

Comparison of T-Groups in



The History and Characteristics of Laboratory Training in Two Asian Countries

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In Asia, there are two countries where laboratory training has been developed systematically and continuously for more than 40 years. One is India, and another is Japan. The aim of this paper is to compare T-Groups in India and Japan in terms of their history and characteristics.

Laboratory training in India has been developed mainly by Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS) since 1972. In Japan, it was developed by JICE (Japan Institute of Christian Education in Rikkyo University) from its introduction upto the 1980s, and by the Center for the Study of Human Relations, Nanzan University (CSHR-NU; formerly Nanzan Junior College) to which the author belongs, from 1970s to present.

History of T-Groups in India

Initial groups in India were conducted by Rolf Lynton in 1957. He established "Aloka" in Mysore in order to develop the capacity of youth. He implemented leadership training for 12 weeks, including unstructured group experience.

In north India, Max Coley, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University, USA, and a member of NTL, stayed in Delhi from 1959 to 1962 as a consultant to the Ministry of Education. He conducted T-Groups in his house, and Udai Pareek was one of participants. With the help of a recommendation from Coley, Pareek visited USA in 1961 for a half year and was trained by NTL. He became a member and subsequently a Fellow of NTL. After his return to India, the first full-scale Laboratory Training in India was implemented in 1962 in Ferozpur by Coley and Pareek. In 1960 Lynton shifted to SEIT Institute and Pareek also joined him there.

They started "L-groups" in SEIT Institute from 1964. In 1960s, SEIT Institute became a central organization of Laboratory Training.

At the same time, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIM-C) invited some NTL members as visiting professors, and they implemented Laboratory Trainings there. After that, Behavioural Sciences Group in IIM-C had offered many labs, and this group became a base of Laboratory Training in eastern India.

In the latter half of 1960s, 14 individuals from India visited USA and studied in NTL, some were supported by IIM-C and some were self-sponsored, etc (Sinha 1986). They started offering Laboratory Training to industrial companies from around 1970. Soon it was felt that an association for facilitators like NTL would be needed in India too. In 1971, by Francis Menezes' proposal, a 2 day conference for establishing an association of T-Group facilitators was held in Pune. As the result, the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS) was established in 1972.

From the beginning ISABS undertook development of new facilitators. The programme has been called "PDP" (Professional Development Program). A person who finishes PDP becomes a professional member of ISABS, and can function as a T-Group facilitator. Currently ISABS has more than 120 professional members. It conducts two national, and several (about 10) regional events, offering more than 50 labs (T-Groups) in a year. Many professional members of ISABS are also members of the National HRD Network (HRD standing for Human Resource Development), and are working in HRD roles in industries, consultancy and other organizations. Many companies send their employees to

laboratory training offered by ISABS. The link between HRD in industrial companies and ISABS is strong and close.

History of T-Groups in Japan

The first full-scale Laboratory Training in Japan was implemented in 1958 under the name of "Laboratory on the Church and Group Life", as one of the events in 14th World Convention of Christian Education. This laboratory training was conducted for twelve days. The training staff were 10 facilitators who belonged to the Protestant Episcopal Church in USA and Canada. They were all trained at NTL and they conducted the labs in English. The participants were Japanese clergymen and missionaries of Protestant churches who could speak English. This first laboratory contained three elements : T-group, theory session and practice groups (structured group exercises). These three elements were allocated equally.

This first lab had an impact on some participants, and they continued spontaneous study meetings. Later, these meetings led to establishment of JICE (Japan Institute of Christian Education in Rikkyo University). Since 1962, JICE has implemented laboratory trainings by Japanese staff every year. From 1968, the name of the training was changed from "Laboratory on the Church Life" to "JICE Laboratory Training", and participants were recruited not only from leaders of church but also from other areas. JICE became a leading institute of T-Groups in Japan.

At the same time, T-Group was used by social psychologist in Kyushu University to study group dynamics. They conducted some T-groups, but their main interest was research rather than training, so their T-group activities have not continued.

Under the influence of flourishing T-Groups in USA, Japanese industry got interested in and started T-Groups in 1960s. The Sanno Junior College (Junior College for Industrial Efficiency) invited E. Massarik to Japan in 1963 under whose supervision "Sensitivity Training"(S.T.) workshop was conducted for Japanese industry. After the mid 1960s, some business and consultancy companies conducted "S.T." for industrial units. Some of trainers in these "S.T." were not adequately trained, and at the request of sponsors (companies) who sent participants, they conducted "operational" training and tried to "change" participants' attitudes and behavior. In an extreme case, a few trainers used violence on participants. In the late 1960s these problems in "S.T." received publicity in the media, and it became a social problem temporarily. As a result, the number of T-Groups conducted by business and consultancy companies got reduced in the middle of 1970s.

