



**1885-1939**

- 1885** Birth 15 November, Birth Place : Chittal Swarashtra
- 1897** First Marriage with Late Hariben
- 1906** Second Marriage with Late Jariben
- 1907** Left for East Africa
- 1909** Return to India
- 1910** Law Education in Bombay (Mumbai)
- 1913** High Court Pleader, "Badvan Camp"
- 1913** Birth of Shri Narendra Bhai (Son)
- 1915** Legal Advisor of Shri Dakshinamurti Bhavan
- 1916** Associated with Dakshinamurti Vidyarthi Bhavan
- 1920** Establishment of Bal Mandir
- 1922** Inauguration of Bal Mandir Bhavan Near Takhteswar Bhav-Mandir in Bhavnagar by Kasturba Gandhi
- 1925** First Montessorie Conference, Bhavnagar
- 1925** Establishment of Adhyapan Mandir
- 1928** Second Montessorie Conference, Ahmedabad (Chaired)
- 1930** Living in Refugee Camps in Satyagraha Movement, Banar Parishad, Surat, Beginning of Akshargyan Yojna
- 1936** Discontinued Association with Shri Dakshinamurti Vidyarthi Bhavan
- 1937** Samman Thailly Bheint
- 1938** Work in Gujarat; Established Last Study Temple in Rajkot
- 1939** Died on 23 June, Bombay (Mumbai)



**राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्**  
**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

**NCERT**

**GIJUBHAI BADEKHA**  
**SECOND MEMORIAL LECTURE**  
**2009**

THEME : *Culture and Development*  
*Implications for Classroom Practice*  
T.S. SARASWATHI

**Memorial Lecture Series**



**1885-1939**

NCERT  
**MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES**

**GIJUBHAI BADEKHA**  
**SECOND MEMORIAL LECTURE**

at  
Adishesiah Auditorium  
MIDS, Chennai

**20 January 2009**

*THEME : Culture and Development*  
*Implications for Classroom Practices*

T.S. SARASWATHI



**राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्**  
**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

**First Edition**

July 2010 Asadha 1932

**PD 5H RNB**

© **National Council of  
Educational Research and  
Training, 2010**

*Printed on 80 GSM paper*

Published at the Publication  
Department by the Secretary,  
National Council of Educational  
Research and Training, Sri  
Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi  
110 016 and printed at M/s  
Sri Vrindavan Graphics (P)  
Ltd., E-34, Sector-7, Noida  
(U.P.)

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

- No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.
- This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise disposed of without the publisher's consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.
- The correct price of this publication is the price printed on this page. Any revised price indicated by a rubber stamp or by a sticker or by any other means is incorrect and should be unacceptable.

**OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION  
DEPARTMENT, NCERT**

NCERT Campus  
Sri Aurobindo Marg  
New Delhi 110 016  
Phone : 011-26562708

108, 100 Feet Road  
Hosdakere Halli Extension  
Banashankari III Stage  
Bangaluru 560 085  
Phone : 080-26725740

Navjivan Trust Building  
P.O.Navjivan  
Ahmedabad 380 014  
Phone : 079-27541446

CWC Campus  
Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop  
Panihati  
Kolkata 700 114  
Phone : 033-25530454

CWC Complex  
Maligaon  
Guwahati 781 021  
Phone : 0361-2674869

**Publication Team**

Head, Publication : *Neerja Shukla*  
Department

Chief Production : *Shiv Kumar*  
Officer

Chief Editor : *Shveta Uppal*

Chief Business : *Gautam Ganguly*  
Manager

Assistant : *R.N. Bhardwaj*  
Editor

Production : *Sunil Kumar*  
Assistant

## **CONTENTS**

<b>OUR OBJECTIVES</b>	v
<b>SECTION I</b>	1
Gijubhai Badekha : On Being a Primary Teacher	
<b>SECTION II</b>	8
Gijubhai Badekha Memorial Lecture—2008-09 Theme : Culture and Development—Implications for Classroom Practices	
<b>ABOUT THE SPEAKER</b>	24
<b>ANNEXURE</b>	
I : Memorial Lecture Series 2007-08	25
II : Memorial Lecture Series 2008-09	27

It will do if our school does not have a vast library of books on education. It will not do if no one reads a single book on education related topics.

*Excerpted from Prathmikshalama Shikshak  
First published in 1932*

## OUR OBJECTIVES

The National Council of Educational Research Training (NCERT)\* is an apex organisation, assisting and advising the Central and State Governments by undertaking research, survey, and development, training and extension activities for all stages of school and teacher education.

One of the objectives of the Council is to act as a clearing house and disseminator of ideas relating to school and teacher education. We have initiated the current Memorial Lecture Series in order to fulfill this role and to commemorate the life and work of great educational thinkers. Our aim is to strive to raise the level of public awareness about the seminal contributions made in the field of education by eminent men and women of India. We expect that such awareness will set off a chain of discourse and discussion. This, we hope, will make education a lively subject of inquiry while simultaneously encouraging a sustained public engagement with this important domain of national life.

The memorial lecture series covers public lectures commemorating the life and work of nine eminent Indian educational thinkers and practitioners.

### **Title and Venue of Memorial Lecture Series**

<i>Title</i>	<i>Venue</i>
Gijubhai Badekha Memorial Lecture	Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai
Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Lecture	Regional Institute of Education Bhubaneswar
Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture	Regional Institute of Education Mysore

\* More information on NCERT is available at : [www.ncert.nic.in](http://www.ncert.nic.in)

Mahadevi Verma Memorial Lecture	Regional Institute of Education Bhopal
B.M. Pugh Memorial Lecture	North East Regional Institute of Education, Shillong
Savitribai Phule Memorial Lecture	SNDT Women's College, Mumbai
Marjorie Sykes Memorial Lecture	Regional Institute of Education Ajmer
Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture	Presidency College, Kolkata
Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture	National Institute of Education NCERT, New Delhi

---

We invite persons of eminence from academia and public life to deliver these lectures in English or any other Indian language. Our intention is to reach to large audiences consisting in particular of teachers, students, parents, writers, artists, NGOs, government servants and members of local communities.

