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**Dr. Siddhartha Sarkar**

Director, Asian School of Management and Technology,  
India

E-mail: [director.asmt@gmail.com](mailto:director.asmt@gmail.com)

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# Implications of the Influence of Traditional African Education on Technical Vocational and Agricultural Education in Ghana

**K. G. Badu**

Faculty Officer and Deputy Registrar, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana  
Email: kgyab@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** *The paper examines the various attempts made by Governments, missionaries as well as individuals in the provision of technical, vocational and agricultural education in Ghana. It also examines the successes and challenges with respect to the implementation of technical, vocational and agricultural education in Ghana. Relevant literature and documents on Ghana's educational reforms were the main data used for this exercise. It was found out that the negative attitude of most Africans/Ghanaians towards technical, vocational and agricultural education was as a result of the influence of "logic" in Traditional African Education on manual work. It is recommended that all stakeholders should mount a sustainable public education on the influence of "logic" in Traditional African Education which works against the provision and practice of technical, vocational and agricultural education or manual work in the country.*

**Keywords:** Logic, manual work, traditional African education, influence, negative attitude

## Introduction

Globally, education is meant to equip the youths with employable skills among other things. This means that education should prepare youths with skills that will make them self employed in addition to any white collar job that may be available to them. Education is meant to produce a sound and balanced personality. The youths must be able to use the head, heart and hand to improve himself/herself and the larger community, which he/she is an integral part. Where this is not realizable, it tends to create a whole lot of confusion and chaos. The result is mass unemployment, crime, prostitution and other nefarious activities. Governments alone (whether developed or developing) cannot employ the total populace and be paid from the national treasury. This is an impossible task. It needs the combined efforts of all stakeholders. There is also the need for sound and purposeful education. Education must be relevant to the socio-economic needs of the people. The need for skills acquisition for self-employment therefore, cannot be over-emphasized. Education is always meaningless if it fails to satisfy the yearning aspirations of the people. People pursue education with the hope that they would be gainfully employed in future. However, it is unfortunate that in most developing countries including Africa/Ghana the educational systems have not been so functional enough to empower the people economically. The technical, vocational and agricultural education, which should provide these employable skills to the youth, is not well managed in Africa including Ghana as a result of many factors. Developing countries are aware that the only way that unemployment can be reduced among the youth is to take our technical, vocational and agricultural education seriously. In Ghana, for example, the government is painfully aware of the failure of many of the attempts to reform the public education system. There has been a continuing aim to make education more relevant to the world of work after school to rural development and modernization of that predominantly agriculture-based economy (MOEYS, 2004). In view of this, governments, individuals and missionaries, all over the world, have tried in diverse ways to introduce technical, vocational and agricultural education as a means of empowering the youth to secure jobs after formal education.

In Africa, all the colonial masters introduced technical, vocational and agricultural education in their colonies. In Ghana, which is our reference point, the colonial rule did establish vocational, technical and agricultural education in the Colony. Governors Maclean and Winni et, for

example, did their best to establish model farms as well as technical schools in the 1840s to enable the school pupils acquire employable skills (Graham, 1976).

The missionaries also played a very key role in introducing technical, vocational and agricultural education in the colony (Ghana). The Wesleyan church, for example, under the leadership of Rev. Allein sought for permission to introduce agricultural education in Ghana in the 1840s. Again, Rev. Freeman and William Thackeray also established model farms at Beniah and Domi-nasi to train the young ones to acquire the skills of modern farming, (Graham, 1976).

The private people were also not left out in this exercise. A group of Europeans formed an experimental cotton plantation association to encourage Africans (adults and school pupils) to develop interest in farming. (Graham, 1976). All these interventions took place with the view to helping Africans, and for that matter Ghanaians, to accept manual work in order to reduce unemployment.

The attempt to introduce technical, vocational and agricultural education in our schools in Ghana did not end with the colonial government as well as the early missionaries. In 1951, before the independence of Ghana in 1957, the Convention Peoples Party (C.P.P.) introduced the Accelerated Development Plan (ADP), a document, which spelt out Nkrumah's programme in education. In that document, provision was made for the establishment of technical institutions to teach skills in various trades such as carpentry, masonry electrical installation and welding. These institutions were located at Asuansi, Ho, Kikan (Takoradi), Koforidua, Kpando, Sunyani and Tamale (Foster, 1965). Subsequent educational reforms in the country had all given prominence to the development of technical, vocational and agricultural education. The 1961 Educational Act, The Dzobo Committee and educational reforms in 1972, the Anfom Committee and the 1987 Educational Reforms all emphasized the need for technical, vocational and agricultural education as a way of solving the ever increasing unemployment problems in the country.(Ministry of Education, 2007, Antwi, 1992).

Some aspects of the 1987 Educational Reform, for example, touched on the relevance of the curriculum and placed much emphasis on the technical and vocational education at the Junior Secondary School (J.S.S) level. Tools and equipment were secured for the schools in addition to construction of workshops. Teachers were also given training to take care of the system. Even though much was not achieved in terms of the objectives of the reform, at least the government showed some commitment to provide employable skills for the youth (Antwi, 1992, MOEYS, 2004). The current 2007 New Educational Reform also lays much emphasis on technical, vocational and agricultural education as a means of reducing unemployment among the youth. The reform, among other things, states that there should be a radically transformed emphasis on the quality, quantity and financing of technical, agricultural and vocational education to enable it offer a credible alternative to general education (Arts and Science) for the majority of 15 to 19 year-olds (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MOEYS), 2004). In pursuit of this objective, the following will be put in place.

(i) A National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training will be established under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to implement a national post-basic Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system, to guide policy-makers, and to sensitize the public on the Government's focus on a new vision for Technical, Agricultural and Vocational education and training.

(ii) An enhanced financial base and improved physical infrastructure to reflect Government's new vision for TVET in the country.

(iii) Government will encourage private industry, commerce and services to participate fully in the running of programmes in technical and vocational training at the tertiary level.

### **Apprenticeship/Skills Training**

The large number of the youth who drop out of Primary and JSS school-line, and are, thereafter, left to their own devices about their fortunes in the world of work, is a source of worry to government. It reinforces Government's conviction about the urgent need to restructure the current officially disengaged attitude towards their subsequent participation in the world of work generally and their adult/family life. Apprenticeship to acquire proficiency in the numerous areas of skill, industry and craftsmanship is today dominated by the private sector. Henceforth, it will become a commitment of the state to partner the private sector in a more systematic way to promote apprenticeship programmes. Government will assume full responsibility for the first year of the apprenticeship programme. Government accordingly accepts the recommendations of the Committee and further has decided to:

- Constitute a National Apprentice Training Board, among other things, to oversee and regulate apprentice training and handle issues concerning registration, content, duration and certification.
- Formalize community-based apprentice training schemes in all Districts to cater for the youth.
- Support institutions such as the Regional Technology Transfer Centres (RTTCs) and Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology Industrial Service (GRATIS), Opportunities Industrialisation Centres (OIC), Youth Leadership Institutes, the Private Sector and other organizations including NGOs to increase capacity and expand their coverage and enrolment of apprentices.

The financial commitments, which the state makes to second-cycle education in general education, agricultural, vocational and technical institutions should now be matched by commitments to industry-based apprenticeship and training. (MOEYS, 2004).

It could be further said from the historical narratives that governments of both pre-independence and post-independence had played key roles in instituting technical, vocational and agricultural education in our educational system. The same could be said about the missionaries and individuals who worked tirelessly and continue to work for the establishment of technical vocational and agricultural education for the youth of Ghana.