On the other hand, "learner-centered" laboratory training continued at JICE. In 1972, in cooperation with JICE, the Department of Human Relations in Nanzan Junior College was established. In this department, all education was done by

the laboratory method for female students who were 18 to 20 years old. T-group was compulsory for all students. Almost all regular classes in the department also used experiential learning. The facilitation process was softer, gentler and more "learner-centered" in T-groups run for young female students. This "learner-centered" approach was also the result of introspection by trainers who had been involved in the unfortunate "S.T.s" in 1960s and early 1970s.

In 1977, the Center for the Study of Human Relations in Nanzan Junior College was established, and this center started conducting laboratory training for adult learners as public training programs. After 1980s, JICE became less active, and Nanzan Junior College became the central institute for implementing laboratory training in Japan. In Nanzan Junior College, the total number of T-group participants was about 3,000 students, and about 400 adult learners. From the year 2000, the staff (and the department / center) shifted to Nanzan University. At present the Center for the Study of Human Relations in Nanzan University (CSHR-NU) implements many laboratory trainings for adult learners as public trainings, and the Department of Psychology and Human Relations in Nanzan University implements T-Group and structured laboratory trainings for undergraduate students. Since 2004, the course "Master of Educational Facilitation" was also started as a post-graduate course for capacity building of laboratory facilitators.

T-groups in Japan have developed within the education system, initially for Christian education, and later for education in college and university. As a result, T-group trainers in Japan have developed their skills as educators rather than as OD practitioners. The link between T-Groups and industrial companies has been weaker.

Comparison of history between India and Japan

The origin of T-Group in both countries was the same; it was brought in from NTL and was introduced around 1960 in both countries. But the history after the end of 1960s was different in the two countries. In India, ISABS was established and it had rigorous system of development of T-group facilitators. It seems that ethics of laboratory training has been protected in India. On the other hand, there was no system of facilitator development program at that time in Japan. In the latter half of 1960s, industry took keen interest in T-groups because of the influence of USA, but well-trained facilitators were in short supply. As a result, ethical problems emerged in some training conducted around 1970.

Another difference is the interest of facilitators. In India, many researchers and practitioners of applied behavioral science developed their skill in laboratory training. They have applied their skills and methods to OD (Organization Development) and HRD (Human Resource Development). There has been interest in both practice and research in India. In Japan, T-

groups have been implemented in the area of education, especially Christian education and education for college/university students. Facilitators have been interested in education for humanistic development. In the process, educational philosophy of facilitation has been developed, but it has not been applied to real life fields, such as OD and HRD.

Training schedule in India by ISABS

Laboratory training conducted by ISABS is usually for 6 days, and it includes 16 or 17 T-Group sessions. A training program in the Winter Event (2004 in Agra) is shown as Table 1. Usually, fourth session on third day is not conducted; and then the total number of T sessions is 17. The pattern of training schedule by ISABS is comparatively stable. (See Table 1).

Training schedule in Japan by CSHR-NU

A training program schedule in Japan is shown in Table 2. This schedule is a sample program, because programs of laboratory training by CSHR-NU vary according to participants' situation. Usually, the training schedule for the next day is decided in the staff meeting conducted the previous night. (See Table 2).

The objectives and contents of the program in each community session varies according to participants' situation. Table 3 shows a sample of programs in 2003. Basically, the following three elements are usually included in all labs by CSHR-NU : (a) writing reflection sheet after each T session, (b) night sessions after finishing each day's program, and (c) community session for reflection (e.g. community session 5-1 and 5-2 in Table 2.) after finishing all T-Group sessions (See Table 3).

(a) The *reflection sheets* after each T sessions contain 5 or 6 items, and participants write down the group process according to these items. These sheets are collected and read by facilitators during the interval (break time), and thereafter these sheets are put in the session room. Members of the group can read these sheets in order to share their process observations. Incidentally, at the end of a T session, facilitators usually distribute reflection sheets for the session. This is done regardless of whatever may be happening in their group, except in an extreme situation. Ending time (and also starting time) of T sessions is punctual in Japan.

(b) *The night sessions* are conducted every evening after finishing all programs, and are meant to help participants to relax and reflect. Participants listen to music and poems, or do some relaxation exercise in the night sessions.

