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**BOOK REVIEW**

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# **Schooling, Socialisation and Identity**

## **A Textbook for B.Ed. Course**

**PUBLISHER:** NCERT, New Delhi

**YEAR:** 2014

**PAGES:** 142, **PRICE:** ₹ 125

Socialisation is a lifelong process that facilitates internalising the norms and principles of society, the way society functions and expects us to conduct ourselves. Almost all the behaviour patterns learned by us are a reflection of our interaction with different representatives of society. These important representatives come in the form of family, school, peers and media. What we call human nature is actually the learned behaviour with different representatives and at different levels. The society, the school and others are therefore responsible in establishing the identity of the individual and this identity becomes an integral part of the personality.

The book under review titled *Schooling, Socialisation and Identity* — *A Textbook for B.Ed. Course*, published by NCERT has been written with the central theme of social identities,

their importance and nature of their formation.

The book aims at generating awareness about the role society and school play in establishing the identity of an individual and the need of better understanding between the teacher and the learner.

This book has been skillfully conceptualised in seven chapters.

Chapter 1 on 'Self and Society' starts with the basic contention that society is the whole, the individual is a part and the behaviour of the individual has to be seen and understood in the light of the whole, i.e., the society. The making of the self and mind and the contribution of culture for acquiring complex skills, knowledge and their transfer has been conveyed competently in this chapter. There is a clear mention of the importance of social psychology

in shaping up the behaviour of an individual in the dynamic ongoing social process. The vital part of the message in this chapter is the focus on the dynamic relationships of human beings and the society as stated in the theory of George Herbert Mead whose book *Mind, Self and Society* has been recognised the world over.

Greeting another person as per the culture has been discussed well and supported with an activity. The relationship between society, mind and self with essential point of enquiry and social theory has been explained using simple language and day-to-day examples.

The chapter also briefly covers the role of social institutions and socialisation, kinship, marriage and family, many faces of community, neighbourhood socialisation, cultural capital, etc. There are seven activities to support the various dimensions of self and society. The relationship between the self and society, various dimensions of socialisation and the role played by cultural capital in different contexts has been explained well.

Chapter 2 on 'Socialisation and its Dimensions' starts with the constitutional provisions and commitment of the Constitution to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years. Addition of Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy, 86<sup>th</sup> amendment of Constitution, Article 21A to introduce Right to Education Bill-2005, Free and

Compulsory Education Act (April 2010) have been kept in mind while framing this chapter on socialisation and its dimensions, social inequality and constitutional equality. The pain and longing of a child who wants to go to school has been beautifully illustrated through a poem titled "Watch you going to School".

The identity of the child as a citizen of India, the rights of the child irrespective of the State he/she is born, the laws governing the State and the consequences of the violation of the laws, has been explained well in this chapter. There is also a mention of plurality and diversity at the time of partition of the country and national movement. In addition, the chapter makes a passing reference of distinct religious groups in India and their strengths in making India a culturally and traditionally a rich country. Growing up gendered, boys and girls going to separate schools, skewed male and female sex ratio in the country, caste system and diversity of India from various perspectives have been well elucidated. The chapter is supported by five relevant activities, pictures and a case study.

Chapter 3 covers 'Self, Person and Identity'. The focus of this chapter is on the issue of identity. The interconnection between the self, person and the identity has been beautifully put across. Several questions which arise while establishing the identity and the concept of self have been answered with the help of some statements

which are actually the expressions of children, adolescents and young adults. The development of self which includes self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy and the relation of self with family, peer, school, teachers, etc., have also got a mention in this chapter. The parenting style and parent-child relationship, teacher and schooling experiences have been covered quite well.

Three case studies to understand the role of teacher and its relation as well as influence on children has been stated aptly. The chapter has elaborated on the concept of identity, its diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium and achievement. The beliefs as shared by famous psychologist Rogers and Maslow having unlimited potential to promote the goal of self-fulfilment have been explained rationally. The sense of self and the understanding of the conflict arising out of beliefs, value systems, ideology and public personal image have been effectively covered keeping in mind the heterogeneous, diverse nature of the surroundings, the processes of globalisation, urbanisation, internal and transnational migration, growing complexity of cultural relationships, etc.

