates; a dedicated teacher motivates: and an outstanding teacher enlightens.'

II.   Development and not Deception: Besides enlightenment, aim of a teacher should be to develop personality of student that is not only robust enough to withstand all kind of pressures and challenges but also a kind that is sustainable one. Today's education is largely creating deception in the mind of students rather than aiming at developing a value-based personality in them. Be it for the individual or the society, deception i.e. tricky and dishonest means cannot bring sustainable development. When education does not give the students proper insights into decision-making process, deception breeds. Teacher has to dispel all such deceptions and illusions in the mind of students by way of showing clearly the aftermath of wrong options and offering righteous path of development. As the great thinker Rabindranath Tagore wrote in 'Crisis of civilization (1941)' that "By

unrighteousness man prospers gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but perishes at the root".

III. Unity of thoughts and action: Mahatma Gandhi could earn massive acceptance and huge following essentially because he exemplified unity of thoughts and action. Lofty ideas, wishful thinking and engaging talks do not yield something. Rather the disunity amidst thought and action forms the chief source of one's anxiety. Education should help students adopt and sustain this particular unity in their walks of life. To attain this, teacher himself needs to walk the talk and demonstrate unity between thoughts and action. The disunity becomes obvious when students find asymmetry of thoughts and divergence between personal life and career of their teacher. You cannot have separate benchmarks or philosophies for the two pursuits of yours.

IV. Character-building and not Career-building: We admire men with character and integrity. Simply a careerist we envy. Even with powerful people, we fear. It is only men with character that we trust. And if trust does not exist, what is left then. There is a marked difference between character-building and career-building. Career-building is building-up your image through adding professional skill and training. Image is what others think of you and character is what you know about what you are. Some people build image of honesty, which they are really not. While some people are honest because they really believe it is the right thing to do. Such people are doing the right thing for right reason and that is called character-building. Career is just an image or a shadow, character is reality. Character is the root, career is the fruit. Career opens the door while character keeps it open. Character is what we do or not do even if no one is watching. Teacher has a central role in cultivating character element in the student and inculcating self-discipline, empathy, commitment to civic and moral values in them.

V. Ambition and not Adaptation: Having ambition is a necessary condition for the development of personality. Education today is primarily oriented towards addressing current needs arising out of competition and changing conditions. Little effort is made toward changing the course and

complexion of the development. No one is trying to create a kind of development that is in the long-run interest of the society. Instead of adapting to a market-led growth trajectory, we should aim at creating a new society through welfare-led action-plans. Ambition helps in creating own destiny while adaptation believes in the given destiny. Education should help students to be creative, visionary and innovative rather than adaptive and assimilative.

VI. Team-spirit and not Task-spirit: Education today has largely become task-oriented rather than team-oriented. Education needs to inculcate team-spirit amongst students and breed sense of co-existence in the society. This would help students develop proper understanding of human behavior and enable sensible learning from fellowmen. Task-spirit breeds commitment to the goal of self-actualization while team-spirit breeds loyalty towards organizational goals. Adopting humble approach to learning, focusing on larger questions, and selecting ethical ways of doing things will help instill right values and team-spirit among students. Unfortunately, most of the colleges today are focusing exclusively on skills or task and producing not leaders but merely technicians. With mere focus on task, organizations may achieve task satisfactorily. But with lack of team-spirit; they may experience high attrition level, low morale, and disturbing job-dissatisfaction in the organization.

VII.   Excellence and not Expedient: "Biggest disease today is not leprosy or tuberculosis, but rather the feeling of not being wanted" said Mother Teresa. As such, it is only the pedagogy of education that can address this problem. The feeling of not being wanted is essentially due to misplaced ideals and loss of identity amongst them. They join the rat-race without knowing their own nature or identity and what exactly suits them. How can one win the race when one does not place himself in the right kind of race? Education must be oriented towards creating excellence by focusing on the theme 'Know Thyself'. Getting results through acts of manipulation or tactical devices, abusing principles and norms typifies expedient behavior.

OUR VALUES: Teaching through Ethics and Values

Teaching is one profession which has commanded maximum respect down the ages. We, Indians, have conferred an almost divine stature on our teachers. Since time immemorial, formal education has been synonymous with our 'guru-shishya' tradition. Centre is committed to highlight the significance of this tradition in the modern world. In this tradition, guru learns or develops understanding along with his disciples, just like in performing or creative arts. Disciples get practical training rather than bookish knowledge. Both of them, as collaborator contribute equally to knowledge and innovation. The institution of guru as a repository of knowledge and shishya as one who passes on that knowledge becomes vital in the process of knowledge transfer. Even though, during those days teacher was at a disadvantageous position in terms of reading and teaching material and technological aids, including amenities; respect and status of a teacher was of highest standard.

Modern teachers are living to the best of time in terms of availability of information, reading and teaching material, technological tools and comfortable amenities. However, the status and respect of the teacher in the society is eroding day-by-day. Why so? We need to ponder over this. Centre is of this opinion that our predecessors were living more ethically and uprightly in their life by maintaining high degree of honesty, sincerity and transparency. So the choice is entirely on us, if we want to attain that kind of status and respect we need to adopt core ethical values in our teaching and behavior.

Teachers need to resolve the conflict between personal and professional ethics. While our profession may demand a certain way of academic development, as an individual we may not be comfortable with it. The real challenge lies in finding a solution that is sustainable and overrides the concerns of ethical dilemma. And this dilemma can be handled best, if one focuses on the larger horizon and develops faith that ethical ways of doing things is generically virtuous and the only way of accomplishing personal and professional goals.

Modern education gives you analytical skill but not subtleness of mind. It is our traditional scriptures that would suggest how this subtleness is obtained through Yagna and Upasna. "The need of the hour is to create a climate of opinion which says respect is more important than wealth. It is time to make traditional values like honesty, integrity and decency fashionable again" says Narayan Murthy of Infosys.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, counting his time in the teaching profession as best years of his life, stated "Through teachers flow the values and culture of a nation and its people" Deep-down every teacher is divine and ethical in nature. It is only the elements of application of ethics and values that brings difference in teaching style. Undoubtedly, conscious application of ethics and values would make the teaching more effective and help the teacher in restoring respect that they commanded down the ages. To enable rethinking on norms and principles of teaching, one can draw enough insights from the following points:

E=Emotional competence: If character development is the foundation of democratic societies, emotional competence is important to sustain this foundation. Emotional literacy should go hand in hand with teaching for character, for moral discipline, and for citizenship. One reason why modern youth is so poor at the basic life skill is that as teachers we have not bothered to make sure every student is taught the essentials of handling anger or resolving conflicts positively- nor have we bothered to teach empathy, impulse control, and expression of love, despair or any of the other fundamentals of emotional competence.

T=Transparent conduct and trustworthy: Transparency breeds openness and trust. Trust is the backbone of all kind of relationships. Ethical behavior in personal as well as professional life is important to gain authenticity and dependability. An atmosphere of mutual trust between teacher and the taught, built by transparency in dealings, enhances the effectiveness of teaching.

H=Human governance and humanity: Let your heart do the back-seat

driving always in your decision-making. Body language and your feelings express where from you are addressing, intellect or your heart. If you want to get across the heart of your students you need to speak from the core of your heart and show concern towards humanity and morality in life.

I=Integrity and Identity: Person with doubtful integrity cannot be called a good teacher in the eyes of students. Students look for an ideal image about the teacher and they are not ready to accept anything short of that. The identity of a teacher in their eyes is quite distinct from other sections of society. But do teachers keep this in mind while surfing internet or doing cut and paste on computer, defying research or publication ethics.

C=Consistency in behavior and character: Some teachers are found contradictory or inconsistent in their behavior. At one time they would preach something and other time different things. They are found to be lacking consistency in their thought process and behavior. Such people cannot attract students for the purpose of learning.

S=Societal and spiritual: Purpose of education is to make the living in society better. Ethical ways of doing things have essentially been drawn from religious texts and scriptures. Teachers can draw insights from those texts to enhance their teaching skills and capability in the society. Mahatma Gandhi said to the teachers "Your role is not to teach. Nobody can be taught. You will have to facilitate a young man to become a responsible citizen of this country". To create responsible citizen, teachers must pledge to be more responsive, ethical, morally upright in our entire endeavor so that the place and the status of the teaching community is restored in the society.

OUR PROGRAMMES:

a) Lectures: The Centre organizes special lectures of eminent academicians, research scholars and public personalities to fulfill its mission. Primacy is given to lectures on service learning based on the maxim, 'Love all, serve all, and enlighten all.'

b) Orientation Seminars: The purpose of a sound and effective

educational system is to impart knowledge along with ethical values. Thus the college has initialed a movement for incorporating ethical values as a fundamental part of the educational syllabus in the country.

c)   **Professional Workshops:** College makes effort to organize workshops for students, teachers and members of different professions.

d)   **Outreach Programme:** To reach out to the youth and to create awareness among them regarding the relevance of values in today's society, the college annually organizes College Alumni meet for students of Delhi University.

e)   **'Antargyan' fest:** The fest is organized as part of our active learning initiative, where all students and teachers take active part. This is much on the lines of 'Antardhwani' cultural festival organized by University of Delhi.

f)   **Research Activities:** The Centre tends to produce well researched literature conveying the message that the five human values (Truth, Love, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence) are inherent in all faiths and cultures.

g)   **College Magazine:** College publishes annual magazine called `**Alok Tirtha'** with prime focus on art, literature, education and morality.

h)   **International Journal:** College has started publishing 'International Journal of Applied Ethics'. This is an annual journal featuring application aspects of ethics.

I)   **International Conference:** College organized a 3-day international conference on 'Restoring culture of ethics and values: The Holistic Education way', in association with Baha'i house of worship & Philosophy dept. of Delhi University.

j)   **Incubation Centre:** A MOU has been signed by our Principal and Director General, NIESBUD, Govt. of India. Apart from entrepreneurship training programme of college students under its aegis, incubation function

of film-making society was held under the guidance of Marwah Asian Academy.

k) Knowledge Resource Centre: Air-conditioned reading room both for teachers and the students, obtains and displays several books, newsletters and magazines. A well equipped air-conditioned Knowledge Resource Centre contains about 100 computers and approximately 10,000 enriching books. The library also maintains a reading Hall and computerized searching of books has also been implemented. The library is in the first stage of automation and has created a database of documents using software DELNET, which aims at linkage with more than 1000 libraries from around the country.

OUR COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Course on ethics and values should have the following objectives: -

a. Affect a transformational process among the participants, which may eventually lead to self-realization and thereby self-actualization.

b. Initiate a change in the mind-set of the participants so as to induce them to be men and women of character, who are able to transmit values both by precept and example.

c. Introduce the world of ethics and values and highlight the importance of character building. Emphasize the universal acceptance of the five basic values of Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Peace and Non-violence across religions and compatibility with the concepts of modern science.

d. Examine the philosophy, methodology, pedagogy and relevance of value-oriented education.

e. In particular, analyze the possibility of transmitting values through community singing, parables and short stories, teaching of individual subjects, social service, examples of great men and so on;

f. Also prepare a plan of action for introduction of value-orientation in the curriculum and creation of ethical society.

OUR COURSE DESIGN:

The course on ethics and values can broadly be divided into three major parts:

Part I: - The aim should be to bring all the participants to one common platform by following a process of soul-searching, self-realization and self-purification, thereby leading to an understanding of their fundamental duty for existence and the omnipresence of God. Topics comprising the above parameters are as follows:-

• Self-realization and leadership
• Person who inspires me the most: - Presentation by the participants.
• `Who am I': the Vedantic Insight.
• Analysis of great personalities.
• Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior (FIROB) tests.
• Leadership, personality and human values.

Part II: - This part of the programme should involve study of the implications and significance of the five fundamental values of *Sathya* (Truth), *Prema* (Love), *Dharma* (Righteous Conduct), *Shanthi* (Peace), and *Ahimsa* (Non-Violence), commonalties of all religions/interfaith harmony and Science and spirituality. The topics are as follows:-

• Ethics and Human Values:- An introduction
• Analysis of the Five fundamental Human Values
• The Art of Dynamic equilibrium
• Commonalties of All Religions
• Basic Human Values and Different Religions:-
• Basic Human Values and Baha'i ' World Faith
• Basic Human Values and Sikhism
• Basic Human Values and Islam
• Basic Human Values and Jainism

- Basic Human Values and Buddhism
- Basic Human Values and Christianity
- Ethical behavior : a scientific perspective
- Interface between Science and Spirituality.

Part III: - In the final part, we should analyze the possibility of promoting values through different methodologies and Pedagogical devices:-

- Education in Human Values- the Government Policy.
- Institutional role in Human Values education.
- Pedagogical aspects of value oriented education.
- Management of time and stress.
- Introduction to Yoga and Pranayam.
- Silent sitting and Meditation.
- Secret of `OM'.
- Community Singing
- Cultural programmes.
- Video films.
- Stories and parables.
- Social Service.
- Ideal teacher.
- Ideal parenting.

Apart from lectures on different subjects mentioned in part I, II and III, the students should be expected to study two basic text books on human values and write a review of these books in not more than two pages. An action plan should be drawn in every course/programme to tailor the course/programme to the specific requirement of the students. While formulating the action plan, factors like background of both the staff and the students, the language they are comfortable with, the level of general awareness and other social imperatives and the school system should be given importance. Meditation and reading habits are the time-tested techniques that keep the mind alert, stimulated and positive. Reading

classics and books on great lives should form part of our daily routine. While reading the inspirational lives, we should try to understand how the character of such individuals developed. A novel and popular feature in the course/programme would be the introduction of Anuvrat from the day. The participants would be encouraged to pick up and practice and good habit like 'Smile today', `I will speak softly today,' 'I will make a new friend today', etc….

There should be constant effort to refine the syllabus. Changes should be made on the basis of suggestions received from participants. Following themes should form subject matter of discussion and learning:

A) The Self – An Understanding:

Improvement in effectiveness should mean a change in person in following respects.

• Developed Self-understanding, self-awareness and self-confidence.

• Higher Motivation (Taking initiative, perseverance, objectivity focus, etc).

• Impact making in relationships and interactions.

• Developing belief that destiny can be shaped by realizing the need for excellence (Achievement Motive), need to influence others (Power Motive), need to pursue goals that are likely to help people at large (Extension Motive).

Extraordinary powers are in the mind of a man. And mind needs to be governed by the 'conscience'. Person's thoughts, emotions, memory, imagination and discrimination are all functions of the mind. Face and voice differ from one another, so also the mental world, mode of thinking, way of understanding, and reaction to events differ. In human transformation great emphasis should be laid on purity, health and control of the mind. When we analyze the behavior of leaders in history who made lasting contribution for the humanity, or a nation, or a community, or an organization or a cause, we find that they possessed some special qualities in common. They came in all

shapes and forms-the flamboyant, the scholarly, the artistic, the ascetic, the gregarious and the reclusive. And yet, they possessed two qualities in common.

- All of them have been persons of character.
- They had an inner-structure composed of certain universal values.

B) Human Values - And a leader:

The five most important human values are briefly explained below:

- Truth – that which does not change. It is also used to denote God.
- Right Conduct - Conduct that befits the duties and obligations of a person's position, whatever it may be.
- Love – Unselfish love that expects nothing in return.
- Peace – perfect equanimity in the face of success and failure
- Non violence or Non Injury – not hurting anyone by thought word or deed.

Out of the five values discussed above, the first two, truth and right conduct; virtually contain the distillate of all morality. Honesty, integrity and loyalty are inherent in them. Selfless people are neither greedy nor looking for shortcuts to success; hence, their integrity never wavers. They seek no unfair advantage over others; hence, their loyalty is steady and strong. When people have these virtues, then their thoughts, words and deeds are coherent. They say what they think and do what they say. There is no dual thinking and double speaking in their nature. That establishes their credibility for which they are trusted. Trustworthy people alone can become leaders. The other three qualities essential in a good leader are: Courage, Willpower, and Initiative

C) Courage and confidence:

The most important act of courage for a leader is to take decisions. No action can start unless a decision is made. Making a decision means being accountable for success or failure. It is important that decisions are made

with care weighing the pros and cons of the available options. A leader needs both physical and moral courage. The moral courage can be described in the following words: Quiet resolution, the hardihood to take risks, the will to take full responsibility for decisions, the readiness to share its rewards with subordinates, readiness to take the blame when things go wrong, the nerve to survive storm and disappointment and to face each new day with the score sheet wiped clean, neither dwelling on one's success, nor accepting discouragement from one's failures.

D) Will Power and commitment:

Power to persist is a quality present in all outstanding leaders. Willpower is the source of all other faculties. In the implementation of any plan or project, number of difficulties may arise. These difficulties or failures may arise due to natural causes; at other times, to insufficient resources; or to the frailties of human nature. A good leader must have the willpower (determination, perseverance or tenacity) to persist despite the setbacks and difficulties that may arise.

E) Initiative and innovativeness:

Effective leaders are always ahead of events. They do this by intelligent anticipation based on sound information system. Leaders are also on the lookout for openings and opportunities that can help the furtherance of their task. All these are signs of initiative and innovativeness. People of initiative are innovators and self-starters that make them dynamic. It can be developed by the habit of forethought. A leader should take some time to reflect on the chosen course of action and visualize the likely snags and difficulties that may arise.

BUILDING YOUTH FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE
A CASE STUDY OF RAMANUJAN COLLEGE – PART I

Naghma Siddiqi*

Our youth are our future. We should invest in them as we do in other things related to our future. One important way of investing in them is by providing them with quality education that helps them to face global challenges. In doing so many educational institutions – schools, colleges and universities – often impart education towards global-readiness with mere economic considerations. This makes our youth 'money-making machines' with little human considerations. In the face of this challenge many institutions have laid emphasis on holistic education that integrates the humane aspects within the curriculum. Through holistic education students are made aware that while individual success is important; it can be made more fulfilling and result-oriented by understanding our human nature and striving towards our positive goals keeping ourselves and others in mind.

EDUCATION FOR PEACE

In India ground-breaking efforts were made by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in their *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (2000) that integrated value-education(rooted in religions) on formal lines in primary and middle school curriculum. NCERT's *National Curriculum 2005*led to the emergence of peace education as a discipline that sought 'to nurture ethical development, inculcating the values, attitudes and skills required for living in harmony

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***** *The present article is the first part of a case study of the impact of **Towards a Culture of Peace and Reconciliation Program** in Ramanujan College and The Centre for Ethics and Values. The author of the article, member of Center for Peace and Spirituality,* www.cpsglobal.org*, has developed this program based on the findings of her doctoral research 'The Role of Islam in Establishing Peace in the Contemporary World' that she is doing from the Department of Islamic Studies in Hamdard University, New Delhi.* naghma@cpsglobal.org*.*

with oneself and with others.' [1]NCERTs Position Paper (September 2006) on 'Education for Peace' defined it as nurturing of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that comprise and promote a culture of peace as the purpose shaping the enterprise of education.

Earlier UNESCO (1992) had defined the *culture of peace* as 'a growing body of shared values, attitudes, behaviours and ways of life based on non-violence and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, on understanding, tolerance and solidarity';[2] while Professor Felipe McGregor (1914-2004) had linked the culture of peace with education for peace, [3]stating: 'The concept of education for a culture of peace links it closely with educational themes, fields and concerns with a view to generating a holistic vision of quality education.'[4] In higher school education Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) made pioneering efforts to introduce subjects focusing on adolescence education and peace at the secondary and senior secondary level. In February, 2007, the then Chairman of CBSE, Ashok Ganguly mentioned this in a statement to Khaleej Times (Dubai): 'Emphasis is being laid on integrating peace and value education as well as adolescence education programs into the curriculum from six grade upwards to expose students at an early age to various social, cultural and religious issues facing the world.'[5]

Education for peace became more relevant in imparting holistic education when the word 'peace' came to be looked upon as an 'umbrella

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[1]   National Curriculum Framework 2005, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005, 61.

[2]   UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education: *Learning to Be: A Holistic and Integrated Approach to Values Education for Human Development* – A UNESCO-APNIEVE Sourcebook for Teachers, Students and Tertiary Level Instructors, UNESCO, Bangkok, 2002, 173.

[3]   Felipe McGregor: *Culture of Peace*, Peru, 1986.

[4]   UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, ibid, 163.

[5]   CBSE Blogspot, http://www.cbseschools.blogspot.in/, [accessed January 7, 2014].

term[6] (Galtung) to collectively refer to all the positive values such as *love, non-violence, compassion*, *truth*, *justice*, *equality*, *tolerance*, *patience*, *good conduct*, *harmony*, *humility*, *togetherness*, *self-control* and more.[7] As a result, ethics, values and attitudes, as the building blocks of the culture of peace, came to be imparted as the basic foundations of ethics, values and morality.[8]

INTEGRATING MIND, BODY AND HEART (IMBH)

Delhi University has probably taken the boldest step in this regard by introducing a compulsory (non-credit) course titled 'Integrating Mind, Body and Heart' (IMBH) as part of the Four-Year Under-Graduate Program (FYUP), which is a brainchild of Professor Dinesh Singh, Vice Chancellor of the University. In an interview on Doordarshan, when asked why he had introduced the program, Professor Singh replied that he considers it the primary duty of a university to give direction to society and to channelize the energies of youth for productive and creative purposes through education.… It is in fulfilling this responsibility of Delhi University that this platform has been created.[9] He defines education as a quest to understand one's *antardhvani* (inner self), so that a person is able to understand who he is and what he wants to do in life. He feels that if students are able to do this they will choose their subjects based on an understanding of their own potential and capabilities and enter society to become its productive and contributing members.

The IMBH course requires students to become aware of certain defining moments from the life of Mahatma Gandhi to imbibe principles of non-

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[6] Johan Galtung: *Theories of Peace – A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 1967, 6.

[7] A. S. Balasooriya: *Learning Ways to Peace: A Teacher's Guide to Peace Education,* UNESCO, New Delhi, 2001, 1.

[8] UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, *op.* cit., 38.

[9] "A Journey of Thoughts with Prof. Dinesh Singh," Doordarshan, [uploaded May 22, 2013], http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKb0lsJejOg, [accessed January 5, 2014]

violence and ground them holistically. The practice-oriented program was introduced in the academic session of 2013 in various colleges of Delhi University to kindle a value oriented and holistic process in the minds of students to lead them to better realize and appreciate the fact that there should be harmony between what one thinks, what one feels and what one creates or presents externally.[10]

RAMANUJAN COLLEGE AND THE 'ANTARGYAN' FEST 2013

As in other colleges the IMBH course was introduced in Ramanujan College, Kalkaji under the guidance of its Principal, Dr. S. P. Aggarwal. To inspire students and teachers to take maximum advantage of the newly introduced foundation courses, especially the 'Integrating Mind, Body and Heart'; *The 'Antargyan' Fest2013* was organized during the mid-semester break under the chairmanship of Dr. Aggarwal, directorship of Mr. T. K. Mishra, Director of *Centre of Ethics and Values* and in collaboration with Gandhi Smriti & Darshan Samiti and Baha'i House of Worship.[11] The fest aimed to create a positive impact of activity learning on the minds and hearts of participants for four days from 7th to 10th October, 2013.[12]

Be the Change

I have been associated with Ramanujan College and The Centre for Ethics and Values since March 2013 to share with its students the findings of my research as regards ethics and values based on peace. I had the pleasure of taking part in the fest and see its impact directly. As an ex-student of Delhi University, I was surprised to see so many opportunities available to students which were not available during our time. The sessions at Gandhi

[10] Four Year Undergraduate Program, "Integrating Mind, Body and Heart", [June 7, 2013], http://fyup.du.ac.in/IMBH.html, [accessed January 7, 2014].

[11] "Ramanujan College organizes fest during mid-sem break," [October 7, 2013], **http://dubeat.com/2013/10/ramanujan-college-organises-fest-mid-sem-break/**, [accessed January 7, 2014].

[12] *The 'Antargyan' Fest 2013*, Centre for Ethics and Values, Ramanujan College, Delhi, 2013, 2.

Smriti and Darshan Samiti, Rajghat were particularly pertinent in helping students understand the principles of peace and non-violence. One teaching of Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world", is exemplary. This, essentially, teaches that we should change ourselves instead of asking others to change themselves. We have to stop blaming others for our vows and take responsibility for our life. This important law of nature teaches us that in a world in which all are free we cannot control others. We can only control ourselves. The choice before us is to either adjust with others or live in complaint and negativity. While the former, in taking us on the path of peace, leads us towards success and progress; the latter, in placing us on a confrontational path with others, only leads us to frustration and failure.

I noticed that the interactive sessions of the fest were focusing on individuals as the target of change in an endeavour to inculcate ethics, values and knowledge of applying them in daily life. Within four days, I witnessed the beginning of a process of positive change in certain students. On the first day many had been quiet and subdued; whereas on the last day, more students spoke freely and were able to share their views effectively on ethics and values and their application in daily life.

If individuals are made to understand the importance of changing themselves, a marked behavioural change can occur in them. Such a transformation in individuals at the level of the mind will be reflected in their behaviour and action. And once individuals change at the level of the mind they become an instrument of broader change in society. As per my study, if we want to change society on positive lines we have to motivate and educate individuals to transform from the culture of violence to the culture of peace. Holistic education should, thus, be grounded in peace education.

Change Your Mindsets to Succeed

The organizers were kind enough to give me an opportunity to share the findings of my doctoral research on '*how to establish peace in the world*' that I am pursuing from Hamdard University, New Delhi. In my

presentation on '*Change Your Mindsets towards Peace, Non-Violence'*, I explained that each of us is born with unlimited potential and certain unique capabilities; if we recognize and match the two then we can succeed. That is, if we are able to recognize our inner capabilities and select our goals in life based on these capabilities, success is bound to come our way, it being only a matter of time. This, however, requires that we change our mindsets towards the culture of peace and lead a life based on principles of peace and reconciliation, some of which are as follows:

1. Principle of Giving: One important principle that I shared with them was the *principle of giving*, exemplified by the dictum, "in giving we receive". The principle teaches us that when we strive towards our goals, we should become *givers* instead of being mere *takers*. It is only in giving that we receive from others; while remaining mere takers makes us become unwanted members of society. And we can become giving members of society by following the *principle of reciprocity*.

2. The Principle of Reciprocity: The principle of reciprocity is based on the *golden rule of ethics* which is given in the Bible in these words, 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you' (Luke 6: 31) and in the Hindu texts as, 'One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma.' (Brihaspati, Mahabharata: Anusasana Parva, Section CXII, Verse 8). This principle teaches us to treat others as we want others to treat us. We all know what attitude we want or do not want from others. We should simply follow the same in our dealings with others. If we want positive speech and behaviour from others, we have to also speak and behave positively with them. If we do not want others to stand in our way, we have to like wise ensure that we do not stand in the way of others.

3. The Principle of Non-Confrontation: The *principle of non-confrontation* is another principle that tells us how to strive towards our goals successfully. This is given in the Quran with respect to planets in these words, 'each floats in its own orbit.' (36:40). Just as planets have continued to move in the universe for millions of years without colliding with other

planetary bodies; if we want to strive towards our positive goals uninterruptedly, we have to confine our activities to our own sphere, without interfering or confronting with the spheres of others. How can we do this? When we strive towards our goals in society, we should carve out a path for ourselves without confronting with the path of others. We will, thus, continue to strive towards our goals to climb the ladder of success.

4. Principle of Conversion: In spite of our best efforts to not confront others; situations do occur in which others cross our path. This leads to negative experiences. At such times instead of getting provoked, angry, hating others and seeking revenge; we have to rise above the negativity and give a positive response. This is called the *principle of conversion*, a cow being an excellent example of this principle. A cow ingests grass and through a process converts it into wholesome milk. In a similar way man should also be able to rise above negative experiences and give positive responses in return. An illustrative example of this can be seen in the following incident. A young man once took offense at something an elderly person had said and kicked him in the chest. The elderly man responded saying, 'I hope your gentle foot was not hurt by my hard stony chest.' The elderly man, in knowing the principle of conversion, was able to normalize a potentially explosive situation. Similarly all of us can manage the negative situations of our life by following such unilateral ethics.

