Aas Pass ki Khoj
Methodologies for Heritage Education

Government College of Education, Srinagar
and
Delhi Public School, Srinagar

August 25 -26, 2014

Padmini Ghosh
Seema Kakran

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceedings</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Feedback</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiles of the Facilitator and Participants</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glimpses</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

This report is based on the proceedings of two workshops that were organized in Srinagar at the Government College of Education and Delhi Public School on August 25 and 26, 2014 under the \textit{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 would also like to express its gratitude 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 \textit{Hum Kadam}: Education for Peace Initiative.

The support of colleagues at WISCOMP, Harish C. Bhatt, Sree Kumari V. and Devender Kumar is gratefully acknowledged.

\textbf{Padmini Ghosh}
\textbf{Seema Kakran}
Background

The workshop titled *Aas Pass ki Khoj: Methodologies for Heritage Education* was organized as part of 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). The *Hum Kadam* initiative seeks to constructively channelize the potential and zeal of the youth to build trust across the divisions of conflict and to foster active coexistence.

With a view to maximize impact on the youth, the *Hum Kadam* initiative also explores various approaches that can enable educators to empower children and youth to:

- Develop an understanding of, and accommodation for, the differences that may exist in experience, ethnicity, religion, and political beliefs;
- Transform prejudices and build trust and relationships across myriad fault-lines (religion, race, nationality, gender, class, ethnicity, to name a few);
- Develop skills in dialogue, active listening, and other forms of nonviolent communication; and,
- Promote coexistence and multiculturalism in their communities and society.

Training workshops and dialogues are organized for educators as part of the *Hum Kadam* initiative to foreground the contemporary issues that impact education in India. Issues of access, equity and quality, as also concerns about biases in curricula and flawed teaching methodology, are part of the discussions that take place. The workshops are premised on the understanding that the domain of education is a possible liberating space that can empower as well as sensitize individuals to deprivation. This space is under severe strain due to several contemporary challenges. These challenges emanate from three distinct but inter-related trends in the Indian society and polity. First, the threat to secular spaces from fundamentalisms of different kinds; second, the growing legitimacy of a culture of militarism; and third, the dislocating and
bewildering changes imposed upon education by the processes broadly described as globalization and the consequent inequities.¹

As these trends and concerns collide and cohere, they raise serious questions about the capacity of educational spaces to renew their role in engendering social transformation and providing effective responses to conflicts and their resolution. It raises several pertinent questions: How can Indian education resist the impulses of sectarian forces? Can it be made capable of countering these influences or is it doomed to implicate itself in a ‘closing of the Indian mind’? Can contemporary developments in the revision of curricula look beyond skill based, instrumentalist aims of education? Can education provide avenues for the politics of the possible, without surrendering to partisan and cynical political interests and stakeholders? Can it provide a vocabulary and space for transformative learning?²

In response to these issues, many educational scholars argue that education in India today is informed by two opposing strands of thought.³ One, that can be discerned from the neo-liberal frame of standardization, teacher accountability and learning outcomes that regard education as an ‘enterprise of efficient delivery’. They also assert that such thinking underpins the Right to Education Act, which is considered progressive and transformative by most human rights proponents. In contrast to this, efficient delivery models of the national school curriculum framework and the teacher education curriculum framework reaffirm the central role of teachers as agents of social transformation. They rely on their ability to rise above social prejudices and biases, and educate for and in a diverse society.

WISCOMP believes that while efficiency cannot be completely ignored and may find relevance for assessing infrastructural needs, a truly liberating and transformative educational experience requires that the pivotal role of the teacher be recognized. In this backdrop, WISCOMP organizes workshops for educators that provide space for discussing issues of diversity and difference.

