

A TALK ON
PEDAGOGICAL CULTURES
September 30, 2021

Organised by -Department of Elementary Education

Theme - Pedagogical Cultures

Date of the Event - September 30, 2021

Mode of the Event - Online mode, through Google meet.

Name of the speaker- Prof. Padma M. Sarangapani (Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS))

Number of participants- 96

Prof. Padma M. Sarangapani (Tata Institute of social sciences (TISS)) began the talk with a brief of her observations, emphasizing the relationship between culture and pedagogy. Ms. Padma read us an excerpt from her work which entails South Asian education. She further highlighted the significance of description of “teachers” as agents who are embedded in professional and institutional context, a description which entails value judgements. She made it clear that pedagogy and culture are not isolated from each other. Pedagogy is consequential, epistemic and it is embedded in culture and political history. Pedagogy is emergent, it emerges in situations and it can't be derived by applying what one knows about it. If we have to understand pedagogy, we must understand the teachers. She regarded teachers as street level bureaucrats who negotiated various work fields. However, if one investigates historically, one finds that the idea of a guru is part of traditional folk culture. A Guru is seen as a person of knowledge and they can create magic in the teaching process. But then in modern times teachers are not given the authority they need to decide what they want to teach according to the needs of their children. She highlighted how abysmal the professional autonomy of teachers is. She argues that society has a deficit perception about teachers. Here she used an example of in-service teacher education programmes which are designed to just fill gaps and no relevance is given to experience. Literature provides us two views of teachers, the deficit view, which sees that teachers are inadequate and the other one is the teacher's view where we get to know about how different pedagogies arrive in the classroom.

Conclusively, he highlighted the hard-working side of teachers who evolved a completely different pedagogy just for their students, away from textbook culture. According to her, such teachers focus on aims for students and not on aims for education and it is too simplistic to say they teach this way just because they don't know enough.

Towards the end she left us with an intriguing question to think about i.e., “Now that we know about the pedagogic cultures and teachers' conditions, what should we do about it? Should we alter it, if yes then how?”

Report by- Samiha and Ishika (B.El.Ed III year)