

Remember, Reclaim, Recreate!
Dialogues on Identity and History

New Delhi

March 28–31, 2013

Devaki Singh



Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace
Foundation for Universal Responsibility
New Delhi

Copyright © WISCOMP, New Delhi,
India, 2013

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by
WISCOMP
Foundation for Universal Responsibility
UGF, Core 4 A, India Habitat Centre
Lodi Road, New Delhi-110003
India

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	5
Introduction.....	7
Family History: Creating a History Storyboard.....	8
Local History: Mehrauli Walk	12
Nation Simulation Activity	15
Dialogue - Why and How?	19
The Way Forward	22
Participant Feedback.....	23
Programme Schedule	26
Profiles of Facilitators	28
List of Participants	29
Glimpses	30
<i>Annexure</i>	
A. Background Note	32

Acknowledgments

This report is based on the proceedings of a workshop that was organized for school students in New Delhi on March 28-31, 2013 under the *Hum Kadam*: Education for Peace initiative of Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) and its partner the Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access (FAEA). WISCOMP is grateful to the FAEA Board members for their unwavering support and to Prof. V. R. Mehta, for mentoring the project.

WISCOMP is grateful to Mr. Rajiv Mehrotra and the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for their constant guidance and encouragement. Special thanks to Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, Founder and Director, WISCOMP for her vision and ideas that have shaped the *Hum Kadam*: Education for Peace Initiative.

The support of colleagues at WISCOMP, Seema Kakran, Manjrika Sewak, Shilpi Shabdita, Sthea Mason Kapoor, Harish C. Bhatt, Sree Kumari V. and Devender Kumar is gratefully acknowledged.

Devaki Singh

Introduction

Remember, Reclaim, Recreate! A Workshop on Identity and History was organized for high school students and provided an opportunity to the participants to unpack how and why issues of identity play a crucial role in developing opinions about ‘self’ and ‘the other’ and to examine how identity operates simultaneously as a unifying agent and one that constructs differences.

Organized by WISCOMP in collaboration with the Foundation for Academic Excellence and Access (New Delhi) as part of its Education for Peace project—*Hum Kadam*, this workshop was conducted over four days at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Participants were drawn from eight schools from New Delhi and Srinagar. These included St. Mary’s School and Bluebells School International, New Delhi; Army Public School and Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School, Srinagar; Central High School, Pulwama; and three schools run by the Kashmir Creative Education Foundation (KCEF), Pulwama - Life School, Dolphin International School and SAADI Memorial School.

The workshop gave an opportunity to the participating students to learn about individuals/groups/communities different from their own and to develop attitudes that promote respect for differences. The workshop offered a forum to discuss processes of identity construction using historical reflection. The objective of the workshop was to reduce prejudices and misperceptions among the participants with the longterm goal of improving group relations.

There was an emphasis on learning-by-doing and the use of audio-visual presentations, role-plays and group discussions. The sessions at the interactive workshop did the following:

- Focused on issues of identity, history, diversity and dialogue.
- Provided a creative forum to think and talk about some issues related to nationalism and nationhood.
- Explored ways to stimulate respect for difference and an understanding of how dialogue can help in cultivating it.

The workshop also included ‘I-Share Assemblies’ at the end of each day which gave students an opportunity to express their opinions, share key ideas learnt and reflections on the sessions.

Family History: Creating a History Storyboard

The introductory session of the workshop was facilitated by Shreya Jani and Megha Rawat of Standing Together to Enable Peace (STEP) Trust. After some warm up exercises and ice breakers, the participants shared their perspectives on ‘Histories of Play’ and created a history storyboard.

In preparation for the workshop, each student made a ‘History of Play-Family Tree’ from home. They interviewed their family members and neighbours highlighting the playing habits, going back a few generations and collated the information in a creative format. The session began with students presenting their respective family history charts, following which they were divided into smaller groups where each group was given a specific topic and task. The topics included: 1) the story of changing values of play, 2) similarities between two different contexts i.e. Delhi and Srinagar when it comes to play, 3) dissimilarities between traditions of play in Delhi and Srinagar, 4) story of a changing childhood, 5) friendships across generations, 6) changing physical spaces.

The participants were asked to use their personal family history charts to create a history storyboard on the above topics using either of the following mediums: 1) contemporary storyboard which involved the use of Facebook statuses to convey a story, 2) traditional storyboard, which involved the storytelling method. The presentations were diverse in their content and the discussion following this exercise was lively and illuminating.