² Ibid.
In this series, two workshops titled *Aas Pass ki Khoj: Methodologies for Heritage Education* were organized at the Government College of Education, M.A. Road, Srinagar and Delhi Public School, Srinagar on August 25 and August 26, 2014 respectively. The workshops aimed to:

- Motivate the teachers to explore questions of heritage preservation, and cultural and social identities within the curriculum;
- Promote coexistence and respect for diverse viewpoints;
- Provide a tool for facilitating experiential learning of subjects and themes in the curriculum;
- Cultivate methods of multi-disciplinary exploration; and
- To explore commonalities and cross-cultural understanding using geological linkages and moving beyond existing political boundaries.

The workshop drew on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 that has served as a guide for evolving a national system of education to realize the democratic vision enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The NCF 2005 identifies the broad aims of education as: independence of thought and action, sensitivity to others’ well-being and feelings, learning to respond to new situations in a flexible and creative manner, predisposition towards participation in democratic processes, and the ability to work towards and contribute to economic processes and social change. The workshop sought to integrate the vision of NCF2005 with the Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) system introduced by the Jammu and Kashmir Secondary Education Board (J&K BOSE) and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to introduce a more pragmatic approach to understanding and teaching heritage.
Workshop Proceedings

Dr. Navina Jafa, the facilitator of the workshop, opened the workshop with a stark statistic. She noted that an average school educator, within the span of his or her teaching career, comes into contact with approximately 18,000 pupils and parents. Jafa asserted that this staggering number demonstrates the impact that teachers can have in a society and how altering one person’s thinking or beliefs can become an effective tool for bringing about enormous positive difference to the society. She added that not only is this number astounding when compared to people in other professions, but also that the power of the educator is further strengthened when this number is combined with the fact that people who come in contact with an educator generally have a year-long engagement with the educator.

After underscoring the influence that educators have in society, Jafa went on to share her views on the special significance of educators in a conflict context, where both the young and old have experienced violence and disharmony for a protracted period, and where schools are often the only enclaves where young people can feel a sense of security and peace. They also have great expectations from their teachers. She shared, at this point, her own belief that absolute peace is a utopian idea; that there can only be moments of calm, and it is necessary to capture and capitalize on these moments.

Since the intent of the workshop was to offer an introduction, and majority of the participating teachers did not have any exposure to theoretical understanding of Heritage Education, her method consisted primarily of lecture and interactive discussions. The programme was roughly divided into two parts. In the first half, Jafa elucidated the idea of the Indian Subcontinent with the aim of providing a framework within which the teachers could engage with Heritage Education, and the second half focused on the ‘how’ of Heritage Education.

Before moving to the ‘how’ of Heritage Education, she raised an important fundamental question: Whose heritage is prevalent, and what heritage has been passed on to the students through the school? She clarified her own ideological position at the onset by stating that the concept of shared lived experiences of the population in the Indian
Subcontinent was a heritage that needed to be passed on as it helped individuals to move beyond the ‘cartographic anxieties’ that colonialism had imposed on the peoples of this geographic area.

Although most educators understood the meaning and importance of heritage preservation, there was a general tendency to focus on the landscapes, buildings/structures and objects more than the traditions, customs and knowledge that are parts of the oral tradition. Importantly, individuals seldom think about the process of heritage construction and preservation. When people think about heritage, they constantly discriminate between things which are worth inheriting and passing on and other things which they prefer to forget. Heritage construction and conservation both involve a constant process of selection – deliberate and without too much thought. Each generation continuously decides which elements of heritage it wishes to preserve and which ones it seeks to discard. Neglect can lead to a slow but sure loss of heritage as well.

The definition of ‘heritage’ changes dramatically for individuals and communities over time. Depending on sociopolitical conditions, aspects of one’s identity may be preserved or proudly acknowledged and conserved. This is more applicable to built heritage, where in certain monuments may come to acquire greater significance. This lets us arrive at the conclusion that there may be differences of opinion on what must be preserved and what is considered valuable. Therefore, what children learn in school and how school activities give meaning to heritage is extremely relevant.