We hope these lecture series will be of use to our audience as well as the public in and outside the country in general. I must acknowledge the contribution of Ms Konsam Diana, *Junior Project Fellow* for helping me with the finalisation of this manuscript. The contribution of the Publication Department (NCERT) is also duly acknowledged.

ANUPAM AHUJA  
*Convenor*

## SECTION I

# GIJUBHAI BADEKHA ON BEING A PRIMARY TEACHER

HARPREET JASS\*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Experiments of great thinkers and educationists can act as beacon light to guide our thoughts. One such thinker, teacher and educationist we had in India is Gijubhai Badekha. He lived and worked in Gujarat. The purpose of the article is to look into his thoughts and ideas as answer to present challenges of primary education in India. Strength of his thoughts lies in his simple description of situation or the problem he faces and then with equal honesty he tries to find the answer to it. He uses commonsense to see what works with children to teach them concepts. He also tries to understand the underlying concept of the topic to be taught. His fight is against the system and those notions of learning that fails children or do not allow them to become good learners. Teaching is very challenging and serious job according to him and requires sincerity on part of teacher to see what works out the best.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Among many thinkers and theorists, one comes across in the field of Education; a very simple yet convincing, and impressive contribution is of Gijubhai Badekha. He pens his educational ideas and thoughts against the backdrop of colonised India and an equally 'colonised' system of

---

\* Ms Harpreet Jass is currently teaching elementary education, child development and pedagogy of science at the Department of Educational Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

education. A system which is highly bureaucratic where for every little detail the hands are bound by rules and teachers finds no system to try-out new ideas or bring change to make children learn in efficient manner. The problems he raised are unfortunately still the problems that most of the primary teachers are facing in India or could be in many other parts of the world. Especially those parts of the world where education is imparted to learners' majority of whom belongs to a different social and economic background that of their teachers. This difference in the backgrounds of learner and teacher is likely one factor among several others that are held responsible for poor level of teaching and learning by teachers. Or if we word it differently where the world of school is very different from the everyday life of learners and hence the divides between educated and non-educated is too overt and imply connotations to the status of both. Badekha's arguments and experience tries to answer such deep questions. He raises such profound questions about the education system, which forms the backdrop of most of his writings. However, his trysts and struggles which are beautiful, simple and honest have equally plausible answers for educationists and teachers to look at. Hence, an immense scope to benefit from his practical accounts and other thoughtful ideas.

Against the above backdrop, this article is an effort to explore contributions of Gijubhai with relevance to present state of education in India, highlighting what is real learning or good education. The conviction is that even in present times how meaningful his works and writings are. Article also discusses underpinning of his educational thoughts and 'experimentation' as key to achieve the change of real learning in the system.

### **BIRTH AND LIFE**

Gijubhai's own life has been an exemplary to try-out 'new' and bring change. He was born on 15 November 1885. He was high court lawyer by profession. Birth of his son made him wonder about the education of child and his

developmental needs. He found his answers in the works of Maria Montessorie, another noted educationist, teacher and thinker from Italy. He became a primary teacher and co-founded his experimentation and trysts with the system to bring about real learning for the children. In 1920 he founded the first pre-primary school — Bal Mandir — under the aegis of Shri Dakshinamurti Vidyarthi Bhavan. Henceforth his ideas not only on education of children in school but also about parenting and child development started ossifying.

In the words of Pandya 2008 who has been translating works of Gijubhai from Gujarati, the language he penned his ideas:

*In the 19 years till his untimely death in 1939, Gijubhai worked incessantly, contributing a lifetime of work in the area of children's literature and education. He left behind a legacy of prolific writing (nearly 200 publications for children, youth, parents and educators). His best known work is Divaswapna (meaning day dreams). First published in 1939 in Gujarati, it is an original contribution to ideas on pedagogy.*

Now many of his works are translated into English, Hindi and also in Punjabi. With the translation of his ideas in many languages the hope of disseminating his ideas and hence making change possible could be realised in near future.

### **UNCOMPLICATED ELOQUENCE**

The power of his thoughts lies in the simple description of the situation and the action he takes to address the problem faced in that situation. He stands as an example of a reflective teacher with a very spontaneous commonsense to react and act in the situations of primary classes in Indian context. His style of writing is as if he is talking to someone and one feels that as these are their own words and thoughts only that someone has dare to put in this form and bring in the solution too. Many of us would have done the same or would love to do what Gijubhai found as solution to the problem. His simplicity is in the conviction with which he writes and also practicability of what he is doing.

Another very important point that one finds to call his thoughts as practical, is that the jargon of theoretical and philosophical standpoints or terms has been missing in his reflective and analytical accounts that we come across in his works, making him easy to relate to everyday challenges of a primary teacher. Most of us as teachers find it relatively difficult to remember any theory and almost impossible to find its implication. Works like that of his are complete practical accounts and ready reckon for any primary teacher to try out in her/his classroom.

But the weaving of all the implications of theory and philosophy is equally there. His thoughts have genesis in 'child-centered' education and he cites several examples of the same in his classroom experience with children. Gijubhai therefore can be called as reflective teacher whose theory is simple and based on experimentation.

### **REAL EDUCATION**

His works *Divaswapna*, *Mata Pita Se*, and others solidifies his thoughts on Education that what does he expect from us as he takes us towards to the real nature of education he has been demanding. His works reminds us of not only goodness of the child, nature of real learning but also critical role and responsibility of adults as parents and teachers to educate the child. His experiment of teaching children in meaningful manner begins with the conflict between theory and practice. He wishes to have the 'first-hand experience' of the classroom.

