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ST. XAVIER'S INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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The e-Journal is a bi-annual journal and encourages authors to publish their conceptual as well as research articles in the journal. The e-journal will review and publish conceptual papers, research papers, case studies, analytical papers, book reviews, critical views on policies and any other of educational interest.

The e-journal provides a platform for teachers in Higher Education, student teachers, researchers and all those interested in novel educational practices and making them more student-centric in nature. The e-journal provides updates on the current research trends in different disciplines as well as conceptual articles with innovative ideas. The quality of the articles will be assessed by a (double-blind) peer review. The peer reviewers as well as the members of the Editorial Board constitute a group of eminent persons in Education and the institute will have the right to decide the members in these teams. The publication will be a resource for all those striving to carry out innovations in the field of Education.

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REFLECTING CHANGE: SITUATING INDIA AND THE US IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

by

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Abstract

Multipolarity is approached differently by powers that 'are' and 'to be'. In the realm of these power circles are the nations, regional organisations, leaders and multinational corporations. The superpowers, the middle and aspiring powers, and the regional powers consistently aim to sit atop the hierarchy to define events that can impact the global order. They compete, cooperate and clash while consistently altering the global power dynamics, making it more complex and engaging with the rise of multiple centres of authority. The paper aims to explore the evolving relationship between India and the United States in the context of the new global order. It explores the strategic, economic, and diplomatic factors influencing the bilateral relationship between these two nations, with a focus on their roles in international organisations, defense cooperation, trade relations, and shared global challenges.

Keywords: *Multilateral, foreign policy, Indo-Pacific, maritime*

Introduction

Multipolarity is characterized by the multiple power centers that exist, have emerged or are gradually emerging. A multipolar world is the making of various factors - political, economic, military and strategic that involves state and non-state actors. Multipolarity is not a new concept but is once again in discussion with the rise in the strength of countries and regions, hitherto seen as less impactful in directing the course of global politics, as key global players.

According to the *Realism Theory* in International Relations (IR), nations are left to defend themselves in an anarchic structure that provides no guidance or an overarching system to overcome disputes. Collaborations and cooperations are only interest driven which can also offer greater opportunities to develop relations and regions. Countries would therefore prioritize their national and security

interests over multilateral cooperations often to get a relative edge over the other powers they perceive to be in competition with.

Post-Soviet disintegration (1991) and the end of the Cold War Era, resulted in the United States being considered as the only super power thereby presenting a ‘unipolar’ world. However, this status, neither ended the conflicts in the world nor the disagreements. With the rise of the new Russia, Japan, China and India, a new geopolitical structure seemed to evolve. In this structure the United States (US) and its might had to be derecognized and even challenged; a new front had to be created; renewed ambitions had to be realized and new powers had to declare the herald of new era thereby putting a constant demand on resources, defence, technology, trade and transit routes, global economy and foreign relations as the countries strategize to define their ‘sphere of influence’. The Cold War division of east and west, now involves a further division of North and South. The rise in Global South refers to countries of the earlier ‘Third World’ added with Oceania.

As we approach the end of the first quarter of the new millennium, the world no longer seems to be guided by the, Rules-Based Order (RBO) or the Liberal International Order (LIO) that was built upon post-World War II, commonly agreed principles of international cooperation. It was mostly driven by the western countries but we witness a rather momentous transformation in the global order with the economic rise of countries in the east and power centers shifting from the west while the ‘Global South’ seeks a high seat at the decision table. How viable and long lasting will be these changes? To what extent can the economically rising countries sustain their economic growth? What strategies will be followed by the aspiring powers to retain their aspirations? Will the West insist on its power status? Will it succeed? Many such questions raise a call for potential discussions on the changing global order in general and Indo-US relations in particular, the focus of this paper.

Reflections from the past and the rise of the ‘new world disorder’

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War era ended the bipolarity giving the US an ultimate unipolar status with its military prowess, strong control over the global financial institutions and dominant security structures. Both the powers were ruled by contrasting ideologies. Nicholas Ross Smith argues that US’s ideology of Democratic Capitalism and Soviet Union’s Marxist-Leninist ideology provoked potential for establishing two contesting camps offering conflicting solutions for the post Second World War world though in the current scenario a universal ideology in their relations is far less important.ⁱ

The end of the Cold War triggered a surprise response from many pundits of the International Relations often contesting the theoretical framework that failed to predict the end of the dense power rivalry between the erstwhile USSR and the US and their allies. Heikki Patomaki contrasted different

theories of the International Relations and argued that the multiple theories failed to explain the phenomenon as they failed to look beyond their specific lens towards the event and identify it.ⁱⁱ William C. Wohlforth demanded a revisit to new documents and historical evidence to understand the end of the Cold War and a focus on empirical evidence for clearer theoretical argument.ⁱⁱⁱ

As a powerful force on global politics, US promoted liberal democracy and market economy that demanded the globalization of markets. India too ushered globalization with economic reforms in 1991 evolving into a major global player. However, peace eluded the transitioned globe. Ethnic conflicts, regional and civil wars affected the world.^{iv} The rise of China, the resurgence of Russia, a dent in the Atlantic Alliance, the rising economy of BRICS, altered the global equations.

In the current scenario, the ‘super power’ US denies the existence of any other nation for similar position while ambitious China is extending its influence to challenge US dominance. Russia wishes to revive its historical power status and has sided with China and they together invite alliances. China, in particular, has seen unprecedented economic growth and has expanded its political and military influence through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which as of 2025, involves the participation of more than 150 countries.^v

Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia desire regional dominance. India is an aspiring power with rising economy and powerful military has also emerged as an important player in global politics. It enjoys historic ties with many countries and has a strategic position in the Indo-Pacific region, the present theatre for active international action.

Apart from them is the rise of regional organizations. These were formed for addressing not particularly one but distinct issues. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN-1967), European Union (EU-1993) and the African Union (AU-2002), reflect the challenges facing traditional global institutions. Beyond the multilateral United Nations, these regional organizations have increasingly taken on a more prominent role within their respective regions. Some of these were formed for specific purpose such as the Mercosur (1991), for economic integration of Southern Common Market, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO-2001) to strengthen regional stability and advance economic collaboration; Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO-2002), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU-2015), AUKUS (2021) for military cooperation or security partnerships; Closer home we have the BIMSTEC (1997) and the IOR-ARC (1997) and then the transcontinental G77 (1964), G20 (1999), and BRICS (2009) now BRICS+. The change is not sudden but has gradually emerged. The ideological concerns that dictated the bipolar world are no longer the concerns as nations are being increasingly guided by their national interests.

Multilateralism: A choice or commitment?

In the current scenario, the US has rather prioritized itself over others through bilateral relationships often putting at stake its engagement with broader international concerns. Multilateralism was a system that the US had once advocated along with its western allies for promotion of peace and democracy. While threats to liberal internationalism were expected from the newly decolonized non-western states and the US and Europe were to stand with each other to protect the cooperative spirit. However, the liberal internationalism seems to be threatened by the developments in the west itself.^{vi} In the Trump 2.0 era, multilateralism is a choice for the US instead of a commitment. Some of the decisions of the Trump administration in 2024-25 which have triggered a change and “set the world in a dizzy” are as follows:

- **Defence guarantees-** US under Trump wants to back out from inherent defense guarantee extended to Europe since the Second World War forcing Europe a relook in its own foreign policy.^{vii}
- **Tariffs-** Anglo-American partnership that was till now seen as the ‘world’s enduring alliances’ now faces the Trump tariff wrath.^{viii} President Trump’s next call over tariff is in the direction of Europe. His aggressive position on tariffs, to counter US global trade deficit that exceeds \$1 trillion, has a global impact. Trump’s demand for trade parity and reciprocal tariffs is bound to have a strong spillover on trade impacting global value chains.^{ix}
- **Freezing aid-** The US Agency for International Development (USAID) that contributed over 40% of global aid, has frozen the aid affecting humanitarian programmes worldwide making it “targeted and time limited”.^x
- **Imperialistic intentions** – The US President’s comments on Mexico, Greenland, Panama, and Canada have also invited sharp reactions from leaders of the respective countries and the world. He has announced to reassert US influence over these countries. 40% of U.S. container traffic, valued at roughly \$270 billion annually, transits the Panama Canal waterway.^{xi} Greenland is cited as critical for the US national security while Canada was referred to as the US’s 51st state challenging the hitherto existing notion of US-Canada border as the world’s friendliest border between two countries. Will the Trump administration honour NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) that was replaced by the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement)? The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) was renamed the Department of War (DoW) by executive order in September 2025.^{xii}

- **West Asia-** Trump's declaration that 2 million Palestinians must leave Gaza for making it the 'Riviera of the Middle East' invited sharp Arab response from Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt against his plans. He threatened to cut aid to Egypt and Jordan if they do not agree to his development plan for Gaza. US under Trump ordered military strikes on Yemen's Iranian aligned Houthis over their Red Sea attack.
- **Mediation** – President Trump had boasted of ending the Russia-Ukraine 3 years' war in 24 hours, during his campaign. The Trump administration has now offered a 28-point peace plan for the Russo-Ukraine war, so far unacceptable to both the parties. Donald Trump claimed to have mediated talks between the nuclear-armed neighbours, India and Pakistan, over an armed conflict (2025) between the two when India launched 'Operation Sindoor' thus leading to a ceasefire between the two. A claim India has denied.^{xiii}
- **MAGA-** from the various domestic and international moves, the ultimate objective of Donald Trump's Make America Great Again (MAGA) is to eliminate influence of rivals particularly China that has signed an MoU with about 22 Latin American countries in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and make US as the most important power in the world.