In spite of all these developments, the technical, vocational and agricultural education in the country had failed to offer a credible alternative to general education (MOEYS, 2004). The same arguments that were mounted to account for the failure of the technical, vocational and agricultural education in the pre-independence era continue to work against the successful implementation of these programmes today. According to (Antwi, 1992; Graham, 1976 & MOEYS, 2004) some of the factors that had worked against these initiatives include the following:

- Ghanaians are of the view that the technical, vocational and agricultural education do not give much respect and prestige as that of the general education (Sciences and Arts).
- They also think that workers in the technical, vocational and agricultural sectors are not mobile enough when it comes to transfers and promotions.
- Others also complain of inequalities in remunerations. They think that their counterparts in the general education have a better deal than them.
- Africans themselves are not interested in manual work. They associate manual work with slavery because of their past history.
- Inadequate workshops and other equipment to facilitate the programmes.

- Lack of adequate trained staff (teachers) to handle the programmes.

Currently, looking at the various educational reforms that had taken place since independence, a lot more of these challenges had been addressed to a greater extent. This means that there are still more to be done and this is evidently captured in the 2007. New Educational Reform of Ghana. Again, one issue that had not been tackled seriously from the colonial era to date is the negative attitude of most Africans, and for that matter Ghanaians, towards technical, vocational and agricultural education (manual work). (Scott, 1938). Most Africans/Ghanaians still prefer to be engaged in white collar jobs instead of working in the field. They prefer to accept even low wages in the offices, rather than field work with higher incentive packages. The numerous educational reforms in Ghana since independence had failed to address specifically this issue. No single educational reform had directly talked about the negative attitude of most Ghanaians towards manual work and the need to address this through public education. The provision made in the Ghana's New Educational Reform (2007) to sensitize the public on the government's focus on a new vision is not the same as addressing the negative attitude of Ghanaians towards technical, vocational and agricultural education. The former is basically addressing policy issues. It is not meant for attitudinal change.

This seems to suggest that the negative attitude of most Africans/Ghanaians towards manual work or fully accepting technical, vocational and agricultural education, after going through the western system of education, has its root from the Traditional African Education. There is the need therefore to have a cursory look at the Traditional African Education system.

### **Logic in Traditional African Education**

The Traditional African Education was the system of education in place before the introduction of the Western system of education by the Europeans. It served as the tool for training the young ones to fit into the society. The mode of instruction was by imitation. It had no formal classrooms, teachers and other facilities and the educands could not read or write as we have today under the Western system of education. Despite these weaknesses, the Traditional African Education system was a comprehensive, functional and purposeful education. It was able to meet the yearning aspirations of the people at the time. There was no unemployment and the system was able to cater for the social, economic and political needs of the people. The communities were largely rural and therefore did not need the system of education (Western) that we have today (Moumouni, 1968; McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1978).

It had already been said that the mode of instruction was purely by imitation and young ones learnt by doing. The young ones learnt on the spot either on the farms or in the work place (forge, kitchen, homes and shrines as the case may be). What happened was that the tools that were used in preparing them were the very ones they used after training to earn a living. There was some kind of logic in the work they pursued after training. One could establish the concept of "Means-Ends-Congruence" in the Traditional African Education. That is to say, for example, that if your father is a farmer, you also end up becoming a farmer. If you are trained as a blacksmith, state drummer or as an herbalist, you end up practicing the same vocation. One could hardly change vocation. That is, the Means (Training/Education) and the Ends (jobs) must correspond (Congruence). This Means-Ends-Congruence and the Logic in Traditional African Education have something to do with the negative attitude of most Africans/Ghanaians towards manual work or vocational, technical and agricultural education. (Moumouni, 1968; McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1978).

Now transferring this “Logic” in Traditional African Education into Western system of education, the Africans/Ghanaians do not or could not understand why after pursuing Western system of education they should settle with manual work. The tools for training under the Western system of education include: offices, classrooms, files, books, papers, pens as well as holding conferences and seminars and so forth. Therefore after pursuing such education under these conditions, the African/Ghanaian expects that they should continue to work under these same conditions after training (education). To the African, and for that matter the Ghanaian, there is no logic between what he or she learnt in school and what he or she is supposed to do on the field of work. They expect that, even as artisans, they should still operate in the offices and continue to “push pen” and do other routine work as they were exposed to during their training (Western education). Therefore, to work with cutlasses, hoes and other farming or trade inputs on the field after formal education is unacceptable and illogical. The perception of the African is that the Western system of education is synonymous with white collar jobs and, therefore, this explains partly why most Africans including Ghanaians have consistently not shown interest or commitment to technical, vocational, and agricultural education despite the numerous educational reforms to promote them.

### **Discussion**

The commitment of governments, missionaries and private individuals from the colonial period to present to promote technical, vocational and agricultural education in Ghana cannot be questioned. There had been various attempts at different times to inculcate into the young ones the need to accept manual work as part of their training (Western education).

One could talk about successes made so far in this direction. In Ghana there are technical, vocational, agricultural as well as polytechnic institutions all over the country to promote technical, vocational and agricultural education. The objective of this strategy is to impart to the young ones employable skills so that they can be self employed or be employed by the state in their quest to contribute to the growth of the economy. Despite these interventions, there are still a large number of unemployed youth in Ghana partly as a result of their negative attitude towards manual work. The 2007 New Educational Reform of Ghana has identified the need to follow-up on the youth to acquire trade even after school. The setting up of a “National Council for Technical and Vocational Training” to implement a national post-basic “Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET)” system is a laudable idea and must be commended. By this, the government accepts the weaknesses in the technical and vocational education in the country. The provision of workshops, equipment, curriculum and teachers alone cannot solve the problem. There is the need for supervision and intensification of the programme.

Again, the government also recognizes the fact that the number of hours allotted to students for practical work is not enough. The reform acknowledges that knowledge must be measured with performance. You cannot claim to know if you cannot perform. This brings to mind the concept and philosophy of pragmatism in education. The philosophy of pragmatism posits that there must be clear distinction between “performative knowledge” and “informative knowledge”(Dewey, 1964; Schofield, 1981). The 2007 New Educational Reform of Ghana is guided by this principle. It is hoped that if the TVET is properly implemented, then the youth will partly get committed to the technical and vocational education. It also emphasizes on government-private sector partnership as a way of raising both material and human resources to ensure the successful implementation of the reform. In the past, the execution of educational reforms had been the sole responsibility of government and formal institutions in the country. This

development has achieved little since majority of the populace stay aloof. The commitment of government to bring on board all sectors of the economy even within the local setting is commendable. Under the scheme, funding will not be a problem to the individual youth as the government will aid the state and private institutions to see to their training. The current educational reform also seems to take care of the disparity between the general education and technical, vocational and agricultural education.

One issue, however, that is still outstanding and unresolved is the influence of logic in Traditional African Education on technical, vocational and agricultural education in Africa/ Ghana. The African has failed to recognize the fact that in the Western system of education, there is no strict “logic” or Means-Ends-Conquence” as was the case of the Traditional African Education. The Western system of education is just to supplement or build on the traditional system of education. Scott, (1938) states that:

“The African declined to accept the indigenous system of training as a foundation for his future education. He would regard any suggestion in the educational sphere to build upon the old as tantamount to a refusal to grant him the benefit and opportunities of the purely western forms of training to which he not unnaturally attributed the domination of the white”.

