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- Educational policies concerning Primary Education
- Questions and Answers
- States Round-up
- Illustrated material for classroom use.

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EDITORIAL

The present issue of the *Primary Teacher* covers articles and papers related to Early Childhood Education, Inclusive Education, Primary and Elementary Education and Implementation of SSA and RTE. It also presents studies on teacher satisfaction and professional commitment, classroom processes and the role of co-curricular activities in the learning of children. The National Plan of Action for Children 2005, approved by the Parliament, based on United Nation's Convention on Rights of Child (UNCRC), tries to ensure all rights to all children upto the age of 18 years. The goals, objectives and strategies related to 'Child Survival' and 'Child Development' were presented in previous two issues of the *Primary Teacher*. In this issue, goals, objectives and strategies to ensure rights related to Child Protection have been presented.

In this issue, we have included a special feature entitled 'Serving with Passion'. It highlights the commitment and sensitivity of a doctor, based on the author's personal experiences. She draws strong messages for the head teachers and teachers for developing sensitivity towards the learners. It focuses on the way good doctors remove fear from the mind of patients and make them confident to be healthy. The teachers should also treat their learners in a similar manner so as to make them confident, fearless and active learners. Issues related to corporal punishment, sensitivity towards special needs children and gender equality have also been highlighted in this special feature.

Under Early Childhood Care and Education, there are two articles. The first one "Learning while Playing at Early Childhood Stage" focuses on the play and experience based learning during early years and analyses the Piaget's concept of Physical Knowledge and Logico-Mathematical Knowledge as the process of learning and construction of knowledge by young children. The second article "Teacher Education in Early Childhood Care and Education" analyses the status of Early Childhood Teacher Education in the country. The quality of Early Childhood Teacher Education has been focused with a view to improve it by adopting multipronged strategies. Arguments have been placed to increase the duration of pre-service courses and adopt various other modes of training along with face to face.

The paper included in the area of Inclusive Education is entitled "SSA and the Present Status of Elementary Education of Visually Impaired Children—Enrolment, Special Teachers, Braille Textbooks, Assistive Devices, Accepting environment". It highlights the gaps in the coverage and resource availability for the education of visually impaired children and provides

suggestions to augment the necessary resources. It lays emphasis on creating an accepting environment for special needs children having visual impairment.

There are two studies on Teacher Education included in this volume. First one is on “Professional Commitment of School Teachers”, the second is on “Job Satisfaction of Government Primary School Teachers: A Study of Sant Ravidas Nagar, Bhadohi District, U.P. The study on professional commitment analyses the gender variation in various dimensions of commitment of secondary school teachers of Ghaziabad district. The second study analyses the job satisfaction of primary teachers having BTC and Special BTC training in the state of U.P and suggests that recruitment of special BTC trained teachers as primary teachers is not conducive to job satisfaction of these teachers.

There are three studies related to pedagogy and children’s learning achievement. One is on “Relevance of School Diary for Improving Classroom Processes” the second is on “Co-curricular Activities and Science Achievement of Secondary School Students” and third is a comparative study on “Learning Achievement of Elementary School Students in Urban Slums of Varanasi City”. The first one analyses the importance of school diary by examining the communication among child, parents and school in improving the classroom processes. It suggests how the quality of interaction can be improved between home and school and between child and teacher. The second study examines whether participation in sports and games has any impact on the science achievement of children. The study resulted in showing positive gains of participation in sports and other activities on science achievement. The third study on learning achievement of Class V students compares the achievement of slum children of Varanasi in Mathematics and Hindi with national level averages.

The next article “Access Provisions under the RTE Act (2009) and SSA” analyses the provisions made under the RTE Act for facilitating children’s access to schooling. Under the section ‘Impressions’ the value of maintaining dignity in difficult situations is highlighted through an anecdote.

In the section ‘Did You Know’ strategies for ‘Child Protection’ have been presented as given in the National Plan of Action for Children-2005. The hard work of Ms. Arti Dwivedi, *Junior Project Fellow (JPF)*, for finalising the manuscript of this issue is acknowledged.

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G. C. UPADHYAY, KAVITA SHARMA, KIRTI KAPUR
PADMA YADAV, KIRAN DEVENDRA

Serving with a Passion

Kiran Devendra*

My younger brother's wife Queenie was going to AktivOrtho for her spinal problems, where its Chairman and Managing Director, Dr Gerd Mueller, an orthopaedic surgeon of international repute, convinced her that she could get better with graded active and passive treatment. The moment Queenie learnt this, she thought of my spinal problem which was twelve years old, and was making me undergo a lot of pain which was showing in my eyes and face. When she told me that I needed to see Dr Mueller, I was uncomfortable and hesitant. I did not want to leave my coping mechanism, a comfort zone which I had developed for myself over the years. However, after an hour or two, she told me that it was up to me to decide, but I must try to meet the doctor who was mature and grounded.

I did go to AktivOrtho after two days. I soon realised that Dr Mueller is a grounded, practical and mature doctor, who has a lot of experience not

only in orthopaedics but also has an equally rich experience in Orthopaedic rehabilitation, sports medicine and medical fitness. Dr Mueller was the Deputy Chairperson of Hamburg's largest orthopaedic hospital. Having pursued orthopaedic surgery for several years, he identified an increasingly prevalent need for effective rehabilitation and pain management and, since then, has devoted himself to



Dr Gerd Mueller

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the non-invasive treatment of orthopaedic and related ailments. He is pursuing this as his passion. There is a special emphasis on the patients themselves taking an active role in their recovery. AktivOrtho team works with the patients to help them feel and get better. Dr Mueller believes that many patients can be helped without invasive surgery. However, it can also help in taking informed decisions in case of patients who would need surgery, in spite of all the available graded exercises and treatment programmes. Such patients can again join AktivOrtho for getting mobile and maintaining fitness after the surgery.

Gradually, with each visit to AktivOrtho, I began to slowly think of doing things which I had forgotten about. I was always scared that these would break my back. I became over-conscious of my overweight as I was finding it difficult to manage. I had been realising that I needed to reduce it. There was always a disbelief when I told the doctors that for atleast twenty-six days in a month I was eating sensibly, never missing my exercises and morning walks, and yet I was easily getting exhausted. No one actually guided me as to how to start using abdominal muscles which I never used in the last twelve years as, whoever I went to, either smiled at my overweight or politely told me that I should reduce the weight. I was very frequently getting cramps, increasing pains, stiffness, high level water retention and vertigo. I had learnt to deal with all these by developing

copng mechanisms both at mental and physical levels, compromising with faulty posture, which would somehow, let me read, write, sit for long hours painfully in office and frequently take short and long flights for official tours.

I had developed respect and faith in Dr Mueller within a week. I made an effort to let go my fears. He made me realise that an attitude of positive thinking which I have is good, it is good to count one's blessings and thank god for those. He, however, explained to me that this was not enough. I needed to understand that it is not right to think that 'even with so much of pain, I am able to do all my tasks, tours, long sittings in office' at a time when so much is available to make one actually feel better. He said that because of my fear and the mental acceptance and capacity to tolerate pain, I had forgotten to use my abdominal muscles. I was overusing my back muscles, which was not going to help me to go on compromising, as eventually, this would incapacitate my functioning. My treatment during the first two weeks involved heat therapy, triggering of the painful spots to allow better circulation of blood, deep tissue massage to unlock the muscles which had not been used for years. I was scared of movement as these would easily bring vertigo attacks, I was encouraged to go on a machine which would help me balance during fast movement and increase flexibility. I began to feel better after six sessions, became confident that I could manage myself even during

a lot of movement. Within no time, I learnt to stand without fear as Dr Mueller and the physiotherapists encouraged me by repeating, 'all muscles which need to work to help you remain stable will gradually begin to work'. With this my fear of movement disappeared. Nidhi and Frances helped me in the initial difficult phases, and then Lipi for a while under Dr Mueller's gentle but mature guidance, and his ability to take quick but right decisions to change the course of treatment. Treatment and exercises with the physiotherapists trained by him made me do things I could not. I became aware of my abdominal muscles. I also learnt how to bend forward sitting on a chair to use the abdominal muscles throughout the day.

Dr Mueller's wisdom in taking a decision was objective when I asked him if I needed to undergo kidney function test as the water retention was heavy. He said, "No, we will flush it out with a special kind of massage, lymphatic drainage." He got all the exercises stopped for more than a week. A month later when I went in for tests, the kidney function test was actually normal. My cramps have reduced both in intensity and frequency, the high level water retention has reduced with a massage for lymphatic drainage, and flexibility has increased with deep tissue massage. My posture has become better. Teachers could help every child by identifying what he/she cannot do and then helping her/him to overcome the levels of difficulty by

assuring the child that it will be possible. Improvement in every child by bringing in objectivity, keen observation by teachers, hand holding, reposing faith in child would make Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation meaningful for every child.

My muscles which were non-functional for years are gradually becoming functional. With deep tissue massage and exercises, I have become more comfortable and know which exercises to do when I get exhausted. The flexibility of my body is slowly increasing. I have started understanding that exercises on the machines will help me only if I understand, assess my needs and evaluate progress and difficulties with Dr Mueller and the physiotherapists.

Each visit and discussion with Dr Mueller reminds me of the participatory approach that National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) advocates and envisages for better teaching-learning processes. The participatory approach to evaluation where the stakeholders participate with evaluators, themselves become aware of the need to address the issues which have bottlenecks. The initial resistance of the stakeholders gradually disappears as they become confident with their participation, and with a lot of evidence coming from the fields – schools, teachers, parents, functionaries and the administrators – for the need to change for better results. Once the stakeholders begin to get confident and believe that a critical input would help in addressing the

unaddressed issues, a better delivery of quality initiatives in education introduced by the States and Union Territories is assured. A decision can be taken for a mid-term correction after assessing and evaluating the needs of the learners, stakeholders and teachers' needs as well for meaningful training programmes. The participatory approach does help the States/Union Territories to take a decision to improve, replicate and upscale programmes/initiatives in the area of school education.

Dr Mueller's positive attitude to help every patient while maintaining his/her dignity, continuously reminds me of Children with Special Needs. Years of my visits to schools, both urban and rural in States/UTs, it has been a painful experience to observe these children either getting totally ignored or typecasted. It is hard to believe that there is a total lack of concern and sensitivity for these children. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (Education for All) has a lot of concern in its schemes for Children with Special Needs. The Right to Education Act 2009 envisages concern for quality education for every child in the age group of 6-14 years of age. The Act has given great concern for these children. To ensure quality education of every child in this age group, the Children with Special Needs need to be accepted, treated with dignity and provided enabling learning environment in schools. The children who do not do well in academics are also treated badly in schools and

homes. The teachers and the parents want children to do extremely well. Never do they want to find out the reason of their not doing well. Some children could be emotionally disturbed, some could be finding it difficult to cope with the increasing learning gaps and there could be many other reasons. Dr Mueller believes in treating pain by addressing all dimensions of a person's life – physical, social, emotional and psychological. This holistic approach brings positive results. Our teachers need to understand children, their backgrounds, their areas of difficulties, creating situations where all of them can participate in teaching-learning processes in different ways. Hand holding and, trying to assure children that they can do well, would go a long way to help these children.