Jafa said that there are two important questions that each educator must confront:

a) What is our identity? Whose heritage should prevail? and

---

4 In 1994, Sankaran Krishna coined the term “cartographic anxiety” to describe a persistent neurosis that seemed to mark Indian practices of state and nation building. For Krishna, the term “cartography” encompasses all those representational practices that, in various ways, have attempted to inscribe something called ‘India’ and to endow that entity with content, history, meaning, and purpose, taking within its ambit not only the drawing of lines on a map but also the frequently bloody and coercive processes by which those lines are socially produced and made effective. Krishna understands India’s cartographic anxiety as stemming both from the peculiar circumstances of its birth-its creation-by-amputation in the bloody events of Partition-but also as “a facet of a larger postcolonial anxiety: of a society suspended forever in the space between the ‘former colony’ and ‘not-yet-nation’.” See Sankaran Krishna, Cartographic Anxiety: Mapping the Body Politic in India, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Fall 1994), pp. 507-521
b) Are we being reductionist in our approach when we deny certain parts of our history and heritage?

The answers to these questions provided, in her view, the framework that educators could use when thinking about Heritage Education. She opined that as educators they should look at the Indian Sub-Continent, as it was understood in the pre-1947 period. She further explained that the geo-political terms that are used and which often underscore how heritage is understood in post-colonial societies is a British legacy which was inherited post-partition; and it is important to remember the significance of the shared civilizational roots of the pre-independence times. The discussion on pre and post-partition societies was to be understood in the context of power asymmetries, which often involved resources. The most effective tool for capturing power is politicizing culture which is a very emotional and sensitive aspect of human life. She quoted Kapila Vatsyayan at this point, who says that “culture [if used with ulterior motives] is a more powerful bomb than the nuclear bomb” as it is constantly misused and distorted by power-hungry people. Once culture is politicized to these levels, people start seeing the world through stereotyped lenses which disturbs rational thinking and eventually gives rise to violent conflict.

In situations where culture has been politicized, it is important to acknowledge that the anger which is manifesting itself in the form of violence may be emanating from fear; therefore, teachers need to be intrepid so that they can engage with children freely and instill in them a sense of fearlessness as well, which is the first step towards becoming calm individuals. Once they overcome fear, they may develop the willingness to engage in healthy dialogic processes that are based on reasoned thought.

Jafa further explicates the two kinds of heritage: Internal and External, and said that it is imperative for teachers to balance the two. Without beginning the process of identifying internal heritage which is constituted by ideas and memories, it is difficult to understand the issues of cultural heritage, social identity and collective memory that are revealed externally. Additionally, unless educators are able to discern the relationship between these three, conflict management will not be possible. Although heritage includes inherited traditions, monuments, objects and all elements of culture, its meaning can only be grasped
through the activities, behavior and the meanings individuals give to each of these elements at a given point in the history of any society. It therefore *always* involves interpretation and fluidity.

It is important that heritage remains or “should remain as the subject of active public reflection, debate, and discussion. What is worth saving? What can we, or should we, forget? What memories can we enjoy, regret, or learn from? Who owns “The Past” and who is entitled to speak for past generations? Active public discussion about material and intangible heritage – of individuals, groups, communities, and nations – is a valuable facet of public life in our multicultural world.”

Moving further, she discussed External Heritage as that which goes beyond political divisions and cited geological history as a reference point, which comes before human history, to portray that geological reality pre-dates and goes far beyond the lifespan of an individual human being. She brought to light an interesting perspective of looking at mountains as passes rather than barriers to appreciate that human history is replete with a constant exchange of ideas. No human identity that exists in the world today can exist in isolation, least of all Kashmir, which extends beyond the political borders and includes Aksai Chin (*de facto* part of China), Azad Kashmir (*de facto* part of Pakistan), Ladakh and Jammu. She exemplified the concept of exchange of ideas by referring to the Chinar tree, which is considered to be a proud possession of the region and a clear identity marker of Kashmir, but which actually has its origins in Greece. She also stated that human history, civilization and society have always been and should be considered a shared arena, which will enable children to evolve as global citizens. If we desire our children to be global citizens, then we cannot afford to politicize history or education. More importantly, even if we were in favor of isolating our children, the reality is very different. Most of them are connected to the world in ways that previous generations could not imagine.