BENEFITS OF FOLLOWING UNILATERAL ETHICS

The benefits of following unilateral ethics are many. Here I would like to share two of them: *one*, they help us to develop intellectually and *two*, they help us to succeed in life. How does this occur? It is a fact that the human personality (the mind) has unlimited potential. But our potential lies in the dormant state until the challenges of life activate them. And it is difference of opinions, criticism and provocative situations that present challenges for us. Thus, differences and problems of life are not negative; they have a positive role. Problems and differences, when considered as negative, evoke a negative reaction; but when looked upon positively, as challenges, elicit a positive response that helps us to advance our intellectual development. Arnold Toynbee in his book, *A Study of*

History has attributed all developments of history to this *challenge-response mechanism*.[13] How does this occur? When we are able to look upon problematic situations positively as challenges we are able to successfully indulge in dialogue and discussion, which starts aprocess of brainstorming that helps us to develop intellectually and spiritually.

The second major benefit of maintaining unilateral ethics in our dealings with others is that it helps us to strive towards our goals towards success. But this requires that we set realistic goals and strive towards them with patience and determination. In the face of provocation we can either react negatively or respond in a positive manner. If we become negative or get provoked, it will only cloud our judgment and our mind will not be able to think about the task at hand, but will busy itself with how to get back at the person. The result will be failure to deal with the task at hand. If on the other hand we remain patient in the face of provocation we are able to keep our minds free to plan on how to deal with the task so that we are able to better strategize and execute our goals. As a result maintaining unilateral ethics ensures that we continue to climb the ladder of success.

DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS

During the course of my further interaction with the college and the IMBH staff, I realized that the IMBH course, by providing interactive activities to gain insight into the humane aspect of life provides students an effective platform to apply such principles in their lives. It further gives them the time and opportunity to plan their life in such a way that they can concentrate both on their subjects and their application besides learning to manage societal relations positively. In this manner they learn to succeed and become contributing members of a duty-conscious society based on WE-WE ethics rather than WE-THEY ethics. The concept of WE-THEY ethics means that we demand our rights from others while giving them little or nothing in return. This proves to be ineffective and results in protests, demands and chaos in society.

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[13]   Toynbee, Arnold: A Study of History, Vol. 1 Oxford University Press, 1987, 70-76.

The concept of WE-WE ethics, essentially means that one is ready to give others' their rights as a duty, being content with what one gets from others, not demanding more and more. This is a subject of a discipline called deontology. Derived from the Greek word *deon,* meaning duty, deontological ethics are described as morality of an action based on 'duty' or 'obligation'. The most famous deontological ethicists was Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), whose ethics can be summarized as 'do only the action that you would wish to see made a universal rule to govern the lives of everyone around you all the time,'[14] the central ethic being 'limit your own freedom, do not coerce the freedom of others.' As a result the formula of one who follows WE-THEY ethics is, 'I have to win at any cost'; while the formula of one who follows WE-WE ethics is 'I can win by helping others.' Following deontological, WE-WE ethics is, thus, the only way to ensure that one does not stand in the way of the success of others' while continuing to climb the ladder of his/her own success.

TOWARDS A CULTURE OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

The *Center for Ethics and Values*of Ramanujan College had planned to measure the success of the festand its impact through conducting surveys and psychological tests with students of the Psychology Department.The organizers allowed me to test my research findings that have been developed in the form of a personality development program entitled, *Towards a Culture of Peace and Reconciliation*. The program postulates that social evils do not erupt all of a sudden; rather they germinate and grow over a period of time.One way of checking themis by training individuals to transform themselves towards a culture of peace and reconciliation. The program is planned as a *pre-test questionnaire*; an intervention in the form of a *personality development program* and a *post-test questionnaire* along with a *response form*.

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[14] Kant, Immanuel: http://trivialcontemplations.wordpress.com/2011/01/13/ethics-why-deontology-teleology-and-existentialism-are-illogical-apart-from-god/, [accessed January 7, 2014].

The program was launched in the college in December 2013 when nearly 800 first-year students of Ramanujan College took part in this program by taking the *pre-test questionnaire* that comprised of 25 questions to test their *pre-test peace quotient* prior to the intervention. The "peace quotient" is defined as a state of peace in the mind of an individual based on the findings of the research. Having found the *pre-test peace quotient* of the participants, a personality development program, ***Towards a Culture of Peace and Reconciliation*** will be given to those who volunteered to take part in it. The program has been developed with a threefold aim: *one*, to help individuals develop positive personalities; *two*, to help them form positive relations with others in society and *three*, to transform society on positive lines by focusing on the individual. The program aims to achieve these by helping individuals learn the importance of peace and train them to apply principles of peace and reconciliation in daily life. The intended result of this exercise is that people inculcate unilateral ethics so that they can become duty-conscious members of society and become masters of life's situations rather than victims of circumstances. The personality development program comprises of *twenty* ***Peace and Reconciliation Modules*** listed below.

1. Positive Personalities Succeed
2. From Ore to Steel
3. Peace and Reconciliation – The Way
4. Realism, Not Idealism – The Method
5. Freedom of Choice for Test, Not As a Right
6. Realistic Achievable; Ideal Unachievable
7. Freedom, Peace and Opportunities
8. Peace-First, Not Condition-First
9. A Culture of Peace and Reconciliation
10. Change Your Mindsets, Change the World
11. Unilateral Peace, Then Opportunities
12. Art of Conversion, *Tazkia*
13. Strive Through Non-Confrontation
14. Accept Flowers Amidst Thorns
15. Art of Difference Management

16. Journey of Life: Water in a Flowing River
17. Challenges Lead to Development
18. Duty-First, Not Rights-First
19. Manage Yourself; Manage Life
20. Become a Master of Situation

The personality development program will be given to the students of the college in January 2014 followed by a ***post-test questionnaire*** to ascertain their *post-test peace quotient* and the impact of the intervention and a ***response form***. As the program will only be completed after the publication of this article, its findings will be shared with the readers in the second part of this Case Study in the next issue of the journal. I would, however, like to share one aspect of my interaction with the students so far that gives insight into the positive results of the efforts of Ramanujan College and the Centre for Ethics and Values. In the pre-test questionnaire there is a column in which participants are asked if they would like to take part in the personality development program. Normally, when we give this questionnaire we usually obtain a 25-30% affirmative response. From Ramanujan College we received a positive response from nearly 90% of the participants. This clearly shows that the college has been able to create an enthusiasm in students to strive for positive change and goes to the credit of the administration, teachers and staff of the college.

IN CONCLUSION

Franklin D Roosevelt (1882-1945) had said, 'We cannot always build the future of our youth, but we can build our youth for the future'. Ramanujan College and Centre for Ethics and Values has made a beginning to build their youth for the future. This is definitely a step in the right direction in imparting holistic education. Its impact will be ascertained as the program progresses in the college. I look forward to sharing the findings with the readers of the journal in the next issue.

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ETHICAL WORK IN THE VILLAGE OF HOPE
– CHANGING LIFE CONDITIONS FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Kristina Bartley and Per-Olof Thång*

Costa Rica has, despite its democracy and welfare state, major problems with poverty, disintegration, and violence. NGOs are trying to find solutions to these problems. One organization is The Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation (CRHF) operating on a local level in a slum district outside the capital San José. This article examines what characterizes the CRHF as a voluntary organization and how trust is built through ethic work. CRHF is a social justice movement combining service provision and political advocacy, working with politicizations and democratization of everyday life for children and women. CRHF creates collective identity and actions on voluntary basis and has a horizontal structure and a leader with a strong emotional and ethical attachment. Internal and external trust creates by closeness and distance, honesty and transparency, unselfishness and altruism with elements of sacrifice. Strategies to handle poverty, social exclusion, violence, and criminality are to work closely with children and women on local level with short-termed goals on a long-termed everyday basis to create empowerment and social accountability.

Keywords: Children, Costa Rica**,** slum district, voluntary organization, ethic work

Introduction

When I founded the Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation in 1997, I chose the name simply because it seemed to fit with the circumstance I was in. /…./ As I look back now on the inner wisdom that led me to this choice of

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words, I am perplexed as to how I ever was able to create – from the very beginning – something that was to become so meaningful for so many people, and in such a relatively short time. (Nystrom, June 10, 2013).

In this article it is discussed how a voluntary organization operates in a slum area in Costa Rica. Heuser (2005) claims that voluntary organizations have an important role in how social norms and codes of ethics are expressed in efforts to change life conditions for people in vulnerable situations. He argues that:

As such, they have a significant impact on societal levels of social cohesion. Although social capital involves generalized trust becoming manifest as spontaneous sociability, social cohesion is determined by how that sociability is translated into autonomous action for the common good (Heuser, 2005, p.16).

In this article it is analyzed how The Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation (CRHF) works with vulnerable children in La Carpio, a slum area in San José and is based on the following issues: what characterizes the CRHF as a voluntary organization? How can trust and confidence for the organization's work be achieved through ethic work? Which are the main difficulties and what strategies are used to create empowerment and social accountability? Svensson (2006) argues that legitimacy is closely related to concepts such as trust, confidence, and social capital, and according to Putnam (1996) social capital involves trust, social norms, and networks. However, trust is a multidimensional concept, which can include both personal and organizational trust, and internal and external trust (Oudhuis, 2014). Correspondingly, Svensson (2006) argues that trust can be regarded as a relation between actors or a social or political system. Trust can be seen as a rational strategy, which individuals develop in order to deal with other actors. According to Svensson (2006), it symbolizes cognitive, normative, or emotional expectations of one's own and others' behavior and the consequences of the relations.

Within the research on social movements, there has been an interest in the

study of the prerequisites for organizing and mobilizing social movements when striving for social justice and change. What is often focused on is the lack of influence and participation of marginalized groups with their demand for recognition and economic resources (Hugemark and Roman, 2006; Wettergren and Jamison, 2006).

There are different ways of defining non-profit, or voluntary, organizations. According to Markström and Karlsson (2013, p. 920) modern non-profit organizations are multidimensional, they combine political advocacy with social provision and can be called "social movement service organizations". According to Boussard, most social movements in Latin America have emerged as a grass root reaction to structural problems. One common trait is that they have developed as a reaction to crises that have affected the continent, e.g. economic crises that have led to social exclusion, marginalization, and violence (Boussard, 2006). Furthermore, Boussard claims that we can only understand the social movements of Latin America if we use a wider definition of the term, which is similar to how we understand them in a western European context. Boussard defines social movements as informal networks based on a common basic view and solidarity between the members. The networks are mobilized around conflicts through different forms of protests (Boussard, 2006). However, Touraine (2002) claims that societal movements defend a social way of using moral values and ethic codes contradictory to those its social opponents defend and try to implement (Touraine, 2002) Moreover, Touraine points out that the moral and ethical discourse of social movements concern freedom, life projects, and respect for fundamental rights, and those participating in such a movement want collective actions to prevent what cannot be tolerated.

Research on social movements reveals different perspectives that represent different scientific paradigms. One of them is the identity paradigm (Thörn, 1997; Wettergren and Jamison, 2006), within which social movements are considered organized collective actions based on a collective identity. The actors of the movement experience solidarity toward each other since they share certain fundamental worldviews and values. They are also in conflict

with the established system and thus express protests as a means to strive for social change. Wettergren and Jamison (2006) argue that social movements can be empirically investigated in terms of expressions and created networks as to promote their thoughts and collective identities.

Within the identity paradigm, there is a clear connection between social movements and social change. Much emphasis is put on the term 'collective identity', which is regarded as a continuous social construction. Individuals who act collectively construct their actions, and when producing their collective actions they define themselves, their environment, other actors, available resources, possibilities, and obstacles (Melucci, 1991; dellaPorta and Diani, 2006). The collective identity is a creativity process that contains some aspects: Cognitive definitions of aims, networks of active relations that define the different organization forms, leadership models with communication channels and technology, and emotional investments that enables the participants of the movement to feel included in the community (Wettergren and Jamison, 2006).

On the basis of the identity paradigm, Castells (1998) claims that social movements must be understood in their own terms and conditions, or as he puts it, "what they say that they are" (Castells, 1998, p. 84; Wettergren and Jamison, 2006). In a review on social movements, Castells assumes Touraine's typology that defines a social movement from three principles: the identity of the movement, its opponents, and its social aims. Thus, Castells defines identity, as the movements' own definition of what it is as well as the practices that constitute its own definition. Its opponents would be the movement's most important enemies and its social aims the vision of the movement.

The structure of this article is as follows. The next section is a brief presentation of the situation in Costa Rica, followed by a description of the slum area of La Carpio. Thereafter, the method and the methodological issues are discussed. Finally, empirical analysis is presented, followed by a concluding section.

Costa Rica

Often described as a socially developed welfare state, Costa Rica is distinguished from the rest of Central America (Bartley, 2008; Boussard, 2003, 2006). Boussard (2003, 2006) describes how social movements in Latin America have emerged in the wake of authoritarian regimes, yet claims that Costa Rica is an exception from this since theirs have emerged within a democratic system. A stable democracy since the military abolishment in 1948, Costa Rica has pursued active political actions to promote peace and human rights. With a welfare system founded in the 1890s in connection to the establishment of the public school system, it has also come to include national healthcare, health and accident insurances, free university education, and pension schemes (Bartley, 2008). However, studies from the perspective of children's rights show significant problems within the country – one of them is immigrant children's right to education and healthcare (Bartley, 2008).

Since the late 1970s, there has been a decline in the Costa Rican economy due to critical periods caused by large external debts, increasing inflation, and political crises in the region. During the 1980s and 90s, the country was forced to strict and often unpopular austerity policies, such as repeated structural adaptation schemes making it difficult to maintain the welfare system. There are also visible signs of social disintegration, increasing criminality and inequality as well as impaired infrastructure. Furthermore, during the last few years the country has been struck by several corruption scandals involving former presidents (Bartley, 2008). One of the major Costa Rican problems is poverty. Approximately 22 percent of all households live in poverty (Schneider, 2008). However, the poverty level is somewhat lower in Costa Rica than in the rest of Central America, where it is estimated to be as high as 50 percent (Boussard, 2003).

In Costa Rica, education has had a large impact on social mobility. Within the public school system, nine years of compulsory school is free of charge. On the other hand, there are problems with regional differences in terms of access to education as well as student dropouts. Thus, children in

marginalized areas and of indigenous origins are those most vulnerable in terms of poverty and dropout rates (Bartley, 2008).

Approximately eight per cent of the Costa Rican populations are immigrants, which is a relatively large proportion of the population. There is a long tradition of receiving immigrants, and those granted asylum have, to a large extent, the same rights as Costa Rican citizens in terms of access to the social security system, education and healthcare. A large number come from the neighboring country Nicaragua. Also, a relatively large proportion is illegal immigrants but since Costa Rica lacks resources for deportation, rejected immigrants often remain in the country illegally (Bartley, 2008).

La Carpio, the Village of Hope

La Carpio, commonly known as the Village of Hope, is situated between the asphalt factory and the city dump. It is a slum district in San José and is described as one of the poorest and most dangerous districts of the city. Approximately 40 000 people live in an area of 296 square kilometers, a space intended for 7 000 people. Half of the population is from Nicaragua (Janerud, 2008), many of them lack legal immigrant documents and are therefore excluded from the social welfare system. Over half of the populations in La Carpio live below the poverty line compared with 22 percent of the national population (Schneider, 2008). The 2000 census registered 2 942 homes in La Carpio and 1 287 of the houses were in bad condition. According to the housing hierarchy, the closer to the river you live, the poorer the family. Many sheds are built of corrugated plates and masonite, several have bare dirt floors, and some are only partially covered by a roof (McDonald, 2010). Others are of better standards, and built of cement. Nuclear families live in the somewhat better houses, but a large proportion of the inhabitants of La Carpio are single mothers. Hundreds of garbage trucks drive the main street every single day. Since the year 2000, 700 tons of garbage is disposed of on a daily basis in La Carpio, and several houses are situated just a few hundred meters from the city dump.

La Carpio is an unregulated residential area, built without permission from the authorities. The geographical area La Carpio was originally owned by

the Costa Rica medical system and was used as a recreational center for its members, but about twenty years ago, a small number of Nicaraguan immigrants arrived to the area. They placed a few sheds of plastic and plates there, but since then the expansion has been immense, due to the Nicaraguan civil war, catastrophes, and poverty (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008; Goodwin, 2008; Janerud, 2008; Habib-Josefsson, 2007).

During the last few years, several voluntary organizations work with improving the situation for the inhabitants of La Carpio (Janerud, 2008). One of these is the CRHF, which runs national projects focused on education, developing communities, primary and preventative care, support service for women, teenagers at risk and the indigenous people. The organization CRHF is based on children's rights and are thus to a large extent concerned with improving conditions for children, where a stable family environment, hygiene, food, clean water, education, healthcare, and right to housing are fundamental.

Children's rights to education are important for the organization, and education takes place on three educational levels: for children, teenagers, and adults. The adult education in La Carpio is mostly for women and the volunteers that are set to execute different projects, but it is also open for the slum district's children and teenagers in the education activities founded by the organization.

Gail Nystrom founded CRHF in 1997 and has led the work since. She is a teacher with a master's degree in Special Education and Early Childhood Education. She arrived in Costa Rica from the US through the American organization, 'Peace Corps Volunteer' in 1977. Today, there are day care centers, education centers and a children's clinic in La Carpio, all founded by the organization. The work of CRHF is carried out by a diverse group of volunteers. Over the years, thousands of volunteers have been working on various projects. Human voluntary donations and volunteers' fees are intended to cover the costs of the organization (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Method

Different types of qualitative method has been used in this article; interviews, observations, and textual analysis. The empirical material consists of an interview with the founder of the movement, Gail Nystrom. The 3 hours interview was conducted in a hotel in central Costa Rica, in November 2008. The interview was in the form of a thematic open interview, which means that the researcher is constantly trying to develop the conversation with the respondent. Meanwhile, there is a structure in that the researcher has identified a number of themes (Aspers, 2007, p. 137). The interview focused on questions regarding the organization's work with children, prioritized areas within this work, and possibilities and obstacles for the organization's continuous work. The interview was recorded on tape at the same time notes were made. Additional interview material is a 30 minutes radio interview that was made on Radio Wisdom in Costa Rica in 2012, where Gail Nystrom talks about her life. Radio Wisdom is a weekly pod/broadcast about pioneers, reformers and visionaries who have made a contribution in areas such as social justice (http://wisdom-radio.com).

The empirical material also consists of observations. Kristina Bartley visited La Carpio with Gail Nystrom during a day in November 2008. The purpose of the observations in La Carpio was to get insight in the area, the everyday life for the children and their parents, and to study how the organization's various activities were organized. During the day we also had the possibility to speak to some of the inhabitants; both adults and children, about the activities for children that the organization has created. We also visited the daycare center, the education center, and the health clinic for children as well as a house built by the organization for a single mother and her five children. Throughout this visit, continuous field notes were written. The aim of these field notes was to try to capture as many aspects of the situation in La Carpio as possible in order to create what Aspers (2007, p.107) calls a "thick description" of the field and the activities that took place in it. However, this field notes should be seen as own reflections of what was witnessed and experienced during this day, not an objective description of what really occurred (see Nielsen, M.L et al.,

2013).Photographs were also taken during this day, which later became a complement in the analysis of the field notes.

The article is also based on qualitative text analysis. Different documents have been used, as written documents from the organization's web page on the Internet, e.g. policy documents and activity reports and statements written by Gail Nystrom. Moreover, a number of articles describing La Carpio and the work of Gail Nystrom, and some articles written by volunteers or other visitors to the area are used. These documents are relevant for this article. When assessing the value of an information source, one should ask whether it contains information or knowledge relevant to the current issue, and if the information is available in a practical and systematic way (Merriam, 2004). The documents used in this article meet these requirements. The documents have closeness to the reality in La Carpio and the organizations work (see Merriam, 2004). A repeated reading of the documents, in several stages, has been made. First the documents were read through, in order to create an overview, getting hold of the context of the discussion and to categorize the content. Then thorough detailed readings, aimed at interpreting how the documents relate to the specific questions of this article, were done several times. Quotes and excerpts are used to increase the transparency of the analysis (Esaiasson et al., 2004).

Results
What characterize CRHF as a voluntary organization?

CRHF can be classified as a social movement service organization with two main goals: service provision and political advocacy (see Markström and Karlsson, 2013). As a social service organization the CRHF works with child and family welfare such as access to health care, preschools, education centers, financial assistance, food, clothing, medicine, and housing. Through education, support groups, credit counseling, job training programs and vocational rehabilitation, and sheltered workshops, it works with political advocacy in order to strengthen women and children's rights. Markström and Karlsson (2013) argue that it is difficult to classify organizations as either service organizations or organizations working with

political advocacy; often they are hybrid organizations where "…the goals of value change, service commission and mutual aid are combined to various degrees". (Markström and Karlsson 2013, p. 920), and accordingly CRHF can be classified as a hybrid.

By using Castells (1998) term "the identity of the organization" CRHF labels itself as a non-governmental, non-profitable organization, the purpose of which is to develop creative and economical solutions to a number of social problems in Costa Rica (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008; http://www.crhf.org. December 22, 2008). Independent from the state it produces an alternative to state services (cf. DeHoogHoogland and Racanska, 2003). The CRHF works toward development-related issues in order to improve the quality of life for the most exposed groups in Costa Rica, both by educating the inhabitants of the area and the volunteers that arrive there to work. Hence, education is one of the organization's core interests. The lack of children's education is regarded as one of the major problems. Or as one sociologist operating in the public school in La Carpio puts it:

Here in La Carpio, we're the last stand … we're in the basement … its educational terrorism. The people with the most instructional need are the least prepared people. Unfortunately, we're reproducing the cycle of poverty (Stanley, 2006, p. 3).

It is a democratic movement since it contains activities that contribute to a widening of the social democracy (cf. Thörn, 1999). As their work is based on participation and influence, this could be classified as 'help to self-help'. Thus, it is the locals that have an influence over the specification of the problems:

All needs that the CRHF addresses are defined by the local populations, thus ensuring a high level of commitment to each of our programs. (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008)

Hence, the organization defends democratic rights and procedures. Simultaneously, their activities could be viewed as a protest against

authority negligence of important issues in terms of human rights. Thus, the organization can be viewed as a protest to economic, political and social conditions (cf. Boussard, 2006).

"From us to you organization" – self-help in progress

Hugemark and Roman distinguish between so-called 'me for you' and 'we for us' organizations (2006, p. 227). 'Me for you' organizations are charity organizations and 'we for us' organizations are run by people within the group's own help sphere. Moreover, there is a distinction between philanthropic social work and self-organized self-help. Philanthropic social work is more or less self-help in progress, run and started by others but engaging those in need. In organized self-help, the very people that have the problems are the same as those who plan and develop the activities (Meuwisse and Sunesson, 1998).

Based on this terminology, the CRHF can also be regarded as a hybrid, depending on the activities and the developmental phases. In a sense, we can call it *from us to you*-organization while it is self-help in progress. One example is the building of the day care center and education center, which initially was a 'me for you' philanthropic social work project. They were run by international volunteers but are now completely run by local women, but the organization continues to support the women. The CRHF has paid for small business enterprises or offered the women help with job applications. In some cases, they have been given food baskets, bus tickets, clothes, shoes, counseling, childcare, or help in finding housing (Nystrom, 2005, 2006). Gail has educated a total of 20 women in running the day care center and the education center. These women are also learning English. Gail Nystrom (2006) writes:

After working to train seven women the previous year, we are able to open our day care center in May and worked with children from the community whose parents work and need a safe, healthy place to leave their children. We dreamed big with this day care center and the women worked very hard to keep up to the standards of excellence that we set. The Las Brisas is

designed to be a small business enterprise for the women so that they earn a good portion of the funds needed through parent support. The foundation provides the food, and covers stipends for the staff that the weekly 10 USD the parents pay cannot cover. (Nystrom, 2006, p. 2)

In this way the day care center and the education center emphasizes the concept "from us to you" with self-help in progress, which is achieved by using the available resources. These centers do not only give the women social service and work; they also get more power to change their lives, and in this way CRHF combines social provision with political advocacy.

Still, the ultimate goal seems to be that the inhabitants should take over and run the centers by themselves, i.e. that the centers should be developed into organized self-help organizations. Gail emphasizes the importance of social accountability. In an interview in Tico Times, Gail says she has faith in her projects, they are "sustainable in spirit, sustainable in infrastructure, sustainable in the service they give to people", and she believes that the people she has helped will develop the projects and keep things going. She continues "It's happening now, and I think that between five and 10 years from now, the CRHF won't be here anymore. I mean they either got it or they didn't get it." (Norman, June 13, 2012).

The children´s clinic however is a typical "me for you" organization. Volunteers built the clinic in 2004. In the beginning, 40 patients were received on a daily basis but at the time I was visiting the clinic the number was down to 25, much likely the results of an increased health standard. The most common health problems in the area according to Gail are due to insecure family environment and extreme poverty, e.g. physical and psychological abuse, malnourishment, drug abuse, and alcoholism. One doctor and one psychologist work there, but also medical students and other university students do their practical training here. Gail holds this as very important since it increases the understanding and empathy for those living in La Carpio (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Collective identity is constructed through moral values, social norms and ethic codes

Moreover, the CRHF can be defined as a grassroots organization, as the running projects are created by the inhabitants, i.e. the grassroots, and not by the authorities. As a grassroots organization, CRHF can demand responsibility from its members, for example the volunteers coming to Costa Rica (cf. Boussard, 2006). dellaPorta and Diani mean that, "the grassroots model combines strong participatory orientations with low levels of formal structuration. The existence of organizations of this kind depends on their members' willingness to participate in their activities." (dellaPorta and Diani, 2006, p. 149). This is evident in the work of the organization, which is based on collective identity, ethic codes and actions on a voluntary basis (Melucci, 1991, dellaPorta and Diani, 2006). The work of the CRHF is conducted by a group of volunteers from all over the world, among others Europe, Canada and the US. The importance of volunteers is described as follows:

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation. Because of their effort, input, and shared resources, we are able to work toward our mission of creating a better quality of life for individuals in need. (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008)

The work of the volunteers is built on participation and influence. In fact, the volunteers also design projects, which start within the CRHF with support from the organization, also involving the inhabitants. At the time I was there one project had to do with building bunk beds:

We are going to make 1200 bunk beds because of what I told about children sleeping on the floor, there is rats on the floor, and it's dark fear, and it's, you know, dirty floors, so we are getting them up of the floor. The people in La Carpio are going to produce the beds. We have a group of what I call the drunks in the corner, the alcoholic; they are going to do the producing of the bunk beds (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Residents for a low price may then buy these beds. In this way the project is

transformed into a small business for the men producing them. However, the organization and the volunteers finance the materials. The volunteers will also prepare bags with bedtime stuff for the kids with toothbrush, toothpaste, mirror, brush, and a book, "so they are going to sleep with a book" (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008). The volunteers contribute with money, they have to pay to come and work for the organization, and the organization makes demands on them: "The CRHF requires a high level of commitment, dedication, and personal responsibility from every volunteer." (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008). Moreover, it is pointed out that the volunteers ought to have a positive, friendly attitude and be convinced about their possibilities in helping others to promote positive life changes:

They must be sincere in their desire to serve and sensitive to the life situations of others, especially to the fact that there are thousands of Costa Ricans who cannot afford to put food on their tables. (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008)

In this way, we can see how the organization's moral and ethical discourse becomes clear. The collective identity is constructed through moral values, social norms and ethic codes based on fundamental human rights that enables and controls the volunteers' actions (Touraine, 2002; Heuser, 2005). According to Melucci (1991) this can be seen as continuous social construction, in which individuals who act collectively define themselves and their environment.

