UNIT 3 UNDERSTANDING CURRENT ISSUES (NLP, EI, MI)

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

1. Understand what some of the current issues are regarding intelligence.
2. What NLP, MI, EI are.
3. Understand what is multiple intelligence
4. How it is changing the way in which people with different abilities are being viewed and understood
5. How people with different types of intelligence can be helped
6. And you will be able to edit lessons so that the target learner gets the maximum benefit from this lesson.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the current educational atmosphere, people are realizing that all the children cannot be judged by the same scale. Each student is unique and the standards of evaluating their capabilities have to be updated in order to understand how to help them achieve their potential. The recent movie “Tare Zameen par” illustrated this school of thought very vividly. It showed that children are all unique and should be treated differently. A lot of research has been done in the last two decades which has made educationists sit up and take notice of these individual differences. This is where neuro-linguistic programming, multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence and social intelligence comes in. Educationists are still trying to understand how to use this knowledge to help students to do better by devising ways to teach better in the classroom, when planning their lessons or the curriculum.
3.2 WHAT IS NLP

Neuro linguistic programming or NLP is an interpersonal model for communication that is being used in psychotherapy and also in other areas where communication and change is required. It studies how people think and see the various aspects of their lives. It is based on the observation of naturally self taught expertise and modeling the processes and habitual patterns which the experts use intuitively which are responsible for the results they get.

NLP was developed by Richard Bandler and linguist John Grinder in the 1970s when they worked with several world renowned therapists and recorded their work. They felt that these therapists were able to obtain almost magical results. Much of the philosophy, world view and discussion was first written in the books called ‘Structure of Magic (vol.1 & 2)’ and ‘Frogs into Princes’. However, NLP does not consider anyone to be ‘broken’ or unstable; they merely have a different neurology, experience of life, and the innate ability to adjust and adapt as the neurological processes are very adaptable. According to NLP, individuals are very wise unconsciously, even though they may not be able to use their wisdom. NLP claims to help people to change by teaching them to train their brains. However these claims are too vague and ambiguous.

NLP works to bring about change and harmony in human relationships based on their own methodology and philosophical approach. Richard Bandler and John Grinder were greatly influenced by gestalt therapist Fritz Perls, family systems therapist Virginia Satir and psychiatrist Milton H. Erickson. They also claimed that NLP draws a lot from certain aspects of neurology (‘neuro’), transformational grammar (linguistics), and cybernetics (programming).

Carolyn Boyd in her book says “NLP is concerned with how the top people in any area consistently achieve results. It is more than a way of thinking about success, though it also provides a series of practical techniques that can be easily learned and applied to any area of life.

The belief that lies behind NLP is that each person who achieves outstanding results has a method, process and structure by which he does so. NLP analyses that persons thinking and behavior to make a model of excellence that anybody can use and replicate his success. Next, NLP takes this model and shows you how you can apply it not only to replicate the successful methods of others but also to create your own successes. NLP can also be used as a way of understanding the methods by which you can achieve good results and how you can reproduce them on a consistent basis.

NLP can help you to make use of your inner potential, create a vision and purpose, set effective goals and achieve them.”

However all the people were not convinced that neuro-linguistic programming was a genuine method of helping people to deal with problems as their claims were unsubstantiated and their claims were exaggerated? They said that it was a pseudoscience because their methods were outdated and there was no empirical validation. In fact NLP has recently tried to improve its practice but its research is spread over disciplines and involved over too many fields. NLP states that communication is the message received and not the message sent – that is the result you get. There has to be a willing ness to set aside preconceived notions and frames because that is most important part of communication. Speech has to be interpreted in order to understand its meaning as it is the thought which is being conveyed. Cognitive linguistics, transformational grammar and general semantics.
also point this out. It is a very complex process as it can involve distortions, errors, mistranslations as it is ones thoughts, feelings and experiences which have to be conveyed as words. In fact NLP considers all behavior as communication.