President Trump insists on putting American interests first, "way before everything else".^{xiv} He expects engagements and partnerships only with those with whom the American interests align, be it for trade, economy or security. While the US President's comments and actions have caused a 'pervasive sense of fear and intimidation'^{xv} due to their uncertainty, it has put the world in a constant state of bewilderment. Some countries are revisiting their trade relations with the US and their other alliances. China has filed a complaint in the WTO regarding the US's tariffs, claiming that "the measures are inconsistent with the United States' obligations under various provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994".^{xvi}

Globally the governments are rushing to figure out what the new line of thought is or should be. How long will these comments and decisions sustain? Would the US President honour his own words? The question is how is this to unfold? What has changed for India?

India and the US:

India's relations with the US have never been sans friction, though the countries have rarely drifted apart for long. India's relationship with the US was impacted by the Cold War, India's Non-Alignment, Indo-Soviet friendship and US-Pakistan alliance, among others. These relations have involved economic, defence and strategic partnerships apart from a steady people to people connect with a large Indian diaspora in the US. Over the years India has developed its own responses. In the present scenario India is seen as an aid for US role in the Indo-Pacific.

What has changed for India over the last few decades, is its own economic status/prowess, its importance and role in the new geopolitical set up and India's reinvented approach to the east and the Indo Pacific because of the rise of China. Post globalization, India embarked on the path of robust economic development and has been one of the top five economies in the world. In the last quarter century, India's relations with the US have been steady. In the Trump 1.0 and beginning 2.0 era, there was a considerable discussion in the US about an emerging era of cooperative diplomacy with India. Currently the issues which are on the forefront in Indo-U.S. relations are as follows:

1. **Bi-lateral trade** – While the U.S. goods and services trade with India totaled an estimated \$212.3 billion in 2024, the U.S. goods trade deficit with India was \$45.8 billion in 2024, a 5.9 percent increase (\$2.6 billion) over 2023.^{xvii} (US-China trade in the same year was estimated \$658.9 billion). India is the world's largest and fastest growing LPG markets. In order to reset ties with the U.S., shield itself from additional U.S. tariffs and secure a broader trade deal, India promised to boost US energy supplies to India. A close to ten percent of India's annual LPG imports will come from the U.S.^{xviii} India will buy oil, gas, military and defence equipment, hardware and agricultural products while US will provide military cooperation and technical transfers.^{xix} Collaborations in defence, scientific and technical cooperation, countering terrorism continue to remain between the two. Economy and trade are integral part of the Indo-U.S. relationships and Prime Minister Modi has already insisted on the US backing India's MIGA (Make India Great Again).
2. **Illegal migrants**- India is seen as a predator taking away US jobs. As of 2023, India is the third largest source country for illegal migrants in the US and transnational network of human trafficking.^{xx} It has to crack down on 'dunki' routes if it indeed sees the issue as important. It is necessary to understand that the U.S. uses tariff war as a geopolitical instrument than a merely economic one.**The Indo-Pacific**- US under Trump wants to minimize China's influence and maximize America's. However, the US has to reconcile to India's friendly relations with Russia and accept to align with India to deter China in the Indo-Pacific. Both, India and the U.S., are impacted by China's growing influence and its hegemonic ambitions. In 2015, India and the US issued their Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region. Issues in the Indo-Pacific include increase in maritime traffic, protection of sea lanes, piracy, blue economy and natural disasters. It is however the strategic aspect of the region where U.S. and India with Japan and Australia have to cooperate for shared interests of maintaining free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

3. **Maritime Partnership-** Indo-US maritime partnership is defined by India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean, escalating power of China in Indo-Pacific region and Indo-US concerns regarding the same. To address issues of maritime security, the two countries released the "Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean Region" in 2015. The defence and trade cooperation furthered with the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and the renewed Defense Framework Agreement of 2025.
4. **QUAD-** The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, the informal strategic forum was an outcome of a collective efforts to overcome the damaging impact of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, 2004. It was articulated by Japanese PM Shinzo Abe and revived in 2017 as a "centerpiece of U.S. Strategy" to overcome China's assertiveness in the region. Like the United States, India sees the Quad as an important platform for addressing regional security challenges in the Indo-Pacific apart from other platforms such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF-2022). The Indo-Pacific is seen by India as a pillar of improving bilateral India-US ties for a partnership that is a shared vision of an open, stable, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region.^{xxi} In the Trump 2.0 era, QUAD seems to have been relegated to the background. India needs to make attempts to ensure its hosting in the presence of the US President. QUAD offers India a strategic equipoise against the rising might of China and promote its Act East Policy. But the biggest gains of QUAD have to be realized in the Indo-Pacific region.
5. **Technology and Defence-** India is also increasingly aligned with the United States on technology development. The U.S. and India released a Joint Fact Sheet applauding the success of the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), a framework launched in 2022-2023, in advancing strategic cooperation in key sectors such as space, semiconductors, and advanced telecommunications. The U.S. is a significant supplier of defense equipment to India since the last two decades. It has become India's largest military exercise partner. India is a Major Defense Partner (MDP) of the US with Strategic Trade Authorization-1 for a further facilitation of trade and technology collaboration in defence and high technology areas.^{xxii}

Indo-US relationship has evolved from the US contribution towards early years of India's nation-building process after independence, to cautious relations after India's non-alignment stand to highly strained relations causing mistrust with India's stand on international events such as the Korean War (1950-1953) and Vietnam War (1955-1975), the deepening of US-Pakistan alliance and Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty (1971). Nuclear sanctions and denial of technology assistance after India's two nuclear tests (1974,1998), that gave way to a Strategic partnership with the India-US Civil Nuclear

Agreement, 2008 ending India's nuclear isolation and later a defence cooperation. China's rise once again put the focus on Indo-US relations as India became a significant partner in US's Indo-Pacific strategy, that served India's interests well.

The rise of ambitious powers in Asia, Africa and Latin America and regional and active trans-continental groupings has alerted the Trump administration to reinstate America as the most powerful nation. The impact of these policies is likely to shift away attention from crucial issues that require global consensus and collective action - the UN Sustainable Development Goals, from which the US has withdrawn. A system of self-interest can compromise the ability of nations to cooperate for the maintenance of global peace, to ensure the protection of supply chains and to develop an approach of shared responsibility to resolve global issues such as conflicts, pandemics, the climate crisis, trade disputes, inequitable technological advances, attacks on human rights; inequality among people, communities and nations; steady supply of necessities; and dealing with issues related to migration among others.

Conclusion

Indo-US relations have been defined by mutual concerns and compulsions. The recent downturn in relations causing US's punitive tariffs on India rising up to 50 per cent, punishing India for its alliances for e.g. with Russia, India's initial exclusion from Pax Silica Declaration, an economic security framework with "access to trusted partners"^{xxiii} has created challenges for India.

India-US ties have multiple common practical and strategic interests. Being a hugely populated nation as the world's largest democracy, India's strategic location in the geopolitics and its membership in the world's prominent organizations adds to India's responsibility to play a crucial role in the global affairs. India can be a regional leader for the US in the Indo-Pacific region. One has to understand that countries come together over shared values/ideologies and shared interests. In a multilateral global order, member countries thrive on cooperation, commitment and continued trust. India is an ideal strategic partner for many countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, European nations, Japan, Australia, Canada and South Korea which considers India a natural ally. India is America's Comprehensive Global Strategic Partner in AI technology; a large market and growing economy with strong defence credentials; strategically located in the Indo-Pacific; and a willing partner in establishing a free, open and peaceful democratic world.

At the moment it is obvious that the US is in charge of the direction of relations between the two countries. India has taken a firm foreign policy stand on various occasions earlier. Maintaining

strategic autonomy is inherent to India's foreign policy options. For India and the US as large democracies, strong economies with strategic relations, common security concerns and as participative members in multiple organizations across the continents a collective effort will be desirable in addressing the issues of an otherwise fragmented world. US interests and Indian policy and diplomacy can help navigate through what appears to be the uncertain and troubled waters. That is in the interest of both.

End Notes:

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- ^{iv} In West Asia, The Gulf War (1990-1991), The Iraq War (2002-2011), The war in Afghanistan that went on for 20 years (2001-2021) and the current Gaza conflict. Africa was bereft with the Rwandan Genocide (1994) and the Congo Wars (1993-2003); Asia faced civil wars in Sri Lanka, and conflicts in Myanmar; in Europe the Yugoslav Wars (1991-2001), the Chechen Wars (1994-2009) and the current Russo-Ukraine War.
- ^v As of the end of June 2023, China has claimed to have signed more than 200 documents on jointly building the BRI with 152 countries and 32 international organizations. *10 Years On, the Belt and Road Initiative Is Not Only Fruitful, but Also Promising*, (2023, August 16) Embassy of People's Republic of China in Grenada, https://gd.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zxhd_1/202308/t20230826_11133075.htm
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“FROM METAPHOR TO METAMORPHOSIS: TRACING THE JOURNEY OF REPATRIATION IN *THE DESIRABLE DAUGHTERS*.”

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Abstract:

The topic of repatriation in diasporic literature contributes to a better understanding of the intricacies and difficulties encountered by individuals and groups that have been uprooted. In addition to offering insight into the larger socio-political ramifications of repatriation, it also offers a chance to explore the psychological, emotional, and cultural components of doing so.

