RESEARCH APPROACHES IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUBJECTS

VOLUME - 1

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Edited by: *Sruthi. S, Dr. Parikshit Layek, Dr. Mohd. Shaikhul Ashraf, Prof (Dr) Namita Rajput, Dr. Munendra Kumar, Prof. Chidanand S. Anur & Madan Pal*

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CHAPTER 16
REPRESENTATIONS OF DISABILITY IN SELECT WOMEN'S WRITING: A TRAJECTORIAL OVERVIEW

Ms. Noble A. Paliath[1]

Abstract

Disability Studies has a long history of relationship with feminist theory and gender studies. Several texts that got produced as part of early disability studies stress the want to explore portrayals of disability in women's lives as well as the meeting point and intersection between feminist and disability politics. This complex and intricate nexus between the afore-mentioned bodies of academic disciplines has contributed to the birth and germination of a new and fresh branch of knowledge christened as feminist disability studies. It is now also, as in the earlier times, conceived as a recognized and pertinent area of study that can lead to any perusal of women's literature. The two systems of knowledge share a mutually beneficial relationship because both have something to learn and imbibe from and contribute to one another and complement one another. Feminist disability theory is often construed as an expansive critical lens that help understand how the related notions of ability/disability meets and interacts with other social and cultural domains like gender and also how such social systems are mutually constitutive. Thus, an understanding of the intersectional and mutually constitutive and symbiotic relationship between disability and gender is essential to reading representations and delineations of disability in women's writing. The current article is an exploratory attempt to trace the trajectorial overview of a few representations of disability in select women's writing.

Key Words: *Disability Studies, Feminist Theory, Gender Studies, portrayals, disability politics, Feminist Disability Studies, mutually beneficial, critical lens, trajectorial overview*

As Rosemarie Garland-Thomson in her influential essay, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory" rightly remarks, Disability studies can benefit from feminist theory and feminist theory can benefit from disability studies. Both feminism and disability studies are comparative and concurrent academic enterprises. Just as feminism has expanded the lexicon of what we imagine as womanly, has sought to understand and destigmatize what we call the subject position of woman, so has disability studies examined the identity disabled in the service of integrating people with disabilities more fully into our society. As such, both are insurgencies that are becoming institutionalized, underpinning inquiries outside and inside the academy. A feminist disability theory builds on the strengths of both (2-3).

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To rephrase her observation; incorporating disability into feminist theory does not restrict the focus to women with disabilities; also it does not exclude discussions and deliberations on race, class, sexuality, or other vectors of power; rather "integrating disability clarifies how this aggregate of systems operates together, yet distinctly, to support an imaginary norm and structure the relations that grant power, privilege and status to that norm" (2-3). As a result, feminist disability theory is that which makes use of a generalizing and universalizing rather than minoritising view of disability, comprehending it as part of a broad and wide system of both privilege and oppression based on ideas of ability and disability which evaluates, interprets and produces not only physical but also cognitive variations.

Feminist disability theory can also draw attention to ableism within women's literature. Marge Piercy's feminist utopian novel *Woman on the Edge of Time* foresees a future in which disabled bodies do not exist. She in a way points to the inability and callousness of society to contain differences without creating hierarchy, compartmentalization, bias and prejudice. Marge Piercy does away with forms of oppression and segregation like racial, class, sexuality and ability differences altogether in order to fantasize a world without oppression. The concept of equality is beautifully portrayed in the text and everyone is delineated as able bodied. This kind of marked absence of disability in the novel puts forth the assumption that disability has no place in feminist visions of the future. The common sense nature of ableism, the staunch belief that disabled lives are lesser lives and that able bodied embody the ideal are undermined and subverted in the novel. Feminist Disability Studies is thus a counter point to the non disabled privilege and ableism extant in the society of the past and present times.

Women have long been figured in Western thought as deformed, inferior and mutilated versions of males, both physically and cognitively. As circulated and read, exclusive feminine traits like menstruation and pregnancy often bind women's 'lesser' bodies and minds. This treatment of women has often been the content of scathing criticism in generations of women's writing. Consequentially, Feminist disability theory provides a crucial lens for the evaluation and interpretation of women's literature produced across ages. As history goes, before the development of Feminist Disability Studies, disability was already a common aspect of women's writing. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Dr. Frankenstein's monster symbolizes the potential for failures in the human quest for scientific betterment. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, is a text that picturizes different chronic and mental illnesses as indicatives of the morality and inferiority of various characters in the novel. There were differences in opinion and differences in approach to feminists' (also, anti-feminists') responses to disability. Some claimed and argued that all women were not disabled, women were being slanderously classed with disabled people, and women were not naturally disabled but were made disabled by the prevailing norms of sexist inequality.

Folks opposed to the feminist movement argued that women are innately, mentally and physically weak. They are disabled in comparison to men. The activities of public life typically reserved and meant for men would further put women into trouble. Of the varied opinions casted, the argument that women were disabled by patriarchal oppression more than ever gained prominence; it became a regular, perennial and prominent theme in women's literary texts especially those that got produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This predominant thought manifested itself through the concept of the ‘mad-woman.’ Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, depicts the

image of the mad-woman wherein the fictitious character of Judith, Shakespeare's imaginary sister, "Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say" (800) was compelled to commit suicide owing to societal restrictions.

At last—for she was very young, oddly like Shakespeare the poet in her face, with the same gray eyes and rounded brows—at last Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on 3 of 4 her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so—who shall measure the heat and violence of the poet's heart when caught and tangled in a woman's body?—killed herself one winter's night and lies buried at some crossroads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle (Woolf 801).

A similar instance occurs in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, where Bertha, the woman is locked away in the attic by her husband, Rochester. *The Madwoman in the Attic* by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, reclaimed and asserted representations of the mad woman as symbols of rebellion against patriarchal oppression; rather than as victims disabled by it. The observation revealed the extended history of the pathologization of women in psychiatry. This novel interpretation of the mad woman as rebel also suggests that madness is the only sensible and rational response of women to the dictates of the patriarchal society.

Another notable example of the figure of the madwoman in women's literature is in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," a much read short story. The narrative portrays a woman's emotional degeneration over the course of several months as she is essentially locked up in a room in a summer house under the governance of her physician husband to recover from her miserable condition. The mad woman narrator in the story has often been decoded as symbolic of the mental impact of patriarchal oppression on women as well as women's resistance to patriarchal oppression. There are many instances in the novel when the narrator's husband tries to attain total dominion over his wife. A further noticeable fact is that his control often goes unquestioned by others. Hence, the story can be re-read as not only a critique of sexism but also of ableism as well. Disability, thus, remains a fundamental feature of women's writing in both the historical and contemporary sense.

Thus, through a close scrutiny and re-readings of many a literary text, we come to decipher that there are diverse ways in which disability studies theory can assist the furtherance of evaluation of women's writing. The varied depictions and interpretations of disability as identity, experience, culture, metaphor, politics, oppression and rebellion are extant in the field of women's writing. Discourses based on disability have often been used in opposition to women as a form of patriarchal oppression. Also, disability presents itself as a metaphor for both oppression and rebellion in majority of the texts produced by women. Consequentially, disability studies put forth an enhanced and nuanced stance to feminist literary analysis which permits readers to critically evaluate how disability is delineated in women's literature. On a concluding note, a careful attention to these details and how to decode those, leads one to expand the possibilities and probabilities for further perusals of both unknown and novel texts of women's literature.

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CHAPTER 17

FROM INTEGRATION TO TRANSFORMATION: A CLOSE READING OF R. K. NARAYAN'S *THE GUIDE (1958)*

Ms. Noble A. Paliath[1]

As the trite, hackneyed and clichéd definition goes, Indian Writing in English or Indo-Anglian literature or Indian English literature (IEL) is a generalized field of specialization signifying writers in India who write in English while their native or co-native languages remain one of the umpteen languages of India. The year 1930 saw the birth and origin of Indian novel in English or the English fiction in India as a result of the productive, distinct and creative contributions from many a literary stalwart associated with the field of Indian Writing in English. Consequentially, with the passage of time, a notable line of Indo-Anglian litterateurs raised their genuine concerns regarding the doubtfulness and improbability of conveying Indians' profound experiences in a foreign language. They also expressed their doubts in association with the genuineness of emotions conveyed in an alien language rather than in the indigenous languages. The peculiar contributions and inherent differences of the Indian Novel from other epistemological branches of disciplines were inaugurated by the triumvirates, namely, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand. The particular distinctiveness of this body of academic discipline articulated by them was based on a number of factors like language, idiom, manner of depiction, portrayals of characters, core thematic concerns and both cultural generalities and specificities; to mention a few.

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayanaswami Iyer alias R. K. Narayan (1906–2001), one of the pioneers, phenomenally popular and respected novelists of Indian Writing in English, stormed the literary firmament of Indian Writing in English with his remarkable, enormous and sizeable body of literary texts that was all-inclusive of both novels and short stories. His literary style and idiolectic version is a unique blend of the Western and the Eastern, with the Eastern being preferred and given an Indianness to the core; a faithful reflection of India. He wrote in a very pure, simple, easy, natural, homely and conversational style. He excelled to a very large extent in successfully and vividly delineating Indian experiences, especially the lives of the lower middle class in South India. Generally perceived, Narayan was a writer who took least interest in the subject of politics and problems of India. However, differences of opinion persist with regard to Narayan's approach to politics. All the more so must this be the case, the venue, locale and setting of most of his fictional productions is an imaginary and fictitious South Indian town of Malgudi, an imaginative version of Narayan's beloved Mysore that gave the mandatory fixity of background for his novels. *Mr. Sampath* (1949), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *Lawley Road* (1956), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-Eater of*

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Malgudi (1962), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), *A Horse and Two Goats* (1970) and *The Painter of Signs* (1976) include some of the best of his novelistic ventures.

The Guide (1958) is de facto a tale of adultery with the hero of prominence in the novel taking centre stage and being christened as Raju, a railway guide popularly known as Railway Raju. He is famously known as a tourist guide in Malgudi. Meanwhile, he comes into contact with the archaeologist, Marco and his dancer wife, Rosie. While Marco, the eternal tourist and art historian is absolutely immersed and absorbed in his archaeological findings and endless investigations, Raju manages to seduce Rosie and wins her heart within no time. When Marco comes to know about this, he leaves for Madras and Rosie starts living with Raju in his ancestral home with daily rehearsals; she being a passionate, accomplished and graceful dancer. Raju soon begins to lead a luxurious and lavish life at the expense of Rosie's earnings. However, the relation between Raju and Rosie soon turns out to be an unsuccessful affair as Raju forges Rosie's signature on a legal document through which Marco wants to transfer some jewellery to Rosie. Raju is incarcerated for the same and is sentenced to two years' imprisonment. After getting released from the jail, Raju takes refuge in an old, dilapidated and lonely temple in Mangala on the banks of the river Sarayu, a few miles away from Malgudi. "He felt he was attaining the stature of a saint" (16). The villagers misunderstand him as a holyman, sage and saint with "apostolic beard" (6). He was definitely passing through "some sort of transmigration" (22). They brought him all kinds of offerings that include a combo of varied eatables. However, a severe famine and drought breaks in that village. This leads the rustics to urge Raju to undertake a fast so as to bring rains to their parched land. He sags down on the twelfth day with an utterance of certainty, "Velan, it's raining, in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs" (247).

The novel begins with Raju acquitted from jail being currently positioned in an old temple by the river Sarayu, the words and the setting paving way for a sudden access and an air of pontificality. "Raju welcomed the intrusion… The man stood gazing reverentially on his face… and took his seat two steps below the granite slab on which Raju was sitting cross-legged as if it were a throne, beside an ancient shrine" (5). The technique of narration moves on two planes; in two time-frames, the past and the present. R. K. Narayan uses the technique of alternate chronology, intermixing and intermingling the past with the present. Raju was once a renowned tourist guide. Many a tourist opined that, "If you are lucky enough to be guided by Raju, you will know everything. He will not only show you all the worth-while places, but also help you in every way" (9). In the due course of his role as a fully accomplished tourist guide, Marco, the archaeologist, proves to be a lifelong customer of Raju. "The moment I set eyes on him, on that memorable day at our railway station, I knew that here was a lifelong customer for me. A man who preferred to dress like a permanent tourist was just what a guide passionately looked for all his life" (10). Raju's infatuation with Rosie, Marco's wife, carries the story fast forward ending up the whole world of the novel in a state of utter disorder and anarchy. As goes the situation, "he realised he had lost sight of his starting point and found himself entangled in hopeless figures" (17). Even in the midst of absolute chaos, a welcome aspect for Raju, he declares, "What must happen must happen; no power on earth or in heaven can change its course, just as no one can change the course of that river" (22).

Raju also realizes that it is better not "to think of what is gone. What is gone is gone" (30). Rosie stood as a factor of prime concern for Raju when he exclaims, "My sympathies were all for the girl; she was so lovely and elegant… Her arrival had been a sort of surprise for me" (65). Raju hates

Marco to the core which becomes evident in the lines, "A hateful fellow. I had never hated any customer so much before" (68). Raju was full of praise for the "glorious snake dance" (84) of Rosie. Raju exclaims, "I spoke my mind. I praised her dancing. I spoke out my love, but sandwiched it conveniently between my appreciations of her art. I spoke of her as an artist in one breath, and continued in the next as a sweetheart… Oh, I keep thinking of you all night. World's artist number one! Don't you see how I am pining for you every hour" (84). Raju's blind fascination and adoration for Rosie finally paid off as according to the words of his mother the woman with the serpentine look will after all land you up in a state of aporia. His attempt to forge Rosie's signature finally makes him chained behind the bars. The entire life seems blank hereafter. However, the novel is given a twist when people mistake his identity to be that of a swami or messiah. "…around his neck he wore a necklace of prayer-beads. His eyes shone with softness and compassion, the light of wisdom emanated from them" (90). The transformation that has come over Raju becomes evident in his very incarnation as Swami of the place. "He came to be called Swami by his congregation, and where he lived was called the Temple. It was passing into common parlance" (91). The villagers swarmed around him when they found themselves in the midst of confusing situations as they have ascribed the role of their messiah to him. They asserted that, "This Mangala is a blessed country to have a man like the Swami in our midst. No bad thing will come to us as long as he is with us. He is like Mahatma" (102). The august presence of the swami itself was a blessing as far as the villagers were concerned. As per the request of the commoners, Raju, though reluctantly, submits himself to the common requirement of a fasting for twelve days and this act of pleasing others eventually leads to his death giving the novel an air of finality.

The Guide, though not a popular or the best of R. K. Narayan's literary outpouring, was widely acclaimed and well received by the literary world. The book anchors around the theme of innocence betrayed, finally, leading to corruption and redemption. Thus, Raju in the story finds himself in his new identity as the spiritual guide and is a fraud-turned-honest man. His act of impersonation though not a deliberate one turns into a genuine act of self-sacrificial virtue. R. K. Narrayan's *The Guide*, as the title suggests, through a process of intrusion into and integration with the familial life of Marco-Rosie couple, the essential identity of Raju gets transformed into the spiritual guide and mentor of a whole locality thereby creating a sense of link between the processes of integration and transformation in his life. The title of the novel is apt, suggestive and befitting. This literary creation is typically Indian with its depiction of ideas, imagery, and characters and is a true characteristic of R. K. Narayan's fiction.

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Role of Women in Literature

Dr. Shubhra Jamwal & Dr. R. S. Regin Silvest

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4. Unearthing the Unwritten: Revisiting Connotative Paradigms in Adrienne Rich's "Claiming an Education"

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Literature has often been the bottle gourd and melting pot of umpteen pregnant, pertinent perceptions and reflections of connoisseurs of art, which help shape our views and insights about general and particular concepts on any relevant content. The world has discerned, construed and interpreted many a litterateur's musings on the inevitable link between the associated notions of gender and education. Adrienne Rich, America's widely read, hugely influential and one of the most celebrated women of letters is universally acclaimed and challenged for her disputatious, confrontational, argumentative and anti-male bias in her writings. "Claiming an Education" is an essay garbed in the form of a convocation speech delivered by Adrienne Rich in September 1977 to the graduating women students of Douglas College, New Jersey, USA. Her essay is a kind of polemical text of a speech that she delivered to an august audience of students at an all-female college.

"Claiming an Education," first printed in the magazine *The Common Woman* in 1977 and eventually reprinted in the collection *On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose* 1966-1978, apparently, is a critique of the present day faulty educational system from a woman's perspective where gender-based discrimination is highly raging and ringing at the core especially in the wider scenario of the university sphere of education. At the same time, the text can be read and re-read as a statement and documentation of feminist ideas. Adrienne Rich powerfully entails how education simply becomes yet another contesting seat, site and hub of gender-biased, prejudiced and age-old inequity and bigotry out of the many different spots and realms of demarcation and segregation. The present paper attempts to have a look at and scrutinize the key issues foregrounded by Adrienne Rich in the afore-

mentioned seminal speech articulated by her in front of an impressive galaxy of aspiring academicians.

Adrienne Rich is a litterateur to whom a series of descriptive labels are often associated and attached with. She is often eulogized to be a renowned poet, essayist and political activist for women who self-labelled, self-defined, self-referenced, self-branded and self-designated herself as a woman, lesbian and feminist. She often stood for the cause of women and became a great champion of the oppressed by standing for the yet-to-be realized and materialized rights of women and the sexual minorities. She was a daring radical feminist who was out and out unapologetic of her political stance. The questioning of patriarchal pre-suppositions, a rallying clamour, cry for a common women's language, women's role in society in various capacities, the immediate and instant need for desirable, positive change and the power of the will continued to remain some of the perennial and recurrent issues of concerns in most of her writings. Adrienne Rich's "Claiming an Education" is in no way different, in that, it surfaces and projects Rich as an uncompromising, unbending feminist in all its manifestations.

Adrienne Rich at the very outset of her influential deliverance announces the systematicity with which she has planned to separate her remarks into two parts. "… some thoughts about you, the women students here, and some thoughts about us who teach in a women's college. But ultimately those two parts are indivisible" (50). According to her, there is always,

> An ethical and intellectual contract between teacher and student. This contract must remain intuitive, dynamic and unwritten; but we must turn to it again and again if learning is to be reclaimed from the depersonalizing and cheapening pressures of the present day academic scene (50).

"Claiming an Education" speaks of the importance of claiming versus receiving an education, a dilemma faced in most schools and curricula across the globe. Rich explains that being educated is a right and therefore both women and men should claim that right. Receiving, on the

other hand, is to accept, as if education is being offered as an option rather than a right.

... you cannot afford to think of being here to receive an education: you will do much better to think of being here to claim one. One of the dictionary definitions of the verb "to claim" is: to take as the rightful owner; to assert in the face of possible contradiction. "To receive" is to come into possession of: to act as a receptacle or container for; to accept as authoritative or true (50).