Check your progress 1

Self assessment questions

1. What have educationists begun to realize recently (NLP EI, MI)?

2. What is NLP?

3. Has it become an established field of study?

4. What are the objections to it?

5. Does NLP consider all people as being the same?
6. According to NLP, what is communication?

3.3 WHAT IS MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Dr. Howard Gardner, a psychologist and professor at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education, suggested in 1983 that the traditional idea of intelligence is too limited and we cannot assess a person’s intelligence correctly on the basis of I.Q. tests. He put forward the theory of eight (seven at first and then he added two more) different types of intelligences in his book ‘Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences’. He said that there is a broad range of human potential in children and adults and although each individual has all the intelligences they manifests these in varying levels, making each person unique.

He said that these various intelligences are:

1. Linguistic intelligence is present in those people who are good with words, those who can appreciate sounds, rhythms, words and have well developed verbal skills.

2. Logical-mathematical intelligence is found in people who are good at numbers or at logical reasoning, can think conceptually and can understand abstract concepts.

3. Spatial intelligence is present in those who are picture smart, those who can think in pictures and visualize abstractly.

4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence- body smart or those who have good control over their bodies and can handle objects well.

5. Musical intelligence is present in those who have musical talent, who can appreciate musical sounds and produce music.

6. Interpersonal intelligence- people smart or those who can interact with other people and can understand their moods and feelings.

7. Intrapersonal intelligence- self smart- that is a person who is aware of personal desires, moods, feelings and is in tune with the values and thoughts.

8. Naturalist intelligence- nature smart- a person who is in tune with nature, can recognize plants and has the ability to understand vegetation and animals.

9. Existential Intelligence- sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about
human existence, such as the meaning of life, why do we die, and how did we get here.

Usually in schools children are judged by their abilities in mathematics, logic and languages according to the standard I.Q. tests such as the Stanford-Binet Intelligence quotient test. However it is now being realized that children may have talent (or intelligences) in other fields. It is being realized that the many facets of abilities exhibited by children can be as valuable as their grasp of traditional subjects. Many schools and institutions are coming to regard I.Q. tests as being outdated as people can have musical talent, dancing talent, acting, painting sports and other kinds of talents. But unfortunately they do not get the attention they deserve and many times get labeled as backward or suffering from ‘ADD’ (attention deficit disorder) just because they cannot fit into the mold specified for them. The theory of MI proposes that teaching in schools should be done in a variety of ways and teachers should be trained to present their lessons in ways which use a number of activities so that they can catch the attention of children with different learning abilities. In the recent past this theory has been catching the attention of educators and in fact methods are being tried out to address the special talents of students. So teachers are now using methodologies exercises and many different kinds of activities to be able to make all kinds of children understand the material to be taught.

Criticism of the theory

However, James Traub's article published in The New Republic says that Gardner's system has not gained acceptance in the academic circles. Teachers, on the other hand say that they always felt that students learn in different ways and that there are many differences between students.

Linda S. Gottfredson, a sociologist by training, is currently professor of educational studies at the University of Delaware and one of the advocates of psychometric evaluation, says that this theory is vague and cannot be measured whereas other intelligences can be measured. Others say that this theory is not new; people have always believed that people have different levels of intelligence or ‘primary abilities’ as Gardner calls them.

There can be no standard so that the children's abilities cannot be measured. In addition this kind of teaching cannot be practically adopted because of the size of classes and lack of resources.

