Module 2

Sensitivity of the Educators

Learning objectives

During this module, you will:

1. Increase the knowledge about what makes a good educator and what are the most popular traits which make an effective and ineffective educator
2. Learn more about the Ikigai as a reflection on one's life
3. Learn more about the hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow
4. Understand how the hierarchy of needs can be used with regards to the migrants' journey in a new country
5. Learn about the Theory of Belongingness by Roy Baumeister
6. Increase the awareness of how an educator can make the students feel that they belong in the school system

Index

2.1 Introduction

A teacher is an important person in the life of the students. She/he is in a position to make a difference in the students' lives. Educators do more than provide knowledge and nurture practical life skills – they help students build their confidence and be aware of their sense of self. They help pave their way to a promising future. Teaching can be a very demanding job but it also has the potential to be very rewarding as it leaves an impact on the students she/he comes in touch with. Teaching is also a social process in which the teacher influences the students and help them to develop according both to their potential and to societal needs (Kumar, 2018).

2.2 Traits of effective teachers

At the start of this brief reflective journey, I will pose a question 'Who is the teacher?' One might come up with different connotations, ideas and presumptions of what a teacher is. In the empirical sense, a teacher is the person who informs the others, who has a sense of knowlegde and skills which she/he can pass along to the less-informed. Mills, in 1978, described the teacher as 'the possessor of Truth' (Mills, 1978).

However, is having the knowledge enough to be an effective teacher? Does it matter that the teacher possesses the tools to share his/her knowledge? And if one has the knowledge, the tools to share the knowledge with the students, is that enough to make someone a good teacher?

According to a research study done in 2017:

> "Good teachers connect the self, the subject and students in the fabric of life because they teach from an integral and complete self; they are connected to themselves and induce the students, a 'capacity for connectedness'".
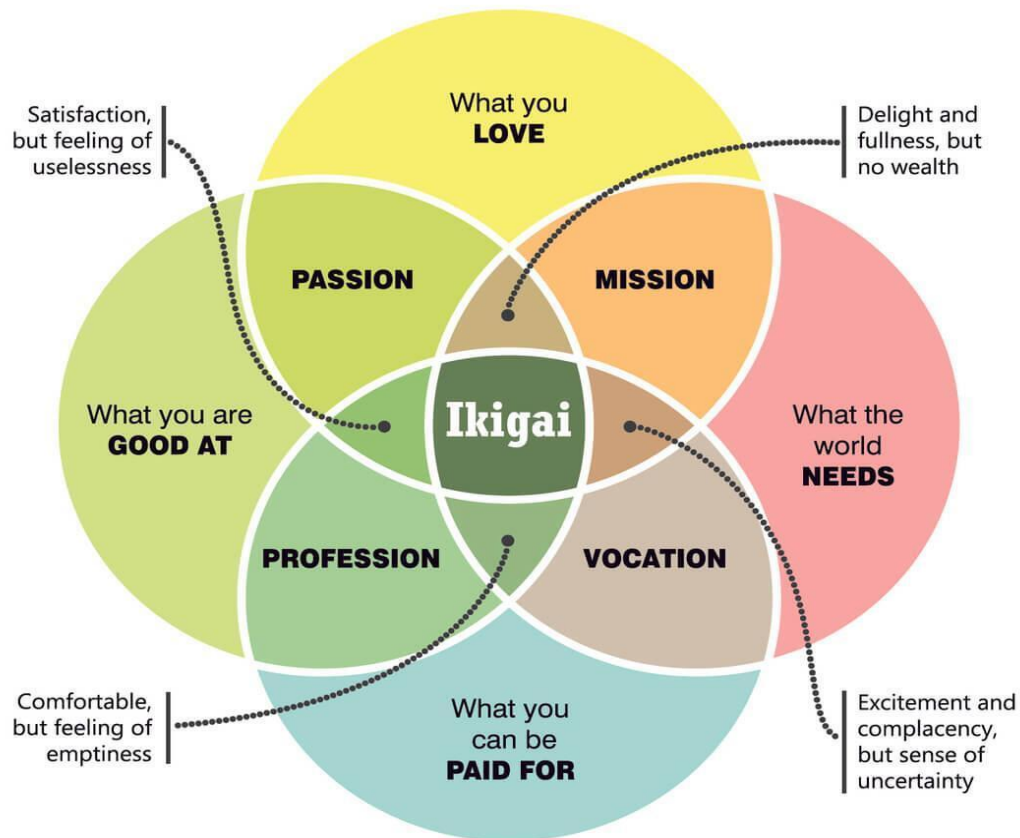
(Dr. Yoganandan & Vetriselvan, 2017)