All active members of CRHF work as volunteers, including Gail whose work also is unpaid. In this way, the organization could also be defined as non-hierarchic (Ahrne and Papakostas, 2006). However, the networks created by the organization to promote thoughts and collective identities take place through Gail and the volunteers. Thus, the daily work and recruitment of volunteers are not only about mobilizing people but also resources. In terms of the volunteers, it is a mobilization of their money, time, as well as work capacity, which, according to dellaPorta and Diani, requires different mobilization techniques (dellaPorta and Diani, 2006).

Horizontal structure and a leader with a strong emotional attachment

The democratic orientation of social movements is often faced with the dilemma of matching leaderships with grass root democracy. One way of avoiding this issue is to employ a horizontal structure, which does not necessarily exclude the need of leader functions (dellaPorta and Diani, 2006). The CRHF has a horizontal structure and a leader with a strong emotional attachment to the organization, explained on their web page as follows:"Gail has dedicated herself to supporting at-risk populations as they search for ways to improve the quality of their lives." (http://www.crhf.org. January 29, 2009). In an interview with Gail Nystrom in a radio program from 2012 the reporter also says that with over 33 years of service, she has become the "Mother Theresa of Central America" (http://wisdomradio.com. February 25, 2012).

One difficulty for grassroots organizations is their dependency on members' voluntary contributions. dellaPorta and Diani (2006) denotes that their options for continuous work is limited, yet notable is the fact that the CRHF work in La Carpio has lasted many years. What is more, the activities of the CRHF could be regarded as a step toward a strengthened self-image of those helped by the organization, which in extent may contribute to new knowledge, social change and sustainable social and democratic development:

Through the friendship and support of our volunteer network, the people in the communities that we serve learn to believe in themselves as they search for lasting solutions to their daily problems. (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008)

Thörn (1999) points to the fact that new social movements involve strategies for a politicization and democratization of everyday life, which takes place from 'below' and starts with the members' individual and collective experiences of everyday life. Moreover, Thörn claims that the new approach to identity creation as a political issue in the new social movements is not to be viewed merely as a strengthening of self-images but a way of life. These two aspects are seen in the CRHF work and their key

values, which are denoted on their web page: innovation, integrity, cooperation, and cost reduction. Innovation concerns the development of creative and unique solutions to real social problems, identified by the inhabitants of the area. Integrity is important to ensure the credibility of the organization's work and is described as happening through openness, honesty, trust, and responsibility. Especially emphasized is mutual respect. Cooperation is underlined as important in order to realize the organization's visions, not only for those within the slum districts but for individuals, groups, and organizations all over the world. Finally, cost reduction is about working toward economic solution to reduce administrative costs and maximize the productivity of the volunteers (http://www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008).

How to create trust and confidence through ethic values

Hugemark and Roman (2006, p. 231-232) claim that traditional democracy theory is challenged by what they call the 'politics of presence'. The concept refers to certain politics where those sharing its situation and experiences best see to the interests of an organization, which is apparent in the work of the CRHF. When Gail came to La Carpio she thought at first she should only work with donations. However, in an article in Tico Times she says,

You cannot go in with a whole bunch of millions and build a school and just walk out. That's what I was going to do. I said, I'm going to build eight daycare centers, one in each section, and then I'll give the women a three-week training session. What was I thinking? (Norman, June 13, 2012)

The above quotation shows that she realized that she had to work closely with the residents on a long-term basis to build trust and confidence for her organization and for herself; it was not enough to work at the organization level (see Svensson, 2006; Oudhuis, 2014). In this way she exerts the politics of presence, to assume Hugemark and Roman (2006), and for her it has become a way of life. Based on the analyses of the interviews with Gail, observation data and documents it is possible to distinguish three different strategies that Gail uses to create trust and confidence in her work with the people in La Carpio.

Closeness and distance

In her effort to build trust and confidence Gail talks about closeness and distance. She and the volunteers visit the slum district every day and work closely with the children and the adults, even though they do not share their situation completely since they live outside the area. In the beginning she was living in La Carpio together with the refugees but she was so traumatized by their life situations and stories that she had to distance herself to get energy to be able help them (G. Nystrom, 2012, February 25. Radio Wisdom). Nevertheless Gail underlines the importance of presence in order to gain their confidence. In this way she and the volunteers create personal and internal trust (see Oudhuis, 2014). The people in La Carpio all know her since several years. When Bartleyvisited La Carpio November 2008, she noted that people in La Carpio had confidence in Gail. We were driving around through the slum district. Several of those we were passing waved at her, and some children began to run after the car. We drove with the windows open and Gail stopped the car now and then, went out and started talking to those she met. Soon a circle of people was surrounding her. She explained later that one of the women needed help, she was without food and the organization would help her.

Honesty and transparency

Further important aspects in creating trust and confidence are to be honest with those she helps and that everything she organizes should be transparent. "My behavior must be impeccable", she argues. "I must be very open about everything I do and about how much money I have". Therefore, she is documenting everything she does, and that gives her confidence. She says that you can come to me anytime and ask about a project and I can instantly tell you what we have done (G. Nystrom, 2012, February 25. Radio Wisdom). This is also visible in the descriptions on how to support the organization's work through donations, as it is stressed that all donations go directly to those in needs. The word 'directly' is written in capital letters (http:/.www.crhf.org. December 20, 2008).

Through transparency she wants to create external and organizational trust towards the donors (cf. Oudhuis, 2014). In the interview she stresses that

one problematic thing is the financing part of the projects and she depends on donations (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Unselfishness, altruism, and elements of sacrifice

She also creates trust and confidence by unselfishness and an altruistic attitude, which include elements of sacrifice. If you want to create social change, you must also sacrifice, emphasizes Gail in the interview. "You have to pay yourself. I also live close to the financial edge. I have done it, I live it", she continues (G. Nystrom, 2012, February 25. Radio Wisdom). She also expresses solidarity through the fact that her work is unpaid and for Gail this is a matter of ethics. As she puts it, "How can I get paid when I am working with people who don't have food on their tables, it's not fair". She adds that those she helps know this (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008). Here we can see how she expresses the moral discourse and the ethical codes of the organization and her respect for residents' fundamental rights (see Touraine, 2002). In this way she builds both internal and personal trust by showing that her life is economically limited. The purpose of the 'politics of presence' is to demand social belonging and to break the spells of exclusion and marginalization for social change. According to Hugemark and Roman (2006), the 'politics of presence' has communicative democracy as one of its ideals, which we can see is most apparent in the CRHF.

Difficulties to cope with

Poverty, social exclusion, violence and criminality, corruption and the media's image of La Carpio in combination with the Costa Rican government and authoritarian passivity are according to Gail regarded as the problems of the organization. Paradoxically enough, these factors are the very prerequisites for the organization's existence and work.

To handle this problem in everyday work, Gail means that the solution when working with children is to strive toward short-termed goals and take small steps each day. She compares herself with the industrious leaf-cutting ant that cuts off small pieces of leaves and carries them away:

I think that what we are doing is small circles of influence. I'm like the leaf-cutting ant. We just keep working. And that is what you have to do. And you have to work every day, and every day you have to make some kind of progress, small things every day that adds up, and not big things that never happen. (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

The societal aims of the organization are to work with social exclusion and violence on a day-to-day basis. According to Giddens (2007), social exclusion concerns individuals' different ways of being excluded from total participation in the surrounding society. Underlining the fact that social exclusion is a wider definition than poverty, Giddens refers to four dimensions of social exclusion: poverty, exclusion from the labour market, exclusion from social services, and social relations. All four dimensions are to be seen in La Carpio. The fact that La Carpio is not included in the city map of San José can be viewed as a confirmation of social exclusion. The activities in CRHF involve the prevention of social exclusion in many ways. One of the most important aspects in terms of children's rights according to Gail is to make children visible. Powerless people are invisible, says Gail. She explains as follows:

What I do for them is that I make them visible. Because I talk to them, because I hold them, because I hug them and I create programs for them. So actually one of the greatest needs is to become visible to the world and to feel that you are somebody.

(G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Violence can be described in La Carpio as three-dimensional: structural, cultural and direct violence (Schneider, 2008). Structural violence lies inherent in the inequality of power and options for different groups in the societal structure. This is evident in the description of the area, since most people live in poverty and lack power and influence. A large number of them are single mothers with a highly insecure everyday structure that is further problematized by the adjacency to the city dump, which pollutes air, water and cultivations. The CRHF activities to strengthen rights to education,

influence and participation can be viewed in the light of their attempts to reduce structural violence.

Through the negative expressions and images of La Carpio presented in the media cultural violence is expressed. The CRHF works actively in this field, for example through the project 'Photo voice', where the children were to explore their reality when photographing everyday situations. The photographs have been exhibited, which Gail believes enable the children to communicate with people outside their area. In extent, this helps them to formulate their needs and become visible, which might contribute to cultural understanding and reduced social exclusion. What is more, when the children become aware of their situation they are also able to change it. Similar projects have been run for local women (Wilkinson, 2008).

Direct violence is often found in families in the district and thus constitutes a great proportion of children's everyday life. This is highlighted in the education center. At the time of our visit, the students worked on the theme love/fear to illustrate their daily situation in La Carpio where violence and threats are common. Another example are the support groups at the health clinic for children where a doctor started a program related to direct violence discussing issues such as domestic violence, abuse of the mother and/or child, and other hard circumstances for mother and children. The local women perform a large proportion of the organization's work. When interviewing Gail, she emphasized the importance of working through the women in order to improve the situation of their children (G. Nystrom, personal communication, November 25, 2008).

Discussion

In this article, we have drawn interest to a voluntary organization operating in Costa Rica in a slum district outside the capital San José. The CRHF is an interesting example of a social movement service organization that combines service provision with political advocacy in a Latin American context (cf. Markström and Karlsson, 2013). The organization has emerged as a reaction to social, political and economic injustices (cf. Boussard, 2006). The identity of the movement can be described in terms of social

justice movement and a grass root organization working with politicization and democratization of everyday life. The organization's work is focused on attempts to reduce the reproduction of social injustice, poverty and social exclusion. This is to be achieved through education, healthcare, and support for the people in the slum district. The CRHF aims to create possibilities for social change and increased understanding of people's life conditions, which is to promote solidarity and mutual respect between peoples and cultures. This is inherent in the activities described in this article and the collective identity is shaped by these ethic values and collective actions.

All in all, the CRHF work is based on an empowerment perspective focused on marginalized groups' ways from dependency to independence and social accountability (cf. Sjöberg, 2002). Their view on democracy is a participation democratic approach (cf. dellaPorta and Diani, 2006). The organization promotes an approach based on grass root autonomy for children and women to gain a certain amount of power to influence their own lives. Thus, within this approach the children and women are viewed as subjects rather than objects, which could be regarded as an example of a democratization process of the civil society. The children's individualpotential is emphasized, and this is a standard, which also derives from the Convention of the Rights of the Child where the child's agency is highlighted (cf. Bartley, 1998).

The description of the organization´s work in fact actualizes the issue of democracy and social capital, i.e. trust, social norms, ethic values, and networking (Putnam, 1996; Svensson, 2006), which was stressed several times during the interview with Gail. According to Putnam, unity emerges in voluntary organizations as strong social norms and mutuality that enables cooperation, i.e. the basis for democracy. It also has a strong attachment to the common and ethic values that the participants gain from the cooperation (Putnam, 1996).

The importance of trust and cooperation is also apparent in the description of the organization's work, the volunteers' execution of the projects and in the definition of the term integrity, which is described in terms of closeness

and distance, honesty and transparency to build trust and confidence, which also include responsibility and elements of sacrifice. In this way the organization tries to achieve internal and external trust (Oudhuis, 2014). However, Gail mentions that one difficulty in her work is distrust, which makes trust-gaining work central. This is one reason why she finds it is important to visit La Carpio every single day. According to Putnam, social capital is the result of the mutual trust of the individuals in a group or society. This in turn is dependent on the number of social relations and contacts between them as well as the intensity of trust in their relations. The CRHF invests in social capital through their work in the day care center, the children's clinic and the education center, not only for the children and for the women but also for the volunteers and Gail. This could be regarded as a reinforcement of the solidarity of the immediate society, and according to Putnam, those with social capital tend to accumulate even more. As a result, more complicated problems can be solved and due to social networks trust is now transferable, which may spread further (Putnam, 1996). Close networks of social exchange, i.e. generalized reciprocity, are a possibility to reinforce social trust through norms and ethic values. In this aspect, the organization's networks play an important role in transferring these norms and values. The activities are structured as intensive horizontal contacts where everybody is on the same level, which is an important aspect of creating social capital (cf. Putnam, 1996). At the same time, the organization's dependency on Gail as a driving force can be a threat. What will happen when Gail no longer is active? How can the CRHF prepare itself for that day? Ultimately, this could be an issue for the Costa Rican government to solve.

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CAN GENES BE IMPROVED TO CHECK MORAL DEGENERATION?

T. K. Mishra*

Moral degeneration has occupied a central focus of modern social thinkers and reformers. It has emerged as major functional crisis for society. Social thinkers and philanthropists are trying to discover the solution, despite having limitations of its scientific study. While some are of the view that degeneration of the morality is rooted into the deficient system of governance; some blame the people relating the phenomenon to individual's dysfunctional genes or criminal instincts. In this very system we can find many people leading glorious life, having impeccable record. A typical problem identified in the article is modernity-afflicted society's negation of institution of marriage. While figuring out human morality, a question on the process of child procreation has been raised. Effort has also been made here to indicate some of the ways through which human genes can be improved to check moral degeneration. There is good news that the genes can be improved if proper parenting, especially motherly care is ensured and good habits is inculcated in the child by method of holistic education.

Key words: Epigenetics, DNA, **Transformation,** Stochastic

Introduction

In the present article it is argued that moral degeneration in society is more gene-related than systemic. The older generation blames the new ones for moral degeneration and vice-versa. The blame-game goes on without fixing the responsibility. It is held that moral degeneration is rooted into the gene of the individual rather than into the circumstances or the system.

As love is God, no other means than love can sprout values of love in the child. Procreation of child devoid of blissful love of both parent, is not

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superior to animal-breeding of human beings. If society wants the genes of love and morality incarnated in the child, it needs to realize the significance of marriage as institution. Perhaps, Buddha, Gandhi, etc. could not have their own child equally potent/virtuous/genius as these people attained blissful wisdom much after the birth of their own child. When the implantation in the womb is with spiritual love, the offspring is blessed with genes of the Supreme like i.e. the power of God (Generator, Operator and Destroyer). Any circumstance or problem whatsoever in life will not deter such human beings.

Family members need to refocus on the institution of marriage, if future generations are to benefit. Marriage is not a system or matter of belief, but an institution that creates moral obligation and commitment by spouses to look after each other, share their mutual concern and plan their life's goals together. Rather than a choice or mere fashion, marriage is a necessity for a harmonious and natural living in society. Any one opposed to such an institution of nature raises conditions for a non-committal, animal-like sex and live-in relationships. And this finally culminates into loss of morality in the society.

A central message from the epic Mahabharata is relevant here. It states, 'no matter how mightier or wiser one is, if one's birth is not natural; the unholy destruction is imminent'. Whether it was Pandavas or Kauravas, they met undue destruction as they were born in a somewhat unnatural mode. One can find umpteen cases where misadventure or unnatural act of human procreation has resulted into in a curse for the society. If you trace the genesis of frustrated, restless youth of today often changing their jobs, etc.; you may find that most of them do not subscribe to the institution of marriage. They can often be seen running after quick-money, anticipating windfall gain. They are averse of coping with the reality of life or going through a complete lifecycle.

Can you improve your genes?

Dr. Deepak Chopra posted on the LinkedIn* that geneticists are increasingly appreciating the fact that the output of genes varies

considerably, not just from year to year but from minute to minute. The genetic read-out of two identical twins is quite similar at birth, but looks very different by age they reach seventy. This understanding, which is still in its infancy, is part of a growing field known as epigenetics that explains how gene activity changes according to one's lifestyle and environment. Your genetic code is active and highly responsive to such things as environment, emotions, personal and social relationships, diet, level of exercise, biochemistry, neurochemistry, etc. Since our brain chemistry is directly affected by our thoughts, our feelings, our stress levels, our everyday experiences and how we react to them, etc.; all these can theoretically affect your gene activity. This new view allows us to see that positive lifestyle changes - meditation, stress reduction, good sleep, a balanced diet, moderate exercise- have a beneficial effect right down to our genetic level. Even taking up positive activity and alteration of lifestyle even for a short period of time can change the activity of 500 genes, according to the findings of Dr. Dean Ornish, the champion of lifestyle as the key in reversing heart disease. A corollary to this is that some behavioural changes can be passed on to the next generation, through so-called "soft" inheritance. This has been shown in mice and lower organisms, including water fleas. However, future studies will need to tackle the extent to which this happens in humans. Even though the genes a child receives from its parents are largely fixed, events that change the parents' epigenome (either positively or negatively) can potentially be passed on without altering the DNA sequence of the genome. This changes the interaction of the DNA with its surrounding protein sheath and its effects on gene activity.

A key experiment with mice showed that a mouse that was from a good or bad mother was likely to become a good or bad mother in turn and pass the behaviour along to the next generation. More recently, mice that were conditioned to fear a certain aroma passed on this fear to their offspring via epigenetics. Similar findings about events that affected our ancestors are coming in human studies. For example, children born to parents in conditions of famine were more prone to obesity. Could this have been due to epigenetics? These are some interesting observation that future

epigenetic studies will need to address. The upshot is that we can resolve to be good to our genes, with the hope that any positive change in our gene-activity will possibly benefit our children. Research studies indicate that meditation specifically alters genetic activity almost immediately, which counters the belief that it takes years of spiritual practice to create meaningful change. In particular, meditation increases the levels of a protein called telomerase, which has been linked to the slowing down of the aging process in cells. The fact that a simple behavioural change acts quickly and deeply is positive news for those who promote the mind-body connection. Science has moved from a sceptical stance about mind and body to validation at the deepest physiological level.

*Ref: Deepak Chopra, 'the Best New Year's Resolution: Be Good To Your Genes', LinkedIn January 05, 2014;

Can you help transform your biology?

To date, one of biology's greatest achievements, the mapping of the human genome, is only emerging in medical advances. A different aspect of our genome which radically revises a model that is decades old, dating back as far as the original discovery of DNA, posted Deepak Chopra through LinkedIn*. In the original model, the effects of our genes were considered to be fixed and unchanging, controlling every aspect of our physical makeup, behaviour, and susceptibility to disease. Not just eye colour, height, and other physical characteristics were predetermined by inherited genes, but perhaps all kinds of behaviours, from criminality to belief in God was effected by it. The new model, however, portrays a more fluid, dynamic genome that responds quickly, even instantly, to all that we experience, including how we think, feel, speak, and act. Every day brings new evidence that the mind-body connection reaches right down to the activities of our genes. How does this activity change in response to our life experiences is referred to as "epigenetics". Regardless of the nature of the genes we inherit from our parents, dynamic change at this level allows us almost unlimited influence on our fate.

Theories of evolution and genetics have long taught that genetic mutation is entirely random. However, genetics has been gradually stepping into a new era of "self-directed biological transformation": **Self-directed** = Voluntary activity in your thoughts, feelings, habits, and desires. This is the realm of personal choice. **Biological** = Effects at every level of the mind-body system, including reactions by your genetic material. **Transformation** = Major shifts in cellular activity leading to physiological changes.

This means that control is being given back to each person; we are no longer seen as puppets of our DNA. The human genome is set to be the stage for future evolution that we ourselves direct, making choice an integral part of genetics. This is in stark contrast to the "biology as destiny" view where genes override choice. Yoga and meditation, for example, can trigger almost immediate responses in genetic activity. Exercise, a balanced diet, good sleep, and stress reduction - all well-known for improving bodily function - exert beneficial effects via our genes. So the next frontier will be to discover how deep and lasting such changes are, how much control we have over them individually, and how they can be passed on to future generations through so-called "soft inheritance," in which the parents' life experiences and behaviour directly influence the genome of their offspring (transmitted via the epigenome, which controls how the activities of our genes are turned up and down).Genes don't simply switch on and off but work on a sliding scale, more like a rheostat. In addition, genes communicate fluidly, so that the old view, where a single gene determined a single characteristic, like eye colour, must be revised. Our mind and emotions directly affect our gene activity, and since the mind is the source of a person's lifestyle and behaviour; it directs one's biological transformations. Self-awareness holds the key to this process of self-transformation. Consciousness is invisibly reaching into the biochemistry of every moment of life. In your body, as in every cell, regulation is holistic, self-generated, self-organizing, and self-directed in concert with consciousness. Darwin didn't know about epigenetics and "soft inheritance". Otherwise, he may have written a very difference treatise, in which evolution wouldn't solely result from random gene mutations.

*Ref; Deepak Chopra, *This post was co-authored by Rudolph E. Tanzi, Ph.D.* 'Big Idea 2014: You Will Transform Your Own Biology', LinkedIn, December 10, 2013

How vital is motherhood truth for improvement of genes:

Self-directed evolution is the emerging paradigm. Evolution resulting from gene mutation, the emerging paradigm suggests possibility of not only genetic engineering but also genetic transformation and improvement. The genes of an ordinary child can be improved to contain morally responsible character, if motherhood truths and principles are realized. Today parents are not educating a child, especially girl-child to create a happy, united or cohesive family for them. They do not realize the dangers of not inculcating values and motherhood norms in the child, more so to the girl child. In Indian culture a child can marginally bear with a father who is irate, drunkard or characterless, but cannot digest temperamentally a mother of such kind. To lot of women, men are genetically privileged class or blissfully superior breed. This perception creates a retaliatory psyche in their mind. And such a psyche can be overcome only by one's self-realization inside, not by any intervention from outside. Self-realization can add into them 'genes' of self-worth, self-esteem or self-respect. Ignorance about self-worth not only develops possessiveness, insecurity and mutual jealousy in them; but also develops inferiority complex. And in the retrograde, succumbing to the powerful genes, they easily get enslaved and conquered. Not realizing the power of love or bliss, they keep struggling to regain the exalted status and harmony. Developing respect for the self, you become self-disciplined, self-governed and will never behave lowly. Through self-realization you get aware of the bliss and you are not dependent for independence on any outside force. And this is how when you're 'in'+'dependent' in life, you get true freedom. If you are not guilty of theft or crime, chances are the least that you are punished. Although a realized soul is not exempt from the hardships or atrocities of the world; but is equipped enough to cope with them, treating such experiences as temporary. The bliss of motherhood ever accorded incessant dominance in India. As highly adorable; motherly nature has been realized to have genes

of vast capacity to love, birth, grow, rise and rule, as well as to make the other compliant. "If you can love enough you can be the most powerful in the world" (Emmet Fox). Not just limited to womanhood or femininity; sensitization of such principles can uphold cultural decency, human dignity and self-discipline, be it for any individual, corporate or community.

The Bhagavad-Gita assigned the mother the most exalted status in the family life: 'greater than ten teachers is the preceptor: greater than ten preceptors is the father: and greater than ten fathers is the mother'. There is no guru greater than the mother. Nothing equals the power of the selfless love of a traditional mother, who is always willing to lay down her life for her children. Even if her children hurt her with words and deeds, she is ready to forget and forgive. A mother could get no better gift than hearing others praise her children. She will experience greater joy upon hearing others speak highly of her children, than when she gave birth to them. This depicts traits of our ancient culture and joint-family system, which is an enigma to the west. Swami Vivekananda, despite his status as a monk, said to elite American women (Jan 1900): '…the ideal woman in India is the *mother*, the mother first and the mother last…the whole force of womanhood is concentrated in motherhood. In the western home, the wife rules… In the Indian home, the mother rules…That is the ideal of India.' The acme of feminine human values is embodied in motherhood – holiness, purity, chastity, prayer, unselfishness, sacrifice, forgiveness and the like. He enunciated distinctive concepts of living that were in large measure aimed at inculcating and promoting the spirit of tolerance and the value of ethical responsibility, and thereby concretizing of ideals of decent and just society. Mahatma Gandhi once said, '…..Woman is the incarnation of ahimsa. Ahimsa means infinite capacity for suffering.' Ahimsa came from realizing the common source of all life in God. He emphasized the point that our marital lives became more meaningful only when spiritualized. Mother could be exalted to the status of gods and there was no greater refuge than the mother in times of trouble. That was why we refer to our own country as the motherland, and our own language as the mother tongue.

Even our gods have shown us the greatness of mothers, by according a high

status to their respective Consorts. Goddess of knowledge *Saraswat i*is always portrayed as seated beside her consort Brahma. *Parvati* constitutes one half of Lord Shiva's body, which has earned for Him *Ardhanari*. Lord *Narayana* holds His consort Goddess *Laxami* in His chest. Forgiveness, ability to sacrifice, and deriving satisfaction from the sacrifice can be dominantly noticed in our traditional mother. Our caring mothers used to create a sense of mutual reliance amongst our family members. No matter how economically independent one becomes; one always falls back upon the mother, for love and empathy. ANI posted on yahoo (9-1-2014), 'Mother's touch critical for preemies'. Scientists have claimed that the benefits that premature infants gain from skin-to-skin contact with their mothers is measurable even 10 years after birth. In a new study, Dr. Ruth Feldman, a Professor at Bar-Ilan University, and her team studied the impact of different levels of physical contact on prematurely born infants. Specifically, the researchers compared standard incubator care to a novel intervention called "Kangaroo Care" (KC), which uses the mother's body heat to keep their babies warm.

Can the holistic education method improve genes?

Educational institutions should seek innovative visions, embrace social missions, and provide holistic education to nurture genes that can inculcate willingness to learn, positive attitude, sense of responsibility, love, respect, and a zest for life. Holistic education is a worldview that appreciates the flowing interrelatedness of all life and embraces diversity, both natural and cultural. It embodies pedagogical revolution that contributes to the sense of self-worth, oneness of all humanity and liberates individuals from the authoritarian system of behavioral management. "We must remember that intelligence is not enough, intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education" (Martin Luther King Jr.). "To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society" (Theodore Roosevelt). Who would deny that kindness, courage, will-power and honesty are important? "Holistic Education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values

such as compassion and peace" (R. Miller).It is, however, imperative to keep in mind that Holistic Education is not a specifiable model or ideology, but an attitude of openness to the living presence of our students and to the complex and dynamic world around us. It is an educational and cultural movement that creates institutions that encourage young people to be ethical, responsible and caring. It is a commitment to nurture the genes of the 'whole child'. The philosophy of 'holism' is more concerned with drawing forth the latent capacities and sensitivities of the soul than with infusing passive young minds full of predigested information. It encourages experiential learning and includes individual's 'meta needs'. Putting forward examples of role models, teaching good moral character and emphasis on human, spiritual and universal values forms the integral part of such education. Love for humanity – is the core virtue from which emanate all other virtues such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, respect, compassion, etc. Holistic Education not only cultivates minds, it also nurtures hearts and genes. Its goal is to develop a value system in students that enlightens and sustains them socially, ethically and academically in society. It is essentially a democratic education, concerned with both individual freedom and social responsibility. It is education for a culture of peace, for sustainability and ecological literacy, and for the development of humanity's inherent morality and spirituality.