During the discussion, Jani emphasized that the exercises were meant to enable the participants to unpack some of the ideas that are transmitted by different actors in our lives. The purpose of the exercise was not to make value judgments, but to compare and contrast the historical experiences of varied groups with a view to understand the differences. She said that it was essential to understand the idea of ‘family tradition and respect’ as it manifests itself in different ways that directly and indirectly impacts who we are. Ideas on family and respect are also transmitted through other mediums, one of them being popular culture, especially Bollywood and television shows. Rawat added that sometimes these ideas from

popular culture have adverse impacts as they are distanced from reality. Family and community are part of an essential support structure which facilitates social interactions and provides a set of values that guide one's behavior. However, she also noted that one must be consciously aware of these values so that if the need arises one can question and



A student participating in the discussion

challenge certain ideas that have been handed down from the previous generations, rather than carrying on with them.

Interaction amongst the participants and facilitators also revealed how certain values and ideals have been lost in the process of societal advancement and how newer aspirations and morals have acquired dominance.

The participants observed that while there may have been many differences in their parents' and grandparents' generations, young people today shared several experiences and interests, something that was attributed to the pervasiveness of the internet, which results in easier connectivity. Thus, while thirty years ago, the same game may have had a different name in Delhi and Srinagar, it was less likely now. Children today enjoyed commonalities due to their shared experiences and were

not bound by geographic location, like the use of Facebook and Play Stations, for instance. Students remarked how these obvious shared experiences were actually products of globalization. There was a greater level of “standardization across Srinagar and Delhi, [where] names [of games] in local languages decreased gradually to be replaced by names which are more globalized like basketball, netball, and hockey” (sic), noted one of the participants. They also mentioned how young people today interact with the people of the opposite gender more easily as compared to the older generations, pointing towards a certain amount of openness. At this point, using an example of increased instances of violence against women who move beyond traditional roles, the facilitators interjected to question whether access to information had really made people more open-minded or had people become less tolerant

Another issue that was brought up was the decline in the physical spaces for children to play. In Delhi, it was recognized as the product of urbanization, while in Kashmir it was attributed to the continuing political unrest and curfews.

One of the participants commented that the idea of childhood itself had evolved. Childhood today was characterized by several negative aspects like materialism, cliques and cyber bullying. When one compared the childhood experiences of the older generations it appeared to them that they enjoyed the ‘smaller things’ in life. The participants also commented on the growing significance of monetary wealth and appearance in society where popularity was determined by ownership of latest gadgets. One participant summed up to say “we have these stupid excuses that place us at a particular status (sic) to which we want to belong, because really who doesn’t want to be famous, who doesn’t want to be cool”. When asked about the definition of the expression ‘of being cool’, participants said that this image was ‘pre-decided by the herd’.

Jani and Rawat ended the session by underlining that when the participants analyzed different generations there was a tendency to either glorify the past or to show how everything in the past was undesirable. Often this inclination to generalize and make judgements took over and created an image or a stereotype. Therefore it was important to first flag things for what they are before beginning a discussion on what is desirable and undesirable.



Shreya Jani interacting with the participants

Historical evaluation doesn't have to be on one extreme or the other, they stressed. The assessment of history is undertaken to understand, to make sure that mistakes are not repeated and to be open-minded. The idea of tracing the familial histories of play was also to understand heritage and how it is carried or not carried by 'the self'. It was an exercise to analyze the values at individual level in the families and what one ought to carry forward, understanding what is redundant and needs to be ignored. But at the same time, it was to inculcate respect for the knowledge that each generation carries with it.

Local History: Mehrauli Walk

A Historical Walk in the Mehrauli area of Delhi was conducted by Jaya Iyer, a Theatre Practitioner and Environmentalist. The walk covered the Jamali Kamali Mosque, Balbans Tomb and a Sufi shrine. The purpose of the walk was to understand the importance of looking at varied perspectives, narratives and the contours of history. During the walk, the participants were asked to take photographs of objects/scenery/people which they felt symbolized certain words. These words were: Harmony, Disharmony, Cacophony, Rhythm, Proportion and Disproportion.

Iyer provided the students with a historical background of the Mehrauli area and conducted an interactive exercise which was titled '*15000 years of History in 15 minutes*'. Through a role-play and games, she traced the history of Delhi from what is known as the '*Painted Grey ware Age*' to the modern times, highlighting some of the key rulers/leaders and the stories associated with the city.

Later, using only 8 of the pictures which they had taken, the participants were instructed to prepare an audio-visual presentation. For making the



Jaya Iyer conducting the Historical Walk at Mehrauli

presentation the participants were divided into smaller groups. They were asked to create a story by connecting the pictures with the words given.