The effective teachers are capable to weave a web of relations between who they are, the subject they are teaching and their students. Although this can be done through an array of methodologies, the effective teachers are not seen in just their methods but in their ability to put the student in the centre of what they do and form positive relationships with them. This can be done through the ability of the teacher having his/her mind (knowledge), feeling (emotions) and spirit (motivation) aligned (Parker, 1997).

This brings us to another reflective point: the ikigai. It is a general assumption that being a teacher is a vocation. Is it just a vocation or something more? This is a Japanese concept meaning 'a reason for being'. Essentially, the 'ikigai' is the reason why a person wakes up in the morning. In a 2001 research paper on 'ikigai', co-author Akihiro Hasegawa, a clinical psychologist and associate professor at Toyo Eiwa University, placed the word 'ikigai' as part of everyday Japanese language. It is composed of two words: *iki*, which means life and *gai,* which describes value or worth.

Ikigai

A JAPANESE CONCEPT MEANING "A REASON FOR BEING"

Satisfaction, but feeling of uselessness

Delight and fullness, but no wealth

What you LOVE

PASSION

MISSION

What you are GOOD AT

Ikigai

What the world NEEDS

PROFESSION

VOCATION

Comfortable, but feeling of emptiness

Excitement and complacency, but sense of uncertainty

What you can be PAID FOR

Link to video: The purpose in life through ikigai

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXAk-LaNmW8

Attachment: 30 day ikigai challenge

When a person is aligned with what he/she is good at, what he/she loves to do while getting paid for it. Then this is the basis of the 'ikigai'. And this can be reflected in all areas of the life of the professional, in this case, the educator.

The effective teacher is the one that acts holistically and is motivated to do so. In a research carried out in 2017, with the aim of identifying the traits of an effective versus ineffective teachers; students were asked what comes to mind when we speak of 'an effective teacher'. These are the results:

- Balance of behaviour
- Quality of teaching
- Enthusiasm
- Knowledge of the subjects
- Management of the class

(Yoganandan, G., & Vetriselvan, V. (2017)

Following, are a selected number of quotes which the students remarked and which are interesting to reflect upon. The quotes are from 'Personality traits of (in) effective teachers', 2017.

The following are some themes which emerge:

<u>Being seen</u>

"The teacher should be an all-round developer, *if the teacher cares the students*, the students will get the interest in learning the subject."

"A good teacher should *understand* the students."

These two quotes highlight the importance to put the student at the centre stage of learning, so that the student feels seen and acknowledged.

<u>Motivation</u>

"The teacher should be a *motivator* and shares their knowledge to the student."

The motivation relates to the enthusiasm, which was one of the main traits of an effective teacher.

Open attitude

"The teacher should be *friendly*, communicate clearly to the students, and *appreciate* the students."

Most of the students mention the importance of kindness, a friendly smile and having an open and friendly attitude. This goes hand in hand with not comparing students against each other and appreciating them as they are and where they are at, whilst challenging them to where they have the potential to excel. This means that the teacher sees the student as he/she is: helps him to realise the strengths and excel in them, and recognise his/her challenges and helps the student create goals to learn from his limitations.

Encourages rational thinking

"Teaching is a good profession, it creates new innovation and impart discipline among the students."

An effective teacher is someone who not just teaches the subject and shares the knowledge but one that allows time and space for the students to reflect on their learning and supports them in their thinking. The design of teaching must make the student more rational thinking, knowledgeable and self sufficiency (Jaya and Baskar, 2015).

Traits of non-effective teachers

On the other hand, the students listed the most common traits for ineffective teachers. These include the following:

- Partiality
- Using hard words
- Comparison
- Punishment
- Lack of patience and tolerance towards the students

As one can notice, none of the students mention the subject per se but they were more concerned about the character of the teacher and to the students being *non-seen*, not appreciated as they are and being put in a position where they are compared and given punishments.