Real purpose of education that teacher should understand is that children should love their school and teachers. If the children want to come to the school since they are treated with respect and there are enough meaningful learning opportunities, he feels no children would deny coming to the school. Gijubhai cites several of useful learning activities like story telling, drama, games and paper folding to name a few that could serve many objectives of teaching-learning at primary level and make it relevant for children. However, teacher's intuition to link

all these methods to curriculum is the real challenge and must. Real learning is also learning where children learn by doing and hence are independent with their learning and do not depend on textbook or teacher as source of information alone. In words of Gijubhai in *Divaswapna* what he thinks games are

*Games are real education. Great powers are born on the playground. Games means character building. p.20*

*His ideas on imparting value education to children as against religious indoctrination could be observed in his words “...we should try to live religion. Parents must try and teachers must try. We could tell children stories from the Puranas, and the Upanishadas, whenever there is a reference to these in their textbooks. Let us tell them stories of saints just as we tell them stories of historical personages. ....let us not make our children memorise and recite holy verses! Let us not teach religious dogmas and scriptures and the like in the name of moral instruction.” p.44*

This way he tries to argue for meaningful education for children in different areas—History, Language or preparing for exams or school function. He argues that underlying assumptions of methods we follow have flaws hence a need to re-look at it. This will make alternative methods or use of the same method in more effective and correct manner. He believes that for any topic teacher should figure out the underlying concept and then help children identify that through activities.

### **EXPERIMENTATION — KEY TO CHANGE**

He put a firm faith in alternatives he wishes to try with children and make change possible. We as teachers have stopped to argue for changes and alternatives on arguments say, these are not possible or too idealistic or on several other similar arguments. Gijubhai makes it possible by saying that ‘experimentation’ is the key to bring the change. A teacher with an untiring spirit to learn, to question the existing system, methods and even failure of individual teacher or student, can try several things that will make ‘real’ learning takes place and which

is not only for exams and some outward reward alone. However, outward rewards of praise, applause and good marks are also achieved by him in his experiment of education.

It is honest since his trysts are met with failures, doubts and also criticism of fellow teachers' complains of their responsibilities of family, securing job and oppression of bureaucracy. All this is the reality of a common human as well and also of a job in a system. The system seems aversive to change and our individual needs and also social expectations of stability, survival which is both economic as well as social in nature. All of us find it challenging to meet the demands of system, job and our own personal needs. But Gijubhai answered this by saying the key lies within. Once we start questioning the system and recognise that it is even our personal need to do our job of teaching in efficient manner. Good teaching is the real satisfaction and key of change.

The first step of experimentation is 'failure' and that is what Gijubhai's tryst or experiment begins with. His first day of teaching made him realise that his plans may not work the way he has planned, as he describes in the first chapter of *Divaswapna*. Students in his class did not respond to his plans of silence, concentration and discussion as he had planned. Our experiments not working, is something that all the primary teachers will agree to. But he with his experimentation could figure out methods of stories and games to make students interested in real concepts and not mere rote memorisation. One can say that he could figure out at least that much success rate of his new experiments that he kept on going while most of us are likely to be belittled by failures. He could also not bring many changes due to social or bureaucratic demands but yet many of the changes he cites are positive signs. Say children might need to prepare for exams but let them continue to read and play and not only focus on paper-pencil tasks alone.

His writing of *Divaswapna* is especially the weaving of such new ideas, failures, disgrace and solutions. It makes

reader feel very normal and humane that job of primary teachers might be all this but bit of real success is also possible.

A very novel experiment by him was to divide the day into activities, games, and stories and not go by strict authority of time table. He happens to use his own instinct to organise his days with the children. Several other features of good and useful teaching practices one can see and find in his works.

## **CONCLUSION**

Reading Gijubhai is opening of world of possibilities to make primary education beneficial for student and teacher. Purpose of this article is also to motivate a reader, any one who loves children to look further into the works and words of Gijubhai, and look out for the answers and problems of education he has articulated for us. One may not find Gijubhai struggling with his filial responsibilities but he argues in his works addressing parents that we even need to question what is good for our children and not only the one whom we teach in schools. This is where his ideas draw the tangent of looking at life and our own existence in alternative manner; schooling will also be meaningful hence once we try to make life meaningful. All of us as primary teachers may feel the need of a real alternative look at life, real meaning and purpose of it, which means not only to fulfill demands as put forth by society or system on us. The idea is to live real and meaningful life and also make it same through the educational experience for the children.

## **REFERENCES**

- BADEKHA, GIJUBHAI. 1990. *Divaswapna*. An Educator's Reverie translated by Chittaranjan Pathak. National Book Trust, New Delhi.
- PANDYA, MAMTA. 2008. Gijubhai on Education from learningnet-india.org

SECTION II

**GIJUBHAI BADEKHA MEMORIAL LECTURE  
2008-09**

**THEME : CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT  
IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM PRACTICES**

T.S. SARASWATHI \*

**ABSTRACT**

*Theoretically, psychological differences among human groups can be accounted for in three distinct ways: (a) exposure to different local ecological conditions may cause underlying psychological mechanisms to be expressed differently (evoked culture); (b) people may acquire psychological tendencies through socialisation and enculturation (cultural transmission); and (c) population differences in gene frequencies may be associated with particular behaviour tendencies (non-cultural genetic variation).*

*An understanding of the role of culture in development of psychological processes has significant implications for teacher training and classroom practices. These include: (a) the fallacy of stereotyping and treating groups as monolithic; (b) viewing culture as immutable and essentialised, contrary to evidence of change amidst stability; (c) the constraints of evaluative comparisons and the importance of tolerance for differences; and*

---

\* Senior Professor (Retd.), Human Development and Family Studies, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, India

(d) greater appreciation of the richness of cultural differences which can serve to enhance rather than diminish the classroom climate.