Table 1. A schedule of laboratory training by ISABS in India (winter event in 2004 at Agra)

	First day	Second day	Third day	Forth day	Fifth day	Sixth day
	7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
	8:30	T1	T5	T8	T12	T16
	10:30	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Check out
	11:00	T2	T6	T9	T13	Reflection
	13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	c.s. 3
	14:00	T3	T7	T10	T14	Lunch
	16:00	Tea break	Free (Faculty meeting)	Tea break	Tea break	
	16:30	T4		T11	T15	
	18:30	Free (Faculty meeting)		Free (Faculty meeting)	Free (Faculty meeting)	
19:30	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner		
21:00						
23:00	Community Session 1		Community Session 2		Party	

*c.s. = community session

Table 2. A schedule of laboratory training by CSHR-NU in Japan (Sep./2003 at Kiyosato)

	First day	Second day	Third day	Forth day	Fifth day	Sixth day
	7:30 8:45	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
		T2	T6	T9	T12	Community Session 6 [Preparing to go back]
	10:00 10:15 10:45	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	
		Break	Break	Break	Break	
		T3	T7	T10	T13	
	12:15 12:30	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	
	13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	14:30	Free	Free	Free	Free	
15:00	Community Session 1 [Clarifying Objectives]	c.s. 2	Community Session 3 [group work exercise]	Community session 4 [non-verbal group exercise]	Community Session 5-1 [Reflection by oneself]	
15:30		T4				
		w.r.s.				
17:30	Break	Break	Break	Break		
18:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
19:15						
20:45	T1	T5	T8	T11	c.s. 5-2	
	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	w.r.s.	[Sharing]	
21:00	n.s.1	n.s.2	n.s.3	n.s.4	n.s.5	
21:10						
21:30	Staff meeting	Staff meeting	Staff meeting	Staff meeting	Staff meeting	
24:00						

*c.s. = community session n.s. = night session (community session for meditation, etc.)
w.r.s. = writing reflection sheet

(c) *The community sessions* for reflecting on all T-group sessions on fifth day (e.g. community session 5-1 and 5-2 in Table 2.) consist of two parts. In the community session 5-1, participants reflect on all sessions with reference to their own reflection sheets of each T-group session, and write what they have learned from their experience. In the community session 5-2, participants share their learning with each group members.

These structured programs for reflection facilitate each participant's experiential learning cycle. CSHR-NU usually uses the EIAHE' model (E: "Experience"- I: "Identify"- A: "Analyze"- H: "Hypothesize"- E: next "Experience") as experiential learning cycle (Nakamura, 2004). Short lecture sessions are sometimes conducted in community session 1 and 2, but learning from theory is not emphasized in Japan.

Comparison of training schedule between in India and Japan

In Table 4, time allocation in each training schedule is compared. As shown in Table 4, laboratory training by ISABS

includes more T-group sessions (82.1%) and less community sessions (12.8%) compared to CSHR-NU (45.0% and 43.1%, respectively). Lab training by ISABS is more unstructured than by CSHR-NU (See Table 4).

Labs by CSHR-NU include structured group experiences among group members more, such as 6.5 hours in CSHR-NU versus 0 hour in ISABS as shown in Table 4 (column [E]). Hofstede's (1980) wide ranging study of international differences compared levels of "uncertainty avoidance" (i.e "tolerance of ambiguity") among many countries. Uncertainty avoidance in India was low (33rd rank in 39 countries). On the other hand, Japan was very high (4th rank). As mentioned by Pareek (2002), this means that Indian participants have high ambiguity tolerance, and they may be accustomed to unstructured situations.

In Japan, time spent in T session is less than in ISABS, and time spent in structured group experience in community sessions is more (16.0%). One reason for this seems to be that in CSHR-NU T-Groups have been used with young female students, and long and continued unstructured groups may

Table 3. Objectives and contents of each community session by CSHR-NU (2003 at Kiyosato)

	Objective	Content of program
Community Session 1 (first day: 2.5 hours)	- To clarify and to share one's objectives for this training. - To know how to learn in this training.	- exercise for clarifying one's objectives - short lecture "objectives and contents of program in this training" - announcement of T-group member
Community Session 2 (second day: 1 hour)	- To be aware of group process	- short lecture "content and process" - exercise "paired interview about group process"
Community Session 3 (third day: 3 hours)	- To be aware of oneself, members and group in different situation. - To enjoy with physical activity.	- group work exercise in outside "making objet d'art" - writing reflection sheet and sharing
Community Session 4 (fourth day: 2.5 hours)	- To symbolize one's way of interaction to other members & group, and to share it.	- nonverbal group work exercise "representation of oneself & group" - writing reflection sheet and sharing
Community Session 5-1 (fifth day: 3.5 hours)	- To clarify one's learning through reflecting all sessions.	- individual work: writing; learning from experience, with reference of the reflection sheet in each session.
Community Session 5-2 (fifth day: 2.5 hours)	- To expand one's learning through sharing among group members.	- sharing one's learning (written in c.s. 5-1) among group members
Community Session 6 (sixth day: 2.5 hours)	- To prepare to go back to daily life. - To seek how to apply one's learning to one's field.	- individual work: writing action plan, writing letter to oneself after 6 months, etc.