The presentation by each group was followed by a discussion where the participants observed that there was multiplicity of perspectives and diverging positions which were colored by historical experiences of different individuals and groups. This dismissed the myth of ‘neutrality’ or one single ‘truth’. In their comments, students questioned, investigated and challenged some of the personal, social and cultural assumptions about the ‘other’.

With the intention of bringing the attention of the participants towards the ‘process’ in addition to the ‘outcome’, Iyer asked the students to elaborate upon how they came up with their presentations and what procedure had been used by them to arrive at a decision about which photographs should be included in the story and how. The students spoke of how **the entire focus was on completing the task and consequently one single opinion or idea dominated all others**. Further, in the name of ‘teamwork’ or ‘unity’, diverging opinions were ignored. One participant commented on how her idea remained unused, yet she did not raise her concerns to the group because completing the task was a ‘matter of group honor’ and for her the group’s honor was higher than her ‘individual honor’.

The participating students spoke of how in the interest of time-management, roles and tasks were automatically divided. The facilitator interjected and highlighted that it was important to understand if the ‘division of roles was by choice, or was it imposed?’. Thus, the goal was to examine the process by bringing out the difficulties encountered during the course of making the presentations; and if there was no conflict encountered, then by understanding ‘why’ it happened so smoothly.

The facilitator cited a simple example of how decisions within families, as simple as the next meal, generally involves some kind of discussion or debate. In this context, the participants were asked to introspect on why was it that in a group of young people who were interacting and meeting each other for the first time, no such debates occurred? But if they did occur, how were they dealt with? Did the process involve convincing others about certain positions or engagements in a kind of negotiation and ultimately arriving at a solution?

Groups then began to share how differences were handled and how particular ideas came to dominate, either out of practical necessity or because some individuals were relatively less capable at articulating the arguments and ultimately lost out. The facilitator concluded by suggesting the need to consider how certain voices or views are sidelined, not necessarily in this specific task but in other situations as well. Using these examples, Iyer foregrounded how in the quest for a ‘complete product’, the process is regularly undermined, thereby highlighting the ‘significance of the means in achieving the end’.

Gradually from families and communities, the focus started to shift towards understanding a nation. The participants explored the idea of nation building, patriotism and differing nationalisms through a simulation activity.

Nation Building: A Simulation Exercise

With a view to deepen the understanding of democratic decision making processes a simulation exercise was conducted with the participants. The participants were divided into three groups (with each group having students from both regions-Kashmir and Delhi) and were asked to create their own fictional nation, including its name, history, flag, anthem, constitution, laws etc. The geography of each of the nations and their natural resources were pre-determined by the facilitators.

At the end of the exercise, the participants created three different nations: Genovia, Trosliya and Kmisterdam. It was observed by the facilitators that in each group the participants considered dictatorial system as an option and the common reason given for considering such systems was 'efficiency in decision making'. However, eventually they all moved towards establishing some form of democracy in their nations. The characteristics of the three fictional nations were very distinct, Kmisterdam for instance, was a 'woman dominated nation', with a 'figurehead male President' who was elected through the policy of 'reservation for men'. Genovia called itself an 'ideal democracy', one which was 'disable-free'. Trosliya was a resource rich republic which



Shreya Jani and Megha Rawat mediating during the Nation Building Simulation Task

was formed with the coming together of several smaller nations. These characteristics of the nation were later discussed by the facilitators with the participants.

The facilitators then created two fictional disputes between these nations, first was a secessionist movement in Genovia and the second was a dispute over territory between Trosliya and Kmisterdam. The facilitators also initiated the scenario of a natural disaster (Tsunami) which displaced several people creating refugees who had to be relocated and rehabilitated. This simulation activity saw bartering of resources, refugees and territory, with the facilitators serving as mediators. Ultimately, after much debate and discord the three nations were able to solve their disputes.

The post activity debrief session witnessed students enthusiastically presenting their observations and at the same time facilitators emphasizing several issues. When asked about the reasons for the conflict during the activity, students mentioned-

- Money power
- Diversity in population
- Variation in access to resources
- The pervasiveness of “flawed version of nationalism”, which is contingent upon “hating one another” rather than “respecting one’s own nation”.

The facilitators commented on how these issues that arose in their simulation activity also held true for politics at the national and international levels. There were other examples where these similarities were noticed and discussed. For example, all three fictional nations had put forth very elaborate laws and rights in their constitutions however when it came to the negotiations, these principles were ignored in the interest of economic gain and to find quick solutions. For instance, Trosliya which was a federation and consisted of smaller, diverse sub-national groups, did not consider respecting differences in ideas and in fact did not take into consideration these smaller nations when it came to the decision making process. The opinions of all the groups, like that of the indigenous people (which were specifically mandated by the facilitators) within the defined ‘nation’ were not included while negotiating and reaching an agreement. Similarities were drawn by

the participants between the hypothetical exercise and real world situations.