I have heard of Indian doctors who worked abroad and returned to India with the hope of serving patients in their country with better professional learning and experience from various countries they worked in. Some came back as their parents were getting old and were the only child of their parents. I have no idea as to how many doctors from overseas have come back to our country to serve the people. I have come across only one, Dr Mueller, who has moved to India with his wife Gabrielle and two small children. His son Charlie is six years old and daughter Ava is four years old. His wife looks after the management aspects of AktivOrtho. He has determined to be in India to serve people with ortho and



Dr Gerd Mueller

nerve related issues. He often tries to go beyond these to help his patients deal with their difficulties, improve and stay fit.

There has never been a question or an anxiety of any patient which has not been addressed to by Dr Mueller. He finds time and patience to address their anxieties which saves patients from losing their confidence. His unique technique of mobilisation gives immediate relief to patients.

When electricity cuts are there, most of us at home and in our offices do crib a lot, never hesitate to blame the government for not being able to provide the basic amenities. For days, the air conditioning at AktivOrtho did not work, for the comfort of the patients, big pedestal fans were placed in all the rooms. During this period one of the machines got burnt. There was no fuss at all as every physiotherapist and the reception desk were all working normally. I was a little upset as Dr Mueller had taken a very challenging

decision, not an easy one to leave his country at a time when the heat was at its peak in India, to follow his passion to make people with ortho problems feel better. I shared my concern with him that he and his family must be finding it difficult to adjust in such high temperatures. It surely must have been a challenge to convert an ordinary building into a beautiful pain management and rehabilitation AktivOrtho clinic, facing the difficulties of dealing with contractors, getting all the equipments, machines from Germany and shifting to two houses as the first one had some problems. Dr Mueller's calm answer to this was, "I have accepted the challenge and I will adjust to any and everything and so will my family." His wife firmly supports Dr Mueller's vision and does all that she can, with two small children.

Gradually, I discovered in Dr Mueller the depth of understanding of human issues. He is a person who speaks little but is fully aware, a thinker and highly evolved intellectually. His devotion to his profession both as an orthopaedic surgeon, and now guiding pain management and healing people without surgery, his intense interaction with patients, doctors, physiotherapists has brought in him great understanding and clarity. This has led him to publish widely on sports medicine, biomechanics of spine and back pain treatment in research journals. His book *The Lumbar Spine* is beautifully brought out. It has inputs of a psychologist and a pain

specialist, algesiologist. One is used to seeing books in orthopaedics by orthopaedic surgeons. The involvement of a psychologist and a pain specialist enriches the value and contribution of this book in orthopaedics. This book and his various articles on orthopaedics and pain management are consulted by a large number of researchers and practitioners.

mental decision to keep updating our knowledge. We must also make an effort to keep in view every child's need. Dr Mueller comes across as a well-read person, who reads a lot, discusses larger issues and concerns. I was happy and surprised to discover that he finds time to read out books like Richard Bach's *Flight of Jonathan Livingston Seagull* to his children. I noticed him



Examining the Spine of the Patient

Most of the doctors I respect are excellent in their field and in making their patients feel better. They do read everything to update themselves in their field of specialisation, publishing papers and attending conferences. They have little time to read other books and classics. Unfortunately, most of us as academics have given up reading which is not directly related to our work. Each one of us in the academic world and each one of us dealing with children's education at school level could take a

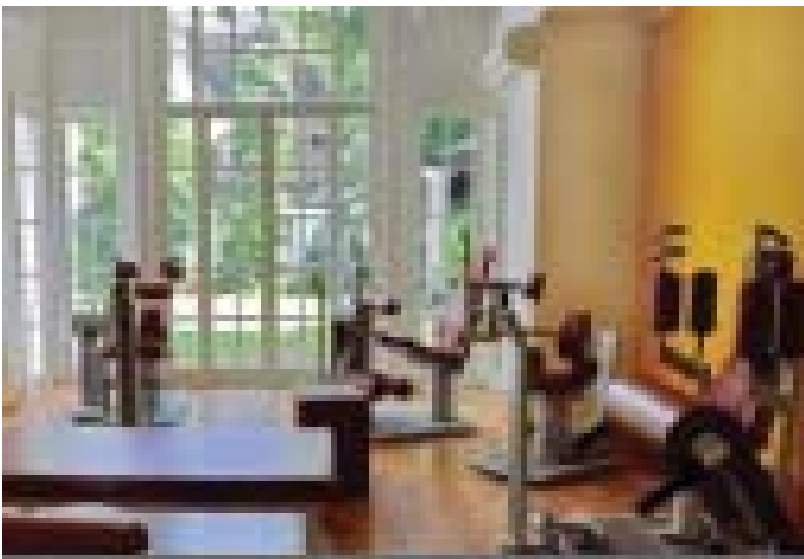
appreciating Charlie's painting and gently discussing Ava's concerns. We all love to see his small kids at AktivOrtho.

It did come to my mind that most of us as parents have a very high level of expectation from our children. We leave them to teachers who may treat them cruelly or disrespectfully. We, as a matter of fact, support them so that our children fulfil our dreams for them. Parents have never had a desire to talk to their children to find out as to what is it that they are interested in, what are

their dreams. The home and the schools are providing a limited kind of enabling environment for learning, but, never for making children realise their dreams. I had shared my anxiety with you about children losing their childhood in an article ‘Where has their childhood disappeared!’ published in an earlier issue. How I wish parents could find time to interact with their children to share their joys and anxieties, and to let them know that they will always be there with them to find solutions to their problems.

Dr Mueller keeps counting his blessings as he is a very positive person. He really adores and reveres his mother Gertrud Mueller. She is a very bright, highly motivated and hard working person. She not only takes care of herself at the age of 80, but also is able

to show many other gestures of kindness to those around her in Ochsenfurt, a town in Bavaria (near Munich). Dr Mueller was born in this town. His eyes brighten up when he feels proud of her intellectual inclinations. He respects his father, who is no more. He feels blessed and satisfied that his wife Gabrielle makes all the efforts to make AktivOrtho welcome patients with a beautiful ambience with a sense of purpose. She manages all this while taking care of her two small children and their lovely home. I experienced Gabrielle’s sensitivity when I had a breakdown at AktivOrtho, a day before my late husband’s birthday. Gabrielle sat with me in the Health Bar, got me a glass of water, talked to me and made a great effort to help me come back to normal.



An exercise room at AktivOrtho

Each exercise/treatment room has a message as simple as 'relax', 'calm', etc. Many exercise/treatment rooms have been named after the names of players. I am reminded of an incident when Dr Mueller was in the exercise room where Deepika and I were laughing and, our physiotherapists had also joined us. He quietly said with a smile, "This is a place where we need to focus which is possible when we are serious". The subtle message left a mark and all of us keep that in mind. This has come to my mind more vividly, as a few days back, in September 2012, a 14-year-old boy died in a school in Hyderabad where, for as small a mistake as chatting in the class, the teacher asked Ismail Hussain to do 300 sit-ups. The boy pleaded to be excused as he had a rod implanted in one of his legs in an operation. The teacher did not bother. Ismail died of exhaustion, shock, fear and humiliation in a hospital. This has also brought back to my mind the death of a girl child, Shanno, in Delhi where the teacher made her do similar kind of cruel act, and refused to give her water to drink in the scorching heat, despite Shanno's repeated requests.

There is a provision at the Health Bar of AktivOrtho for tea/coffee for its staff, patients and for the attendants who accompany the patients. Water is offered by any staff member who sees a patient walking in. It is also a place for patients to have tea/coffee, discuss with each other or the therapists, issues of general nature. Dr Mueller never hesitates to come down to the Health

Bar or exercise rooms to discuss critical issues with patients. This could be practised by our teachers and head teachers. Most of us would recall how scared we used to be when we were given the message that the head teacher wanted to see us in his/her office or the teacher wanted to see us in the staff room. Generally, it used to be a humiliating experience, it still is, as discipline at any cost and doing well in studies at any cost continue to be the mindset of most of the teachers and head teachers. We need to keep in view the child's strengths to motivate him/her. Gradually, he/she will become good at what was earlier difficult to achieve.

There is no fixed place for patients to meet Dr Mueller. He makes himself available keeping in view each patient's comfort. He would come from his office on the second floor to the first and ground floors atleast twenty times a day without letting anyone of us ever know what an effort it is for him in terms of both time and energy. The communication of reminders for the scheduled appointments is sensitive to the patients' sudden changes in their schedules. These are received regularly. In cases of emergency, slots are created to accommodate patients who need immediate attention.

I am reminded of an incident when Dr Mueller had been discussing my problems with me for about twenty minutes when a phone call from his friend in Germany informed him that his kids had met with an accident. He was upset and wanted to immediately

call back to arrange their admission to an emergency of a hospital for treatment. He saw me struggling to stabilise after sitting for so long. Dr Mueller waited till I stabilised and then literally ran to his cabin to help out his friend's children. Each time coming back from AktivOrtho, I think of many children with special needs who suffer endlessly. My worry remains, as after years of our policy concerns, no one finds time for them. I have been thinking for years as to why it is not possible for our teachers to be not only sensitive themselves, but also find time to create sensitivity among children, parents community and school functionaries. How I have been wishing that a sensitivity of the AktivOrtho kind could be created for our children with special needs, somebody to hold their hand. Each class can have a team assigned with the task of taking care of the special needs of these children without letting their dignity compromised. It is not difficult; the will to do it is all that is required, the rest falls in place. Dr Mueller has successfully done it in six AktivOrtho centres in Germany – one in Hamburg, three in Berlin, one each in Bonn and Bremen. All these centres are patient-centred with sensitivity and handholding as values. He has managed to make it possible in Delhi. In some ways, he brings back Dr Albert Schweitzer's memory, who did an unparalleled service in South Africa to heal the suffering humanity with humility. He built a hospital there.

It is so satisfying to listen from Team AktivOrtho, how caring a person Dr Mueller is. Nidhi shared with me an incident when the AktivOrtho building did not have functional toilets. During this period, the staff was using a closeby hotel's facilities. However, after some time there was objection to this by the hotel staff. Dr Mueller who was in a meeting there made all the staff participants of the meeting he was in. His AktivOrtho staff were not only allowed to use the toilets, but were served lunch as well. Dr Mueller and his wife Gabrielle allowed the entire staff to use toilets of their home, a rare gesture of human goodness in the fast paced professional world came from both of them. The head teachers and each one of us could learn that we need to take a stand for those who work with us and take care of their needs. Frances, Nidhi, Lipi, Shuchi, Ankur, Hari, Rohan and Abdul appreciate the sensitivity of Dr Mueller and his wife. Christina feels very proud observing the patients' feeling of immense respect for Dr Mueller and Gabrielle's commitment to AktivOrtho. She takes great pride in the fact that she is from Germany, Dr Mueller's country. Tony, who is also from Germany, feels very proud of Dr Mueller's recognition for professional excellence in his field.