With this as the backdrop, she brought in other examples of ‘indigenous becoming alien, and alien getting accepted’ by the people of the region. Sharda, which is, native to the region, has slowly vanished from public spaces and is seriously under threat even in the private spaces as very

---

5 *What is Heritage?* Available at http://www.umass.edu/chs/about/whatisheritage.html
few people use it. On the other hand, Urdu, which is claimed to be the language of the region today, is actually a product of linguistic and cultural exchanges between Persian and Sanskrit. Jafa therefore asserted the need to look beyond frames handed down by previous generations to understand the process of ownership of some elements of culture and the discarding of some other elements. If we trained our minds to see the commonalities, we can solidify this idea by looking at the cultural nuances of civilization and the commonality of lived experiences across the country and the Indian Subcontinent at large. A striking example of this commonality could be gleaned from the way people travel in public transport (over-crowding) or “jugaad”, i.e. practical, quick-fix solutions to daily situations. Unfortunately, the dominance of political divisions has overpowered our imagination of identities so enormously that we are willing to compromise all other common denominators that can help us to create a sense of brotherhood. Often, deliberate misunderstanding or exaggeration of the problems and costs of according heritage status to objects, ideas, memories and behaviors has lead to conflicts. Hence, it was emphasized that Kashmir and Kashmiri (like any other region) should be seen or understood as a dynamic category, rather than a polarized and isolated zone. The idea of Kashmir as an isolated zone was not workable because if looked at from the neo-political point of view, there was an interplay of three governments; China in Aksai Chin, Pakistan in Azad Kashmir and India for the rest of the state. Even ethnically or religiously there are three different majority groups: Muslims in the Valley, Hindus in Jammu and Buddhists in Ladakh. In such an atmosphere of inherent diversity, the idea of Kashmir itself is rooted in plurality, which is a valuable perspective for educators to work with, she opined. Looking at Kashmir as one single geographic or ethnic unit would be reductionist. The conflict situation in Kashmir has led to a psychological understanding of isolation amongst the people in the Valley.

Jafa urged the participants to keep in focus the fact that the South Asian region is one of the most militarized zones in the world and there are other conflict zones like those of the Maoist belt and beyond. In this context, it was imperative to look at Kashmir as a part of a larger civilization in order to find a way out of the conflict.

Jafa articulated that History is of two kinds: political and embedded. It is the embedded histories that are manifested as legends, epics, oral
histories, and are actually the history of civil society and the ordinary people. In the political histories there is a tendency to over emphasize battles/wars/invasions as often political history is written from the perspective of the rulers and elite. History can be misinterpreted over time as well. For instance, the way one responds to one’s harsh geographical environment and tackles matters of existence could eventually cause movement from one area to the other. Over time this movement for survival can be recorded in history as expansion or invasion.

Religion is another extremely important element of heritage. It can also have two elements: one of historical reality and the other of faith. As educators, it was important to make an attempt to rid oneself of personal biases, and bear the responsibility of inculcating rational thinking, which implies keeping faith and historical reality of different religions separate.

A question that often comes up in this context is: How do we develop a culture of civic behavior? How do we grapple with the reality of multiple religions in the Indian context? The most significant task Jafa asserted was to build a civil society that implants the ideas of discipline, tolerance and compassion. Education and especially schools should be able to provide life skills to an individual, whereby he/she can retain both internal and external equilibrium. They can keep their faith and be able to respect the faith of other individuals. It was desirable to include this component in heritage education in the schools of the Subcontinent, she concluded.

The second half of the day long workshop highlighted the importance, the objectives, and suggestive steps for introducing heritage education at the school level.