The above statement suggests that the African does not want to do any manual work, which to him or her is associated with slavery. (Scott, 1938). In other words, they want to discontinue with the indigenous system of training but want to apply the “logic” in the Traditional African Education to gain what the Western system of education provides for which, in actual fact, is a misnorma. Again, the African wants to behave like a “Whiteman” after receiving the Western system of education. The question, therefore, is how do we address this challenge? All the Educational reforms of Ghana had failed to capture directly reasons for the negative attitude of most Ghanaians towards manual work or technical, vocational and agricultural education. Instead, the reforms had hammered on the deficiencies in the curriculum as well as human and material resources needed to train the young ones to acquire such employable skills. These efforts are commendable though, but the main problem continues to linger on. How do we get the African and for that matter a Ghanaian to change his or her negative attitude towards manual work or vocational, technical and agricultural education? How do we get qualified graduates at the various educational levels to contribute their quota to the improvement of agricultural, technical and vocational sectors of the economy? Are we still not having old and illiterate farmers still struggling with the production of food in the country whilst agricultural experts are mainly working in the offices? When will these experts dominate the field of operation and translate practically what they have learnt in school into production? Certainly these questions need to be answered if we are to make any headway in our effort to promote technical, vocational and agricultural education in the country.

The discussion so far made in this paper has implications for counseling and administration. There is the need for counseling and administrative interventions. The main issue working against the development of technical, vocational and agricultural education in Africa/Ghana is attitudinal. This is where counseling and administrative strategies play a crucial role. Experts in social/personal guidance (counselling) as well as institutional heads and stakeholders should be able to work on the psychological frame of reference of students/people to understand themselves and to make judicious decisions in this area (Pecku, 1991, Gibson & Mitchell, 1990; Okobiah, 1992 & Olu Makinde, 1987). Therefore, one way of solving the negative attitude of most Africans/Ghanaians towards technical, vocational and agricultural education, which is the



focus of this paper, is to get the government, counsellors and all other stakeholders to be aware of the influence of “Logic” in Traditional African Education on our technical, vocational and agricultural education in the country. The problem must be clearly stated and given prominence in our educational reforms so that specific roles could be assigned to various stakeholders to address this issue. This is in line with one of the principles of Guidance, which states that guiding people is a co-operative effort (Pecku, 1991). This obviously has implications for counselling, policy and policy action.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

Based on the discussion so far, it is clear that the main challenge facing the successful implementation of technical, vocational and agricultural education in the country is the absence of public education on the issue of “logic” in our Traditional African Education and its negative influence on manual work.

It is therefore recommended that:

1. Government and other technocrats, especially from higher educational institutions, entrusted with the responsibility of formulating educational reforms in the country must make sure that right policies and relevant public education are in place to sensitise people on the need to change their negative attitude towards manual or practical work. The public education must disabuse peoples’ mind about the unfortunate “logic” in the Traditional African Education and accept any work at all that may help build the economy. The Counselling Unit of the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S.) and the tertiary institutions must take up the challenge and professionally educate the pupils/students, parents and all stakeholders on the need to embrace manual work or technical, vocational and agricultural education. The G.E.S. must make sure that Guidance Co-ordinators are appointed to the schools. This will make sure that the pupils are educated to enable them appreciate manual work at the very tender age.

2. Parents, specifically, should encourage their children or wards to accept manual work and not to see them as “failures”. The youth will respond to this call when they are assured that their parents will accept them and also give them the due recognition that they give to those who offer general education. This is in conformity with principles of counselling. Respect/recognition is one of the core conditions of counselling and therefore applying this condition will highly benefit the students. Counsellors must make this point clear to parents whenever they have the opportunity. Again, there must also be a policy of parity by government where trade related and vocational graduates receive equal pay and other fringe benefits just like their counterparts in the offices to boost their recognition and commitment.

3. The various heads of institution at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels must give priority and equal attention to all the pupils/students offering the various academic programmes. The system where only weak students are admitted to pursue trade related programmes should be discontinued. Students with good aggregates should be encouraged to also offer the trade-related programmes. A conscious effort must be made by School/College/University Counsellors and Guidance Co-ordinators to disabuse the minds of students that trade related disciplines are inferior.

4. A lot more of practical work should be done in the Schools, Colleges, and Universities. Informative knowledge must give way to performative knowledge. Management in the institutions must ensure that practical work is given priority over theory. This will inspire confidence in the students and urged them to practise the trade-related vocation after school. This requires a

big boost in the provision of qualified personnel and equipped laboratories and workshops by the Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOS) as well as the general public.

5. The Ghana National Association of Psychology which the Association of Counseling is an affiliated member should effect the necessary changes in the students' behaviour as well as change the perceptions of the general public to accept manual work or other trade-related disciplines/vocation as normal and prestigious. National seminars, talks, workshops, symposia and conferences should be organized by the Association in conjunction with the Counselling Centres in the Universities to address this issue publicly.

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# The Role of Emotion in Life

## Siddharth Jain

Research Scholar in Vedanta Cultural Foundation (A Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (SIRO) recognised by the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.)  
1A, Landsend, Dongarsi Road, Malabar Hill,  
Mumbai, India  
E-mail: shweta@vedantaworld.org

## Dwarak Leelaram

Research Scholar in Vedanta Cultural Foundation (A Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (SIRO) recognised by the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.)  
1A, Landsend, Dongarsi Road, Malabar Hill,  
Mumbai, India

**Abstract:** *The goal of sociology is to understand the interconnectedness between the individual and the society they live in. More so, how they influence each other and to observe the phenomena scientifically. Focusing on the individual one can broadly categorize the inner personality as having two components, the intellectual and the emotional. The focus of this paper is to explore emotions from a sociological perspective. To try and place the role of emotions within some framework whereby we can gauge our feelings. Although we cannot quantify emotion we must qualify our emotions as a means for understanding them. Furthermore, we can then look to evolve emotionally so as to compliment our intellectual development. This would translate as a complete person. Such a person is most valuable to any society. The basic premise is that emotion is a reaction. A feeling that arises as an effect. This paper will attempt to explore the role of emotion while experiencing it at any given moment. Also, to explore the cause of emotion so as to create the type of emotions deemed desirable and eradicate those deemed undesirable. Having referred to emotion as a reaction it is specifically a reaction (an effect) inextricably linked to our desires. This paper will attempt to illustrate that the appropriate desires engender positive emotions and we can understand this as a vital dimension to individual well being and social harmony. Thus ensuring that emotions are not merely fleeting feelings but that they be harnessed so as to play a role in life and living.*

**Keywords:** *Emotion, desire, feeling, life and living*

## Introduction

One of the intangible and central aspects of human life is the phenomena of emotion. As powerful and affecting as they can be this aspect of human experience is usually not understood by the common person beyond the mere experience thereof. That is, feeling anger or jealousy, love or compassion can all be verified experientially but rarely can one reasonably account for the cause of one's emotions.

Chronologically we can look at emotion from three perspectives. Firstly, the activity that precedes feeling a particular emotion, what to do while experiencing emotion and thirdly, using the emotions we have felt as a means for understanding ourselves better.

Essentially the consensus among sociologists is that a desire/value must be set before emotion can arise. In fact, emotions exist only with reference to experiences pertaining to that which we value. More specifically, whether we are advancing or not towards those values. In simple terms, if I do not have a value for something no emotions can arise.

This paper will explore the fundamentals of emotion. Using a basic illustration as a template we may see the role of desire and our reactions to desire-related circumstances. Furthermore, an exploration of desire as a means for changing emotion. While behaviour modification is a means for curbing emotional impact on oneself and others we must conceive of emotional change itself. This paper will outline the means for changing the nature of emotional experience itself.