"The potential of Holistic Education is to develop capacity to reason critically and compassionately, incorporating and transcending dualistic and suppressed forms of consciousness to achieve a more fully developed mode of awareness" (K.Kesson). Holistic Education is needed to simplify modern education, counter the loss of traditional wisdom and reassess our vision, mission and performance. Breakdown of families and human relationships, increase in drug abuse, free sex and violence, corruption and human rights violations in the present day society is no more a hidden fact. There is a growing need for concerted efforts towards character building by all stakeholders of government and civil society. Holistic Education is not a new idea. It is, in fact, as old as education itself. Throughout history, in countries all over the world, education has had two great goals: to help

young people become enlightened and to help them become good. Good character is not formed automatically; it is developed over time through a sustained culture of teaching, learning and practice. A textual or content-specific boxed approach to excellence in education prevents innovation and the integration of new learning with life situations outside our colleges. The absence of traditional wisdom and the lack of critical thought to apply and test in the local context make the purpose of education less relevant to the society. When an institution decides to comprehensively use Holistic Education, a positive moral culture is created in the total environment. Such environment supports the values taught in the classroom. Colleges must involve parents and the community as partners and emphasize on concerns beyond the classroom using opportunities for community service. Teachers must act as models and responsible mentors, treating students with love and respect, setting a good example, supporting good behavior and checking hurtful actions. They can create a moral community, helping students respect and care about each other and feel valued within the group. They can create a democratic classroom environment, where students are involved in decision-making. Using their academic subjects as vehicles for examining and testing ethical values, they can use cooperative learning to teach children to work together, and they help develop their students' academic responsibility and regard for the value of learning and work. Moral character should reflect in their reading, writing, discussion, debate and decision-making exercises. Committed to Holistic Education, institutions should clearly outline the core values and take a public stand to protect them. Upholding values by making the entire community responsible for consistent standards of conduct, they can become the foundation for all that the institution does—curriculum, teaching methodologies, academic culture, extracurricular activities, etc. Holistic Education is to help a person realize his basic life goals i.e. to become a person of good character; to build healthy relationships, to make positive contribution to the society and become responsible citizens. Social, ethical and emotional development of the youth is catalytic to the improvement of their genetic character or the genes. After all, we know that workers, citizens, parents and neighbors -all need to have good character.

Can deeper role of parent and teacher improve genes?

Along with technology, participation of community and the role of government; answer to the problem of moral degeneration lies in humanizing the society with a multi-pronged approach and in having a deeper role of parents and teachers. Bereft of human values, education today is shrinking into an act of vocation for jobs. If we do not find a way to have visionary and value-based education system to oversee the government functioning and judicial system; we are hard headed towards cataclysmic police state. If we are to tackle this problem effectively, there is no getting away from having responsible parenting and ethical teaching committed to upholding the culture of integrity and values in the country. Public reaction and the subsequent movement have to translate into restoration of parent-teacher reciprocity, righteous parenting and quality education. As teacher's role does not end with academics alone; parent's role does not end with child's admission to institution alone. They should be the first respondents of sexual violence and moral bankruptcy, and should form the back-bone of multi-pronged approach, including of intelligence and investigation.

Erosion in the values content in teaching, proliferation of the internet, breakdown of joint-families is toting up cultural breakdown. Women today are entering public spaces in large numbers. They today aspire to a better and higher education and indeed outnumber and outperform men. Marriage, and children and the kitchen aspirations have been taken over by dream of a career and place in society outside the home. Unlike earlier generations, no longer they are cowed down by society, not afraid to the live-in-relationships, no hesitation to speak their minds, and not ready to accept that they are inferior to men and must tolerate whatever is imposed on them. Family consisted of two prime responsibilities, household and field job. Earlier house job was the domain of the mother and outside job of the father. Wife, as mother, was answerable to her husband only. Now, working women has to answer to bosses in her office also. She, unlike earlier times, can compare her husband with the boss in respect of competency and status. Peace at home is disturbed with lack of mutual

respect and understanding between the two. And the immediate casualty is grooming of the child, especially in a nuclear family.

One needs to understand that unless the culture of parenting and quality of teaching is overhauled, moral degeneration cannot be checked; and the prevention, detection and investigation of crimes against women would continue to be poor. For example, an Indian parent rushing back to India retorted that he would never like to spend the night in jail for objecting to his partying son at home. Seen from all angles – the security of the common man, safety of women, neglect of elderly parents, juvenile delinquency, survival of democracy, maintaining the trajectory of economic progress and dealing with corruption confronting the country – we have to have a reformed mind-set of parents, restructured education system and revitalized teaching community. The future of morality is linked to the fates of parent-teacher activism. Practical way to humanizing the society is to make education motivational and holistic. As a long-term solution, we need to teach value and peace education both at institutions and in the family. The emphasis should be on inculcating ethics to create a duty-conscious society. A rights-based society gives rise of a culture of social anarchy. A duty-based society leads to harmony, solidarity and compassion. A rights-based society is based on the 'we-they' concept, in which we look at other members of society as they, not part of us. A duty-conscious society, on the other hand, is based on the 'we-we' concept in which all members of the society are an extension of us. Sense of right or wrong is no longer received as a legacy. They were not perfect but clarity certainly prevailed on what was deemed desirable and what was not. It clarified that money can buy the world but cannot wipe-off your past or guilt; it cannot cleanse your conscience. Ethics has lost its moorings with the "end justifies means" mentality.

Conclusion:

Greater success has been achieved in genetic improvement of plants and animals, which are more easily manipulated genetically and reproductively. The state of knowledge in human morality suffers from a limitation that it does not allow for the controlled genetic modification of even simple

phenotypes. In humans, for the complex traits such as intelligence, emotions or behaviour are concerned, the limitations are more pronounced. For example, the genome provides only a blueprint for formation of the brain. The complex and subtle details of assembly, emotional and intellectual development involve more than direct genetic control and are subject to inestimable stochastic and environmental influences. Despite limitations of having a scientific knowledge in human morality, empirically and logically one can discover that even though moral degeneration is gene-related, it can be checked by following genetic improvement action-plan; i.e. adopting righteous lifestyle, upholding motherhood truths and seeking Holistic Education.

IMPACT OF CULTURAL FEST ON HUMAN STRENGTHS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL SURVEY AT RAMANUJAN COLLEGE

Dr. Anuradha Palta*

This study was conducted to examine the impact on the mind of students of the 4-day cultural-cum-activity learning fest "Antargyaan", organized by the Centre of Ethics and Values, Ramanujan College. The sample size consisted of 184 students (120 boys and 64 girls). A questionnaire having 15 questions based on 6 categories of psychological strength was prepared. These categories were: wisdom-based knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Analysis of the respondents was done by calculating percentage in the various categories. Prior to the study, students of the college were exposed to the fest preparation for over one month. Fest was designed on the basis of the new curriculum of FYUP, Integrated Mind, Body & Heart and Foundational courses. The objective was to examine the impact of fest "Antargyaan" on the academic success and psychological strength of the students.

Modern day living was observed to be undergoing a cultural and value crisis. The crisis is surmounting due to the changes in lifestyles, food-habits, dresses, modes of entertainment and interpersonal relationships. Youth from economically well-off background were too much involved in glamour, fun and freedom and had almost rejected the traditional culture. On the contrary, youth from economically deprived background were often confused and undergoing stress.

Students were often impacted on account of a lack of balance between tradition and modernity. They were either too modernized to be aware of culture or they were too traditional to match up with the modern society.

When a youth is caught up in conflicting cultures, he is confused and is in constant conflict. He undergoes cultural identity crises, which results in

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psychological discomfort (Berry.et.al, 1987). Influence of any two cultures results in psychosocial and behavioural changes. This process is referred as acculturation (Redfield.et.al.1963).When there is an interaction between dominant and non-dominant culture, there are psychological and cultural changes, which result in conflict and tension and is called acculturative stress. There have been surveys stating that "50 crore Indian youth below the age of 25 are prone to mental disorder, developed due to erratic lifestyles, in conventional job times and very limited communication with their parents" (Nagpal). Such value crises can be taken care by imbibing cultural values and traditions, which are reflected in music, art, literature, value, enjoyment of beauty, aesthetic expressions, customs, spiritual practices, ethical conduct and all the dimensions of life values.

For youth, education can be a tool to maintain good culture and transmit cultural values from one generation to another through knowledge, training and skill-development. The main focus of today's educational system should be to develop value-conscious attitude of students. Education is not only imparting information or training of skills. It has to give a proper sense of values (Radhakrishanan, 1960). Learning to be a complete human being, the physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of individual into a complete man is a broad definition of these fundamental aims for education (UNESCO, 1972). Culture is the foundation, the primary thing…. It reflects in your smallest details of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress, inner culture is reflected in your speech, the way you treat your visitors and guests, how you behave towards one another, towards teachers and elders (Mahatma Gandhi).

College offers opportunities to students to explore and use their talents and capabilities. This is the only place where students can actualize and utilize the inner potential, creativity and strength to lead a good life. A good life is a process of becoming happy, contended, blissful, creative, enjoyable, and invariably free (Rogers, 1967). Cultural values can play significant role in understanding student behavior. The covert aspect of culture represents the psychological values or strength like attitude, optimism, knowledge,

wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperament and transcendence. The overt aspect of culture is external factors like personal and social code of conduct, which an individual exhibit through behaviour, thereby brining harmony between thoughts and actions.

Literature Review

There have been ongoing efforts to study culture from a positive psychological point of view. There had been emphasis on cultural sensitive research and their influence on psychology (APA, 2003). Culture can determine positive and negative personality characteristics and behaviours. Also helps in developing unique strengths (Sue & Sue, 2003).Culture is a Learning process which results in acceptable behaviour to be followed in a society (Linton, 1945).Culture is viewed as manmade part of human environment (Triandis, 1990). It is believed that all human strength is culturally embedded. Acculturation has a positive impact on self esteem and self image (Bery & Sabitier, 1996) and on hope, happiness and forgiveness (Sandase & Hill).In new cultural context individuals inability to cope with changes resulted in psycho-somatic and psychopathological problems like stress, depression, anxiety, negative self-evaluation, etc (Berry, 1970, Dona & Berry, 1994, Berry & Sam, 1996). Acculturation had also resulted in loss of self-confidence, apathy and personal control and learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975). The adolescents of poor educational background, disadvantaged and deprived after acculturation, experienced conflict, stress, anxiety and poor interpersonal relations (Kiselica, e.t.al, 1995, Chataway & Berry, 1989). There are many studies to tackle individual, who were culturally deficient because of deprived and disadvantaged backgrounds (Rath,et.al, 1982).

In the light of above, a need was felt to acknowledge cultural influence and measure its impact on the academic success and psychological strength of students. "Antargyaan" Cultural Fest, as cultural intervention, provided an opportunity for exploring attitudinal change and manifestation of human strength. College students were exposed to newly introduced curriculums 'Integrated, Mind, Body and Heart (IMBH)' and foundation Courses (FC) under FYUP, since July, 2013. "Antargyaan", organized by the Centre of

Ethics and Values, Ramanujan College, in collaboration with Baha'i House of Worship, Lotus Temple and Gandhi Smriti Sansthan from 7-10 Oct, 2013; was basically a cultural-cum-activity learning programme. The Fest organized culture-based learning activities at three different venues. One day at the Ramanujan College campus, another day at Satyagraha Mandap, Gandhi Darshan, and two days at Baha'i House of Worship. Activities such as Sahaja yoga and Vipassana meditation, yogic exercises or asanas, laughter sessions were organized to enhance students' spiritual values. On the first day at college, activities like exhibition of arts and crafts stalls from different states and various FC departmental stalls of games and quiz was organized. A Gandhi Smriti stall displaying handcrafts weaving and spinning wheel was also organized to give an exposure to art and culture. Students had to take part in competitions like painting, slogan writing on kites, poster making, skit, poetry recitation and cultural activities like dance, drama, music etc; during their visit and stay at Gandhi Darshan Satyagrah Mandap on the second day of the festival. The documentary films were screened at the Baha'i' House during the third day of the festival. Students participated in a quiz, a panel discussion and in interactive sessions organized by the Baha'i House on today's youth. There were also informative lectures by experts on Gandhian thoughts and today's lifestyles. Along with moon-light viewing of the Lotus temple, the fourth day ended with a musical evening with a Mumbai based international famy 'Sufi' singer.

The objective of "Antargyaan" Fest was to provide an opportunity for the students to develop insight into Indian art, cultural, language, music, economics, politics, history and science and the practical aspects of these subjects. Objective of the questionnaire for the survey was to study the psychological impact of cultural based activity learning on the students of Ramanujan College on six basic human strengths, such as 1) wisdom & knowledge 2) courage 3) humanity 4) justice 5) temperance 6) transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Sample: The study was carried out at Ramanujan College, University of Delhi. The sample comprised of 184 students (120 boys and 64 girls) covering the age-group of 17 to 19 years. Students, as given below,

belonged to different disciplines of first year FYUP:-

COURSES	No.s
B.Tech Psychology	35
B.Tech Comp.Sc.	7
Pol. Science (H)	9
Eco(H)	15
Bcom(P)	6
Hindi (H)	5
Eng. (H)	4
B.Com (H)	82
Maths (H)	8
Stats (H)	10
Hist (H) DBC	3
Total	**184**

Tools: A self-constructed questionnaire with general information was used. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions based on the following human strengths:

1.	Wisdom and knowledge - 4 questions	Creativity, Curiosity, Open minded, Love of learned
2.	Courage – 2 questions	Persistence (Perseverance) Integrity (honesty)
3.	Humanity – 3 questions	Love, Kindness Social intelligence
4.	Justice – 3 questions	Social responsibility, loyalty Fairness, Leadership
5.	Temperance – 2 questions	Forgiveness, Self-control
6.	Trancendence-2 questions	Appreciation of beauty and excellence, vitality & enthusiasm

Questionnaire:

Positive impact of *Antargyaan Fest* on the everyday lives of students

Name…... , Gender……., Class………., Year…... Section………. & Roll no…………………..:

Please answer the following in YES or NO:

1) Do you think of new and productive ways to do things?
2) Do you take interest in all of ongoing experience?
3) Do you like to master new skills/topics/knowledge?
4) Do you finish what you start (persisting in action)?
5) Do you speak truth and present yourself in a genuine way?
6) Do you help, love and care for others (including people who are not your acquaintances)?
7) Can you fit into different social situations and are aware of feeling of self and others?
8) Can you work well as a member of a group and be loyal to your group?
9) Do you treat all the people equally without any bias?
10) Can you manage a group of people and encourage them for doing various activities?
11) Are you able to control your feelings and emotions?
12) Can you forgive others' shortcomings and not be vengeful?
13) Are you able to appreciate everyday experiences (nature, art, mathematics, science etc.)?
14) Do you feel energized, activated, excited and alive mostly?
15) Are you positive and hopeful about future?

Procedure: - Students of IMBH and FC of FYVP were exposed for a period of one month to the preparation of cultural Fest "Antargyaan". On the four days of Fest they participated in various activities such as yoga, aerobics, meditations, exhibition based on art and Gandhian culture, quiz, competition for painting, poster making, poetry recitation, slogan writing,

drama, skit, dance, music, interactive sessions on Gandhian thoughts and youth of today; watched documentaries on contemporary human issues, cultural programmes and music. Fest was held at Ramanujan College Campus, Gandhi Darshan, Satyagrah Mandap, and Bahai House of Worship, Lotus Temple, New Delhi from 7th to 10th October 2013. Students were asked to fill-up the questionnaire online. An informal explanation was given to them by the experimenter about the questionnaire. Though limited number of students responded on the first day; on the third day, a good number of them filled-up the questionnaires.

Analysis & Results: Analysis of the response was mainly done by calculating the percentage in various categories.

Table-1 : Percentage of respondents in Demographic Categories:

S.No.	Items	Nos.	%*
1	Gender		
	MALE	120	65.21
	FEMALE	64	34.78
2	Course/Education		
	B TECH PSY 1ST YR	35	19.02
	B TECH COMP SC	7	3.80
	MATHS HONS	8	4.34
	HINDI HONS	5	2.71
	ECO HONS	15	8.15
	B COM HONS	82	44.56
	ENG HONS	4	2.17
	HINDI HONS	5	2.71
	B COM PASS 2ND YR	6	3.26
	STATS HONS	10	5.43
	HIST HONS DBC	3	1.63
	POL SC HONS	9	4.89

*Percentage of student present from different courses.

Courses

- B TECH PSY IST YR
- B TECH COMP SC
- MATHS HONS
- HINDI HONS
- ECO HONS
- B COM HONS

Gender

- Males
- Females
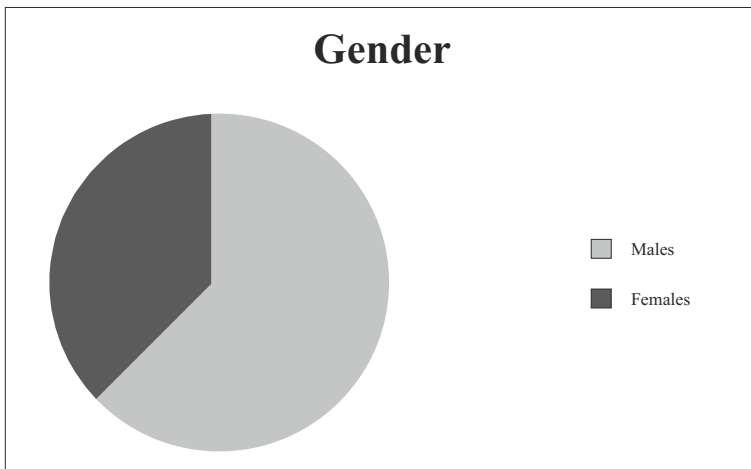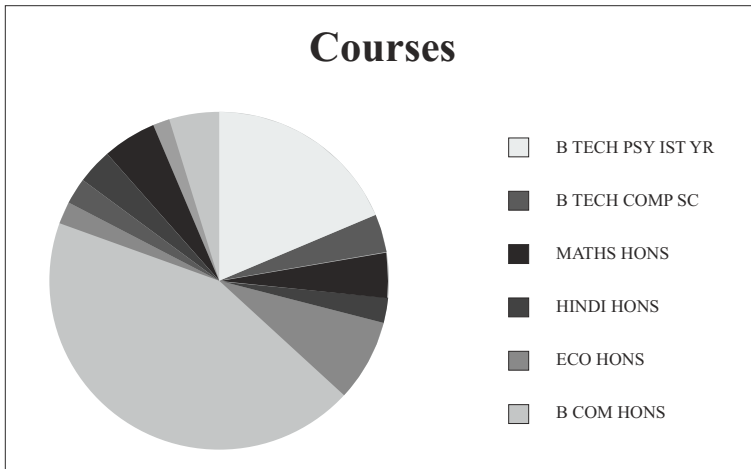
Table – 2: Percentages of the respondent on human strength

Sl.No.	Items		N	%*
i.	Wisdom & Knowledge		173	94.03
	i) Creativity	Yes/no	11	5.97
	ii) Curiosity	Yes/No	162	88.04
			22	11.96
	iii) Love of learning	Yes/No	172	93.48
			12	6.52

ii.	Courage		167	90.76
	iv) Persistence	Yes/No	17	9.24
	v) Integrity/Honesty	Yes/No	143	77.71
			41	22.29
iii.	Humanity		148	80.43
	vi) Love	Yes/No	36	19.57
	vii) Kindness	Yes/No	160	86.96
			24	13.04
	viii) Social Intelligence	Yes/No	137	74.46
			47	25.54
	Justice		157	85.32
	ix) Social responsibility	Yes/No	27	14.68
	x) Fairness	Yes/No	155	84.24
			29	15.76
	xi) Leadership	Yes/No	157	85.32
			27	14.68
iv.	Temperance			
	xii) Forgiveness	Yes/No	115	62.5
			69	37
	xiii) Self-regulation	Yes/No	130	70.65
			54	29.35
v.	Transcendence		159	86.41
	xiv) Appreciating beauty	Yes/No	25	13.59
	xv) Vitality/Enthusiasm	Yes/No	139	75.54
			45	24.45

*Percentages of Response on 15 sub categories of human strengths
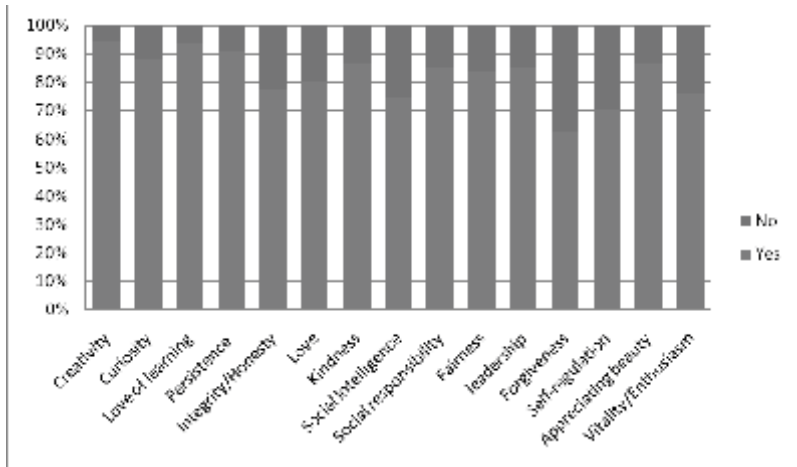
Discussion

It was evident from the trend of the response that generally positive attitude towards such a fest prevailed, which helped in improving on various human strengths. This reported survey includes majority of male respondents which is depicted in the pie chart. The maximum number of respondents was from the commerce and psychology department. In the sub-categories of human strength, creativity; the percentage responses was maximum. The students loved to think about new and creative ways of doing things. In future, we learnt that such surveys should be conducted uniformly and with developed questionnaires. A need was felt for undertaking more such educational and cultural studies in future.

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ENDING A VICIOUS CIRCLE

Rajdeep Pathak*

Every year, November 25, is observed as the *International Day for Elimination of Violence against Woman*. A proud citizen in the urban area often misses out on the necessity of showing any importance to the whole issue. This may not be accepted in the public sphere, but this is the general norm. In the meanwhile, life moves on.

As the world steps in with more guidelines on the safety of women, and activists and social thinkers gets together to vehemently criticize the authorities for their lackadaisical attitude shown towards protection of the dignity of women, far away in the north-eastern state of Assam, on the same day of November 25, 2013, newspapers from the state carried a number of cases of violence against woman. Some of those were horrific and inhuman in nature.

The newspapers reported: A young woman was brutally raped, when she was going to take her son back from school in Kalajan of Lakhimpur district and she succumbed to death at GNRC Hospital, Guwahati. Another Dulumoni Gogoi, a 22-year-old house wife was missing and her dead-body was found in the bank of river Disang. A house wife Jesmin of Digboi couldn't bear the inhuman violence and atrocities by her in laws for dowry and finally left her in laws along with two young children. Another newly married woman Gitika was murdered by her in laws and was thrown into a pond in Sarukhetri of Barpeta district.

In another case, Sujata, a mother of three children was brutally killed by her drunken husband in Jagiroad of Morigaon district of Assam.

Akita Parbin, another 21-year-old pregnant woman was brutally killed by her in laws in Dhaligaon area of Chirang district.

Can we even imagine the sheets of paper and the length of the list, if we add

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all such cases reported in all newspapers published alone from Assam on a day? And more horribly, how many of such cases have been going unreported from all over the country?

It is almost a year since the horrific incident of rape on Nirbhaya took place in the national capital, New Delhi. Beyond that period, when water cannons flashed in the streets and men – let me clarify – 'men' and definitely women took part to change a system that has long been trying to solve a problem – 'the safety of women', the situation remains the same.

Violence on women continues. No state in the country is free from cases of atrocities on women. And these are not petty cases. As one delves into the police records, one is left stunned to see the heinous and barbaric atrocities committed on women.

Where do we stand today?

This brings me to a very vital point. I wonder whether this incident of December 16, 2012, was the only one in the history of humankind, when a woman was brutally attacked and gang raped and someone dared to insult a nation so much so that the entire country awoke. Records from December 16 to January 19, 2013 – a short period – show over 79 cases of violence against women and they were extremely brutal.

I am not questioning the government or the civil society, alone. We have been in a repulsive state of mind, reluctant to realize – or even – question our moral *locus standi* on the question of safety of women. We as a nation, have been worshipping women in different forms, and exploiting them in greater numbers, in total sadism of the paternal mentality. I am equally shocked to see videos posted on the web of how a woman is brutally led to the mirror to witness the brutality that is being inflicted upon her. Cases of violence on women and the brutality of it, the degree to which the crime is committed, is rapidly increasing. New techniques and methods are being adopted. More so, the perpetrators, (after December 16), have realized that keeping the victim alive may be detrimental for them, and therefore, they (victim) are either killed, or severely wounded and left to die.

I am more so, ashamed at the distasteful and abhorring nature of policy makers on how they turn a blind eye to cases of violation of basic human rights and dignity. It takes years, sometimes decades for a case to reach its true and just conclusion.

We are a progressive nation, yet when it comes to giving an identity to our women, the community of which the society is built in, raises their eyebrows.

James Spigelman, (a former Australian judge. He served as Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales from 19 May 1998 until 31 May 2011) writes, "The cultural and social bases for violence against women have been a focus of public attention for at least four decades. Women's refuges were among the earliest manifestations of the feminist revival that commenced about that time, in the late 1960s." He adds: "According to the best figures available, derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Personal Safety Survey* in 2005, one in three women experience at least one incident of physical violence and about one in five women experience sexual violence during their lifetime. Some women are more at risk than others…"[15]

A nation where woman are hunted as witches, raped as commodities, torn as pieces of paper, can such a nation progress?

Where are we heading, as we're shortly stepping into another new dawn in 2014? Many incidents after December 16, 2012 have shaken the society. Leaders across the world have come out to raise their voice against the horrendous crime committed against women. Candle light vigils have generated mass awareness. And lawmakers have been more proactive in settling cases, and announcing stringent punishment to the violators of law. The Justice Verma Committee is a welcome step, but are the women still safe?

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[15]   Violence against women – by James Spigelman (From Griffith REVIEW Edition 29: Prosper or Perish © Copyright Griffith University & the author); http://griffithreview.com/edition-29-prosper-or-perish/violence-against-women.

From domestic violence, which is very common and is the largest, to other cases of more grave violations, violence against women continues to haunt society. It is therefore necessary to recognize women's sense of vulnerability – including, most significantly, vulnerability to domestic violence.

Domestic violence has been known to have serious consequences on the health and well-being of women. These consequences may be divided into physical and psychological categories. Statistics on murder in the United States (US) show that more than 50 per cent of all female victims of murder in a given year are actually murdered by their husbands or boyfriends. These crimes take place as part of domestic violence towards women. In addition to the possibility of death, many women tend to suffer permanent disabilities or injuries resulting from battery (Moris, p.13).[16]

Further, in countries such as the US and Europe, medical authorities are forced to report to the police any incidents in which the woman suffers a serious injury. In less serious cases, the woman is encouraged to report the injury to the policy, even if it is her husband who has inflicted such injuries upon her. In other countries where the beating of women is part of traditions, authorities will try not to intervene to protect the woman even if she is seriously injured. The result is that the woman might suffer serious injuries and the doer gets away with his crime only because he is the husband (Moris, p.13).

Domestic violence against women is therefore a violation of the human rights of women, and it is a humiliating situation to which thousands if not millions of women all over the world are subjected. Many methods of prevention and protection have been developed to help bring an end to this problem.

It is, therefore, necessary to control any form of domestic violence. For domestic violence has correctly been characterized as a form of 'social

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[16] Moris, Lena. "The vicious circle" Macleans, June 1997: pp. 12-13.;Saadawi, Nawal. The Hidden Face of Eve. London, 1981; (http://www.theuniversitypapers.com/women-abuse-essay-women-abuse-paper/) retrieved on December 5, 2013.

entrapment' which extends to social isolation, fear and coercion, indifference of institutions, and structural inequalities of gender, class and race aggravating men's coercive control.

One has to realize that violence begins from within the walls of home, and the necessity to educate a male child to right values and respect for women is a must.

The first step in prevention is education of men and women. When men become aware that battery is a violation of the law and of the human rights of women, and when women become aware of the realities of battery, individuals develop negative perceptions and reactions towards battery. Men will be discouraged from using violence against their wives and at the same time, women will reject such a degrading treatment (Brogan, p.2).[17] The other necessary things such as enactment of strict laws and regulations that protect women against domestic violence, funding and encouraging organizations and institutions that provide support, help, shelter and protection to female victims and regaining the financial and social dependence of women.

Many women are still victims of different forms of violence all over the world. These women may be western, eastern, white, black, rich, poor, or with any characteristics or backgrounds. Some of these women stand up and fight back to survive, but many of them are faced with social, psychological, and financial obstacles that force them to stay in their positions as victims, and therefore cases go unreported.