2.3 Hierarchy of needs and migrants

Link to video about the hierarchy of needs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-4ithG_07Q

Link to Ted Talk 'Measuring what makes life worthwhile':
https://www.ted.com/talks/chip_conley_measuring_what_makes_life_worthwhile/transcript?language=en

<u>Hierarchy of needs</u>

It is important for the educator to understand the background and baggage of the learners – in our case, the migrants. In this way, it will be more easy for the educator to know what is expected of him/her during the learning process. To get better understanding of this, we will use the Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970).
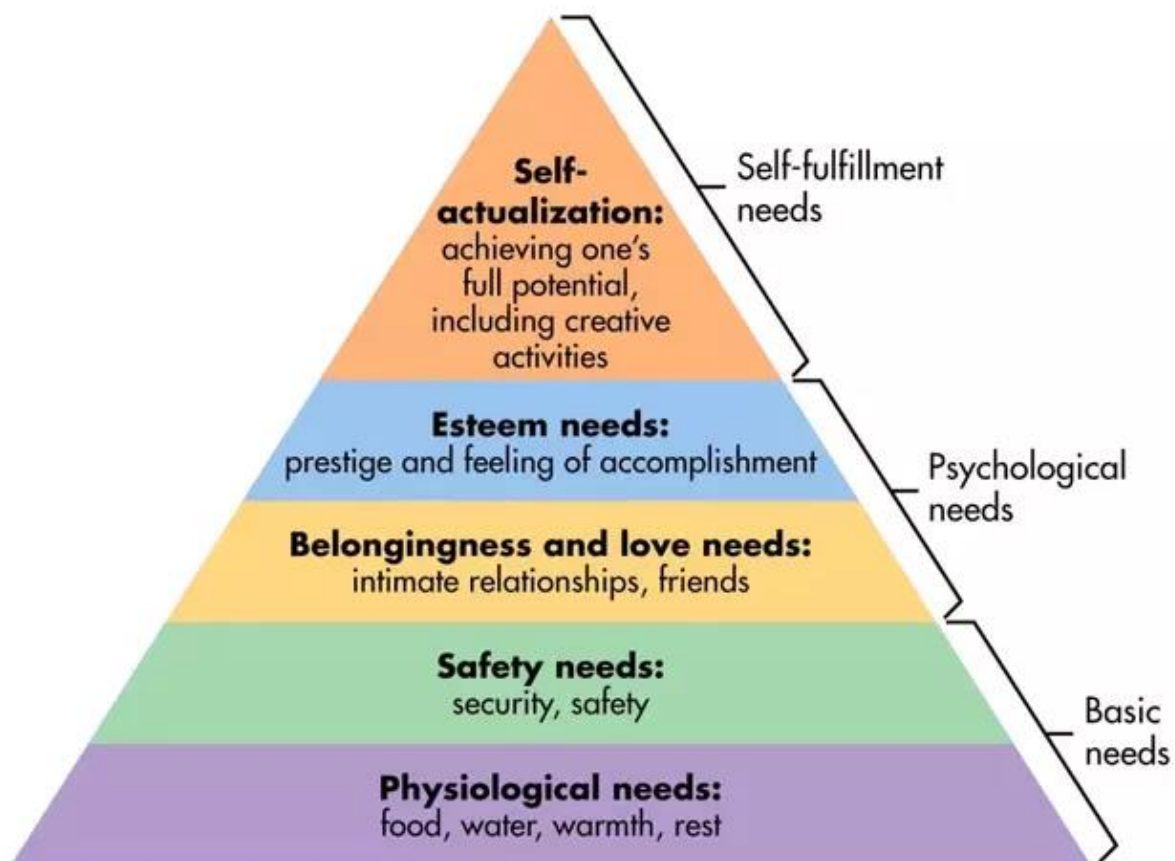
Abraham Maslow outlined a motivational hierarchy consisting of five categories of human needs. The model illustrates how only when a need is satisfied enough, the next need will take more prominence. Therefore, the needs are arranged in ascending order being:
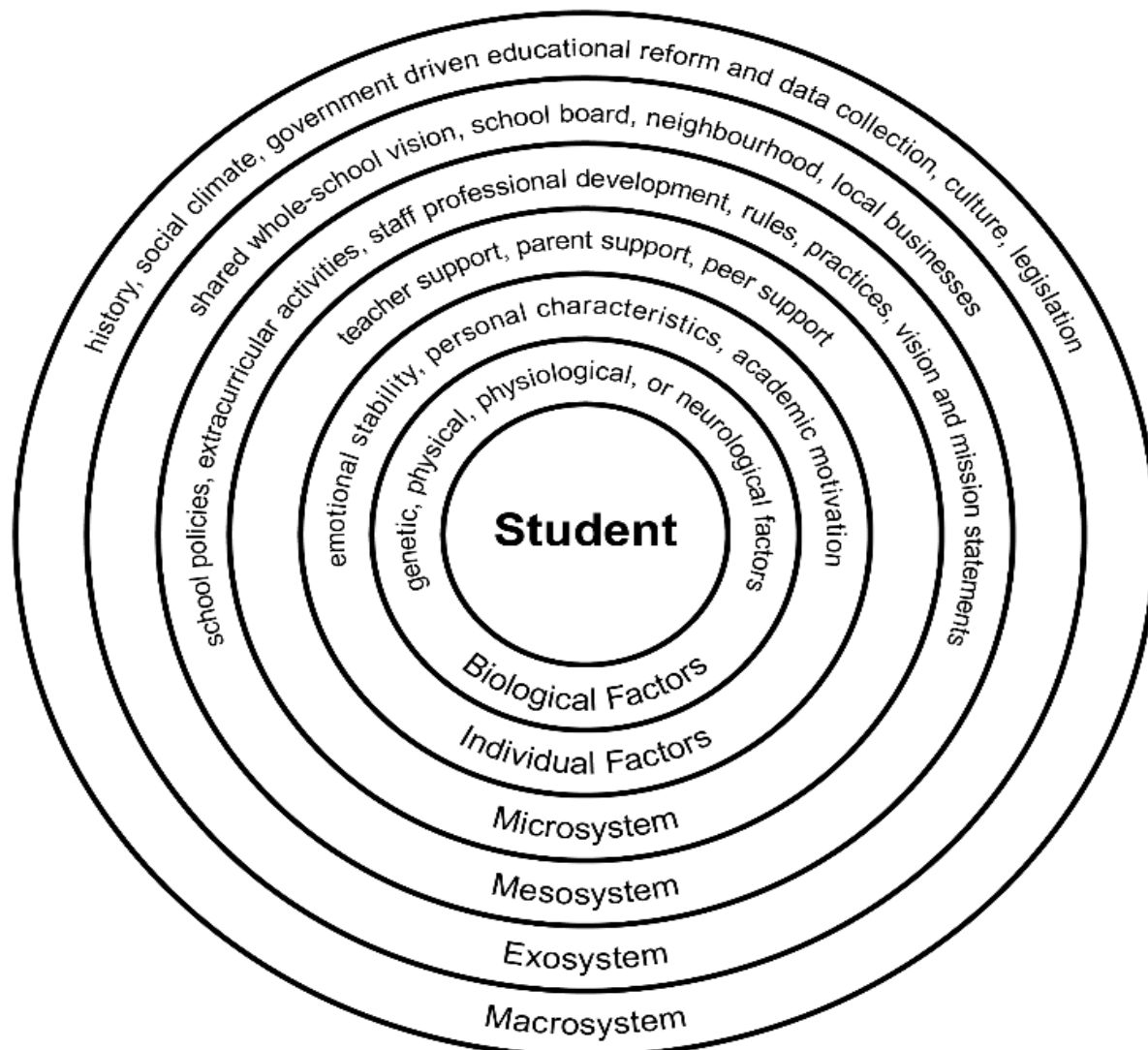
1. *Physiological basic needs* satisfied by food, sleep, warmth and rest. This addresses the need to be provided for in the most basic sense of life and having shelter.
2. *Safety needs* satisfied by security and the feeling of being safe in the community
3. *Belongingness and love needs* satisfied by the need to belong. This relates to the 'Theory of belongingness' which is the human emotional need to be accepted as part of a group. Roy Baumeister (1995) argued that belongingness is such a fundamental human motivation that people feel severe consequences for not belonging.
4. Once a person feels part of something bigger and part of the community, he/she can then move on the *Esteem needs* which entail the need to accept oneself and believe in oneself. This brings us to an important question most youngsters ask: 'How do I learn to love myself?' And the answer is 'You don't start with love, you start with accepting. Once you accept yourself as you are, you can start the journey to loving who you are and work on where you want to be'. Obviously, issues such as bullying and commparing would not help the young person to reach and satisfy this psychological need. Maslow classified in two categories: - esteem for oneself (self-worth, dignity and mastery) and –desire for reputation and respect from others (status and prestige).