It began with the introduction of the concept of Heritage Education as articulated by UNESCO. Jafa reiterated that Heritage education should not be seen as a separate subject within the framework of the school curriculum, and enumerated its importance and objectives as follows:

- A tool for experiential learning of mainstream curriculum subjects and chapters;
- A method for multi-disciplinary exploration;
• Tool for increasing tolerance in the minds of children without preaching it to them;
• To counter the effects of economic imperialism, and as a means to balance the local and the global; and
• Important way to celebrate the plurality of the region and recognizing it as a process; continuously evolving and not static.

It was deemed necessary, at this point, to have an understanding of the concept of heritage *per se*. Heritage generally conveys an idea of a sense of past, which is bound in time and inherited. However, according to Jafa, such an understanding fails to capture the dynamics with which people relish and engage with the past and convert it into something which has a presence, value and relevance in the present time. She propounded that heritage emerges from the past and has its relevance in the present; the Sanskrit word for heritage is *Parampara* which is rooted in *Parampar*— which means one following the other. The word itself in a sense gives a license to every community at every point to change and evolve and is not just an orthodox celebration of the past, but, a flowing and dynamic idea. What is created in the past is inherited in the present, what is created in the present is inherited in the future. The idea of heritage education, thus, is premised on making the child think and instill analytical skills.

Here, the different categories of heritage as developed by the UNESCO were used for purposes of further clarification:

• Cultural Heritage: This is again divided into a) Tangible Heritage that which is perceived through senses, b) Intangible Heritage that which may be perceived through the senses but remains at the level of ideas. While the two are divided for convenience of understanding, every tangible heritage is actually a report card for intangible knowledge. The two are deeply connected.
• Natural Heritage: Understood as the environment, ecology, physio-geography, flora-fauna, biodiversity etc.

Jafa made a significant note here that while we are aware of endangered animals and endangered species of flora, when intangible human heritage becomes endangered we are not as disturbed. Unfortunately, intangible heritage is not protected with as much zeal as endangered biodiversity
is. One of the bigger challenges is to negotiate the value of endangered intangible heritage.

- Digital Heritage: Resources of human knowledge or expression, whether cultural, educational, scientific and administrative, or embracing technical, legal, medical and other kinds of information, are increasingly created digitally, or converted into digital form from existing analog resources. Where resources are “born digital”, there is no other format but the digital original. Digital materials include texts, databases, still and moving images, audio, graphics, software, and web pages, are among a wide and growing range of formats. They are frequently ephemeral, and require purposeful production, maintenance and management to be retained. Many of these resources have lasting value and significance, and therefore constitute a heritage that should be protected and preserved for current and future generations. This heritage may exist in any language, in any part of the world, and in any area of human knowledge or expression.

Regarding methodologies of Heritage Education, Jafa enunciated that every subject has a history/heritage of evolution within the region and global context; therefore heritage can be linked to every subject. It is not limited to the fields of history, sociology, archeology or the like. Therefore, to think that science or mathematics teachers have no use for heritage education is a misnomer. Since heritage education can be effectively used to create cross-disciplinary understanding, it can provide every child the opportunity to explore his/her potential in an innovative manner. In this context, heritage education can create imaginative and realistic entry points for several professional engagements across disciplines.

Further, she urged the teachers to adopt one object from the local or natural surroundings (as logistic limitations may not always allow extensive excursions), for a year in order to understand and explore the contours of Heritage education. She suggested that such an exploration could be called ‘Aas Pass ki Khoj’ (Discovering the Surroundings). It is important that the object or topic adopted was from the local context, which could range across wide variants like a particular tree/plant/fruit significant to the region, local craft, monument, water body etc.