The researcher discusses alienation, acculturation, assimilation, hyphenated identity, cultural conflicts, loneliness, isolation, etc. She struggles with a fragmented sense of identity as she’s caught between the demands of her heritage and the realities of her existence. This research explores how repatriation disrupts the notion of a singular "homeland" and forces the daughter to grapple with a dual cultural identity. It observes the characters' mapping of the contours of their hyphenated identity. Also, it demonstrates that constant negotiation and transformation of the character’s identity are essential because of the interaction between the past and the present.

Keywords: *diaspora, repatriation, expatriation, hyphenated identity, alienation, acculturation, assimilation.*

1 | INTRODUCTION:

Lusia A. Igloria, in her book *Maps for Migrants and Ghosts*, beautifully quotes, “I am the shore I left behind as well as the home I return to every evening. The voyage cannot proceed without me”(qtd. in Goodreads). This evocative statement encapsulates the layered emotional and psychological realities of diasporic existence. The image of the “shore” signifies the abandoned homeland, carrying memories, traditions, and inherited identity. The “home” represents the adopted land where the migrant now resides and constructs daily life. The metaphor suggests a simultaneous belonging to two spaces, revealing the dual consciousness that characterizes diaspora.

The second part of the quotation foregrounds agency. The “voyage” symbolizes the ongoing process of migration, adaptation, and identity reconstruction. Diasporic life is not static; it is a continuous negotiation between past and present, memory and modernity. The individual becomes both traveler and terrain, actively shaping and reshaping the self within shifting cultural landscapes.

Vijay Mishra further articulates this complexity in *The Literature of the Indian Diaspora*, where he modifies Leo Tolstoy’s famous opening from *Anna Karenina* to assert that “all diasporas are unhappy, but every diaspora is unhappy in its own way.” (01) Mishra’s formulation underscores the heterogeneity of diasporic experiences. While displacement may be a shared condition, its emotional, cultural, and psychological manifestations differ for each individual.

Together, these perspectives illuminate diaspora as a space of fragmentation, negotiation, and self-transformation. It is within this theoretical framework that the present study examines the evolving diasporic consciousness of Tara in *The Desirable Daughters*, tracing her movement through expatriation, alienation, and eventual reconfiguration of identity.

2 | BEYOND THE HORIZON: TARA’S GLOBAL LEAP

The journey from homeland to hostland may take only a few days in physical terms; however, the psychological journey of migration unfolds across years. Migration is not merely geographical relocation; it is an internal transformation that reshapes memory, belonging, and self-perception. Diasporic movement often produces what may be termed *metanoia* - a profound shift in consciousness brought about by exposure to new cultural landscapes. The migrant does not simply cross borders; she renegotiates identity. In *The Desirable Daughters*, Tara Chatterjee’s early experiences in the United States exemplify this transformative passage.

It would be reductive to classify Tara’s relocation as conventional expatriation. Expatriates are generally understood as individuals who reside temporarily in a foreign country while maintaining an emotional and practical orientation toward return. Their stay is provisional, and their cultural identity remains firmly anchored in the homeland. Tara’s migration, however, does not operate within this framework. Although her move to the United States is facilitated by marriage to Bishwapriya Chatterjee, her subsequent life reflects a deeper engagement with American society rather than a temporary sojourn.

Unlike the traditional expatriate, Tara does not cultivate sustained nostalgia for India in her early years abroad. Her orientation is future-facing rather than return-oriented. She embraces American modes of living, experiments with autonomy, and gradually distances herself from the rigid expectations of her Bengali upbringing. Her relationship with India becomes reflective rather

than immediate; it exists as cultural memory rather than as an imminent destination. Thus, Tara's movement aligns more closely with immigrant subjectivity than expatriate detachment.

This distinction is significant. Expatriation often implies insulation within cultural enclaves, whereas immigration entails exposure to structural pressures of adaptation and negotiation. Tara's trajectory illustrates the latter. She does not remain suspended between spaces in deliberate cultural preservation; instead, she enters the complex process of assimilation and acculturation that will later generate conflict. Her global leap is therefore not a temporary escape but the beginning of a sustained identity reconfiguration.

At the same time, Tara's early confidence in American reinvention reflects what Ruth Maxey observes in her discussion of Bharati Mukherjee: that immigrant identities in modern America are shaped by tensions between expatriate withdrawal and assimilationist ambition. Tara initially gravitates toward an assimilationist possibility: the belief that one can fashion a new self through geographical relocation. However, the process proves neither immediate nor seamless. Assimilation is gradual, layered, and often contradictory.

Tara's global leap thus initiates a paradox. On one hand, migration promises liberation from inherited constraints such as caste hierarchies, communal surveillance, and gendered expectations. On the other hand, it introduces new uncertainties: cultural displacement, fractured belonging, and the challenge of redefining selfhood in unfamiliar terrain. The promise of transformation coexists with the risk of alienation.

In this sense, Tara's migration cannot be reduced to either romantic reinvention or cultural abandonment. It is the threshold moment that sets into motion the psychological negotiations explored in subsequent chapters. Her relocation marks the beginning of a diasporic consciousness shaped by rupture, adaptation, and self-questioning. The global leap does not resolve identity; it destabilizes it. It opens the horizon to possibility while simultaneously unsettling inherited certainties.

Thus, Tara's movement to America constitutes more than a spatial transition; it inaugurates the layered processes of alienation, acculturation, and contested assimilation that define her diasporic experience. The journey beyond the horizon becomes the precondition for the crises that follow, preparing the ground for the complex negotiations of belonging that unfold in the chapters ahead.

3 | THE THREE “A’s” OF DIASPORA :

ALIENATION

Tara’s experience of alienation begins within the institution that was meant to provide stability to her marriage. As Bish becomes a celebrated Indian professional in America, frequently invited to speak in Boston, New York, Tokyo, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Manila, his public identity expands while Tara’s world contracts into domesticity. Ironically, while he thrives in global intellectual circles, she is expected to remain at home caring for their infant son. Her educational aspirations are interrupted, and financial independence is discouraged because, as she recalls, “[what] would people think that Bish Chatterjee couldn’t support his wife” (Mukherjee 82).

This domestic confinement produces not merely dissatisfaction but psychological alienation. Though physically present in America, Tara feels emotionally isolated within her marriage. Bish’s increasingly traditional outlook, despite his Western success, intensifies this isolation. His inability to recognize her evolving selfhood reflects what Sharmita Lahiri identifies as the psychological shift in women who seek liberation from conventional Indian expectations of femininity. Tara embodies this inward transformation, while Bish represents resistance to it.

Alienation in Tara’s life operates at multiple levels: marital, cultural, and diasporic. Her decision to seek divorce becomes her first deliberate act of resistance against emotional suffocation. However, separation does not resolve her sense of estrangement. Among Indians, she becomes incomprehensible “why a young woman with everything she could ever want would decide to leave her protector and provider” (66). Among Americans, she is perceived as the “supremely lucky one” (27). She cannot explain her San Francisco life to Indians, nor her Indian past to her acquaintances in California.

Thus, Tara inhabits a liminal position belonging fully to neither society. She desires greater Americanness but cannot erase her cultural conditioning; simultaneously, she no longer fits seamlessly within traditional Indian frameworks. Her condition recalls the idea of being a dweller between worlds, accepted by none. Even her son becomes implicated in this in-between existence, as she recognizes the burden of transmitting a fragmented inheritance. Alienation, therefore, is not only personal but structurally embedded in the diasporic condition itself.

ACCULTURATION

While alienation marks Tara's rupture, acculturation describes her adaptive negotiation with American society. Acculturation, in diasporic theory, refers to the process by which migrants adopt aspects of the host culture while still retaining elements of their original identity. Tara's transformation in America illustrates this complex adaptation.

She reflects:

“When I tell them they should be thankful for their identity crises and feelings of alienation, I of course am right... even loneliness becomes a privileged commodity” (Mukherjee 34).

At first glance, this statement appears contradictory. However, it reveals a critical awareness shaped by her American exposure. In India, Tara's identity had been collectively constructed, defined by caste, religion, family lineage, and social reputation. Her actions were monitored in the name of preserving heritage and propriety. Her personal desires were secondary to communal expectations. Even after marriage, her identity shifted seamlessly from Jai Krishna Gangooly's daughter to Bish Chatterjee's wife.

In America, however, Tara encounters a cultural framework that privileges individualism. The very “identity crisis” she references becomes a sign of autonomy rather than disgrace. She begins to question inherited norms precisely because she has absorbed elements of American self-definition. Her pursuit of independence, her assertion of personal choice, and her willingness to critique tradition are outcomes of cognitive acculturation.

Yet this process is incomplete. Tara does not abandon her Bengali heritage; instead, she selectively adapts. Her internal conflict arises from negotiating two value systems simultaneously. Acculturation thus becomes a space of tension where inherited loyalties and newly acquired freedoms coexist uneasily. Rather than simple cultural replacement, Tara's experience demonstrates layered adaptation.

ASSIMILATION

If acculturation involves adaptation with retention, assimilation implies a deeper absorption into the dominant culture, often at the cost of original identity. Tara's narrative suggests that full assimilation remains elusive. Mukherjee allows her characters the agency to determine how much of

Hindu Indian tradition they wish to relinquish and how much of American modernity they wish to embrace.