The ‘disable-free’ characteristic of Genovia was particularly criticized by other groups as the group had chosen to eliminate existence of the disabled instead of making the system disable-friendly. Thus, the treaty which it arrived at after the negotiations was not recognised by the others. Jani argued that the reason why many talks, negotiations and summits prove to be unsuccessful is because of the failure of the negotiators to involve all relevant stakeholders in the process thereby creating an incomplete treaty/agreement which never truly satisfies all the parties. This exercise she stated, prompted the participants to act in an inclusive manner, thus avoiding situations for further conflicts.

The discussion about the rights, history and diversity within the fictional nations also initiated some of the debates that India currently confronts. Jani brought it to the notice of the participants that none of the fictional nations considered the inclusion of agriculturalists or manual labor, who are fundamental to the survival of any nation. Instead all the nation builders had very elaborate city plans. This she felt signified a growing rural-urban divide.

Participants denounced nationalism which was founded on demonizing the ‘other’ or the ‘outsider’; instead they strongly felt that nationalism must be rooted in love and pride towards one’s own nation without hate for others. A participant from Delhi gave an example of the hype, hysteria and nationalist undertones that are strongly evident in the case of cricket matches between India and Pakistan. He acknowledged that the pride felt when India defeats Pakistan in cricket matches is unmatched, but at the same time he also reflected that this was not appropriate. A student from Kashmir remarked that in a country which is marked by rampant inequalities, how could pride and nationalism develop without a feeling of hatred towards the outsider? This question changed the course of the discussion towards the role of the government, policy decisions and the involvement of citizens in addressing inequalities.

In this regard a student from Delhi raised the issue of faulty implementation of government policies. She added that “so many schemes exist, but do the people who need them even know about them”, pointing out the issue of corruption. Students agreed that the government policies urgently required an improvement in terms of its

implementation, while at the same time citizens needed to become more proactive. Students recognized the complexities in the task of nation building, the importance of greater involvement of the citizens and better responsiveness of government agencies.

The participants then watched the documentary '*A Force More Powerful*', which traces the history of non-violent conflict around the world, following which the students were engaged in a discussion around non-violent resolution of conflicts. They were also asked to reflect upon any questions or issues which provoked them during the course of the deliberations at the earlier sessions.

Dialogue- Why and How?

The next session of the workshop was used by the facilitators to introduce the participants to ‘dialogue’ as one of the tools for addressing conflicts and building coexistence. Drawing from the learnings of the previous sessions, students were asked to define the various elements of democracy. Some of the responses were: the principles of citizenship, fundamental rights, duties, elections, voting mechanism. It was understood that “a democracy is where citizens choose who will make the laws, which have to be then followed by the citizens”. Adding to this, one of the participants from Kashmir felt that secularism forms stronger grounds for an ideal democracy in practice.

At this juncture, the participants were asked to reflect their thoughts on whether in India the fundamental rights of all the people were upheld. The participants, by engaging in discussions agreed upon that though Delhi enjoys these constitutional guarantees, but the conditions prevailing in Kashmir are very different because of the censoring of media, suspension of *habeas corpus* and the continued application of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). A Kashmiri participant discussed how the feeling of insecurity prevailed among the Kashmiris, with a constant fear of being picked up for questioning by the security forces. One participant believed that it was essential to give Kashmiris a chance to join the Indian Army so that they felt included. The facilitators here foregrounded various perspectives on the application of AFSPA to Jammu and Kashmir. It was asserted that the need for the law was in the context of the pressing concerns of security in the region, but its misuse and faulty interpretations by some members of the security agencies contributed to perpetuation of violence. They stressed that it was important to speak up and join in a dialogue process because if the armed forces are continually labeled in a negative manner, their behavior reflects this negativity. It becomes self-perpetuating and self-fulfilling prophecy in certain senses, where their actions reflect their negative tag.

Jani here affirmed that perhaps there is a need to question the overemphasis which is laid on the principles of retributive justice which uses incarceration, probing ‘can we instead seek to change the mindsets of those who commit violence?’. She argued that the idea here is to alter the way people think rather than just constraining ideas and actions by employing force.