During the past four decades, cross-cultural and cultural psychologies have built a rich landscape of knowledge related to the role of culture in human development. While cross-cultural psychology views culture as an independent variable that influences behaviour and development, cultural psychologists have viewed culture and individual activity as co-constructive. Cross-cultural psychology in particular has sought to: (a) test existing theories in various cultural contexts; (b) explore new cultural systems to discover psychological phenomena not available in cultures studied so far; and (c) generate a more universal theory of human development based on the first two sets of activities.

The present paper will: (a) examine the nature of the construction of knowledge regarding culture and development; and (b) profile the existing knowledge base regarding cultural variations and similarities in various domains of human functioning. A significant portion of the information is drawn from a recent review by Heine and Norenzayan (2006) with their kind permission to use their review with due acknowledgement. The main thrust of the arguments will be on the explanations offered to understand cultural group differences and their implications for classroom practices in multi-cultural settings.

### **CULTURE AS MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT**

There are varied definitions of culture in the existing literature. (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen, 2002). One comprehensive and classic definition is presented here to highlight the fact that culture is an integral part of human development.

“Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts: the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived

and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; cultural systems may be, on the one hand, considered as products of action, and on the other, as conditioning elements of further action (Kroeber and Kluckholm, 1952, p. 181, cited in Berry *et al*, 2002).

Culture is seen as 'in here' (in our heads and the result of individual activity (co-constructive and participatory) or as 'out there' (outside our skin) and as the antecedent of behaviour. The former is the basic assumption of cultural psychology while the latter characterises cross-cultural psychology. The rich literature from both these schools of thought have contributed to and enhanced our understanding of the interface between culture and human development.

### **GOALS OF CROSS-CULTURAL AND CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY**

The goals of cross-cultural psychology are (Segall, Dasen, Berry, and Poortinga, 1999):

1. To transport current hypotheses and conclusions about human behaviour to other cultural contexts in order to test their validity.
2. To explore new cultural systems, to discover psychological phenomena not available in the first culture.
3. To integrate psychological knowledge gained from the first two activities and to generate a more pen human psychology that would be valid for most if not all people.

Cross-cultural psychology adopts a positivistic paradigm and emphasises derived etic and cultural universalism even while accommodating cultural relativism in some respects.

Cultural psychology, on the other hand, aims to explicate how culture and individuals constitute or construct each other. The emphasis in cultural psychology is not on the search for universalism as much as in the cultural activity of meaning making, hence on intersubjectivity, interpretation and cultural relativism.

In the following sections, we will summarise how the landscapes of knowledge regarding culture and human development have been constructed, and the major substantive ideas that have emerged there from.

*The primary source of the substantive information is based on Heine and Nozenzayan's (2006) article entitled "Toward Integration: Cultural Psychological sciences." (With kind permission to do so dated, 1 November 2008). Other specific references and anecdotal examples have been added by the present author.*

## **TWO STAGES OF SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY**

Most scientific inquiry proceeds through two stages. In the first stage, new theories that facilitate the observation and discovery of interesting phenomena are proposed, and various methodological confounds ruled out. In the second stage, the inner workings of phenomena are more precisely explained, and underlying mechanisms are identified. In cross-cultural/cultural psychologies, Stage I research typically propose theories that predict cultural differences, in particular, psychological processes, whereas Stage II research seeks to more precisely explain the observed cultural differences by identifying the critical variables that account for them. The two processes however, are not mutually exclusive and often overlap each other.

One of the major criticisms in the discipline has been regarding the restricted data base that has been used to understand basic psychological processes. Research has predominantly used Euro-American college students as subjects. Yet, claims have been made about universality in basic psychological processes without necessarily testing the validity of such a claim. Hence, *enhancing external validity* becomes an important goal of Stage I inquiry. Of course, there remains the trade-off between maximising internal validity with adequate controls thereby restricting *generalisability* and enhancing the scope for external validity, thereby limiting internal validity. Even when external validity is enhanced by good cross-cultural research, one need to bear in mind that universality may

be established at various levels of generalisation and may not necessarily be universal in the literal sense of the word.

### **STAGE I : TOWARDS IDENTIFYING CULTURAL VARIATIONS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES**

Stage I research also helps *identify cultural variations in psychological processes*. There are a number of rich theoretical models that allow for predictions about the extent to which various models will replicate in other cultural contexts. Pronounced and theoretically meaningful cultural differences have been found in fundamental psychological processes such as preference for high subjective well-being, the manifestation of psychological disorders, the need for high self esteem, and a preference for formal reasoning. In general, the cultural differences tend to be more pronounced in studies that compare behaviours that reflect implicit psychological tendencies and less pronounced in studies that compare explicit self-reported cultural values. One of the important components of Stage I research has been to identify specific situations in which some cultural differences in psychological processes are made manifest. For example, middle-eastern cultures which still practice 'Honour Killing' are not aggressive across situations but only when their family 'Honour' is threatened by an illicit relation or offensive remark by the foe. Similarly, East Asians do not always prefer intuitive reasoning strategies more than Westerners do and show a preference for formal reasoning in completing abstract tasks, even though they may choose to apply intuitive reasoning in other situations.

A related key focus of Stage I research has been to conduct a systematic series of studies to rule out competing artifactual accounts of cultural differences. Efforts to *determine the validity of cultural differences* constitute a large part of the studies that are conducted in stage I research. (See Van De Vijver and Leung, 2000 for discussions on methodological problems related to this issue).The range of identified cultural differences in

psychological phenomena has expanded in recent years aided by prominent theoretical developments such as on the prototypes of independence-interdependence (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).