These first four needs: namely physiological, safety, belongingness and love, and esteem needs are seen as 'Deficiency-needs'. These needs arise due to deprivation and are said to motivate the person when the need is unmet.

5. The fifth and final need is the Self-Actualisation need which is also known as 'Growth-need' or 'Being-need'. According to Maslow as well as other humanist writers like Erich Fromm and Carl Rogers, every person has an essential striving toward growth and this is prevented from reaching fulfilment only by conditions, judgements and expectations made by society and culture (Cofer & Appley, 1964). The final stage is reached when all the basic needs are gratified and the individual has adjusted to his environment.

Migration and the hierarchy of needs

Immigration is a major event in one's life. It is a disruption in the life pattern of the individual which affects the person on all levels and areas in his/her life. The move makes sever behavioural demands on the individuals and is generally accompanied by various manifestations of emotional disturbance which Oberg (1960) has termed 'culture shock'. Research has shown how moving indefinitely to a new country can induce a 'personality crisis', built from stress of the experience

and is increased if there is impoverishment of the immigrant's ego (Ben-David, 1970). Ben-David notes that as a result of the disorganisation of the ego, the biological needs take prominence and when faced with stress and frustration, a regression to lower levels of the need hierarchy may take place (Barker, Dembo and Lewin, 1941). Therefore, if a person had reached a level before migration, and then the moving country event has brought about certain fears and stresses, this might trigger the migrant to move down the hierarchy of needs and start from the lower needs once again.

Adjustment into the environment can be seen as a recovery process in which the migrant gradually and with the right support can move back up the hierarchy towards self-actualisation. The process might be a long one and this depends also on the situation of the country which the migrant and his/her family have left; and what was the reason for this leaving. The journey up the hierarchy involves people overcoming insecurity, loneliness, self-confusion and recovering from the condition which the 'culture shock' brings.

Having this as a basis of knowledge as an educator, increases the awareness of what migration can do to the person in this process of moving countries. It brings to the attention that a migrant learner in school might not be able to focus on schoolwork and theoretical subjects if he/she does not yet feel safe in the country and provided for. Therefore, it is important that as an educator, this state of play in the personality of the migrant is seen to and acknowledged. Linking this to the traits of the effective educator, this aspect is highlighted more seeing how the educator is an important part in the journey of the migrant from one need to another in the hierarchy of needs.

The diagram shows concentric circles labeled from center outward:

- **Student** (center)
- genetic, physical, physiological, or neurological factors — Biological Factors
- emotional stability, personal characteristics, academic motivation — Individual Factors
- teacher support, parent support, peer support — Microsystem
- shared whole-school vision, school board, neighbourhood, local businesses — Mesosystem
- school policies, extracurricular activities, staff professional development, rules, practices, vision and mission statements — Exosystem
- history, social climate, government driven educational reform and data collection, culture, legislation — Macrosystem

The Theory of Belongingness in the school system

Link to YouTube video The Need to Belong: The Belongingness Hypothesis and the Psychology and Theory behind It: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjVqnu611QI

Link to Ted talk The Human Need for Belonging, Amelia Franck Meyer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-r-ci4iybt8

Schools are important developmental contexts for children and adolescents. When the learner feels that they belong within the group, the general wellbeing of the student is enhanced. This then

includes the enhancement of academic achievement (Anderman & Freeman, 2004). Group membership in early adolescence is linked with greater interest and enjoyment in schools while those who do not feel a part of the school, will lessen their engagement (Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997). Different research highlights how in middle schools and high schools, a more positive sense of belonging has been linked to perceived *trust in the teacher* and safety in the school environment, which might lead to greater involvement in the school such as groups of art, drama and sports.