It is a contribution of a rare kind of both husband and wife to have created a team which has sensitivity and empathy for every patient. I had been having fluctuating blood pressure and high heart rate. Dr Mueller was always

there to guide what my physiotherapist needed to do and on one occasion when it got worse with very high heart rate, he was in constant touch with Christina. Dr Mueller who himself is new to Delhi said to me every time, “I am not good at internal medicine, I can arrange everything to help you come out of a difficult health situation.” Out of the total two months, there were four such difficult incidents which were gently handled by Christina under his guidance. Many a times, Dr Mueller reminds me of Braithwaite’s ‘To Sir with Love’ where the young teacher stands by his students in every situation. This has been making me think of children who have learning difficulties or challenges of physical kind; little attention is paid to their difficulties. Many are asked to leave schools. In Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai, parents of a seven-year-old autistic boy have been asked to take their child to another institute. The Bombay Municipal Corporation asked the school to readmit the child if the parents provided for a shadow teacher. At a time, when the country is moving towards inclusive education and has made Education as a Fundamental Right of every child in the age group of 6-14 years, such incidents happening in a Juhu school is a cause for serious concern. I wish that the Maharashtra State Commission for Protection of Child Right’s intervention helps (*Times of India*, 3 October 2012). Children and their parents would find themselves in a big crisis to find a school for them

which would not only accept these children but provide support. Head teachers and teachers could find ways to help these children with the help of other children. A caution needs to be exercised in these situations – whatever solutions and strategies are collectively planned should be implemented in a sensitive and subtle manner. The need for empathy should never be mixed up with sympathy.

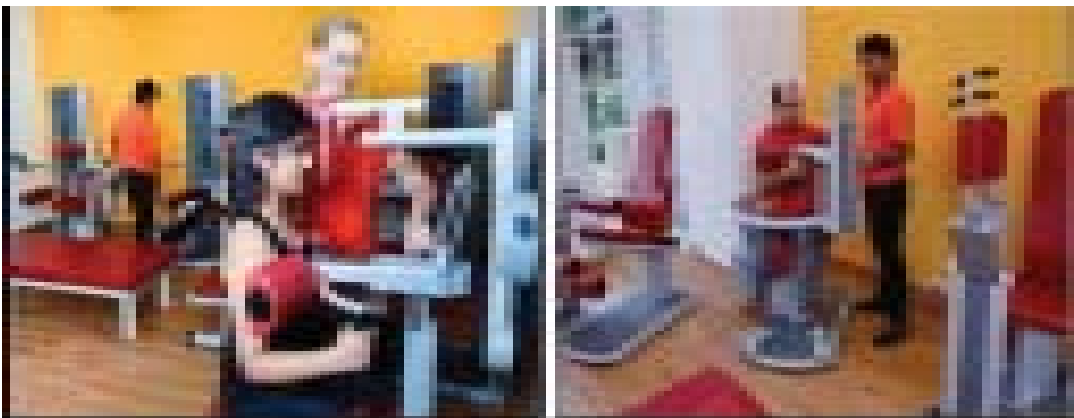
Dr Mueller was given the responsibility and task of providing guidelines to develop an approach to improve the treatment of back pain in Europe by “Prevention of back pain” committee. He also served as a founding member of the Federal Work Group on “Management of chronic back pain”. This reminds me of Prof. Daniel Stufflebeam who chaired the ‘Joint Evaluation Committee’ for developing standards for evaluation. Prof. Stufflebeam is held in high esteem in the academic world. He was eighty-five years old when we met him at Western Michigan University’s Evaluation Centre in 2012. Dr Mueller has been able to achieve this at a much younger age which indicates his wonderful skills of bringing experts together, dealing with different viewpoints, mindsets and most difficult of all making everyone reach a consensus. The entire process establishes credence for the high level of Dr Mueller’s understanding and standing in the field of orthopaedics. The most crucial criterion that factors into an assignment of such a kind is the faith which is reposed in the person.

Graded exercise programme is developed for each patient as per his/her needs. Training of weak muscle groups, balance harmonisation and stretching, deep tissue massages are helping almost each one of us to get and feel better. In addition, we are also made aware of other health activities to promote overall performance. Regular follow ups as well as home exercises are also given as part of the prevention programme so as to achieve maximum benefit for the patient and maintain it as well. Involvement of children and their parents in schools can bring in a change in the mindset of both teachers and children that every child can do better with a little support from teachers and parents. The moment the pressure to perform is taken away, each child will perform better.

It is possible for everyone to get better. The feedback of physiotherapists describes the inputs and how the patient is doing. The method of observation helps in every session to assess the areas of difficulties of each

patient. Patients are encouraged to do self-assessment about the progress, process and improvement. The participatory approach makes the patients a part of both the treatment and assessment process. I am continuously reminded of Source Books on Assessment at Primary Level, developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) where the need to change from mundane assessment process to meaningful assessment is beautifully discussed along with discussions on how this could be done in different subject areas. Corrective measures are discussed and applied, sometimes gradually, and sometimes aggressively at AktivOrtho. Teachers could make a similar effort with the help of their colleagues and students to help children overcome their areas and levels of difficulties.

There is flexibility as to how much and what can an individual patient do. A need to accommodate the immediate,



Physiotherapists working with the patients

and then, the long term benefit of the patient is never lost sight of. A variety of aids/equipments of international standard are there for use. Patients are busy with their own schedules. Progress is assessed in qualitative terms on all aspects with a holistic approach in view. There is a challenge for the patient, the physiotherapist and for Dr Mueller all the time. The AktivOrtho is patient centred. The fact that each patient is involved in planning, development and implementation of his/her treatment plan helps in the plan's effective implementation. Its philosophy that every patient has the potential to improve and participate in his/her treatment and well being is transacted in its true spirit.

New patients are encouraged from the first meeting itself to discuss the treatment plan with Dr Mueller and the attending physiotherapist. The physiotherapists are expected to provide a feedback to him on areas of difficulties of each and every patient, and in cases of patients with high



Discussing the MRI with a Patient

difficulty levels, Dr Mueller leaves many important meetings and tasks to discuss with the physiotherapists as to how to make such patients get better. For many such cases there is a discussion before and after the sessions. No panic is ever created. A physiotherapist is there with the patient throughout his/her session. This is closely monitored by Dr Mueller himself without getting noticed most of the times. Teachers can do similar exercises to make Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in schools meaningful where every child can learn and realise his/her potential without fear and pressure.

It has been a satisfying experience to see thirty-four years old Deepika getting back to normal. She had been coming to AktivOrtho for three months. She is working as an executive of a company in London. She has the following to say:

“I had been suffering from sciatica pain since 2008. I have two small kids to look after and a demanding job. I wanted to be free of pain and fatigue. I had very low energy levels. In West, the doctors put you on Gabapantin for sciatica which has lot of side effects. I had been on drugs for pain as well, since 2008. I was sick of taking drugs after drugs. Eventually, I came to Dr Mueller, who told me that exercises are good and with a programme, specially planned for me, I would feel better. He explained the relationship between drugs and pain as well as the role of

exercises in making one get better. Within two months, I am off medical drugs and pain free. The deep tissue massage has freed my muscles locked for years. The graded exercise plan has helped me a lot. There has been a positive change in my attitude. Energy wise I am feeling better as I can now jump out of bed within no time. I look forward to coming to AktivOrtho. I am always going to come back for a rehabilitation programme at AktivOrtho. Exercises, eating right with vitamins have done me a lot of good.”

Mr Chhabra, a well-established businessman, has had a very nice experience at AktivOrtho. He had a stroke several years back and was having problems of coordination and balance. “It was a very destabilising experience, but I have started feeling better within 6-8 weeks. I like coming here. Dr Mueller and his team have worked to make me feel better. Dr Mueller inspires me. I like coming here and will continue to come.”

Rehabilitation after a surgery is as important as the surgery itself. This is true of all surgeries. I am experiencing its role in recovery at AktivOrtho after my recent Lap chole surgery for gall bladder removal. As a matter of fact, the two months of treatment enabled me to go in for surgery with my back

becoming better, water retention, cramps and vertigo coming under control.

When we begin to believe that each child has the potential to do better and also let her/him know that, a positive change comes in the life of every child. The child comes up in his/her own esteem, has enhanced confidence level and makes every effort to do everything better. When you, as teachers and head teachers, accept a challenge to bring in flexibility to accommodate every child’s learning, physical, mental and emotional needs, you will work to bring in all the resources you need to ensure that every child learns and achieves what he or she is good at, and even make a special effort, making it a possibility for doing what he/she is not good at. When you feel that you need to take an extra step for a few children with special needs, you will be able to do it by creating sensitivity everywhere, in schools, homes, community and public places. You will be able to plan, develop and implement anything and everything for every child, especially the ones who need you more. Everything will become a possibility for you, once you become passionate and develop commitment to bring about a change of attitude and a determination to bring a positive change in every child’s life.

Learning while Playing at Early Childhood Stage

Dr Romila Soni*

Significance of Early Years

The first six to eight years of a child's life, known as the early childhood stage, are globally acknowledged to be the most critical years for life-long development, since the pace of development in these years is extremely rapid. Recent research in the field of neuroscience, particularly on the brain has provided very convincing evidence of the 'critical periods' located within these early years, particularly the first three years, for forming of synaptic connections in the brain, and for the full development of the brain's potential. Research has also indicated that if these early years are not supported by, or embedded in, a stimulating and enriching physical and psycho-social environment, the chances of the child's brain developing to its full potential are considerably and often irreversibly reduced. This finding immediately places a very large percentage of children in the developing world in poverty contexts 'at risk', in terms of their life chances. The early childhood

stage in life is also important as a foundation for inculcation of social and personal habits and values which are known to last a lifetime. What follows logically is the crucial importance of investing in these early years to ensure an enabling playful environment for every child and thereby, a sound foundation for life, which is not only the right of every child but will also impact, in the long term, on the quality of human capital available to the country.

Good quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) programmes are known to produce significant short and long term benefits, particularly for the children in underprivileged contexts. They contribute by compensating for the deprivations at the home front for the children in poverty contexts, and thus serve to improve their life chances. ECE also contributes to the universalisation of elementary education. This, to some extent, leads to reduction in the number of dropouts and failures at the primary level.

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Keeping in view the importance of ECE for universalisation of elementary education, the XIth Plan has put a lot of emphasis on early childhood education. The methodologies suggested for ECE are child-centred and play-based. Thus there is a need to provide quality play at early childhood stage so that the young children can develop to their full potential.

Play is the Basis of Learning

Play as an avenue for social, emotional and intellectual development has been recognised by early childhood educators. Many educators firmly believe that children should engage in activities/objects of their own choice so as to enable them to learn through meaningful interaction with their environment. Early childhood educators are well aware that young children learn better with hands-on activities than with worksheets. Play allows young children to manipulate objects, participate in activities, try out new ideas, find solutions to problems, satisfy their curiosity and create new inventions. Children who are provided opportunities to engage in activities and handle or manipulate objects and play material of their own choice, gain a sense of autonomy and effectiveness; become motivated to attain mastery; develop attributes like self-direction; trust in themselves, self assurance and a feeling of self-worth. This article makes an attempt to clarify what children learn and how children learn by handling/manipulating objects based on Piaget's theory.

How Children Construct Knowledge?

Piaget (1967) identified two different types of knowledge children build when they act on objects. *Physical Knowledge* refers to observable properties of objects and physical phenomena. The implication is that the child should be given opportunities to act on objects in the environment and observe the reactions to his actions on the objects, i.e. ability to manipulate, experiment and observe. This would help children to discover for themselves the physical properties of different objects. Physical knowledge is the knowledge of objects that can be seen or observed. We acquire physical knowledge by acting on objects, for example, by pushing, poking, and dropping them. Most children have a strong desire to investigate their environment. Provide a mud puddle and children will seek it out, pock it, swirl, pat, plop, mash and mess with it. The child kicks the ball, pokes and drops it. The properties that are in the object (ball) i.e., softness and weight of a ball could not be known if the child could not poke and lift the ball. Similarly when the child picks up the ball and allows it to fall on the ground and see it bounce. This is also an example of physical knowledge.