The three sisters exemplify varied responses to diaspora. One attempts to recreate the India she left behind, becoming more culturally rigid in New Jersey than she might have been in India. Another returns to India to craft her own version of modern domestic life within a familiar cultural context. Tara, the youngest, experiments most boldly with American individualism, exploring autonomy and redefining womanhood. However, even she does not fully dissolve into American identity.

Assimilation, in Tara's case, is partial and negotiated rather than complete. She may adopt Western social freedoms, but her ethical framework and emotional reflexes remain shaped by her upbringing. The diasporic journey, therefore, resists closure. It does not culminate in total absorption nor in pure cultural preservation.

Diaspora can be understood as a continual process of becoming a dynamic negotiation of affiliations, memories, and aspirations. Migrants inhabit relational networks that reshape both the hostland and the homeland in subtle ways. Tara's experience demonstrates that alienation may initiate departure, acculturation may encourage adaptation, but assimilation remains a contested and incomplete process. The three "A's" thus illuminate diaspora not as a linear progression but as an ongoing dialectic between loss, adjustment, and self-redefinition.

4 | FAMILIAR SHORES: A BITTERSWEET REPATRIATION

EPIGRAPH AND THE POLITICS OF SELF-FASHIONING

No one behind, no one ahead.
The path the ancients cleared has closed.
And the other path, everyone's path,
Easy and wide goes nowhere.
I am alone and find my way.

(qtd. in Mukherjee)

The epigraph to *The Desirable Daughters* by Bharati Mukherjee sets the philosophical tone for Tara Chatterjee's journey of identity and repatriation. The "ancient path" signifies inherited traditions and established ways of life. Its closure suggests a rupture from generational continuity and the inadequacy of unquestioned tradition in a modern, transnational context. Tara embodies this break when she refuses to conform to conventional expectations of Indian womanhood. She calls her

husband by his name, seeks divorce instead of revering him as “pati parmashwar,” and rejects the submissive marital role prescribed by tradition. The ancestral path, for her, is no longer viable.

Yet the “everyone’s path”, the “easy and wide” road, symbolizes conformity to Western modernity. Tara’s attempt to assimilate into American culture initially appears liberating but ultimately proves directionless. The epigraph’s final line, “I am alone and find my way,” captures the existential solitude of forging an identity beyond both rigid tradition and superficial assimilation. Tara’s journey is thus not a simple rejection of the past but a struggle to construct a self in the absence of stable cultural anchors.

ISOLATION AND THE DIASPORIC CONDITION

Isolation is central to diasporic literature, reflecting the psychological complexities of inhabiting multiple cultural spaces. Tara’s loneliness is not merely personal but diasporic. Her marriage to Bish fails not because of cultural incompatibility but because of emotional neglect. When Tara expresses her loneliness, Bish cannot comprehend it. He asks how “two halves of one consciousness” (Mukherjee 266) could feel alone. His inability to understand her inner transformation becomes the basis of their separation.

Even after divorce, Tara’s solitude persists. She immerses herself in Western social freedoms, believing autonomy will resolve her emotional void. Instead, she becomes, in her own words, an expert on loneliness outside of marriage. Her experimentation with American individualism does not erase her Indianness. Despite attempts to deprioritize her heritage, her cultural conditioning continues to shape her perception and relationships.

As critic Lahiri observes, Mukherjee portrays the psychological evolution of Indian women who seek independence from conventional expectations. Tara exemplifies this transformation, while Bish represents the incapacity to comprehend it. However, Tara’s newfound independence does not grant immediate belonging. In the hostland, immigrants often experience marginalization from both the dominant culture and their own community. Tara’s identity becomes fragmented, suspended between inherited values and lived realities.

This tension gradually initiates an inward retraction from uncritical Westernization. Her desire to reconcile with Bish reflects not regression but a recognition that belonging cannot be manufactured through cultural rejection alone.

TRAUMA, PUBLIC SCRUTINY, AND THE CRISIS OF IDENTITY

Tara's tentative reconciliation with Bish is violently interrupted by the bomb blast that devastates her family. The tragedy functions as a catalyst, dismantling her fragile sense of stability. Bish is severely injured, their domestic life collapses, and the media sensationalizes their private life. Public scrutiny reduces her to a scandal, exposing her to moral judgment and humiliation.

The trauma forces Tara into profound psychological disorientation. The "ancient tattered thread" (Mukherjee 143) connecting her to Bish becomes symbolic of shared vulnerability. The attack reveals how deeply interwoven their destinies remain despite divorce. Guilt and remorse haunt her, even though she is not directly responsible.

Simultaneously, the American media's intrusion exposes the precarious status of immigrants. Her suffering becomes a spectacle. The cultural dislocation she once attempted to ignore resurfaces with intensity. Without emotional refuge in America, Tara finally consents to return to India at her sister's insistence. Her "yes" marks the beginning of physical repatriation, but more importantly, it signals the start of psychological reorientation.

THE TREE BRIDE AND THE INTERGENERATIONAL MEMORY

While preparing to leave the United States, Tara begins writing the story of the "Tree Bride," her ancestor Tara Lata Gangooly. This narrative becomes a means of self-interrogation. The Tree Bride, married to a tree after her fiancé's death to avoid widowhood stigma, transforms her constrained existence into moral and political agency. Inspired by nationalist movements, she shelters revolutionaries and ultimately attains martyrdom.

The Tree Bride represents a paradox. A regressive ritual intended to preserve patriarchal order inadvertently produces a woman of resistance. Her chastity becomes strength; her symbolic marriage grants her freedom from domestic subordination. In this way, tradition becomes a site of reinterpretation rather than mere oppression.

For Tara Chatterjee, reconstructing this ancestral history becomes an act of self-recovery. She describes herself as "like a pilgrim following the course of the Ganges to its source," (Mukherjee 291), suggesting a spiritual quest for origins. The Tree Bride's legacy complicates Tara's understanding of tradition. It reveals that strength can emerge from within inherited structures, not solely from rejecting them.

This realization reframes Tara's identity. Unlike her ancestor, she had pursued autonomy through divorce and Western assimilation. Yet the Tree Bride's story teaches her that resistance and

rootedness need not be oppositional. The past is not merely restrictive; it can be generative.

SPIRITUAL RETURN AND RECONCILIATION

Upon returning to India, Tara relocates to Rishikesh and gradually reconnects with her parents and cultural environment. Discovering Bish's continued respect for her family, evidenced by his affectionate inscription in her father's book, reshapes her perception of him. Her mother's observation that Bish never withdrew emotionally forces Tara to reconsider the permanence of their bond.

Importantly, Tara's renewed engagement with Indian customs does not indicate blind submission. Rather, it signals reinterpretation. She begins to appreciate the ethical core of tradition while retaining her evolved sense of self. Spirituality offers not escape but equilibrium. Her return to India enables a reconciliation between autonomy and belonging.

Visiting her ancestral village, Misthigunj, Tara reconnects with her namesake Tara Lata and symbolically integrates fragmented aspects of her identity. The return is not nostalgic regression but conscious reclamation. Tradition is neither wholly oppressive nor entirely salvific; it becomes a resource for self-definition.

REPATRIATION AS PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL RETURN

As Kim D. Butler argues, "the concept of return is an essential part of the diaspora. There could be a physical return or cultural as well" (Butler 204-205). Tara's journey embodies this dual movement. She does not merely remember India from afar; she physically relocates. Simultaneously, she undertakes cultural repatriation by revisiting ancestral narratives and re-engaging with spiritual heritage.

Her homecoming resolves neither all tensions nor all ambiguities. Instead, it offers a reconfigured identity that integrates multiple affiliations. Tara neither wholly rejects Western influence nor unquestioningly resumes traditional roles. Rather, she negotiates a hybrid self grounded in historical awareness. Thus, repatriation in *The Desirable Daughters* is bittersweet. It arises from trauma, disillusionment, and exile, yet it produces renewal. Tara's journey affirms that belonging is not inherited passively but constructed through reflection, memory, and choice.

Tara's return to India ultimately signifies not surrender to tradition but a conscious reconstitution of identity. Her journey demonstrates that repatriation is not a linear reversal of migration but a reflective process shaped by memory, trauma, and ancestral inheritance. By revisiting the story of the Tree Bride and re-engaging with her familial and spiritual roots, Tara integrates

fragments of her past with the autonomy she cultivated abroad. The return thus becomes an act of synthesis rather than retreat.

In this sense, *The Desirable Daughters* presents repatriation as a transformative negotiation between displacement and belonging. Tara neither fully abandons Western modernity nor unquestioningly embraces tradition; instead, she reconstructs a self that accommodates both. Her homecoming affirms that identity in the diasporic context is fluid and dialogic, forged through confrontation with loss, history, and self-awareness. Repatriation, therefore, emerges as bittersweet yet regenerative, a movement not backward, but inward.

5 | CONCLUSION

As Shilpi Somaya Gowda observes, the diasporic individual experiences an enduring “push and pull” between the land of birth and the land of choice. This tension does not disappear with repatriation; rather, it deepens into a renewed awareness of distance and transformation. The homeland may appear familiar, yet both the individual and the space have changed, creating a subtle sense of estrangement within belonging itself.

The Desirable Daughters offers a nuanced exploration of this condition through the journey of Tara Chatterjee. Bharati Mukherjee presents expatriation and repatriation not as opposites but as interconnected stages in the evolving process of identity formation. Through Tara and through the parallel lives of her sisters, the novel demonstrates that diasporic experiences are deeply individual and shaped by personal negotiations with culture, memory, gender, and modernity.