It is the obligation of authorities and communities to establish and develop the necessary resources and institutions that support and protect the rights and human conditions of these women victims.

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[17] Women Abuse by Theuniversitypapes.com; Brogan, Emily. "Dealing with Domestic Violence." Online, www.altavista.com, January 2, 2000; (http://www.theuniversitypapers.com/women-abuse-essay-women-abuse-paper/); retrieved on December 5, 2013.

On the other side, there are many cases where women from even the marginialised communities have carved a niche for themselves and have contributed to the society.

The story of Anita Kumari is an example of how concerted efforts can bring about a change in the mindset of people and empower the women of the society. Anita Kumari 25 is a beekeeper in Bochaha village, Muzzafarpur district, Bihar. When Anita was young, her parents did not want her to go to school, much against her wishes. Anita had to find a way to pay for her education. She saw men in her village beekeeping and decided to give it a try. She saved enough money from teaching other children to buy two queen bees and begin her beekeeping business. Today, Anita has over 100 boxes of bees and she makes her own honey. [18]

Similar stories of Kiran Devi, a junkyard dealer and an entrepreneur who lives in Patna, Bihar; and that of Jyoti Rose Tirkey, a newsreader with Doordarshan and a radio presenter with All India Radio, are examples of how concerted efforts can ensure empowerment of women. Kiran proudly says, "*You find diamonds in the dirtiest places, and let me tell you this: No work is dirty work. With my junkyard, I have created a business that has changed my family's life*".

It is important to understand that education is central to the process of sustainable development and is empowering, if its contents are geared towards it. Numerous studies in the last decade, in the international arena have shown, however, that educating the female population in a country helps economic growth. [19]

Further, equality in social systems is a necessary condition for

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[18] Going to School is an NGO that assists in realizing every child's dream to go to school and makes schooling relevant for kids. This endeavour was part of the Girl Star Project of recognizing women who are often neglected. http://goingtoschool.com/projects_girl_stars.html. Retrieved on December 09, 2013.

[19] Durant, Valerie L. and Sather, Zeba A.: "Greater Investment in Children through Women's Empowerment: A Key to Demographic Change in Pakistan". – Retrieved on May 5, 2013.

empowerment of women. However, it is not sufficient for their development for which education is important.

"Education", says Tara Sonenshine, U.S. Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, "Is one of the most effective ways we can nurture new generations of strong, open-minded, creative-thinking young women". She continues, "Each woman and girl deserves the opportunity to benefit from the three C's – 'community', 'connections' and 'confidence'. Confidence is built through exposure to other cultures and other languages and the support of other woman showing you what is possible".[20]

A similar – and more explicit – reference was made by the U.S. President Barack Hussain Obama, who on the occasion of the International Women's Day in March 2013 said: "Empowering women isn't just the right thing to do – it's the smart thing to do. When women succeed, nations are more safe, more secure and more prosperous. Over the last year, we have seen women and girls inspiring communities and entire countries to stand up for freedom and justice…"

While referring to these statements in the current scenario, history is replete with facts about how leaders have espoused the cause of women.

Sarojini Naidu (one of the tallest women figure of the Indian National Movement), while arguing that women should be educated says: *Therefore, I charge you, restore to your women their ancient rights. …Educate your women and the nation will take care of itself; for it is true today as it was yesterday, and will be to the end of human life. The hand that rocks the cradle is the power that rules the world*.[21]

The pioneering role played by Mahatma Gandhi towards women's emancipation in the early decade of the twentieth century continued till his

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[20] Tara Sonenshine – *The Power of Half the Sky* – SPAN Volume LIV Number 3 – May/June 2013 (page 2). Retrieved on December 10, 2013.

[21] Chapter 29, *Role of Women in the Indian National Movement* – "Raj to Swaraj" (A Textbook on Colonialism & Nationalism in India) by Ram Chandra Pradhan.

last breath and demands a serious re-look. His successful call to the traditional house-bound women to join the Indian freedom struggle served as a catalyst for the wider participation of women in public life.

It was in the north-east, in Tejpur, Assam, during his visit, from the banks of the mighty Brahmaputra, Mahatma Gandhi described the region as 'Prakriti Putri, the daughter of bountiful nature. Here Gandhi recorded that this (visit) has given him, in what he calls, "a splendid opportunity of paying a tribute to the simple and natural beauty of the Assamese sisters and of enlisting them on the side of India and swadeshi. Not surprisingly, the Assamese women had led a valiant battle for Swaraj!

The weaver Gandhi sings *paeans* to the women of Northeast. "Who would regard as uncivilized a people whose women weave the most beautiful cloth and wear only what they themselves have woven?"

When Gandhiji paid his tributes to the women of Assam, it included the entire region in this generic term. The spinner and weaver in him goes lyrical and expresses his joy and hope in a style so unique to him: "I fell in love with the women of Assam as soon I learnt that they were accomplished weavers. Being weavers, they have used economy in their dress without impairing its beauty or its efficiency as cover. And to me it is a sign of very high culture to see the Assamese women and girls wearing little or no jewellery. They are like women all over India, naturally shy and modest with extremely refined and open faces." [22]

Gandhi realized that empowerment of women is essential and more than that, their being self-reliant is vital.

However, women continue to be in varied circumstances too. Women continue to hold the vast majority of non-professional jobs; are in the lower income bracket; live in homes and areas vulnerable to climate change threats; sacrifice education in order to provide food, water and fuel for their

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[22] Retrieved from the Foreword of Dr. Savita Singh, from the Annual Report of 2003-2004 of Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, New Delhi.

families; face violence in the home as well as in society; encounter discrimination when trying to access productive and financial resources; encounter roadblocks to their sexual and reproductive health and rights; contract illnesses from burning biomass in their homes; lose access to communal and traditional land, as both local and international interests take over; and face environmental hazards such as chemical spills and poor sanitation that have long-term health effects.[23]

A key reference to the UN Millennium Declaration is apt. The Declaration clearly states: *"Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice."*

Bella Abzug, American lawyer, social activists and a leader of the women's movement says: *"It´s not about simply mainstreaming women. It´s not about women joining the polluted stream. It´s about cleaning the stream, changing stagnant pools into fresh flowing water."*

In another context while referring to the development of women, Leelamma and V. V. Devasia exemplifies that the total development of women is imperative for the development of society; such a development is not only inclusive of economic development, but also emphasizes in terms of political, social, cultural and environmental aspects…. The challenge of development of women in the society is not only a problem of finance, but also a problem of motivating and mobilization of woman, who belong to various castes and classes and is inextricably intertwined with the development programmes in a society.[24]

While, a scientific perception of women's needs is the key for her

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[23] Gender Equality and Sustainable Development by Monique Essed Fernandes, Eleanor Blomstro: from:
http://www.un.org:80/wcm/content/site/chronicle/home/archive/issues2012/thefuturewewant/genderequalityandsustainabledevelopment. Retrieved on November 27, 2013.

[24] Leelamma Devasia, V. V. Devasia – Empowering Women for Sustainable Development, published by S B Nangia for Ashish Publishing House.

empowerment, when a woman attains economic independence, the process of sustainable development begins, with her participating in decision-making processes, her role in environment, in community and in the larger arena of life. Along with all these, there comes the crucial issue of security and a society free from violence against women.

Repeated heinous and barbaric cases of violence on women have shattered the process of peace and development, drawing the progressive society backwards – to some dark ages. Innumerable cases of women affected by different forms of violence – dowry, rape, molestation, eve-teasing, female foeticide, honour killing, and the list is unending – is a big black spot, a question mark on governance – of the executive, legislative and the judicial systems of nations and nation states.

In developing countries like India, more than 90 per cent of women work in the informal sector and also in rural areas. These women engage in economic activities such as handicrafts and sewing or rolling cigarettes, weaving of baskets and fabrics, working in cities as vendors – working without any contracts or benefits.

These are the women who need and deserve poverty alleviation programmes more than any other. Safety of women in and outside their homes should be prioritized.

In conclusion, the protection and preservation of the body and dignity are basic human rights of every individual. It is a violation of human rights to inflict physical pain onto a person. It is the obligation of authorities and communities to establish and develop the necessary resources and institutions that support and protect the rights and human conditions of the women victims.

There is no doubt there has been progress, but there is also no doubt that much remains to be done.

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INDIVIDUAL ETHICS AND CRONY CAPITALISM

Minakshi Lahkar*

"Is there some society that doesn't run on greed?...What is greed? Of course, none of us are greedy; it's only the other fellow who is greedy."

Milton Friedman[25]

It has been said that just as envy is the sin of socialism, greed is the sin of capitalism. Gurcharan Das however begs to differ and explains that "at the heart of capitalism is the idea of exchange between ordinary, self-interested human beings who seek to advance their interests in the market place."[26] Greed, going beyond the rational self-interest that Adam Smith spoke about, is an excess of self-interest. It is rooted in the practically endless nature of human desires. By its very definition, it resists satisfaction. Can it then contribute to the quest for happiness?

Walter Lippman said, in 1941, that happiness does not come from the fulfilment of desires but from the conviction that one is contained within the discipline of an ordered existence." This has been equated with dharma which is taken to mean "the upholding (of) a certain balance… a belief system that restrains and gives coherence to desires."[27]

Das narrates the case of a young CEO in a company in which he happened to be an independent director. The executive refused to give kickbacks to a state-owned company which retaliated by keeping their bills pending for nine months. With the company on the verge of bankruptcy, an emergency board meeting was called. Most board members wanted the company to pay up. However the young man dug in his heels and finally prevailed on the others to agree to his solution. This was to close the government business and retain the 30% business with private customers. Das realised that the

[25] In an interview with Paul Donahue in 1979.

[26] Das, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-12-06/mumbai/35647087_1_crony-capitalism-market-place-marketplace

[27] Das, 61.

other board members had capitulated simply due to fear of disclosures by the auditors. Not so the CEO who simply said, like Yudhisthir in the Mahabharata: "I act because I must." His was an instance of the Kantian "inner principles of action that one does not see." [28]

This case is evidently highlighted as the exception rather than the norm. The fact is that crony capitalism remains a major bugbear in today's scenario. This is brought home to us by the disquieting disclosures in the Radia tapes. The transcripts record over five thousand conversations between the corporate lobbyist, NiiraRadia and various industrialists, politicians, bureaucrats and journalists. Taking cognizance of the case, the Supreme Court has ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation enquiry into the award of eight government contracts. The Court order notes that "unscrupulous elements have used corrupt means to secure favours from the government officers, who appear to have acted on extraneous considerations." [29]

Crony capitalism refers to the nexus between business and government and it is a manifestation of the greed of those in positions of authority. It is a malaise rooted in lack of transparency and facilitated by the maze of discretionary bureaucratic and executive control over critical areas such as land, natural resources and government purchases.

Refusing to use the term "crony capitalism," columnist Tavleen Singh speaks instead of the "evil empire of control by politicians and officials." She is especially harsh in her condemnation of officials "so immoral that they have no qualms about stealing from the neediest and most helpless as we have seen from the amount of money that leaks out of NREGA." [30]

RaghuramRajanhas another term, "oligarchic capitalism," for the unholy alliance of politicians and business. In an interview, he spoke of India's

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[28] Das, 67.

[29] http://www.firstpost.com/india/radia-tapes-cbi-registers-eight-more-preliminary-enquiries-1190015.html?utm_source=hp-footer

[30] http://www.tavleensingh.com/article_detail.php?aid=360Indian Express | Column | Jul 2011

"dubious distinction" of having a high percentage of billionaires whose wealth lies in sectors like land, real estate, natural resources and areas needing licencing and which is due to proximity to the government. They have been cornering all the benefits of economic growth and of the opening up of the economy. [31]

Prior to 1991, the state intervened in almost every business decision. When a factory was proposed, an official decided on the size, the location, the technology to be used and the capital requirement. He had to be bribed each time he signed a piece of paper. Dismantling of controls has reduced the problem to a large extent. However, bureaucrats and politicians still enjoy tremendous discretionary powerin certain sectors. This translates into favouritism and crony capitalism.

Any illusions that the economic reforms had changed the way business was done, in India, were dispelled the moment the Radia tapes were leaked into the public domain. Icons of corporate India were revealed to have feet of clay, fuelling middle-class cynicism about the probity of public figures.

It is ironical that Ratan Tata, one of the key figures in the Radia tapes, was formerly head of the Tata group which professed to be very ethical in their pursuit of business. The Tata Code of Conduct says: "Every employee of a Tata company, including full-time directors and the chief executive shall … deal on behalf of the company with professionalism, honesty and integrity, while conforming to high moral and ethical standards." [32] As the cynic would say, echoing Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's play, when being stabbed by his best friend :"Et tu Brute?" [33]

He was not the only one with his head on the block. Tarun Das, formerly head of the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), was also implicated in

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[31] http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-07-31/india-business/28275351_1_crony-capitalism-natural-resources-and-areas-billionaires

[32] NHRC Report, 41.

[33] Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene 1, Line 77

the infamous tapes.CII's own code of ethics   aims to ensure transparency through effective ethical practices.Kumarmangalam Birla, whose Birla group had acquired the Canadian aluminium company – Novelis– was implicated in the mining licence scam. His company, Hindalco had been allotted – at the discretion of the very highest level of the executive – mining rights in a block reserved for the public sector. When corporate leaders themselves behave like this, what price their much vaunted codes?

Swaminathan A. Aiyarassociates crony capitalism with the concept of "jugaad." This was a word originally applied to a makeshift vehicle made by farmers who strapped an irrigation pump to a steel frame with four wheels. Defining the word as "innovation around obstacles of all sorts," he refers to theories of entrepreneurial and managerial skills built by managing the politician-bureaucratic jungle of controls and now applied to global markets. His conclusion is that "some businessmen who rose on the basis of crony capitalism are today world-class, winning global contracts and running huge businesses." [34] True, Ratan Tata's group took over the British steel company Corus and actually turned around its other UK acquisition, Jaguar Land Rover. Yet clearly, the world class entrepreneurial skills of Tata or Birla were no deterrent to their on-going crony capitalistic practices in their own country of origin. As Shirley Chisholm has put it: "When morality comes up against profit, it is seldom that profit loses." [35]

Amartya Sen in The Argumentative Indian gives the example of the interchange between sage Yajnavalkya and his wife, Maitreyi, as set out in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Maitreyi wonders if possession of the whole wealth of the world would make her immortal. The wise sage answers that wealth will only make her life like that of other rich people. While this exemplifies the limitations of materialism, he lays more emphasis on this exchange as illustrative of "the relation – and the distance – between income and achievement, between the commodities we can buy

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[34]   Aiyar, "The Elephant…", 6.

[35]   http://www.womenwhochangedamerica.org/profile/shirley-chisholm-2/

and the actual capabilities we can enjoy, between our economic wealth and our ability to live as we would like." [36] Beyond a certain point, therefore, the pursuit of wealth becomes a measure of our greed. The crony capitalist is the greedy capitalist.

In his book, Breakout Nations, Ruchir Sharma attributes this phenomenon to the "high-context" nature of Indian society which he compares to that of Brazil. Such a society tends to cling to tradition and history and favours "the in-group whether it is one's own family or business circle." [37] A society of this kind is more vulnerable to corruption. His argument is bolstered by statistics. India's rank in Transparency International's annual survey of corruption - covering 176 countries - has been worsening from 74 in 2007 to 94 in 2012. In the Doing Business report of the World Bank in 2012, out of 185 countries, India ranks 173 in 'ease of starting business,' 182 in 'dealing with construction permits' and 127 in 'enforcing contracts.' This reflects controls, red tapism and delay – all of which promote crony capitalism.

The high-context aspect of India is represented by the 'provincial tycoons who have built fortunes based on sweetheart deals with state governments and corner the markets in location-based industries like mining and real estate." [38] Sharma warns that India is nearing a point similar to that of Latin America and parts of East Asia in the 1990s when a public backlash erupted against economic reforms which seemed to favour a small minority leaving millions out of its ambit. The slew of corporate scandals has brought to the fore a simmering discontent within the masses over the total disregard of ethics encouraged by the system. He sees this as an explanation for the spontaneous outpouring of support for Anna Hazare's anti-corruption crusade.

In Aiyar's analysis, the top areas of corruption and crony capitalism are all connected with the infrastructural bottlenecks in roads, power, ports,

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[36] Sen, 8 – 9.

[37] Sharma, 40.

[38] Sharma, 44.

railways and telecom. Private coal mining is permitted only for captive industrial production. Government permission is mandatory to convert agricultural land into non-agricultural land. A power plant needs 118 approvals – giving rise to 118 opportunities for corruption. Public Private Partnerships too promote venality, as PPP projects often become monopolies with private operators enriching themselves at the cost of the public and the government exchequer. The first PPP in the road sector –the Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway – has been in the news for all the wrong reasons. The private partner diverted funds from the joint escrow accounts held with the NHAI to its own companies and to unknown accounts. The contract allows sharing of revenue beyond 1.3 lakh PCUs (passenger car units) in a day. However, a KPMG study of July, 2013 revealed that the private operator has been underreporting to the tune of about 79,000 vehicles per day. Thus it cheats NHAI of about Rs 16 lakhs every day. Service delivery too is faulty. Jammed toll booths during peak hours stresses lakhs of users.

Open, transparent procedures and the abolition of political discretion would lead to cleaner government and infrastructural expansion. If land, mineral resources and telecom spectrum are auctioned transparently, instead of being handed over to favoured parties, productivity will become more important than political connections. Thus costs will come down and implementation will be quicker. Corporates too need to have stricter disclosure norms while accountability must be enforced through fast track courts.

The Twelfth Plan document suggested transparent auction of natural resources, simpler rules, e-tendering, increased use of e-governance practices and fast tracking of enquiry processes. The proverbially lethargic Indian legal system (with an absurd backlog of 320 years of cases in 2011) would therefore also need overhauling.Of course, the corruptibility of the judiciary would have to be factored in. Interestingly, politicians objected to the very use of the term "crony capitalism" in the document on the ground that this would be a tacit acknowledgement of the existence of the practice.

However, rules and regulations cannot enforce honesty. Human ingenuity coupled with human greed often finds a way through. This is amply proved by the US economic meltdown of 2008 which took place despite the plethora of regulations in place. In a retrospective analysis, Robert ErlichJr writes that "the guilty (and greedy)"included Wall Street Rating houses that awarded sub-prime mortgage-backed products their highest ratings, … powerful government-sponsored organisations like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac that lowered their underwriting standards to purchase low-quality mortgages … and the big Wall Street investment banks that sold "toxic mortgage products" on the global market ….[39]The crisis took a heavy toll. Lehman Brothers went bankrupt while otherheavyweights like Merrill Lynch and AIG needed to be bailed-out. There is a lesson here for our business leaders if they are only willing to read it.

Rules need to be embedded in practice. In many companies, ethical structures are mere window dressing which camouflages the rampant unethical behaviour of personnel. The 2011 Tsunami in Japan revealed that TEPCO (Tokyo electric Power Plant) had hidden, from the government as well as the public, the potential hazard of a meltdown in the Daiichi plant. Yet TEPCO had a sophisticated ethical conduct system in place since 2002.

The Companies Act, 2013, is perhaps a step in the right direction as it seeks to enforce tougher norms of disclosure and greater accountability of top management. It also mandates a 2% spend on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) by big companies. But merely spending a portion of profits on a list of government-approved social activities does not mean that the company is promoting ethical practices. A classic case is that of Ramalinga Raju , of Satyam, whose Byrraju foundation won plaudits all over the world for its work in fields like healthcare, education, water, sanitation and eco-awareness. Raju's downfall shows that his CSR was more of a cover for his lack of ethics.For the public, the most powerful symbol of Raju's insatiable greed was perhaps his Imelda Marcosesquewardrobe of a thousand designer

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[39] http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2013-10-20/news/bs-ed-ehrlich-housing-20131019_1_housing-crisis-mortgages-real-culprits

suits, 321 pairs of shoes and 310 belts.

It would be well to turn to Amartya Sen once again. In The Argumentative Indian, he speaks about the "tussle between two contrary moral positions – Krishna's emphasis on doing one's duty, on one side, and Arjuna's focus on avoiding bad consequences (and generating good ones) on the other…Arjuna questions whether it is right to be concerned only with one's duty to promote a just cause and be indifferent to the misery and the slaughter – even of one's kin – that the war itself would undoubtedly cause." While acknowledging the general support received by Krishna's eloquent argument, embodied in the Bhagavad Gita, he notes the impartiality of the epic in presenting both sides of the debate. The desolation of the land after the battle in fact seems to vindicate Arjuna's doubts. He therefore concludes by saying that Arjuna's consequential analysis is especially relevant in the context of the current world scenario with its problems of terrorism, violence, epidemics, insecurity and poverty. [40]

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." [41] Our crony capitalists are captains of industry who occupy responsible public positions. Their duty is not just to maximise profit for their own organisations, at the cost of every other consideration. Instead of paying lip service to elaborately worked-out codes of ethics, they need to make a "situated valuation"[42] of their stakeholders before acting. That would be true dharma which is a matter of personal well-being as well as social and political health.

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[42] Das, 102.

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NISHKAMA KARMA AND THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE: A PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

Krishna Mani Pathak*

1. Introduction

The western philosophical tradition seems to have two basic characteristics: First, it prioritizes normative philosophy over practical philosophy, and second, it believes that philosophy and religion are two different disciplines, though many western philosophers, ancient and modern, have discussed philosophical questions of metaphysics and ethics from the religious perspective. Kantian ethics is a good example for demonstrating these characteristics: Kant's whole ethical philosophy, which is normative, is based on human reason, not on human religion. However, the hidden fact exists that his normative ethical rationalism contains elements of Christian ethics, in particular of pietism, his faith.[43]§

In contrast, the eastern philosophical traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism subscribe to the opposite view: They are neither normative nor do they take philosophy as completely independent of religion; rather they believe that reason and religion are two foundational pillars of philosophical meditation. They discuss philosophy (*darshana*) as a way of life. For these traditions, philosophy is not a subject of mental and academic exercise; rather it is a discipline with which one can develop one's capacity to realize one's spiritual and moral essence. For this very reason, we do not find a distinction between what is normative and what is practical in Indian philosophical theories.

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[43]   Firestone & Jacobs (2008). § Some scholars may say that the division I make between Indian philosophical tradition and western philosophical tradition in relation to religion and theology is inadequate. They may argue that it is too general and can be doubted to be true if we refer to the Carvaka philosophy. My response to them is that no exceptional example weakens my observation.

Yet, despite this basic distinction between the philosophical traditions of east and west, they have many things in common. Many western philosophical theories carry a close resemblance to those of the east. For example, we can observe similarities between classical Indian and classical Greek tradition in the philosophies of Heraclitus and Buddhism, and of Parmenides and Shankara; we can recognize similarity of thought in British philosophers like David Hume and F. H. Bradley with that of Buddhism and Shankaradvaita Vedanta, respectively; the philosophy of German philosophers like Schopenhauer closely resembles that of Vedic and the Upanishadic philosophy expounded by Shankara; and so forth. However, it is notable that most of the resemblances between these two traditions are mainly on metaphysical issues.

On morality, if there is a resemblance between any ethical theory of Indian tradition and western tradition, it is no doubt between the Bhagavad-Gita's *nishkama karma* and Kant's *categorical imperative*.[44] Kant tried to find a way of formulating morality in terms of universal laws. To do so, he examined various sources of human actions, for example actions done from desires, motives, obligations, prudence, altruism, and so on. Finally he found a universal moral law: *duty for duty's sake*—popularly known as the principle of the categorical imperative. His idea of the categorical imperative is quite similar to the idea of *nishkama karma*, explicated by Lord Krsna, in the Bhagavad-Gita. Chatterjea rightly observes: "It is true that Kant has made us aware of the absolute and unconditional nature of ethical imperatives. Yet, reading Kant into Gita is […] simplifying the matter too much" (Chatterjea, 2002, p. 125).

2. The Bhagavad-Gita: A Philosophic–religious Text

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is one of many holy texts of Hinduism. It is a part of the sixth book—'Bhismaparvam'—from the *Mahabharata*. The exact dating of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *Mahabharata* are unknown, however, most

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[44] Kant discussed moral duty as the categorical imperative in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten) and *Critique of Practical Reason* (Kritik der praktischen Vernunft). See Kant (1786) and (1788).

scholars believe that both texts were written at about 1000–500 BCE. The holy *Gita* is considered to be one of the most popular and accessible books of classical Hinduism by both eastern and western scholars.[45] One can imagine its popularity by knowing that almost every Hindu family holds a copy of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

In this holy text, there is a philosophical dialogue and discussion between Lord Krsna and his favorite warrior Arjuna.[46] This dialogue takes place on the battlefield at Kuruksetra (a city located nearby Delhi). It regards the essence of being human, the ethics of human duty, devotion, meditation, selflessness, and spirituality that are said to be the interconnecting threads of Hinduism. However, although it describes the science of self–realization and the significance of spiritual knowledge, its fundamental philosophy is to explain *dharma*, *svadharma*, and *nishkama karma*.

The Gita has immensely influenced philosophers and thinkers like Shankara, Ramanuja, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein, Dr. Albert Schweizer, Carl Jung, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rudolph Steiner, Aldous Huxley, and many others. These thinkers believe that the philosophy of the *Gita* applies to all human beings and does not postulate any sectarian ideology. It is approachable from the sanctified realms of all religions and is glorified as the epitome of all spiritual teachings because the *Gita* reveals the eternal principles which are fundamental and essential for spiritual life from all perspectives, and allows one to perfectly understand the esoteric truths hidden within all religious scriptures. The primary purpose of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is to illuminate the true nature of humanity and divinity. On the one hand, the text reveals classical–spiritual Hinduism, while on the other hand, it reflects a similar sense of ethical rationalism as found in the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

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[45] The *Bhagavad-Gita* is available online in Sanskrit and many other languages (Hindi, Bengali, English, German, Greek, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, Arabic, Russian and Serbian). See the URL: http://www.bhagavad-gita.org/

[46] The dialogue between Krsna and Arjuna reflects the teacher-disciple tradition (Guru-Shishya Paramapara) of ancient India in seeking and sharing knowledge.

3. The Notion and Nature of *dharma*

The term *dharma* has a long and rich history based on its origin, development, and philosophic–religious implications. *Dharma* is discussed in almost all classical texts of Hinduism. The term is derived from the root $\sqrt{dhr}$ (to hold or possess or have) with the primary suffix –*ma*, and is often interpreted as 'that which is held or possessed'.[47] From Rig-Veda to contemporary Indian languages and dialects, the term has been widely used. For example, in *Rig-Veda* there is a term *dhárman* that is understood as something 'established' or 'sustained' and has been tied with the Vedic concept of *rta* that is often explained as 'the law of world order' or 'the Cosmic Law'.[48] The *dhárman* and *rta* of *Rig-Veda* become *dharma* in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, which has explained it as 'the most excellent law' or 'truth'.[49] In the *Dharma-sūtra*, *dharma* is interpreted as the key to Hindu ethics. Later in *Mahabharata*, *dharma* is defined as "laws both of this–worldly and other–worldly".[50] The *Gita* emphasizes this same meaning of *dharma*.

In order to determine what is to be held or possessed as *dharma*, both eastern and western scholars have given some explanations. For some, *dharma*

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[47] *Dharma* is also discussed in Buddhism and Jainism. In classical Buddhism, the term is known as *dhamma* (in Pali) and has been discussed as the key concept of Buddhist philosophy. Buddhists define *dhamma* sometimes as *pratityasamutpada* (causal chain of life's circle), sometimes as the universal law of truth, and sometimes as the teaching of Lord Buddha. *Dharma* is considered to be one of the three jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Samgha. See *Vinayapitaka* and *Suttapitaka*. In classical Jainism, *dharma* is taken as the inherent nature of an object (*vatthu sahavo dhammo*) and since objects are qualitatively different from one another, their *dharmas* are said to be different as well. See *Dharma-Bindu* by Haribhadra. Jainism gives a more comprehensive account of *dharma* that seems similar to that of Hinduism, though Jainists' conception of *dharma* is more technical compared to that of Hinduism. But both philosophical traditions seem to accept that the *dharma* of a human being is to act morally, contrary to *adharma* which is said to be immoral action.