*c.s. = community session

Table 4. Comparison of time allocation

	India (ISABS)	Japan (CSHR-NU)
[A] Length of whole program	6 days 5 nights (115.5 hours)	6 days 5 nights (119.5 hours)
[B] Time of program & percentage <B/A> except break, free, and mealtime	16 T sessions + 3 c.s. 39 hours (33.8%)	13 sessions + 6 c.s. 40.6 hours (34.0%)
[C] Time of T sessions & percentage among program time <C/B>	32 hours (82.1%)	18.25 hours (45.0%) except w.r.s.
[D] time of community sessions & percentage among program time <D/B>	5 hours (12.8%) except reflection session	17.5 hours (43.1%) except n.s.
[E] time of structured group work among group members in community sessions & percentage among program time <E/B>	0 hour (0 %)	6.5 hours (16.0%) including c.s.2,3,4
[F] time of reflection program & percentage among program time <F/B>	3 hours (7.7%) including reflection session+c.s.3	13.6 hours (33.5%) including w.r.s.+c.s.5,6 +n.s.
[G] time of staff meeting	about 6 hours	about 16 hours

*c.s. = community session w.r.s. = writing reflection sheet of each T session n.s. = night session

be stressful for them. Another historical reason is the percentage of community sessions being less than initial laboratory training in Japan. In the early 1970s, JICE implemented community sessions more; the numbers of community sessions were from 7 to 10 (Nakahori, 1985). The number and percentage of community sessions have been reduced with time, especially lecture sessions.

Another difference is that laboratory training by CSHR-NU includes more of writing reflection. It has been suggested that India is an oral culture (Pareek 2002), and Japanese people seem to be more accustomed to writing. CSHR-NU emphasizes writing for reflection as a procedure of data collection in order to learn from experience, as a function of "Identify" in EIAHE' cycle. From the comparison of time allocation in the training schedules, it can be said that a lab by ISABS emphasizes "experience of group in here and now", while a lab by CSHR-NU emphasizes "promoting experiential learning cycle".

Group Process and Facilitation

Group process in each T-Group is different. Every group has particular characteristics. And also, the ways of facilitation vary with the situation, and are different for each facilitator. It is very difficult to make comparisons between India and Japan generally, but I try to describe difference between ISABS and CSHR-NU, using the data of subjective observation through my experience.

There are many common points between both, such as objectives of training, focusing on the process in "here and now", focusing members' feelings, sharing feelings, giving and receiving feedback from each other, enhancing behavioral options and ownership, etc. Basic principle of laboratory training seems the same, because of the same origin (NTL).

But due to differences of nationality and culture, participants' behaviors and group process seems different between ISABS and CSHR-NU for adult learners. In labs by ISABS, group members seemed to be speaking more and listening less, overlaps of speech more (members speaking at the same), time of silence less, shifts of topics more frequent, members' concerns less (especially concern for "data flow", "goal formation", and "social control"; Gibb, 1964) than those by CSHR-NU. Indian participants seem more assertive, more robust and stronger mentally, and less concerned about group process. Japanese participants seem to be more thinking and feeling inside without speaking out, and have more concerns for group process.

According to these characteristics, the ways of intervention were naturally different. In the labs by ISABS, timing of intervention seemed earlier, the number of interventions seemed more, giving feedback by facilitator to members seemed more frequent, than in those by CSHR-NU. In Japan

(CSHR-NU), percentage of interventions by asking questions seemed more. Of course, this is not to say that one is better and the other is worse. These characteristics have developed through their respective histories influenced by culture and nationality. By the influence of history, the facilitators in CSHR-NU think that "learner-centered" attitude is most important. This may be shaped by history, one factor being the long experience of facilitation for sensitive young students, and another factor being a reflection of the unfortunate experience of "non-learner-centered" training that had been implemented around 1970 in Japan.