When adopting the object or idea it is necessary to ensure that a local, personal connection is established. Sometimes, even interest in family
history and genealogy can provide some very interesting opportunities for thinking about heritage and interconnections. Generally, such exploration helps to transform from local and personal concerns to a more inclusive awareness of the context – whether at the regional, national or global levels. The understanding which people gain from local research and experience can enable them to see how their special site or story contributes to the national whole, or to appreciate the heritage concerns of communities beyond their own.

Heritage festivals, local histories, oral histories, family histories, storytelling and tours can enhance the understanding that personal or local connection is the key to community interest and a broader appreciation of heritage.

She gave the example of adopting the Chinar tree in this context, and elucidated the methodologies that can be followed for different age groups. These ideas are listed below:

- Children in the Primary school who learn more with their senses can be asked to explore linguistic heritage by collecting stories around Chinar which will help them identify a heritage of storytelling in communities and explore phrases, metaphors, limericks, riddles etc. in local cultures.

- Middle school (grades 5-8): Basing the learning in the context of Kashmir being a part of the Silk route, and Chinar being brought to the region from Greece, kids can be given projects in economics, geography, language, political history, social history, environment, natural science. To make the learning process more interesting, they can be issued replicas of passport which can be stamped for purposes related to such projects. These methods can be helpful in developing inter-disciplinary learning, experiential projects and creating a wider vision.

- Senior school (grades 9-12): They can be given projects in Ecology relating to Chinar and other trees; also, projects in Social Science which can deal with various beliefs surrounding the Chinar tree.

- For all 3 levels, the school can get carpet weavers to explore the heritage of mathematics in carpet weaving, because in the traditional practice of weaving art, the master craftsman, typically the family elder, would sit on a bench and sing mathematical expressions to
give the design to the weavers. This permutation and combination is technically called Beading in mathematics.

- Career counseling: As it’s important to validate the functionality of experiential learning, it would be prudent to get professionals to come and speak once the projects are completed on various subjects which can range from students’ interest in biology/biotechnology to travel-writing, photography etc.; this would also ensure a manner of factoring in parents’ involvement.

- Heritage education can also serve as an effective tool for interacting with local communities.

- Another interesting activity can be the formation of heritage clubs, which could involve not only students as members and teachers from different disciplines as heritage educators, but also parents.

- It can also be used to broaden the existing knowledge base and develop cross-cultural understanding that may lead to conflict transformation. In this context, teachers are and can be the greatest inventors of solutions to long drawn conflicts.

The lecture was interspersed with segments wherein Jafa took up questions and issues from the participants for further clarification. The dialogue process (in the College of Education, Srinagar) brought forward
issues regarding the multi-party system and caste system which are considered as primary reasons for the identity conflicts in India. Jafa based her answers in the context of plurality in Indian society. She explained that plurality is a lived reality in South Asia, yet it has been distorted, misused and politicized (in the context of both multiparty and caste system) for the vested interest of a few. The only way to counter such politicization was to have a strong civil society that promoted tolerance. An equally effect counter to these broader movements towards intolerance was concerted action at the individual level in the form of explicit expression of disapproval of these developments. Very often silence on the part of those who disagreed with intolerance also perpetuates it.

Responding to one of the concerns raised by a participant on the approach to conflict, Seema Kakran spoke of WISCOMP’s approach to conflict—conflict transformation. Conflict transformation emphasizes mending and building relationships; also, WISCOMP believes that conflict can be positive if it leads to progress, and does not lead to destruction of the kind that we are currently witnessing in India.

Several concerns came up for discussion during the workshop at DPS, Srinagar. A summary of these is provided here.

One concern was regarding the relationship between the psychological dependence of individuals on religion and the power enjoyed by religious leaders. One of the participants asked for further elaboration on this relationship. The answer referred to the situation where an astute leader of a religious or ethnic community misuses and politicizes the psychological dependence of the believers on religion’s ability to provide a sense of security to an individual. In such situations, often the religious leader exploits the dependence of the followers of the faith to his or her own advantage. By using the followers they exercise power and seek benefits from it.