[48] *RV*. 10.133.6.

[49] *Brh. Upanishad*. 1.4.14.

[50] dhāraṇād dharma ity āhur dharmeṇa vidhṛtāḥ prajāḥ ǀ yat syād dhāraṇa saṃyuktaṃ sa dharma iti niścayaḥ ǀǀ *Mahabh*. 12.110.11

represents the 'laws for world order'; for others, the laws of righteousness or a set or rules for the regulation of human life. For some, it represents a behavioral pattern; for others, a guiding force for human actions. For some, it embodies the empirical value of actions directed by Vedic scriptures; for others, an accepted Hindu custom (*acara*). And for some, *dharma* is a set of caste–based qualities tied up with the notion of *varnasramdharma*; and still for others, *dharma* is synonymous with the western term *religion*.[51#]

However, these interpretations are only partly true and therefore do not give the proper meaning of the term because *dharma* is such a unique and specific term that no exact interpretation or translation can be made. Although the term has been taken from many theological, philosophical and ethical perspectives, its sole meaning is to realize and flourish in one's own absolute nature of being a moral and spiritual being. An example from our physical world can help us understand this point. The human entity, soul or reason, is like a piece of iron alloy, mixed with other non-metallic materials like clay. When we purify the raw material applying some scientific processes, we find pure iron that is capable of absorbing magnetic power. Similarly, a human entity is mixed with sensuous desires, views, and inclinations. When this entity through a rational or meditational process

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[51] See P. V. Kane (1969); Derrett (1976); Creel (1977); & Harder (2001). [#]Most western Indologists mistakenly think that the Gita's notion of *dharma* is more or less *varnashramdharma*. I completely disagree with them because *dharma* is prior to *varnashramdharma*; the former is the basis for the latter. How can a basis *b* of something *x* be *x* itself? We can extract some elements of *dharma* from *varnashramdharma* but we cannot extract elements of *varnashramadharma* from *dharma*. The reality is that *varnashramdharma* is a concept related to Hindu social life, while *dharma* is a concept of universal moral life. *Varna* is a category of people who are assigned some specific duties and responsibilities in accordance with their capacity and capability in Hindu social life. For example, members of the so-called upper caste Brahmin can also be warriors the same as Ksatriyas, and Ksatriyas can also perform the duties of a priest. The same can be said about the other two castes of Vaishya and Shudra. Historically, there is evidence that Shudras become popular priests with no ties to Hindu caste–system. My philosophical impression is that some historians and western scholars have wrongly interpreted the ancient Hindu social system.

abandons those sensuous desires and inclinations, it reaches its real form (*svabhava* or *dharma*) and realizes its pure magnetic power of spirituality.

For this reason, I regard *dharma* neither as religion nor custom; rather as the essence or inherent nature of the cosmos.[52] *Dharma* is a unilateral, integral, and unbroken realization of one's moral nature.[53] When applied to human beings, it is their inherent nature of being moral–spiritual entities. Since a moral–spiritual entity is believed to be righteous at all times, and since we are essentially moral-spiritual beings, it is our real *dharma* to be righteous at all times without regard to our desires and inclinations. Further, those who define *dharma* as *varnashramdharma* probably would not have given proper attention to the fact that the first verse of the Gita begins with the word *dharma-ksetre* (the field of *dharma*).[54] If we take *dharma* as *varnashramdharma*, the categorization of a field of *dharma* seems to be amusing and even absurd because a field does not belong to *varna*; indeed, *varna* is a category that is applicable to living beings like humans. If this is so, the following can then be asked: What is *dharma-ksetre* in general and *dharma* in particular?

The *dharma-ksetre* is a moral space in the battlefield. The term reveals that even in a situation of war and battle, one should always act from his/her *dharma* or moral spiritual nature. The battle between Kauravas and Pandawas is a good example of the human conflict on moral issues. The battle symbolically implies that at the time when it is compulsory for an agent to make a choice between a moral and an immoral course of action, one should always choose the former, not the latter. This is why the battlefield is called a field of *dharma* where morality faces a war from

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[52]   M. K. Gandhi wrote: "The term 'religion' I am using in its broadest sense, meaning thereby self-realization of knowledge of self". I use the term 'dharma' in the same sense. See Gandhi (1927). p. 29.

[53]   According to Creel: "Dharma pointed to duty, and specified duties; dharma also supplied a rationale or justification for duties by reference to patterns of order understood to be regnant in society and in the cosmos". See Creel (1975). p. 161.

[54]   dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ ǀ māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva kim akurvata sañjayaǀǀ BG. 1:1.

immorality. Those who do not get this deeper sense of *dharma* are in fact confused in their minds (*dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ*).[55]

When Krsna says to Arjuna: "Considering at your own *dharma* (righteousness) you should not falter; indeed there is nothing higher for a Kshatriya (upholder of justice) than a righteous war", meaning that fighting against upholders of injustice is always a *dharma* or moral duty for upholders of justice.[56] One could say that if war is necessary to save righteousness and justice, it is everyone's duty to go to war. If a warrior does not go to war when justice and righteousness are under attack, it means that he either favors injustice or he undervalues justice; similarly he either favors immorality or undervalues morality.[57]

Understanding *dharma* as one of the four *Purusharthas*, we can certainly say that *dharma* is not *varnashramdharma*; rather it is to say that the former denotes one's moral duties[58] while the latter denotes social duties. Krsna's account of *dharma* should be taken in its entirety.

Varnashramadharma can be said to be conducive to universal *dharma* that is easy to perform in the phenomenal world. It is notable that the *Gita* talks about *dharma* from the spiritual and moral perspectives. From a spiritual perspective, *dharma* is one's surrender to the Supreme Being; from a moral perspective, it is one's preliminary duties in a socio–moral space. Those

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[55]   *BG*. Ch. 2:7.

[56]   *Ibid*. Ch. 2:31.

[57]   The battle of Mahabharata has a metaphorical implication: Kaurava's big army is like one's sensuous desires (*ichchhabhava*), whereas Pandava's army is like one's pure soul or reason which always acts according to one's pure righteous nature (*svabhava*) and one's mind is like the real battlefield at Kuruksetra. Like the struggle between Kaurava and Pandava, there is a continuous struggle as a war between one's sensuous desires and pure reason or soul. The ethical predicament is to determine whether one should follow one's sensuous desires or reason/soul. This is what the whole mythological story of the *Gita* tells us; it gives us solutions to the moral dilemma of whether one should act from sensuous desires or reason/soul in the form of *svadharma* and *nishkama karma*.

[58]   Rosen (2006). Ch. 3

who focus on its **spiritual** connotation define *dharma* as religion, whereas those who focus on its moral connotation ine it as moral duty. It is up to the readers of the Bhagavad-Gita to decide which connotation they choose to subscribe to when discussing the nature of *dharma*. [59]

4. *Svadharma* and *Nishkama Karma*

4.1 *Svadharma* (Self-assigned Duty)

Svadharma is made up of the prefix *sva* and the root word *dharma*. Like *dharma*, *svadharma* too has a wide range of connotations and implications. Scholars from the east and the west have often interpreted the term in their own way creating ambiguity, confusion, and controversy—the most popular is of *svadharma* as *varnashramadharma*. Those who consider '*sva*' to be an adjective often interpret *svadharma* as 'owned' or 'assigned duties' in a social system, and assimilate *svadharma* as *varnashramadharma*.

Those who consider '*sva*' to be a noun in terms of 'the spiritual self' interpret *svadharma* as 'moral duties of the Self' that is said to be identical in all persons. The identical self can be said to be the Cosmic Spirit of the transcendental world. On the other hand, a phenomenal self (or an individual self in the phenomenal world) connected to a physical body and certain psychological properties is a manifestation of the cosmic spirit in a social system. Such a socially situated self plays different roles in order to fulfill certain social demands. The Hindu social system of *varnashramadharma* should be understood from the perspective of one's socially assigned duties and responsibilities considering it (one's *varnashramadharma*) to be the narrow sense of *svadharma*. In the broader sense, *svadharma* implies actions that are of one's cosmic nature of truly

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[59] Mishra writes: "The real significance of dharma lies in the profound Vedic perception of man's existence as a rational being who harmonizes the different purposes of life to be realized here and hereafter". See Mishra (2005). p. 55. On the other hand, Kumar writes: "The most comprehensive description of dharma is that one should look upon others as upon oneself". See Kumar (2005). p. 12.

being a pure spiritual and moral entity.[60]

The controversy regarding the concept of *svadharma* is quite misleading; in fact the controversy is a result of scholars' misinterpretation of the term '*sva*'. Some scholars say that *svadharma* is a Brahmanic creation in favor of the caste-system of ancient India, whereas others say it is an ethical concept. Some say it is one's particular duty assigned to him or her by the community or society, others say that it implies individually determined duties, and so on. Most of us will agree, *prima facie*, that the concept of *svadharma* reflects these implications. However, I must say that above all, there is a deeper sense of the term: *Svadharma* is one's moral obligation in a situation of social predicament or dilemma. On the battlefield at Kuruksetra, when Arjuna was challenged by the moral predicament of whether to go to war or retreat from the battlefield, Krsna reminded him of his moral duty (*svadharma*) of being a warrior for righteousness. And those are the moral nuances that Gita brings out in its concept of *svadharma*.[61]

There is no verse in the *Bhagavad-Gita* that forbids a Brahmin, a Vaisya, or a Shudra from performing the duties of a Ksatriya (the warrior class) in the battlefield when morality and justice are under threat. If this is so, how can some reach the conclusion that *svadharma* is synonymous with *varnashramadharma*? Indeed the emphasis on *varnashramadharma* in the *Gita* is just an example to demonstrate the moral duties of a warrior on the battlefield; it is like demonstrating the moral duties of a teacher towards his or her students in the classroom. Assimilating the Gita's notion of *svadharma* with Kant's notion of self-legislation, we can say that consequences and situations do not determine one's duty in a moral space; rather it's one's inherent moral nature that determines one's duty in a

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[60]   The idea of the Cosmic Self looks similar to the idea of pure reason, developed by Kant in *Critique of Pure Reason*, although the two are metaphysically quite different from each other. However, we can say that the Cosmic Self is the locus of a person's *svadharma* just as pure reason is the metaphysical locus of the practical reason of a moral agent.

[61]   Chatterjea (2002). pp. 111-112.

particular situation. In the *Gita*, Krsna does not talk about how one gains *varna–identity*; rather he in his talk reveals that one's *varnadharma* or course of action is based on the proportional composition of three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, which make up a person.[62#] One's *varna* is not based on birth but only on qualities and actions, determined by a dominating quality. The caste-system can be said to be a result of timely changes in Hindu societal patterns that occurred in the post–classical era. Due to these changes in societal patterns, *dharma* and *svadharma* became traditional and could not maintain their true implications.

In light of the distinction I have made between a sensuous self (*the lower self*) and a spiritual self (*the higher self*), it can be contented that an action can be regarded as *dharma* or moral duty if it is practiced by one's higher self which is a self-governing entity. Even in the case of a moral dilemma or conflict over good or bad actions, the voice of the higher self should be the deciding one, because the higher self always acts according to the law that can be universally applicable. For example, the *svadharma* or *svabhava* of a warrior is to always fight for righteousness, and applicable to all warriors. Taking Krsna as a symbol of the higher self and Arjuna of the lower self, it can be said that fighting against Kauravas is Arjuna's moral duty (*dharma*), directed by Krsna's conception of *nishkama karma*.

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[62] This is a unique interpretation of how one's varna–identity is determined by the three gunas introduced in classical Hinduism for determining one's psycho–physical capabilities and behaviors. It may be quite surprising for some that a person born in a Brahmin family may be of Shudra Varna and a person born in a Shudra family may be of Brahmin Varna. This can be judged as true by knowing one's astrological composition (in Indian astrology) and observing his or her course of action. A Brahmin may be seen as engaged in immoral and bad actions compared to a Shudra who may be seen as engaged in actions of high moral value. For example, Dronacharya was born in a Brahmin family but he chose to be a warrior, acted as a warrior, and trained many who wanted to be warriors. He did not choose to be engaged in Brahmanic activities. # All created life is individually composed of eight elements: Bhumi (earth), Ap (water), Anala (fire), Vâyu (air), Kha (ether), mind, intellect, and ego. (bhūmir āponalo vāyuḥ khaṃ mano buddhir eva ca । ahaṃkāra itīyaṃ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā॥ *BG*, 7:4)

4.2 *Nishkama Karma* (Desireless Duty)

Nishkama Karma is a very unique concept of the Gita that is translated as 'a duty without desire', as 'an action done with no regard to its fruits', as 'disinterested action', and 'selfless action'.[63] § It commands that an agent has the right to prescribed activities (moral and social duties) but never at anytime to their results; the agent should never be motivated by the results of the actions he performs nor should he/she have any affinity for not doing his/her prescribed activities. This concept has two basic implications: (1) One should always act according to one's spiritual–moral nature (*svabhava*), and (2) he/she should always act according to *duties* prescribed by society for the sake of righteousness as a moral virtue (*social duties*).

The first implication is all about *dharma* as universal moral law and the second is about the *svadharma* of an agent in a moral space created by society. The *Gita* tells us that regardless of whether the agent acts from his/her nature or from social duties, he/she should not have any desire of or any attachment to the fruits of those actions. If an action is done from a desire or feeling or an attachment, it has no moral worth; even if the agent desires to achieve a certain result, he/she cannot always achieve it because the result of an action is not in his/her hands; rather it is in the hands of the Supreme Self. The *Gita's* interpretation of *nishkama karma* as a determining law of morality looks similar to Kant's interpretation of the categorical imperative, which implies that the moral agent should always act according to his/her reason or good will free from sensuous inclinations and desires. From the perspective of *dharma*, *nishkarma karma* is a universal moral law and from the perspective of *svadharma* as *varnashramdharma*, it is a moral maxim determined by society.

In the *Gita*, an action performed according to *nishkama karma* is known as *karma-yoga* and the agent/doer as *karma-yogi* in the sense that acting from

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[63]   karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana ǀ mā karmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṅgostv akarmaṇi ǀǀ 2:47. § Mehta translates *nishkama karma* as selfless action. See Mehta (2005). p. 39.

selfless motives is possible only if the agent sacrifices his desires and inclinations. A verse of the *Gita* says that one should always perform one's duty to the best of one's moral capacity with one's mind attached to the lord, abandoning selfish attachment to the results and remaining calm in both success and failure. Acting in this kind of yogic manner brings peace and equanimity to his/her mind.[64] Another verse says that a *karma-yogi* or the selfless person becomes free of both virtue and vice in this life itself and therefore strives for selfless action. Acting to the best of one's moral capacity without becoming selfishly attached to the fruits of one's work is called *karma-yoga* or *seva* (service).[65]

It is interesting to know that *nishkarma karma* is devoid of desires, but not of *karma* (duty). The reason the Gita gives is quite clear: embodied beings cannot completely renounce actions until they reach the level of enlightenment because they are composed of three constituent *gunas* (qualities) of *Prakrti*, i.e., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* that necessarily give rise to actions, both sensuous and spiritual.[66] For this reason, it can be said that the *Gita's* concept of *nishkama karma* is not negation of actions, but negation of desires attached to one's duty. Since desires cause bondage and limit one's potential for renunciation or self-realization, an agent must free himself/herself before he/she can realize his/her own reality.

When caught up in the moral dilemma of whether to go to war for righteousness or to leave the battlefield for unrighteousness, Arjuna asks Krsna a very philosophical question of metaphysics in which he wants to know what it means to be an enlightened or a rational person: What are the characteristics of an enlightened person whose intellect is steady? What does a person of steady intellect think and talk about? How does such a

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[64] yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgaṃ tyaktvā dhanañjaya ǀ siddhyasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṃ yoga ucyate ǀǀ *BG*. 2:48.

[65] buddhiyukto jahātīha ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte ǀ tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam ǀǀ 2:50.

[66] na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ tyaktuṃ karmāṇy aśeṣataḥǀ yas tu karmaphalatyāgī sa tyāgīty abhidhīyateǀǀ 18.11

person behave with others, and live in this world?[67] Arjuna's moral dilemma is quite similar to Sartre's moral dilemma in which a moral agent (a soldier) finds it difficult to decide whether he should stay with his mother and let his country be invaded by the enemy or go to his military battalion and allow his mother to die. As a perfect philosopher, Krsna solves Arjuna's moral dilemma clearing up all his doubts.

Krsna answers, O' Arjuna when gives up all desires for sense gratification produced within the mind and becoming satisfied by the realization of the self in the pure state of the soul; then it is said one is properly situated in perfect knowledge.[68] In other words, only a self-realized person can be called enlightened; enlightenment is the *svabhava* (nature) of a self that can be realized only if the self always acts according to its own laws. A person whose mind is unperturbed by sorrow, who does not crave pleasures, and is completely free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called an enlightened sage of steady intellect.[69]

The mind and intellect of a person who is not attached to anything and is neither elated by getting desired results nor perturbed by undesired results become steady.[70] When one completely withdraws one's senses from the sense objects as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell for protection from calamity, the intellect of such a person is considered steady.[71] The desire for sensual pleasures fades away if one abstains from sensual enjoyment, but the craving for sensual enjoyment remains in a very subtle

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[67] sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhisthasya keśava ǀ sthitadhīḥ kiṃ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim ǀǀ 2.54.

[68] prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān ǀ   ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthitaprajñas tadocyate ǀǀ *BG.* 2:55.

[69] duḥkheṣv anudvignamanāḥ sukheṣu vigataspṛhaḥ ǀ vītarāgabhayakrodhaḥ sthitadhīr munir ucyate ǀǀ 2:56.

[70] yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnehas tattatprāpya śubhāśubham ǀ nābhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā ǀǀ 2:57.

[71] yadā saṃharate cāyaṃ kūrmoṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ ǀ indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā ǀǀ 2:58.

form. This subtle craving also completely disappears from one who knows the Supreme Being.[72]

Why does Krsna talk about the enlightenment of agents in terms of the realization of their own individual natures of being rational–spiritual selves? Because he knows it better than others how one's unrestrained senses enslave one's intellect and encourage one's decision-making faculty to act from selfish motives. The restless senses forcibly carry the mind of not only a common person but also of even a wise person away striving for perfection.[73] When the senses of a person are under complete control, his/her intellect becomes steady and leads the person to self-realization.[74] One loses control over one's mind because he/she develops attachment to sense objects by thinking about them all the time and that causes desires. In other words, desires for sense objects come from the attachment to sense objects and cause vices like anger, delusion, wild ideas, and bewilderedness.[75] It should be noted that the spirit of Kant's rational ethics in which he stresses the essential role of human reason in moral decisions was sensed by Krsna when he explained to Arjuna that one's reasoning is destroyed when one's mind is bewildered; one strays from the right path when reasoning is destroyed.[76]

Some people who consider the *Gita's* philosophy to be theological and not purely moral may not agree with my observation and may therefore reject my interpretation. They may argue that I am relying more on selected ethical ideas inherent in the *Gita* and giving less attention to most parts of

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[72] viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ ǀ rasavarjaṃ rasopy asya paraṃ dṛṣṭvā nivartate ǀǀ 2:59.

[73] yatato hy api kaunteya puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ ǀ indriyāṇi pramāthīni haranti prasabhaṃ manaḥ ǀǀ 2: 60.

[74] vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā ǀ 2:61.

[75] dhyāyato viṣayān puṃsaḥ saṅgas teṣūpajāyate ǀ saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodhobhijāyate ǀǀ 2:62.

[76] krodhād bhavati saṃmohaḥ saṃmohāt smṛtivibhramaḥ ǀ smṛtibhraṃśād buddhināśo buddhināśāt praṇaśyati ǀǀ 2:63.

the text that are primarily theological. They may also argue that the *Gita's* concept of *nishkama karma* is not purely an ethical theory; rather it is a theory that emerged from the notion of *dharma* (religion) taken as *varnashramadharma*.

I accept this argument wholeheartedly because I know (as most of us do) how one's imperfect understanding results in imperfect knowledge. At the beginning I explained that reason and religion are two inseparable foundational pillars of Indian philosophical tradition. I have the impression that western Indologists take Hinduism in general and the *Gita's* philosophy in particular to be religious teachings and not philosophical. At this juncture I can only say that their arguments are not acceptable because they have not grasped the dimension I am highlighting in this paper. Of course, religious elements in the *Gita* are comparatively more frequent than ethical elements but I do not think that philosophical ideas are quantifiable.

 In human social life, the concept of *nishkama karma* is contrary to the concept of *sakam karma* (desired action). One who understands what *sakam karma* implies can also understand the philosophical implications of *nishkama karma*. *Sakam karma* is said to be an action that is done from the motive of achieving something. Most of our actions are *sakam karma*, not *nishkama karma*. For example, people cook food to satisfy their hunger; students prepare notes for examinations to secure the highest grades; people get married to enjoy physical pleasure and to have a family; farmers harvest their fields to have food; scientists do experiments to enhance knowledge; nations have military forces for security; and so on. In fact, most of us are *sakami* people who have desires for results of our actions, contrary to *nishkami* people who always act from the motive of action.

A *sakami* person is naturally inclined to and interested in sensuous feelings and demands and always makes an effort to fulfill them. A *nishkami* person, on the other hand, always acts from his/her spiritual nature that is described in terms of *dharma–svadharma–varnashramdharma* in the *Gita*. However, in the real world it is hard to find *nishkami* persons who always act from duty (karma), not from desires, just as it is hard to find an exceptional agent

(à la Kant) who always acts according to the categorical imperative. The reason is clear: detaching from sensuous inclinations is not easy for ordinary people. In order to be a *nishkami* agent, one needs to go through *yogic* exercise to overpower one's desires and feelings. This is a unique technique we find in the *Gita* and other classical texts of Hinduism. It makes the *Gita's* concept of *nishkama karma* uniquely different from Kant's conception of the categorical imperative because Kant does not tell us how we can defeat our sensuous inclinations: He has only given some formulations that are fascinating in theory, but problematic in practice.[77]

Indian scholars like D. C. Mathur interpret the *Gita's* concept of *nishkama karma* in terms of 'an exhortation to duty' and 'a stirring call to action'. Mathur emphasizes the point that Krsna's philosophical teaching to Arjuna on the battlefield at Kuruksetra gives a rationale to moral actions. He writes–

> [T]he Gita is an exhortation to duty and a stirring call to action. Krishna undertakes the task of persuading Arjuna to shake off inertia and perform his duty in a manly way. This is supposed to be a moral persuasion because it is aimed at convincing Arjuna and converting him on rational grounds. The actual arguments may have a mixture of reason and emotional appeal, but the impression given is that of rational justification for moral action. (Mathur, 1974, p. 34)

According to Mathur, the concept of *nishkama karma* as disinterested duty has two ethical implications: (1) A moral agent should 'perform all its duties (*dharma*) conscientiously in light of its *svabhava* and *svadharma*', and (2) all actions 'must be done in a spirit of nonattachment'. Mathur explains that by "nonattachment'", the Gita means "freedom from an egoistic pride in

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[77] This is precisely because Kant is not interested in religion, nor in how one gets to be a person who can perform morally right actions. He just tells us how one can decide what is morally right and obligatory, as that is the purpose of ethics. Even weaknesses of the will which often result in not doing that which is the right thing to do is not a part of ethics. So theoretically we can agree with Kant.

one's own agency (*karttrt-vabhimana*), and freedom from the desire of the fruits of action (*phalasa*)" (Mathur, 1974, p. 35). I agree with Mathur and thus argue that it is our *svabhava* and *svadharma* that morally push us to perform *nishkama karma* or a duty detached from desires and worldly affairs.

5. *Nishkama Karma* **and the Categorical Imperative: A Moral Path to Perfection**

In the *Gita*, we find a duality of *dharma* and *svadharma*; of *Purusa* and *Prakrti*; of moral duty and social duty; of Krsna Consciousness and human consciousness; of Supreme Soul and ordinary soul; and of a perfect being and an imperfect being. Similarly, in Kantian ethics we find a duality of Good Will and Holy Will; of rational being and irrational beings; of practical reason and pure reason; of perfect duty and imperfect duty;[78] and of a noumenal being and phenomenal being. The nature of the *spiritual self* described by the *Gita* looks identical to the nature of the *good will* described by Kant, and the Krsna consciousness looks identical to the Holy Will. The Gita reveals that a human self is *svabhavatah* (essentially) spiritual and moral and therefore it should always act from its real *svabhava*. In the same manner, Kant reveals that the *good will* is *svabhavatah*, a moral autonomous being, and therefore it should always act from its pure will. The duty of a spiritual and moral being is expressed in the *Gita's* concept of *nishkarma karma* or 'duty without desire' and in Kant's concept of the *kategorischer Imperativ* or 'duty for duty's sake'.

The *Gita* emphasizes the purity of the self in terms of *dharma* (universal law) and *svadharma* (self-law) and Kant emphasizes the purity of the *reine Vernunft* (pure reason) and *praktische Vernunft* (practical reason). With their similar concepts, both the *Gita* and Kant reach the same moral principle of *duty always for duty not for any desire*. Their final principle of morality in this sense is almost similar, if not identical. In other words, the *Gita's nishkama karma* clearly anticipates Kant's ethical theory of duty for

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[78]   Kant (1797).

duty's sake.[79] Kant claims that a moral agent always acts from *reason* and not from the *senses* just as the *Gita* claims that a moral agent always acts from his/her nature of being a spiritual *purusa* (unbound self) and not from the nature of material *prakrti* (physical senses).

Some may then ask how the *theological ethics* of the *Gita* can be similar to the *rational ethics* of Kant, who does not believe in the existence of God? This question may be asked by those who do know that there are hidden theological elements in Kant's rational ethics. Is it not obvious that his notion of the Holy Will looks like the will of God? Varma (2005) rightly observes that Kant's notion of the *good* in formulating the supreme principle of morality and his distinction between the ordinary will (of an imperfect rational being) and the Holy Will which "is possessed by God alone as a perfectly rational being" clearly show that his rational ethics also has a theistic side.[80]

Some philosophers like Peter Singer seem to have a more moderate opinion. According to Singer, *nishkama karma* or the *disinterested actions* ethics of the *Gita* "might look somewhat like Kant's ethic of 'duty for duty's sake', or acting from respect for the supreme moral law (the categorical imperative), but the precise rational-universalizable formulation of Kant is absent here". He argues that the motivation of the Gita:

> is not so much to make the 'good will' the determinant of moral actions but to conserve the Brahmanical cultural base (its performative ideal) while integrating the threatening asocial ethic of ascetic renunciation, and also accommodating the influence of nascent devotionalism, with its theistic orientation. (Singer, 1993, p. 50)

However, Singer wholeheartedly accepts that the *Gita* does not "overlook the significant role that a quasi-rational discerning faculty plays in such a

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[79] Varma (2005). p. 67.

[80] *Ibid*.

process. […]. That the 'will' could at once be intelligent and practical (i.e. socially attuned), making for its moral autonomy, is itself an interesting idea canvassed" in the concept of *nishakama karma*.[81]

Some other scholars like Gauchhwal (1967) accept without any hesitation that both Kant and the *Gita* "offer very identical views to account for both these realms—that of matter and spirit" (p. 94). He argues that the *Gita* and Kant's moral philosophy are pathways to human perfection through freedom and self-determination. He writes—

> If, then, bondage, according to Kant and the Gita, consists in our inability to discern the law of our true being (*svabhava* or autonomy) from the law of the sensible attachments, perfection consists in so determining our actions that only our rational law fulfils itself therein, so that ultimately our self discovers itself as absolutely self-determined. (Gauchhwal, 1967, p. 98)

Despite differences in many respects of their philosophical views on human duty, both the *Gita* and Kant have shown a very close resemblance in interpreting human beings as rational and spiritual. Their perfectionist views on disinterested duties and duty for duty's sake are of notable ethical significance in terms of self-realization and self-determination since their philosophical insistence on the purity of the self or reason gives a clear moral message to the world that when one acts according to moral laws as one's duty, one demonstrates one's real nature or *svabhava*.