Facilitators then discussed some of the important components of a dialogue. They observed that dialogue is usually misunderstood as an exercise to convince the other person about the absolute truth of one's argument, but the actual thrust of engaging in a dialogue is to invite a conversation. The act of inviting a conversation demonstrates that one is engaging with an open mind and a willingness to be a part of a two way process where opinions can be meaningfully exchanged. It is expressed as *'I am willing to change my mind if I see sense in what you believe'*. It is only when one agrees to bring a change in his/her own attitudes, that a possibility of collective change occurs. This dynamism they stressed was essential for the functioning of a democracy where perspectives and ideas continually evolve and expand. Further, if in a democratic setup one considers him/herself to be a citizen, it is important to understand how one should 'practice citizenship'.

This became the premise of the 'Peace Wall: Public Intervention for Dialogue' exercise where the participants were divided into pairs, where each pair comprised of a participant from Kashmir and Delhi. They had to collate three questions/issues which they had found invigorating in the course of the workshop. Their questions encompassed issues ranging from **the relevance of history to the pervasiveness of stereotypes, the characteristics of an ideal nation and the relevance of identity**. They then shared these thoughts with people in the public setting of Dilli Haat, asking them for their views on these questions. The objective was



Discussion on the Peace Wall Exercise

to initiate a conversation while simultaneously attempting to accept the differing perspectives, nationalisms and identities that came up in the course of the dialogue.

Participants shared the experience of their encounters with the visitors at the Dilli Haat. For some people who spoke to the workshop participants, identity was an essential marker in the society, while some others, like a Dilli Haat visitor from Mexico, felt identity was an important contributor to the 'problems' in India. On the characteristics of an ideal nation, most people said that a peaceful nation was most desirable. However one group encountered a person who was completely against democracy and expressed his disagreement over a five-year term of the government. Instead, he stressed on one official language under a hereditary monarch.

One pair of participating students was enquiring about the ways for improving the conditions in India. The responses they got from people at Dilli Haat included focusing on health and sanitation, ending discrimination, removing criminal elements from politics and improving law and order. One group also put forth a question on AFSPA and received responses which decried its continued implementation, sighting its misuse against innocent women and children. A common idea in response to most of the questions was a reference to the status of and resources available to women and girls. The participants believed that this was most likely due to the December 16, 2013 rape case in Delhi which had brought gender equality into prominence.

The Way Forward

The concluding session of the workshop was facilitated by Jaya Iyer. She asked the participants about their feelings after the public intervention and also the learnings from the various exercises over the course of the four days, compelling participants to reflect on how they could continue to dialogue. One participant expressed that he felt as if he was ‘bargaining’ during the Dilli Haat exercise. Others pointed out that most of the people were not very open to talking to them. One participant said that it was an ‘exercise in humiliation’ and ‘learning to accept rejection since many people refused to answer our questions’. Another said that her experience was good because she spoke to people and learnt about their viewpoints. Iyer acknowledged that while these things may appear humorous after the event, but they were actually important to remember. For instance, continuing with the assigned task even in the face of humiliation and rejection is difficult but very commendable. Also realizing that different opinions exist and we have to accept them, are both very significant lessons. One participant concurred and added that some people were absolutely not interested but others were very keen to engage because they had a chance to express themselves while someone was listening. Another participant expressed discomfort at coming across a middle aged woman who spoke about enforcing dress codes for girls as a means to protect them from sexual harassment. Upon interacting with her, the group realized that her opinion was rooted in her context and while they disagreed with the prescription she offered, but they learnt to respect her opinion.

One student believed that it was important that the knowledge gained during the course of the workshop was shared with those who could not attend; therefore she had decided to share the importance of patience and team work with her schoolmates. Others felt that there is a need to reform ones own biases before blaming others. Many averred that it was essential for them as youngsters to question the why and how of the existence of things and systems, to be able to move towards improvement and development.

The workshop concluded with the participants preparing and performing a cultural presentation which included dances and songs.

Participant Feedback*

23 Participants completed the anonymous written feedback forms of the workshop.

Majority of the participants commented that their expectations from the workshop were fully met and in fact the workshop exceeded their expectations. Participants also gave a positive feedback regarding the organization and content of the workshop:

“It was really out of my expectation; this workshop and the organization gave me a new beginning and a new perception for everything. I feel like we can go deep in discussions and come out with new things.”

“The overall organization of the workshop was really superb. Be it the conversation with the WISCOMP members, the lunch, the tea break. I really liked each and every thing. It was really beyond my expectations”.

When asked about the learnings from the workshop they had diverse responses. Several participants stated that this workshop taught them that “we should respect all identities and never discriminate on the basis of caste, religion, creed etc.”

“The most useful learning was that we are the ones who make a ‘stereotype’ and we only can bring the change”.

“The more useful thing I learnt was how to work as a team. How difficult it is to run a democratic country”.