Check your progress 2

Self assessment questions

1. Who was the psychologist who first put forward the theory of multiple intelligences?

2. What did Dr Howard Gardener suggest?
3. How many types of intelligences did he talk about?

4. What are the main criticisms to this theory?

3.4 WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Research into emotional intelligence is a relatively new area and new findings are being given frequently because of which the definition is also changing frequently. In their book ‘Emotional Intelligence In Everyday Life: A Scientific Inquiry’ the editors Joseph Ciarrochi, Joseph P. Forgas and John D. Mayer say that the reason for the explosion of interest in EI perhaps is that, not only does it fit intellectual spirit, (zeitgeist) but also because people feel that we can solve technical problems better than we can human problems. Another reason for the heightened interest is that the concept implies that even though people may not have much academic ability they might still become successful in life if they are high in EI. Still another reason may be that it is becoming a popular idea that EI could play a great role in everyday life as it is being seen that it can be applied to many fields. A lot of interest has been generated because of the possibilities of its application in education and business. In education, for example, a number of positive changes were noted when students were exposed to programmes in social and emotional learning (SEL). In business EI can be used in selecting and developing a career and in knowing how to deal with co-workers. People can get to know about their strengths and weaknesses.

The importance of emotions in dealing with people has long been recognized. But it was only in 1920 that E.L. Thorndike used the term ‘social intelligence’ for the ability to understand and manage other people. In his book “Frames of mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences” Howard Gardner has talked about Interpersonal and Intrapersonal intelligences. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand other people, to have perception of their intentions, ideas and desires whereas
intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to understand ones own feelings, fears, desires and appreciate one's self. For a person who has good interpersonal skills it becomes easy to manage people and to relate to them. Also to be able to understand how your emotions affect others around you. People with high EI are usually able to get along better with others and are able to control their anger and don't get upset easily. They can manage stress and pressure and handle negative feelings. They can also use these to achieve their goals. Alternatively those who have poor EI are poor at people management skills.

It has long been known that emotions and health are closely interrelated. People who can control or suppress their anger often suffer from heart problems, conversely those who are always angry also suffer from hypertension! So knowledge about EI can help people how to deal with emotions. Nowadays many courses are being run to train people to cope with their problems and become successful in life. Negative emotions such as anger can also contribute to poor financial health as decisions made in anger are often disastrous.

3.5 HOW THESE CURRENT ISSUES CAN HELP IN EDUCATION AND STUDY SKILLS

Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist wrote about 'emotional intelligence' in his book 'Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ' and after that the concept became more popular and many more psychologists began to work on it and many more papers began to be published about it. However, as mentioned earlier, a definition of EI has not been agreed upon and it is constantly changing with every new research. After the realization that there are people with different types of intelligences which influences how and what they learn, classroom teaching began to be influenced by it. Children with different skills were given attention so that their particular talent could be developed. Individuals learn in their own way and style which suits their kind of intelligence. A variety of teaching methods, both formal and informal, have been developed to suit individuals which help them to learn more effectively. When one realizes which method suits them best they are better able to handle the learning process and also devise ways by which to learn better. If an individual has musical intelligence he can create songs or create music; if a person is good at numbers he can be good at logic and figuring things out. Picture smart people can draw pictures, create movies and understand colours and pictures more than those who do not have these skills; word smart people can learn words better, write better, read better and generally do more with language. Similarly body smart people dance easily, enjoy exercises and sports; people smart ones are good at interpersonal relations, they enjoy parties and meeting friends. The self smart ones are comfortable ones like to be by themselves. Once this is understood suitable learning and teaching techniques can be evolved to encourage better learning and what is taught or learnt can be matched to the particular talent that an individual has.

Daniel Goleman developed a framework of 5 elements that he used to define emotional intelligence: These were:

1. Self awareness: according to him those who have a high degree of EI are very self-aware they are conscious and aware of their own emotions. As they have a high degree of self control they don’t let their feelings rule their actions. They are confident of them selves as they are honest with themselves. So they also know their strengths and weaknesses and work to use them to their advantage and to better themselves. Many people believe that this self control and awareness is the most important kind if emotional intelligence.
2. From self awareness stems self control. People who are in control of their emotions and impulses don’t allow themselves to get too angry or allow any of the negative emotions to get the upper hand. They never make impulsive decisions and are never careless. All their actions are carefully considered ones. Some of the important character traits are thoughtfulness, adaptability, integrity and having the strength to say no.