6. Summary

We have discussed the *Gita's* concept of *nishkama karma* in light of Kant's moral philosophy and learned that: (1) *nishkama karma* is a philosophical theory of action, more or less the same as Kant's philosophy of the categorical imperative, (2) the *Gita's* philosophical account of *dharma*, *svadharma*, and *varnashramdharma* provides a foundation for its moral

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[81]   *Ibid*.

theory of *nishkama karma* just as in Kant's philosophical account of universal moral laws, duties determined by one's autonomous will and duty towards oneself provide a foundation for his moral theory of the categorical imperative, (3) a disinterest doer (à la the *Gita*) and a bizarre rational agent (à la Kant) are difficult to find in the real world, (4) some duties accepted both in the Gita and Kant's philosophy are socially important but morally have less value if the agent performs them to fulfill his self-interests; duties of this kind are known as *varnashramadharma* in the Gita and imperfect duties in Kant's moral philosophy, (5) Kant's moral philosophy seems helpless in providing solutions to some serious problems in the social and moral domains of the modern world, whereas the Gita's moral philosophy certainly provides practical solutions to those problems (6) Kant defines *morality* or one's *duty* in terms of a form of transcendentalism leaving a very small place for *practice* whereas the Gita's *nishkama karma* is a practical moral philosophy, and (7) the Gita's philosophy of action shows a theistic faith in a supreme entity, while Kant's philosophy shows the supremacy of reason.

It is also of moral significance that despite several conceptual and practical problems in the Gita's and Kant's ethical theories, they both convey to the world the fascinating and inspiring ethical message of non-attachment to sensuous inclinations and desires: Their message is the importance of achieving a universal moral approach to dealing with social issues like protecting righteousness, justice, and bias from unrighteousness, injustice, and partiality.

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LOVE AND BLISS

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The mystery of love lies in unravelling its knots. For generally, it is unintelligible, unknowable in our mundane living. We are trapped in our ethos of market place, consumerism, technologically driven cravings and our trivial pursuits that emanate from desire, ambition. Thus our existential state stifles us. There is no room for the sublime sense of love that provides an image of the beyond, transcendence, pervasiveness. In such a scenario do we truly experience that indefinable, life-force, nourishing source, primal energy that sweeps our entire being when we are thrown into a state of upsurge, uplift, and ecstasy? We are mystified into a sense of climb, another inscrutable level of reality that may be designated as fantasy.

We need to interpret love as bhav. Ramakrishna Paramhans describes Radhabhav as the state of being overpowered by the thought of God. The overwhelming emotion that is the outcome of it as in the case of Gopis, makes them enjoy an elevating, exhilarating, state of bliss. They forget their person and are aware only of Krishna's presence. Such is the expression of overflowing joy that the littleness of man in terms of selfishness, ego, and lust is overcome by the powerful sense of surrender, belongingness, and reverence for the Lord.

There is a distinct kind of spiritual yearning for oneness, merger with Him. The cognition of higher consciousness, the ultimate can follow only by connecting with Him. It is in this context that the purified self is lost in the magical spell so that the entire created world is cast in that radiance. There is the sense of eternal sunshine.

The dismal facet of human relationships in our contemporary context is that our worldly concerns are predominant, pivotal. We seem to understand our emotions as emotionalism, possession, and possessiveness as family entanglements and our rational formulations is an end in itself.

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We consistently shield ourselves with our calculations, business transactions, and falsify these temporal objectives as final. We are clogged by our apprehensions, repressions, jealousies, rivalries and cling to them slavishly so that we are not liberated from our bondage.

Love, however, is symbolic of that perfect joy, equanimity that releases, sublimates and brings about an upsurge. The receptivity to a different level of clarity, consciousness has its overtones, vibrations, in our given human ordeal. The starting point for a change to pure refined love is to be founded on trust, faith, confession, acceptances, dialogue and conformity. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita, 'Those who keep their minds fixed on Me, who worship Me always with unwavering faith and concentration are the very best.'

The devotional nature of love which is in *Bhakti* tradition has its divine aura. Thus our world of apathy, distrust, rancour, violence is to be replaced by amity, submission, affirmation and reciprocity. The key note of interpersonal relations is mutual appreciation, regard, acclaim. The world of concord is the eventual stage out of discord.

Swami Vivekananda wrote that love flows from unconditional giving without expecting returns and even reciprocity. The purity of body, mind and heart are the chief requisites which constitute the wholeness of being. Our fettered, fragmented lives that are a witness to clashes, conflicts between body and mind, body and heart are to be redeemed, redirected. Cleanliness in human person, participation of the total personality leads to Godliness according to Vivekananda.

The significant message is that love is creative, constructive and not reductive as it is misinterpreted. It is fulfilling and has a lasting impact. The sense of unbounded, unlimited becomes discernible only if we move in that direction. Tagore in Gitanjali makes an evocative statement, 'At the immortal touch of thy hands, my little heart loses its limits in joy and gives birth to the ineffable.' The transforming echoes must become realizable in our paltry split lives.

There has to be quest for authentic realizable self in our life of aberrations.

We have to work with determination and will to lift the mist that darkens our lives. We have to achieve the love realized in whatever dose it is possible. We have to open ourselves to a world of realized truth, *Ananda*, bliss, luminous brilliance. The state of higher realization is the ultimate and that needs to be our existential goal.

The vital stage is one of being oblivious of our mechanical lives and in awakening to a world of possibilities. Aurobindo tells us in <u>Savitri</u> how Savitri in embodying that divine will is able to seek deliverance for Satyavahan from the prison of death. Love too has that cosmic dimension when a human being can progress to higher levels of realization. Meaninglessness, negatives are to be brushed aside in favour of positives, revival, and resurgence.

In fact, cosmic consciousness is unifying. Our perceptions of reality that arise from body, mind, and heart have generally their source in gross I-sense. We get submerged in a world of appearance, *maya* and remain alienated from higher reaches of experience. We need to have knowledge of the real *tattva*.

Siva *Shakti* is one such single flowing consciousness where the entire cosmic manifestation of the object world flows from its light. The entire phenomenal world which is the creation of our mind is pierced to its source. Only then there is the radiance in the subject and the object. Love and bliss, *Ananda* is that portion of everlasting joy.

Our limited living, confined existence has to grasp such levels of truth. These experiences can become realizable after tremendous, strenuous effort stretching over years.

It is worth referring to the words of Swami Vivekananda: "I have one hope. They call Thee the Lord of the world, and - good or evil, great or small - I am part of the world, and Thou art my love. My body, mind and my soul are all at thy altar. Love, refuse these gifts not."[1]

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[1] Swami Vivekanand, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekanand, Vol. VI (Advaita Ashram, Calcutta, 1991), p.78.

Tagore's lines are also evocative of an eternal grace, "My house is small and what once has gone from it can never be regained. But infinite is thy mansion, my lord, and seeking her I have to come to thy door."[2]

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[2] Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali, (Pigeon books India Ltd, Delhi, 2009), p. 110.

AN EVALUATION OF IMPACT OF E-RESOURCES ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF STUDENTS OF RAMANUJAN COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

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The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which the students of Ramanujan College, New Delhi are aware and make use of e-resources in their academic pursuit. The purpose was also to highlight the problems faced by them in accessing e-resources, their views on usefulness of e-resources compared to that of print resources and the place from where they prefer to access information. The study found that students prefer e-resources against print resources. E-resources have various positive features which make for them convenient to serve their educational needs. The findings also revealed that the most users were facing numerous problems such as lack of knowledge, lack of trained staff and inadequate terminals for browsing electronic information.

Key words: E-Resources, E-Journals, ICT, E-Book

Introduction

Today`s world is changing at fast pace. Gone are the days when dissemination of information used to follow the speed of a tortoise. With the advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT), the desired information can be accessed with a single click. Actually what students are accessing so speedily today are the electronic resources available on the internet at Ramanujan College, earlier known as Deshbandhu College (Eve.). It is a UGC funded; Delhi University maintained institution- being, in fact, third largest college for Commerce education in the university. Its new campus will spread over to 7 acres of land in Kalkaji, New Delhi. A Knowledge Resource Centre was set up under the aegis of the Centre for Ethics and Values, Ramanujan College.

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Statement of the Problem

Supporting research and learning activities forms a major mission for academic libraries. In recent years, academic libraries face pressures like reduced budgets, and rising costs of books purchases and periodical subscriptions. Rapid growth of electronic publications is reshaping the nature of collections and the mode of delivering and accessing information in libraries. The traditional print resources nowadays is facing huge challenge from their electronic counterpart.

Facilities Available at Ramanujan College

With regard to the infrastructural facilities available at Ramanujan College, it has a good air conditioned library with rich collection of academic books, reference manuals, journals, periodicals etc., which is regularly replenished. It caters to the entire demand of the students, consultants, research scholars and teachers of the college. The resource facilities have been provided within the library reading hall, computer laboratory and in the personal computers of each faculty within the campus. The leased line internet facility is available and it is kept open for the students even beyond the academic hours to encourage them in acquiring advanced skills and knowledge in it through the internet. Steps have also been taken to provide internet facilities to all the categories of students using computer lab. In addition, the entire college campus has radio linked internet broadband connectivity through a Wi–Fi network. This is what the author, being a senior employee of the college library, has experienced when he conducted the survey.

E-Resources

An electronic resource is defined as e-resource which requires computer access or any electronic product that delivers a collection of data. As defined by The New Course Oxford English Dictionary (2001) A book that has been converted to digital form and could be read on a computer through network services or a C D ROM is an E-Book. An E-Book is a literary work in the form of a digital object consisting of one or more. Standard unique

identifiers metadata, and a monographic body of content, intended to be published and accessed electronically (Association of American Publishers, 2000, p.31). AACR 2 Rules 9.0A1 States "Electronic resources consist of data (Information Representing numbers, text, graphics, image, maps, moving image, music, sounds, etc.),programs (instructions, etc. , that process the data for use), or combinations of data and programs."

Review of Literature

Review of literature acts as a platform to any kind of study and plays a vital role in furtherance of research. In the context of students` use of e-resources various scholars have studied different institutions and produced literature related to use of e-resources in the respective institutes. In this direction, Atilgan and Bayram (2006) reported the results of a survey on the use of e-databases at Ankara University. Zainab et al (2007) the findings reveal that e- journals are used for searching new information, reading full text articles, reading abstracts and browsing tables of contents. Madhusudan (2010) conducted a study on the use of electronic resources by research scholars of Kurukshetra University and found that electronic resources have become the vital part of the information needs of the research scholars. He also found that e- resources can be a better substitute to conventional resources, if the access is fast and adequate computer terminals are provided for fast access to e- resources. Ali (2010) in his findings revealed that more than 60 percent of users in the Central Science Library are using e- journals weekly for the purpose of research. Printed journals are consulted by majority of the users as compared to e- journals. However, slow downloading of PDF files is a major problem that discourages users to use e- journals. Swain (2o10) , in his empirical study on the use of electronic resources among the students of business schools in Orissa found that the students community has yet to explore the potential benefits of various forms of electronic resources that could help their scholastic needs. Shukla and Mishra (2011), conducted a study on the use of e- resources by the research scholars of Institute of Technology B H U and found that low internet connectivity is the major hindrance in accessing electronic information. Kaur (2006), reports e-resources can be good substitute for conventional resources if the

access speed is fast, access to all the important e-journals is provided and more computer terminals are installed to provide access to e-resources.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to analyze dependency of the students on e- resources, the perceived impact of the e-resources on their academic efficiency and problems faced by them while using the e-resources.

The objectives of the study were following:

- To know the awareness and use of E- Resources amongst the students.
- To know the different type of e- resources available in the library.
- To find out the frequency of use of e-resources by the students.
- To find out the purpose of use of e-resources by the students.
- To find out the basic search strategy for accessing e- resources.
- To find out the infrastructural problems in using e-resources.
- To identify the place from where the users access e-resources.
- To find out the problems faced by the students while using e-resources.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study were:

- Most of the students are aware and use the e-resources.
- Provision of e-resources and services has high impact on the students.
- Majority of students use the internet facility to keep themselves up-to-date.
- The users need training and guidance for effective use of e- resources.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is confined to the students of under graduate programmes of various disciplines. The present study aims to fulfil the academic needs of students and its covers e-resources. The major

limitations of the study consist of only the use of E-resources and geographical area is restricted to the Ramanujan College, University of Delhi, New Delhi.

Methodology

The questionnaire was designed to elicit opinion of the students. The survey was conducted by means of a structured Questionnaire circulated among 300 students from different disciplines of the Ramanujan College and out of these 210 students had responded. Hence the response received was 70% (percent). A random sample method was used for the selection of respondents and possible personal interaction was made with them during the survey. The investigator also personally interacted with students, made informal talks regarding various aspects of e-resources. Besides this observation method was also used to determine the effective use of e-resources.

Significance of the study

The value of the study relates to the understanding of the usages of electronic resources by under-graduate students of the Ramanujan College. This study amongst others, attempted to identify the variables that can play significant role in the use of e-resources.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The gathered data were scrutinized and tabulated for subsequent analysis. Results were presented in the succeeding sections:

Knowledge About E-Resources

Students were asked to give their views on their consultation of e-resources at Ramanujan College and whether they are aware of the existing electronic resources. With respect to this particular question, 66.67 per cent of respondents answered affirmatively, which indicated a positive trend.

Table-1: Knowledge about E-Resources

Question	Respondents	Percentage
Consulting E-Resources	140	66.67%
Not Consulting	70	33.33%
Total	210	100%

Availability of E- Resources in the Library

Due to popularity of e-resources, libraries are spending lot of money to acquire e-resources. Normally academic libraries maintain e-resources such as, Library OPAC'S (With Full Text Access), Bibliographic databases, Full text Journal, E-books, Online Newspapers, E-Journal aggregators open access journals.

Table-No. 2 Satisfaction with the E-Journals, available in the library

Sr. No.	Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	169	80.48%
2	No	41	19.52%
Total		210	100%

Table 2 indicate that majority 169 (80.48%) students are not satisfied and 41(19.52%) are satisfied with the E-Journals available in the library.

Frequency of Use of E- Resources

Normally the students focus their studies on text-books and rarely use the journal sources for their curriculum needs. As the majority of students are under graduates and have the project work in their study, they are using less electronic resources. With regards to the frequency of use of e-resources, it was found that 61.43percent of the students use e-resources occasionally, 28.57 percent monthly basis, 7.14 percent use weekly, whereas only 2.86 percent of students use it daily.

Table- No. 3 Frequency of use of E-Resources

Frequency of use	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	6	2.86%
Weekly	15	7.14%
Monthly	60	28.57%
Occasionally	129	61.43%
Total	210	100%

Preference of Electronic Resources over Printed Resources

Now-a-days, both types of sources are available in each and every educational Institute. In many institutions e-resources as well as print resources are subscribed. But as a matter of research the question was asked about their preference of use between print sources and e-resources. On this, 58.10% preferred electronic resources, 28.57% percent preferred both the sources, whereas only 13.33% percent users preferred print format.

Table No. 4 Preference of Electronic Resources over Print Resources

	Respondents	Percentage
Electronic	122	58.10%
Print	28	13.33%
Both Equally	60	28.57%
Total	210	100%

Basic Search Strategy for Accessing E-Resources

Initially, students had no idea about the basic sources i.e. where from they can get their required information/ data. Various aspects that one needs to know were missing, such as the available sources, the keyword search, author search, subject search, title search, etc. In majority of cases, students were doing the search by keywords, as we can clearly see from table no. 5 that 43.43 percent of students prefer keyword as their search strategy, 13.81percent to subject, 8.57percent to author, 01.43% to date of

publication,13.81percent to title of the journal,13.33percent to   title of article and only 7.62%by abstracts.

Table No. 5 Basic Search Strategy for Accessing E- Resources

Search Method	Respondents	Percentage
Author	18	4.57%
Keywords	87	41.43%
Subjects	29	13.81%
Date of Publication	03	01.43%
Title of the Journal	29	13.81%
Title of Article	28	13.33%
Abstracts	16	07.62%
Total	210	100%

Infrastructural Problem in Accessing E- Resources

Though internet is major provider of e-resources, its speed is a hurdle in providing good services. In India specifically in Delhi University Colleges, the speed of internet is a major source of dissatisfaction among the internet users. Like this majority of students of Ramanujan College, 45.24% treat the insufficiency of work station as the major infrastructural problem in accessing e-resources, whereas 01.90% of them responded that they are not facing any infrastructural problem. Similarly, 12.38% treat low internet connectivity, 02.38% to compatibility of systems, and 38.10% to availability of internet facility beyond college hours as infrastructural problem in accessing e-resources.

Table No. 6: Infrastructural Problem in Accessing E- Resources

Problems	Respondents	Percentage
Low Internet Connectivity	26	12.38%
Compatibility of Systems	5	02.38%
Infrastructural Problem	95	45.24%
Availability of Internet beyond college hour	80	38.10%
None	04	01.90%
Total	210	100%

Purpose of using E-Resources:

Table below 7 highlights that most of the students 40.48% used e-resources for study/ reference work followed by 35.71% for Project work, 16.67% for Assignment, 04.76%for update the subject knowledge, and 02.38% for seminar, conference.

Table No. 7: Purpose of Using E- Resources

Sr .No.	Purpose	Respondents	Percentage
1	For Study/References	85	40.48%
2	For Assignment	35	16.67%
3	For Seminar/Conference	05	02.38%
4	For Project Work	75	35.71%
5	Update the subject Knowledge	10	04.76%
	Total	210	100%

Table below 8 shows that 32.38% respondents faced lack of training problem, 26.67% generation of redundant information, and 24.29% faced Internet Access problem, 13.33% of the users faced problem of insufficient number of computers, and 03.33% faced the problem with regard to non co-operative attitude of the staff in searching the required information.

Table-8: Problem faced while using E-Resources

Sr.	Problems	Respondents	Percentage
1	Lack of Training	68	32.38%
2	Internet Access	51	24.29%
3	Insufficient number of computers	28	13.33%
4	Generation of redundant information	56	26.67%
5	Non-co –operative attitude of staff	07	03.33%
	Total	210	100%

It is clear from the table below that most of the students 168(80%) felt the need of users training programmes for effective use of e-resources. Whereas, 20% felt that training programme was not necessary because they already have the required knowledge for effective use of e-resources.

Table-No. 9: Need of users training programmes

Sr. No.	Training Programme	Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	168	80%
2	No	42	20%
Total		210	100%

Impact of E- Resources on Academic Efficiency

Table below 10 indicate that majority 40.48% students have reported that use of e- resources has expedited the research process, 35.24% have told about access to current up – to – date information, 10.95% about access to wider range of information, 08.57% easier access to information and 04.76% informed that use of e- resources helped to improve professional competence.

Table No. 10: Impact of E-Resources on Academic Efficiency

Sr. No.	Impact of E-Resources	Respondents	Percentage
1	Expedited the research process	85	40.48%
2	Easier access to information	18	08.57%
3	Access to wider range of information	23	10.95%
4	Access to current update information	74	35.24%
5	Improved professional competence	10	04.76%
	Total	210	100%

Findings

Findings of the study can be summarized as under:

- Majority of the students of Ramanujan College are aware of E-Resources.

- Only 2.86% of them use e-resources daily, which is a poor response.

- In majority of the cases, it was the teachers, library personnels and friends who introduced the e-resources to the students.

- Majority of students prefer the library and WI-FI network for accessing e-resources.

- 58.10% of students prefer electronic format while 28.57% prefer both print and electronic formats.

- In 35.71% of cases students use e- resources for their project work.

- Insufficiency of work station is the major obstacle while accessing e-resources.

- More than 80% of the students required training for effective use of e-resources.

Regarding the problems of using e- resources 32.38% students stated that lack of training is a problem for effective use of e- resources. Besides, 26.67% also stated that generation of redundant information is the problem in using e–resources. However, 26.67% Students felt that generation of

redundant information was the main problem. While 32.38% stated that lack of training is also a big problem in using e-resources. Maximum numbers of students 80.48 % were fully satisfied and 19.52% partially satisfied with e- resources available in the library.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the   suggestions are put forward to improve the E- Resources among the students. In the end of this study, thefollowing are the suggestions to improve the functioning of library. Majority of the student's community faces the problem while searching information in the e-resources and internet due to time consuming process.

* The numbers of computer should be raised.

* Computer facility less then comparison to student strength.

* The library does not provide SDIservices to its users. It should be provided by the library because users want to selected information on the topic.

* To provide E- Resources facility efficiently and effectively number of nods must be increased. To reduce the slow downloading problem while accessing E- Journals, the library should acquire high speed internet and intranet connection.

* Library should provide printing facility required by the students free or at a minimum cost.

* Attitude/ behavior of staff must be more helpful towards the users.

* Library staff should assist the users in using e- resources for their required information.

* Training programme regarding how to use e- resources effectively should be organized.

* Lack of training is a major de-motivating factor in the usage of e- journals,so that needs to be improved.

* Moreover, infrastructure and training programmes are essential for better use of electronic resources campuswide.

Conclusion

There are is the days of internet and e- resources. Everybody is using internet and e-information in their day-to- day life. In near future, the internet and e- resources will be the bread and butter for every educated person for their academic activity. In this way now the use of e-resources are used by the students for the all round development of their scholastic needs. They have got the right information at right time conveniently, effortlessly and easily. However, they sometimes feel disgusted to use e- resources because of poor internet connectivity at the time of urgent needs. So the utmost care should be taken by the college authority to upgrade the e-information service provision. It is important to realize that the collection of E- Resources should be properly organized for access and effective use by end users. To conclude, we can say that E-Resources, whose history spans only a few years have emerged as one of the most important media of communication .E- Resources are very useful for students to carry out the required work that too in the field of higher education. E-resources are very versatile, more up to date and, can be accessed anywhere, crossing all geographical boundaries. The survey also shows some important points regarding student's acceptance and involvement in accessing electronic resources through internet.

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ONE LIFE ALLIANCE INDIA
YOUNG AMBASSADOR PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS
Kia Scherr

The One Life Ambassador training program is designed to launch leaders of integrity from the colleges of India by educating them about the value of honouring sacredness of life through direct experience and practical application.

Life as I knew it ended on November 26, 2008 when terrorists killed my husband and 13 year old daughter. But something sacred and precious lived on in my heart. Love never dies. Love is the light that pierces the heart of darkness. Love is compassionate and love forgives. And out of that love emerged the possibility of a greater vision, a positive outcome from the tragic loss of 170 people from India and many other countries throughout the world.

What good could possibly come of this? What is the most powerful way to counter-act terrorism? It is clear that now is the time to engage in a new conversation – a conversation that evolves the ultimate value of the sacred life within us all.

The opposite of the life destruction that is terrorism, is *life-affirmation* – honoring the sacredness of the life we all share. If we want to balance the extreme life-negative behaviors rising in our world, we must bring a strong commitment to the opposite - living with love and compassion to bring about harmony, truth, justice and balance in our everyday world.

As Persian poet Saadi wrote: "We all come from the same source. We are one human family." This is the truth. It is time to live this truth in our everyday lives. Our survival as a human race depends on it. One Life Alliance provides value-based holistic education to develop interaction skills that result in harmonious living. By bringing focus to the principles that develop the whole human being, we create an environment for positive change. Neither terrorism nor corruption can dominate our lives if the majority of us make the oneness and sacredness of life our priority and

highest value. In this way, we all take the lead to create new possibilities for not only resolving all conflicts, but preventing conflicts through collaboration and cooperation.

Why is it important?

At a time of increasing violence all over the world, this program teaches the opposite – that life is sacred and must be honored in self and others. Our future young leaders will be trained to initiate harmony, truth, justice and balance in their communities. We begin by cultivating this value within ourselves as we build a path that will open new possibilities and opportunities to work together in community..

The OLA Ambassador Training Program is a Three Part Plan to create an innovative and sustainable contribution to our communities. Mumbai and Delhi will lead the way for cities all over the world to follow this model.

Part 1 – 30 Day Pledge Practice

College students begin by taking the Sacredness of Life Pledge and participate in the 30 Day Pledge Practice, using the One Life Alliance Pledge book by Kia Scherr.

 An adult leader will meet with each group weekly to discuss experiences, challenges and insights. On a daily basis, they will go online to review the day's focus and post their experiences, challenges and insights for that day in the online community group.

- Fill in the focus questions, challenges and insights for each day.
- Join the online community and share with others around the world who have joined the Pledge program.
- Invite all family and friends on Facebook and elsewhere to take Pledge and join the 30 Day Community Online Pledge Program.
- Meet weekly to discuss experiences and results from the practice. Document results and write down specific examples of how this practice affected your behavior each day.

- What difference did it make? Compare before and after the Pledge.
- Note study habits, test scores, relationships with peers, teachers, parents. How were conflicts and challenges handled? Be specific.
- Create a daily chart to show your progress.

Part 2 – Sacredness of Life Community Project

Form smaller groups of 10 each to be lead by an elder Mentor who has also participated in the 30 Day Pledge program. Spend the next 30 days designing a 4-6 month plan to honour the sacredness of life in your community.   The plan will include strategy for execution. Meet weekly with Mentor and communicate daily online.   Kia will monitor online daily and comment/provide feedback to students.   Student Worksheet: Take 30 days to formulate a project and outline all the steps to make it happen – who, what, where, when, how?

Week 1

1. Your name and names of group members:
2. Give your group a name related to the sacredness of life and what it means to you
3. What project will your group create in your community?
4. What is your objective?   What outcome do you intend to achieve?
5. What is the target audience? How many will you reach out to and how often?

Week 2

6. Will you work in conjunction with another organization, or work independently?
7. How will you introduce your project to your audience?
8. What aspects of the Pledge program will you focus on?
9. Set a strategy to implement with a timeline.
10. Who will do what and when? Set deadlines.

Week 3

11. What are your intended deliverable results and how will you evaluate the success of your project?

12. What technologies will you utilize?

13. What members of the community will you contact?

Week 4

14. What will it cost? How will you raise funds, promote, share, enroll volunteers?

15. Assign roles according to interest, skill and experience.

16. Set a target date to begin implementation.

- Keep track of progress each week to see what is getting completed and what needs more attention or assistance.

- Create weekly objectives and who is responsible for each task needed to fulfill objective.

- Create a power point to introduce your project. Each group will post their project ppt online for all to see.

In addition to power point, each group members needs to have a complete outline of the project that includes each person's role. The outline needs a page that lists each member of the group and their contact information. (phone, email, address)

3rd 30 Days – Take Action - Implementing the Project as a Team

Part 3 – Execute the plan for a school term. Set timeline of objectives, evaluations, on-going follow-up. Monthly meeting with other OLA groups to share experiences, challenges, break through and results. On the target date, begin to execute the steps you outlined last month. Document all activities with photos and written reports. These reports will be posted for all to see. Confirm appointments; follow through with each other to ensure all objectives are being met. Document as the month unfolds: write progress reports for team members, photos, filming or recording as appropriate.

Assign the best writer for this task.

Create a Contract: What I agreed to do by what date. What I completed by this date. Result:

 Next step: By when: Post progress report on group blog. Include photos whenever possible.

Celebrate the Sacredness of Life

Create a celebration event at your school after first 90 Days to launch your project – Invite teachers and community leaders to share your project and invite them to take the Pledge. Invite their support and participation. Give awards to leaders of community who most exemplify the message of OLA. Ongoing celebration of project success to keep the momentum alive and inspiring: Best student speakers share results of project thus far. The groups will elect a keynote speaker from the community and invite special guests appropriate to the projects that are happening.