Chapter 4 is based on 'School Culture and Hidden Curriculum'. This is a very relevant chapter of the book being reviewed. We are aware that the curriculum of the school which means the content to be taught is pre-decided. However, the teaching in every school goes beyond the specified framework of

curriculum. The ethnicity of the school, even though not particularly mentioned in the curriculum plays a significant role as it has the natural message and the culture of the school set in it. In this chapter, case studies have been cited explaining the intended purpose of assessment for giving children credible feedback on their progress. What has been very beautifully explained in this chapter is the fact that children who are valued and recognised for their academic achievements by teachers and labelled as superior may not have other abilities which children labelled as academically inferior may possess.

The role of social faculty in creating these hierarchies has been explained well and supported by some reflections. The best part of this chapter is questioning the idea of able-bodied and able-minded. A pictorial presentation of a case and excerpts of an interview published in a magazine make an interesting reading. There is so much emphasis on inclusion in education these days. This chapter reinforces the importance of recognising the socio-economic and structural conditions of operation which can have far-reaching impact on impairment and disability. The powerful force of hidden curriculum with good intentions for the stakeholders has been explained well.

Chapter 5 is on 'Schooling and Identity Formation: Role of Schools'. The importance of the role of a school

in identity formation of the person is an established fact. The phase of transition for a child while shifting from home to school and forming new identities has been covered quite well and supported with an interesting case study. Defining the role of school as a social institution, the expected functions of the school and shortcomings if any have been explained in the light of the views of thinkers like Michael Apple, Avijit Pathak and Krishna Kumar, who have opined that conventional schools may simply be teaching children how to be submissive and how to accept mindless instructions from the powerful, as many activities according to them have little purpose.

There is a detailed mention of the identity in rural schools and different types of school. The importance of communication between teachers and students and the role it plays in establishing relationship between teachers and students has been adequately explained. The role of mother tongue as medium of instruction, its importance in better teaching-learning has been rightly emphasised. This chapter is supported by activities, pictures and a case study.

Chapter 6 is on 'Role of Education: Towards a just Peaceful Living'. It gives an overview of the modernity and globalisation. This chapter talks about their effect on changing the social, political, economic and cultural fabric of the nation which has come to us with advantages as well as disadvantages. Conflicts arising

out of modernity and globalisation and the need of educating children to accept differences and understand issues at a deeper level have been explained in simple and logical manner. The chapter emphasises the need of determining the nature of education and its impact on the classroom teaching techniques and assessment. Articles 29 and 30 of the Indian Constitution on minorities and cultural diversity have been aptly quoted while explaining the issues like cultural identity and critical pedagogy. The differences and the diversity prevailing in our society in schools and classrooms and the role a school can play in addressing inequalities has been clarified in simple and understandable manner.

Chapter 7 deals with 'Evolving Identity as a Teacher'. The need and the importance of the process of socialisation and the role played by teachers have been clearly brought out in this chapter. The identity of the teachers in relation to their professional responsibilities has been elaborated quite well.

There is a fairly elaborated account of pre-service education, values and beliefs of a teacher and the socialisation process. Talking about the identity of the teacher, this chapter highlights the ethical and moral dimensions of this identity as well as the importance of the role played by the teacher as a facilitator and co-learner. Related activities have been incorporated in this chapter to make it meaningful and interesting.

This book as a textbook for B.Ed. course can be termed as an outstanding work done by NCERT because of its relevance in terms of quality of content and simplicity of presentation. Keeping in view the price of the book, the paper quality, the printing clarity and quality contents, the book is very useful

for the student-teachers, teachers and teacher educators. All the seven chapters in the book are meaningful and supported with important case studies.

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