3. Such people are motivated. They plan actions and usually work for long term goals. They are highly productive and accept challenges and achieve results effectively.

4. Having a high degree of emotional intelligence give people a high degree of empathy. This is considered to be the second most important kind of emotional intelligence after self awareness. Such people have great understanding of those around them and can understand even slight variations in the moods of others. They understand the wants, needs, feelings, and viewpoints of others. They are very good at relationships, at listening to others and relating to them. They are not judgmental and realize that people are different from each other so they do not put them in stereotypes.

5. People with a high EI have very good social skills—they have all the qualities needed to work well in any social setting! They are easy to talk to, they understand others without having to be told, they focus on others rather than on themselves. They are good at managing disputes and can communicate well. They manage relationships and maintain them. They can be good leaders.

People vary in the degree of emotional intelligence they have as they do with every other kind of ability. They can use their ability to suit the situation or the moods of others and can capitalize on this ability. According to Goleman people are born with a general degree of EI which determines their ability to learn emotional competencies. Emotional intelligence can be improved with training. This means that those who have a low degree of EI find it difficult to get on with others in the social environment in which they live and suffer from emotional problems.

Criticism of the Theory of EI

1. EI is too broadly defined.

This is a new field of study and because of this the concepts and ideas are changing frequently. In fact the researchers themselves are changing their definitions as their ideas change. Newer and newer elements are being added almost everyday and the base is broadening, with the result that many unrelated concepts are being added to the definition of EI. Many of the concepts being added have no relationship with each other. These make the theory very unstable.

Critics say that without stabilization there can be no way in which measurement can be done. The result is that the theory becomes too vague and unstable.

2. It cannot be considered as a type of intelligence

Criticism has been leveled at Goleman’s early for claiming that EI is a form of intelligence. Eysenck says that there are too many assumptions regarding intelligence and that it often runs contrary to what researchers have come to expect when they study the types of intelligence. He says:

"Goleman exemplifies more clearly than most the fundamental absurdity of the tendency to class almost any type of behavior as 'intelligence'... If these five 'abilities' define 'emotional intelligence', we would expect some evidence that they are highly
correlated; Goleman admits that they might be quite uncorrelated, and in any case if we cannot measure them, how do we know they are related? So the whole theory is built on quicksand: there is no sound scientific basis. Locke also claims that the concept of EI in itself is a misinterpretation of the intelligence construct, and he offers an alternative interpretation: it is not another form or type of intelligence, but intelligence—the ability to grasp ‘abstractions’ applied to a particular life domain: emotions. According to him the concept should be re-labeled and referred to as a skill.

3. EI cannot be used to predict

EI cannot be used to predict the common outcomes. Landy says that the few incremental validity studies that have been conducted on EI have not given anything which adds to the prediction of the common outcomes. He says,"EI is compared and contrasted with a measure of abstract intelligence but not with a personality measure but not with a measure of academic intelligence."

Check your Progress 3

1. What is emotional intelligence?

3.6 SUMMING UP

In this unit we have tried to understand the major issues regarding intelligence. In that, we have given special focus to neuro-linguistic programming, emotional intelligence and multiple intelligence. We have also been able to understand the changing ways in which people with different abilities are being viewed and dealt with. We hope that after doing this unit you will have far better idea of the diverse types of intelligence and how to facilitate people with different types of intelligence. In addition, you will be in a position to edit lessons/books for such target learners.

3.7 AIDS TO ANSWERS

Check your progress 1

1. Educationists have begun to realize that all the children cannot be judged by the same yardstick. Each one is unique and each has his or her own special qualities.

2. NLP or neuro-linguistic programming is a field of study which says that people can be treated on the basis of realization about themselves and by training their minds to think differently and by teaching them a variety of communication skills.

3. NLP has not become an established field of study because the originators are adapting and constantly including newer fields of study, increasing their scope and methods. They use vague and ambiguous language to talk about their subject.