UNDERSTANDING UNTOUCHABILITY IN MULK RAJ'S
UNTOUCHABLE

Shruti Jain and Anuj Khushwah*

Immanuel Kant in an answer to the question 'What is Enlightenment?'
suggests that "[The] motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude!
Have courage to use your own understanding."[3] The most important factor,
according to Kant, is that our understanding, experience and judgment
should help us in overcoming our immaturity and make our surroundings
more meaningful. To desire this enlightenment is to accept the fact that we
reason out everything we confront. This sharpens and prunes our
understanding of our own 'self' and the reality we confront in our everyday
activities. It also enhances our humanitarian understanding which, in turn,
is based on ethical and moral understanding of society.

M.K. Gandhi in "Ethical Religion" explains that "[…] it is one's duty to
obey the laws of ethics whether or not one professes a religion; and that men
who would not obey them could do no good either to themselves or to
others, in this world or the next"[4] (2). But then what is ethics? According to
Gandhi, " […] ethics enables man to know how he should act *(that is, to
determine right from wrong and follow the former)*. Man has two windows
to his mind: through one he can see his own self *as it is*, through the other he
can see what it *ought to be*" (4). It is very crucial for a healthy society and
can be achieved through inter- subjective communication among people.
For instance, a student should not understand a progressing class fellow as a
competitor to be jealous of but should be composed enough to look upon
him as an inspiring friend. The latter acceptance can flow into us through a

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3   Kant, Immanuel.   "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?"
    xavierhs.imodules.com/s/717/.../kant_-_what_is_enlightenment.pdf

4   Mohandas K. Gandhi. "Ethical religion". www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/ethical.pdf

sound dialogue with a fellow student or the teacher who is aware of the apparent intricacies of the world being better rooted in the reality/ truth.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is one such insightful journey into the self where when confronted with different values Bakha abides, decides and alter ethics to finally emerge a winner. From this standpoint, to analyze Bakha, our untouchable hero, is also somewhere to analyze the people that Bakha represents. However, this journey is accomplished via discussing some basic important points in the novella: whose ethics and whose morality is followed by whom? Is not the ethics that untouchables follow in the novella pseudo-ethics[5] which kept them at periphery? How can one account for the lack of experience which results from the missing inter-subjective communication that further obstructs the nourishing growth of untouchables? How far, then, can enlightenment be justified?

Bakha, the protagonist, is a sweeper and Mulk Raj's fondness with this character has developed because of his own experience with the sweepers in his childhood. This is a genuine example of how aesthetics[6] helps in accomplishing ethics. And this sort of aesthetics is inadvertently very important, because such aesthetic experiences are always contingent but are always conducive in ethical disposition. In the preface to *Untouchable*, E.M. Forster conceives: "[…] as a child he played with the children of the sweepers attached to an Indian regiment, he *grew to be fond of them,* and to understand a tragedy which he did not share. He has just the right mixture of insight and detachment […]". (7)

Anand's ethics helped him to empathize with untouchables. Art is a realm

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[5]   Pseudo- ethics are those false guidelines created by Brahmins which subjugate the so-called untouchables on the basis of their ignorance of the self crated Brahmin religious texts. They are the constructed realties of the high class and caste.

[6]   Sherri Irvin in Aesthetics as a Guide to Ethics explains: "Aesthetics, as I see it, is in large part about matters of "what it is like": it is a consideration of the qualitative feel of human experience. An ethics that is sensitive to these matters will, I think, do a better job of capturing what it is to be a morally good person and how one is, from one's position within a particular human life, to go about becoming one."

where all gaps can be filled up as it helps us to see things in a whole and hence facilitate to understand the situation from different perspectives, leading to new direction and solutions. The process consecutively raises the bar of our ethical and moral standards.

If ethics, according to Gandhi, means a form to perform, to be applied then the confused equation of elite and low caste/class emerges. The Brahmin ethics would expect, for example, by a Brahmin to perform certain exclusive duties, the failure of which would make him/her an outcaste. But at the same time, there exist 'peripheral Brahmin ethics' which instead of being acted on are imposed by Brahmin on the untouchables. This can be explained with the fact that Bakha, an untouchable is unusually conscious of his suppressed state. He knows where he belongs to and what is been expected out of him- he never touches the so- called 'high'. He is enslaved to an extent that he needs to announce his approach: "You swine, you dog, why didn't you shout and warn me of your approach!' he shouted as he met Bakha's eyes. 'Don't you know, you brute, that you must not touch me!" (38).[7]

Bakha's naivety at times become the viewpoint for readers: "Ever since he had worked in the British barracks Bakha had been ashamed of the Indian way of performing ablutions, all that gargling and spitting, because he knew the Tommies disliked it" (10).[8] This is where the cultural exclusivity[9] explains itself. Bakha who don't know the implicated meaning of ablution fails to connect himself with the Brahmin culture and the ethics involved. He is abused every now and then by the upper caste people. On the surface, nothing remarkable as such happens in the life of Bakha. He does not become a gentleman he desired to become. But the experience he gained throughout and the generation of hope through the attainment of spirituality

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[7]   Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001.

[8]   Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001.

[9]   Every community has its own individual culture and the rituals and customs have an ulterior significance and justification peculiar to that culture.

at the end are of greater importance and significance which will be discussed later. Mulk Raj Anand straight forwardly provides these remedies (or hope) for better life of Bakha:

1) Bakha could become a Christian with the help of the Salvation Army missionary, Hutchinson.

2) He could hang his hopes on Gandhi's promise of eradication of evils of untouchability.

3) The introduction of water closet or flush system, which makes the task of sweepers easy.[10]

Every remedy and hope indicates a 'lack' in the society. It also exhibits the incompetency of prevailing ethics in the society. How can these ethics be explained? It is self evident that education plays a very crucial role in determining the ethics morality and character, but this very education from the sociological viewpoint appears to be flawed. Mills and Gale explain the problem: "Education refers to the stored way of thinking about and understanding life where the the expected behaviours, expected language competencies, the explicit and implicit values, knowledge, attitudes to and relationship with the academic culture required for the success in the school are all competencies which one *class* brings with them to school".[11]

There is involved a structural crux. It is because even though people like Bakha never enter the school they inevitably have to confront the people who receive education, the Brahmin education. Morality and immorality is then based on these ethics, for example 'untouchability' is the residual of not touching anything dirty or their soul may go dirty: "[…] you have touched and defiled me […]"[12](38). "This is the feature of dominant caste

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[10] Khan, S.A. *Indian inferno* in "Mulk Raj Anand: The Novel of Commitment", New Delhi: Atlantic, 2000. P 19- 46

[11] Carmen Mill and Trevol Gale. "Researching Social Inequalities in Education: Towards a Bourdieuian Methodology".

[12] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001.

ideology, the loci, from where flow the all pervading living experiences of life. In order to remain dominant, it is necessary for the elite caste to keep the people of low caste at bay and also to check its own agents through stringent standards. Therein they (elites) enjoy the privileges of symbolic capital". It is now clear that the deficiency of ethics is the result of the ignorance of the same. Therefore, the existence of Bakha's caste is a result of regimented process, in a sense that they are victim of manipulation of scriptures as such. In the essay "Concept of Shudra" in *Manu Smriti*, A.R. Tripathi explicates: "As such it is clear that people of three upper classes harming Dharma were put under the category of Shudra. It was the denial of duties, lacking faith in spiritual life, misconduct and getting attached to sensual life, which brought the downfall of Brahmins and Kshatriyas to the fourth Varna"[13] (292). Later Tripathi explains: "Even a Brahmin having a bad company may lose his status. Manu says that "A Brahmin, who resorts to the best and avoids the low, reaches eminence and if he does contrary to this, he reaches the state of Shudra" (294). It is quite clear that being 'Shudra' is a 'state' and not a 'caste' as such. But the regimented belief we hold today is simply the manipulation of elite education where 'state' is confused with 'caste'. This can now be contested that it is the obstruction of experience only that is responsible for the condition of Bakha and his community.

As we have already mentioned above the remedies by Mulk Raj Anand, we would now like to explain, through the remedies, the other aspect of Bakha's alienation within the society. These remedies are the remedies of breaking the boundaries and experiencing freedom. Freedom is one of the important aspects and it is the most important ethical duty that every social being has to follow. Isaiah Berlin in "Two Concepts of Liberty" explains the negative sense of liberty as: "[…] a person or group of persons - is or should be left to door be what he is able to do or be, without interference by other person's?"

Apparently, Bakha is the victim of negative liberty where the elite caste is experiencing unrestricted liberty over lower caste people of the society. So

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[13]   A.R.Tripathi. *THE CONCEPT OF SHUDRAS IN MANU SMRITI: A REAPPRAISAL.* www.indologica.com/volumes/vol30/23_Tripathi.pdf p 292-294

the remedies as such can be considered keeping in the mind the freedom, spiritual as well as physical, of Bakha.

First is that Bakha could become a Christian with the help of the Salvation Army missionary, Hutchinson. This could have freed Bakha from the shackles of untouchability. Earlier in the novella Bakha had experienced that 'Tommies' (Britishers) did not believe in the idea of untouchability and treated all Indians equally. We think that Bakha acted at that very moment ethically and morally as a social being. It is because if he would have embraced Christianity without any interrogation he would have been certainly free but it would have been a mere momentary escape. However, Bakha as a rational being questioned the relevance of Jesus in his own life: "'Yessuh Messih must be a good man," he thought, "if he regards a Brahmin and Bhangi the same." But who was he? Where did he come from? What did he do?....' (121)

Bakha's values did not get shattered when subjected to trial. We think that this quasi-trial scenario proved his loyalty during his tumult in his mind. This trial acted as an agent which elevated Bakha's character. And if the trial itself is an agent, then, it is supplementary to the complex whole, that is, life. In this sense, his decision can be seen as the ethical values Bakha conceived and acted on at that moment based on his intra- communication, experience and observation. The perception of ethical reality is formed by experience, that is by space and observation and the way experiences are perceived by us and get internalized within us, marks the difference in our approach.

Second is Gandhi's promise of eradication of evils of untouchability. Gandhi is one of the most important figure in the novella. When Gandhi provides an explanation as to how untouchables can ethically evolve as social human being: "They have to rid themselves of evil habits, like drinking liquor and eating carrion" (139)[14], he might seem ignoring the materialistic obstacles encountered by the untouchables yet at the same time he mentions the lack in the ethics of high caste Hindus: "They

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[14] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001.

(untouchables) should receive grain only – good, sound grain, not rotten grain—and that too, only if it is courteously offered. If they are able to do all that I have asked them to do, they will secure their emancipation".[15](139)

Gandhi was not in the favour of government alienating the untouchables from "Hinduism by giving them a separate legal and political status"[16](136). This viewpoint is in contradiction with the next remedy that is, the introduction of water-closet which in turn takes us into the twenty-first century scenario. State intervention, indeed, has reformed the ethics of twenty-first century's subject. For instance, till the time ethics were the monopoly of Brahmins, people like Bakha could not mingle with 'high' but today the reformation by the government in the education system has placed all the students at one platform where they not only exchange their 'tiffins' but also their problems and thoughts . The situation in the story has also been handled in very efficient and likely manner: "The Mahatma didn't say so, but the legal and sociological basis of caste having been broken down by the British-Indian penal code, which recognises the rights of every man before the court, caste is now mainly governed by profession".[17](145)

Later, it is suggested by a modern poet that the introduction of flush system could free the untouchables from the: "[…] stigma of untouchability and assume the dignity of status"[18](146). Seemingly the modern ethics are triggered against Gandhian ones but it is inevitable. The novella was published in 1935- twelve years before the independence- and the freedom country was fighting for, according to Gandhi, could have been won only through including more and more masses into the struggle. But it was only possible when the masses themselves held a socialist vision in their mind's eye thus it needed an extraneous intervention which came in the quilt of government policies. This somehow generated hope in Bakha who knew

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[15] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001.

[16] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001

[17] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001

[18] Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Penguin Groups, 2001

that he would never be able to leave 'latrines' but keeping hold of his spiritual self, he will gain at least soul's freedom. Soul's freedom was extremely necessary for him because this freedom made him think of the situation his community has got caught into. This brings a sense-of-belongingness attitude within him: "'I shall go and tell father all that Gandhi said about us," he whispered to himself, "and all that that poet said. Perhaps I can find the poet someday and ask him about his machine."[19] (148)

It is worth noting here how Bakha is justifying his hope. How his character has got elevated from the initial naivety to the spiritual maturity. He knows about his conditions, limitations and obstruction and he is fully aware that he cannot get the freedom of speech (the fundamental one) easily but believes in the gradual process attaining the same. This consciousness came to him when he became the listener of the meaningful conversation of modern poet and his fellow. We think that Bakha then understood the importance of conversation and his own being, felt happy and content and hoped for the auspicious time to arrive.

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ETHICAL BEHAVIOR
Nischal Kapoor*

  The most common definition of "ethics" is "the principles, norms, and standards of conduct governing an individual or group". The success of any group, whether a community, business organization, or family unit depends on the development of a set of agreed upon ethics or rules of behavior. Sharing ethical standards fosters cohesion in groups and allows a harmonious work and living environment. Human civilization was built on the development of ethical standards and the expectation that all individuals will abide by these standards. Even cross culturally there are many ethical codes that human beings can agree upon. From this basic standard groups develop individual codes of conduct that align with their cultural environment.

How Ethics Develop

The human individual begins developing an ethical standard or character almost from birth. As a small child one is taught right from wrong, develops empathy for others through behavioral observation, and learns to behave in a manner acceptable in his or her immediate environment. For most children the parent plays the key role in helping to develop an ethical system. The parents' system derived from their parents' ethical codes as well as what they personally have experienced over their lifetimes. For many families the religious belief has a great deal to do with how ethics and morals are defined. As a child grows older he or she begins to attend school. The values and ethics developed over time shape not only who the individual becomes but also how he or she can interact successfully in society.

Underlying Ethical System

Within every human being resides a subtle system created right from the time of its creation in its mother's womb. In the sacrum bone at the base of spine, there exists a subtle and dormant coil of spiritual energy known as the Kundalini. This energy has been well documented through the ages, and has

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become a core part of many of the most authoritative Yoga and spiritual practices. By the process of Self Realization, as per Sahajayoga invented by H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi in 1970, that involves a gentle awakening of this living and conscious energy takes place, so that it pervades the individual's subtle (i.e. spiritual) being. Once this event occurs, the person is no longer isolated from the universe around them – i.e. trapped inside their own head – but becomes a connected part of the greater cosmos. The benefits of this awakening are many, including the inherent values that are resident within each of us and those that we aspire in our day to day lives. As an example, by the process of self-realization through Sahajayoga and through its regular practice, one automatically develops values like wisdom, innocence, creativity, satisfaction, peace, generosity, courage, love, teamwork, humility, forgiveness etc. These are the qualities of the seven energy centers residing in the subtle system of every human being and once awakened; these energy centers fully manifest these qualities through our being. Any pretence or incompetency drops by itself

It's not just important to talk about ethics but to become ethical in our being. This cannot be done through lectures, but something has to happen within one for the change to come. For example, one cannot counsel courage into a fearful person through discussion. One has to become fearless from inside to be courageous from outside. Self realization brings that change from within. It has been proved amongst millions of practitioners of Sahajayoga across more than 120 countries since last 43 years. Also, one cannot pay for this as it is an innate process. So it is has to be always free.

Why Ethics are Needed in an Organization

Ethics are needed in an organization because people care about ethics. Individuals want to be treated fairly. Establishing a code of ethics or guidelines for behavior lets everyone know what to expect, not only in terms of how they should conduct themselves but also in terms of how they can expect to be treated. Even though the idea of a corporate code of ethics can be traced back to the 1960s, it is only in the last half of the 20th century that big business, higher education, and government entities have adopted a

written code of ethics as a fundamental step in establishing a managerial structure. Corporations that conduct themselves ethically have been proven to attract better employees and enjoy higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty, which over time leads to a better bottom line.

Conclusion

A standard code of ethics is the backbone of any group or society and begins with each individual. Together groups agree on what behaviors are acceptable among them, but individuals are faced with conforming their personal lives to those standards every moment of every day. It is in within the scope of society to set acceptable standards of behavior for the good of all citizens involved. It is in the hands of the individual to ensure that these guidelines are adhered to and the goals and ideals of civilized society realized. To make it happen one has to go within and not just be ethical on an external superficial basis while within they deny the very logic of it. One has to outside what he is inside!!

ROLE OF VOLUNTEERING IN PROMOTING PRO SOCIAL
VALUES AMONGST YOUTH

Vedabhyas Kundu*

"The amount of satisfaction helping them (persons with disability) has given me is unrivaled. Volunteering is a great way to do exactly what we are supposed to do: go beyond our own dreams and try and fulfill the dreams of others. As students it is essential that we learn the higher values of life, which are not taught in our books, but beyond them. I started it and if ten of my friends join me too, imagine the kind of work that we can do!" – Lavanya Garg, student of Lady Shri Ram College and Coordinator, The Peace Gong; in The Peace Gong, February, 2012 (The Peace Gong is a children's newspaper, she wrote this while in school)

Lavanya who is now studying in   second year in college has been volunteering since school days and strongly believes that by contributing to community building work students can experience both inner and outer growth. She further writes, *"If by sitting on Facebook a little less, or watching the television a little less, we all could record a book (talking book for persons with visual impairment) for even an hour every now and then, it definitely won't affect our social circle but will definitely affect our soul."* (The Peace Gong, February, 2012)

This intricate link between volunteering and enhancement of pro social values which leads to inner and outer growth of young people is explored in this paper. An attempt has been made by capturing perspectives of young people volunteering in different parts of the country to establish that the youth needs to be encouraged and motivated to take up volunteering work for the holistic development of the society.

Volunteering: A Snapshot

Volunteering is a distinct human characteristic. It is a socio-psychological bridge connecting the self and the individual consciousness to the collective consciousness of the community. On the one hand, it is an expression of free

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will of an individual, while on the other; it is an expression of a certain set of values imbibed from society values that enable an individual to locate herself or himself in relation to others. (Kundu, 2006 & 2010)

Volunteering can either be a conscious or an unconscious act. A large number of human beings unconsciously volunteer in some way or the other almost every day. Such unconscious acts of volunteering play an important foundation in the formation and survival of various processes of socio – cultural institutions. The conscious act of volunteering is often defined by socially and culturally evolved values. So when a person helps an elderly lady cross a busy road or feeds the hungry, all these acts are defined by a set of socially evolved values. (Kundu, 2006 & 2010)

The socio-psychological need of every human being for a sense of belonging in relation to the other forms the basis of volunteering. The need for a sense of belonging also arises from the need for emotional well-being and for a socio-cultural identity. The need also propels human beings to go beyond the self to reach out to people and nature. (Kundu, 2006 & 2010)

To be an effective volunteer requires a strong degree of commitment in which the volunteer extends to be of service to a wider cause. The spirit of selfless service runs high in volunteers since their motivation is not for money, fame or greed but is essentially based on altruistic values. The motivation is the good of others, even though it may not serve the narrow conception of self-interest. It is based on love and non-violence and a desire to serve without reward and to bring about peace. (Kundu, 2012)

Effective volunteering requires the ability to listen deeply to the people with whom one is working. The process of becoming peaceful and building confidence can develop during social engagement. However, this requires taking time off for oneself, so as not to get 'burnt out' which is a bitter, common malady among peace volunteers. To be an effective volunteer, it is important to have peacefulness within and a confidence in the knowledge of oneself. (Kundu, 2012)

The selfless nature of volunteering has been succinctly advocated by Swami Vivekananda,   *"Asks nothing; want nothing in return. Give what*

you have to give; it will come back to you – but do not think of that now, it will come back multiplied a thousand fold – but the attention must not be on that. Yet have the power to give; so give willingly. If you wish to help a man, never think that the man's attitude should be towards you."

Further, Mahatma Gandhi laid great emphasis on the selfless nature of service. In his Booklet, 'From Yervada Mandir', he writes, *"Voluntary service for others demands the best of which one is capable, and must take precedence over service of self. In fact, the pure devotee consecrates himself to the service of humanity without any reservation whatever."* In fact, so much so, Gandhi likes the spirit of service to character. In 'Art of Living,' he writes, *"We should render devoted service to the world in every possible way, resembling that every one of our brethren has a claim on us. Those who think that they are responsible only to themselves can never be men of high character."*

Also in his Autobiography, "My Experiments with Truth, Mahatma Gandhi writes, *"Service can have no meaning unless one takes pleasure in it. When it is done for show or fear of public opinion, it stunts the man and crushes his spirit.*

Volunteering and the Youth

In today's post-modern society where young people are always in the hunt for a good career and often finds it a challenge to give quality time to family and friends, locating space and time to volunteer is a tough proposition. For majority of youth, material goals are in the top list of priorities. The aim is to acquire status in the society. Joshi (2010) in this context notes, "Today, the impact of globalisation and the economic boom can fan increasing individualism in India. This, in turn, could result in increased urbanisation, migration, media dominance, hectic work life, the break-up of the joint family system, change in the role of women from being home makers, and disregard of the elderly, among others."

The increasing individualism is often seen as anti-thesis to the spirit of volunteering and hence furtherance of pro social values. Scholars like Beteille (2003) have underscored that individualism is accompanied by the growth not only of competition but also of the idea of natural inequality. Similarly, Etzioni (1993) observes that increase of individual rights

conflicts with the needs of the community and could destruct institutions like families and communities.

Hustinx et.al. (2003) further emphasize that 'individualization is considered the most dangerous threat to volunteering eliminating the remaining solidarity among citizens.'

In this context, Kundu and Dahiya (2012) explore the significance of volunteering. They argue, "In the backdrop of emerging tensions and contradictions in our contemporary society where views of Charvak who advocated hedonism and philosophers like Helvetsius who said self-love and egoistic pleasures were the only basis of human action seems to hold the roost, recognition and promotion of volunteering has become significant. For many us who seem lost in the alluring world of symbols and images, it is critical to locate ourselves in relation to our 'self' and the society at large."

Also it is significant to ensure that volunteering is promoted amongst the youth on the Gandhian principle that *'service is not possible unless it is rooted in love and Ahimsa.'* This is especially critical as Hustinx (2001) notes that in the wake of advanced modernization and individualization processes, there appears to be a basic shift from habitual and dedicated involvement toward more episodic, non committal and self-oriented types of participation.

As Hustinx mentions often it is found that young people tend to volunteer just for a certificate and not out of any commitment. In such situations self-aggrandisement and self-personification become the main motives for their episodic volunteer indulgences. The challenge hence is to instil amongst youth the ephemeral values of compassion, mutual respect and dedication which would enable them to contribute towards a holistic development of the society. Here it would be pertinent to quote Devasia (2012) who along with her team of young Peace Gong reporters talked to other children on the essence of volunteering. She writes, "While underscoring the importance of volunteering for imbibing positive values and developing deeper understanding of society, a large number of children in different parts of the country expressed their desire to volunteer for causes and issues at local community level."

Devasia further quotes one of the students, Sumigha Singhania, whom she interviewed, "Volunteering to me is an opportunity to help the community and become better human being. It helps me to understand the pain of the less fortunate. It is a pedestal to step out from my comfort zone and level, work beyond my limits and realize my dormant potential,"

Meanwhile, Bhattacharya (2012) in her editorial in the Peace Gong issue on volunteerism underscoring on what adolescents can do says, "All of us have the light in us, a light powerful enough to purge the darkness around. We all have the spark in us, just waiting to be kindled! We are all peace warriors trying to work day and night for a better tomorrow. And that's exactly what our newspaper, *The Peace Gong* advocates – humanity."

The perspectives put together by Bhattacharya, Devasia and the young reporters of the Peace Gong on the link between volunteering and development of a young person as a better human being as been well articulated by Hastings. Hastings et. al. (2007) argue that encouraging adolescents' enrolment in volunteer work may be an effective way of promoting their prosocial development, as youths may incorporate their prosocial activities as an element of their selves.

They further argue on the importance of positive community involvement for the prosocial development of adolescents and young adults. According to Hastings et. al., "Being involved in other-oriented activities leads youths to increasingly value kindness, caring, and altruism as important personal qualities to which they aspire; presumably this value shift would support future prosocial activities."

The impact of orienting adolescents and youth towards prosocial activities and volunteering can be articulated through the views of Dyuthi, a Class XI student and present Editor of the Peace Gong. Hailing from village Thrikkaipetta also known as bamboo village in Waynad, Kerala, Dyuthi and other members of the Waynad Shishu Panchayat who are also part of the Peace Gong team have taken up the initiative to reach out to families of the local tribes, Paniya, Kattunaikar and Kurumar. Many children of these do not go to school and Dyuthi and her friends are trying to motivate the families to send their children to schools.

Dyuthi points out, "In re scripting the destiny of the world, children have a crucial role to play. We the children should take the first steps to find solutions for the burning issues suffocating our world. It is so hard and so easy to love. When we let go of hatred only can we embrace love." (http://shishupanchayatwayanad.wordpress.com/2013/11/23/new-chief-editor-of-peace-gong-is-from-wayanad-kerala-state/)

Similarly the efforts of the Surovi Shishu Panchayat in Guwahati, Assam to develop critical understanding of the intricate relationship between human and wildlife through practical action and exposure gives credence to the importance of volunteering in furthering prosocial values.

Talking about the regular field study and volunteer programme of Surovi, Riya Akhtar, a class X student observes, "We now have been able to develop compassion for all forms of life and strongly believe in the dignity of all. We also need to learn how nature sustains us. Besides by going to the wildlife sanctuaries and villages inside these sanctuaries, we learn about how the people and wild animals exist together." (Ali and Chetri)

Meanwhile the initiative of the Peace Gong Siliguri Bureau in village Seeyok Phatak in Mirik, Darjeeling district of West Bengal to locate natural sources of water and use indigenous filtering method for the benefit of the community is also an interesting example of how young people through volunteering are trying to contribute to community development. Adolescents and youth like Mrinalini Subba, Bikash Portel and Nishal Chautel who are part of the team are also using their indigenous communication system to create awareness on water conservation.

Sayantani Roy, Coordinator of the Peace Gong Siliguri Bureau and Assistant Professor in the IIAS School of Management says, "Through better communicative and cultural skills, young people can express themselves about their concerns. This is the foundation of developing a highly active and responsive citizenry. As a student I had never imagined on how we could link media and communication education to volunteerism. But the challenge to develop the Peace Gong Bureau in Siliguri has made me understand the intrinsic link between volunteering, communication education and ethical values. We

have to work with young people in the context of these linkages which in turn could enhance the essence of humanism amongst the generation next."

Conclusion

Switzer, Simmons, Dew, Regalski, and Wang (1995) in a longitudinal study found that school-mandated involvement in *"voluntary"* activities over a year was associated with increases in young women's self-perceptions of being altruistic, and young men's continued involvement in community activities.

Also the perspectives of many adolescents and youth put together in this chapter underline the significance of motivating young people to volunteer. The chapter also tried to explore how volunteer work lifts the spirit of humanism and strengthens community cohesion. Further to promote volunteerism amongst youth it is important to explore and locate what Sayantani Roy suggests, the 'intrinsic link between volunteering, communication education and ethical values'.

While many of these young volunteers quoted in this chapter definitely are following the Gandhian principles that *'service is not possible unless it is rooted in love and Ahimsa'*, in contemporary society it is a challenge to attract youth to volunteer selflessly and internalize prosocial values. The changing social structure which is encouraging individualism encourages episodic volunteering which is devoid of genuine commitment and compassion.

In this backdrop genuine efforts needs to be made to recognize and facilitate youth volunteering efforts which internalizes human values. Replication of such efforts in different communities should be encouraged so that we can develop a huge young volunteer corps which reaches out to the marginalized and unreached with compassion and love.

Lastly, it would be pertinent to quote Buddha's feelings for others which is beautifully described in the *Bodhicaryavatara:*

"So long as the sky and the world exist, my existence will be here for the eradication of the miseries of all beings.

Let me suffer all the sufferings of beings and let the world be happy (and liberated) by dint of all merits of me, the Bodhisattva."

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