Tributes to Prof. L.B. Tripathi

Professor L.B. Tripathi (1935-2012), one of the founders of the Department of Psychology, D.D.U. Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur, was a great person, academic leader, disciplinarian, perfectionist and above all a matchless teacher.

Born on September 15, 1935 in a village in Ballia District of U.P. Prof. Tripathi had a brilliant academic career. He completed B.A. Honours & M.A. in Psychology from department of Psychology, B.H.U., Varanasi and joined the same department as teaching assistant in 1955. He joined D.D.U. Gorakhpur University in 1957 as Assistant Professor. In 1960, he joined the department of Psychology, McGill University, Montreal (Canada) for his Doctorate under Donald Hebb and D. Bindra. Upon his return to Gorakhpur, he was selected as Reader in 1964 and again in 1968 he became Professor in the Dept. of Psychology D.D.U. Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur. Despite scarce resources, the department of Psychology, D.D.U. GKP University, reached new academic heights and established strong base in the field of experimental Psychology under his dynamic leadership. His academic determination, unflinching industriousness and commitment to the growth of research activities was instrumental in acquiring the status of “Department of Special Assistance” (DSA) for the dept. of Psychology from U.G.C. in 1989. Under his transformational leadership colleagues and students were truly inspired to publish high quality books and research articles. Prof Tripathi assiduously trained his students and colleagues in diverse fields of psychology. A large number of his students have carved out for themselves careers in psychology and got prestigious jobs in universities, research institutes, administrative departments and similar organizations in India and abroad.

Prof. Tripathi popularized Psychology as a discipline of great interest by writing high quality chapters and books on Psychology both in English and Hindi. His review entitled Higher Mental Processes in ICSSR survey called Psychology in India: The State of Art (Vol.1, 1988), Adhunik Prayogik Manovigyan (1972, 2011), Adhigam Ka Manovigyan (1979), a Hindi translation of Hulls, Deese & Egeth’s Psychology of Learning, Manovigyanik Anusandhan Paddhatian (1983), and Adhunik Saamajik Manovigyan (1992, 1999) are some of his milestone contributions that have provided a sound base for generations of students seeking a career in Psychology.

Prof. Tripathi’s contributions represent the Zeitgeist (the spirit of time) among academicians. As an excellent teacher, prolific writer, great orator, devoted researcher, efficient administrator, nurturant leader and above all a committed individual, Prof. L.B. Tripathi would be remembered for long as an institution in himself for enlightening the generation of Psychologists in particular and humanity in general.

On 5th Oct, 2012, Prof. L.B. Tripathi left this world peacefully. His demise is a great loss to the realm of Psychology in India. May his noble soul rest in the eternal peace.

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On October 5, 2012 India lost a doyen of Psychology in India, Professor L B Tripathi, former Professor and Head, Department of Psychology, Gorakhpur University. He struggled to keep experimental psychology in India alive through teaching and training of many generations of students.

Professor Tripathi was born on 15th September 1935 in Dharahara village in Balia (U.P). His father late Sri Jagannath Tripathi was a farmer by profession. He completed higher education at Banaras Hindu University under scholars like Professors B.L.Atreya and S.S. Jalota. After doing M.A. in 1955 he started a career in at a D.J. P.G. College, Barot. After staying for a very short period of two months joined Gorakhpur University in 1957 with Dr. M.M.Sinha and Sri S.B.L. Bhardwaj. The turning point in his academic career came when he left for McGill University, Montreal, where he was trained under the stalwarts like Donald O. Hebb and Dalbir Bindra. He earned Ph.D. on his research on concept formation under Professor Bindra in 1963 and returned to Gorakhpur University. He moved to Jodhpur University as Reader and Head but returned to Gorakhpur as Reader in 1964 and became Professor and Head in 1968 and retired in 1996. After retirement he moved to Allahabad and joined the Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) in Psychology at Allahabad University from 1999 to 2001 as a Visiting Professor. Subsequently he was associated with UGC Centre for Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (CBCS) as a visiting professor and contributed to its shaping during its early phase.

At the University of Gorakhpur Prof. Tripathi supervised 22 PhD. students in various areas: time perception (S.N.Rai), person perception (Bhaskar Deo Mishra), prolonged deprivation (Girishwar Misra, Ashtanand Tiwari, Sushil Kumar Tripathi), social motivation (N. K. Mani Tripathi, Rashmi Gupta, Pushpa Sharma, Adesh Agarwari), learning and memory (Sheela Singh, Ramji Lal Srivastava, Veera Srivastava, Anupam Nath Tripathi), religiosity (Achal Nandini Srivastava), group polarization (Rajendra Tiwari), dependence proneness (B.D. Tiwari, Ramesh Mani Tripathi) and child rearing and socialization (Renu Singh, Madhulika Srivastava). He undertook several projects including Calibration of Materials in Hindi for Research Purposes (ICSSR), Psychological Consequences of Prolonged Deprivation (with Girishwar Misra) (ICSSR), Learning Disability in a Deprived Society (with Achal Nandini Srivastava) (NCERT), and Psychological Outcomes Associated with Severe Iodine Deficiency (with B.D. Tiwari) (ICMR). In his research journey he dealt with the issues pertaining to the developments in mainstream psychology, culture, deprivation and poverty, parenting and the changing scenario in the professional culture in the community of teachers (see for details Misra, 2006*).

Prof. Tripathi was the founder president of U.P. Psychological Association (UPPPA) convener of the advisory committee for drafting the constitution of National Academy of Psychology (NAOP) India. He excelled as a teacher and became a role model for many. As Hindi became the medium of instruction he took the initiative to bring out a series of standard text books in Hindi for undergraduate students. His Adhunik Prayogik Manovigyan has gone into more than 10 editions.

Prof. Tripathi commanded unparalleled respect from colleagues and students. Those who have visited him cannot forget the hospitality, concern, care and warmth during such moments. He was a constant source of inspiration and a guiding force for a large number of colleagues and students. As a Guru he has nurtured several generations of psychologists. His passing away is a great loss to Psychology in India. He was a great source of inspiration for us. He is survived by his wife, three sons- Anand, Vibhav, and Vivek, two daughters - Pragya and Manisha and eleven grand children and large family of friends, students and admirers. He will be always remembered as a gentle and affectionate human being with a professional approach and humanitarian thinking. He advised, guided, mentored and counseled many of us. The best tribute which psychology fraternity can pay to him is by taking forward his passionate commitment to experimental psychology.


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