



Gender Equality and Women Empowerment



Gender  
Equality  
and  
Women  
Empowerment

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V.V.M.s's. G. Patil

Arts, Science & Commerce College

SAKRI, Dist. Dhule.







Atharva Publications

**Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**

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ISBN: 978-93-87129-95-5

Book No.: 604

Publisher & Printer: Mr. Yuvraj Mali

17, Devidas Colony, Varkhedi Road,  
Dhule - 424001.

Contact: 9405206230

Basement, Om Hospital,  
Near Anglo Urdu Highschool, Dhake Colony,  
Jalgaon - 425001.

Contact: 0257-2239666, 9764694797

atharvapublications@gmail.com

www.atharvapublications.com

20 Oct. 2018

Typesetting : Atharva Publications

Price : ₹ 595/-

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श्री. सुभाष भामरे  
Dr. SUBHASH BHAMRE



वर्तमान में, भारत सरकार  
श्री. सिद्धा 110011  
Minister of State for Defence  
Government of India,  
New Delhi - 110011

Date: 14/10/2018

Greeting Message

NijampurajaneShikshanPrasarakMandal's  
"Adarsh college of Arts organizing National level  
seminar on Gender Equality and women  
Empowerment"

It is the first seminar on the said subject  
considering current social situation Discussion on  
such subjects are very essential and fruitful.  
I wish every successes to the seminar and expect  
good suggestions.

Thanking You!

Yours,  
Dr. SubhashBhamre

114A, South Block, New Delhi - 110011  
Tel.: 011-23192128, 23194621 Fax: 011-23016235

Residence: 9, Teen Bhumi Marg, New Delhi - 110011  
Tel.: 011-23017024



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## The Sense of Equality in Demons of Chitrakut

Dnyaneshwar Shantaram Chavan  
Dept. of English, VVM's Sitaran Govind Patil Arts, Science  
and Commerce College, Sakri (Dhule)

### Introduction

*Demons of Chitrakut* (2005) is the third novel of the *Ramayana Series* written by Ashok Banker. This novel depicts some of the main episodes of the *Ramayana* like the wedding of Rama with Sita, Rama's encounter with Parsurama and Rama's exile. This novel describes both the aspects that are happiness and unhappiness in a grand manner. Ashok Banker minutely depicts the actions and emotions of each character that are involved in the events.

The present research paper is an attempt to trace the sense of equality as observed in the novel *Demons of Chitrakut* particularly in the episode of Rama's exile. This episode not only describes the emotional being of many characters but it also sheds a light on gender equality. Nature has created man and woman which are considered as two sides of the same coin. The *Ramayana* is the epic that tells the story of Ikshvaku Clan where there is no any gender discrimination found. Particularly the episode of Rama's exile in *Demons of Chitrakut* has shown the perspectives of three women characters that are Kaikeyi, Manthara and Sita.

### Perspective of Equality

Rama's marriage with Sita is the episode that shows the happiness of everyone. Queen Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi along with King Dasaratha everyone experienced happiness. But after some days, when King Dasaratha declared that Rama will be coronated, Manthara plays her role. Here in this novel, Ashok Banker shown her as an agent of Ravana, Lord of Lanka, Ravana wants to abolish the kingdom and family of Dasaratha particularly Ayodhya that is never defeated. Hence Manthara sows the seeds of doubts in the mind of Queen Kaikeyi, the favorite queen of Dasaratha. Queen Kaikeyi asked Dasaratha to send Rama in exile. Very day of happiness turns into the atmosphere of unhappiness. Collective happiness is abolished by this act of Kaikeyi.

Everyone wants special treatment when they are in power. To be in limelight is one aspect of human behaviour that might happen

in case of Kaikeyi but Lakshman has emphasized her choice of time. Manthara has accepted her crime of being agent of Ravana so Lakshman thinks that this might be Ravana's plan to remove Rama from throne through the medium of playing family drama and emotional attack so that everyone in Ayodhya might be depressed emotionally and Kaikeyi's choice of time, Manthara's involvement in the foul play will have weakened the whole empire. But his brotherly love does not accept Rama's exile.