Logico Mathematical Knowledge involves–

- (i) Development of the ability in children to find similarities and differences among objects and be able to classify or group these objects accordingly into classes.

- (ii) Development of the ability to seriate or place objects in order along any one dimension, for example, from biggest to smallest or vice-versa.
- (iii) Development of the concept of number and quantity.

Logico mathematical knowledge differs from physical knowledge because it involves relationships between and among objects, rather than characteristics of individual objects. For example, if we gather several objects and determine that we have four, fourness is not a characteristic of one of the objects by itself, it is a relationship we have imposed on the group of objects. However, the colour of the objects, perhaps blue, red, yellow and green can be said to be a characteristic of each object and is not dependent on any object's relationship to other objects. In this case, physical knowledge is in the external world to be observed while logico mathematical knowledge is created by the learner. To create logico mathematical knowledge we act on objects, relate them to each other and can observe their actions and reactions.

Logico mathematical knowledge is created when we make relationships between objects, for example, when we

compare two balls – one red and one blue – and think that they are different. The different relationship is created by an individual who puts the two objects into this relationship. The difference exists neither in the red ball nor in the blue ball. It exists only in the mind of the person who puts the two balls into this relationship.

Another view of Piaget's differentiation is to think of knowledge as being from two sources – external and internal. The source of physical knowledge is partly external to us, but the source of logico mathematical knowledge is internal.

When a child in the block building corner looks for more cylindrical blocks to make a tower taller, s/he engages mainly in the logico mathematical action. As the child searches through the pile of blocks, she makes relationships between blocks that are cylindrical and those that are not. When the child places a cylindrical block on the top of other four blocks in the tower, s/he is engaged mainly in physical action, because the tower will topple unless the blocks are carefully stacked so it is impossible to separate physical knowledge from logico mathematical knowledge.

Block building involves many concrete operations that involve both knowledge such as one-to-one correspondence, counting with purpose, matching, sorting and fitting blocks to spaces. The unique one dimensional multiple qualities of blocks seems to encourage productive thinking and experimentation. Block building is almost problem solving.

Similarly, it would be impossible for a child to recognise a red ball as such without comparing to balls of other colours. This relationship or classification is essential for the observation of object properties. When children put beads of different colours on a string, they learn cardinal and ordinal numbers as well as patterning and colour discrimination. Logico mathematical knowledge and physical knowledge depend on each other and develop together. As children's logico mathematical framework becomes well structured, they develop more precise and better organised physical knowledge and vice-versa. Children can obtain sensory information only when they act on an object physically and mentally. Materials offered in the classroom may range from buttons or seeds that children have collected to commercially produced manipulatives such as pattern blocks, puzzles and coloured paper. Children sort, classify, order, count and compare collection of objects. Children acquire physical knowledge when they handle/manipulate objects and observe how they work or react. For example, children discover the properties of balls by holding them, kicking them, dropping them, rolling them and throwing them. Manipulation or handling objects is essential for children and adults to acquire physical knowledge. We cannot get physical knowledge without *interpreting* with our logico mathematical framework, the sensory information we get by holding

and touching the object. Teachers must support our children's learning about new ideas and concepts by providing variety of toys, objects and activities that lead them to manipulation and exploration.

How Children Think

Children's thinking undergoes changes as they get older. For example, the child between 2 to 6 years of age is in *pre-operational stage* of cognitive development, while the child between 6 or 7 years and 9 or 10 is in Piaget's *concrete operational stage*. Today Sakshi is sure that her toy will sink if dropped in a pail of water. Tomorrow she may confidently guess that the same toy will float. Priya may judge that you and she have the same amount of orange juice if both of your tall glasses are full. As you carefully pour your juice into several shorter, thin glasses, the child may decide that you have more to drink than she does. Children spend years actively exploring material to learn about the properties of substances. For example, children gradually realize the total mass or weight of solids and liquids does not change despite changes in container shape or distribution of materials.

Piaget's term action refers to mental action, which is often accompanied by physical action at early childhood stage. When we gently squeeze a mango or a papaya to find out how ripe it is, we do so because we want to know something about the fruit.

The important part of our action is the mental part, without which the external act would be a mindless manipulation.

Adults can begin to learn how a young child thinks and reasons by watching each child's response to physical changes, such as breaking up a ball of clay into many pieces and judging the amount of clay present when compared to an unbroken ball.

In the physical reaction, children have to think to decide how to roll a ball in a game similar to bowling. If they roll the ball too far to the left or right and miss the target, they have to think to decide what to do next.

In the logico mathematical reaction, the child acts on objects not to produce desired physical efforts but to put them into relationships. When the child is given six blue blocks and two yellow ones, for example, s/he can put together the ones that are the same, and separate those that are different. The child can also order the blocks spatially or divide the blocks into two equal groups.

Young children physically act on the objects as they put them into relationships. As they grow older, they are able to group, order or divide them in their heads without touching the objects at all.

In short, the handling of objects or first hand experience with concrete objects (manipulation of objects) is essential in the logico mathematical realm because young children think better and do better when

they physically act on the objects. Children can gain an understanding of the basic concepts of one-to-one correspondence, counting, ordination, classification, comparison, etc. as they manipulate objects in their environment. This is why we say always provide concrete manipulative material to get first hand experience, as workbooks do not encourage children to invent their own ways to solve problems. When we always tell/teach or present knowledge to young children, we stifle their initiative and diminish their confidence.

Children are learning about their environment and people in every situation. They learn how to use materials/objects. Sand is for sifting and pouring, but not for throwing. Books are for reading, not for tearing up or using as weapons.

Creating a Thinking Atmosphere

Pre-schoolers can be challenged to think and sketch their imagination. There are ways to encourage thinking which often occur simultaneously. One way to encourage children to think is to provide opportunities for them to take decision. Allow children to decide on their own in a game, who knocked over the most balls or how many children should be there in each learning area or give children choices within the boundaries of the rules for the centre. In this way children need to learn to be responsible for their own actions through taking the initiative. Giving responsibility or allowing to take decisions encourage children to think

Giving Children Choices (I Can Do It)

From earliest toddlerhood, children express their need to do things for themselves and by themselves. Children often grow in self-satisfaction as they try to accomplish new developmental tasks. If a caregiver has learned to match needs with abilities, children will have more experiences with success than failure as learning progresses.

“I can make out how to fix it.”

“I can swim.” “I can draw my house.”

much harder than when the teacher decides everything. Children who are given choices in what and how they learn will learn more and have a better attitude about it. Without choices, children “burn out” just as adults do, says writer Alfie Kohn. This is the reason why sometimes they perceive themselves as powerless and respond with apathy or aggression. *Young children worked more creatively when they are permitted to select the materials they wanted to use in making a collage.* Children’s choice is a key component of holistic, constructivist, learner-centered or developmental approaches to education.

Another way to encourage children to think is to provide opportunities for them to exchange viewpoints/ideas with their peers. Ask lots of “What if” (questions). Helping children develop their language skills entails priceless rewards for care giving adults as well as pleasure and skill for children. Children think harder when one child says, for example, that the balls are easier to knock over if arranged in a certain way, and another child holds a different idea. Working with manipulative objects

encourages such kind of exchange of dialogue, whereas workbooks preclude the possibility of this kind of exchange. When doing only worksheet sitting on their chair (seat work) they do not get chance to agree or disagree. On the other hand when working with material/objects they develop intellectually and socially.

It is not the manipulation or handling of objects in itself that is important for children’s learning. What is important is the mental action that is encouraged when children act on objects themselves. It depends on the teacher whether she wants her children to become active or passive learners. When the teacher holds all the power of decision making, children eventually become mentally passive because they are prevented from taking decisions/ taking a stand and exchanging ideas.

The crux of the matter is that children need to be active. We must create an environment that provides plenty of opportunities for children to think when they work with objects. Worksheets also need to be based on concrete experiences. So teachers and parents

need to go beyond drill-type methods of teaching and use your own initiative to encourage children's thinking.

Helping children become independent and enthusiastic lifelong learners. Isn't that what good teaching is about? Based on the discussion the following role of teachers emerges out.

Teachers must:

- be sensitive to the fact that children's initiative and creativity may be more important than our

limited expectations and demonstrations;

- understand the stages of emotional development of children and their relationship to intellectual understanding;
- offer praise that is specific and sincere;
- give all children equal attention and opportunities for success; and
- capitalise on children's interests and curiosity.

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Teacher Education in Early Childhood Care and Education: Issues and Concerns

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Abstract

The staff running the ECCE programme is the single most important factor in determining the quality of the programme, yet is the most neglected aspect of the programme. Teacher in the ECCE context is the person who takes care of the education rather than the care component, and as care and education are integral part of ECCE, the training for the teachers at this level requires a perspective different from that of the teacher education addressing elementary and secondary level of schooling. The ECCE teacher education operates in various modes from certificate courses of a few weeks duration to bachelor and post graduate degree levels. As we are gearing up to meet the increased demands of the ECCE teachers due to the implementation of Right to Education Act, we need more programmes in ECCE at degree level to fulfil the objective of providing quality ECCE programmes which support the formal system of education by preparing children in a genuine manner. This paper also substantiates that there is research evidence that the degree level teacher education of ECCE has a positive impact on ECCE outcomes.

Introduction

The term Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) refers to a philosophy of providing opportunities/experiences to young children upto eight years of age in order to promote their holistic development as well as providing services and support systems

to communities and families to meet the needs of their young children (NCERT, 2006). The aim of ECCE is to provide optimal cognitive, physical and social development of children from vulnerable sections of society including first generation learners. The ECCE is

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expected to promote goals of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) by preparing kids for formal schooling and also by freeing the girl children engaged in sibling care.

Now ECCE is considered as vital and significant if India is to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) goals due to increased awareness. To achieve these goals it is not only necessary to expand the facilities for ECCE but also improve the quality of ECCE which is largely dependent upon the quality of care-givers, workers and teachers engaged in ECCE.

Government's resolve to give importance to pre-primary education can be traced back to the various reports and policy pronouncements after Independence:

- Input for enrolment and retention of children in primary schools had hailed pre-primary education as 'an essential adjunct' of the national system of education.
- Early Child Development Committee headed by Ms Mina Swaminathan (1972-73), while laying emphasis on pre-primary education called for an integrated approach to child development.
- The National Policy on Education (1986) and Programme of Action (POA) (1992) had a distinct section on Early Childhood Care and Education. The Policy stipulates a "high priority" to ECCE "both as a

feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education". POA called for universalisation of ICDS by the year 2000 and widening the scope of *anganwadis* to include crèches. It also laid emphasis on participation of parents and improved training of *anganwadi* workers.

- National Nutrition Policy (1993) considered children below six years as high-risk groups and gave them high priority. National Nutritional Mission was launched to address this problem.
- National Commission for Children (1992) protects the rights of children with a strong legal base.
- National Policy on Empowerment of Women (2001) provides for childcare facilities including crèches at work places.
- The National Health Policy (NHP) (2002) considers 0-6 year age group as targets for reducing Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) to 30/1000 live births and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) to 100/100000 per year.
- National Plan of Action for Children (2005) ensures every child's survival, development protection and participation.
- National Curriculum Framework (2005) considers ECCE as significant for the holistic development of the child and emphasised two years of pre-schooling.