Further in her speech, she goes on to tell about the relevance of educating women as well as women's rights in an educational environment. Rich foregrounds the gendered nature and institutionalized biases of the academia. One of the devastating weaknesses of university learning, according to her, is the absence and total erasure of women's experience and thought from the curriculum and its exclusion of women as members of the academic community. Only very few women are visible and present in the upper levels of faculty and administration in most institutions. "Douglas College itself is a women's college in a university administered overwhelmingly by men" (50). She also submits that what you learn here, the very texts you read, the lectures you hear… to a very large degree, (are), neither objective reality, nor an accurate picture of the past… When you read or hear about "great issues," "major texts," "the mainstream of Western thought," you are hearing about what men, above all white men, in their male subjectivity, have decided is important (51).

Adrienne Rich comes up with two vital observations in the due course of her speech when she comes up with punching statements like sciences can be racist and sciences can be sexist too. Black and other minority sections have recognized that their racial and ethnic experience was not counted for in the studies broadly labelled as human. Moreover, it has been more difficult for women to comprehend their exclusion. It is also a matter of serious and shocking concern that it is only within the last hundred years that higher education has and that too grudgingly been opened up to women, even to white, middle class women. Rich draws the attention of the members of the audience to certain unavoidable and

indispensable changes in the history of womanhood with the rebirth of the feminist movement in the country. It was an occasion when women students and teachers began to demand and set up women's studies courses- "to claim a women-directed education" (51). Despite all the scathing criticism, Women's Studies has evolved and is still growing as an autonomous and independent branch of literature, offering to more and more women, "a new intellectual grasp on their lives, new understanding of our history, a fresh vision of the human experience, and also a critical basis for evaluating what they hear and read in other courses, and in the society at large" (51).

Adrienne Rich demands an education that requires an element of active personal initiative, active, ongoing struggle for a real education. The essential experience of education, for her, is the experience of "taking responsibility toward yourselves" (51). She furthers her argument by stating that education entails being responsible to oneself- not just for women, but for all students. Rich encapsulates a barrage of ideas when she tries to incorporate the notion of what is responsibility to oneself in terms of education. According to her,

> Responsibility to yourself means refusing to let others do your thinking, talking and naming for you; it means learning to respect and use your brains and instincts; hence, grappling with hard work... you don't fall for shallow and easy solutions- predigested books and ideas, taking "gut" courses instead of ones you know will challenge you, (no) bluffing at school and life, instead, doing solid work, (not) marrying early as an escape from real decisions, (not) getting pregnant as an evasion of already existing problems. It means that you refuse to sell your talents and aspirations short, simply to avoid conflict and confrontation (51).

It is also in a way resisting the limiting, warring and conflicting forces of society which, in turn, according to Rich, demands courage with a difference. It means not to be continuously available to others when one needs time, space and room for oneself and one's work. It is also a way of others' (parents, teachers, husbands, friends, children) respecting one's sense of purpose and integrity as persons and valued individuals.

Rich temporarily puts an end to the articulation of thoughts kept reserved for the first part of her speech as she remarks, "Now comes the second part of the contract" (51). She points out the fact that education of women has been a matter of heated debate and deliberation for centuries and also to the age-old, fixed, negative attitudes about women's role, their ability to think and take leadership. Many male professors consider teaching in a women's college as a second-rate career. Many tend to eroticize their female students, treating them as sexual objects, instead of extracting and eliciting the best out of their minds. She feels sorry to state that, "Many teachers, both men and women, trained in the male-centered tradition, are still handling the ideas and texts of that tradition on to students without teaching them to criticize its antiwoman attitudes, its omission of women as part of the species" (51). She suggests clear thinking, active discussion and excellent writing as pre-requisites for intellectual freedom to mould thoughtful, expressive human beings and these are the traits to be inculcated in the student community who are being brought up in a culture of discouragement which is both anti-intellectual and anti-woman. Instead of cultivating passive recipiency in the minds of women pupils, they should instead be trained to think actively and be active and globally intelligent thinkers.

Finally, as her speech approaches the mark of a definitive conclusion, she asserts that education necessarily entails, taking yourself seriously. It is all about pushing the limits of your reach and accessibility to others, showing others the range of what you can do. "It means rejecting attitudes of "take-it-easy," "why-be-so-serious," "why-worry-you-will-probably-get-married anyway." Education also means a doing away with discouraging attitudes and outlooks as it is always a matter of and making a pledge of mutual seriousness and shared commitment between the teacher and student communities. She concludes the speech by rightly remarking and thus making a universal appeal that,

> women's minds and experiences are intrinsically valuable and indispensable to any civilization worthy the name: that there is no more exhilarating and intellectually fertile place in the academic world

today than a women's college- if both students and teachers in large enough numbers are trying to fulfill this contract (52).

Gender is a concept that is constantly and continuously being discussed, deliberated, revisited and redefined. It is in this context that such a feminist and cultural text like Adrienne Rich's "Claiming an Education" becomes relevant. Rich outrightly criticizes the gendered bias in education. The speech may be read and interpreted as a critique of the present day system of education and that too from a woman's perspective. It may also be viewed and perceived as the detailed analysis of a keen and sharp observer of society at large embedded in the personality of Adrienne Rich and its crippling practices, deconstructing the inequitable educational structures to a tremendous impact.

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HUMAN RIGHTS OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Global Intervention Strategies

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Inclusive Education and Disabled Children: A Critique

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Introduction

Since times immemorial, there exists an established and default framework of pervasive policy gaps in the education of children with disabilities. Mainstream education often becomes an insurmountable barrier that prevents disabled children from experiencing inclusion. Mass public education and school curricula have never been framed shaped and designed with differently abled learners in mind. It's high time for inclusive educators to seriously think of an alternative curriculum that are more in tune with, in line with, the needs and wants of diverse learners. The curricular approaches failed to recognize and meet the diverse learning needs of discrete pupils. The narrowness and rigidity of syllabi signify exclusion for non-normative children. Often and always, special educational needs and learning disabilities are seen as the direct products of exclusionary schooling. The achievements, attainments and accomplishments of varied centers of learning become nullified and negated when they fail to integrate and accommodate the spirit of all its teachers and students. Disabled children are expected to conform and fit into the existing schooling arrangements.

Disability studies and social justice intersect at the crossroads of inclusive education. Inclusive education in India as elsewhere has often been described as exclusive of children with disabilities. Disabled children rarely and seldom make progress and advancement beyond primary school. A vast majority of the disabled are illiterate and have hardly ever attended schools. Disability is most likely to prevent and inhibit one's access and entry into the arena of education and children with disabilities of various sorts like autism, cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities are least likely to get admitted in schools. Lack of facilities in schools for the disabled like ramps, accessible toilets and access to electricity in schools, to mention a few, is the major stumbling block and impediment that stand in the way of disabled children's admittance to temples of learning. The educational challenges of children with disabilities arise and stem from a rigid and stringent curriculum, inaccessible schools and classrooms, continued absence of modified assessments, and deficit perspectives that place limits on what disabled children can achieve.

The current research article addresses the pertinent question containing

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within itself the thread of contemporaneity: To what extent are completely and wholly disabled children incorporated in their schools? At the heart of this critique is a wakeup call for inclusive education. The very thought process of inclusive education eventually leads one to ponder over its antithesis, that is the notion of special education. Special education and inclusive education breathe in special significance taking into serious concern the psycho medical view that disabled children require specialist intervention. Special education positions and places the disabled child in a specialist and professional setting supported by specially and professionally trained experts who willingly intervene to improve the child. This provides a more suitable context for the needs of disabled children to be met. But children who undergo special education often have a narrow education, achieve low levels of academic advancement and leave schools only to enter other segregated and separated realms of work and education.

According to Gerber, special education is a–segregating, insulated, self-protecting, racially biased philosophy and array of practices, a product of… misguided scientific positivism, or merely as an ineffective, over-blown problem to easily solvable school problems (159).‖ As per the opinion of Isaacs, special educators succeed in promoting limited on to logiest of personhood, exaggerated legitimizations of the normal, based on an ever-growing and insidious idea that the failings of children can be explained in terms of a medical deficit-model of the disabled child (41).lAs Gerber points out, special schools breed –unusual practices enacted by specialist teachers to instruct or manage the exotic and homogenized groups of special needs children (157).‖ Special schools conspire in the failure and comedown of all schools to accommodate and contain difference. Special schools relocate and transplant the infirmities and failings of mass education into the minds and bodies of disabled children. The above-mentioned assumptions persist to impact inclusive education. Inclusion is de facto a response to special education. As Vislie submits,

Inclusive education is a process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals. It records inclusion and exclusion as connected processes, schools developing more inclusive practices may need to consider both. It emphasizes overall school effectiveness. It is of relevance to all phases and types of schools, possibly including special schools, since within any educational provision teachers face groups of students with diverse needs and are required to respond to this diversity (21).

Inclusive education has become globally preserved in documents such as UNESCO‘s (1990) World Declaration on the Education for All, UNESCO‘s (1994) Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education Needs and the United Nations (2007) Convention on

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These initiatives intend to promote disabled people‘s human rights through entry and access to the physical, social,

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educational, health, economic and cultural environment. As Vislie comments, Inclusive education, based on a growing international consensus of the rights of all children to a common education in their locality regardless of their background, attainment or disability, seeks to provide good quality education for learners and a community-based education for all(18).

India's National Education Policy 2020 (NEP), often branded as a fresh era in the map of educational reforms, offers rays of hope against exclusionary practices of the disabled community. New ways of thinking and practicability of approach related to the changing trends in education contributed to ideas like comprehensive schooling and systemic reorganization of schools. As per the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD) and its provisions for inclusive education, education is perceived as a space where persons with and without disabilities learn together. The act is also all-inclusive of non-discrimination in schools, accessible infrastructure, personal monitoring, individualized attention and home-based education. Contemporaneously, umpteen differently abled children have been admitted to local mainstream schools.

Conclusion

Children with disabilities are primarily interpreted and viewed as beneficiaries of welfare and care in the form of peer tutoring, collaborative learning, open schooling, personalized assistance and one-on-one teaching. It is the need of the hour to go further, to identify disability as just another aspect and phase of identity and as a form of diversity rather than solely a scarcity and deficit. Inclusive education approaches seek changes in the domain of education demanding educators to rethink education and disability by fitting into a generic consensus by upholding noble principles like accommodation, integration, tolerance, acceptance and assimilation. Schools should become places and sites of transition and transformation that affect positive change. Schools should be in the forefront of providing pro-active support to the inclusion of disabled students. Inclusive education may be considered as one step forward in this direction and regard that might help re-energies and re-activate further changes in schools. Inclusive education should act as dialogic spaces that open up more responsive curricula and professional support of inclusion. Inclusive education has not grown as one might think and hope. Much is still being done. Ultimately, the question remains: Are the human rights of the disabled when read in alignment with their rights to get educated been violated or fulfilled?

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National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Multidisciplinary Approaches

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The Power of Info: Why Good Info Matters?

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Abstract

It involves and requires a sense and air of certainty and assurance when we claim an assert that we are all living in a VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) worl The world around us is subject to unprecedented, constant, speedy and unpredictable changes the split or fraction of a second. These fluctuations, alterations and transitions happening acro the globe are officially disseminated to the general public by a host of professionals associated wit and affiliated to the media industry. With the recent strides and advancements made in the fie of science, technology and media, huge volumes of info are transferred and transmitted instantl at the same moment, over increasingly larger distances thereby paving the way not only for in explosion but also info pollution. As a result of the avalanche and barrage of info, this state ambiguity in the very act of decoding, analyzing, categorizing, and dissecting the received info int genuine and fake ones, involves and consumes a lot of systemic, conscious and deliberate effor from the part of seekers of info to make a selection from among the informed choices. People ofte find themselves caught and torn between the worlds of what and what not to believe. It is at th context an epistemological concept like media literacy becomes pertinent and excites th furtherance of academic deliberations. Media literacy is all about exhibiting the readiness to verif the readily available info by subjecting it to critical thinking and skeptical scrutiny. The currer article is a foray into a few fact checking exercises, tools and techniques that help construe th changing info ecosystem, how to develop nuanced perspectives based on recent issues of concer and also as how to ascribe meaning to events that help shape our lives and the world in which w live in.

Key Words: VUCA, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, advancements, info explosion, info pollution, avalanche, barrage, epistemological, media literacy, critical thinking, fact checking, skeptical scrutiny, changing ecosystem

Living in a post-truth era, we find it a bit difficult to divine the differences between the epistemological concepts and debatable terms like fact and truth. It's not easy to pin down the discrepancies between the opposing terms or lexicons like fact and truth. The questions on the difference between fact and truth are often considered to be a bit more philosophical than lexical. Fact and truth are often compared to a beaded necklace wherein the beads are facts and the thread that connects the beads becomes the truths. Thus, multiple truths become what may be called as the fact. Fact is often perceived as something that exists in reality, in a real form, firmly planted in the physical world and as such is a visually and empirically verifiable entity. It is constant, fixed unchanging, proven, objective, authoritative quantifiable and is regardless, irrespectiv and independent of the person who believe it. Truth, on the other hand, is always th outcome of a universal acclamation. It varie from person to person. It is strictly personal subjective and personally experienced. I takes into account the feelings, emotions an beliefs of the individual. It is an emotionally and subjectively driven force. To sum up every fact is true but all truths are not facts The ability to distinguish between fact and truth, thus, necessitates a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the changing info ecosystem.

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Media serve as the oxygen of unrestricted, public life. Whatever happens under the sun; all the goings-on around us, we get from media reports. It is an undeniable and indisputable matter of fact and serious concern that we, human beings, as the major and supreme occupants and inhabitants of today's globalized, industrialized and interconnected world have become saturated with media. We can even go to the extent of remarking and stating that our immediate communities, societies and even cultures are now media saturated. Defacto, the media mediate. Print media like newspapers, magazines and books, broadcast media like TV and radio and finally and ultimately, (with revolutionary leap happening in the highly technologized world minute by minute) digital media like mobile phones, videos, films and animations act as warring, conflicting and opposing forces that increasingly compete among each other to steal and snatch away our precious and invaluable pastimes and leisure moments. With the proliferation and mushrooming of 'n' number of media options that give access to instantaneous info, the media now puts forth more diversified choices in the production and distribution of newsworthy raw materials for everyone without any sort of discrimination.

Media shape and influence to a greater degree our understandings of the world thereby forcing and compelling us to act, behave and think in a specific way as dictated by the powerful lot. Media is highly impactful in the sense that it exercises huge power, authority, control and supremacy in our daily, routine chores and lives. The media reports; the messages that we decode from various sources are all the more non-immediate, highly calculated, biased and mediated by highly advanced technology. The raw materials and news items are not randomly collected; nor are they part of a natural and unchanging order. They are often perceived to be a matter of selection. Hence, media is all about interaction and communication. However, the transmission of message is not all about production; it is only half the story but when we exhibit the readiness and opt out to be consumers of info circulated by mega companies and professional corporations, we are in fact involved in a noble mission of interpreting and analyzing the messages, attributing to them our own semantic understandings and inclinations. Herein lies the pertinence of one's creativity and invites us to construe our roles in co-creating new readings and perusals of the received info and also reinforces the spirit of critical inquiry within us urging us to be critical users of others' media. This notion takes us to the language being employed in these kinds of exchanges.

Language is always a highly nuanced term in itself. It contains and encapsulates within itself varied layers of meaning. Language is the entity that makes us essentially human; it is the connective force that binds us with the immediate community. Language reflects and constructs reality at once. It is always in a state of flux; as such, is dynamic and ever-changing system of systems. Media force us to think how language operates; how stories are fabricated by way of language and how they are garbed and wrapped in the attire of creative and stylistic language so as to help shape the ways in which these stories are recorded and analyzed. Taking into serious account and consideration, the systemic study, collection and gathering of required data and submitting those to fact checking procedures, what matters much, is the capability and shrewdness from the part of unchecked flourishing of voracious creators of info who tailor language in such a way as to make the story emotionally appealing and something that excites genuine interest from the part of the general public; from consumers of content. Unfortunately, the originators, enablers and creators of info; the persons who write the initial script remains obscure, anonymous and hidden and sharers of info through the act of sharing without much forethought and second thought, create far-reaching, unforeseen consequences and implications.

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The anonymity further ascribed to the creators of info on one side and the sharers of info who either agrees with or argues against the info being shared is as a result of the lesser degree of interactivity between the two parties. People performing the afore-said linguistic acts are equally responsible as people commenting and sharing the same and similar info. Hence, sharers of info should always be cautious when they sit to transmit and disseminate unofficial and unauthorized info. This lack of knowledge in verifying the genuineness and authenticity of info and exchanging creditable and authoritative info necessitates the furtherance and urgent need one understands about what and what not is to be publicly shared. The afore-mentioned stance calls for critical attention a profound and deep knowledge in the epistemological branch of discipline called Media and Information Literacy (MIL) or Media Literacy.

Media and Information Literacy consists of the knowledge, the attitudes, and the sum of the skills needed to know when and what information is needed; where and how to obtain that information; how to evaluate it critically and organize it once it is found; and how to use it in an ethical way. The concept extends beyond communication and information technologies to encompass learning, critical thinking, and interpretative skills across and beyond professional and educational boundaries (IFLA, 2011).

Literacy is often deciphered as one's ability to read and write. Media literacy is a catch phrase that is much in vogue in the contemporary global scenario. Media literacy is the ability to recognize different types of media and fully construe the messages that are getting encoded. If roughly interpreted, media literacy is the ability of the consumers of both media and info to submit and subject both to critical thinking and skeptical inquiry and thus jump into definitive conclusions in a studied way. Media literacy is a mandatory skill to be learnt in the digital age. An awareness of media literacy provides beneficiaries with discretionary power that help them think critically about media. It may also offer guidelines as how to become active consumers of info, identify prejudices in media and be responsible and duty-bound creators of media.

There are diverse ways to easily understand and verify a text, a post or info by following a few steps like the following. Try to copy and paste the text concerned from the post on Google Search Bar. We can easily go to relevant websites and check the info using Google Fact Check Explorer, a search engine designed exclusively for fact-checking exercises. Date can play a main role in identifying misinfo. Use the date tool in Google Search to ascertain the date of the post; whether the date of the post has appeared on the internet before and whether it has been repurposed with a different narrative. Checking relevant websites may also lead one to destabilize the practice of misinfo. Be aware of the fake links, assess the contents published, examine the same for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes; all these tips give one ample clues for the website being a credible or a non-credible one. Videos are often tools used to misrepresent info and generate misleading and untrue stories. A thorough attention to the specific details like the locale, the language of the audio, the comments that appear on the video, a search for similar videos available on the internet will shortly lead one to more clues about the video. Also, take a screenshot of the video, right click and then search for Google Images and one will understand where the image and the video are from.

WhatsApp forwards (home-made remedies for chronic ailments, alternative medicines for critical health issues, patriotism, national spirit et cetera) are yet other vital origins of misinfo. Misinfo that we share unknowingly via WhatsApp may land us in dangerous circumstances. If these posts create in us extreme emotions thereby persuading us to move into a particular line of action, whether these are heavily shared and forwarded many a time, whether the images are digitally altered and edited and if

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the answer is a big, emphatic yes, then definitely these forwards are causes of misinfo. There are umpteen tools, techniques and strategies available for fact-checking exercises like image search, reverse image search, video verification, photo verification and text verification in addition to a few using Google, Yandex, Bing, Tin Eye, You Tube Data Viewer, You Tube Geofind, Google Lens, Invid and so on.