“One most useful learning was that the process undertaken in order to obtain a fruitful product is extremely important. Patience, consideration & respecting everyone’s views while working in a group is essential”.

Another participant added that “now my confidence level has raised more than I expected and last but not the least the interaction among the group member was really mind blowing & I came to know that something called team work is quite fruitful”.

* The responses of the workshop participants have been reproduced verbatim but the general practice of including a [Sic] sign has been avoided as there were many grammatical errors.

Regarding how they would use the learnings from the workshop most of the participants said that they will try to incorporate these ideas in every aspect of their life. They also mentioned about spreading these ideas amongst their friends at school who were not at the workshop. One participant stated, “I guess my morals were deepened and the way I viewed the society has changed completely.” Another said, “I learned a lot from the workshop and I think that I will be using all the learnings in the interaction with people and many more discussions as I learned team work, cooperation etc. and I think these things will help me a lot in the future”.

Participants were asked about their favorite session from the workshop; the Nation Building Simulation Exercise and Mehrauli Historical Walk stood out as favorites for most.



Participants with the Facilitators and WISCOMP Staff.

“Going for Mehrauli walk and listening history from Jaya ma’am and also being a part of it (learning by doing)”.

“I liked the third day, Nation Building-the most”, expressed another participant.

“I liked all the activities which we did at the workshop. The session I liked the most was when Jaya Ma’am projected before us the history of Delhi by practical means. By that session I got to know that history can be interesting also.”

“I liked the session in which we made our own nation and gave our nation a name, its physical features, history etc., it was also wonderful”.

When asked about the session which did not meet their expectations, certain participants felt that the sessions in general were very long. A certain number of participants did not like the movie screening. “The movie session was quite boring”, said one of the respondents. Another participant found the presentation sessions “a little boring and everyone was feeling sleepy and when everyone had to speak their family history, it was too boring”.

Participants were pleased with the atmosphere during the discussions which many found to be engaging and forthright:

“I think that everyone got an opportunity to speak, participate in it. I think the workshop was also interactive enough. Each and every student got a very good platform to exhibit their views, comments and opinions, which was the best part of the workshop”.

“The discussions were free and frank. Whatever questions came in our minds, we just kept on asking them to the teachers and the session was quite interesting as compared to the other discussions we do in our classes.”

“I am really satisfied with the work of the whole team. As everyone was allowed to speak, to express his/her views. No one was neglected and no one was more preferred otherwise it would have created a sense of inferiority and superiority, and of course it was much interactive”.

“Yes, everybody got a fair chance. Each one of us felt free to comment & there was no hesitation in sharing.”

One participant felt that the sessions could have been more inclusive if Hindi was also used as a medium of instruction, “everyone and everything was good. But we need a bit of improvement in sessions. They were good but we need to also talk in Hindi as some people are not able to understand English or some specific words. I was puzzled at certain points”.

When asked if they would like to attend a future workshop, 22 participants said that they would ‘definitely like to attend similar workshops in future’, while 1 said he ‘might’ attend a workshop.

Programme Schedule

Day 1

28th March 2013, Thursday

Venue: Maple, IHC

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 9:00 – 11:00 | Welcome, Ice breakers & Rules Setting |
| 11:00 – 1:00 | Family History: The Story of Play (Sharing session) |
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Lunch |
| 2:00 – 4:30 | Creating a History Storyboard of Family Histories |
| 4:30 – 4:45 | Tea |
| 4:45 – 6:00 | I Share Assembly |

Day 2

29th March 2013, Friday

Venue: Maple, IHC

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9:00 – 1:00 | Local History: Mehrauli Walk |
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Lunch |
| 2:00 – 3:30 | Making History Together (Preparing AV from the walk together) |
| 3:30 – 4:30 | Sharing the AV and Discussion: ‘What is History?’ |
| 4:30 – 4:45 | Tea |
| 4:45 – 6:30 | Debriefing |
| 6:30 – 7:00 | I Share Assembly |

Day 3

30th March 2013, Saturday

Venue: Maple, IHC

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 9:00 – 1:00 | Building a Nation Simulation Activity |
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Lunch |

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2:00 – 4:45 | National History: Building a Nation Simulation Activity & Debriefing |
| 4:45 - 5:00 | Tea |
| 5:00 - 6:00 | I Share Assembly |