The Quality Concerns

The SSA Joint Review Mission (2010) notes that it is very critical to emphasise the need for a holistic and enriching Early Childhood Education for each child before entering primary school. This is especially relevant in the context of the Right to Education (RTE) Act and its meaningful implementation. (Now the Government is planning to have one year preparatory class in all schools from the next academic year). A child exposed to ECE programmes not only has robust socio-emotional adjustment skills, s/he is also able to be cognitively mature enough to transit to the primary level with ease and confidence. Some children were seen to be dropping out because of health problems. This again needs to be addressed through a proper early childhood development programme that addresses nutrition and health needs of pre-school children.

The policies cannot be implemented unless supported by necessary infrastructure, human resources and the active participation of the stakeholders – nursery teachers, ECE workers, parents, community and the government. This article is dealing with concerns and issues of teacher education in ECCE though there are other ECE workers and care providers.

According to Ackerman (2003), many significant researches support the positive benefits of quality Early Care and Education (ECE) for later developmental and academic outcomes. The benefits are more marked in the case

of children from deprived sections (NCERT, 2005). If India is to attain the MDG and EFA goals, the quality of ECCE programme is of vital significance. Ray (2007) in the report on Status of Education states that the Delhi government is going to open 300 ECCE centres, and add every consecutive year the same number till all primary schools have a preschool. It is a good attempt in the right direction. The recruitment process of the ECCE workers must have been over by now. The questions are: Who is qualified to take up those positions? How are these people trained?

High-quality care is essential to the optimal development of young children. In India, the benefit of ECCE is limited to a few children. Research studies have looked into the quality of ECCE programmes in Mumbai (Kamath), Pratham centres and also in Tamil Nadu (Suriakanthi, A. and Swaminathan, Mina, 2000). In many of the ECCE programmes, the education component was neglected as they were reduced to mere feeding centres. The teacher or the care giver is not qualified more often. According to Kaul (2000), all preschool teachers were females and 56.4 per cent teachers were trained in Jammu and Kashmir. One of the major challenges that we need to tackle in the area of ECCE will be that of teacher education.

Teacher Education Programmes in ECCE

Teacher education is concerned with the preparation and initiation of pre-service teachers and capacity building

of in-service teachers. In the context of ECCE, there are many programmes dealing with the preparation of such ECCE personnel in India. Children in the age group below three years need more care and support, there is a need for preparation of personnel for child care. The three to six-year-old children are to be prepared to enter the formal system of education, and the role of teacher is more crucial and all the teacher education programmes in ECCE cover them.

In our country, there are wide variety of ECE programmes and also ECE training programmes which may be classified under following heads:

- Pre-service courses (being run by different state-owned and private institutions)
- In-service courses (exclusively meant for state-level key functionaries of SSA/SCERTs and functionaries of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme)
- ECE Diploma/Certificate Courses (being offered by distance learning institutions like Indira Gandhi National Open University, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and several other State-specific open universities) and
- Specific ECE intervention-based training inputs.

Pre-service courses: Several teacher training initiatives (Integrated Pre-Primary and Primary Teacher's Training, Nursery/Pre-Primary Teacher's Training, Vocational Training

in Child Care and Education) have been set up by different state-owned and private institutions. Integrated Pre-Primary and Primary Teacher's Training is being run since many years. The programme, which is recognised by NCTE and is commonly known as NTT, aims at preparing teachers for pre-school stage (3-6 years) and for the first two grades (6-8 years) of the primary stage. Besides this, the curriculum of higher/senior secondary stage of education (+2) in CBSE, NIOS and many State education boards have also included early childhood education as an area of vocational education. The content of this course includes both theory and practice components of ECE. After completion of this course, the students can either opt for higher education or for employment or self-employment in the ECCE centres/school.

In-service Courses: In-service programmes at the induction stage of the job as well as ongoing professional development programmes in ECCE are conducted by different agencies.

The National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) organises the Comprehensive Training Strategy for ICDS functionaries at different levels. It is the major in-service training initiative in which every functionary — the Child Development Project Officer (CDPO), the Assistant Child Development Project Officer (ACDPO), the Supervisor, the Anganwadi worker (AWW) and Anganwadi helper (AWH) — has to

undergo job training at the initial stage of taking up the assignment, and refresher training every two years. So far as training inputs under ECE in these programmes are concerned, out of 26 working days job training being imparted to CDPOs, Supervisors and AWWs, four days intensive training is being imparted on ECE only. Similarly in refresher training, which is of five days duration, the ECE is being covered by allocating three to four sessions. For the use of ICDS trainers, NIPCCD organises the skill training programmes specifically on ECE of five days duration. The training inputs concerning ECE in all these programmes also emphasise on developing the skills for preparation of indigenous teaching material.

Provisions were also made in DPEP and SSA initiatives to not only train the ECE functionaries but also the community representatives and members of the women's groups as well, because they have been vested with the responsibility of the management of ECE centres. Regular induction and in-service training programmes were imparted to the ECE functionaries using specially designed training curriculum. In most such cases, the pre-school kit and training content has followed the model developed by NCERT. The members of the ECE resource groups set up in various SCERTs and DIETs were also trained and sent on exposure visits to learn from the examples of ECE interventions. Further, under DPEP/SSA initiatives, the AWWs from selected AWCs were trained on specific aspects

of ECE as a part of the convergence strategy with ICDS.

NCERT also conducts a diploma programme for those functionaries who are already engaged in provisioning pre-school services. In addition to above such training inputs, various SCERTs also contribute to the professional development of early childhood educators using a cascade model. Under this model, these institutes of repute first train the ECE master trainers, who, in turn, impart the training to supervisory and grass root functionaries.

The open and distance learning mode of training: There are many private and government initiatives offering certificate and diploma courses concerning ECE. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), and several other State Specific Open Universities (SSOUs) like Kota Open University of Rajasthan, Bhoj Open University of MP, Rajarshi Purushottam Das Tandon Open University of UP and Distance Education Department of Jamia Millia Islamia also offer specialised certificate and/or diploma courses in ECCE through open and distance learning system.

Accreditation of Various Degrees in ECE Teacher Training

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), which is a statutory body, has laid down the norms and standards for two programmes, namely

Pre-School and Nursery Teacher Education Programmes. These norms laid down by NCTE are now expected to impact on quality. Besides laying down the norms and standards of teacher education courses concerning ECCE, the NCTE has also undertaken the task of accreditation of the institutions offering pre-primary and nursery teacher training courses. Further, keeping in view the ground realities obtaining in different parts of the country and to ensure the adequate supply of suitably qualified teachers for the growing area of ECE, the following four programmes have been further proposed by NCTE. These are:

- Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Education (CECCE)
- Diploma in ECCE and Early Primary Education (DECCE and EPED)
- Diploma in ECCE and Primary Education (DECCE and PEd) and
- Post Graduate Diploma in ECCE (PGDECCE.)

Besides these courses, we have three-year Bachelor (BSc) and integrated BSc.Ed (Home Science) and also Masters (MSc/MA) in Child Development and B.Ed (Nursery Education) and M.Ed (ECCE). The Home Science Departments of different universities also offer Ph.D in ECCE. In India there are many international universities also offering teacher education programmes in ECCE. The curricula of all these courses are also

different, though these may have common components of Child Development, Child Psychology, Nutrition, Community Relationship, School Organisation and Management appropriate for the level. Some of them also have in their curricula different approaches to ECCE, policy initiatives and research in ECCE.

The provision of centre-based ECCE in India is available through three distinct channels—government, private and non-governmental. According to Mehta (2007) the percentage of primary schools having attached pre-primary sections increased from 14.27 in 2002-03 to 15.32 in 2003-04, further to 17.93 in 2004-05 and to 20.02 in 2005-06. There are 26.56 per cent primary schools with upper primary and 39.98 per cent primary with upper primary and secondary schools or higher secondary schools having attached pre-primary schools. The number of pre-primary schools are increasing year after year. There is no data available on qualifications of pre-school teachers and also schools having day care facilities. According to the 2001 Census, India has a population of 158 million children between the ages 0-6. India has the largest child population in the world. Programmes and interventions for children aged 0-6 are provided by the government, the private sector and NGOs. The government sector covers only 22 per cent of the population (MHRD, 2003). The private sector covers about one crore children. Though exact figures are

not available, about 20 million children are supposed to be covered by NGOs. The government sector employs persons with wide range of qualifications from certificate, diploma or degree in ECE or nursery education, whereas, the NGOs and private sector employ persons with none or highly qualified B.Ed, M.Ed, Ph.Ds with pre-primary training. There are about 15 institutions offering Diploma in ECCE in Delhi. These institutions are affiliated to SCERT, Delhi. There is a bachelor degree course in education (B.Ed(Nursery)) conducted by Jamia Millia Islamia, and the Child Development Centre of Jamia Millia Islamia offers a two-year MA in Child Development. The reality is that majority of the teachers who are working as nursery teachers are trained after the plus two level through a diploma in ECE, (NTT). But it is high time we have more degree and post graduate courses in ECE similar to what we have in JMI. Most of the nursery teachers employed in Balwadis or Anganwadis are trained for a duration of two weeks to two months. The pre-primary sector is primarily covered by the Balwadis or Anganwadis, and the independent nursery schools or nursery schools attached to regular schools are very few.

When we look at the history of secondary education in India even at the secondary level, the teachers were trained through certificate courses to begin with, and later through degree and diploma courses. The Department of Teacher Training of Jamia Millia

started in 1938 with a certificate course for preparation of teachers, and later started the diploma programme of two years duration after a decade, and the B.Ed courses after another decade. There are many studies which give evidence to the fact that a degree course prepares the teachers in a better way. Even today we find many nurseries run by private initiatives, being run by teachers not trained in ECE.

Teacher Education and ECCE Environments

As there are many more reports on how the teacher's qualifications lead to better learning environments, we need to improve the training and recruitment in ECCE. When will India reach the level of having a minimum bachelor's degree in ECE or child development for a teacher at pre-school level? As we have to cope up with the demand of increasing the number of preschools, the government should increase pre-service training as well as in-service training facilities for ECCE professionals.

Kagan and others (2007) in their book *The Early Care and Education Teaching Workforce at the Fulcrum: An Agenda for Reform* states that there are nearly five million individuals who have the responsibility of caring for and educating nearly two thirds of the American children under age five who spend time in non-parental care. What is the Indian scenario? Available institutional arrangements for pre-school teacher education are grossly inadequate considering the expected

expansion of pre-school education sector in the coming years. Also, there is need to evolve specially designed programmes at the degree and post-degree levels for the training of teacher educators. One possibility is to develop the M.Ed as a teacher educator training programme with specialisation in pre-school education.

Quality of the ECCE and Teacher Education

Fontaine and others (2006) provide outcome information in regard to a state-funded Enhancement Grant Project in which childcare facilities' personnel were provided with professional development activities to assist them in evaluating their early care and learning programmes, and planning and implementing enhancement activities. After three years, a significant improvement resulted in several areas critical to high-quality care for young children.

An important issue for early childhood education policy is the extent to which classroom quality could be improved by raising requirements for teacher educational qualifications. A number of empirical studies report the effects of teacher education on ECE outcomes, and more specifically, whether or not a bachelor's degree is an important aspect of ECE teacher preparation (Ninoes, 2006).