The digital age has made it viable and practicable for any tech-savvy person to produce and create messages from the comfort of his or her own sense of temporality. Info is power and it is a universally acclaimed idea that access to reliable and verifiable info is the lifeblood of human progress and development. Fake news is actually a poorly defined term that conflates a variety of false info. It encompasses under its purview ideas like unscientific claims, hoaxes, rumours, false contexts, manipulated contents et cetera. Owing to the overflow and surplus of infodemic in the form of both misinfo (a kind of false info, but the one who shares it thinks it to be true and gets involved in the process of sharing it, an unintentional act) and disinfo (a kind of false info, but the one who shares it fully knows that it is untrue and gets involved in the process of sharing it, a deliberate and intentional act), people often find themselves entrapped in a world of fear of uncertainty, ambiguity, utter confusion, persistent anarchy, total chaos and disorder. All attempts to blur the boundaries between true and false info is now under unprecendented threat.

The main dangers associated with fake news are the breakdown of trusted info sources, worsening of law and order situation, public health concerns, perpetuation of stereotypical images, honour killings and suicidal attempts; to mention a few. Addressing the issue in all its gravity, global debate is going on as how to put a check on; how to tackle and curb the incessant flow of disinfo. When an info reaches at one's fingertips, try to flood one's mind with all possible interrogations and searches like the source of info (who's behind the info?), followed by its verification, consultation of supporting sources, the believability of info, the trustworthiness of evidence that supports the contention, date of publication and expert opinions. Also try to flip situations; break the traditional way of looking at things. We should be guided by scientific temper when we sit to analyze facts; when we spend our invaluable time to construe and address the spread of false info; recheck the factuality of info passing through our hands. We should also exhibit our willingness to ask hard questions. We should also be led by hard-nosed skepticism. This sense of intuition and awareness may prevent and stop us from sharing fake info. Instead of being branded as products of passive recipiency, let's all be designated as active and intelligent thinkers who are capable enough of differentiating sense from non-sense. Let's all be referenced as media literates.

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PREFACE

This book represents the proceedings of the National Seminar on "SABKA PRAYAS AND ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT" to the authors and delegates of the event.

This Seminar on "Sabka Prayas and Atamnirbhar Bharat" is about celebrating "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" through the involvement of everyone's efforts in making of Self Reliant India. It covers **Actions@75** which highlights steps being taken to implement policies and actualize commitments. Action@75 triggers all the efforts that are being undertaken to help India take its rightful position in the new world order emerging in a post covid world by highlighting the steps being taken to implement policies and actualize commitments. This seminar will talk about the outcome of Sabka Prayas in the making of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

The seminar is particularly important for both researchers and policy makers and offers opportunities not only for future studies on the subject but also helps to find out the ways to increase participation of Civil Society in making of Self Reliant India.

This volume collects abstracts of the papers which stimulates in depth debates on diverse topics and presents numerous ideas about Aatmnirbhar Bharat, Start ups, Rural India, Role of NEP , Culture, Digital Infrastructure, Sustainable Environment, Tax, Sports, Defence, Media and many other topics to understand the movement of India on the path of Self Sustainability.

We hope this proceeding would be inspiring, informative and useful to all the participants of the National Seminar and the readers.

Dr Sunita Singhal
Convenor

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CULTURE THROUGH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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Bharathidasan Govt college for Women, Puducherry

ABSTRACT

Today, in this touch screen world, people, especially urban people, do not have sufficient time to teach the precious myths to their children. Consequently the culture and myths of the society will be forgotten. Hence the easiest and simplest way is to give mythological knowledge to the children has to be traced out. One such interesting way is through their sole friend 'comics'. The impact of comics on Indian children of today cannot be overstated. The comics comprises a very wide area, covering mythological stories from ancient Sanskrit sources, tales about the rulers and warriors of medieval India, and narratives about the heroes of the modern Indian nation. The comics' endeavour to bring forth the different elements of Indian mythology by many articles and stories is not only to educate but also for recreational reading. These comics, that form the backbone of Indian mythology, are a great medium for people especially parents to inculcate the interest in the younger generation on Indian culture and to impart values of the same to them. The hypothesis of the present paper is to portray the importance of comic in the preservation of Indian myths and history to the future generation.

Keywords: Culture, Children, Literature, Comic

AN IMPACT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING APPROACH IN LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

A commonly studied source of variation is regional dialects. Dialectology studies variations in language based primarily on geographic distribution and their associated features. The grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, and other aspects of this sociolect much as dialectologists would study the same for a dialect. The study of language variation is concerned with social constraints determining language in its contextual environment.

Keywords: Language, Society, Culture, English

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: A VISION AHEAD FOR HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Department of Economics, Sacred Heart College, Chalakudy, Kerala

ABSTRACT

The country's total development, which includes industrial, social, and economic development, is significantly influenced by the higher education system. The third-largest higher education system in the world is in India. Providing quality-based education in the areas of education, research, and other areas is the current mission of Indian higher educational institutions, such as colleges and universities, in order to empower young for self-reliance and financial independence. The main issues that India is currently dealing with in higher education are covered in this essay, along with some government efforts through New Educational Policy (NEP) to address those issues.

Keywords: Higher Education Institution (HEI), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Students

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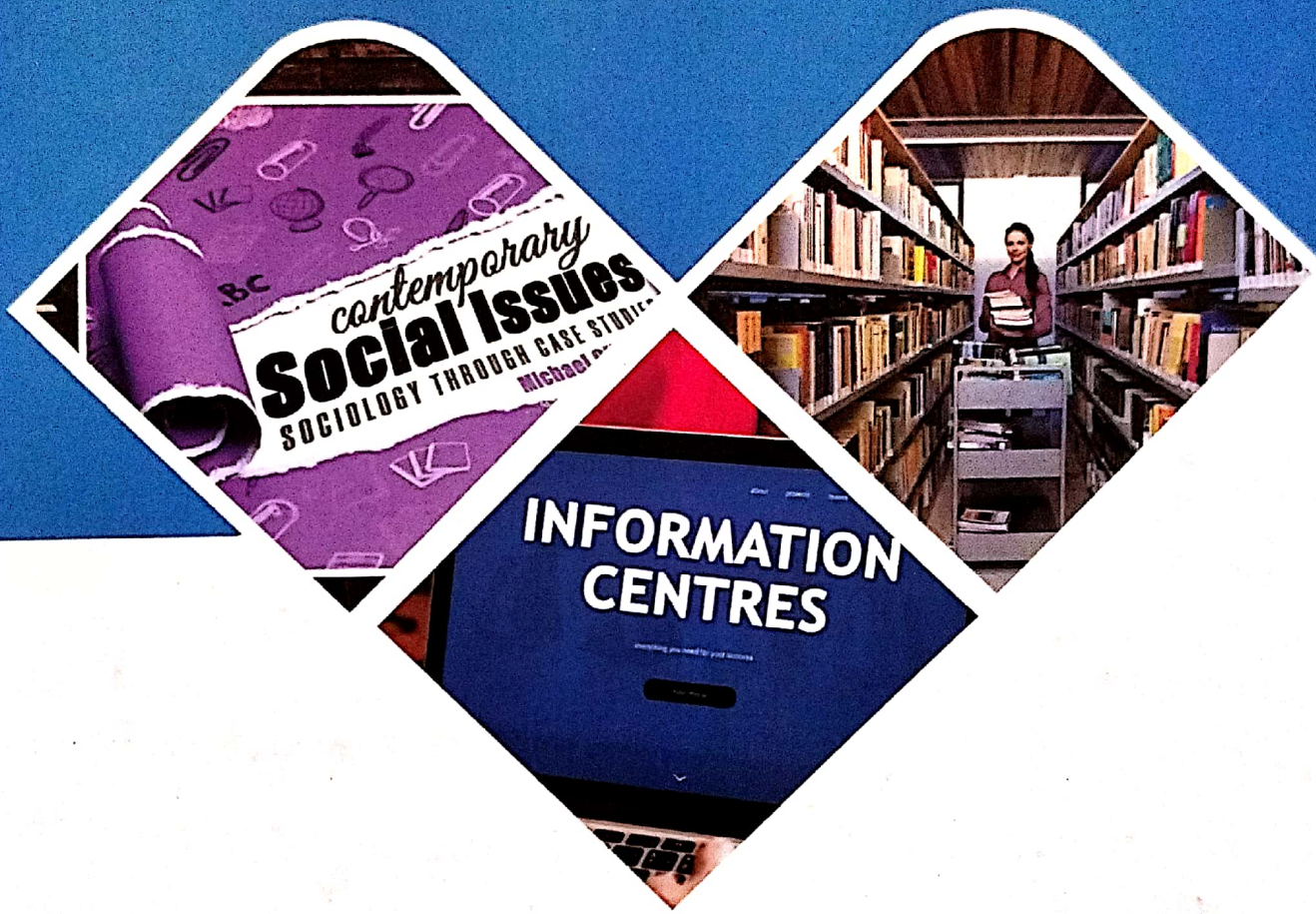
CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTRES



Dr. S.Aravind
Dr. K Ramasamy
Dr. J.Arumugam

Mayas Publication

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CPPLICEB01

Innovative Library Spaces for New Age Libraries

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I. INTRODUCTION

Libraries have evolved and transformed over the years with the changing technologies. Traditional libraries were resource oriented but new age libraries are more user centered. In the past, libraries were the major sources of information for users but today there are multitudes of sources and inorder to sustain, libraries have to attract users by catering to their changing needs. Library should no longer be just a silent place for learning but it can be a space for creation, collaboration and celebration. Constructing new libraries with innovative spaces and redesigning existing libraries according to the patrons' requirements is the need of the hour. Also, the furnishing, lighting, look and feel of the library are equally important inengaging the users. Thus,modern libraries should become the hub of edutainment rather than education. Many libraries in India and abroad have done architectural transformations to suit the needs and expectations of modern users. Some of the innovative spaces which can be introduced in modern libraries are discussed in this paper.

1. Four Space Library Model

The four-space library model was developed by Danish LIS-scientists DorteSkot-Hansen, Casper Hvenegaard Rasmussen and HenrikJochumsen. According to the model, the library's overall objective is to support four goals viz. experience; involvement; empowerment; and innovation.The model proposes four different overlappingspaces in correlation with the four overall goals.The inspiration space underpins

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innovation and experience, the learning space underpins experience and empowerment, the meeting space underpins empowerment and involvement and the performative space underpins involvement and innovation.In an ideal library these four spaces are not to be seen as concrete rooms in a physical sense, but rather aspossibilities that can be fulfilled both in the physical library and in cyberspace. These spaces will support and interact with each other and thereby support the library's objectives (Jochumsen et al., 2012).

The inspiration space is intended to stimulate meaningful experiences that transform our perception and inspire us to take unusual choices. The source of the inspiration can be found in all media (both analogue and digital) and across the entire genre spectrum.

The learning space is where children, young people and adults can discover and explore the world, while enhancing their skill-sets and options through open, unobstructed access to knowledge and information. This is a space for formal, informal and experience-oriented learning which can happen through plays, artistic activities, courses etc.

The meeting space is an open, public space to meet like-minded people as well as people with different values and interests. In a segmented society we need such platforms to encounter opinions that challenge us through discussion and debate. This space facilitates interpersonal interaction, both random and organised.

In the **performative space** the users can interact with others and can be inspired to create their own creative expressions or innovative solutions. This space provides access to tools and materials that support their creative activities through interactive games, writing, sound and video and if possible, they can receive support from professional artists, designers, multimedia developers, etc. It can also serve as a platform for communicating, publishing and distributing users' works and products and for staging their various activities (Jochumsen, n.d.; Jochumsen et al., 2012). Although the four space model was originally meant for public libraries, it can be used to construct and redesign other types of libraries also.

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2. Innovative Spaces for Modern Libraries

Based on the four space model, there are several spaces which can be created in libraries to inspire the users to do greater things.

3. Inspiration Space

Some of the spaces which come under inspiration space are as follows.

Exhibition Space: Modern libraries can have an exhibition space or gallery near the entrance or at any designated corner to exhibit artistic works, publications, achievements etc. of the members, display the new arrivals or showcase the work of experts in their fields. Such a creatively designed and organized space can catch the attention of someone entering the library and can be a source of inspiration.

Digital Wall: Many of the modern libraries have introduced the concept of interactive digital walls to attract and engage the users. Such walls can display digital stories, photos, videos, latest information on various topics, events happening in the library etc.The users can interact with the wall and share their knowledge to others. The library of IIM Ahmedabad has a special multi-monitor setup digital wall facility, which combines four 42-inch display to create a massive display of upcoming events, new resources, trending data, services & facilities available in the library etc. (Digital Wall, n.d.).

Auditorium Space: Libraries can construct auditoriums or seminar halls to conduct various programmes for the users such as cultural performances, book readings, lectures etc. The size of the auditorium can vary depending on the library budget and the number of users.

Open Sky Space and Green Space: These are unique spaces which can be created in certain informal areas such as library terrace, garden, lounge etc.It can be designed with natural light passing through glass walls, green roofs, plants etc. to bring freshness and calmness to the mind and help in getting inspiration. People can spend time in this space to read for longer hours, relax and meet others(Joshi Jagdish, 2020).

Relaxation Space: Libraries must inevitably have a space for the users to take a break,unwind and relax after a long day of study or work.Spaces like

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nap zones, game zones etc. can help the users relieve their stress and improve concentration. Such spaces should be thoughtfully designed with appropriate furniture and soothing ambience.

4. Learning Space

One of the main objectives of libraries is to provide a learning space for its users. Some spaces which come under learning space are as follows.

Collection Space: Books and periodicals still remain the heart of most libraries. Separate spaces can be provided for different collections such as reference books, subject books, fiction, non-fiction, competitive exam books, periodicals etc. along with comfortable seating. It has to be a silent space as people will be involved in serious learning.

Audio Visual Room: As digital resources are gaining importance, libraries can create a separate audio-visual room for the users of digital collection with facilities like computers, laptops, internet etc. The users can access CDs, DVDs, databases, E books etc. from this room.

Private Carrels: It is necessary that libraries should have a designated silent area for users who prefer that. Private carrels are individual zones designed specifically for quite reading with specific furniture which ensures privacy. In many libraries such carrels can be reserved well in advance by the users.

Workshop Space: Libraries can provide a space to conduct workshops by experts in different fields. Users can come together and learn new skills and methods under the guidance of the expert.

Interactive Children's Space: In many big institutions, the members live with their family within the campus. So, the libraries have a moral responsibility to provide a learning space for the family, especially children. This area can be designed with vibrant colours, interesting story books, educational puzzles, toys etc. to engage the children and spend quality time with them(South Central Regional Library Council, 2016).The central library of IIT Madras has a children's corner for the kids of the staff.

Meeting Space : Libraries were traditionally meant to be silent but for today's digital natives meeting spaces are very much essential as learning happens through collaboration and discussions. Some spaces in the library for formal and informal meetings are as follows.

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Discussion Room: Few sound proof rooms can be created in library to allow discussion and group study for users. In this way library can provide a meeting space for small groups without disturbing other users who prefer silence. Such cubicles can be allotted on reservation basis and can have internet, computer, projector, interactive screens, markerboard facilities etc. IIM Kozhikode library has created ideation lab or discussion rooms for the benefit of users.

Cafe: Most libraries do not allow food and beverages inside the library. Many users spend long hours in the library and they need to have refreshments to sustain their energy. Modern libraries have to be redesigned by including a small café inside or outside the library as it is necessary for the users to get energized and also hold small informal meetings and socialize with others.

CelebrationSpace: Libraries can also create small areas for celebrating various achievements and functions. In this way library can provide a platform for people and their families to meet, celebrate and exchange ideas.

5. Performative Spaces

Many modern libraries have introduced several performative spaces to encourage the creative talents of the users and provide a platform to display their knowledge and skills to others. Some of the performative spaces are as follows.

Maker Space: It is a space designed to boost the creativity of the users. It can consist of many resources such as 3D printers, laser cutters, arts and craft supplies, sewing machines, various gadgets etc. and users can create many things individually or in group. Makerspace provides a venue for users to construct a variety of real-world products. It is an ideal place to incorporate more activities into a fun and inspiring environment and help to nurture critical thinking and learning. This space provides an opportunity to transform the library into a learning environment that empowers learners as they research, draft, create and collaborate (Julian & Parrott, 2017). One third of the public libraries in Georgia have makerspaces to offer hands on learning.

Digital Studio: With the outbreak of pandemic, online classes have become the main mode of learning in educational institutions. A digital studio is a

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necessity in these days and library can create this space to support content creationby the staff and students. This space can include gadgets and software that support recording and editing of pictures, music and videos. Members can use these facilities to create good quality videos, photos, short movies and other creative contents.

Auditorium and exhibition space in the library can provide a platform to stage and highlight the creativity and innovative skills of the users. These can be considered as inspiration space for the viewers and a performative space for the creators or artists.

6. Other Spaces

Apart from these spaces new age libraries can also provide spaces and facilities such as help desk, special rooms, lifts, ramps and resources for specially abled users and make the library barrier free and accessible to all.

II. CONCLUSION

Modern libraries around the world are turning into a social sphere with dynamic tools and spaces, from podcast recording studios to robotic book-retrieval systems to appeal to the needs of digital natives(Eskins& Burshtein, 2018).There are several challenges which come in the way of creating these spaces in the library such as budget and space constraints. It may not be possible to include all the spaces in a single library but depending on the budget, area, users and type of library, the spaces can be created. Librarians and institutions can take up the redesigning initiative for creating futuristic libraries. As many public libraries in India are loosing its significance, Governments can propose projects and allocate funds for their reformation so as to attract the public and revive their past glory. Only if libraries are flexible and updated, it can remain relevant in the future.

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P. Padma
K. Ramasamy

PROFILE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR RESEARCHERS AND ACADEMICIANS

PROFILE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

For Researchers and Academicians

Editors

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10

LinkedIn As An Academic Profile Management Tool

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INTRODUCTION

The ultimate aim of a researcher is to make his research findings reach maximum people and get recognized among a larger community. Earlier, academicians had limited options to share their publications, research findings, achievements etc. and could only network and collaborate with few people from nearby areas or institutions. The introduction of internet, social media, web 2.0 tools etc. has been a boon for the academic world as the professionals could use them to create their online identity and reach more people. Profile Management system is a web-based tool used by researchers, faculty members, scientists etc. to organize research activities carried out and showcase skills, experience, expertise, projects, publications, etc. It acts as a knowledge management as well as discovery tool and enables people to create their own profile and even network with people across the world (Jeyapragash et al., 2017). It also allows people to follow the works of their

contemporaries, collaborate with them and remain updated about the developments in their research area or discipline. Nowadays having a professional existence online is a must for everyone as it has various benefits both in online and offline world. There are several profile management systems like Vidwan, Orcid, ResearchGate etc. This paper focuses on using LinkedIn as a profile management system, explains various steps in creating a LinkedIn profile and gives tips for effectively using it for professional advancements.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with nearly 800 million members in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. LinkedIn was officially launched in 2003 with a mission to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful (About LinkedIn, n.d.). It has job postings, online learning opportunities, and specific tools like Sales Navigator to help with professional development and networking (Alstyne, 2020). LinkedIn is mainly used by companies, business professionals, investors, job seekers, entrepreneurs, working professionals etc. for recruiting, networking and career development. It has both individual and company profiles with various features. Profiles can be created freely by anyone with an e mail id. LinkedIn also provides premium account with payment for availing additional features like profile boosting, amplifying the content, providing more visibility etc.