Day 4

31st March 2013, Sunday

Morning Session: IHC, Dilli Haat

Post Lunch Session: Bluebells School International

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 9:00 – 10:30 | Dialogue – Why? And How? |
| 11:00 – 1:00 | Peace Wall: Public Intervention for Dialogue |
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Lunch |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | Way Forward: What we can do to continue the dialogue |
| 3:30 – 4:30 | Preparation for Cultural Program (participants will be divided into 4 groups of 10 to prepare a performance on this day) |
| 4:30 – 6:00 | Closing Remarks and Cultural Program by participants |

Profiles of Facilitators

Jaya Iyer has over two and a half decades of experience in the world of art, social development and ecological integrity through theater, education, social action, organizational development, self-work and spirituality. She specializes in theatre for self and social development and has worked with NGOs, government supported autonomous institutions, universities, community groups and individuals. She helped create over 500 street plays and several stage plays; has developed programs for youth and adolescents; facilitated a wide range of training and workshops and curated several public festivals and events. She trained under Ebrahim Alkazi in theatre direction and was awarded UNESCO Aschberg bursary to study the Theater of the Oppressed with Augusto Boal.

Shreya Jani is Managing Trustee of Standing Together to Enable Peace (STEP) Trust, one of the few organizations actively working towards educating and training for building a culture of peace. This organization is the force behind Delhi's annual Peace Festival. Ms. Jani works as a curriculum developer, campaigner, trainer and researcher for various NGOs, government institutions and private schools across India. She holds a Masters' degree in Peace Education from UN Mandated University of Peace and a Bachelors' degree in Political Science from Lady Shri Ram College and Bachelors in Education from CIE – University of Delhi.

Megha Rawat is currently a freelance content writer for K-5 Social Studies and a trainer for students and teachers in Peace Education and Media Literacy. She has worked with Standing Together to Enable Peace (STEP) Trust, conducting Peace Education in Juvenile Homes for boys in New Delhi. She has facilitated workshops for school and college students on Media literacy and Peace Education. She holds a Masters Degree in Sociology from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

List of Participants

Army Public School

Alina Mir

Mehwish Rashid

Priyanka Bakaya

Simran Nasir

Tabish Khan

Tavleen Kaur

Bluebells School International

Amrita Sood

Arnav Gupta

Sakshi Mathur

Kirtika Aggarwal

Sanya Kapoor

Tanvi Akhauri

Tanya Ghai

Mugdha

Central High School

Faheem Farooq

Shahanshah Asrar

Dolphin International School

Afeefa Farooq

Mahnoor

Life School Chari e Sharief

Ahra

Basit Mushtaq Matoo

Presentation Convent

Hadeel

Haiqa

Illah Mufti

Madiha Sameet

Maumil Mehraj

Sara Aftab

Saadi Memorial

Rakshanda Khursheed

Sufoora Yousf

Shaila Nazir

St. Mary's School

Anmol Anand

Apoorva Sharma

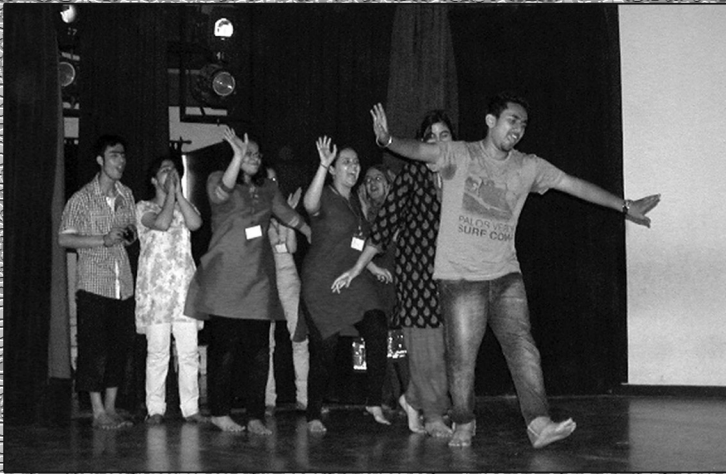
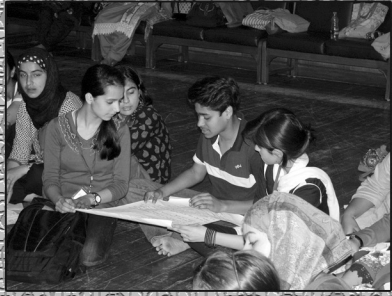
Ashmita Phukan