Kelley and Camilli (2008) conducted a meta analysis of the Impact of Teacher Education on Outcomes in Center-Based Early

Childhood Education Programmes. The primary focus of this study was whether completion of a bachelor's degree has a positive impact on ECE outcomes. The analysis indicated that effects on quality outcomes from teachers with a bachelor's degree (the treatment group) were significantly different from those teachers with less education (the comparison group). In standard deviation units, the average effect was 0.16 standard deviations ($p < .05$) higher for teachers with a bachelor's degree than for their non-bachelor's degree counterparts. There are, however, two caveats. First, the effect size is relatively small, though significant. Therefore, the benefit of the requirement that ECE teachers having a bachelor's degree must be seen in light of the potential benefits of using the requisite funds some other way. Second, the research underlying this effect size is correlational in nature. Thus, it is possible that any number of factors, aside from having a bachelor's degree, cause this effect.

In yet another study, NICHD and Duncan (2003) used data collected from a sample of 1300 children in nine states. The study focused on the effects of teacher education (measured as total years of formal education), staff/child ratio, and group size. To test whether programme structural quality was related to child cognitive and academic ability, the authors compared three statistical methods, adjusted for family selection bias. The methods included: multiple regression models of 54-

month child outcomes, longitudinal models of 24 and 54-month child outcomes, and residualised change models of 54-month child outcomes adjusting for the 24-month outcomes. Structural quality was found to predict cognitive outcomes at 54 months. More specifically, teacher education demonstrated consistent, positive associations with children's 54-month achievement outcomes, including mathematics and reading skills, and phonological knowledge. During the past 10 to 15 years, research on the relationship between participation in Early Care and Education (ECE) programmes and child development has grown substantially.

Arnett (1989) conducted an analysis on a small sample of 59 pre-school teachers from child care centres in Bermuda. Teachers had completed either half or the entire two-year ECE training programme offered by Bermuda College, had bachelor's degrees in ECE, or had no training. Teacher attitudes and behaviours were assessed using a combination of questionnaires and classroom observations. No significant differences were found between teachers who had completed either half or the entire training programme. With respect to classroom behaviours, teachers who had completed half or the entire programme were rated higher in positive interactions than teachers with no training, while teachers with a bachelor's degree in ECE received the highest rating of the three groups for positive interactions. Furthermore, teachers who

had completed either half or the entire programme were rated as less detached and punitive towards children than teachers with no training, while teachers with a B.A. in ECE were rated as the least detached and punitive. A similar pattern was seen for teacher attitudes.

A large scale study, the National Child Care Staffing Study in United States (NCCSS; Whitebook, Howes, and Phillips, 1990), included 664 classrooms from 227 centres in five large cities obtained by a stratified random sampling procedure. Information on teacher characteristics, including teacher education, was collected through staff interviews. Teacher behaviour and classroom process quality were assessed by direct observation, where process quality refers to children's direct experiences in the ECE setting, including their interactions with teachers and peers, and exposure to materials and activities that encourage learning. Results of one analysis indicated that teacher education, measured as total years of education, was positively related to greater sensitivity and more appropriate care giving in preschool classrooms. The second analysis involved a comparison of four groups of teachers with the following levels of education: high school diploma, some college, associate's degree (A.A.), and bachelor's degree (B.A.) or higher. According to the results, teachers with a B.A. or higher were more sensitive, less harsh, less detached and provided more appropriate care giving to children than

teachers with an A.A., some college or a high school diploma. When ECE training was compared across groups, no significant differences were found between teachers with a bachelor's degree and teachers with a B.A. in ECE; both groups demonstrated greater teaching skills compared to teachers with an A.A., and teachers with no training. In addition, teachers with college-level training in ECE but no B.A. demonstrated greater teaching skills compared to teachers with an A.A. and teachers with no training.

As there are many more reports on how the teacher qualifications lead to better learning environments (Whitebook, 2003, Barnett, 2003), we need to improve the training and recruitment in ECCE. The minimum degree for a teacher at preschool level should be a bachelor degree in ECE or child development. As we have to cope up with the demand of increasing the number of preschools, the government should increase pre-service training as well as in-service training for ECE professionals.

As ECE settings have a direct relationship with quality of care which is related to teacher/caregiver qualifications, some measures are suggested for ECE teacher education below:

- (1) **Regulatory efforts to improve** ECE teachers qualifications, including barriers to improving qualifications; the NCTE (2006) has published the curriculum for ECE for certificate, diploma and degree programmes.

- (2) **Professional development** efforts, including a description of the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Programme as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). In the case of NCLB, the teachers' professional development through improvement in subject knowledge is highlighted (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2006). As part of SSA, ICDS, etc. professional development of ECE professionals is to be highlighted. Attending refreshers should help the ECE professionals grow in stature.

In March 2006, Chancellor Reed of California University convened a statewide meeting with leaders across sectors of the higher education and K-12 communities focused on *Building and Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce: Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities*. Researchers in this field asserted that the pipeline for professionals serving the early learning population is not sufficiently robust to meet the state's *current* need for a well-qualified workforce. Issues of programme growth, alternative programme delivery systems, access, faculty recruitment and preparation, and articulation were discussed during the March 3 summit. In India, we have very little effort and awareness for such a need. The Child Development Centre of Jamia Millia Islamia, and also at Ambedkar University are steps in the right direction.

(3) **Career ladders**; Educationists pointed out that pre-primary teachers are on the lowest rung of the teaching hierarchy (Malarvizhi, 2006). The pay structure needs to be revised to make ECE professional at par with others in the school (TGT). The quality will be adversely affected if the teachers are not paid well. As the ECCE is a very crucial input in the overall educational scenario, the career opportunities of ECE professional cannot be ignored.

(4) The government as well as private sector should pay attention to training and recruitment at the ECCE level. Now any training or no training is considered suitable for ECCE.

To conclude, the ECCE workers at all levels need better training and education, therefore, the government policies and public awareness regarding ECCE as well as efforts to develop programmes both preservice and in service await great zeal to meet the demands of quality and quantity.

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SSA and the Present Status of Elementary Education of Visually Impaired Children — Enrolment, Special Teachers, Braille Textbooks, Assistive Devices, Accepting Environment

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Abstract

Elementary education, which lays a foundation for life-long learning, is equally important for children with visual impairments. The major objective of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Right to Education (RTE) Act is to universalise elementary education (UEE). One of the major thrust areas of SSA therefore is on inclusion or mainstreaming Children with Special Needs (CWSN) into the fabric of formal elementary schooling. The coverage of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in 2008-09 was 27.80 lakh (91.39%), out of which 20.36% visually impaired children were enrolled in Classes I-VIII, suggesting that greater attention is needed to bring these children into schools to achieve the goal of SSA. As far as special teachers, Braille textbooks, assistive devices are concerned, the situation is not satisfactory. There is a need for an independent evaluation of the programme to assess educational benefits accruing to different categories of disabled children, particularly children with visual impairments, whose educational and other needs are different from children with locomotor handicaps.

Introduction

“Education must aim at giving the blind child a knowledge of the realities around him, the confidence to cope with these realities, and the feeling that he is recognized and accepted as an

individual in his own right.” (Berthold Lowenfeld). In the Salamanca Framework for Action (1994), Article 7, the fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever

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possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences that they may have. Inclusive school must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning, and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with community. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school. Johnson (1994) said, "It forms an integral component of the overall education system, and is provided in regular schools committed to an appropriate education for all." Elementary education, which lays a foundation for life-long learning, is equally important for children with visual impairments. A child suffering from disability, as defined in clause (I) of section 2 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection and Full Participation) Act, 1996, shall have the right to pursue free and compulsory elementary education in accordance with the provisions of Chapter V of the said Act.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, launched in 2001, is an effort to universalise elementary education by community-ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country that attempts to provide an opportunity for improving human

capabilities of all children, through provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. The mission statement of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* says, "The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* Mission strives to secure the right to quality basic education for all children in the 6-14 years age group." It stresses a people-centred mode of implementation of educational interventions with involvement of all stakeholders, especially teachers, parents, community and Panchayati Raj Institutions and voluntary organisations. It also emphasises an equity-based approach that focuses on the needs of educationally backward areas and disadvantaged social groups including children with special needs. Chapter 5 of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* emphasises the need for education of children with special needs that includes children with visual impairments.

The aim of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* is to provide useful and relevant elementary education of satisfactory quality, with emphasis on education for life to all children in the 6 to 14 age group. There is also another goal, to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. Useful and relevant education signifies a quest for an education system that is not alienating and that draws on community solidarity. Its aim is to allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in a manner that allows the fullest harnessing of their

human potential, both spiritually and materially. This quest must also be a process of value-based learning that allows children an opportunity to work for each other's well being rather than to permit mere selfish pursuits.

Method

This paper uses secondary data drawn from various documents and reports. These include *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), Revised Framework of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (2011), *Seventh All India School Education Survey* by NCERT and *Elementary Education in India* by National University of Education Planning and Administration (NUEPA).

Results and Discussion

Overview of inclusive education in the light of RTE Act and Revised SSA Framework 2011

The major objective of SSA and Right to Education (RTE) Act is to universalise elementary education (UEE). The goal of UEE has further been strengthened by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, making free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right of every child in the age group of 6-14 years. This Amendment has given a new thrust to the education of Children with Special Needs (CWSN), as without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. Hence, education of CWSN is an important component of SSA. SSA has a provision of ₹3000 per child per year for the inclusion of disabled children. District plan for children with special needs is formulated within ₹3000 per child norm, with ₹1000

ear-marked exclusively for engagement of resource teachers. The interventions under SSA for inclusive education are identification, functional and formal assessment, appropriate educational placement, preparation of Individualised Educational Plan, provision of aids and appliances, teacher training, resource support, removal of architectural barriers, research, monitoring and evaluation and a special focus on girls with special needs.

SSA ensures that every *Child With Special Needs*, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. Thus, SSA has adopted a zero rejection policy, which means that no child having special needs should be deprived of the Right to Education and taught in an environment that suits best to his/her learning needs. These include special schools, Education Guarantee Schools (EGS), Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) or even home-based education. The major thrust of SSA is on inclusion or mainstreaming CWSN into the fabric of formal elementary schooling. Experiences of programmes like District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and various research findings have shown that inclusion is best determined by the individual needs of the child. Most children with special needs can be enrolled and retained in regular schools if adequate resource support is provided to them; whereas there are others who might have to be provided some kind of pre-integration

programmes before they can be mainstreamed in a classroom. Still there might also be some CWSN with severe and profound disabilities, who would require an educational programme and intensive specialised support.

Every Child With Special Needs should be placed in the neighbourhood schools with support services. These children should be given training to acquire certain skills to facilitate their elementary education as envisaged in the RTE Act. For instance, they may need mobility training, training in Braille, sign language, postural training, etc. Thus, school preparedness of Children With Special Needs must be ensured by providing 'special training' as envisaged in the RTE Act. This training may be residential, non-residential or even home based, as per their specific requirements. The existing non-formal and alternate schooling (including home based education) options for children with disabilities can be recast as 'special training'. This means that (a) all children with special needs who are not enrolled in schools or have dropped out, will first be enrolled in a neighbourhood school in an age appropriate grade, (b) they will be entitled to 'special training' through regular teachers or teachers specifically appointed for the purpose. Thus, SSA has adopted a more expansive and a broad-based understanding of the concept of inclusion, wherein a multi-option model of educating CWSN is

being implemented. The dual objective of embracing this model is to bring more CWSN under the umbrella of SSA, and to provide them appropriate need-based skills, be it vocational, functional literacy or simply activities of daily living. Further, an attempt is being made to provide these skills in the most appropriate learning environment. CWSN are also being covered through the EGS. In SSA, 51,565 CWSN are being covered through AIE/EGS in 19 States/UTs, whereas 27 states have adopted the practice of home-based education for children with severe-profound disabilities, with the objective of either preparing CWSN for schools or for life by imparting to them basic living skills. Parental counselling and vocational training are two important aspects of the entire home-based instruction programme. Through home-based education, SSA could cover 1.38 lakh CWSN. A notable feature of this programme has been an increased and a sustainable school-community linkage by actively involving parents in the educational process of their CWSN.