4. There are many objections to NLP. All the people were not convinced that neuro-
linguistic programming was a genuine method of helping people to deal with
problems as their claims were unsubstantiated and their claims were exaggerated.
They said that it was a pseudoscience because their methods were outdated and
there was no empirical validation.

5. NLP does not consider every one to be similar; they merely have a different
neurology, experience of life, and the innate ability to adjust and adapt as the
neurological processes are very adaptable, so they are unique.

6. NLP states that communication is the message received and not the message
sent – that is the result you get. There has to be a willingness to set aside
preconceived notions and frames because that is most important part of
communication. Speech has to be interpreted in order to understand its meaning
as it is the thought which is being conveyed. Cognitive linguistics, transformational
grammar and general semantics also point this out. It is a very complex process
as it can involve distortions, errors, and mistranslations as it is one’s thoughts,
feelings and experiences which have to be conveyed as words. In fact NLP
considers all behavior as communication.

Check your progress 2

1. Dr Howard Gardener, Dr. Howard Gardner, a psychologist and professor at Harvard
University’s Graduate School of Education was the first person to suggest that
the traditional method of assessing intelligence was wrong because it did not take
into account that not everyone has the same abilities, not every one should be
judged by the same criteria of mathematical or linguistic capabilities.

2. He suggested that there are nine different types of intelligences. All the types of
intelligences are present in everybody but in varying quantities, some have one
kind of intelligence and some may have another kind.

3. He said, at first that there were seven types of intelligences, but later on he added
2 more.

The nine types of intelligences are:

1. Linguistic intelligence is present in those people who are good with words

2. Logical-mathematical intelligence is found in people who are good at numbers or
at reasoning

3. Spatial intelligence is present in those who are picture smart

4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence- body smart

5. Musical intelligence musical talent

6. Interpersonal intelligence-people smart

7. Intrapersonal intelligence self smart

8. Naturalist intelligence nature smart

9. Existential Intelligence

4. The main reasons why this theory is not accepted are –

   a) that it is too vague and not clearly stated
b) Intelligence has to be measured as there should be a standard by which to be able to assess people.

c) Some people say that this theory is not new and educators have always known that children have different abilities.

d) Teaching cannot be done by methods advocated by the people who propagate the theory of MI as it would be impractical given the size of the classes.

Check your Progress 3

1. The importance of emotions in dealing with people has long been recognized. But it was only in 1920 that E.L. Thorndike used the term ‘social intelligence’ for the ability to understand and manage other people. In his book “Frames of mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences” Howard Gardner has talked about Interpersonal and Intrapersonal intelligences. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand other people, to have perception of their intentions, ideas and desires whereas intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to understand ones own feelings, fears, desires and appreciate one’s self. For a person who has good interpersonal skills it becomes easy to manage people and to relate to them. Also to be able to understand how your emotions affect others around you. People with high EI are usually able to get along better with others and are able to control their anger and don’t get upset easily. They can manage stress and pressure and handle negative feelings. They can also use these to achieve their goals. Alternatively those who have poor EI are poor at people management skills.

3.8 GLOSSARY

zeitgeist : noun German. the spirit of the time; general trend of thought or feeling characteristic of a particular period of time. intuitively: adjective:perceiving by intuition, as a person or the mind.

neurology : noun; the science of the nerves and the nervous system, esp. of the diseases affecting them. gestalt: noun; an instance or example of such a unified whole.

cybernetics : noun; the study of human control functions and of mechanical and electronic systems designed to replace them, involving the application of statistical mechanics to communication engineering.

empirical : adjective; derived from or guided by experience or experiment.

Cognition : Mechanisms involved in such processes in human beings as perception, attention, learning, memory, thought, concept formation, reading, problem solving, and the development of such behaviour in children

psychometry : psychometric theory has been applied in the measurement of personality, attitudes and beliefs, academic achievement, and in health-related fields.
3.9 SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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