Another question focused on whether religion could be used as a unifying force instead of geography when structuring heritage education programmes. In a situation where there is lack of understanding of each other’s faith traditions which often results in problems of visual profiling and stereotyping, proposing such an idea becomes problematic. Jafa also observed that generally in schools religious harmony or respect for other faiths is paid lip service without a genuine attempt to understand
practices of other faiths and traditions, or coming up with actions/behaviours that can demonstrate “respect”. Very often schools conduct assemblies where children state that all religions are equal and then go back to stigmatizing individuals of other faiths.

Before wrapping up the day’s discussion, Jafa discussed the larger significance of alternate methods of teaching and learning (of the kind the workshop was promoting) through the example of a case study of a dyslexic child. This child had been engaged in understanding the world through senses by employing the means of photographs, paints, color, texture etc. and how such methodologies that go beyond the textbook can bring out the best in every child whether they have formerly been labeled as physically challenged/learning disabled/problem child.

The session at the Government College of Education, Srinagar ended on the note that the participants would be divided into six groups who would then engage in heritage education using nature (this being a neutral entry point) and build a project at the schools they were teaching. It was decided that a follow up session will be held after two months to carry the ideas forward and share learnings and challenges encountered.

At DPS, the workshop concluded with the following observations by the participants:

• One of the dangers in over emphasizing heritage was the problem of creating exotica. The functionality and relevance of the past needs to be reinterpreted and celebrated. Educators should use heritage education not only for establishing unique identity of the region but also for the commonalities which can be found with ‘the outsiders’.

• There are two parts of heritage education that must be addressed: one is at the formal individual classroom level and the other is at the larger school level.

• It is essential to observe the local surroundings and then expand it.

• As educators we generally use a particular lens to look at our context; if we want to bring about a change, we need to look at it from a different perspective. Heritage education offers an alternate perspective which pronounces that while we are involved in and engaged within political boundaries, we perhaps need to change our perspective and look for connectors rather than faultlines.
An opposite and equally unsustainable enthusiasm would be one which wanted all heritage to be preserved.\textsuperscript{6}

The workshop concluded on the note that Heritage Education thus must be used as an innovative tool to not only transcend beyond mindset and ambiences of isolation but also serve as a means to mitigate the psychological polarization that shapes up in a conflict ridden area. It needs to be rooted in a sensitive comprehension of one’s own surroundings, culture and heritage, while simultaneously leading a path to interdisciplinary and cross-cultural learning. It is a simple yet advanced pedagogical method which can provide a broader and more nuanced understanding of the educational curricula as well as the global realities, if used in a well thought out manner.

Participant Feedback

The WISCOMP workshop on Heritage Education was a first-of-its-kind introductory workshop on the theme as a part of the *Hum Kadam* initiative. It aimed to offer an alternative perspective which focused on looking for connectors rather than dividers or partitions while we are engaged within our socio-political frontiers. It also charted a course for follow-up workshops.

The participants were interested and expected to know of the importance of heritage and the various methods and manners of heritage protection so as to inculcate in the younger generation a sense of ownership and respect for the heritage that has passed to them. The participants were also looking forward to learn innovative methods to explore heritage and implement it in their teaching praxis.

In the post-workshop evaluation, majority (approx. 65.03%) of the participants felt that their expectations from the workshop were completely met, while some of them (28.3% approximately) indicated that their expectations were fulfilled to some extent.

The participants’ responses regarding their most useful learning from the day’s workshop were several but had a common linking thread which included views on how heritage is related to conflict management, security and peace; the process of heritage conservation through education by linking various subjects to each other and correlating them to heritage and involving the youth for the said purpose; the realization of existence of non-violent conflicts in South Asia and the need to rise above conflicts and how substantive knowledge about our heritage and an understanding of the shared civilization can serve as an effective tool for conflict transformation.