In a study exploring associations between a sense of school belonging and academic and psychological adjustment, Pittman and Richmond found that college students who reported a greater sense of belonging at their school, were doing better academically and felt more competent academically but also had a higher self-worth, better coping mechanisms in times of stress and lower levels of externalizing problems. However, students who were having problems with their teacher and peers, were found to experience more internalizing behaviours due to feeling less connected to their school (Pittman & Richmond, 2007). This is a big part of what inclusion in schools' entails.
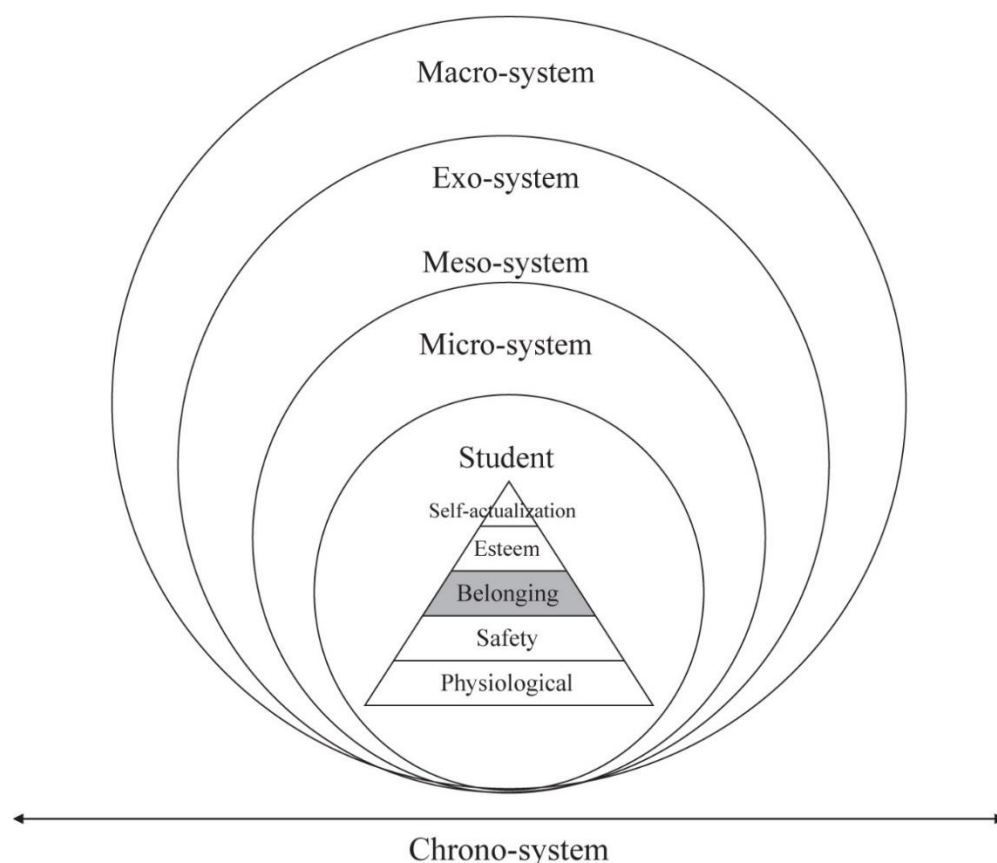
It's obvious by now that helping the students feel that they belong in the school has immense positive impact. However, one might ponder on how this can be done on a daily basis. A research carried out by Capps in 2005, the study asked precisely this question to around a hundred teachers: 'What changes could teachers make to help students feel a part of the school?' There were various answers, but the main ones are condensed in the following list:

1. Making sure the teachers feel like part of the campus. If teachers are proud of where they work and are satisfied in their jobs, the students will witness that in the classroom.
2. Teachers need to be more positive and pro-active in talking with all students to engage them in conversation.
3. Be more culturally aware in their dealings with students. Treat them fairly, and encourage pride in their school by exhibiting that pride themselves. Get to know their students on a more personal level. Know the interests of the students and design some lessons that are more meaningful to the students. Teachers can focus on making lessons multicultural.
4. They can encourage the students to take part in different clubs and organizations.
5. Approach students in a non-confrontational manner. No yelling. Smile more often. Speak to students in the hallway. Be more positive.
6. More one-on-one conversations. I feel that does a good job of helping students feel a part of the school. For those students that may not feel a part, the biggest change I could suggest would be to get to know the students and find out how he/she could become a part.
7. There is a need to plan or schedule more "fun" activities that involve the entire student body. Assemblies, field trips, field day, pep-rallies. This allows students the opportunities to interact with other students and see their teachers participate in something other than "business as usual."
8. Teachers could be more intentional about seeking out students who are not involved and helping direct them.
9. Show they care about each and every student — build a relationship.
10. Be more open to the differences of students, offer more student service organizations, art program.