Repatriation emerges not as a simple restoration of roots, but as another phase of self-redefinition. Ultimately, the novel affirms that diaspora is a continuous journey where identity remains fluid, shaped by movement between spaces, histories, emotional landscapes, and the persistent dialogue between past and present.

This study opens possibilities for further exploration of gender dynamics in diasporic narratives. Future research may further examine the presence of gender biases and how gender shapes identity formation and cultural negotiation. Such inquiry would contribute to a more inclusive and equitable understanding of diaspora and representation.

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THE ROLE PLAY AS A METHOD OF TEACHING: DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE H (HEAD, HEART, AND HAND)

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Abstract

Modern educational thought increasingly emphasises the comprehensive development of learners rather than limiting outcomes to academic performance alone. As a result, teaching–learning processes are expected to promote an integrated growth of intellectual abilities, emotional understanding, and practical competencies. Within this framework, learner-centred instructional strategies have gained significance, and role play has emerged as a dynamic and experiential teaching method. By engaging learners in simulated real-life contexts, role play encourages active participation through thinking, emotional involvement, and purposeful action.

This conceptual paper explores role play as a pedagogical approach in relation to the development of the three H—Head, Heart, and Hand, representing the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning respectively. The paper outlines the conceptual basis and educational value of role play and examines its application in classroom practices and teacher education programmes. It highlights the manner in which role play facilitates higher-order cognitive skills such as reasoning, analysis, and decision-making, while also fostering emotional qualities including empathy, value orientation, and social awareness. Furthermore, the paper discusses how role play contributes to the development of practical and communication skills by enabling learners to apply knowledge through active performance.

By integrating intellectual engagement, emotional sensitivity, and skill-based learning, role play promotes holistic learner development and enhances the relevance of educational experiences. The paper concludes that role play serves as an effective pedagogical tool for bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and real-world application, thereby supporting active learning and the formation of balanced and competent individuals. Its relevance in contemporary school education and teacher education contexts is therefore strongly emphasised.

Keywords: *Role play, experiential learning, three H, holistic development, learner-centred pedagogy*

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving educational landscape of the twenty-first century, education is increasingly recognised as a process aimed at the holistic development of learners rather than the mere transmission of academic content. Global educational reforms emphasise the development of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, emotional intelligence, and real-life problem-solving abilities. Scholars argue that learners must be prepared to respond effectively to complex social, cultural, and professional challenges (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Consequently, education systems worldwide are shifting towards pedagogical approaches that integrate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in a balanced manner (Delors, 1996).

Traditional teacher-centred instructional practices, characterised by passive learning and rote memorisation, have been found inadequate for addressing the diverse learning needs of contemporary learners. Research indicates that such approaches often fail to promote deep understanding, learner engagement, and intrinsic motivation (Freire, 1970; Hattie, 2009). Contemporary educational theorists emphasise that learning is most effective when learners are actively involved in meaning-making processes and are provided opportunities to interact, collaborate, and reflect (Slavin, 2014; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). This shift has strengthened the relevance of learner-centred and experiential pedagogies in modern classrooms.

From a theoretical perspective, learning is widely viewed as an active, constructive, and socially situated process. Dewey's (1938) emphasis on experience and reflection laid the foundation for experiential education, while Piaget (1970) highlighted cognitive development through interaction with the environment. Vygotsky (1978) extended this understanding by emphasising social interaction and the zone of proximal development. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory further demonstrated the importance of observation and modelling in learning. More recently, scholars such as Illeris (2018) have conceptualised learning as an integration of cognitive, emotional, and social

dimensions, reinforcing the need for holistic pedagogical strategies.

Within this theoretical framework, role play has gained prominence as an instructional strategy that situates learning in authentic and meaningful contexts. Role play enables learners to explore real-life situations, assume diverse perspectives, and engage in decision-making processes. Educational researchers argue that such simulated experiences enhance learner engagement, motivation, and conceptual clarity (Fogg, 2001; Van Ments, 1999). Contemporary studies also suggest that role play supports active learning and fosters deeper conceptual understanding by connecting theory with practice (Prince, 2004; Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

The contribution of role play to learning can be effectively analysed through the framework of the three H—Head, Heart, and Hand—representing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The cognitive domain (Head) involves knowledge acquisition, comprehension, analysis, evaluation, and application. Bloom’s taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) provides a foundational structure for understanding cognitive processes, while later scholars emphasise the importance of transfer of learning and conceptual understanding (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Bransford et al., 2000). Research indicates that role play enhances higher-order thinking by engaging learners in analysis, problem-solving, and reflective judgment.

The affective domain (Heart) encompasses emotions, attitudes, values, and social awareness. Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964) highlighted the systematic development of affective outcomes in education, while humanistic psychologists emphasised learner autonomy, emotional engagement, and personal meaning in learning (Rogers, 1969). Contemporary scholars such as Goleman (1995) stress the importance of emotional intelligence in education, suggesting that learning environments must nurture empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. Role play provides opportunities for emotional involvement, perspective-taking, and ethical reflection, thereby strengthening affective learning outcomes.

The psychomotor domain (Hand) focuses on skill development, action, and practical application of knowledge. Pestalozzi’s (1801) emphasis on learning by doing remains relevant in modern experiential pedagogy. Research on performance-based learning highlights that active participation and enactment significantly enhance skill acquisition and retention (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). Role play allows learners to practise communication, leadership, and professional skills in a supportive environment, thereby bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

In recent years, educational researchers have increasingly emphasised the role of active and experiential strategies in developing twenty-first-century skills. Studies suggest that pedagogical approaches such as role play contribute to collaboration, adaptability, creativity, and reflective thinking (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In teacher education, role play is

widely recognised as an effective strategy for preparing prospective teachers to handle classroom realities, manage diverse learners, and reflect on their pedagogical practices (Joyce et al., 2015; Schön, 1983). Situated learning theorists further argue that such strategies support professional identity formation and participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In light of these classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives, the present study seeks to examine role play as a method of teaching and to analyse its contribution to holistic learner development through the integrated development of cognitive (Head), affective (Heart), and psychomotor (Hand) domains. By synthesising insights from educational psychology, constructivist theory, and experiential learning research, the study aims to highlight the pedagogical relevance of role play in contemporary education, particularly within teacher education programmes.

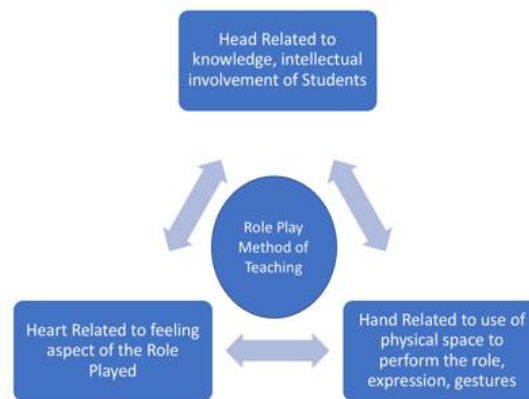


Fig: Role of 3H in Role Play Method

The Three H in Education

The three H represent the integrated domains of learning:

- Head refers to intellectual development, including knowledge, understanding, reasoning, and critical thinking.
- Heart relates to emotional and moral development, such as values, attitudes, empathy, and social sensitivity.
- Hand signifies skill development and the ability to apply knowledge through action and performance.

Effective education requires a balanced development of all three domains rather than an isolated focus on cognitive achievement.

Role Play and Development of the Head

Role play significantly contributes to cognitive development by encouraging learners to analyse situations, solve problems, and make decisions. When learners prepare for a role, they must understand the context, content, and objectives of the activity. This process enhances comprehension, application, and higher-order thinking skills.

Through discussion and reflection after role play, learners evaluate their performance and the outcomes of their actions. Such reflective practices promote critical thinking, conceptual clarity, and the ability to link theoretical knowledge with practical situations.

Role Play and Development of the Heart

The affective domain is strongly nurtured through role play. By stepping into different roles, learners experience diverse perspectives, emotions, and social realities. This helps in developing empathy, emotional awareness, and sensitivity towards others.

Role play also encourages cooperation, respect for differing viewpoints, and ethical reasoning. Learners learn to manage emotions, communicate effectively, and develop positive attitudes towards social and moral issues. Thus, role play becomes a powerful tool for value education and emotional development.

Role Play and Development of the Hand

The psychomotor domain is addressed through active participation in role play. Learners use verbal and non-verbal communication, gestures, body language, and coordination while enacting roles. This enhances their communication skills, confidence, and presentation abilities.

Additionally, role play enables learners to practise real-life skills such as problem-solving, leadership, teamwork, and decision-making. These skills are essential for personal and professional life, making learning functional and applicable beyond the classroom.

Educational Significance of Role Play

Role play promotes learner autonomy, creativity, and engagement. It bridges the gap between theory and practice and makes learning enjoyable and meaningful. In teacher education, role play prepares future teachers to handle classroom situations, understand learner behaviour, and apply pedagogical theories effectively.

Furthermore, role play supports inclusive education by providing equal participation opportunities and accommodating diverse learning styles.

Objectives

1. To clarify the concept and educational meaning of role play as a teaching method.
2. To explain the relationship between role play and cognitive development (Head) through theoretical perspectives.
3. To describe the role of role play in nurturing affective qualities (Heart) such as empathy and values.
4. To outline how role play supports psychomotor development (Hand) through active participation.
5. To conceptually demonstrate the role of role play in promoting holistic development by integrating Head, Heart, and Hand.