Conclusion

The origin of ISABS T-Groups and CSHR-NU T-Groups is same, i.e. NTL in USA. Laboratory training in both countries have many common points, and also show some differences. These differences seem to be shaped by the influences of culture and history. It is meaningful to interact with each other, in order to develop laboratory training in both countries more effectively.

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OUR NEST

Manas Shukla

I am staying in a small, unfurnished room in a suburb of Mumbai till I get a train back to my hometown a thousand miles away. There is only one window in this room (which is actually an abandoned kitchen) with sliding shutters, to save space, I guess. I am on the eighth floor and I can see several treetops from 'my window'. Just for three days this has become 'my window'.

These are two or three days in my life when I am simply 'being' there. There is nowhere to go, no one to speak to and nothing to do. Even the food arrives with clockwork regularity from a nearby takeaway.

It is a lonely and beautiful time to take stock and live with myself.

Just now the quiet was broken by a jetliner taking off from a nearby airport. I got up to close the shutters and looked at what my neighbours were doing. They live in a nest on one of the trees. There are Papa, Mama and three baby crows in the family. Their nest is right below my window and I have learnt not to throw cigarette butts outside. The nest looks sturdy but hastily put together. The crow family seems such a permanent establishment in this crazy mercurial city. Sharing and introjecting the crow family's concerns and delights are meeting my needs of anchorage and home.

The crow mom and dad spread their wings protectively over the three little ones who peek from beneath their glossy umbrella. The babies are at least ten days old and have enormous appetites. I once caught a passing look between mother and papa crow which seemed to say, "I am too tired to fly down for more worms. You go." Then after a while papa flew away to return with a juicy fat one.

These kids know what they want. They jostled their mother aside and opened their red mouths in never ending anticipation. Another crow flew past and the mother quickly covered her babies. Warding off the evil eye or perhaps just embarrassed at her children's display of imminent starvation.

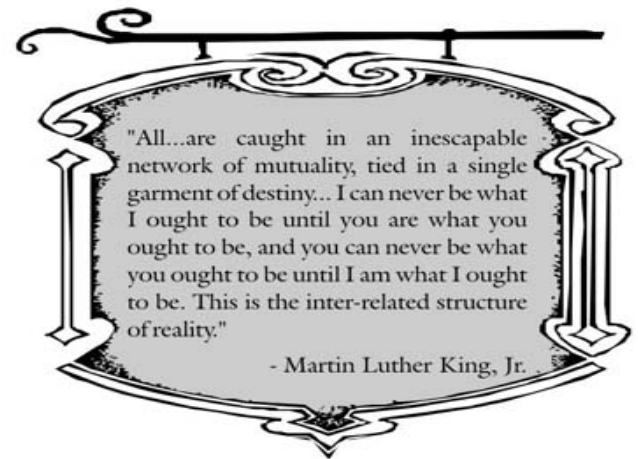
I am not an ornithologist or a National Geographic kind of a person but I have easily guessed who is the mother and who is the father. The mother always looks harried and often scolds

her babies, her husband and some winged guests who are probably papa's friends calling him to some boys' thing. She spends most of her time at home feeding and making quick forays for food. She is getting new frown lines because of an alley cat that has been spied yesterday in the neighbourhood.

The father displays highly energetic bouts of parenting and then flies off to be with the 'boys'. Today they had a fight. He proudly brought home a colorful bundle of cotton waste. "Extra padding for the children my dear, got it at an auction...." She turned her back to him. The kids did not even give their harlequin mattress a second look. It now hangs askew from a nearby twig. Papa is spending less time at home. I have not been able to locate his sulking spot.

But I have seen him once, alone with the babies. He looked at his sleeping young ones with intense love. I don't know if crows can love but my eyes were wet with tears as I related to this primeval bonding. Beast or Bird or Humankind does it really make a difference? Not now, I suppose, but later surely. These doting parents will, unlike my wife, and me, push and cajole and drive the babies out of the nest. A little training and a pretty final goodbye.

My wife and I will probably never be able to do this. We will cling to our daughters and traumatize ourselves with founded and unfounded worries every time they venture into the unknown. We will repair and replenish our nest again and again all through our lives. It is true that we will not have more and more babies like Mrs. And Mr. Crow but we do have two right now and I am sure there will be grandbabies in our nest and I hope we will be able to love them and yet set them free. ■



"All...are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny... I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the inter-related structure of reality."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Please send your feedback and contribution to future issues to Rusi Engineer, Ranjit Vilas, 8-B Dadyseth 2nd Cross Lane, Babulnath, Mumbai - 400 007. Email id: rusi_engineer@vsnl.net

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