Emotion is a phenomenon added to human life which creates a significant dimension to our experiences. When we look at what constitutes “life” we can reasonably generalize that it is a flow of experiences. Given this definition one must explore the factors that constitute an experience as it is the unit we use to qualify our lives.

For any experience a person must have contact. The individual mechanism necessarily must engage in order to declare the experience “of” something. To experience perception there must be external stimuli, to experience understanding there needs to be the knowledge of an idea or concept. Similarly, for the phenomenon of emotion we qualify it by the experience “of” a specific feeling. Stimuli precede perception and knowledge precedes understanding. But the question is what can we preclude with reference to emotion?

From this perspective we presuppose that emotion is in fact an effect, a reaction. Therefore, to understand emotions we must enquire into the preceding activity that is the cause for our feelings. To do this is to add a scientific dimension to emotion by employing a means for establishing cause and effect. Therein, a far clearer picture of the phenomenon of emotion is achieved. As soon as we refer to a cause and effect dynamic we are establishing two distinctly different aspects of the same concept. But there is one distinct difference in the context of emotion.

Where we see a mango seed (cause) we will see a mango tree (effect). This means that cause and effect is the same phenomenon in different stages of manifestation. In the case of emotion this does not apply. Cause and effect needs to be understood differently. Emotion does not cause emotion. Thoughts of a certain type cause emotional feelings of a certain type, but we must remember thoughts and feelings although linked, are not the same. “The cognitive appraisal theory suggests that thinking occurs before feeling. Sometimes emotions occur very quickly, and it is not clear that thinking occurs before feeling ...”. Grieve et al cites a reference that “research suggests that the thoughts occur below the conscious level and therefore thought still precedes emotion” Grieve et al. (2006) pp 33 – 34.

Feelings are the affectations (positive or negative) that arise from our thoughts. To look at thoughts we can broadly say that our thoughts arise from three possibilities. Those are understanding, non-understanding and misunderstanding. The quality of our thoughts is essentially the resultant admixture of these three. This establishes a basic premise that if I want to improve my emotions I need to consolidate that I understand, revise areas where I thought I understood and gain knowledge where I have no understanding.

Ironically, we often refer to emotionally mature people as “very understanding”. Their emotions arise from ideas that have been absorbed and imbibed. The result is emotional equanimity and proportionate feeling.

### **Emotion as a Reflection**

Emotion is an effect, a reaction to something. We can go further and refer to emotions as a means for qualifying our state of mind. Just as we need a mirror in order to see ourselves physically, emotions act as a reflecting medium to see the quality of our mind. In simple terms, negative emotions cannot arise from a positive inner personality. Any feelings that we have, regardless of the surrounding situation or circumstance, is a by-product of thoughts arising from within us. Therefore, in a negative circumstance it is conceivable having positive feelings if we use sound and reasonable thoughts to process the experience.

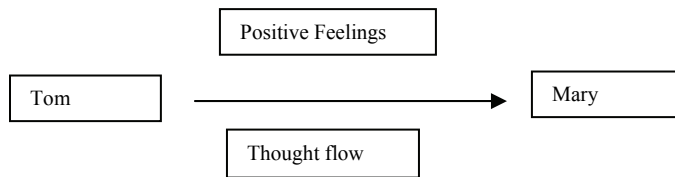
“... [in] the cognitive theory of emotion...[i]t is suggested that the way we think about (or make cognitive appraisal of) a situation results in emotions (Lazarus, 1991). According to the cognitive appraisal theory, the important requirement for the interpretation of emotion is the cognitive

content of the stimulus situation ... In other words, your interpretation (or appraisal) of the situation or event is the primary cause of emotions and can result in you experiencing different emotions.” (Grieve, 2002:33).

An example of how emotions act as a reflecting medium can help us understand the relationship between thought flow and feelings. More so, we can see how a particularized thought flow can take modified forms, which lead to various emotions. Emotions arise when an individual attends to a situation and evaluates it as relevant to his or her goals (Gross & Thompson, 2007). This definition presupposes a chronological sequence of events, involving, first, a real or imaginary situation; second, attention to and evaluation of the situation (appraisal) by the individual; and, third, an emotional response. (Frijda, 1988; Gross & Thompson, 2007).

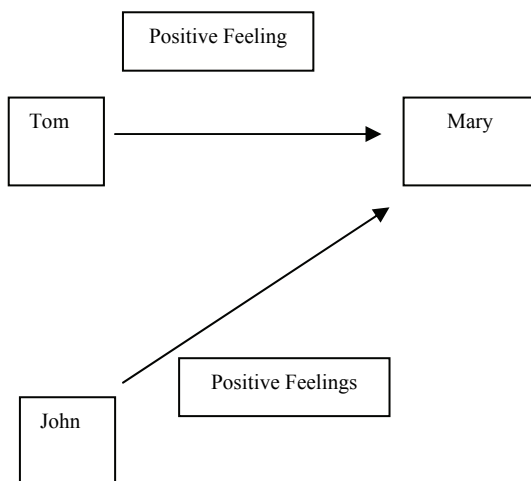
These basic diagrams illustrate the flow of thought towards others and the attendant emotional modifications. More so, they illustrate that emotions can change as the circumstances related to the same thought flow changes.

**Figure 1**

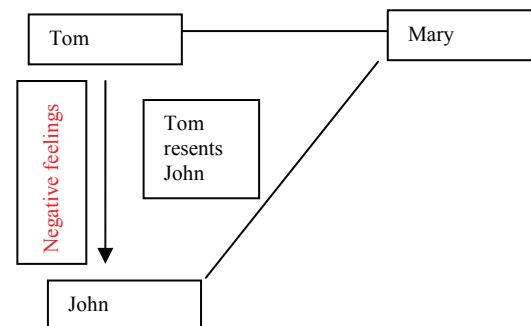


*Tom is attracted to Mary. His thought flow towards her is positive. His experience of her would be positive. He sees her as a reflection of what he considers positive qualities.*

**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



Returning to the idea of understanding, non-understanding and misunderstanding we can explore the illustrations more deeply.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> illustration we can see that from Tom's positive thought towards Mary has also arisen a negative thought flow toward John. One could say that Tom misunderstands John. To be happy

Tom desires Mary to reciprocate the positive feelings. Tom sees John as a threat to this. Therefore, the feelings of resentment towards John are a reflection of misunderstanding John as a threat.

In this final illustration we see that the misunderstanding is caused by Tom's powerful desire to exclusively enjoy Mary's affections. It is this exclusivity that creates the feeling of ill-will towards John. Essentially John is misunderstood as a threat solely because of Tom's powerful thought flow that excludes others. The liberty of John to have the same desire is not only rejected but is not even considered.

With reference to desire we may say that it is a consolidated thought flow towards something that we believe will make us happy. But if we persist with the 3 illustrations we see that Tom's pursuit of happiness through his desire for Mary soon translates as agitation when John is added to the scenario. The obvious question is why did thoughts underpinned by positive feelings modify into negativity in another direction? The answer is selfishness. The self-centered preoccupation with the condition of one's desires leads to indiscriminate thought-flow. McCullough et al. cites Nolen-Hoeksema & Jackson "When personality, social, and clinical psychologists read the word *ruminatio*n, most likely they think of engaging in a passive focus on one's symptoms of distress and on the possible causes and consequences of these symptoms" (Nolen-Hoeksema & Jackson, 2001, p. 37).