Review of related literature

Prince (2004), in *Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research*, examined the effectiveness of active learning strategies in higher education. Through a systematic review of empirical studies involving undergraduate learners, the findings demonstrated that participatory strategies such as role play significantly enhance conceptual understanding, retention, and engagement. The study established the foundational effectiveness of active learning approaches.

Hattie (2009), in *Visible Learning*, synthesised over 800 meta-analyses to evaluate instructional impact on student achievement. Using effect-size analysis across school and higher education settings, the findings confirmed that interactive and student-centred strategies, including role play, produce strong positive effects on academic performance and motivation, reinforcing the empirical strength of active learning.

Yardley-Matwiejczuk (1997), in *Role Play: Theory and Practice*, explored the theoretical and practical applications of role play in education. Using descriptive and interpretative analysis of simulated learning environments, the study highlighted that structured role enactment promotes experiential learning, emotional involvement, and interpersonal competence.

McCaslin and Hickey (2001), in their work on social constructivism and educational practice, examined learning as a socially mediated and identity-forming process. Through qualitative analysis of collaborative classrooms, the findings revealed that participatory activities such as role play enhance cognitive engagement and social identity construction, linking experiential methods to constructivist theory.

Slavin (2014), in *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*, analysed effective instructional models through descriptive research. The findings supported cooperative and experiential learning strategies, demonstrating that structured interaction and simulation-based methods improve academic achievement and learner motivation.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), in *Implications for Educational Practice of the Science of Learning*, reviewed research on pedagogies promoting holistic development. The study emphasised experiential and participatory approaches, including role play, as essential for deep understanding, collaboration, and long-term learning outcomes.

Wang and Pan (2021), in *Role Play and Social-Emotional Learning*, investigated the impact of role play on secondary students using a quasi-experimental design. Statistical analysis indicated significant improvements in empathy, collaboration, and emotional regulation, demonstrating the affective and social benefits of role enactment.

Smetana and Bell (2018), in their study on moral and social development, used qualitative thematic analysis to explore how simulated scenarios influence adolescent moral reasoning. The findings revealed that role play strengthens ethical understanding and perspective-taking abilities.

Schön (1983), in *The Reflective Practitioner*, examined professional learning through reflection-in-action using conceptual and qualitative analysis. The study suggested that simulated practice environments such as role play cultivate reflective thinking and professional competence.

Sayow and Marsevani (2024), in *Role Play in Teacher Education*, employed a mixed-method design to assess the impact of role play on teacher trainees. Analysis of micro-teaching and role enactments revealed enhanced communication skills, instructional confidence, and classroom management abilities, demonstrating the practical applicability of role play in professional preparation.

Research methodology

The present study adopts a conceptual and descriptive research approach and therefore does not involve a conventional empirical sample or experimental procedure. Instead, a purposive theoretical sample consisting of classical and contemporary scholarly sources related to role play, experiential learning, learner-centred pedagogy, and holistic education was used. These sources included books by eminent educationists, peer-reviewed journal articles, and policy documents relevant to the development of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. As the study is non-experimental in nature, no standardised tools or instruments were employed; rather, document analysis and systematic review of literature served as the primary tools. Techniques such as thematic reading, comparative analysis, conceptual interpretation, and synthesis of ideas were used to examine

and organise the selected literature in relation to the objectives of the study. The research design was descriptive and analytical, enabling an in-depth examination of role play as a method of teaching and its contribution to the integrated development of Head, Heart, and Hand. This design facilitated logical interpretation and coherent presentation of theoretical insights without the use of statistical analysis or field-based data, making it appropriate for achieving the stated objectives of the conceptual paper.

Research Findings Related to 3H

The conceptual analysis of literature reveals that role play is an effective learner-centred method of teaching that supports holistic development by simultaneously engaging the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. The study finds that role play actively promotes cognitive development (Head) by encouraging learners to analyse situations, interpret roles, make decisions, and engage in reflective thinking. Learners are not limited to memorisation but are involved in higher-order thinking processes such as reasoning, problem-solving, and application of knowledge.

The findings further indicate that role play significantly contributes to affective development (Heart). By assuming diverse roles and perspectives, learners develop empathy, emotional awareness, social sensitivity, and value-based understanding. Emotional involvement during role play enhances motivation and fosters positive attitudes towards learning, cooperation, and ethical behaviour.

In relation to psychomotor development (Hand), the study finds that role play provides opportunities for learning through action. Active participation involving verbal expression, gestures, body language, and coordinated movement enhances communication skills, confidence, and practical competence. Role play also supports the development of essential life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and decision-making.

An important finding of the study is that role play facilitates the integrated development of Head, Heart, and Hand rather than addressing these domains in isolation. This integration makes learning meaningful, contextual, and applicable to real-life situations. The study also finds that role play is particularly relevant in school education and teacher education, as it bridges the gap between theory and practice and prepares learners for real-world challenges. Overall, the findings establish role play as a pedagogically sound and effective method for promoting holistic learner development.

Educational Implications for 3H integrated pedagogy

The study implies that role play can be systematically used as a pedagogical strategy to support holistic learning objectives within existing classroom structures. Its use encourages teachers to design learning experiences that integrate understanding, emotional engagement, and skill application in a balanced manner. The findings further suggest that teacher preparation programmes may incorporate

structured exposure to role play to strengthen pedagogical reasoning and reflective teaching practices. Additionally, the study indicates the relevance of recognising learning outcomes that extend beyond content mastery, thereby supporting the inclusion of activity-based learning processes within routine instructional practices. Overall, the implications reinforce the suitability of role play as a method aligned with contemporary educational aims focused on integrated learner development.

Limitations and Scope for Further Study

The study is limited by its conceptual nature, as it draws conclusions from theoretical interpretations rather than direct classroom observation or measurable outcomes. While this allows for a broad understanding of role play as a pedagogical method, it restricts the ability to examine contextual factors such as classroom dynamics, learner diversity, and institutional constraints. The study also does not differentiate the impact of role play across subjects or educational stages, which may influence its practical application.

These limitations, however, open meaningful avenues for future research. Subsequent studies may investigate how role play functions in subject-specific contexts such as science, language learning, or social sciences. Empirical research may also explore how learners' cognitive, emotional, and skill-based responses to role play vary across age groups and learning environments. Additionally, future studies could examine teachers' pedagogical decision-making while implementing role play and identify strategies to address practical challenges. Such research would extend the present conceptual understanding and contribute to the effective integration of role play in diverse educational settings.

Analysis

Role play functions as an effective learner-centred method by actively involving learners in the construction of knowledge. Educational literature highlights that experiential engagement through role play enhances learner participation and reflective thinking, shifting the focus from teacher-led instruction to active learning (Dewey, 1938; Joyce et al., 2015).

Role play also supports cognitive development by encouraging learners to analyse situations, make decisions, and apply concepts within meaningful contexts. Such engagement aligns with higher-order cognitive processes identified in Bloom's taxonomy, indicating that role play promotes deeper understanding and critical thinking rather than rote memorisation (Bloom, 1956).

The affective dimension of learning is strengthened through role play as learners emotionally engage with diverse perspectives and experiences. By assuming different roles, learners develop empathy, value awareness, and social sensitivity, which are essential for emotional and moral development (Krathwohl et al., 1964).

In addition, role play contributes to psychomotor development through purposeful action. Learners employ verbal and non-verbal communication, gestures, and coordinated movement during role enactment, thereby enhancing communication skills, confidence, and practical competence (Simpson, 1972).

Most significantly, role play facilitates the integrated development of Head, Heart, and Hand. The simultaneous engagement of cognitive processes, emotional involvement, and skill-based action supports holistic education, as advocated in educational philosophy and contemporary frameworks of learning (Pestalozzi, 1801; Delors, 1996).

Conclusion

The present study highlights role play as a pedagogical approach that aligns effectively with the goals of holistic education. By enabling learners to engage with content through experience and reflection, role play supports an integrated approach to learning that goes beyond conventional instructional methods. The conceptual analysis demonstrates that role play creates meaningful learning situations where understanding, emotional engagement, and purposeful action coexist. Its relevance in contemporary education lies in its capacity to connect theoretical knowledge with lived experience and classroom realities. The study concludes that role play, when thoughtfully integrated into teaching practices, can strengthen learner engagement and support balanced development. As education continues to evolve towards learner-centred and experience-based models, role play remains a pedagogically sound and adaptable method for enriching the teaching–learning process.

