

BOOK REVIEWS

Schooling in India: Hindus, Muslims, and the Forging of Citizens

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Schooling is a process of socialisation in a formally civilised form of society. If education instigates to 'think' then schooling defines 'what to think'. In fact every civilised society, it is schooling that defines the boundaries of the socially accepted behaviours and socially unaccepted behaviours for its citizens. But what is considered to be acceptable behaviour is always questionable, particularly in a multi-religious society, where each religious group has its own definitions of good and bad behaviours from its own point of view, which is differed from others. Similarly, what should be characteristics of a good citizen in a pluralistic society? How formal schooling contributes to make a good citizen by inculcating the spirit of nationalism in the formative minds of the children and the youth belong to multi-religious groups to achieve the idea of unitary and unified identity as an Indian? To address these questions in adequate manner, the present volume of this research work has been an attempt on the part of the researcher to perceive

India as a one nation against its pluralistic characteristics of the state.

The present work is ethnographic study of primary schools in western India (Maharashtra) by Benei has not only been an attempted to examine the making of good citizens in the formal setting of learning situations but the book addresses the moot question of what goes in making of a nation in a true sense and spirit. In other words, it is about schooling in the service of nation, how schooling functions to create citizens and how nationalism is inculcated in youth.

Highlighting the elements of banal nationalism, i.e. national flag, national song and national anthem, the author has initiated the issue of Indian nationalism in the very first chapter of the book. By giving ample opportunity and reverence to the spirit of nationalism, each aspects of banal nationalism have been vividly discussed by the author in the following chapter. In the school context the daily chanting of the nation into existence explores the formation of

patriotism and nationalism. As it has been pointed and observed by the author that the production of banal nationalism supported by the morning liturgy in the school unconsciously places the children at the realm of identification process of making them as good citizen.

The present study by the author herself embedded in the form of book gives insight into the educational processes occurring right from the beginning of socialisation and as early as kindergarten and primary school which are crucial to the production of local, regional and national attachments. To make her observations more substantive and affirmed the author has quoted the views of eminent educationists of the contemporary India, on socialisation of children which is intricately embedded in a multiplicity of culturally defined norms and rules from an early age. Emphasising school in terms of Weberian terminology as a public entity as recognised and legitimised by state and acts as a model of state functionary where the stakeholders-parents, teachers and educational officials play a crucial role in shaping state injunctions, relating them to ongoing political events, both within and outside the country. All these negotiated productions may crucially contribute to the social and political constriction of persons and citizens. In this case, young innocent children-future citizens are taught by the pedagogy that mirrors the imagining of identity-ethnic, religious and linguistic. Schooling hereby plays a particular role in the process of making of citizens.

In the next chapter of the book, a vivid elaboration has been done at the

school level on the different symbolic aspects of identity like language, cultural bodies and emotions of the individuals in the process of making and producing good future citizens. The study is based on the ethnographic accounts of Marathi-medium and few Urdu-medium primary schools in Maharashtra vicinity; the author clearly describes the importance of Marathi language as a dominant cultural tool to express the feelings and sentiments of nationalism among the primary school children. Drawing on the field experiences by the author herself has observed that how the daily iterations of devotion to the Indian nation are explicitly expressed by the state dominant language i.e. in the Marathi language. The mediation of language, the discipline procedures extant in everyday life at school gives wide experiences in the construction of the nation. The chapter also draws upon the intimacy of the home and family that makes Maratha schools potentially powerful resources that are activated in times of heightened conflict. Schools in Maharashtra have been seen through the lens of producers of regional and national allegiance that have become naturalised, legitimised and authentic.

Tracing life in a Marathi-medium and an Urdu-medium school in Kolhapur dealt in Chapters 4 and 5 separately are truly commendable for the academicians. In both cases, it is clearly shown by the author that the inner life of the class-room transactions where pedagogic authority (social actors) is exercised to construct knowledge and culture. It gives the reader an opportunity to grapple with the issue of recognising the school's role as a social institution.

Moreover, the author has explored the inner contradictions of identity formation in respect to spatial and social contexts. The first dimension holds the tension between the national and the regional i.e. in case of a Marathi- medium school, Benei guides us to notice the specificity of Maharashtra's regional identity, formulated as the Maratha self, crystallises in two major curricular domains, namely, history and Marathi language which is supported by the analysis of textbooks especially, the Grade IV book which introduces Shivaji, The Great Maratha Warrior.

The other dimension holds the tension inherent in Hindu-Muslim relations in the portrayal of the Urdu-medium school; Benei shows how the language chosen and used to carry out teaching creates a world of its own. Also, schooling serves to shape up the otherness of Muslims. How a community and a sense of belonging thereto are produced or at least reinforced through schooling. It is in congruence with Stuart Hall's Volume Questions of Cultural Identity wherein "identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being..." somehow the existing processes leading to "sharper differentiation of identifications" which endow upon Muslims an "irredeemable otherness".

In the concluding chapter of the book, aspiring for producing better future citizen the author has explicitly acknowledged the importance of military schools for the protection of national identity. These military schools are symbolic of Maharashtrian heritage that ought to serve and benefit the Indian

nation at large. The Prantinagar School provides "evidence" under which sexual polarities appear to be transcended in favour of a balanced growth- at least that of boys- and extreme regional aspirations are transcended in favour of a national agenda. This chapter however distract from the otherwise sustained consistency of the analysis of what Benei calls "visceral citizens".

Benei's work undoubtedly enriches the readers about the future of education in Maharashtra. It portrays a clear picture of the sense children make of a narrowly defined curriculum-both functional and ideological. She aims to reveal the collective cognition, with reference to a nation, its freedom and the history and the goals of that freedom. She focuses on the fact that national states have until recently penetrated down to the minutest details of the everyday in order to instill a sense of nationalism in the citizens.

Nevertheless, the present volume can offer insights in so wide a range of fields and disciplines should suffice to indicate the scale of the author's attempt and success. Further, the author does not talk about those citizens who do not recognise the dominant cultural definition of a nation. Certainly Maharashtra cannot be the representative of whole of India as Benei has attempted to prove in the present work. More or less the ethnographic narratives depicted by the author in the book suffered from the narrow perspective as she is taking Hindu population dominated schools in making out the sense of India. To avoid the narrowness and provide the broader perspective the research could have extended to other cities and could have

taken other Hindu ideologies bearing schools as well as Muslim Madrasas, only then the title of the book will be justified in true sense. Overall, the major contribution of the book however to provide the impetus to the Maharashtra

State Centre for Educational Research and Training is that there is a need to produce textbooks within a secularist and ecumenical framework, avoiding any explicit discussion of religion in the school texts.

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Teaching Learning Process

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The term teaching learning process is always happens to be a will coming topic for any teachers or others who are involved in the area of education directly or indirectly.

There are hundreds of books/ documents and materials (audio and Visual) explaining teaching leaning process, its technique, methodology, its different aspects in different ways.

We can see the change in concept of teaching leaning process in every documentation. The concept of teaching learning process is so vast and multidimensional that every time it is dealt it reflects innovation in terms of perception of the author.

Teaching leaning process takes place in continuum. Its not a one time activity or move to one direction only. Teaching leaning takes place all the time, with all activities, movements and experiences we are involve directly or indirectly.

It's a two way process, takes place between the teacher and the taught, covers physical, social, emotional and cultural environment of the learner in an around.

Every teacher adopts a variety of strategies/process and explains the content in his/her way unique in nature suitable to pupil and place (Classroom). Same teaching-learning process/ strategies cannot be replicated by