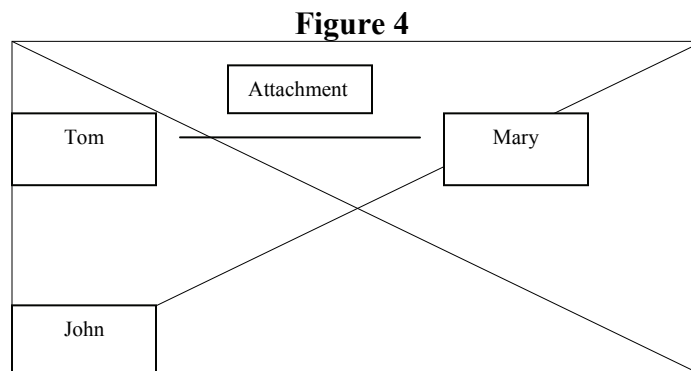
McCullough goes on to say "But ... few recent ideas in personality-social psychology have drawn as much consensus as the idea that rumination is counterproductive for psychosocial adjustment and interpersonal functioning." McCullough et al. (2007) p. 490.

The fact that a person pursues an object or being with the idea that the happiness therein should be for them, to the exclusion of others, is the foundation for putting oneself at odds with the world. Feelings of negativity are being caused by the quality of the thought, which could be described as selfish due to the fact that the person's thought flow towards happiness does not consider the happiness of others. In fact selfish desire denies anyone to share your individual enjoyment.

In psychological terms this translates as a mental friction, resistance to others. *Any resistance to others could translate as a negative emotional feeling.*

### Emotional Modifications

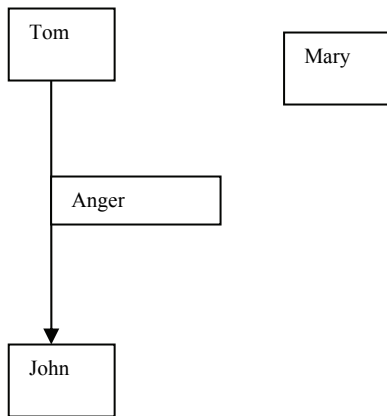
What Tom would call love is merely an emotional attachment. *A thought-flow that does not identify with Mary but rather his own personal needs, which are fulfilled through her.*



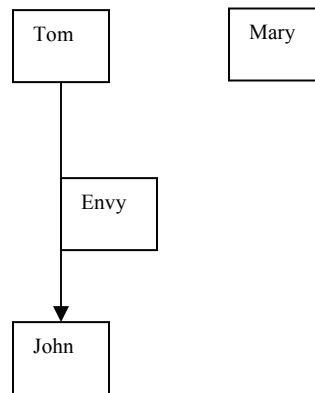
In the case where Tom's desire to win Mary's affection are successful there is a potential for attachment. That is, the powerful thought to obtain Mary as a partner could modify into the desire to possess and control her as a means to ensure the relationship persists. The effect is two-fold;

- a) Her independent movement will be a cause for agitation to Tom as it conflicts with his need to possess and control her.
- b) Mary will be resistant to being possessed and controlled. The result would be a desire to end the relationship.

**Figure 5**



**Figure 6**



In illustration 5 we see that Tom becomes angry with John. Anger arises as a modification of desires being seen as interrupted. Tom sees John as an interruption in his desire to obtain the exclusive attention of Mary.

In the scenario in illustration 6 there is a feeling of envy towards John because he has succeeded in winning Mary's affections. The emotional affectation of envy arises when we fail to fulfill a desire and allow that un-fulfilment to modify as negativity towards those who have achieved the same, or equivalent, desire.

All of these negative emotional affectations are founded on one basic theme. That is, Tom rejects the various possible outcomes by referring only to his desires. In fact, any outcome that does not translate as his own fulfillment produces negative emotional modifications. In short he has not considered anyone's happiness but his own and in this scenario "the activities of at least two persons are directed towards getting the same reward, and, to the degree that one of them is successful...the other is denied". Interestingly it is not the feeling of competition but the anticipation of success that create the negative feelings."...- the firmer the anticipation the more violent the anger-..." (Smelser 1970:51)

Continuing with the idea of emotion as a reflection we see through the illustrations that feelings directly arise from thought flow. More specifically, we can observe that feelings are the mental affectations related to desire. This obviously establishes one fundamental principle and that is, in order to change the quality of my feelings I must change the quality of my desires.

Tom may conclude that it is reasonable to bear resentment towards John for sharing a desire to enjoy Mary's affections. But we see the very premise is flawed as he neglects to consider that the transaction of Mary's affections will be decided by Mary. This fallacy in understanding produces invalid emotions. If the scope of Tom's perspective went beyond himself and his desires he

would gladly accept the laws of attraction as an addition to his social framework and surely feel empathetic towards John. In fact, he would feel an affinity with John with reference to Mary being attractive. With this perspective that goes beyond the immediate dynamics of a situation we can avoid what is called 'the false cause'.

Therein one establishes a cause and effect dynamic based on the immediacy of temporal succession "after the thing, therefore because of the thing". For example, in hearing we did not receive a promotion we also soon hear about the successful candidate. We posit them as the "cause" for our failure. This is due to the immediacy of the news but in reality the cause of not receiving the promotion is merely that one was not good enough. This example of the "false cause" concept indicates how a misunderstanding of events is created due to reason being clouded by the affectations that can accompany powerful desire (especially if they have been interrupted or thwarted).

### **Emotion Regulation**

Virtually all of life's experiences are pervaded by emotion. Response tendencies in individuals are inextricably linked to social and cultural contexts (Gross, 1998b), and thus emotion regulation should be of significant interest to social psychologists and theorists in developing models of human social behaviour. Emotion regulation as defined by Ochsner & Gross (2005, pp.242-243) involves "the initiation of new, or the alteration of ongoing, emotional responses through the action of regulatory processes." Whether the experience and accompanying emotion is perceived as positive or negative, some level of emotion regulation is necessary in all situations in order to be able to successfully manage day-to-day living and respond appropriately to life's changing situations. This regulation can be automatic or controlled, unconscious or conscious (Gross, 1998b; Mauss, 2007). *In this paper, only the consciously applied aspect of emotion regulation is considered.*

The effect of emotion regulation can be either positive or negative depending upon the method employed. Two emotion regulation methods are cognitive reappraisal and behavioral regulation. A brief description of these common emotion regulation processes follows.

### ***Cognitive Re-appraisal***

Because an emotion arises from the evaluation of a particular situation with reference to one's goals, this presupposes an appraisal of the situation. This is known as the cognitive appraisal theory of emotion. In this theory, one's "interpretation (or appraisal) of the situation or event is the primary cause of emotions and can result in [one] experiencing different emotions." (Grieve et al., 2006, p.33).

Cognitive reappraisal involves "construing a potentially emotion-eliciting situation in a way that changes its emotional impact." (Gross & John, 2003, p.349). Essentially, the individual reconsiders the situation in the light of new or additional knowledge that was not available when the situation and subsequent emotion was first experienced. The reappraisal of the situation can thus "give rise to a totally different cognitive appraisal, emotion, and direct action" (Grieve et al., 2006, p.34). Thus the cognitive appraisal theory can be applied to reducing emotional impact, or to changing the emotion itself. The very question of reappraisal does not arise if one has no mitigating knowledge to apply to the situation. "Knowledge and experience work together...When we learn new knowledge and memorize that novel information, we then have the ability to be more prepared....Knowledge, then, is the precursor of experience" (Dispenza 2007:202). If the concerned experience is emotion and we are conceiving of changing them then our preceding



ideas must necessarily change. However, one may be in possession of mitigating knowledge, but neglect to apply this knowledge at the time. Later one can come to understand that they could have applied their knowledge.