2.4 Conclusion

From this module, we have seen how the educator can be one of the pivotal link in the life of the migrant learner who just arrived in a new country. Through the self-reflection of the educator of what makes him/her effective and through the increasing of awareness of how the hierarchy of needs effects the migrant learners, it can be concluded that the job of the educator is more about

how he/she teaches than about the content. Building a relationship of trust and creating a safe space where the migrant learner can feel secure and safe are pillars to building the bridge so that the learners can be in a position of learning about academics and learning about himself/herself as a whole human being.

Main Learning Points

- ➢ Increase the knowledge about what makes a good educator and what are the most popular traits which make an effective and ineffective educator
- ➢ Learn more about the Ikigai as a reflection on one's life
- ➢ Learn more about the hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow
- ➢ Understand how the hierarchy of needs can be used with regards to the migrants' journey in a new country
- ➢ Learn about the Theory of Belongingness by Roy Baumeister
- ➢ Increase the awareness of how an educator can make the students feel that they belong in the school system

- • 5 reflective questions

1. What are some of the traits that make the educator an effective one?
2. What are the hierarchy of needs and how does a person move up or down the needs?
3. How does the hierarchy of needs relate to migrants in particular?
4. What does the Theory of Belongingness say?
5. How can you practice this in your daily life as an educator?

References

Adler, S. (1977). Maslow's need hierarchy and the adjustment of immigrants. *International Migration Review, 11*(4), 444. doi:10.2307/2545398.

Anderman, L. H., & Freeman, T. (2004). Students' sense of belonging in school. In M. L. Maehr & P. R. Pintrich (Eds.), Advances in motivation and achievement: Vol. 13. Motivating

students, improving schools - The legacy of Carol Midgley (pp. 27-63). Greenwich, CT: Elsevier

Barker, R. et al. 1941 "Frustration and Regression: An Experiment with Young Children", University of Iowa Studies on Child Welfare, 18(1): 1-314.

Baumeister, R. F.; Leary, M. R. (1995). "The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation". Psychological Bulletin. 117 (3).

Ben-David, J. 1970 "Ethnic Differences or Social Change?" In Integration and Development in Israel. S.N. Eisenstadt, R. Bar-Yosef and C. Adler, eds. Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press. Pp. 368-387.

Capps, M. A. (2005). Characteristics of a sense of belonging and its relationship to academic achievement of students in Selected middle school in Region IV and VI education service Centers, Texas (Doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2005). College Station, TX: Texas A & M University.

Cofer, C.N., and M.H. Appley. 1964 'Motivation: Theory and Research', New York: Wiley.

Jaya, M., and Baskar, D. (2015). A pragmatic study on Innovative technique in teaching. Global Journal for Research Analysis, 4 (9), 194-195

Kumar, S. (2018). A STUDY OF TYPE OF PERSONALITY AND APTITUDE OFB.ED TEACHER TRAINEES OF MYSORE CITY. *International Education and Research Journal*.

Maslow, A.H. 1970 Motivation and Personality. 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Row.

Mills, J. (1978). Who is the teacher. The Theosophist , 99, 1-5

Oberg, K. 1960 "Culture Shock", Practical Anthropology, 7:177-182.

Parker, P. J. (1997). The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pittman, L. D.; Richmond, A. (2007). "Academic and psychological functioning in late adolescence: The importance of school belonging". Journal of Experimental Education. 75 (4): 270–290. doi:10.3200/jexe.75.4.270-292. S2CID 144378588.

Wentzel, K. R.; Caldwell, K. (1997). "Friendships, peer acceptance, and group membership". Child Development. 68 (6): 1198–1209. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1997.tb01994.x. PMID 9418234.

Yoganandan, G., & Vetriselvan, V. (2017). Personality traits of (in) effective teachers as identified by Indian MBA Students: A qualitative study. *Asian Journal of Management, 8*(3), 403. doi:10.5958/2321-5763.2017.00064.6