Rama does not deny all these issues but he is unmoved and is determined by his words. He says, "I cannot come back, brother. I have given my word. I must obey my father's wishes. To refuse now would dishonour him" (Banker, *Demons of Chitrakut* 279). Rama's dharma shows that his commitment to words is final. He is committed to obeying even Dasaratha's promises and assurances made in the past. Sita provides the evidence that Rama will never disobey his father because "Maharaja Dasaratha did not object or rescind the order, as he could well have done. Whatever the influences... I go with him as well" (Banker, *Demons of Chitrakut* 279).

Sita's determination reflects her faith towards Rama and his dharma. That is why Mammatha Natha Datt points out that Sita has become the grand exemplary to the Hindu women as the embodiment of chastity, purity and wifely fidelity. (iv) According to Sita, when Kaikeyi says all these things to Rama, Maharaja has been present there and King Dasaratha cannot speak anything else that his silence indicates permission for Kaikeyi's resolution. Rama confirms his exile. Sita wants to go as his wife but not forcefully. He has denied at first but later on Sita, herself accepts the dedication of Rama towards his dharma. He follows the words of his mother and father whatever the consequences may be. Sita, as a faithful wife, proves an example of humanism. Her staunch faith makes her determined to accompany Rama in the jungle.

Rama is well aware of the behaviour and emotions of Lakshman so he clarifies that karma and dharma govern all. But those are matters beyond their control. Rama has explained to him the philosophy of karma and dharma. Rama supports Kaikeyi's views of her boons granted by Dasaratha. She has saved the king and so she should be rewarded. Dasaratha is the king who never falters from his words so if Rama denies his boons and accepts Lakshman's facts then it will again be a question of the fulfilling wishes of Kaikeyi



Impact Factor – 6.261 Special Issue - 116 Feb. 2019 ISSN – 2348-7143

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## New NAAC Methodology and Higher Education Institutes in Rural Area

**Prof. Dnyaneshwar Shantaram Chavan,**

IQAC Coordinator, Vidya Vikas Mandal's Sitaram Govind Patil  
Arts, Science and Commerce College, Sakri,  
Tal. Sakri, Dist. Dhule

### Introduction:

Today's world is called a global village. It is because of vast revolution has been taking place in the field of Information Technology. It has changed the mode of economy, industry and market. Other aspects of the market economy are also changing. The industry of every kind revolutionized today. Development at the global level has grasped certain kind of pace. This pace is maintained by a workforce that is modified themselves according to the needs of the time. Today higher education institutes around the world are trying to produce such kind of human resource that can change the world with that pace. In order to keep with this pace, quality education is important. In India, the output of higher education graduates is very high. Still, this outcome has some kind of lacuna. Quality measures should be applied so that this kind of lacuna can be removed. In view of this NAAC is established in 1994 by UGC in order to improve the quality in the process of imparting education in Indian higher education institutes. State governments also take initiatives in this regard.

NAAC Accreditation nowadays becomes mandatory for all the HEIs. NAAC introduced a new methodology of this accreditation process. It is revised after five years. New NAAC methodology comes into effect from July 2017. It includes the following changes.