As a corollary to identifying cultural differences, Stage I cross-cultural research also *informs theories about psychological universals or cultural similarities*. A significant contribution in this regard comes from anthropologists (For example, Schlegel and Barry's, 1991 work on adolescence analysing HRAF data on 186 cultures) and the classic work by the Whiting group on child training and personality (Whiting and associates, 1963). Compelling evolutionary accounts for the origin of psychological processes need to consider the adaptive value of the processes at the level of abstraction where universality is more evident, or they need to specify the conditions under which they are operating (See Keller, 1997 for discussions on the evolutionary perspectives). Work by my students in Baroda with rural and urban women revealed that the standard tools of self-esteem that focused on an individualistic perspective yielded poor scores whereas open-ended interviews highlighted that women in these communities derived their self-esteem by the collective achievement of their husbands and children. Similarly, positive self-enhancement is derived from social (family or group) approval and appreciation rather than in terms of how one describes one's self. In fact, self praise is considered arrogance in collectivistic cultures which expect the individual to underplay one's virtues.

One of the major short comings of the most influential researches in cross-cultural psychology has been that it has focused on comparisons between North Americans and East Asians (the work by Markus and Kitayama, 1991 which generated a lot of interesting research is one such example). It is very likely that other cultural comparisons may throw up demographic and cultural variables of interest. Contributions by Whiting and associates (Whiting, 1963 onwards), Cole and associates (Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp, 1971, and later work) and Segall, Campbell and Herskovits (1966) are excellent examples of potential

contributions from work with other cultures. Another often cited criticism is that cultural psychological research has been largely limited to exploration of the extent to which theories developed in the West generalise to non-western cultures. Contributions from cultural psychology (Shweder, 1990) and indigenous psychology (Sinha, 1997) address this shortcoming.

There is a pressing need to shift from exploring whether phenomena identified in the West generalise elsewhere to exploring whether other indigenously identified phenomena generalise to the West.

Ramanujan (1990) and Sinha and Tripathi (1994) discuss the example of 'tolerance for contradiction' observed among Indians who can co-exist with science and religion or science and astrology with no obvious cognitive dissonance in their individual lives. It would be interesting to see whether such a tolerance generalises to the Euro-Americans. Similarly, there has been anecdotal evidence highlighting the prevalence of mathematical concepts in the every day life of south Indians through close contact and familiarity with classical music wherein the numerical count in the rhythm is critical as also the practice of decorating the front yard with daily drawings of intricate designs that call for an appreciation of arithmetic and geometric concepts. The perceived superiority of South Indians of both genders in mathematics both among resident Indians and Indian Diasporas could lead to interesting cross-cultural research.

## **STAGE II : TOWARDS EXPLAINING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

Stage II research seeks to explain how cultural differences in psychological processes are produced and sustained. Cross-cultural research enables the unpackaging of confounding variables. Cole and his associates' study of age, schooling and cognition in Liberia (1971) is an excellent example of segregating the role of schooling and age, something which cannot be done in cultures with universal and compulsory schooling. Absence of gender differences in mathematical abilities among South Indians

and hypothesis related to everyday experience in mathematics could lead to unpacking situational and contextual variables.

Several interesting methodological strategies have been used to ascertain the reasons for cultural differences and explain them.

## **1. Mediational Strategies**

A frequently used strategy is to identify cultural differences on two measures and then examine whether the cultural differences in the relationship between the two measures is in the predicted direction. As the reader is well aware, there are inherent limitations with such correlational strategies, particularly with data based on self reports. Cultural variables are often not transparent and self evident to the participant who may have been enculturated in the said beliefs and practices without even being conscious of them and articulate about it. Further, correlations do not clarify causal relations nor the direction of the relationships observed leading only to tentative inferences that need further testing.

## **2. Experimental Strategies**

An interesting strategy is to prime constructs hypothesised to vary across cultures and then examine whether such priming can lead people from one culture to respond more like those of another culture in select experimental tasks. Work in the area of independence-interdependence is of particular interest.

A variety of other experimental or quasi-experimental approaches have also been used to identify mechanisms underlying cultural differences. One approach is to identify key experiences that vary across cultures and measure whether greater exposure to these experiences leads to change in psychological variables. For example, training in Oriental or Ayurvedic medicine could foster a holistic way of thinking, with longer periods of exposure likely to impact more.

New research has gone beyond independence-interdependence to examine additional cultural

affordances that may explain cultural differences in cognition. Heine and Norenzayan (2006) cite the study by Miyamoto, Nisbett and Masuda (2006) which showed that (a) randomly sampled Japanese scenes were visually more complex than randomly sampled American scenes (as judged by both objective and subjective measures); and (b) both American and Japanese participants exposed to Japanese scenes were more likely to show holistic processing in a subsequent task than were participants exposed to American scenes.

Another useful approach is the triangulation strategy. The procedure involves first examining a psychological phenomenon in two cultures A and B that differ in a theoretically predicted direction. The second step involves cultures B and C (a third culture) wherein B differs from C in another psychological characteristic, but C and A share a commonality. Heine and Norenzayan (2006) discuss an interesting example of similar ecological reasoning among Mayan villagers and Americans with expertise in biology (such as seen in park keepers) but both differed from other Americans who were not exposed to ecological reasoning that relies on knowledge about the inter relations among plants and animals.

Although still in its infancy, Stage II research has deepened cross-cultural psychologists' understanding of psychological mechanisms by broadening the horizons in the search for reasons for cultural differences.

## **EXPLANATIONS FOR GROUP DIFFERENCES**

Theoretically, psychological differences among human groups can be accounted for in three distinct ways (after methodological artifacts have been ruled out): (a) exposure to different local ecological conditions may cause an underlying psychological mechanism to be expressed differently (evoked culture); (b) people may acquire psychological tendencies through social learning processes that are biased in favour of learning from in-group members (transmitted or epidemiological culture);

or(c) population differences in gene frequency may be associated with particular behavioural tendencies (non-cultural genetic variation). Each of these is explained briefly in the following section.