These practices and innovations in SSA are, no doubt, leading to a gradual increased identification of CWSN from 14.59 lakh in 2003-04 to 30.42 lakh by 2010. Similarly, the enrolment of CWSN has gone up to 25.95 lakh (85.33%) as compared to 11.71 lakh CWSN in 2003-04. More CWSN are likely to be covered through various interventions and strategies. The coverage of CWSN by 2010 was 27.80 lakh (91.39%). Besides

increasing the physical coverage, the expenditure on inclusive education in SSA has also shown an upward trend. From a mere 26% expenditure in 2003-04, the States have shown an overall expenditure of 78.88% on CWSN inclusion related activities in 2009-10 (Revised Framework of SSA, 2011). However, the quantum of expenditure cannot be considered as an indicator of actual progress. There is a need for an independent evaluation of the programme to assess educational benefits accruing to different categories of disabled children, particularly children with visual impairments. The generic term “CWSN” does not take adequate care of children with visual impairments whose educational and other needs are different from children with locomotor handicaps. The major focus of SSA Framework appears to be on children with locomotor disabilities, though occasional references have been made to other categories of children as well.

The focus of SSA is now on reaching out-of-school CWSN, not covered so far and developing a strategy that will ensure that every Child With Special Needs receives continuing on site support. This perhaps is the biggest challenge of all and a crucial determinant of the success of the Inclusive Education (IE) programme under SSA. However, there are a few important issues in IE that are being continued to be stressed upon by Government of India with the states, namely:

(i) The percentage of CWSN identified

being only 1.50% of the total child population in comparison to Census 2001, wherein 2.1% of the population has been found to have some disability. Hence, states should further streamline identification procedures.

- (ii) Monitoring mechanisms to assess both the quantitative and qualitative progress in IE to be constantly improved by states.
- (iii) Emphasis on classroom practices and teaching methods adopted by teachers for effective classroom management of CWSN.
- (iv) 58.01% schools have been made barrier-free and more schools need to be covered. Quality of ramps in most of the states is an area of concern.
- (v) To ensure that every Child With Special Needs receives continuing on-site academic support in schools.

To deal with the above issues, the revised SSA Framework 2011 claims that the following initiatives have been taken up at the national level:

- National level consultation with the national level institutions and civil society organisations working in the disability sector held to discuss the systemic changes for creating a learning environment for the CWSN.
- Sub-group with representatives of civil society organisations constituted to frame guidelines on teacher training programme, capacity building of Resource

Teachers, multi-category training and strengthening of Resource Rooms.

- A National level Resource Group on Inclusive Education proposed with representatives of national level institutions and civil society organisations.
- Survey formats for preparing the record of children at habitation level being revised to collect authentic information on CWSN.
- Detailed guidelines prepared for identification of CWSN of different categories.
- Provision for 5% sample check of the habitation-based data on CWSN through the third party.
- Larger network of the Resource Teachers and Care Givers for academic support to CWSN and teachers.
- Creating/strengthening the Resource Rooms at block level for counselling and therapeutic support to the CWSN.
- Provision for development of one resource room in every district to be accredited as RCI study centres.
- Augmentation of the BRCs with training facilities, which are also useful for trainings in IE.
- Provision for the engagement of IE volunteers on contractual basis.
- Provision for home-based Education for children with severe or profound disabilities.
- Focus on adequate availability of appropriate teaching-learning

materials, equipments and furniture.

These claims need to be verified through intensive research studies all over the country. Focus of inclusive education in the year 2011-12 would be on infrastructure development, human resource and work force development, strengthening material support to CWSN to promote effective inclusion in schools and classrooms, and strengthening schools for the enrolment and retention of all kinds of CWSN. Hence, the focus would now be on specific activities that would promote physical access, activities for ensuring enrolment and continued attendance and retention of CWSN in the schools, including provision of continuum of support services to provide quality inclusive education.

Enrolment, Special Teachers, Braille Textbooks and Assistive Devices

Seventh All India School Education Survey by NCERT included information on management-wise number of schools admitting children with disabilities, management-wise enrolment of children with different disabilities, and state-wise number of schools according to availability of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and number of teachers trained in facilitating teaching children with disabilities. However, there is no information about availability of Braille textbooks, aids and appliances in this survey. The following tables include information about children with visual impairments only.

Table 1

Management-wise Number of Schools Admitting Children with Visual Impairments

Stage	Management	Total number of Schools	Number of Visually Impaired Children Admitted
Primary	Government	434,125	37,832
	Local Body	276,841	23,226
	Private Aided	37,541	3,083
	Private Unaided	101,914	3,659
	Total	850,421	67,800
Upper Primary	Government	144,299	14,120
	Local Body	76,447	7,940
	Private Aided	44,782	3,178
	Private Unaided	72,452	2,153
	Total	337,980	27,391

Table 1 demonstrates that the number of government schools admitting children with visual impairments in primary classes was the highest, whereas the number of private aided schools admitting visually impaired children was the lowest. The trend was almost similar in upper primary stage except that the number of private unaided schools admitting visually impaired children was the lowest.

Table 2 indicates that the number of visually impaired boys and girls

enrolled in rural schools at primary stage was highest in government schools while the lowest enrolment for boys is in private schools and for girls is in private unaided schools. As far as urban schools are concerned, private unaided schools enrolled the highest number of visually impaired boys while government schools enrolled the highest number of visually impaired girls at primary stage. The lowest number of visually impaired boys was enrolled by private aided schools whereas the lowest number of visually

Table 2
Management-wise Enrolment of Children with Visual Impairments

	Area	Government		Local Body		Private Aided		Private Unaided		Total	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Visual impairments at primary stage	Rural	30177	22709	19502	14469	2014	1486	2250	1185	53943	39849
	Urban	2552	2470	2406	2057	2301	1820	2642	1787	9901	8134
	Total	32729	25179	21908	16526	4315	3306	4892	2972	63844	47983
Visual impairments at upper primary stage	Rural	13340	8504	7379	5236	3345	2336	1283	702	25347	16778
	Urban	2182	2062	1631	1455	2396	1971	2050	1619	8259	7107
	Total	15522	10566	9010	6691	5741	4307	3333	2321	33606	23885

impaired girls was enrolled by private unaided schools.

The enrolment of visually impaired boys and girls at upper primary stage in rural areas was the highest in government schools while it was the lowest in private unaided schools. In urban areas, the highest enrolment for visually impaired boys was in private aided schools, whereas the enrolment of visually impaired girls was in government schools. The lowest enrolment for visually impaired boys and girls was in local body schools.

As per information in the Seventh Survey, Goa and Sikkim did not have Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and trained teachers to help children with disabilities at primary and upper primary stages. Among the Union Territories, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, and Lakshadweep did not have either of them at primary and upper primary stages. Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura states and Puducherry (UT) did not have specially trained teachers to help disabled children at primary and upper primary stages, while Chandigarh (UT) had only IEDC and trained teachers at primary stage. As per the Seventh Survey, there were 85,780 primary schools having IEDC programme and 38,300 specially trained teachers; while the number of upper primary schools having IEDC was 36,547 and 9,702 specially trained teachers.

Elementary Education in India

Analytical Report 2008-09 reveals that 20.36% visually impaired children were enrolled in Classes I-VIII in 2008-09 suggesting that greater attention is needed to bring these children into schools to achieve the goal of SSA.

No matter what the educational setting is, it is widely accepted that there can be no inclusion of CWSN without adequate resource support. This aspect has been taken care of in SSA mainly through NGOs, inclusive education Resource Teachers (RTs), volunteers, and by imparting long-term training to regular teachers on inclusion.

Twenty-eight states/UTs have appointed 12,629 Resource Teachers and 1,139 NGOs are involved in the IE programme in 33 states/UTs. An important and unique facet of this involvement is the range of activities that the NGOs have undertaken in the states for IE. These activities vary from planning for inclusion as in West-Bengal, to implementation and monitoring of IE, like in Tamil Nadu. Other States have engaged NGOs for designing and initiating innovative programmes. These include theme-based camps in Orissa, and development of low-cost/no cost Simulation Park for social inclusion of CWSN in every BRC of Tamil Nadu, to training of Key Resource Persons from the Families of CWSN in West Bengal, and preparation of adapted TLM for CWSN in Karnataka. As far as visually impaired children are concerned, 23,477 visually impaired children have

Table 3
Gender-wise Enrolment of Visually Impaired Children in
Grades I-VIII in 2008-09

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
I	19,507	15,216	34723
II	17,365	14,542	31907
III	18,900	16,015	34915
IV	20,295	16,434	36729
V	21,351	17,652	39003
VI	22,130	18,399	40,529
VII	19,861	17,521	37382
VIII	14,000	12,584	26,584
I-V	97,418	79,859	177277
VI-VIII	55,991	48,504	104495
I-VIII Total Enrolment	153,409	128,363	281772

been provided Braille books with the help of NIVH, Dehradun, National Association of the Blind, All India Confederation of the Blind and other such reputed organisations (Revised SSA Framework, 2011).

Table 3 shows small decline in the number of visually impaired boys, while the decline in the number of visually impaired girls is large suggesting that vigorous efforts are needed to ensure enrolment and retention of visually impaired boys and girls to achieve the goal of SSA.

Accepting Environment

This author conducted studies in

sample regular schools of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya and Mizoram, and positive attitudes towards visually impaired children and their acceptance in regular schools (Soni 2001). The classmates and teachers were very positive, though they did not undergo any training in teaching these children. The attitudes of visually impaired and other normal students towards friendship and integration, positive attitudes were found in both the groups.

In another study conducted by this author in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram (Soni

2005), it was found that teachers were least aware of facilities to the visually impaired children. Braille textbooks, aids and appliances, and other devices for the visually impaired, students were not available in the sample schools except in the laboratory of DIET in Nahan (Himachal Pradesh). These aids and appliances were available in the lab of DIET, but they were not being used in schools. Many of the teachers in Chamba district and other places did not know the meaning of visual impairment and normal children wearing glasses were considered visually impaired. However, crutches, wheelchairs and other appliances were available for children in most of the sample schools and teachers were aware of facilities to children with locomotor disabilities.

Conclusion

Although SSA has made significant contribution to the education of CWSN,

there is an urgent need to look into the problems of each category of children with disabilities separately. Each category has specific problems, and solutions have to be found to overcome them. The general term 'Children With Special Needs', though sounds very good, has done a great deal of harm to children who need greater care and attention. Each one of us has special needs and, therefore, use of this term (CWSN) is misleading. In other words, justice is not being done to the children who actually need educational interventions in the form of special teacher, aids and appliances, other educational materials and training in skill development. A huge amount of money is being spent on CWSN under SSA, and, therefore, an evaluation of the entire programme need to be done to assess actual benefits accruing to each category of CWSN and incorporate changes in policy if required.