LINKEDIN FOR ACADEMIA

Although primarily known for managing job profiles and career related posts, LinkedIn can also be used for academic profile management and is of great use for academicians and researchers. Having a LinkedIn profile which is search engine optimised allows people to find us via a name search on Google and usually provides a link to our LinkedIn account as it is well-indexed by Google. LinkedIn

creates an online framework for documenting our career and enterprise life (Ellson, n.d). LinkedIn is a good platform to make new connections, maintain it and keep in touch with colleagues and alumni. It allows users to create their own events, add their connections, follow several organizations, people, pages etc. and get to know about various events happening in their academic circle. Apart from this, LinkedIn provides opportunity for users to join various groups of their interests, share their knowledge and expertise and even get mentored by experts.

LinkedIn is considered to be one of the best publishing platforms in the world as we can publish whatever we write, with or without references, at any time, free of cost and spread our work more broadly across the internet. The publications can also be listed in the publications section or as a post for others to see. LinkedIn has a unique feature which allows people to both give and receive endorsements and recommendations for their skills and work and it adds to their credibility. LinkedIn profile provides details of our educational qualifications, experience, achievements etc. which can be shared with others as a short biography when being asked to be a speaker, presenter or media commentator. The contact information in LinkedIn gives option to add proof of other virtual presence such as *OrcidID*, website link etc. so that people can track our work and contact us if needed (Ellson, 2020).

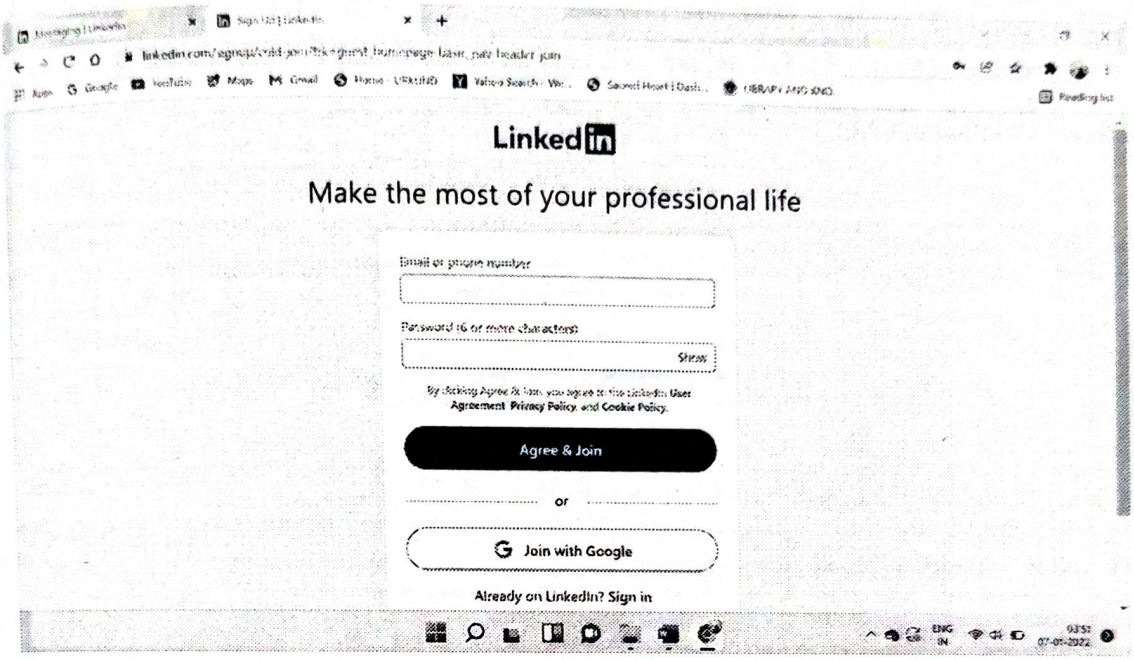
HOW TO CREATE A LINKEDIN PROFILE

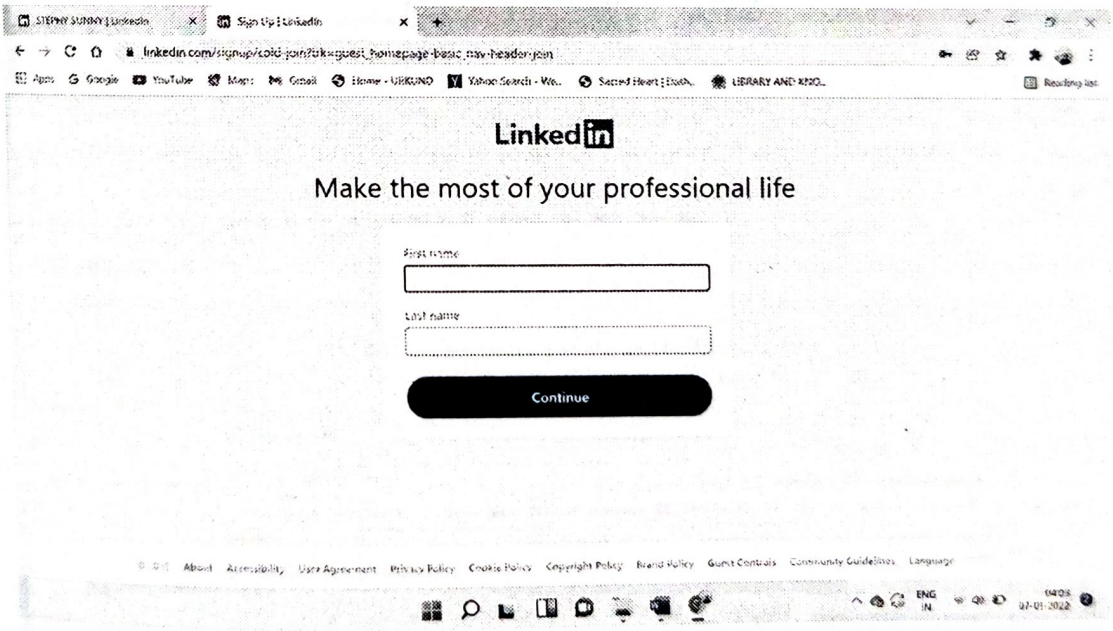
It is very simple to create a profile in LinkedIn. The steps to be followed and some suggestions for creating a good profile are given below.

Step 1. Sign Up Process

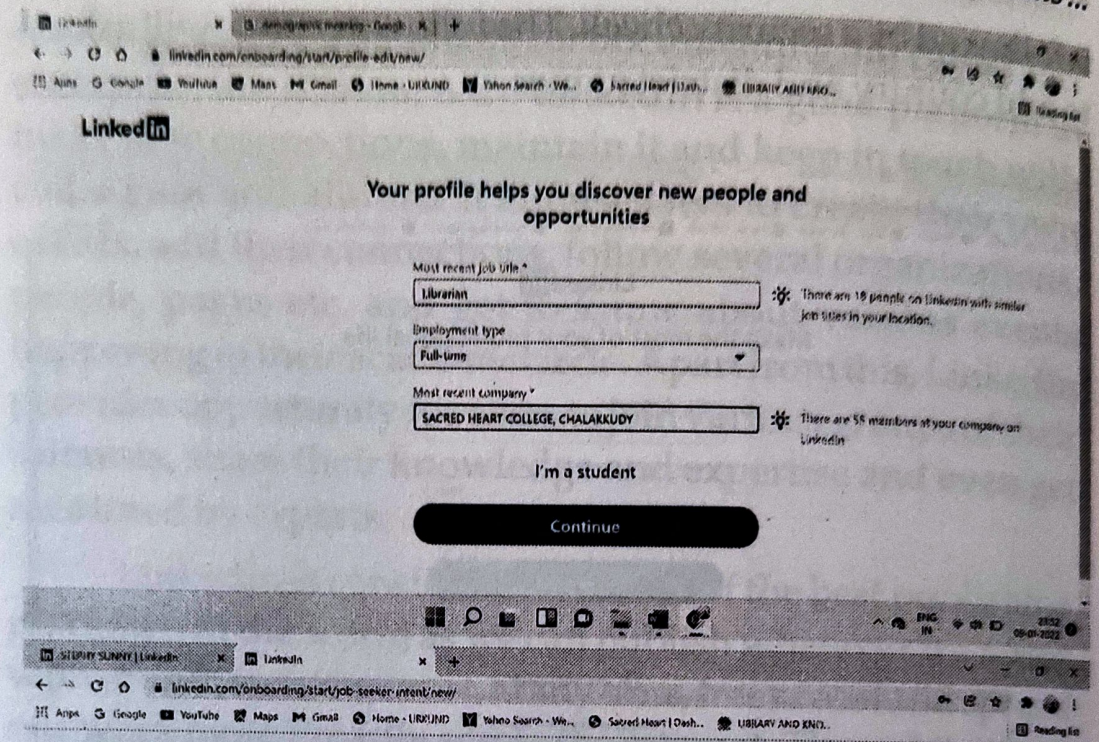
The first step for creating a LinkedIn account is to go to linkedin.com and sign up with our email id and create a password. Then we have to add our first and last name which

is followed by a security check. The following page will ask us to add country and district names.





The next task is to fill the most recent job details such as designation, employment type, company or institution name etc. and verify the email account through otp. LinkedIn also asks us whether we are seeking for a new job at present or not and gives option to add our e mail contacts to LinkedIn so that we can easily make a contact database and connect to them if we wish.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Your profile helps you discover new people and opportunities
Most recent job title *
Librarian
There are 18 people on LinkedIn with similar job titles in your location.
Employment type
Full-time
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There are 55 members at your company on LinkedIn
I'm a student
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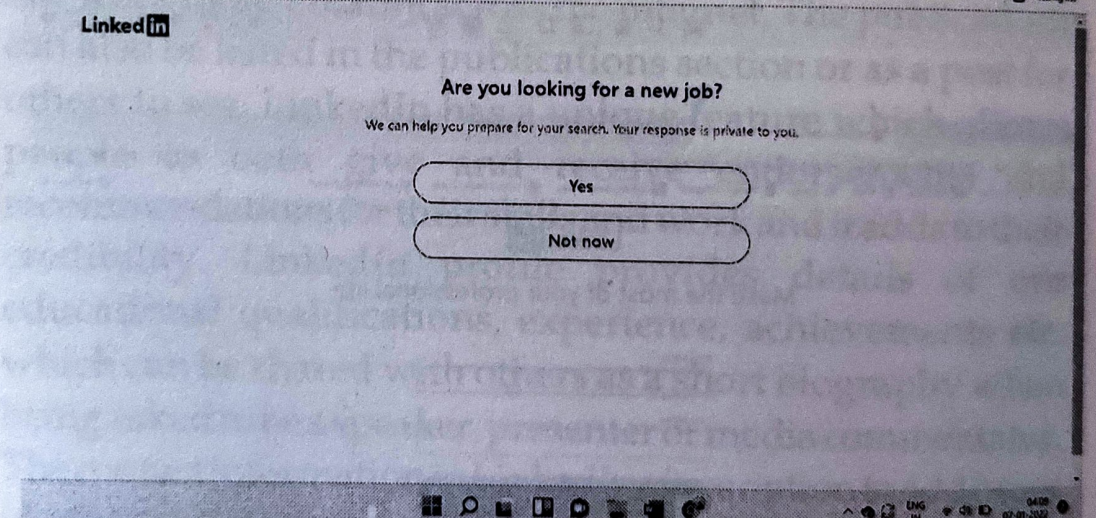
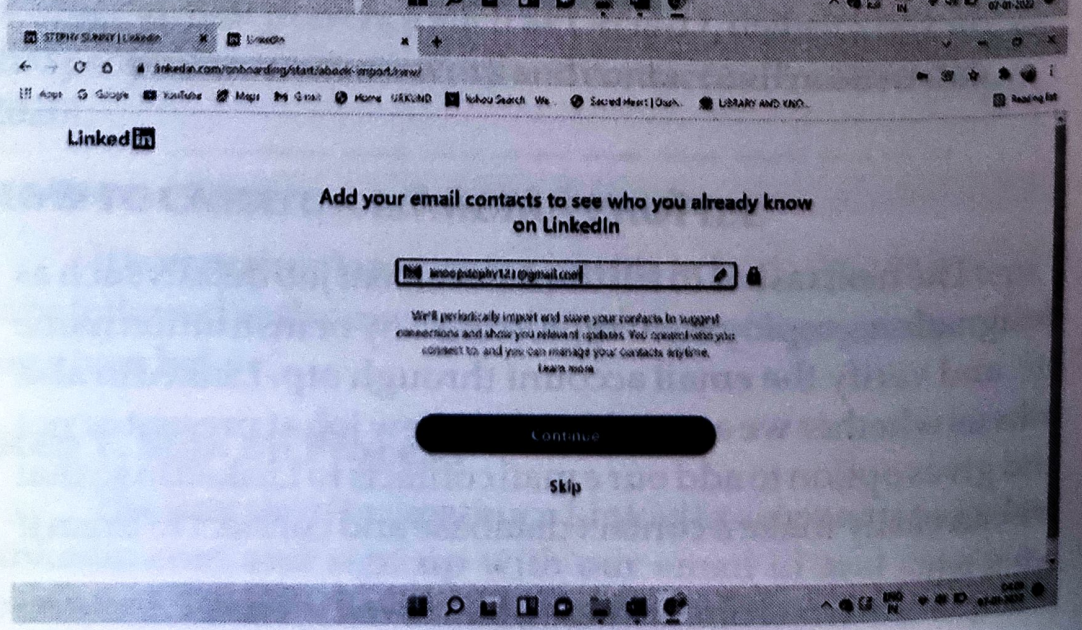

Linked in
Are you looking for a new job?
We can help you prepare for your search. Your response is private to you.
Yes
Not now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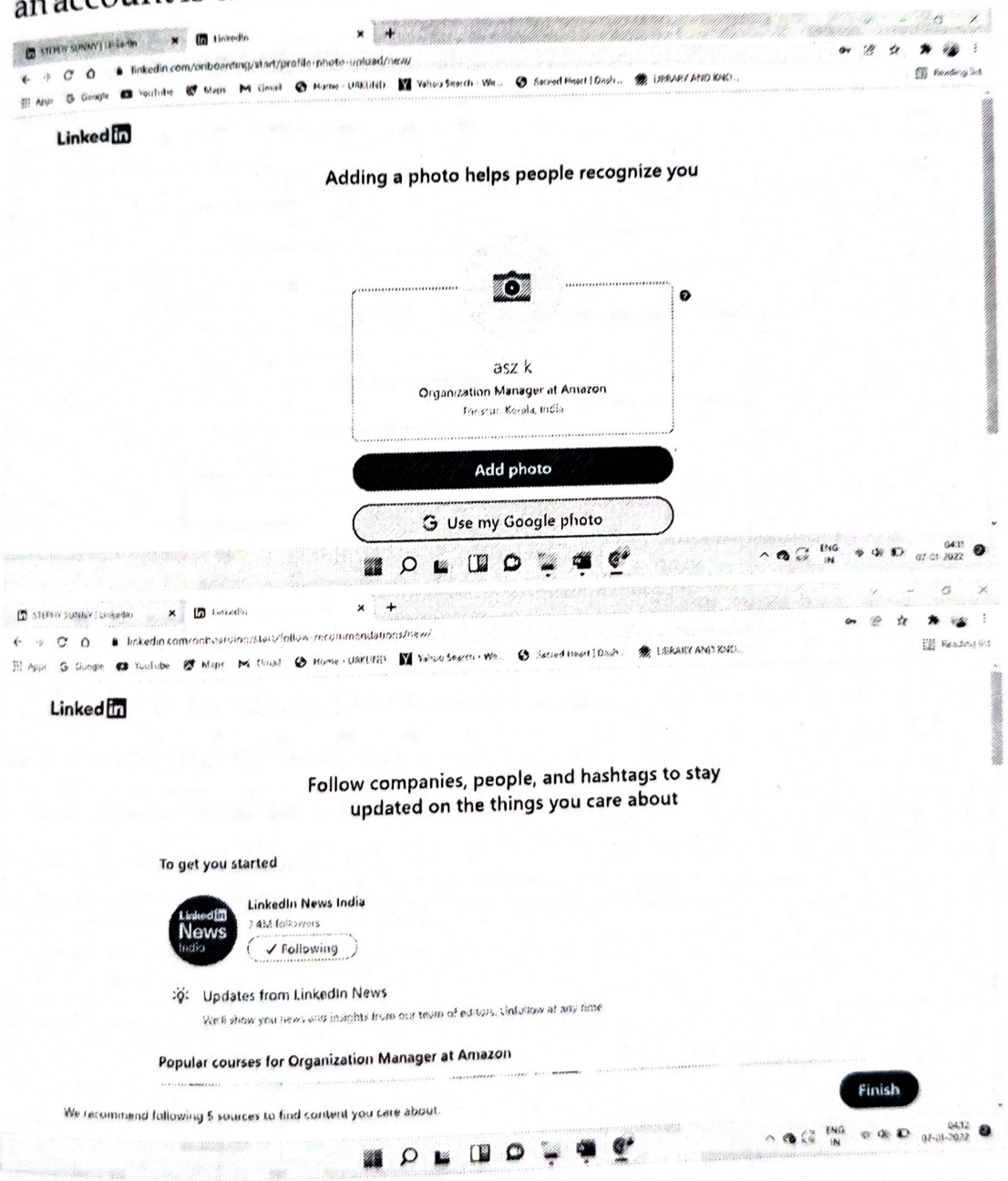
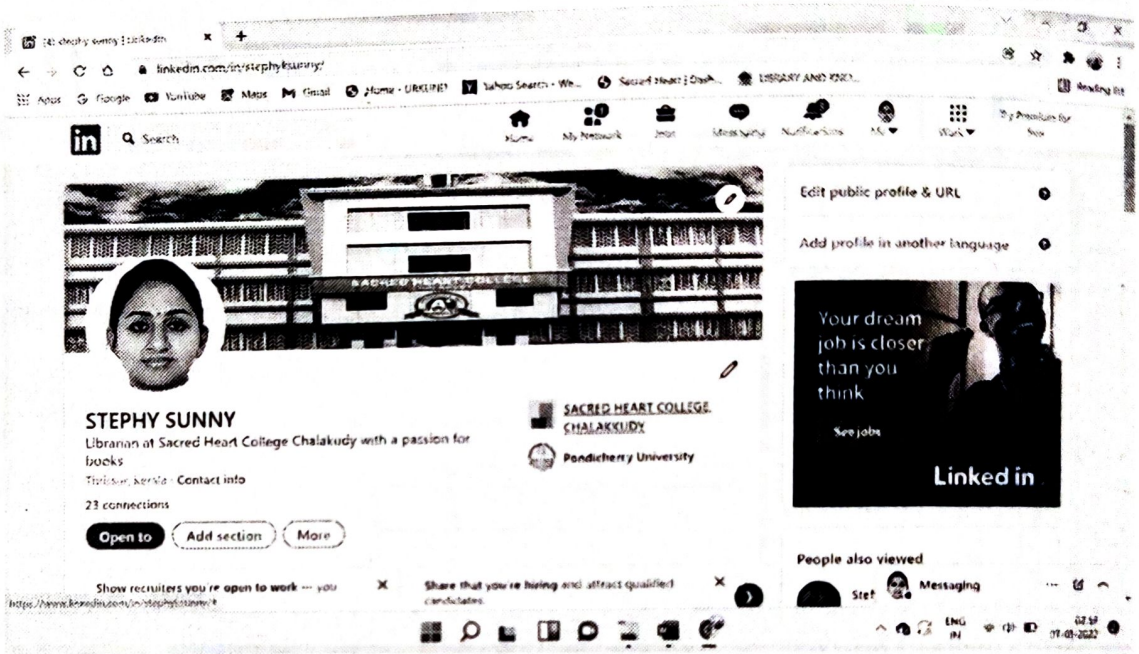
Next step is to add a profile picture to our account for easier recognition. LinkedIn also suggests us to follow pages, hashtags etc. of our interest so that we can find related information in our feed and remain updated about these topics. The sign up process is finished by giving these basic details and an account is created in LinkedIn.