Not only does the theory presuppose an appraisal of the situation, but also a concern or goal against which this appraisal is applied. This concern or goal represents a desire entertained by an individual. If reappraisal of a situation with respect to a particular concern/desire can be considered an emotion regulation technique, then so too can the reformulation of one's desires. One's personality, as both an inward experience and an outward expression, is necessarily influenced by desires. The French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Jacques Lacan concurs with Spinoza's assertion that "desire is the essence of man" (Kordela, 2007, p.13). The strategy of desire reformulation thus affords greater scope for the individual to rehabilitate their personality: eradicating the experience and expression of negative emotions, which are correlated with anxiety, depression and other physical and mental disorders (Grieve et al., 2006; Watson et al., 1988); and inculcating positive emotions, which "encourage personal growth and social connection" (Grieve et al., 2006, p.36).

Reappraisal has been associated with improved relationships (Gross & John, 2003), enhanced subjective well-being (Gross & John, 2003; Gross, 1998b), and decreased negative affect (Gross, 1998a; Gross & John, 2003; Ochsner & Gross, 2005).

### ***Behavioral Regulation***

Behavioral regulation, or expressive suppression, is a response modulation that involves "inhibiting ongoing emotion-expressive behavior while emotionally aroused." (Gross, 1998a, p.226). Expressive suppression is the inhibition of articulation while affected. When done without a reasonable understanding as to why, negative effects are various.

Expressive suppression does not reduce the unpleasant experience of negative emotions (Ochsner & Gross, 2005), and has been associated with a number of acute and long-term deleterious effects including increased anxiety and lower self-esteem and subjective well-being (Butler et al. 2003; Egloff et al. 2006; Gross & John, 2003) and impaired communication and social functioning (Butler et al. 2003; Gross & John, 2003).

However, in certain cases, in which expression would be significantly damaging, expressive suppression may be the only option (Gross & Munoz, 1995). From a more positive perspective, emotion inhibition has been highlighted as an important aspect of psychological development [Kopp, 1989; Saarni, 1990; Thompson, 1991]. As Bonanno et al. (2004) have shown, long-term adjustment depends upon the flexibility to employ the emotion regulation strategy that the situation demands. Ultimately, "Emotionalism upsets your intellectual balance and poise. Passive subservience to emotion ruins your material and even spiritual wellbeing" (Parthasarathy, 2004:88)

It is when expressive suppression has become mere habit, or is employed without understanding of the reason, purpose or benefits of the strategy that it will continue to extract the previously mentioned personal and social costs. However, as one comes to understand both the beneficial and detrimental outcomes of expressive suppression to particular situations, a greater awareness of oneself and emotions is gained, and the process of emotional rehabilitation can commence.

A parent who suppresses the uncontrolled feelings of intense anger towards a young child is of course adopting the most beneficial approach. Personally reflecting to further understand this approach, the parent reasserts the potential harm of anger expression to the child. Investigation into the negative external consequences and internal agitation of the situation paves the way for

an investigation into the anger as an effect, its causes, and possible solutions. Because cognitive reappraisal can be employed before the emotional response is underway, its application implies some level of mental preparedness or conscious awareness of potentially emotion-eliciting situations. This arises from personal reflection of one's previous experiences, and the possible causes and effects. Thus internal reflection is particularly important in the process as it equips the parent with knowledge of their own emotional propensities.

As one becomes established in a greater understanding of appropriate and inappropriate emotion-expressive behaviour, this understanding is available as mitigating knowledge to be applied to future situations as a reappraisal strategy. Hence, expressive suppression can be considered to be an initial coping strategy.

### ***Avenues for Emotional Growth***

While reappraisal is clearly preferred over expression suppression, it is important in the context of one's continued emotional development to take in a realistic view of emotion regulation. This requires taking in knowledge that will enable a broader perspective of life experiences, and create a new, enhanced world-view. This new knowledge paves the way for new experiences and new emotions. As Dispenza (2007, p.206) states, "knowledge is the precursor to experience. When we learn new information and apply what we learn by modifying our behavior, we create a new and more enriched experience. Because emotions are the end product of experience, the result of our intentional actions should produce a new experience with a new emotion."

The personal reflection, the intake of knowledge and its subsequent application to one's field of emotional experience requires the cohesive functioning of the emotion and reasoning faculties that lie within the human personality. As Gross (1998b, p.288) states, "cooperation between reason and emotion brings our actions into line with our enduring concerns, motivating and sustaining action directed towards longer-term projects in the face of temporary setbacks".

To possess this balance of reason and emotion is to be equipped with emotional intelligence, which encompasses the ability to be aware of and control one's emotions, and to use and express them wisely. Emotional intelligence "provides the link between feelings, character, and moral values" (Grieve et al., 2006, p.40).

### ***Desire as a Means for Emotional Change***

The universal factor in human life is the existence of desire. This is the term describing the thoughts flowing towards that which we project will give happiness. In simple terms, if we fulfill a desire we are happy and the attendant emotions will be happily experienced by that particular person. If we are thwarted we will experience the negative feelings inherent in unfulfilled desire, which is the denial of happiness.

Having defined desire as a consolidated thought flow we can infer a significant investment has been made in achieving a certain end. As our emotions arise from the evaluations we make of scenarios related to our desires we can certainly curtail and govern emotion when our evaluations are sound in basis. But as Socrates explained; man is a man by virtue of possessing reason but not all men are reasonable. This lays the foundation for another aspect of understanding the role of our emotions in life. That is, while we may learn new means for evaluating situations directly and indirectly related to our desires, a paradigm shift in perspective comes when desires themselves change in nature. *Meaning, reason is applied to changing our understanding of happiness itself.*

A basic distinction used with reference to desire is the ideas of selfish and unselfish. Immediately one can conceive of a situation where the emotional feelings would be different even if the dimensions for evaluating a situation were the same.

A selfish person would engage in the pursuit of happiness with underlying (and unavoidable) concerns about others facilitating or obstructing their path to fulfillment. People with similar desires would be seen as a threat to happiness. The thought that others' successes could directly impinge on theirs is a cause for reactions (effects) like resentment, competitiveness, fear etc. (as illustrated earlier). This arises from the one central theme of a selfish person; any happiness achieved in their activities is not only to be enjoyed by them alone but they will actively exclude others from sharing their experience. Moreover, they certainly cannot feel a vicarious happiness by identifying with the successes of others.

Selfishness is nothing but a means, a method employed for achieving well-being, to say it is "bad" etc. has limited meaning. But we can see it as a fundamentally flawed method. The central cause for this is separateness, an unavoidable effect of self-centeredness. In the context of sociology this means a person will fail to experience integration, acceptance, empathy etc which are all vital to individual and group harmony. Essentially a selfish person will feel displaced, isolated and ultimately alone.

Remaining focused on the theme of individual harmony we must explore the idea of unselfishness as a superior means for happiness. Having previously commented on the self-centered, ego-centric outlook of a selfish person we can infer that unselfish is the antithesis of this.

A reduction in self-absorbed pre-occupations allows the individual to explore happiness through other means. That is, to achieve the goal of inner harmony by increasing our joy content through learning to incorporate the desires, needs and traits of others into our life. More so, to be proactive in our own efforts to intelligently assist and facilitate other's also. This is done with the underlying knowledge that in sheer mathematical terms our potential for positive emotion is increased to the extent the happiness of others is incorporated into our own sense of well-being. John Stuart Mill associates unselfishness as another utilitarian means for happiness wherein it "directs us to promote the happiness (pleasure) of every person... not just our own happiness... I am to give equal weight to everyone's happiness, and am not entitled to give special consideration to my personal well-being, ... ." (Stumpf and Abel 2002:392)

Nietzsche concurs by stating that the motivation of all human actions is "to satisfy a desire." Meaning unselfish actions are not done for others to the detriment, but rather to compliment, our emotional well-being. (Stumpf and Abel, 2002:402)

Using a basic example of group psychology we may see a practical scenario where the merits of unselfish desire are validated;

You are included in a group of people but your desires and interests are selfish. All other members will be qualified on the basis of the potential for positive/negative roles in achieving your personal ends. This one-dimensional approach leads to a "with me or against me" mentality. Conflict is virtually assured.