### **A. Evoked Culture**

The often cited example in cross-cultural psychology of evoked culture pertains to food sharing (Berry, 1966). Where foraging and hunting success is highly variable across time, egalitarian norms for food sharing and sanctions against hoarding are strong; this is not the case where supply of food is relatively stable such as in sedentary agrarian cultures. The other example relates to mate selection where even today, in societies where infant and maternal mortality are high and where there is need for several children to assist the parents in running a farm or assisting in earning a livelihood, robust women who are physically strong and hold promise for hard work and good reproductive prospects are preferred over thin and delicate looking females (see Buss et al, 1990). Environmental factors that evoke holistic cognitive tendencies among Japanese were referred to in the previous section.

### **B. Transmitted and Epidemiological Culture**

Cultural transmission is the primary engine that produces the bulk of stable variation across groups. Transmission is through socialisation in the family and in other socio-cultural settings, enculturation through total cultural immersion, and through formal and non-formal education. It is useful to distinguish between evoked and transmitted culture as explanation of cultural differences; yet, in actuality, these two processes reflect a continuum rather than a dichotomy. One possibility is that ecological differences evoke initial responses that vary adaptively across different environments, but then these responses are picked up and perpetuated even when the initial conditions are no longer present. A prominent example in

the Indian setting is the practice among North Indian Hindus of a strict taboo regarding marriage alliances among families residing in seven villages surrounding the bride or groom. Such a practice (which is in contrast to the encouragement of cross cousin marriages in Southern India) initially aimed at prohibiting marriages among close relatives who inhabited villages close by since that could result in inheritance of genetic disorders running in the family. This practice continues even today when the demographic distribution of families has changed drastically, and the strict taboo continues, and often, one reads of honour killing by parents or close relatives when cousins fall in love, elope and marry.

Cultural psychologists could take advantage of the naturally occurring 'experiments' to isolate the effects of transmitted culture by comparing groups living in similar environments but with different beliefs and practices (See review of work in this area by Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre, 1997, and Berry and Sam, 1997). One is often surprised to note the extent to which cultural differences are preserved, for example, among Indians who migrated to Africa some three to four generations ago and the Indian Diaspora in the USA which consciously preserves its cultural heritage in the family and home settings, even while integrating with fellow Americans in the work setting.

### **C. Genetic Variation as Explanation for Psychological Differences**

A controversial explanation for psychological differences between cultures is that they could derive from genetic differences. This possibility should be examined with care, given the unfortunate history of racism and conquest that has often accompanied biological explanations of group differences. The words 'savages', 'primitive', 'barbarian' and so on to describe cultures different from those in the West were in usage until recently. Behaviour geneticists have repeatedly warned about the need for caution in inferences

regarding genetic differences between cultures as often 'the within culture' differences exceed 'the between culture' differences. Nevertheless, a growing body of research continues to identify genes that vary systematically across populations. These include genes associated with distinct blood groups, skin colour, lactose intolerance, resistance to malaria and several other characteristics. Group differences could well result from selection pressures (survival of the fittest), the consequence of thermal regulation, pathogen resistance, diet constraints and the like. The Parsee (Zoroastrian) community in India offers excellent opportunities for genetic research having preserved its genetic identity through monitored inbreeding. Genes related to longevity, despite the prevalence of several genetically inherited diseases, have been investigated as reported in a recent seminar organised by the PARZOR group at Bombay in December 2008. Most psychological traits and tendencies are unlikely to meet the stringent criteria for indicating genetic inheritance. What would be useful to understand is as to how cultural practices have sustained the influence of the genome. *Empirical results typically show that immigrants and their descendents exhibit psychological processes intermediate to those of their heritable culture and their cohorts in the host culture, which is evidence consistent with a cultural, rather than genetic explanation of group differences.*

### **PROXIMAL AND DISTAL EXPLANATIONS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

Distal explanations are historical analyses that involve social, economic and geographic factors that may have given rise to culturally stable patterns of thought and behaviour. Proximal explanations, on the other hand, involve individual level psychological processes including beliefs, knowledge and experiences with the world that have been shaped by these historical developments, and could be directly implicated in cultural differences in psychological characteristics. The former deals with culture

level analysis, and the latter, individual level of analysis. An excellent example of distal explanation is seen in the 1991 work by Schlegel and Barry who examined the secondary data from Human Resource Area files (HRAF) from 186 pre industrial cultures, to provide an anthropological account of adolescent development across cultures. A contemporary example of proximal explanation could be the perseverance of honour culture in societies where men and women are executed on charges of falling in love with a stranger, an enemy's kin or eloping with an already married person, thus, bringing the family to shame. A historical precedent that evolved to preserve the group's identity and maintain taboos prescribed by the culture have sustained in practice even though the said taboos are irrelevant and serve no purpose today.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM PRACTICES**

The rich data on cultures assembled by Cross-Cultural and Cultural Psychology over the past four decades have several implications for classroom practices, especially in a multi-cultural society like India where caste and religion play an important role in social interactions. Key ideas that emerge from work in this area are listed below and offer a base for reflection and practice.

- We tend to treat groups as monolithic and generalise our stereotypes regarding groups to individual pupils. For example, we take it for granted that children of a particular caste are dull and incapable of learning abstract concepts, or that members of some groups are not clean, or others whose ancestors were dacoits, will inherit the tendency to be thieves. Each one of these beliefs that openly affects classroom practices can be challenged and proved as unfounded.
- We tend to view culture as immutable and essentialised. Cultural studies as well as studies in human development in any given culture show clearly that both stability and change are characteristics of both cultures and individual ontogeny. In a society where

caste prejudices are deeply rooted, change can occur in first generation learners only when teachers believe that neither culture nor individual behaviour are static. There is adequate data base to support such a claim.