The most interesting learnings of the workshop that the participating teachers from DPS, Srinagar, noted were:

It is an expedient methodology that can be integrated in their teaching practices; the method of Storytelling to inculcate idea of heritage preservation for younger children; the idea of connectors and commonalities across the region; the need to go beyond text books; formation of heritage clubs; interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning; importance of learning about each other’s faith traditions as
teachers to begin with; short excursions/walks, and heritage education without undertaking expensive trips but looking at objects around us; bringing peace in the classroom.

Though most of the participants did not find any serious limitation of the workshop, yet some (16.98% approximately) of them felt that the workshop had too much information to be packed into a single day. They observed that there should have been some activities to make it more interactive (15.09% approx.). The participants also suggested some of the following themes that they would like to have for future workshops:

- child labor;
- the education system;
- women related issues like women’s education, empowerments, security, domestic violence and the like;
- environment;
- community sanitation;
- education for differently abled people; and
- socio-economic conflicts in South Asia.

There were also a couple of suggestions for workshops on religious, moral and value education.

The participants (94.33% approx.) in their responses shared a common eagerness to attend a follow up workshop on the same theme.
Profiles of the Facilitator and Participants

**Navina Jafa** (New Delhi) is a Heritage Educationist and Classical Dancer. She is the Director of the Indian Cultural Heritage Research. She is also a cultural activist, an academician, a performing artist, a cultural historian, and a cultural entrepreneur. Dr. Jafa specializes in creative activities including academic cultural tourism, cultural representation, cultural diplomacy, arts in development programs, and conflict transformation through the arts. She is widely known for her cultural heritage tours. She received her PhD from Jamia Millia Islamia and has authored *Performing Heritage: Art of Exhibit Walks*, Sage, 2012.

**Participants**

The group of participants at the Government College of Education, Srinagar consisted of both in-service and pre-service teachers who were pursuing their B.Ed from the institute. The names of the participants are:

- **Arif Hussain Lone** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Asad Ali** is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.
- **Bisma Miris** an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.
- **Fasiha Allaqband** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Hafsa Gulzar** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Husai Sana Khan** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Ishfaq Ahmad** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Itifaq Parray** is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in Education.
- **Jeelani Wani** is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.
- **Kaneez Fatima** is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.
- **Kunzang Lamo** is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.
Mehak Farooq is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Mehak Malik is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Mohammad Ramzan is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in education.

Mohammad Shafi is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Nadeem Rathore is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Nasreen Mughal is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Parveen Akhtar is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Rabia Geelani is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Rayaz Ahmad Mir is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Roomaisa Kowsar is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Roomaisa Rashid Beigh is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Rubeena Yousuf is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Sakeena Bano is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Sidra Nazir is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Taqwa Maqsood is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Tawqueer Ahmad Mir is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Tsering Distong is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Virji Raina is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

Yasira Khaliq is enrolled as a student in the B.Ed programme.

Zubair Chawdhuri is an in-service teacher pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.
The teachers attending the workshop at Delhi Public School, Srinagar were from Social Science and Environmental Sciences background. They teach students between the ages of 4 years and 14 years.

Afshan Rasool teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Arjumand teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Farhana Shah teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Fayaz Ahmed Bhat teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Foziya teaches Environmental science to students in the upper kindergarten.

Khursheed teaches social science at the senior school level.

Masarat Jan teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Mir Manzoor teaches Social Science at the senior school level.

Mohammad Yousuf teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Monisa teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Muzaffar teaches Social Science at the senior school level.

Mymoona Bano is an Environmental Studies teacher at the junior school level.

Radifa Khan teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Rehana Gul teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Romana teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.

Roohi Fayaz teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Saba teaches Social Science at the middle school level.

Sabata teaches Environmental Science to the upperkindergarten students.

Sahira teaches Economics at the senior school level.

Shabir Ahmed teaches Social Science at the senior school level.

Showkat teaches Social Science at the senior school level.

Tawheeda teaches Environmental Science at the junior school level.
Glimpses