The group members, upon perceiving this mentality will be less inclined to facilitate you knowing that your selfishness will prevent you from reciprocating the very assistance you expect from them. Of course, a selfish person will resent such "non-cooperation" in others.

In the same setting an unselfish person will be happily accepted into the group by virtue of his willingness to integrate their goals with that of other group members. This willingness to integrate immediately establishes a harmony. More specifically, an unselfish desire will give rise to further harmony inducing emotions. "Positive emotions like joy, love, and acceptance are usually

experienced as pleasurable and rewarding. Positive emotions may create an urge to be creative, to explore, to seek new experiences, and to grow. In short, positive emotions encourage personal growth and social connection. A capacity for having positive emotions is a basic human strength...”

Grieve et al (2006: 35, 36). This starts a positive cycle wherein “Feeling connected to others increases psychological...well-being...a sense of connectedness also increases empathic responding as well as acts of trust and co-operation...,which tend to have mutually reinforcing effect: they beget trust and cooperation in return...” (Hutcherson et al 2008)

“Empathy means understanding fully...Empathetic openness allows you to be aware of various people’s positions...Empathetic openness not only allows you to understand others but makes you more sensitive to what they are experiencing. This encourages people to say what they need to say and facilitates communication...” Grieve et al. 2006: p 12. ) Furthermore, an unselfish person can experience positive feelings vicariously. That is to be happy as result of another group member’s happiness. This is the effect of unselfish desire, a thought flow related to feeling happiness that does not exclude, but rather includes, others achieving success in their desires.

### **Desire as a Means for Happiness**

It is obvious that the projected ends for a desire would be a greater feeling of happiness. This does not need to be taught as it is instinctive and intrinsic in all beings. What can be learned are the various means for obtaining happiness. However, the means for happiness are not intrinsic or instinctive. We must learn how to be emotionally contented and happy. Therefore, we must see desire as a means to an end and that end, in this context, is a persistent and meaningful sense of emotional equanimity. Hutcherson et al poses the question “How can we increase feelings of connection at an automatic level, most crucially towards those not yet with our circle of trust?” (Hutcherson et al 2008:720). In curbing negativity the point of concern is known i.e certain values pronounce certain activities as wrong. “...however, Western science has only recently begun to recognize the benefit not just of counteracting negative, antisocial emotion, but also *fostering* positive prosocial emotions and behaviors. Even when highlighting the important role of positivity in counteracting implicit negativity, most studies leave unanswered the question of how to generate such positivity in the first place.” (Hucherson 2008:720)

Viewing desire as the means for the paradigm shift in perspective with reference to emotion is of prime importance. The reason for this is because every significant aspect of our lives is preceded by desire. Accepting this, we must view desire as the fundamental cause for the effect called emotion.

Given that one cannot simply “be” compassionate, patient and loving etc we can safely assume that to obtain positive emotions we must at least desire them. One must desire to be compassionate etc. Once again it begs the question, how do I develop the desire and conviction to genuinely aspire to such positive emotional traits?

The answer is that we must clearly correlate positive emotion with happiness. “...no-one ever neglects anything which he judges to be good, except with the hope of gaining a greater good.” (Durant 1962:167) One must be convinced that patience brings more happiness than impatience, tolerance over intolerance, sharing over greed. A vital role that emotions play in our lives is that they act as revelations to our own thought patterns. Our irritation with colleagues may reveal to us our unrealistic expectation of others, our ability to identify with another’s perspective reveals our empathy. In both cases there is a desire at play. The first is causing agitation as one’s person-

al desires are projected onto others. The result being that the desire, rather than obtaining happiness, achieves a contrary result.

Experiencing the internal and external benefits of empathizing with another reveals the merits of unselfish desire. The desire to identify with another's perspective as a means for happiness is proven. More so, the example contains the fundamental principle of positive emotions, and that is harmony. When one is in harmony one feels more complete.

From the external perspective this is obvious. Any individual desirous to integrate oneself into a community willingly dedicates one's actions to the group to achieve acceptance, belonging etc. There is also the individual happiness that arises from service-orientated action, a positive feeling inherent in giving of oneself for the benefit of another.

Studies indicate that happiness and satisfaction are enhanced when peoples goals are..., concerned with community contribution, emotional intimacy and personal growth..."(Lyubomirsky 2001:241)

### **Intellect and Emotion**

The theme of harmony is often associated with peaceful co-existence. Furthermore it can also be taken to be the pleasing effect of various parts being in concordance. With reference to inner harmony the commonly accepted ideal is symmetry of reason and emotion. When our emotions arise from reasonable ideas as well as the experience of emotion being dealt with reasonably, we have the pleasing effect of inner harmony.

The harmonious correlation between emotion and reason is encapsulated by Spinoza who states " By emotion (affectus) I understand the modifications...,and at the same time the ideas of these modifications" (Durant 1962:166).It is important to note that emotions arising from reason and emotions experienced reasonably are similar but are not synonymous. Patriotic emotions may arise from reasoned conclusions related to one's nation. But once the feelings of patriotism are instilled one must also ensure that these nationalistic feelings are reasonably expressed. In simple terms it may be reasonable to feel patriotic but it is not reasonable to allow that feeling to take us over wherein we become unreasonable (as per the maxim of Socrates previously mentioned.) Herein lies the crux of inner harmony; the development of the intellect to observe, govern and guide our mind's emotions. In this context "...a certain narrowness of outlook leading not infrequently to a kind of fanaticism" is likely if our intellect is neglected. If we are objective, impersonal "...they help a man maintain a certain sense of proportion" (Russell 1932:222). As previously mentioned one cannot simply be compassionate or patient by merely thinking it. Even negative feelings like anger cannot be produced without cause. This is why we often hear the term "learn" when referring to emotional development; "I must learn to control my anger" or "I must learn to be more compassionate". This demonstrates clearly that there is an aspect of knowledge that must be learnt and imbibed for emotional development to arise as a natural consequence.

"Unfortunately, objective and dispassionate appraisals...may be relatively rare and difficult. Cognitive judgments are often clouded by emotion (Haid,2001)

Aristotle associates human virtue with optimum functioning and in this context states that "...desires are not *in themselves* rational but since they can,... *be controlled by* reason,..." the highest character is wherein "...our desires and emotions...obey the voice of reason" (Stumpf and Abel 2002:348-9).

This indicates that the role of emotion is integral to a complete, fully integrated person of virtue. But the overriding qualification is not good or noble sentiment but their governed expres-

sion. Continuing with this reference the conclusion encapsulates the role of and the importance of cognitive symmetry.

Since happiness consists in acting rationally and since acting rationally means acting in accordance with human virtues, happiness can be defined as activity in accordance with the intellectual and moral virtues. In other words, a happy life is one in which we do rational things well in which we use the intellectual virtues to think well, and in which we use the moral virtues to enable us to respond reasonably to our emotions and desires.