1. From qualitative peer judgment to data based quantitative indicator evaluation with increased objectivity and transparency
2. Towards extensive use of ICT confirming scalability and robustness
3. In terms of simplification of the process a drastic reduction in a number of questions, size of the report, visit days.
4. In terms of boosting benchmarking as a quality improvement tool. This has been attempted through comparison of NAAC indicators with other international QA frameworks
5. Introducing pre-qualifier for peer team visit, as 30% of system generated a score.
6. Introducing System Generated Scores (SGS) with a combination of online evaluation (about 70%) and peer judgment (about

30%)

7. In introducing the element of third party validation of data and the possibility of roping in multiple agencies
8. In adopting a 100% off site evaluation of HEIs applying for 4th cycle accreditation; on-site visits in exceptional cases
9. In providing appropriate differences in the metrics, weightages and benchmarks to universities, autonomous colleges and affiliated/constituent colleges
10. In revising several metrics to bring in enhanced participation of students and alumni in the assessment process (NAAC Website)

Above shift is introduced by NAAC for the accreditation process of the HEIs in India. It focuses on ICT use. NAAC has also developed some data templates. It requires a bunch of information to be uploaded. The standard operating procedure is also introduced. These steps are really useful for institutions for getting accreditation.

### Background:

The higher education system in India is one of the largest systems in the world. As per the AISHE Report for the year 2017-18 states that there are 903 universities, 39050 colleges and 10011 stand alone institutions in India who are listed on the AISHE portal. 36.6 million Students have been educated through this system. The numbers itself state the giant proportion of our education system. Late Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, our beloved President, gave us a dream to make our nation superpower in 2020. It is only a year away. This dream can result in reality through this 36.6 million student power. But 60.48% of colleges are situated in rural India. 79.90% of students are enrolled for undergraduate courses and major share is of Arts faculty. Total GER of higher education is 25.8%.

### Challenges

On this background, NAAC works for quality excellence. Now it will be done by ICT tools. Colleges established in rural areas are lacking the basic IT infrastructure. Traditional Courses have been carried out in these institutions. It is a need of time to blend traditional



education with ICT process but it needs infrastructure. Such infrastructure can be built but with the help of government and allied agencies such as UGC, RUSA and others. But since XIIth plan, UGC has not given any grant. HEIs in rural areas severely affected by this decision. UGC grants can boost their needs regarding the creation of ICT based infrastructure. Traditional Colleges cannot generate funds in such a way that they can build a state of art ICT facilities. It is not limited to ICT infrastructure only but it also deals with the maintenance of established infrastructure. Enrolled students are eager to enter the new digital age and traditional colleges are facing them with poor ICT facilities. Government policies need to update regarding these issues particularly in the case of HEIs in rural areas. It will be beneficial for these HEIs to face new NAAC process confidently. After all, these institutions for many years are imparting education to hundreds of students. New NAAC process creates confusion among these HEIs. NAAC has been trying to clear those confusions through various NAAC Awareness Workshops. Various colleges are organizing seminars and conferences on new NAAC methodology. These are positive steps to understand the process. It is a need of an hour. It also shows HEIs eagerness to face this new methodology. But the question remains how to fill the gap between theory and ground level realities.

This methodology will become the turning point for these HEIs to transform them into competent educational institutes in spite of various odds and hurdles. Various key indicators developed in this methodology are not applied to rural colleges. They have to lose marks assigned to those indicators. Students Satisfaction Survey is one of the challenges in front of rural colleges. It is a challenge in terms of students using emails for any correspondence.

New rules of operating emails are changing. Students in rural colleges are mobile users. They use their mobiles for social media transactions but most of them are not using their emails for general communication. Apps such as What's App, Telegram, and Twitter are used commonly rather than email. But NAAC prefers emails of students to conduct student survey. There are many such odds to face in this new methodology.

#### Conclusion:

It is concluded that there is a strong need to change the whole scenario of the ground realities of Higher Education Institutes in the rural areas. The education sector is now going through the transitional state. Government policies' regarding higher education in Maharashtra is highly influenced. Rural colleges suffered a lot due to these policies. UGC has stopped the grants to be released for general development of these colleges. In such critical situations, HEIs in rural area have to face NAAC process that requires IT infrastructure. That is the big challenge for them but still, these institutions are facing this new methodology of NAAC. These new challenges will make them stronger and they can impart education with utmost use of ICT in higher education. This methodology will change the whole scenario of higher education in general and of rural colleges in particular.

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