- Another malaise that plagues our classroom practices in the evaluative comparisons rewards children by virtue of their class, caste and occupational background advantages at the cost of those who enjoy no such privileges. Developing an attitude of tolerance for alternative life styles, belief systems and language forms pays rich dividends in terms of providing an enabling environment for learning, particularly for first generations learners from the lower castes.
- Cross-cultural psychology also offers us observations on cultural prejudice, culture blindness and multi-culturalism as options in classroom practices in a multi-cultural society such as ours. Needless to emphasise that for both teachers and pupils, a positive attitude towards multi-culturalism pays the best dividends.
- Finally, experiences in a multi-cultural classroom can lead to greater appreciation of cultural differences in a complex society such as in India. An appreciation of differences when fostered in children by a teacher, who can transcend differences and see the richness in the diversity, can help nurture a generation that is both tolerant and appreciative of diversity in religions, ethnicity, and language as we do of cuisines, textiles, and music and dance forms.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasise that there are ethical issues involved in how we structure the landscape of knowledge, especially in the social sciences. Theoretical ideas often get *rectified*, and are reflected most clearly in the classroom teaching-learning situations, wherein as teachers, we engage both students and ourselves in shaping a shared understanding, reflecting either our prejudices or our tolerance for alternative world views.

## REFERENCES

- BERRY, J.W. 1966. Temne and Eskimo Perceptual Skills. *International Journal of Psychology*, pp. 207-229.
- BERRY, J.W. and D. SAM, 1997. Acculturation and Adaptation. In J.W.Berry, H.H.Segall, and C. Kagitcibasi (Eds) *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology. Vol.3, Social Behaviour and Applications (Second Edition)*, (pp. 291-326). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- BERRY, J.W., Y.H. POORTINGA, H.H. SEGALL, and DASEN, 2002. *Cross-Cultural Psychology. Research and Applications*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, UK.
- BUSS, D.M., M. ABBOTT, A. ANGLEITNER, A. ASHERIAN, A. BIAGGIO, A. BLANCO-VILLASENOR, *et al* 1990. International preferences in Selecting Mates: A study of 37 Cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. 21, 5-47.
- CAMILLERI, C. and H. MALEWSKA – PEYRE, 1997. Socialisation and Identity Strategies. In J.W.Berry, P.R.Dasen, and T.S.Saraswathi (Eds). *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology. Vol. 2, Basic Processes and Human Development. (Second Edition)*, pp. 41-67, Needham Heights, M.A.: Allyn and Bacon.
- COLE, M., J. GAY, J.A. GLICK, and D.W. SHARP, 1971. *The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking*. Basic Books. New York.
- HEINE, S.J. and A. NORENZAYAN, 2006. Towards a Psychological Science for a Cultural Species. *Perspectives in Psychological Science*. Vol.1(3), pp. 251-269.
- KELLER, H. 1997. Evolutionary Approaches. In J.W.Berry, Y.H.Poortinga, and J.Pandey (Eds.). *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology. Vol.1. Theory and Method. (Second Edition)*, pp.215-255. Needham Heights, M.A.: Allyn and Bacon.
- MARKUS, H.R. and S. KITAYAMA, 1991. Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, pp 224-253.
- RAMANUJAN, A.K. 1990. Is There an Indian Way of Thinking? An Informal Essay. In K.M. Marriot (Ed.). *India Through Hindu Categories*. pp. 41-58. Sage, New Delhi.
- SCHLEGEL A., and H. Barry III, 1991. *Adolescence: An Anthropological Inquiry*. The Free Press, New York.
- SEGALL, H.H., D.T. CAMPBELL, and M.J. HERKOVITS, 1966. *The Influence of Culture on Visual Perception*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

- SEGALL, H.H., P.R. DASEN, J.W. BERRY, and Y.H. POORTINGA, 1999. (Second edition). *Human Behaviour in Global Perspective. An Introduction to Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Needham Heights, M.A.: Allyn and Bacon.
- SHWEDER, R.A. 1991. *Thinking Through Cultures*. Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press. Harvard.
- SINHA, D. 1997. Indigenising Psychology. In J.W.Berry, Y.H. Poortinga, and J. Pandey, *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 1, Theory and Method. (Pp. 215- 255). Needham Heights, M.A.: Allyn and Bacon.
- SINHA, D. and R.C. TRIPATHI, 1994. Individualism in a Collective Culture: A Case Study of Co-existence of Opposites. In U.Kim *et al* (Ed). *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, Method, and Applications*, (pp. 123-136). Cross-Cultural Research Methodology Series. Vol.16. Thousand Oaks, Sage, C.A.
- VAN DE VLJVER, F.J.R. and K. Leung, 2000. Methodological Issues in Psychological Research on Culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, (Millenium Special Issue)v Vol. 31(1), 33-51.
- WHITING, B.B. (Ed.) 1963. *Six Cultures: Studies in Child Rearing*. Cambridge, M.A. Harvard University Press, Harvard.

## **ABOUT THE SPEAKER**

Professor T.S. Saraswathi retired as Senior Professor in Human Development and Family Studies from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India. She obtained her doctoral degree in Psychology and Child Development, as a Ford Fellow at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA in 1972. She was also a visiting Fulbright Scholar at Cornell University in 1983-84. She has held visiting academic appointments in Tufts University, La Salle University, the Phillipines, and at Bogacizi University, Istambul, Turkey, since 2001.

Professor Saraswathi has co-edited Volume 2 of the *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* (1997, with Berry and Dasen); *The International Encyclopaedia of Adolescence* (2007, with Arnett *et al.*) *World Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the World* (2003, with Larson and Brown). Her edited volumes in India include *Cross-cultural Perspectives in Human Development* (2003) and *Culture, Socialisation, and Human Development* (1999), both by Sage Publications. She has contributed scientific papers in the areas of moral development, culture and socialisation, adolescent development and social policy. Currently she is an Associate Fellow at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore.