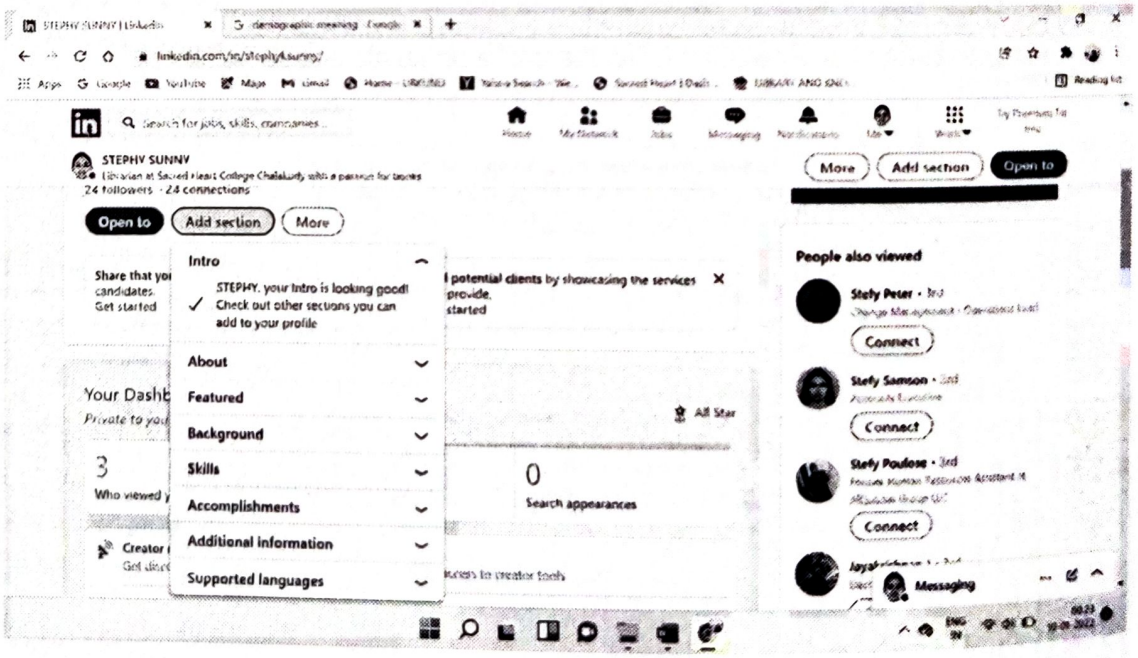


Step 2. Profile Updation

Once the account is created, we need to fill several details to make our profile complete. A complete and updated profile gets more reach and visibility. When the profile is opened, there is an option to upload a background cover image along

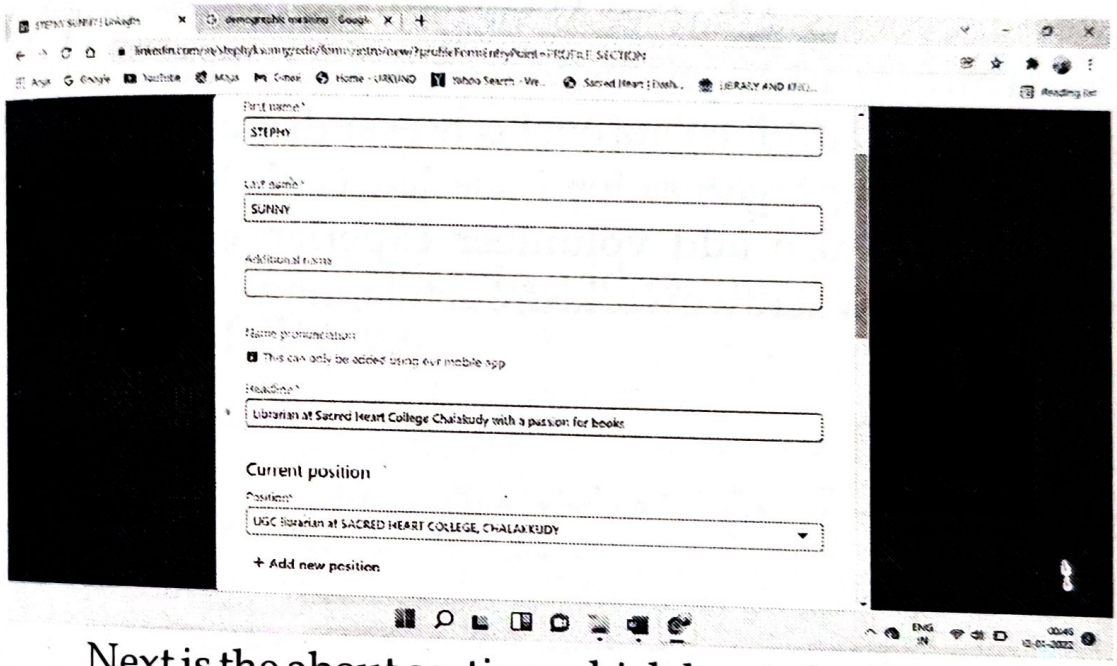
with the profile photo which was already added. It is better to upload a close up picture in formal wear as profile photo for a professional feel. Also, a good cover image can make our profile look much better and attract others to it. After uploading the photo, we have to fill in different sections such as intro, about, background, skills etc.



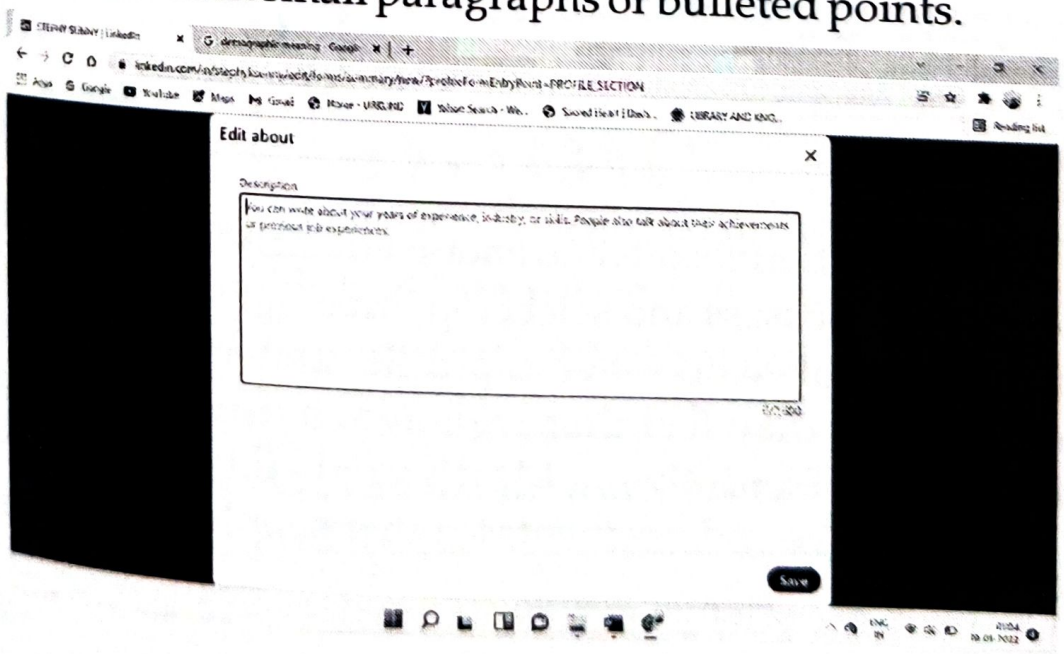


The intro section contains details which are seen at first when someone views our account. It contains details like name, headline, current position, demographic information, location, contact details etc. Headline is like a tagline which describes our work and draws profile visitors' attention.

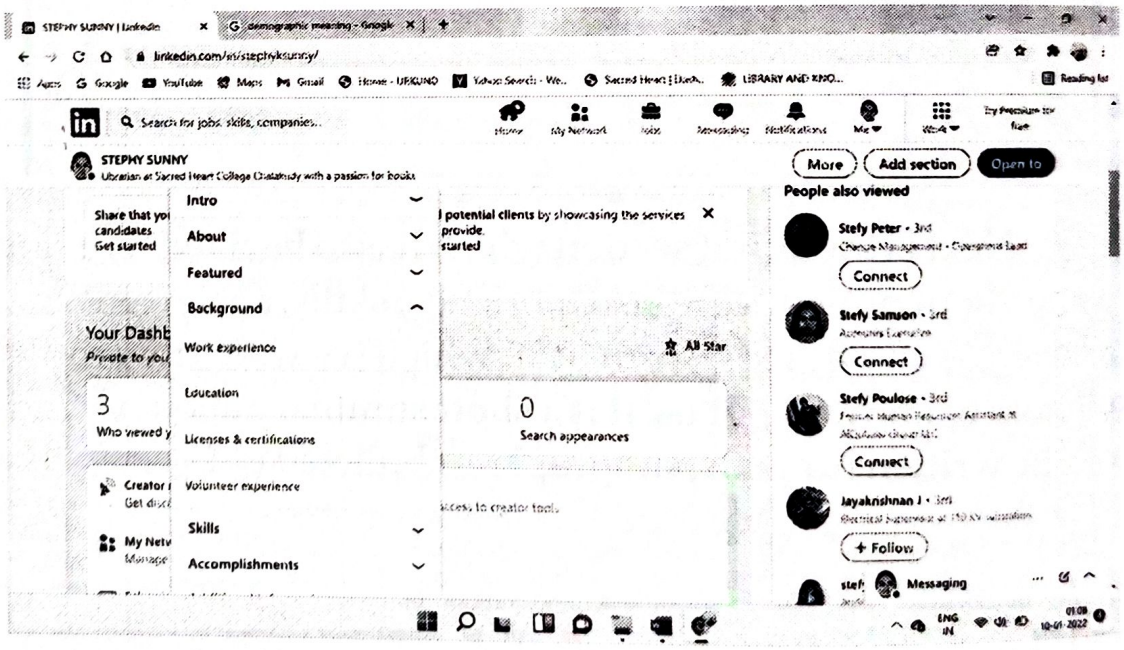
Instead of using a generic headline it is better to be more specific and descriptive as it is meant to stimulate interest rather than just inform about our current job title (Sivula, 2016). LinkedIn gives an option to add contact details such as e mail, phone number, address, website link etc. so that people can get to know more about us if they wish. Also, we can make our profile picture, contact details etc. visible to public or only to connections.



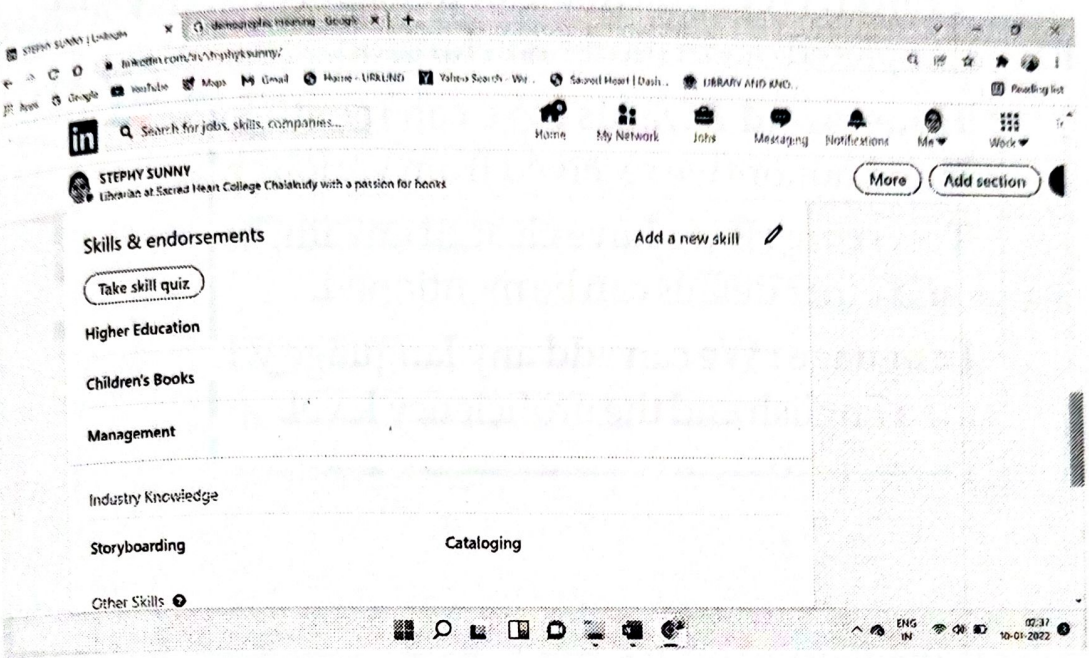
Next is the about section which has to be filled. We can write about our education, experience, skills, achievements, awards or any other information which we want the profile visitors to know about us. It is a short summary about us and can be written in small paragraphs or bulleted points.



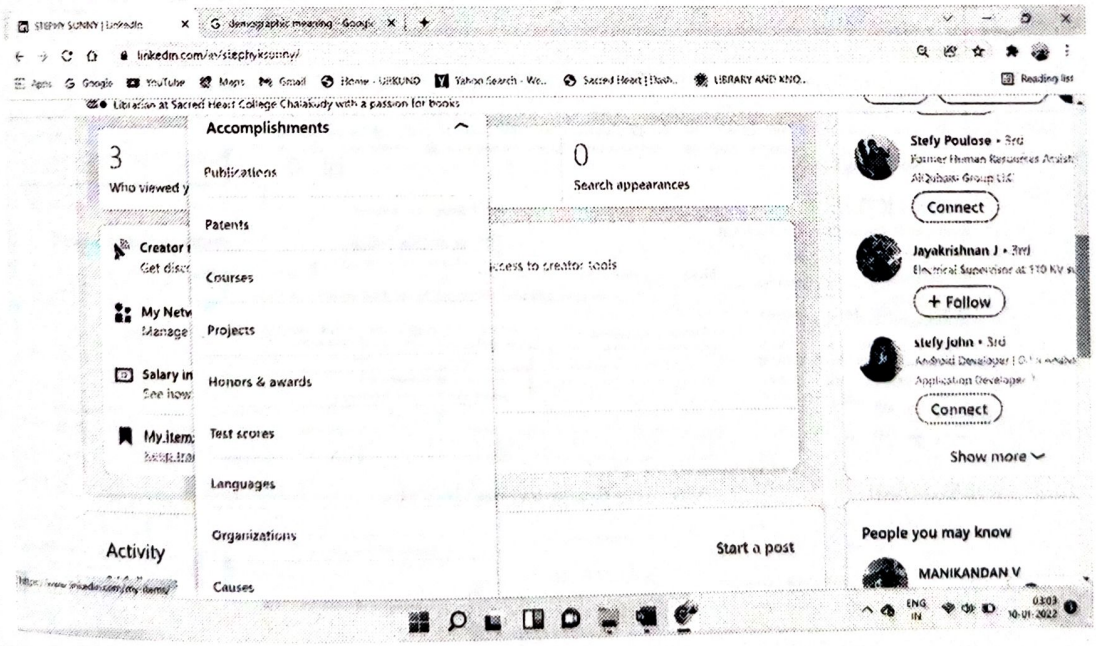
Next is the background section which includes details like work experience, education, licenses and certifications, volunteer experience etc. In the work experience we can write about our current job as well as previous jobs, companies or institutions worked, type of work, start and end date etc. Education details include name of institution, degree, field of study, grade, start and end year, activities and societies etc. It is better to give these in reverse chronological order so that latest one comes at the top. Along with this there is an option to add media such as photos, videos, links etc. LinkedIn gives a provision to add details of our licenses and certifications such as name, issuing organization, issue date, credential details etc. and we can also add volunteer experience such as the organization where we worked, our role, the cause we worked for etc.



Next section is skills and endorsements where we can list the skills we possess and select top three skills which will be featured. People who visit our profile can see our skills and endorse us if they feel that we have those skills. Getting endorsements from others add to the credibility of our profile. We can also give endorsements to other people.



Next is the section to add our accomplishments. It includes the following:



Publications : We can add the details of our publications such as title, publisher, date, url etc.

Patent : We can add the title, application number, issue date, status, url etc. of the patents we have received.

Course : We can mention any specific course we have completed by giving details like name, number etc.

Project: We can mention the details of projects which we have completed or currently working on.

Honors and Awards : We can mention the details of awards and honors we received from various places.