Returning to Spinoza we see “The decisions of the mind are nothing save desires, which vary according to various dispositions (Durant 1962:164-5). The disposition could be intelligent or unintelligent, selfish or unselfish. The ideal disposition, as previously advocated by Aristotle and Mill, would be an intelligent and unselfish disposition which would achieve the goal of desire that is, put simply, to feel happy.

Herbert Spencer suggests we do not waste the intellect on merely deliberating over rival impulses (Durant 1962:326) but that we heed the words of Schopenhauer and use the intellect as “...nature has produced it for the service of the individual will” (Durant 1962:275). This means we must apply our intellect when we develop the will to utilize and nurture emotions in a way that complements our growth in happiness.

The development of our intellect can only be through the introverted process of personal reflection. Therein, we invest the time to expose ourselves to the knowledge related to higher values, themes beyond self-centered concerns. From the perspective of sociology any positive or negative phenomena in society is due to the resultant effect of individuals. Therefore what each person must apply themselves to is that which is under their jurisdiction. This begins with one’s own personality.

### **Conclusion**

The phenomenon of emotion is central to the creation or destruction of boundaries. One can choose to feel a oneness with others by allowing emotions of identification to express. Or, one can cultivate emotions that engender a sense of separateness. The role we assign our emotions, or more so, the direction we allow our emotions to take will be governed by the desires we cultivate. If we do not review and revise our understanding of ourselves and our obligation to imbibe healthy means for happiness we face destruction through “...self-centeredness, selfishness. This is the death knell of..., wisdom and culture of the human race” (Parthasarathy, 2007:89).

By independent reasoning and personal reflection we can cultivate the tendencies of perspective, self-governance and empathy. With such a disposition emanating from the intellect we can ensure that the emotions arising from our mind play a positive role in our individual life and societal roles.

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# Accounting for the Determinants Affecting the Rise of Rural Non-farm Sector in India

**Sumona Ghosh**

Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Email: sgsxc2003@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The study shows, that the shift of the farmers from farm activities to non-farm activities is not a myth it a reality. Growth in non-farm activities was the of not only push or distress induced factors like fragmentation of land, financial indebtedness crop cultivation becoming an increasingly investment-intensive activity demanding mechanization, more investment is better quality manures, and seeds, pesticides, which is difficult to afford specially with agricultural crops seeing only modest prices but also due to more positive or pull induced factors like growth of literacy, job opportunities and increased demand for non-crop food and services.*

**Keywords:** Non-farm activities, pull factor, job opportunities

## Introduction

The Situation Assessment Survey of the farming community, commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization, bring out the pathetic condition of India's farmers, be it in income, expenditure, indebtedness Farmers are committing suicide and migrating to the cities in search of livelihood. Why does this happen to the farmer? Why do farmers take this extreme step? Is income from cultivation not enough to meet consumption and other expenditure? Are farmers heavily indebted due to falling income from cultivation and increased cost of cultivation? Or are farmers not able to cope with the new competitive environment after economic reforms? Answer to these questions can be found from the survey initiated by the Union Ministry of Agriculture, which is known as the Situation Assessment Survey (SAS). For the first time, as a part of the millennium study, the Ministry of Agriculture initiated a comprehensive socioeconomic survey of the farmers covering educational status, levels of living, farming practices, possession of productive assets, awareness and other relevant issues. The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) carried out the SAS of farmers during 2003 (January-December) covering 51,770 households spread over 6,638 villages across the country. The survey reports have already been released in five different volumes, namely, (1) Independence of Farmer Households, (2) Access to Modern Technology for Farming, (3) Some Aspects of Farming, (4) Consumption Expenditure of Farmer Households, and (5) Income, Expenditure and Productive Assets of Farmer Households. The results of these surveys show the dreadful condition of farmer households be it in income, expenditure or indebtedness of farming households.

The annual net income for the farmer households is less than Rs. 1,000 per farmer household in Orissa, UP and West Bengal. One of the SAS reports also indicates that given a choice, 40 per cent of the farmers would quit agriculture and take up alternative occupation [NSSO 2005 : 11] The results of SAS sufficiently prove that farmers are not getting enough remuneration for their produce.

Our understanding of livelihoods and poverty has undergone considerable change over the last few decades and this has implications for the way in which we define, research and analyse these concepts. In the 1970's the focus of poverty analysis was on income and in rural areas, this was assumed to be income from agricultural activity only. But, more recently, there has been an increasing preoccupation with more holistic views of poverty and a recognition of the fact that a plethora of activities make up the livelihoods of the rural poor. This can, and often does, involve acknowledgment of the many non-agricultural activities that are carried out by poor people in



rural areas. Definitions of the rural non-farm economy are problematic. There is no standard definition either internationally or within India as the sector is too diverse to allow neat classification (Fisher et al., 1997). The rural non-farm economy is defined in this paper to exclude primary agriculture, forestry, fisheries, but to include trade and processing of these products, in addition to other goods and services, as secondary and tertiary sectoral activities.

Research has shown that diversification is not necessarily a strategy pursued by poor people, nor is it just about coping. For some people it can help in mitigating risk or coping with vulnerability where risk remains high and in setting poor people on a cumulative path towards greater livelihood success (Davies, 1996). In addition to reducing the risk of livelihood failure (Gill, 1991; Alderman and Paxson, 1992), diversified livelihoods can also help to reduce income and consumption fluctuations due to seasonality in labour demands (Morduch, 1995), offset the impacts of natural risk factors on staple food availability add activities more added value to the household livelihood portfolio (Von Braun and Pandya-Lorch, 1991), provide cash resources that enable household assets to be built up, and help people to hold onto the assets they already possess (Netting, 1993). Diversification across income sources helps households to combat instability in income and thereby increases the probability of their maintaining livelihood security. Poor people build diversification strategies sensitive to their context and livelihood strategies.

The absolute dependence of households on land as an asset is now virtually a thing of the past. Brick kilns now dot the countryside, especially along the all-weather roads, and have come as a saviour to the agricultural labourers. Construction activities and rickshaw pulling in cities have come handy and now in the bigger cities one can find several places where labour markets are held daily-in the morning, labourers *from* villages congregate and those who want to engage them *for* the day come and engage them.

Agricultural crops saw only modest price increases compared to non-agricultural products. At the same time, both the costs and risks involved in the cultivation of coarse cereals, irrigated paddy cotton and oilseeds increased. Farmers also faced increasing operating costs as the price of inputs rose. Competition *for* land and the reduction of communal areas increased the costs associated with keeping drought animals because fodder became more expensive. At the same time, richer farmers invested in tractor which was leased out to other farmers at a price that was less than the maintenance costs of animals. The outcome of the factors outlined above meant that crop cultivation became increasingly investment-intensive activities. Investment requires capital and entrepreneurship with fragmented land holdings, poorly defined property rights, and lack of infrastructure in agriculture and transition from traditional land-based to capital-based agriculture which is a time consuming process. Whilst agriculture remained the most important source of income for the majority of rural households, the debates about rural development attach increasing importance to the rural non-farm sector. It is recognized that traditionally rural households in developing countries have been viewed as though they were exclusively engaged in agriculture, but there is mounting evidence that the rural households can have highly varied, often multiple sources of income. Rural households can and do participate in a wide range of nonagricultural activities along side the traditional rural activities of farming and agricultural labourers. Such non farm income can contribute significantly to total income of farming households in India. Thus process of diversification of the rural economy, howsoever slow, has set in which has helped the agricultural labourers to find job opportunities outside agriculture.

Amongst policy makers there is a considerable interest in gaining a better understanding of how the rural non farm sectors contributes to economic growth and what, if any, specific role does it play in alleviating rural poverty. Now it is clear that the land-based agricultural sector