**ANNEXURE I**  
**Memorial Lectures — 2007-08**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture	17 January 2007	India International Centre, New Delhi	Professor Christopher Winch Educational Philosophy and Policy, Kings College London, UK	Individuals Workers or Citizens Reflections on the Limits of School Based Educational Reform	Professor Mrinal Miri <i>Former Vice-Chancellor</i> NEHU, Shillong
Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture	19 January 2007	RIE Mysore	Dr Radhika Herzberger, <i>Director</i> Rishi Valley School Chittoor Andhra Pradesh	Religion, Education and Peace	Prof. BL Chaudhary <i>Vice-Chancellor</i> MohanalSukhadia University, Udaipur Rajasthan
Mahadevi Verma Memorial Lecture	17 August 2007	RIE Bhopal	Prof. Karuna Chanana <i>Former Professor</i> Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies School of Social Sciences, JNU	Women in Indian Academe; Diversity Difference and Inequality in a Contested Domain	Prof. RS Sirohi <i>Vice-Chancellor</i> Barkatulla University Bhopal
B.M. Pugh Memorial Lecture	11 March 2008	Laitumkhrak Women's College Shillong	Shri Ratan Thiyam <i>Chairperson</i> , Chorus Repertory Theatre Imphal	Theatre Language and Expression	Professor T. Ao <i>Dean</i> , School of Humanities, NEHU Shillong

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Marjorie Sykes Memorial Lecture	8 April 2008	RIE Ajmer Jawahar Rang Manch, Ajmer	Ms Medha Patkar Social Activist	Socialisation vs Politics of Education	Professor M.S. Agwani Former Vice-Chancellor JNU
Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture	2 July 2008	Dorozio Hall Presidency College Kolkata	Shri Manoj Das International Centre of Education Sri Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry	Education for a Faith in the Future	Professor Sanjib Ghosh Principal, Presidency College, Kolkata
Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Lecture	19 July 2008	RIE Bhubaneswar	Professor N.R. Menon Member, Commission on Centre State Relations	Realising Equality of Status and of Opportunity: Role of Government, Judiciary and Civil Society	Professor Chandrashekhar Rath Eminent Writer
Gijubhai Badekha Memorial Lecture	11 September 2009	RIE Mysore	Shri U.R. Anantha Murthy Jnanpith Awardee	My Writing My Times	Professor G.H. Nayak Kannada Literary Critic
Savitribai Phule Memorial Lecture	12 December 2008	Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Mumbai	Dr Sunderaraman Director State Health System Resource	The Educational Institution as a Health facility	Dr (Ms) Vibhuti Patel Professor and Head Director PGSK SNTD Women's University

\* Lecture was delivered in 2009 because the speaker was ill in 2008.

**ANNEXURE II**  
**Memorial Lectures — 2008-09**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture	28 January 2009	National Institute of Education NCERT New Delhi	Shri Anupam Mishra Gandhi Peace Foundation Delhi	Raj Samaj Aur Pani	Professor M. H. Gureshi <i>Former Professor</i> Geography, Centre for the Study of Regional Development JNU
Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture	30 January 2009	RIE Mysore	Professor Padmini Swaminathan Madras Institute of Development Studies Chennai	Literacy and Levels of Formal (General and Professional) Education of the Indian Population: A National Report Card	Professor B. Shaik Ali <i>Former</i> <i>Vice-Chancellor</i> Mangalore and Goa University
Mahadevi Verma Memorial Lecture	5 January 2009	RIE Bhopal	Ms Kalpana Sharma <i>Former Chief of</i> <i>Bureau, The Hindu</i> Mumbai	Can Media Teach us Anything?	Dr Pushpendra Pal Singh <i>Head, Department of</i> <i>Journalism, National</i> <i>University of</i> <i>Journalism and</i> <i>Communication, Bhopal</i>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Lecture	14 January 2009	RIE Bhubneswar	Professor Swapan Majumdar <i>Director Culture and Relations</i> Vishva Bharati	Education as Empowerment/Inns in Search of an Alternative Education	Professor Shantanu Kumar Acharya Eminent Writer
Gijubhai Badekha Memorial Lecture	20 January 2009	MIDS Chennai	Professor T. S. Saraswathi, <i>Former Professor</i> , Maharaja Sayaji Rao University Baroda	Culture and Development Implication for Classroom Practices	Professor S. Jankarajan <i>Director</i> Madras Institute of Development Studies
Savitribai Phule Memorial Lecture	29 January 2009	SNDT Women's University Mumbai	Professor Sharmila Rege <i>Director Kratiyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Study Centre</i> , University of Pune	Education as Tritiya Ratna: Towards Phule Ambedkarite Feminist Pedagogies	Professor Chandra Krishnamurthy <i>Vice-Chancellor</i> SNDT Women's University
Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture	27 March 2009	Presidency College Kolkata	Professor Jasodhara Bagchi, <i>Former Professor</i> Jadavpur University	Education for Women and Women for Education : the Case of Bengal	Professor Sanjib Ghosh <i>Principal</i> Presidency College Kolkata
B. M. Pugh Memorial Lecture	27 March 2009	Don Bosco Youth Centre Shillong	Shri P. Sainath <i>Rural Affair Editor</i> The Hindu, Mumbai	India in the Age of Inequality : Farm Crisis, Food Crisis and the Media	Ms Patricia Mukhim <i>Editor</i> Shillong Times
Marjorie Sykes Memorial Lecture	28 October 2009	RIE Ajmer	Professor Kamal Datta <i>Former Professor</i> Department of Physics University of Delhi	What should we Teach? An Examination of Issues Underlying the College Curriculum	Professor Bhagrat Singh <i>Vice-Chancellor</i> MDS University Ajmer

## NOTES

## **NOTES**