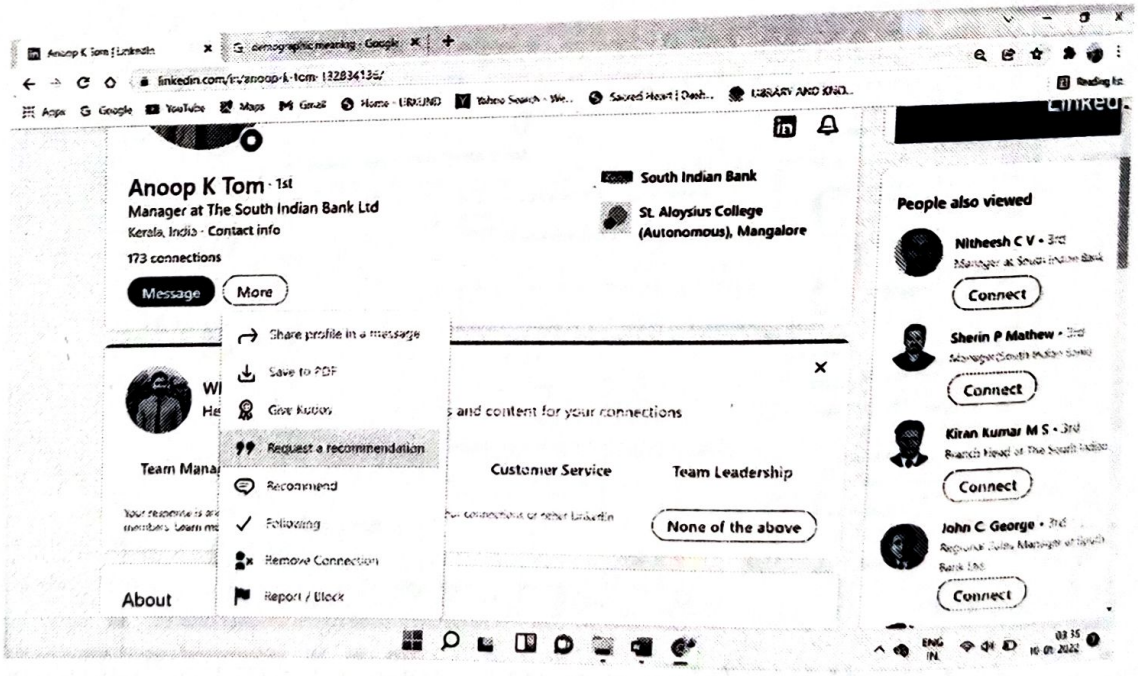
Test score : If we have cleared any important tests, the scores and other details can be mentioned.

Language : We can add any language which we know other than English and the proficiency level.

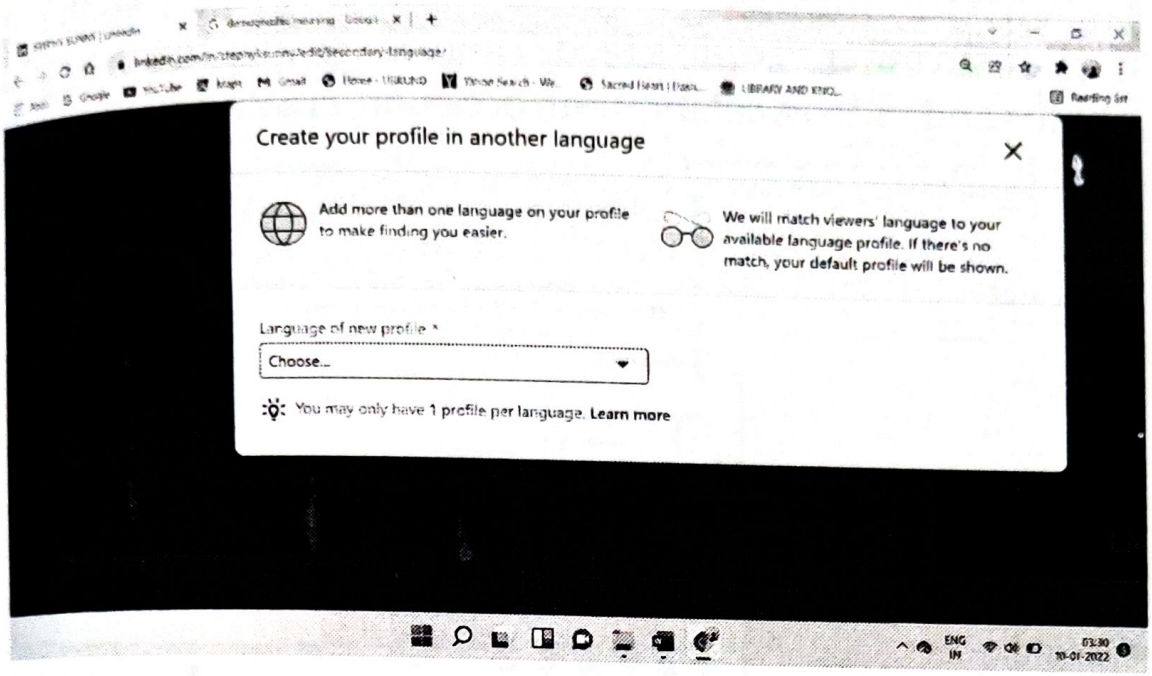
Organization : We can mention the details of the organizations which we are a member of, our position etc.

Causes : LinkedIn allows us to select some causes which we care about from the list.

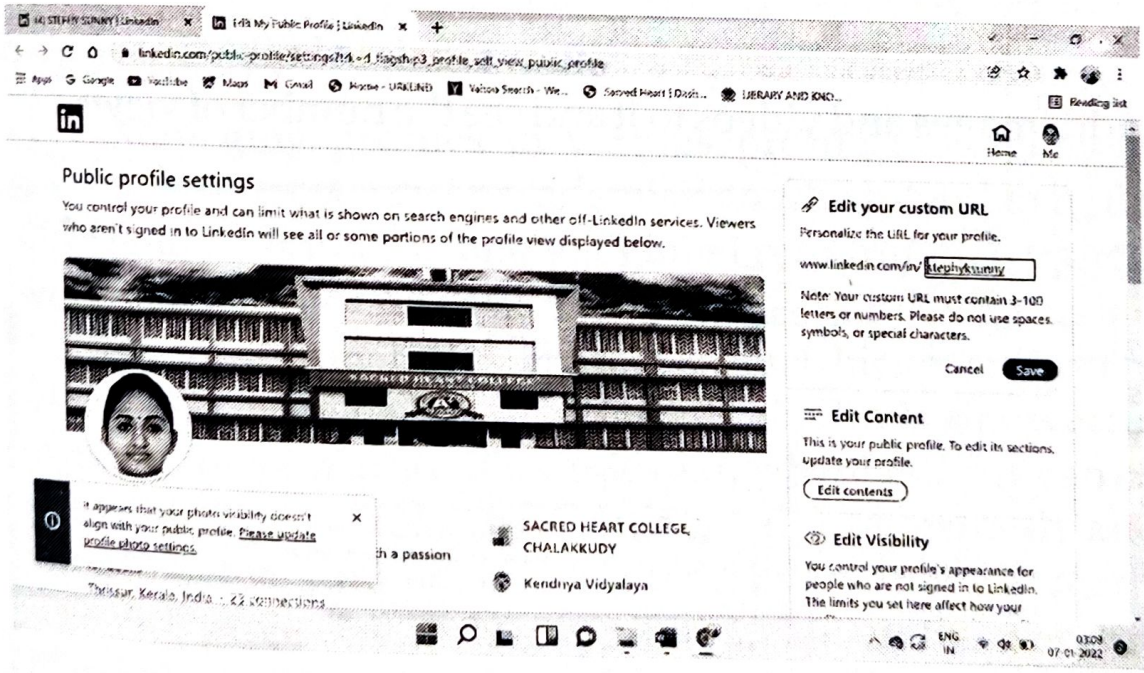
The next section is for adding references. We can visit the account of people whom we know and request for a recommendation so that our profile gets some credibility.



The last section gives us option to create our profile in any other language to make it easier for others to find us in LinkedIn.



LinkedIn allows us to edit our custom url so that our profile can be optimized and easily be found through a google search.

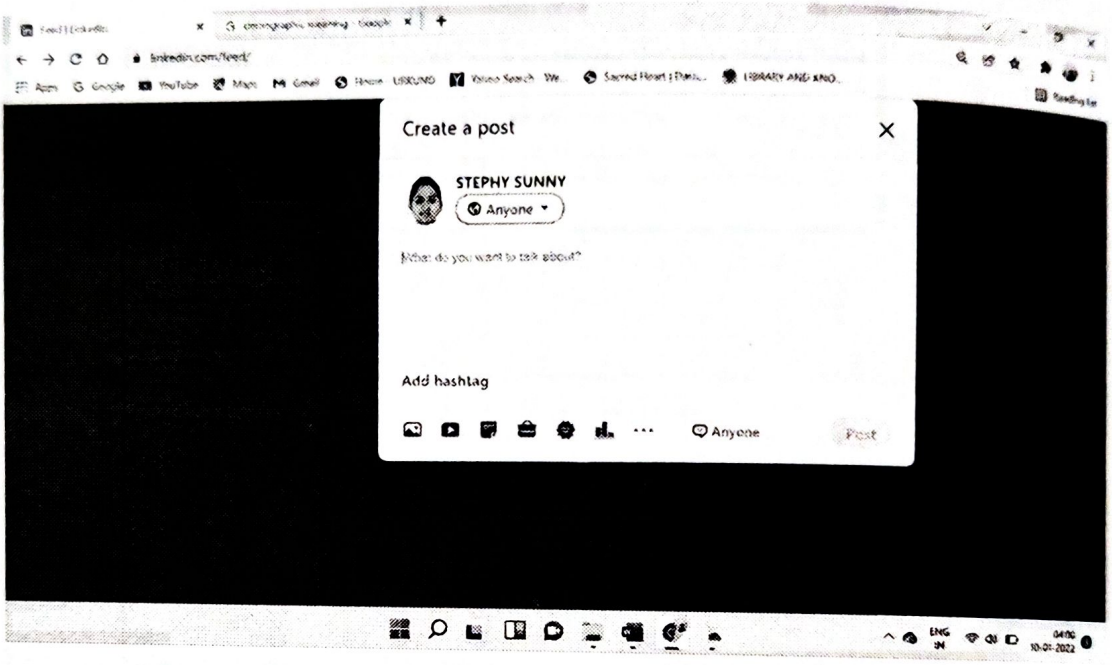


Step 3. LinkedIn Features

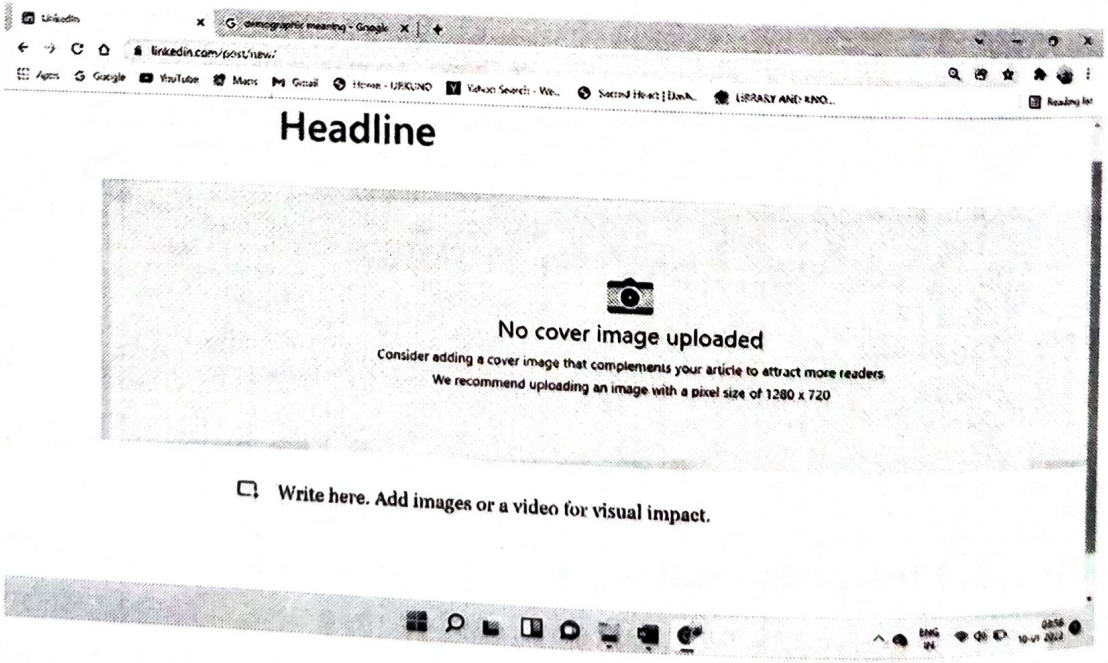
LinkedIn has several features for its users. These can be of great benefit for academicians if used effectively. Some features are:

Posts : The users can post anything they like such as

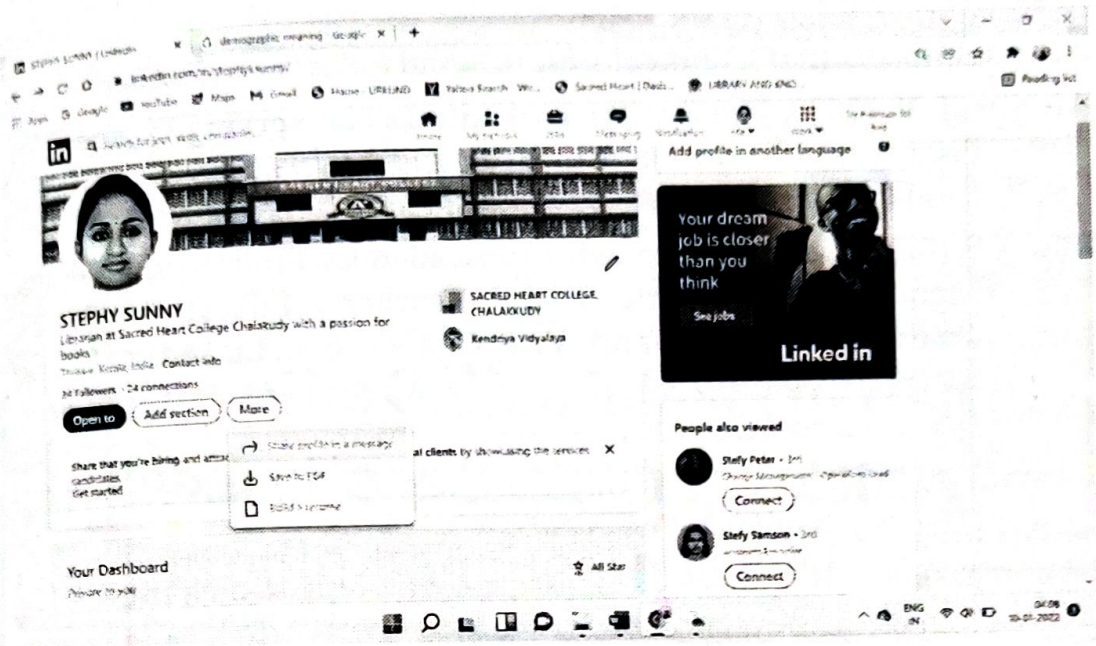
research findings, publications, achievements etc. so that it appears in other people's feed. There is also provision to add photos and videos, celebrate an occasion, create poll or event, offer help, find an expert etc.



Article: We can publish any article in LinkedIn and even add images and videos to it and see the number of views.



LinkedIn allows us to share our profile, save to pdf and even helps in building our resume with the details given.



Apart from this LinkedIn can be used to follow people and pages, message others, join groups and communicate with members, follow hashtags, subscribe to newsletter, search for jobs etc.

CONCLUSION

Managing profiles in various profile management systems is of great use for academicians who intend to build their online reputation and get global recognition for their works and achievements. The scope of LinkedIn as an academic profile management tool is much bigger and yet to be explored fully by academicians. LinkedIn is a powerful platform for scholarly communication where profiles can be created easily, details can be updated almost instantly and achievements can be highlighted. Even though many academic professionals have profiles in LinkedIn, many are incomplete, not updated regularly and rarely used. A well updated LinkedIn profile can act as digital curriculum vitae and can fetch better jobs for professionals. It is time that the academic world understands the benefits of LinkedIn and uses it more actively for professional development, building network and increasing their online digital footprint.

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ശേഷീവാദം
വിചാരവും വിശകലനവും

എഴുതിയത്
ഡോ. സിസ്റ്റർ നോയൽ റോസ്



ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി പഠനങ്ങൾ



ശേഷീവാദം
വിചാരവും വിശകലനവും

എഡിറ്റർ
ഡോ. സിസ്റ്റർ നോയൽ റോസ്

മനുഷ്യശരീരത്തെയും മനസ്സിനെയും കുറിച്ചുള്ള പൊതുസമൂഹത്തിന്റെ പരമ്പരാഗത ധാരണകളെ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി പഠനങ്ങൾ പ്രശ്നവല്ക്കരിക്കുന്നു. ശേഷീവാദത്തിന്റെ അധീശ സാംസ്കാരിക രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തെ ആധികാരികമായി വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുന്ന മലയാളത്തിലെ പ്രഥമ ഗ്രന്ഥം.

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ഭിന്നശേഷി: ആശയം, വിചാരമാതൃക, വിനിമയം

ജിനി എം. ടി.

മനുഷ്യരുടെ ശരീരഘടന, പ്രവർത്തനം, ചിന്ത എന്നിവയുമായി ചേർന്നുകാണുന്ന ചില ശരിമാനദണ്ഡങ്ങൾ നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ പണ്ടുമുതലേ സ്ഥാനംനേടിയിരുന്നു. ശരീരത്തിന്റെ ഘടന, പ്രവർത്തനം എന്നിവയും ചിന്ത, ബുദ്ധി എന്നിവയും ശരിബോധ്യങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് മാറുമ്പോൾ അവയെ ഏതെങ്കിലും പോരായ്മപ്പട്ടികയിൽപ്പെടുത്താനാണ് സമൂഹം എക്കാലവും ഉദ്യമിച്ചിരുന്നത്. നമ്മുടെ നാട്ടുവഴക്കങ്ങളായ ഇരട്ടപ്പേരുകൾ അതു വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. മനുഷ്യശരീരത്തിന് നിർവചനങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് ഒരു വ്യക്തിയുടെ ശാരീരിക-മാനസിക പൂർണ്ണതയെ അളന്നുതിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തുകയും അതനുസരിച്ച് മനുഷ്യരെ പൂർണ്ണരെന്നും അപൂർണ്ണരെന്നും വർഗീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന പ്രവണത സമൂഹത്തിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നു. ഈ പ്രവണതയുടെ സ്വാധീനംകൊണ്ട് സമൂഹത്തിൽ അധികാരാടയാളങ്ങൾ നിശ്ചയിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഈ അടയാളങ്ങളുടെ ബാഹുല്യമാണ് ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാർക്ക് സമൂഹത്തിലും സമൂഹനിർമിതിയിലും സ്ഥാനമില്ലാതാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഭിന്നശേഷിയെന്നു പരാമർശിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതൊരു കുറവായാണ് സമൂഹം ഇന്നും മനസിലാക്കുന്നത്.

തികഞ്ഞവ്യക്തി എന്ന നിലവാരപ്പലകയ്ക്കു കീഴിൽ ഓരോ മനുഷ്യനും വിലയിരുത്തപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. സ്വത്വബോധത്തിന് ശ്രമിക്കുന്ന ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ള വ്യക്തിക്ക് ഉത്തമവ്യക്തിയെ പ്രതിഫലിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ദർപ്പണം നൽകി 'നീ അപൂർണനാണ്, നിന്റെ വ്യക്തിത്വം ശകലിതവും' എന്ന് പറയുന്നതാണ് സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ നയം. സ്വന്തം സിദ്ധികളെയും വ്യക്തിത്വങ്ങളെയും തിരിച്ചറിയാൻ അനുവദിക്കാത്ത ഈ ജ്ഞാനരൂപങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ, സാംസ്കാരികവിനിമയ

ത്തിൽ തങ്ങളെക്കൂടി ഉൾകൊള്ളുന്നതിന് ഏത് സ്വത്വം കൈയാളണം എന്ന ചിന്തയിൽ ഉഴറുന്ന ഭിന്നശേഷിവ്യക്തിത്വങ്ങൾക്ക് സമകാലസാംസ്കാരികഭൂമികയിൽ സ്ഥാനമില്ലാതെവരുന്നു.