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“A STUDY ON AWARENESS TOWARDS HEALTHY EATING HABITS AMONG STUDENTS”

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Abstract:

The foundation for healthy lifestyle and better eating habits are formed during childhood, which is carried along into adulthood. A strong nutritional foundation enables children to become confident teenagers and capable adults—ready to thrive, achieve, and lead (*Nutrition Matters*, n.d.-a). It has been observed that the dietary patterns of school-going children are changing in an alarming rate with an increasing preference for fast food, packaged snacks, and sugary beverages etc. Such eating habits is encouraged by lack of awareness, influence of peers and the easy availability of unhealthy foods. Lack of knowledge about healthy food habits leads to poor food choices and associated health problems such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease as well as impacting students' academic performance and overall well-being. Present study shows that girls (90.86%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to boys (56.43%) (PhD, 2024a). It indicates that students whose mothers are Post Graduates (70.54%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to mothers having School (57.52%) and Under Graduate (68.24%) qualifications. This study shows that students whose mothers are housewives (88.14%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared those who are working in Private (69.83%) and Government (59.14%) sectors

Key words: *Eating habits, students, gender, mothers, school, education etc.*

Introduction:

In today's fast-paced world, food choices play a crucial role in determining an individual's overall health and well-being. Proper nutrition is fundamental to the physical and cognitive development of children and adolescents. With the increasing availability of processed and fast foods, many students tend to opt for convenience over nutrition, often resulting in poor dietary habits (Abbas, 2024). This shift has raised serious concerns about the long-term health impacts on the younger population. Investing in healthy, diverse diets from the beginning, helps prevent illness and makes us nurtured. Because when we nourish today, we shape tomorrow (*Nutrition Matters*, n.d.-b) (*Nutrition Matters*, n.d.-c).(*Nutrition Matters*, n.d.-d)

Balanced nutrition provided early in life is essential for health later in life (Schwartz et al., 2011). Awareness and knowledge about healthy food habits varies significantly depending on factors such as age, education, socio-economic background etc. Students during adolescence and early adulthood, are in a critical phase of growth and development. Proper nutrition is essential not only for their physical development but also for cognitive function and academic performance (*Pros and Cons of Fast Food - EducationalWave*, 2025). Nutrition can significantly impact learning and brain development(PhD, 2024b) (PhD, 2024c). Our body and brain requires specific nutrients to function optimally.(PhD, 2024d). Cognitive development plays a significant role in a child's overall growth and success in life(PhD, 2024e). As children spend significant portion of their day in school, it is important to know about the level of awareness toward healthy eating habits to address this knowledge gap through structured nutritional education programs.

Rationale of the study:

As a teacher, parent and facilitator of holistic student development, based on classroom observations, interactions during internship and informal observations that most of the students were unaware of the importance of balanced nutrition. Their frequent consumption of junk food and disregard for healthy eating habits raised concerns about their physical health, energy levels, and ability to concentrate in the class room. It is important to address the growing concern about the food habits of students as it has impact on their health and academic performance (*10 Key Fast Food Pros and Cons | Luxwisp*, 2025).

This study aims to assess the level of awareness among students regarding healthy food habits. It seeks to understand about the knowledge they have about nutrition, food choices, and the influence of media, peers, and educational programs on their dietary behavior. By identifying gaps in awareness, the study intends to provide insights that can help in designing effective nutritional education interventions, ultimately promoting healthier lifestyles among students.

Aim of the study:

“A Study on Awareness towards Healthy Eating Habits among Students”

Objectives of the study:

1. A study on awareness towards healthy eating habits among the students on the basis of gender.
2. A study on awareness towards healthy eating habits among the students on the basis of mother’s qualifications.
3. A study on awareness towards healthy eating habits among the students on the basis of mother’s occupation.

Methodology:

This study employs Descriptive Survey Research Design. The survey method is useful for collection of data from large group of respondents through structured questionnaires. As this study focuses to assess, describe and interpret the level of awareness towards healthy eating habits among students, survey method helps the researcher to gather information efficiently, and facilitating statistical analysis.

Sample: Data was collected from 49 school students. Data collected from 24 male students and 25 female students from Mumbai. Among them, 24 student’s mothers has school education, 15 student’s mothers are under graduates and 10 student’s mothers are post graduates. 17 student’s mothers are working in private sectors, 09 mothers are government employees and 23 are housewives.

Tool: For this study, a structured questionnaire was prepared by the researcher, consisting 40 relevant statements covering key components about food habits. To study the level of awareness about healthy food habits of school students using a three-point rating scale. The questionnaire consisted of statements with three response options: Never, Sometimes, and Always. For data analysis, these responses were assigned numerical values as Never = 1, Sometimes = 2, and Always = 3. The assigned scores were used to compute percentages and interpret the level of awareness among the students. A higher score indicates a higher level of awareness toward healthy eating habits among the students. The collected data was analyzed using percentage analysis to determine the level of awareness about healthy eating habits.

Analysis and interpretation:

Data Analysis:

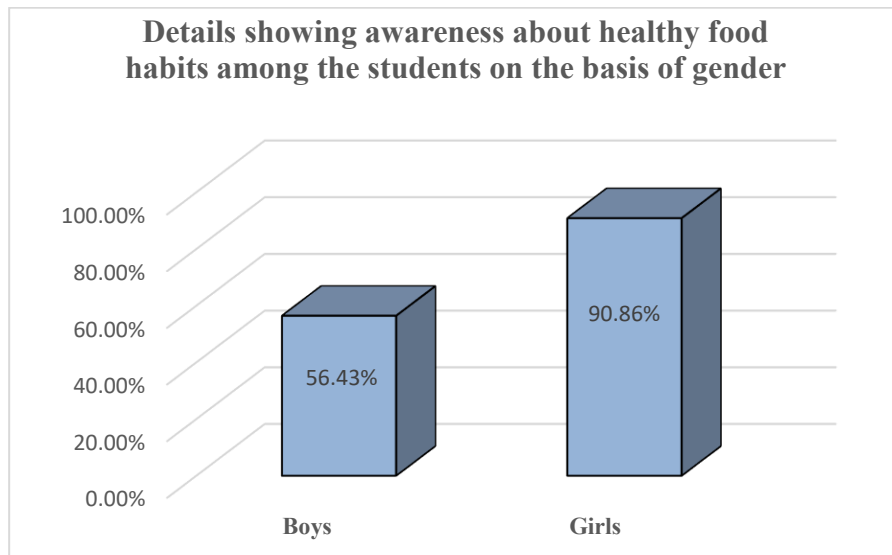
For the present study, the researcher analysed the collected data to study the level of awareness of healthy food habits on the basis of gender, mother’s qualifications and mother’s occupation.

Objectives 1: A study on awareness towards healthy eating habits among the students on the basis of gender.

Table 1. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of gender.

Gender	No. of students	Percentage
Boys	24	56.43%
Girls	25	90.86%

Figure 1. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of gender.



Interpretation:

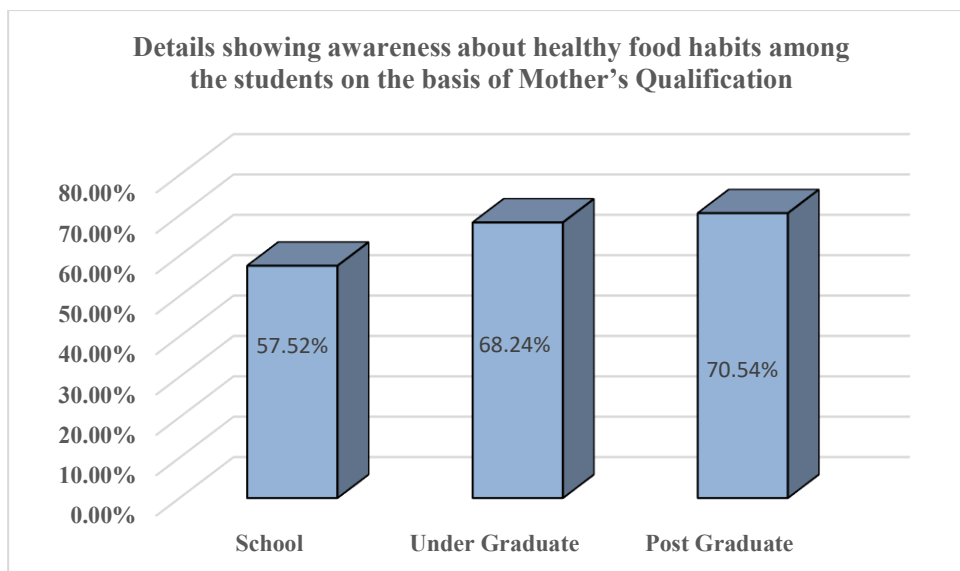
Table 1 indicates details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of gender. Percentage analysis shows that girls (90.86%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to boys (56.43%).

Objective 2. A study on awareness about healthy food habits among student on the basis of Mother’s Qualification.

Table 2. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of Mother’s Qualification.

Qualification	No. of students	Percentage
School	24	57.52%
Under Graduate	15	68.24%
Post Graduate	10	70.54%

Figure 2. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of Mother’s Qualification.



Interpretation:

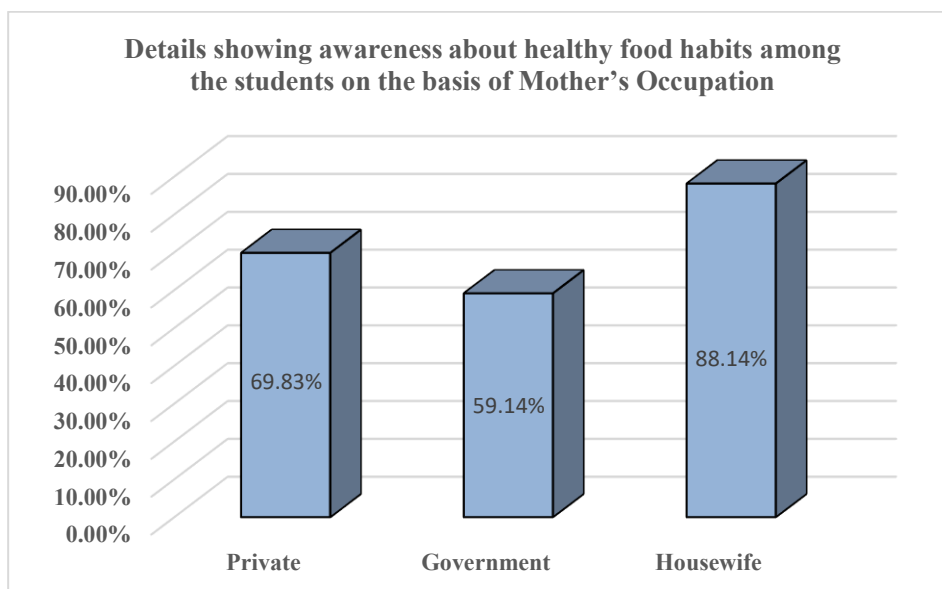
Table 2 indicates details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of mother’s qualifications such as School (24) Under Graduate (15) Post Graduate (10). Percentage analysis shows that students whose mothers are Post Graduates (70.54%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to mothers having School (57.52%) and Under Graduate (68.24%) qualifications.