Atharva Puranik

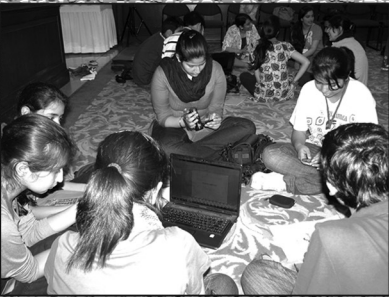
Ektasulodia

Kush Gaur

Glimpses

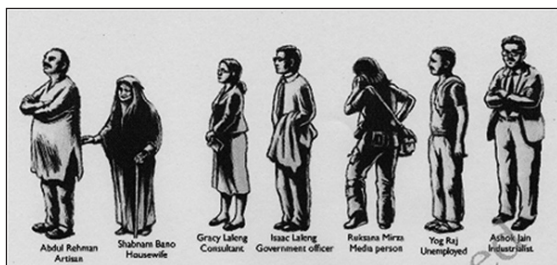


Glimpses



Annexure A

Background Note



NCERT Class VII, Social and Political Life-2

What is identity?

A simple answer to this query would be: It is how one responds to the question- who are you? Or, identity is how I express who I am.

One might answer the question “who are you?” entirely differently in distinct circumstances. For example, depending on the context, the same person might give the following answers – “an Indian”, “a Delhi-ite”, “a Kashmiri”, “a Muslim”, “a woman”, “a student”, “a daughter”, “a Salman Khan Fan”, “a football enthusiast” and “a Sachin Tendulkar fan”.

By this simple definition, then, identity is something that evolves throughout our lives and it is possible for one person to associate with many groups or have multiple identities.

Each of us undergoes many experiences that help us grow as individuals and these in turn shape our ideas about self or how we would like others to understand us. Gradually, we determine our likes and dislikes; what we want and don’t want to do. This process of identity formation never ceases and enables us to have a vibrant, happy and meaningful life.

The process of identity formation almost naturally also involves a process of ‘othering’. When we define ourselves in a particular way, we have in our mind some distinctions we make between those who we feel are different from us. We try to distinguish ourselves from some



‘other’. In the process we may link ourselves with other individuals too. For instance in a group of friends when a person says that he/she loves football, he /she may distinguish themselves from those who love cricket or basketball and in the process construct a distinct identity that brings them closer to other football lovers and differentiates them from those who love cricket or basketball.

There are other people around us who are also involved in this process of identity formation. For instance, schools/universities talk of ‘school spirit’ thereby trying to instill a sense of belonging to the larger school community. Or how people who have different tastes in music, tend to argue with each other over whose tastes are superior. Or, how every time there is an International level sports event, like the Cricket World Cup, or the Olympics, various Indian newspapers and news channels hype up India’s chances. These too are examples of identity formation.



This process of “othering” can also have a negative connotation. For instance, the phrase “*we don't do that in our family*” is often repeated in Indian households as a comment about certain traditions and beliefs. This one sentence simultaneously defines the identity of a particular family and also separates it from others.

A more extreme indicator of this “othering” process would be in caste, gendered, religious or racial terms where various groups compete for power, prestige and status. In this regard identity becomes a powerful political tool, one which has far reaching effects, both constructive and destructive. An example of this in the Indian social context would be the movement by lower castes for greater political, economic and social development. Centuries of institutionalized suppression by way of the caste system has been gradually challenged by Dalit and other caste groups. Although some progress has been achieved, thereby expanding the democratic rights available to them, there is a backlash against this progress. Lower castes continue to experience violent suppression in different parts of the country. Thus identity at once becomes a force for empowerment and yet, differing identities become a source of violence.

The development of stereotypes is related to this. Stereotyping, the process by which certain characteristics come to define the identity of a group, often negatively, cloud our judgment and distort our perception, leading to feelings of prejudice that ultimately lead to discrimination. A basic example of stereotypes leading to prejudice would be gender discrimination. The stereotype of women and girls being weaker and thus requiring ‘protection’ has led to a situation where they are considered a burden. This has increased discrimination against them and has created a scenario where their movement, clothing, appearance and social interactions are regulated under the pretext of protecting them.

So what is it that causes these problems? Can we do something about identity generated conflicts and violence?

It is difficult for people to be accommodating towards others because of many reasons. One, it is hard for those in power/ control to give up their privileged position. Two, the world is filled with wars, stories of people killing each other, segregated living and interpersonal conflicts, leaving little room for tolerance and active coexistence. As a result the cycle of hate continues between armies, nations and groups, reinforcing

stereotypes and inter-group differences. One of the ways that can help in building tolerance is interaction and dialogue, but once identity formation becomes rigid and uncompromising, no space is left for these positive processes.

The question of identity becomes extremely important when dealing with the complex idea of a 'nation' within a diverse setting like India, one with numerous religious and ethnic groups, multiple languages and distinct regional characteristics. The workshop will provide a space where you can discuss issues of identity, history, diversity and dialogue.