വ്യത്യസ്തമായ സവിശേഷതകളുള്ള ഒട്ടേറെവിഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നതാണ് ഭിന്നശേഷിവിഭാഗം. 1995-ൽ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി ആക്ട് നിലവിൽ വന്ന സമയത്ത് എട്ട് വിഭാഗം ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരാണ് ഉൾപെടിരുന്നത്. 2016-ൽ RPWD (Right to persons with Disabilities Act) വന്നപ്പോൾ അത് ഇരുപത്തിയൊന്നായി വർദ്ധിച്ചു. പെട്ടെന്നുണ്ടായ വർദ്ധനവല്ല ഇത്. നമ്മുടെ സാമൂഹികാവബോധം, സാമൂഹ്യസംവേദനശേഷി എന്നിവ വ്യാപിക്കുന്നതിന്റെയും വർദ്ധിക്കുന്നതിന്റെയും വികസിക്കുന്നതിന്റെയും അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിലാണിത്.

ഭിന്നശേഷി എന്ന പദം

ഈ മേഖല അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന വലിയ പ്രതിസന്ധികളിലൊന്ന് കൃത്യമായ അർത്ഥം ധ്വനിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഭാഷ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വാക്കുകൾ ലഭ്യമല്ല എന്നതാണ്. സാധാരണകരുതുന്ന രീതിയിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കാൻ പ്രാപ്തിയില്ലാത്ത ഒരു വ്യക്തിയെയാണ് ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരൻ/ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരിയായി മിക്ക ആളുകളും കരുതുന്നത്.

ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി എന്ന പദം വഹിക്കുന്ന ആശയലോകം കേരളത്തിലെ ഭാഷയ്ക്കും സംസ്കാരത്തിനും ഇനിയും പൂർണമായി ഉൾക്കൊള്ളാനായിട്ടില്ലെന്നു കാണാൻ പ്രയാസമില്ല. സംസ്കാരം, ഭാഷ, മാനവികത എന്നിവയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ട് ഡിസെബിലിറ്റിയെ മനസിലാക്കുകയും ചർച്ചചെയ്യുകയും വേണമെന്നത് കേരളം ഗൗരവമായെടുത്തിട്ട് എതാനും വർഷമേ ആയിട്ടുള്ളു. ഇംഗ്ലീഷിൽ ഉപയോഗിച്ചുവരുന്ന മൂന്നു പദങ്ങൾക്ക്, (എബിലിറ്റി, ഇന്നബിലിറ്റി, ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി) കൃത്യമായ മലയാളപരിഭാഷ സാധ്യമല്ല. എതാണ്ട് പതിനേഴാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടുവരെ ഇന്നബിലിറ്റി, ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി എന്നീ രണ്ടുപദങ്ങളും ഒരേ അർത്ഥത്തിൽ പ്രയോഗിച്ചുവന്നു. ക്രമേണ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി ശാരീരികമായ എന്തെങ്കിലും പോരായ്മയെ സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്ന വാക്കായി മാറുകയാണ് ഉണ്ടായത്. മലയാളത്തിൽ ആയിരത്തിതൊള്ളയിരത്തിതൊണ്ണൂറുകൾ വരെ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി എന്നാൽ വികലാംഗതയായിരുന്നു. വികലാംഗപെൻഷൻ, വികലാംഗസർട്ടിഫിക്കറ്റ്, വികലാംഗക്ഷേമ കോർപ്പറേഷൻ തുടങ്ങി നിരവധി സങ്കല്പങ്ങൾ അക്കാലത്തുണ്ടായവയാണ്. ഇരുപതാംനൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ അന്തിമദശകം വരെ വികലാംഗത എന്ന

സങ്കല്പത്തിനു ചുറ്റുമാണ് കേരളത്തിൽ ആശയങ്ങൾ രൂപീകരിച്ചിരുന്നത്. അപ്പോഴേക്കും അന്താരാഷ്ട്രനിലപാട് മാറിക്കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. ഐക്യരാഷ്ട്രസംഘടനയുടെ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി നയരേഖകൾ സൂക്ഷ്മപരിശോധനാഘട്ടം കഴിഞ്ഞു. എബിലിറ്റിയിൽ നിന്നും ഡിസെബിലിറ്റിയെ വേർതിരിച്ച് നിഷ്പക്ഷമായ മാനത്തിൽ കാണാനാവുക എന്നത് മനുഷ്യാവകാശത്തിന്റെയും സ്വയം നിർണയാവകാശത്തിന്റെയും അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ലോകമനസിന്റെ സാമൂഹികനിർമിതിയുടെ ഭാഗമാക്കുക എന്നതിലേക്കു നീങ്ങി.

വിദേശത്ത് ഡിസബിലിറ്റിയുള്ള വ്യക്തികളെ Persons with disability (PWD) എന്നുമാത്രം പറയുമ്പോൾ കേരളത്തിൽ അംഗപരിമിതി, ഭിന്നശേഷി എന്നീ പദങ്ങൾ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നു. കഴിഞ്ഞ ഏതാനും വർഷമായി 'ഭിന്നശേഷി' എന്ന പദമാണ് കൂടുതൽ അഭികാമ്യമെന്ന അഭിപ്രായം ശക്തമായി. ഈ പദം എത്രകണ്ട് അർത്ഥപൂർണവും നിഷ്പക്ഷവുമാണെന്ന് പറയാനാവില്ലെന്നുമാത്രമല്ല, ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി സമൂഹവും അവരുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടുപ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നവരും പൂർണമായി അംഗീകരിക്കുന്നുമില്ല. ഭിന്നശേഷി എന്ന പദത്തിന് 'differently abled' എന്ന പ്രയോഗവുമായി സാമ്യമുണ്ട്. പണ്ട് അമേരിക്കയിൽ സ്പോർട്സ് രംഗത്ത് ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവർ വന്നുതുടങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ കണ്ടെത്തിയ പ്രയോഗമാണത്. എന്നാൽ വ്യക്തികൾ പരസ്പരം വ്യത്യസ്തരായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ എന്നതിനാൽ ഇങ്ങനെയൊരു പ്രയോഗംതന്നെ പര്യായോക്തപദമല്ലേ? (euphemism) എന്ന ചോദ്യം ശക്തമായി (ഭാഷാസാഹിതി 22,23). വ്യക്തികളെ അവരുടെ കഴിവിന്റെയോ സ്വഭാവത്തിന്റെയോ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ വർഗീകരിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ടോ എന്നത് കാലികപ്രസക്തമായ ചോദ്യമാണ് എന്ന് അണ്ണാമലൈ സർവകലാശാല മെഡിസിൻ ആൻഡ് റീഹാബിലിറ്റേഷൻ സെന്റർ മുൻപ്രൊഫസർ ഡോ. യു. നന്ദകുമാർ വിലയിരുത്തുന്നു.

ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരെക്കുറിച്ച് സമൂഹം എങ്ങനെ ചിന്തിക്കുന്നു എന്നത് അവർ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെക്കുറിച്ച് എങ്ങനെ കരുതുന്നു എന്നതിനെ ആശ്രയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. ഭിന്നശേഷിയെക്കുറിച്ച് ആളുകൾക്ക് വ്യത്യസ്തവീക്ഷണങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഈ കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളെ ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ മൂന്ന് മാതൃകകളായി തിരിക്കാം. ധാർമികം, വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രപരം, സാമൂഹികം. ഓരോ മാതൃകയും ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ കാരണങ്ങൾ, ഉചിതമായ പ്രതികരണങ്ങൾ, ആഴത്തിലുള്ള അർത്ഥങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു.

ധാർമിക മാതൃക (Moral Model)

ധാർമികമാതൃകയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷി എന്നത് വ്യക്തിയുടെ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ കുടുംബത്തിന്റെ സ്വഭാവം, പ്രവൃത്തികൾ, ചിന്തകൾ, കർമം എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അർത്ഥമായിക്കാണുന്നു. ഈ വീക്ഷണകോണിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെന്നത് കളങ്കവും നാണക്കേടും കുറ്റപ്പെടുത്തലും നേരിടേണ്ടിവരുന്ന അവസ്ഥാവിശേഷമായും തെറ്റായപ്രവർത്തനത്തിന്റെ അടയാളമായും ഒരു കൂട്ടർ കാണുന്നു.

ബൈബിളിൽ ഈ ചിന്ത വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്ന ഒരു ഭാഗമുണ്ട്. 'അവൻ കടന്നുപോകുമ്പോൾ ജന്മനാഅന്ധനായ ഒരുവനെ കണ്ടു. ശിഷ്യന്മാർ യേശുവിനോടു ചോദിച്ചു. റബ്ബി ഇവൻ അന്ധനായി ജനിച്ചത് ആരുടെ പാപം നിമിത്തമാണ്, ഇവന്റെയോ, ഇവന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാരുടെയോ? യേശു മറുപടി പറഞ്ഞു. ഇവന്റെയോ ഇവന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാരുടെയോ പാപം നിമിത്തമല്ല, പ്രസ്തുത ദൈവത്തിന്റെ പ്രവൃത്തികൾ ഇവനിൽ പ്രകടമാകേണ്ടതിനാണ്'(യോഹന്നാൻ 9:1-3). വൈകല്യവും പാപവും തമ്മിലുള്ള ബന്ധം ശിഷ്യന്മാർ പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്നു. നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകൾക്കു മുമ്പുതന്നെ ഈയൊരു ചിന്ത സമൂഹത്തിൽ ആഴത്തിൽ വേരോടിയിരുന്നു എന്ന് ഇതിൽനിന്നു മനസിലാക്കാം. പാപവും ഭിന്നശേഷിയും തമ്മിലുള്ള ആശയക്കുഴപ്പം വൈകല്യത്തിന്റെ മതപരമായ തലത്തെ സ്ഥിരീകരിക്കുന്നു. ഇത് വൈകല്യത്തെ, പാപത്തിന്റെ ഫലമായി ഒരു വ്യക്തിക്കോ കുടുംബത്തിനോ ദൈവം നൽകിയ ശിക്ഷയായി കാണുന്നു. തന്മൂലം വൈകല്യം വ്യക്തിയെ മാത്രമല്ല മുഴുവൻ കുടുംബത്തെയും കളങ്കപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ സാമൂഹിക, സാമ്പത്തിക, രാഷ്ട്രീയ, ആത്മീയ മേഖലകളിൽ നിന്ന് ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരെ ഒഴിവാക്കുന്നതാണ് ഇതിന്റെ സൂചന. വിശുദ്ധി പൂർണ്ണതയിലും സ്വാഭാവികതയിലും ശാരീരിക ആവിഷ്കാരം കണ്ടെത്തുന്നു എന്ന ആശയം വ്യക്തമായി പുറത്തുവരുന്നു.

സുഭാഷ് ചന്ദ്രന്റെ 'സമുദ്രശില' എന്ന നോവലിലെ ധാർമികസങ്കല്പം ഈ ആശയത്തോടു ചേർത്തുവായിക്കാം. ഇതിഹാസകഥാപാത്രമായ അംബ തന്റെ സ്രഷ്ടാവിനോട് ഉത്കണ്ഠയോടെ ചോദിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ചോദ്യം ഞാൻ അങ്ങയെ പ്രാപിച്ചിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ എനിക്ക് ജനിക്കുന്ന കുഞ്ഞിന് സംഭവിച്ചേക്കാമായിരുന്ന ന്യൂനത എന്തായിരിക്കുമെന്നാണ് (പുറം 23). അതിനുത്തരമായി സ്വേച്ഛയോടെ പുരുഷനെ പ്രാപിക്കാത്ത പാപത്തിന് സ്വേച്ഛയോടെ കൈകാലുകൾ ചലിപ്പിക്കാൻപറ്റാത്ത മകൻ ജനിക്കുമായിരുന്നെന്ന് പറയു

ന്നു(പുറം 24). മഹാഭാരതത്തിന്റെ തുടർച്ചയായി അവതരിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട ആധുനികകാലത്തിലെ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരന്റെ അമ്മയായ അംബയും ആശ്വാസം കണ്ടെത്തുന്നത് വിവാഹപൂർവലൈംഗിക ബന്ധമെന്ന മിഥ്യയുടെ നിഴലിൽ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചെടുത്ത പാപബോധത്തിലാണ്. ഇതിലൂടെ പുരുഷനെ അതൃപ്തിയോടെ പ്രാപിച്ചതിന്റെ പാപഫലമായുണ്ടായ ശാപജന്മങ്ങളാണ് ധൃതരാഷ്ട്രരും പാണ്ഡുവുമെന്ന് പറയുന്ന ഇതിഹാസത്തിലെ ധാർമികസങ്കല്പം തന്നെയാണ് നോവലും പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുന്നത്.

മറ്റൊരു തരത്തിൽ വൈകല്യത്തെ ബഹുമാനത്തിന്റെയോ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെയോ ശക്തിയുടെയോ അടയാളമായി കാണാവുന്നതാണ്. ഉദാഹരണത്തിന് മതവിശ്വാസിയായ ഒരാൾ തങ്ങളെ (അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അവരുടെ കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളെ) ദൈവവിശ്വാസം നിമിത്തം വൈകല്യമുള്ളവരായി തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തുവെന്ന് വിശ്വസിച്ചേക്കാം. ജീവിതവെല്ലുവിളിയെ അതിജീവിച്ചതിന്റെ നല്ല ഓർമപ്പെടുത്തലായി വൈകല്യത്തെ കണക്കാക്കാം. (ഉദാ: പോളിയോ, പകർച്ചവ്യാധി, കുഴിബോംബിൽ ചവിട്ടുക.) ധാർമികമാതൃക ലോകമെമ്പാടും വളരെ വ്യാപകമാണ്. അത് പലപ്പോഴും മാധ്യമങ്ങളിൽ ചിത്രീകരിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഉദാഹരണത്തിന് ചില സിനിമകൾ തിന്മ, ഹാസ്യം എന്നിവ ചിത്രീകരിക്കാൻ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നു. ഇതിനു വിപരീതമായി, അതുല്യമായ ലക്ഷ്യങ്ങൾ കൈവരിക്കാൻ സാധാരണ മാനുഷികതലങ്ങൾക്കപ്പുറത്തേക്ക് പോകുന്ന ഒരാളായി ചില സിനിമകൾ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരനെ ചിത്രീകരിക്കുന്നു.

വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്ര മാതൃക (Medical Model)

1800-കളുടെ പകുതി മുതൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്ര മാതൃക ധാർമികവും മതപരവുമായ മാതൃകയെ മാറ്റിസ്ഥാപിക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ മെഡിക്കൽ മോഡലിനെ ചിലപ്പോൾ 'പേഴ്സണൽ ട്രാജഡി' എന്നും വിളിക്കുന്നു (തോമസ്& വുഡ്സ് 2003:15). കാരണം ഇത് ഭിന്നശേഷിയെ വസ്തുനിഷ്ഠമായി മോശവും ദയനീയവുമായ ഒരവസ്ഥയായി കണക്കാക്കുന്നു. 'വ്യക്തിക്കും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കുടുംബത്തിനും തടയപ്പെടേണ്ടതും സാധ്യമെങ്കിൽ സുഖപ്പെടുത്തേണ്ടതുമായ വ്യക്തിപരമായ ഒരു ദുരന്തം' എന്ന് കാൾസൺ(കാൾസൺ 2010:5) ഇതിനെ നിർവചിക്കുന്നു. കാൾസൺ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഈ

നിഷേധാത്മകസങ്കൽപം ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരായ വ്യക്തികളിൽ നടത്തുന്ന ചില സംശയാസ്പദമായ മെഡിക്കൽചികിത്സകൾക്കു കാരണമായിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഉദാഹരണത്തിന് നിർബന്ധിതവന്ധ്യംകരണം, ദയാവധം തുടങ്ങിയവ. മെഡിക്കൽ മോഡൽ അനുസരിച്ച് ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാർ സാധാരണയിൽ നിന്ന് വ്യതിചലിക്കുന്നു. അസാധുവായ, വികലാംഗ, മന്ദബുദ്ധിയുള്ള തുടങ്ങിയ പദങ്ങളെല്ലാം മെഡിക്കൽ മോഡലിൽ നിന്ന് ഉരുത്തിരിഞ്ഞതാണ് (ക്രീമർ 2009:22). ഈ സമീപനം ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരായ വ്യക്തികളെ അവരുടെ കഴിവുള്ള എതിരാളികളുമായി താരതമ്യപ്പെടുത്താനാകില്ലെന്ന ധാരണയെ ശക്തിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. ഭിന്നശേഷിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള വ്യാഖ്യാനത്തിന്റെ മെഡിക്കൽ മോഡൽ ഒരു ദ്വൈതവാദത്തെ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ഇത് 'കഴിവുള്ളവരെ' ഏതെങ്കിലും വിധത്തിൽ മെച്ചപ്പെട്ടവർ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ പരിമിതിയുള്ളവരേക്കാൾ ശ്രേഷ്ഠർ എന്ന് തരംതിരിക്കുന്നു.

വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രമേഖലയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെന്നത് ഒരു ശരീരവ്യവസ്ഥയിലോ പ്രവർത്തനത്തിലോ ഉള്ള വൈകല്യമായിട്ടാണ് കാണുന്നത്. ഈ വീക്ഷണകോണിൽനിന്ന്, സിസ്റ്റം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ പ്രവർത്തനം കഴിയുന്നത്ര സാധാരണയിലേക്കു തിരികെനൽകുക എന്നതാണ് ലക്ഷ്യം. പ്രത്യേക പരിശീലനമുള്ള പ്രൊഫഷണലുകൾ അധികാരം സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്ന ഈ മാതൃകയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാർ ഇവരുടെ ഉപദേശം പിന്തുടരുന്നവരായിമാറുന്നു. രോഗനിർണയവും ചികിത്സയും കൃത്യമാണെന്നും രോഗിയുടെ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ രോഗിയേക്കാൾ കൂടുതൽ വൈദ്യന് അറിയാമെന്നുമുള്ള ധാരണ രൂപപ്പെടുന്നു. രോഗികളുടെ ആത്മാവബോധത്തിന് ഒരു പരിഗണനയും ഇവിടെ ലഭിക്കുന്നില്ല. ഇവിടെ ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ ചരിത്രവും ഭാവിയും കഠിനമായി സങ്കുചിതമാകുന്നു. മെഡിക്കൽ പ്രത്യാഘാതങ്ങളിൽ മാത്രം ശ്രദ്ധകേന്ദ്രീകരിക്കുകയും വൈകല്യത്തിന്റെ അനുഭവത്തിന് സംഭാവന നൽകുന്ന യഥാർത്ഥ സാമൂഹികഘടനകളെ അവഗണിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

സാമൂഹികമാതൃക (Social Model)

ഒന്നാം ലോകയുദ്ധം ഭിന്നശേഷിയോടുള്ള കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളിൽ മാറ്റമുണ്ടാക്കി. ആരോഗ്യമുള്ള ചെറുപ്പക്കാർ യുദ്ധസേവനത്തിനു പോകുകയും അതിൽ ധാരാളം പേർ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരായി തിരിച്ചെത്തുകയും ചെയ്തു. അവരുടെ പുനരധിവാസം അടിയന്തിരമാ

യി വേണ്ടിവന്നു. വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രവും ടെക്നോളജിയും ഒന്നിച്ച് പൊയ്ക്കാലുകൾ തുടങ്ങിയ കൃത്രിമഅവയവങ്ങൾ, ശാരീരികക്ഷമത വർദ്ധിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള ഉപകരണങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയുടെ നിർമാണം വ്യാപകമാക്കി. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവരെക്കൂടി ജോലിയിൽ പ്രവേശിപ്പിക്കാൻ തൊഴിൽദാതാക്കളെ പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുകയും അവർക്കു വേണ്ടുന്ന സുരക്ഷ തൊഴിലിടങ്ങളിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാർക്കുതകുന്ന പാർപ്പിടങ്ങളും മെച്ചപ്പെട്ട ജീവിതാവസരവും ഉണ്ടായത് ഡിസബിലിറ്റി എന്ന ആശയം തന്നെ പുനർവിചിന്തനം ചെയ്യാൻ അവസരമൊരുക്കി. രണ്ടാംലോകയുദ്ധവും ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരോടുള്ള കാഴ്ചപ്പാടിൽ കാതലായ മാറ്റമുണ്ടാക്കി. ഇംഗ്ലണ്ടിൽ മാത്രം മൂന്നുലക്ഷം ചെറുപ്പക്കാർ യുദ്ധക്കളത്തിൽനിന്നും ഭിന്നശേഷിയുമായി തിരിച്ചെത്തി. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവരുടെ എണ്ണം കൂടുന്നത് ശരിയല്ലെന്ന് കണ്ടിരുന്ന ശാസ്ത്രജ്ഞരും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ന്യൂനതയും കുറവുകളുമുള്ള ശിശുക്കൾ ജനിക്കാതിരുന്നാൽ ഭിന്നശേഷി ഭാവിയിൽ നിയന്ത്രിതമാകുമെന്ന് സ്വപ്നംകണ്ടിരുന്നവർ യൂജെനിക്സ് എന്ന വിജ്ഞാനീയത്തിന് രൂപംകൊടുത്തു.

യൂജെനിക്സ് സൊസൈറ്റിയുടെ തലവനായിരുന്ന ജൂലിയൻ ഹക്സലി (1930)ഇങ്ങനെ പറഞ്ഞു, 'ന്യൂനതയും കുറവുമുള്ള ഓരോ പുരുഷനും സ്ത്രീയും കുട്ടിയും ഭാരമാണ്. അവരെ പോറ്റുന്നതും വസ്ത്രം ധരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതും രാജ്യത്തിന് അധികഭാരമാണ്. അവരുടെ സംഭാവന നിസ്സാരമാവാം, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഒന്നുമുണ്ടാവില്ല'. (കി 1930, Julian Huxley, secretary of the London Zoological Society and chairman of the Eugenics Society wrote: 'What are we going to do? Every defective man, woman and child is a burden. Every defective is an extra body for the nation to feed and clothe, but produces little or nothing in return.)

ജർമനിയിൽ യൂജെനിക്സ് പരീക്ഷണങ്ങളുടെ ഭാഗമായി അംഗവൈകല്യമുള്ളവരെ കൂട്ടക്കൊല ചെയ്തതിന്റെ തെളിവുകൾ പുറത്തുവന്നു. അനേകംപേർ വന്ധ്യംകരണത്തിന് വിധേയമായിരുന്നു. അവകാശങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും മൂല്യസങ്കല്പത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും പുതിയ ചിന്തകൾക്ക് ഇതെല്ലാം വഴിയൊരുക്കി. മുൻകാലങ്ങളിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷി ഒരു വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രവിഷയമായാണ് കരുതപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ യു.എൻ.സി.ആർ.പി.ഡി, ലോകാരോഗ്യസംഘടന എന്നിവരുടെ പുതുക്കിയ കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകൾ അനുസരിച്ച്, വൈകല്യ

മുള്ളവർ എന്ന ആശയത്തെ ശാരീരികമോ, മാനസികമോ, ബുദ്ധിപരമോ, സംവേദനപരമോ ആയ ചിലയിനം ബലഹീനതകളിലേക്ക് ചുരുക്കുന്നില്ല. പകരം ഭിന്നശേഷിയെ, വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രപരമായ നിർവ്വചനങ്ങളിൽ നിന്ന് സാമൂഹികമായ നിർവ്വചനത്തിലേക്ക് കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നു. അതായത് പ്രധാനസ്രോതസ്സ് ഒരാളുടെ ശാരീരികമോ, മാനസികമോ, ബുദ്ധിപരമോ, സംവേദനപരമോ ആയ ബലഹീനതകളല്ല, പകരം, അത്തരം ബലഹീനതകൾ സമൂഹത്തിലെ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മറ്റു ഘടനകളിലെ തടസ്സങ്ങളിൽ തട്ടുന്നതു കാരണം പൂർണ്ണവും ഗുണപരവുമായ സാമൂഹ്യഇടപടലുകൾ നടത്താൻകഴിയാത്ത അവസ്ഥയാണ് എന്നാണ്. ഈ നിർവ്വചനം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത് വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രപരമായ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ മാത്രം മതിയാവില്ല എന്നും, അതിന് മുകളിൽ സൂചിപ്പിച്ച 'തടസ്സങ്ങളെ' യാണ് ശ്രദ്ധിക്കേണ്ടതെന്നും ഈ സംഘടനകൾ വാദിക്കുന്നു. സമൂഹങ്ങളുടെ ബോധപൂർവ്വമായ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലൂടെ ഇത്തരം തടസ്സങ്ങൾ ഒഴിവാക്കപ്പെടുമ്പോൾ പരിമിതി, ഭിന്നശേഷിയായി മാറ്റപ്പെടുന്നു.

ഭിന്നശേഷിക്ക് കാരണമാവുന്ന അവസ്ഥകളെ പലതായി വർഗ്ഗീകരിക്കാം. വൈദ്യശാസ്ത്രകാഴ്ചപ്പാടിൽ, ഭിന്നശേഷിക്ക് കാരണമാവുന്ന വൈകല്യങ്ങൾ, ഹാനികൾ എന്നിവ ജന്മസിദ്ധമോ, ജനിതകമോ, ആർജ്ജിതമോ, അജ്ഞാതകാരണങ്ങളാലുള്ളതോ ആവാം. എന്നാൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ സാമൂഹ്യമാതൃക അനുസരിച്ച്, ഒരു വ്യക്തിയുടെ പ്രത്യേകതകളേയും പരിമിതികളേയും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിനു സമൂഹത്തിന് കഴിയാതിരിക്കുന്ന ഏതവസ്ഥയും ഭിന്നശേഷിക്ക് കാരണങ്ങളാണ്. പ്രധാനമായും ദാരിദ്ര്യം, സാമൂഹ്യ-രാഷ്ട്രീയഘടനകൾ, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസലഭ്യതയില്ലായ്മ, ആരോഗ്യ മേഖലയുടെ കാര്യക്ഷമതയില്ലായ്മ, സാങ്കേതികമായപിന്നോക്കാവസ്ഥ, സാമൂഹ്യകാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകൾ, ജീവിതസാഹചര്യങ്ങൾ, സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ സാമ്പത്തികഘടനയും നയങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയാണ് സാമൂഹ്യമായി ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരെ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നതും, അതിന്റെ വ്യാപനത്തിന് കാരണമാവുന്നതും. സാമൂഹികബഹിഷ്കരണത്തിലേക്കും അടിച്ചമർത്തലിലേക്കും നയിക്കുന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥാപിതവും ഘടനാപരവുമായ തടസ്സങ്ങൾ സമൂഹം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നു. ഭിന്നശേഷിസൗഹൃദമല്ലാത്ത കെട്ടിടങ്ങളും ഗതാഗതസേവനങ്ങളും ഉദാഹരണമാണ്.

സാമൂഹിക മാതൃകയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിത്വം വ്യക്തിയുടെ വ്യക്തിത്വത്തിന്റെ ഒരു വശമായി കാണുന്നു. വംശം, വർഗം, ലിംഗഭേദം

മുതലായവ പോലെ, ഈ വീക്ഷണകോണിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരനും പരിസ്ഥിതിയും തമ്മിലുള്ള (ശാരീരികവും സാമൂഹികവുമായ) പൊരുത്തക്കേടിന്റെ ഫലമായാണ് വൈകല്യമെന്ന് വിശ്വസിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഈ പരിതസ്ഥിതിയാണ് തടസ്സങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നത്, മറിച്ച് ശേഷിക്കുറവല്ല. ഈ മാതൃകയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെ അഭിസംബോധന ചെയ്യുന്നതിനുള്ള മാർഗം പരിമിതികളുള്ളവരേക്കാൾ പരിസ്ഥിതിയെയും സമൂഹത്തെയും മാറ്റുക എന്നതാണ്. ഒരു സാധാരണവ്യക്തിക്ക് ജീവിതത്തിലെ ഏതുഘട്ടത്തിലും ഭിന്നശേഷികർതൃത്വം കൈവരാം. പഞ്ചേന്ദ്രിയങ്ങളും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന സാധാരണക്കാർക്കുവേണ്ടി നിർമിച്ച വീടുകളും വിദ്യാലയങ്ങളും പൊതുഇടങ്ങളും സാമൂഹികപരിസരങ്ങളുമാണ് ഭിന്നശേഷി ജനവിഭാഗത്തിന് സാമൂഹികപ്രക്രിയയിൽ തുല്യപങ്കാളിത്തവും അവസരങ്ങളും നഷ്ടമാക്കിയത്. അതായത് ശാരീരികവെല്ലുവിളികൾ മാത്രമല്ല, ഭൂരിപക്ഷജനത അവർക്കുവേണ്ടി രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിയ സാമൂഹികജീവിതപരിസരങ്ങൾ അവയുണ്ടാക്കിയ തടസങ്ങൾ കൊണ്ട് അവസരം നഷ്ടമായവരാണ് ഭിന്നശേഷിസമൂഹം.

ഭിന്നശേഷിയും സാംസ്കാരികഇടപെടലും

സാമൂഹികജീവിതത്തിൽ പരസ്പരം ആശയവിനിമയം നടത്തുന്ന പാരമ്പര്യവിശ്വാസങ്ങൾ, മൂല്യബോധം, ധാർമികവ്യവസ്ഥ, സാമൂഹികഘടനയിൽ അടങ്ങിയിരിക്കുന്ന അധികാരബന്ധങ്ങൾ തുടങ്ങിയവ വിനിമയം നിർവഹിക്കുന്നത് വ്യവഹാരത്തിലൂടെയാണ്. അത് സാമാന്യബോധമായി ജനസഞ്ചയത്തിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നു. അറിവും അധികാരവും കൂടിച്ചേരുന്ന ഇടം എന്ന അർത്ഥത്തിൽ മിഷേൽഫൂക്കോ വ്യവഹാരത്തെ നിർവചിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. വ്യവഹാരത്തിലൂടെ പഠിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത് സാമൂഹികതയാണ്. അവയാകട്ടെ അധികാരത്തെ പ്രസരണം ചെയ്യുന്നതും. സാമൂഹികവിനിമയത്തിന് സാധ്യമാവുന്ന എല്ലാ ഘടകങ്ങളും വ്യവഹാരത്തിൽ ഉൾപെടുത്താമെന്ന് ഫെയർ ക്ലോ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു. ഭിന്നശേഷി കേവലമായ ശാരീരികാവസ്ഥ മാത്രമല്ലെന്നും അത് സാമൂഹികമായും സാംസ്കാരികമായും നിർമിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന ഒന്നാണെന്നുമുള്ള വെളിച്ചത്തിലാണ് മാനവികശാസ്ത്രമേഖലയിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയെ അധികരിച്ചുള്ള പഠനങ്ങൾ നടക്കുന്നത്. ഏതൊരു വ്യവഹാരത്തിലും (Discourse) അധികാരം ബോധ-അബോധതലങ്ങളിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അധികാരത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തിയുള്ള ആ

ലോചനകൾ സമകാല സാമൂഹിക-സംസ്കാര പഠനങ്ങളിൽ പ്രസക്തമാണ്. പലതരത്തിലുള്ള അധികാരത്തിന്റെ രൂപങ്ങളിലൊന്നാണ് ശരീരത്തിനുമേലുള്ള അധികാരം. സാമൂഹികജീവിയായ മനുഷ്യന്റെ മനോഭാവവും ചിന്തയും പെരുമാറ്റരീതിയും സമൂഹത്തിൽ തന്നെയാണ് നിർമിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടത്. അങ്ങനെ നിർമിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന മനോഭാവത്തിൽ ശരീരനിർവചനങ്ങൾ പൂർണമായും തിരസ്കരിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരോട് സംസാരിക്കുന്ന ഭാഷയും അവരെ സൂചിപ്പിക്കാൻ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന വാക്കുകളും മാറ്റപ്പെടേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. ആദരവോടെയുള്ള ഭാഷ, പൂർണപങ്കാളിത്തത്തിലേക്ക് അവരെ നയിക്കും. നാം ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന പഴഞ്ചൊല്ലുകളിൽ പ്രധാനപ്രതികൾ ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരോ കീഴാളവർഗ്ഗത്തിൽപെട്ടവരോ സ്ത്രീകളോ ആണ്.

ഭിന്നശേഷിമേഖലയിൽ ശരീരത്തിനുമേലുള്ള ഭാഷാധികാരം (Power on Language) പലമട്ടിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതുകാണാം. ശരീരത്തിനുമേൽ ഭാഷകൊണ്ട് സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന അധികാരമാണത്. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഭാഷാപദങ്ങൾ ഭ്രാന്തൻ, കുറുക്കൻ, പൊട്ടൻ, മുടന്തൻ, മഠയൻ, കോലൻ, എലുമ്പൻ, തടിയൻ, ഉണ്ടക്കണ്ണൻ, കോലാപ്പി, അരപ്പിരി, മന്ദബുദ്ധി, കുള്ളൻ, വിക്കൻ, എന്നിങ്ങനെ നീളുന്നു. ഇവ പൂർണമായും ഒഴിവാക്കുകതന്നെ വേണം. വിദ്യാലയങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നുതന്നെ ഇത്തരം ശീലങ്ങൾ ആരംഭിക്കണം. ഭിന്നശേഷിസൗഹൃദമായ പാഠഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുകയും ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരുമൊത്തുള്ള സഹ-അധ്യയനത്തിന് അവസരമൊരുക്കുകയും വേണം. ജനാധിപത്യബോധത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, നിഴലിൽക്കിടക്കുന്ന ഈ മേഖലയിൽ വ്യാപിപ്പിക്കാൻ കഴിയണം. ശരീരത്തിന്റെ പൂർണത എന്ന പൊതുബോധത്തിന്റെ അധികാരസങ്കല്പങ്ങൾക്കെതിരെയുള്ള പിന്മടക്കമില്ലാത്ത സമരം തന്നെയാണ് ഏറ്റവും നല്ല ഭിന്നശേഷി പ്രവർത്തനം. അതൊരു മനുഷ്യാവകാശപ്രവർത്തനം കൂടിയാണ്.

ഇംഗ്ലീഷിൽ ഷേക്സ്പിയറിന്റെ കാലം മുതൽ ഡിസെബിലിറ്റി സാഹിത്യത്തിൽ കടന്നുവന്നിരുന്നു. അന്ന് ഡിസെബിലിറ്റിയുടെ അർത്ഥവും അതിനെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അറിവും വ്യത്യസ്തമായിരുന്നു. ഈ നൂറ്റാണ്ടിൽ ഭിന്നശേഷിയുടെ എല്ലാ വശങ്ങളും പോളിയോ, സെറിബ്രൽപാൾസി, ഓട്ടിസം, അൽഷെയ്മേഴ്സ്, കാൻസർ തുടങ്ങിയവ അവയുടെ ശാസ്ത്രീയത കൈമോശംവരാതെ ആംഗല സാഹിത്യത്തിന്റെ സർഗസൃഷ്ടികളിൽ കൊണ്ടുവന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്.

1994ൽ നോബൽ സമ്മാനം ലഭിച്ച ജാപ്പനീസ് നോവലിസ്റ്റാണ് കേൻസബറോ ഒയ് (Kenzaburo Oe) 'ദി ഹീലിംഗ് ഫാമിലി' എന്ന അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ നോവലും അതിലെ 'ഹിലരി' എന്ന കഥാപാത്രവും ലോകശ്രദ്ധ പിടിച്ചുപറ്റി. ഒരു ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കുട്ടി അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന വേദനയും പ്രയാസവുമാണ് നോവലിന്റെ പ്രധാനപ്രമേയം. ലോകം മുഴുവൻ ഓട്ടിസത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ചർച്ചചെയ്യാൻ അത് കാരണമായി. ഒട്ടേറെ മുൻവിധി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന ഓട്ടിസം എന്ന അവസ്ഥയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് പുതിയ പ്രത്യാശകളും പ്രതീക്ഷകളും പകർന്നുനൽകാൻ ഈ നോവലിനു സാധിച്ചു. ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട പ്രശ്നങ്ങളിൽ കൂടുതൽ ക്രിയാത്മകമായി പ്രതികരിക്കുവാൻ ഇതു പ്രേരകമായി. (ഭാഷാസാഹിതി.17) സാഹിത്യപരമായിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു ഇടപെടൽ ഈ മേഖലയെ എത്രമാത്രം പ്രകാശമാനമാക്കുമെന്നതിന് ഉദാഹരണമാണിത്. ഓസ്കർ അവാർഡ് ലഭിച്ച 'റെയിൻമാൻ' എന്ന സിനിമയും 'ബ്ലാക്ക്', 'പാ', 'താരേ സമീൻ പർ' തുടങ്ങിയ സിനിമകളും ഏറെ ചർച്ചചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നു. അത്തരത്തിലുള്ള സൃഷ്ടികൾ സമൂഹത്തിൽ ചെലുത്തുന്ന സ്വാധീനം വളരെവലുതാണ്. മലയാളത്തിൽ ഈ വികാസം ഇനിയും വരാനിരിക്കുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ. ഭിന്നശേഷിപഠനങ്ങളും അറിവുകളും ഭാഷയിലേക്കും അതുവഴി സമൂഹമനസിലേക്കും വന്നുചേർന്നാൽ മാത്രമേ ഇതെല്ലാം സാധ്യമാകൂ.

ആധാരസൂചി

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