Objective 3. A study on awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of Mother’s Occupation.

Table 9.3. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of Mother’s Occupation.

Occupation	No. Of students	Percentage
Private	17	69.83%
Government	09	59.14%
Housewife	23	88.14%

Figure 9.3. Details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of Mother’s Occupation.



Interpretation:

Table 3 indicates details showing awareness about healthy food habits among the students on the basis of occupation. It shows that mothers of the students who participated in the study are working in Private (17), Government (09) sectors, and Housewife (23). Percentage analysis shows that students whose mothers are housewives (88.14%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to those who are working in Private (69.83%) and Government (59.14%) sectors.

Findings:

- This study shows that girls (90.86%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to boys (56.43%). It may be that girls and women are generally more attentive to health-related information, nutrition advice, and preventive behaviors than their male counterparts.
- This study shows that students whose mothers are Post Graduates (70.54%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to students whose mothers having School (57.52%) and Under Graduate (68.24%) qualifications. It can be concluded that Post-graduate mothers are more likely to have greater exposure to scientific, health, and nutrition-related information. This enables them to make informed food choices and pass accurate knowledge to their children than mothers who are undergraduates and have a school education.
- This study shows that students whose mothers are housewives (88.14%) have higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy food habits compared to those are working in Private (69.83%) and Government (59.14%) sectors. Housewife mothers usually spend more time at home, allowing them to plan balanced meals, supervise children's eating habits, and reinforce healthy food choices daily than working parents.

Suggestions:

- Incorporate Nutrition Education into Curriculum: Schools and colleges should integrate basic nutrition and healthy lifestyle topics into the curriculum to increase awareness and understanding.
- Schools need to organize workshops and seminars related to health awareness programs, guest lectures by dietitians, and cooking demonstrations can motivate students to adopt healthier eating habits.
- Educational institutions should offer affordable, nutritious food options and limit the availability of junk food within campus premises.
- Parents and educators should work together to model and encourage healthy eating behaviors both at home and in school.
- Leverage platforms that students frequently use (e.g., Instagram, YouTube, mobile apps) to share engaging content about healthy food choices.

Conclusion:

The findings of the present study indicate significant insights about awareness towards healthy eating habits among students (“(PDF) ATTITUDES AND AWARENESS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ABOUT HEALTHY EATING AND BEHAVIOR,” 2026). It shows that female students (90.86%) exhibit a higher level of awareness and concern regarding healthy eating habits compared to male students (56.43%). This study is supported by Malara, Widłak & Tomczyk, 2025 *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 2025, research indicating that girls are generally more attentive to health-related information, nutrition guidance, and preventive behaviors than boys. This suggests that gender differences play a significant role in shaping dietary awareness and food choices among students.

It also demonstrates that students whose mothers are Post Graduates (70.54%) have higher awareness than those whose mothers are Undergraduates (68.24%) or have only School-level education (57.52%). This finding is supported by the research done by Geethika Koneru, N.S. Sanjeeva Rao & T.S.R. Sai (2019) (“(PDF) A Qualitative Study on Dietary Habits and Nutritional Awareness among School Children,” nd.) & Satyapriya Roy, Shilpi Saha (2025) (Roy & Saha, n.d.) and Mahjabin et al., 2022; Academic OUP, 2020, showing that higher maternal education is positively associated with children’s nutritional knowledge and healthy eating practices. Post-graduate mothers are likely to have greater exposure to scientific and nutrition-related information, enabling them to make informed dietary decisions and effectively guide their children.

It also indicates that maternal occupation influences students’ awareness, with children of housewife mothers (88.14%) exhibiting higher awareness than those whose mothers work in Private (69.83%) or Government (59.14%) sectors. This finding is supported by the studies done by Bastami, Zamani-Alavijeh & Mostafavi, 2019; Koneru, Sanjeeva Rao & Sai, 2019, that mothers who spend more time at home can better supervise children’s eating habits, plan balanced meals, and reinforce healthy food practices, whereas working mothers may face time constraints that limit direct involvement.

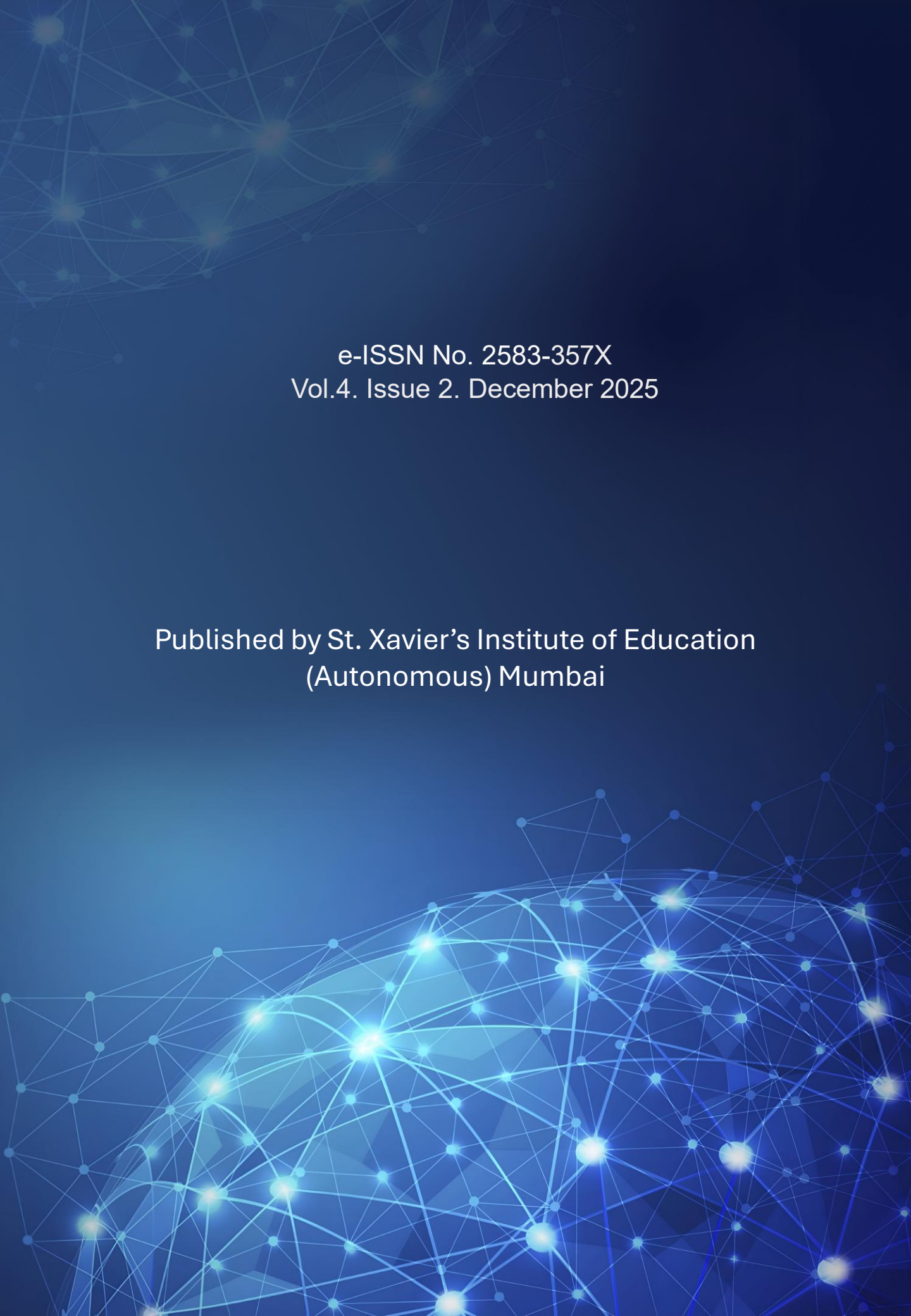
In conclusion, the present study confirms that gender, maternal education, and maternal occupation are significant determinants of students’ awareness of healthy eating habits, echoing findings from previous research. These results emphasize the importance of family and socio-demographic factors in promoting nutritional knowledge and suggest that targeted interventions, especially for male students and children of working or less-educated mothers, are essential for fostering healthy eating behaviors.

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The background is a deep blue gradient. It features a complex network of thin, light blue lines connecting various nodes. Some nodes are small dots, while others are larger, glowing spheres in shades of cyan and white. The network is more dense and brightly lit in the lower half of the image, creating a sense of depth and connectivity.

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