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Professional Commitment of School Teachers

Dr Amrita Maheshwari*

Abstract

Professional commitment refers to a mindset reflecting loyalty and willingness to give one's all to a particular person, principle or plan of action. A teacher's commitment may be reflected with reference to the following six dimensions of her/his role or obligation– Commitment to learner, Commitment to institution, Commitment to work, Commitment to achieving excellence, Commitment to society and Commitment to human values. This research paper compares the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their sex and the socio economic status. A comparative study of teacher's professional commitment with its six dimensions may be instructive in understanding the commitment dynamics and achieving the goal of quality education.

Introduction

Teaching is considered as one of the oldest as well as noble professions. The very word teacher is value loaded. Every teacher is expected to be an ideal person imbued with high moral character. Professionally s/he is supposed to have rapport with all concerned with teaching profession, learners and their parents. Hence s/he is expected to be committed to her/his

profession, to learners, to society, and to high human values. In fact, commitment is an essential ingredient of every profession. In case of education it is more so. If quality education is the goal, it cannot be achieved without the sincere efforts of dedicated and committed teachers. Unfortunately, however, the teachers have fallen victim to a popular criticism in regard to their professional commitment. International

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conference of education in Geneva identified the following trends and concerns regarding teachers throughout the world:

- The need for further professionalisation of teacher vocation, as well as more commitment and responsibility on the part of the teachers.
- Deterioration in the social standing of teachers.
- Deterioration in working conditions including teacher's salaries in real terms.
- Teacher's morale has gone down almost everywhere, standards have dropped and commitment has slowly eroded away.

Commitment plays a decisive role in effective teaching. The more a teacher is committed the more s/he would acquire competencies and the more s/he would tend to be a performing teacher. A committed teacher would certainly respond to most of the issues through their professional expertise. Various research studies have revealed that commitment enhances job satisfaction, performance and reduces absenteeism.

Professional commitment refers to a mindset reflecting loyalty and willingness to give one's all to a particular person, principle or plan of action. A teacher's commitment may be reflected with reference to the following six dimensions of his/her role or obligation:

- (i) Commitment to learner.
- (ii) Commitment to institution.

- (iii) Commitment to work.
- (iv) Commitment to achieving excellence.
- (v) Commitment to society, and
- (vi) Commitment to human values.

The above six components of a teacher's Professional Commitment may be operationalised as follows:

- (i) *Commitment to the learner:* Including love for the learner, readiness to help learners, concern for their all round development, etc.
- (ii) *Commitment to the institution:* Institutional commitment of a teacher will be reflected in relation to his/her identification with and involvement in the organisational activities of his/her school.
- (iii) *Commitment to work:* Internal acceptance of the role and responsibility of the teaching profession. It refers to a teacher's commitment to his/her profession, e.g., a sense of pride in his profession, adherence to professional ethics and commitment to his professional associations.
- (iv) *Commitment to achieving excellence:* Care and concern for doing everything in the classroom, in the school and the community, in the best possible manner and in the spirit of 'whatever you do, do it well'.
- (v) *Commitment to the society:* Such as awareness and concern about

impact of teacher's work on the degree of advancement of families, communities and nation.

(vi) *Commitment to human values:* Including the role model aspect comprising genuine practice of professional values such as impartiality, objectivity, intellectual honesty, nation loyalty, etc.

Factors, which shape and influence the professional commitment could be many. The first and the foremost among them is the gender, which plays a key role in shaping their attitude towards the profession. Both western and the Indian traditions, being patriarchal, assign *kinder, kitchen and the kreche* to women, whereas men are supposed to *sustain, support and succeed*, as much as, male teachers are more exposed to the vagaries of the competitive world. The pulls and the pushes of the teaching profession affect the male teachers more than the female teachers. Female teachers are in fact engaged in a dual career – home making and teaching. They have to maintain high standards on both fronts if they want to continue their profession. They have few diversions or extra professional activities to pursue. Hence female teachers are expected to be more committed than their counter parts.

Socio-economic status (SES) is generally measured on the basis of prestige, wealth and authority. Socio-economic status of a person influences both his life style and life chances i.e., the likely hood of realizing certain

quality of life. SES reflects one's social class also. Warner et al. (1949) discerned six social classes: Upper-upper, Lower-upper, Upper-middle, Lower-middle, Upper-lower and Lower-lower class. Their system of class division is the one still used most frequently by sociologists.

Teaching is known to be a middle class profession. Middle class exhibits a tendency of rising expectations. Now the grades of the teachers revised attractively, the teacher's SES can easily be gauged from the point of view of occupational prestige rankings. Davis and Smith have placed secondary school teachers in middle class. Keeping in view the fact that it is a profession of highly educated persons, it can safely be called a middle class profession. Hence it was decided to rank them in three economic strata on the basis of their monthly income, i.e. salary from school. Three income groups thus arrived were — up to 10,000, 10,000 to 12,000 and above 12,500.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. compare the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their sex, and
2. compare the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their socio economic status.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, *ex post facto* research design has been chosen.

Sample Design

There are more than 100 secondary schools in Ghaziabad Janpad. It is obvious that all of the above schools and their teaching faculty could not have formed the subjects of study by a single researcher. Hence, it was decided to select a representative sample of 40 schools on the basis of the stratified cluster sampling technique.

A composite questionnaire, containing items related to personal identification data of the respondent and the scale measuring professional commitment were administered to the 400 teachers. Respondents are fairly distributed in regard to their gender. The female and male teachers are almost equally distributed, but female teachers are slightly higher in number than male teachers, because in the boys schools some female teachers are also working.

Table 1

S. No.	Sex	No. of Teachers	Per cent
1.	Male	189	47.3
2.	Female	211	52.7
	Total	400	100

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their socio-economic status shows that majority of respondents belong to middle socio-economic status. The teaching profession continues to be a middle class profession.

Table 2

S. No.	Socio-economic status	No. of teachers	Per cent
1.	Up to 10,000	159	39.8
2.	10,000 to 12,000	140	35.0
3.	Above 12,500	101	25.2
	Total	400	100

Tools and Technique

The main tool used in the study was a scale measuring professional commitment. A Likert 5-point scale for measuring professional commitment of secondary teachers was constructed. The scale included 30 items – 5 items each for the 6 dimensions of their professional commitment, all the items were positive. Each item in this scale was provided with five alternatives – strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The minimum-maximum score was 5 to 25. In all 30 items of 6 dimensions of professional commitment, the strongly agree alternative was assigned maximum weight, i.e. 5, strongly disagree was assigned the minimum value, i.e. 1, therefore the total score varies from 30-150.

Try out and the item analysis by 1/3 value-method, suggested by Anastasi (1968) and Guilford (1954) and used by Bureau of Psychology, Allahabad was adopted. The scale was fairly reliable as the reliability value was 0.83. Scale has high face, content and the criterion validity.

Table 3

	Variable	Tools
1.	Commitment	A scale measuring the level of commitment among the teachers has been specially constructed for the purpose of this study.
2.	Sex, Socio-economic Status	Identification data of the respondent gathered through the specially designed questionnaire.

The collected data was treated with the statistical techniques like t-test, F-test, multiple range and Duncan procedure wherever needed.

Results

Sex and Professional Commitment:

Table 4 depicts the significance of t-values calculated between mean professional commitment of male and female teachers. The present study revealed that gender is a discriminator of professional commitment among

teachers. Female teachers have exhibited more Professional Commitment (M=139.34) than male teachers (M=137.37). They have been found to differ significantly at 0.05 level on professional commitment score (t=2.20, p<0.05).

Table 5 highlights the significance of difference between means of male and female teachers with reference to six dimensions of professional commitment as dependent variable. The first t-value calculated to test the

Table 4

t-value Obtained between Male and Female Teachers on Professional Commitment Scores

Sex	N	Mean Professional Commitment	S.D.	t-value
Male	189	137.37	8.87	2.20*
Female	211	139.34	8.69	

* = t-value significant at .05 level
No Star = t-value insignificant.

Table 5**t-values Obtained between Male and Female Teachers on Six Dimensions of Professional Commitment.**

Dimensions of Professional Commitment	Male(N=189)		Female (N=121)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1. Commitment to learners	23.3	1.95	23.9	1.90	3.07**
2. Commitment to society	21.95	2.6	22.75	2.45	3.08**
3. Commitment to institute	22.24	2.75	22.55	2.6	1.30
4. Commitment to work	22.2	2.7	22.35	2.7	0.68
5. Commitment to achieving excellence	23.9	1.55	22.4	1.55	0.52
6. Commitment to human values	23.8	1.75	23.8	1.65	0.08

* = t value significant at .05 level
 No star = t-value insignificant.

** = t-value significant at .01 level

significance of the difference between means of 'commitment to learner' of male teachers (M=23.3) and female teachers (M=23.9) was found significant (t=3.07, p<0.01). The reason for high 'commitment to learner' in female teachers is quite understandable. It is perhaps due to the fact that women are endowed with a natural mother instinct, she feels more natural closeness to the student, in comparison to men. The 'commitment to society' score of male teachers (M=21.95) and female teachers (M=22.75) was again found to be significant (t=3.08, p<0.01). Here again high mean 'commitment to society' score was found in favour

of female teachers. Perhaps a woman is still censored by the society, hence she feels more conscious of her social obligations. None of the other t-values pertaining to other dimensions of professional commitment of male and female teachers were found significant. The third t-value for 'commitment to institution' with mean scores of male teachers (M=22.24) and female teachers (M=22.55) was insignificant (t=1.30, p>0.05). The fourth t-value for 'commitment to work' of male teachers and female teachers was also insignificant (t=0.68, p>0.05). Similarly, t-value for mean 'Commitment to achieving excellence' of male teachers

and female teachers ($t=0.52, p>0.05$) and mean 'commitment to human values' ($t= 0.08, p>0.05$) were found insignificant. It is obvious that male and female teachers have exhibited same professional commitment to achieving excellence and human values.

Socio-Economic Status and Professional Commitment

The mean value on professional commitment for those whose income up to 10,000 is 138.65, for those whose income 10,000 to 12,500 is 139.94 and for those whose income is above 12,500 is 134.57. The F-value obtained for these SES groups ($F=1.15, p>0.05$) was found to be insignificant. It can, therefore, be inferred that the extent of professional commitment found among them is almost the same.

Table 7 depicts F-values obtained after comparing socio-economic status of teachers vis-a-vis their professional

commitment. Individual SES group-wise mean Professional Commitment scores are as follows:

F-values were calculated to compare the teachers of three socio-economic groups, i.e. G1, G2 and G3 on the six dimensions of professional commitment. As regard to the 'Commitment to learners', the resulting F-value was found fairly significant ($F=4.47, p<0.05$). Consequently, multiple range tests were carried out for pair comparison, Duncan procedure for the 0.05 level are 2.79 and 2.93. It was found significant for low SES, i.e. G1 and high SES, i.e. G3. Teachers belonging to low SES were having higher commitment than the teachers belonging to high SES. The second F-value was calculated to compare teachers of three socio-economic statuses on dimension 'commitment of society'. The resulting F-value was found insignificant ($F=1.014, p>0.05$).

Table 6

F-value Obtained after Comparing Teachers of 'Three Academic Career Range Group' on Professional Commitment scores

<i>Academic Career Range</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Professional Commitment</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>F-value</i>
1. Up to 10,000	159	138.65	8.63	1.15
2. 10,000 – 12,500	140	139.94	8.57	
3. Above 12,500	101	134.57	9.59	

Table 7

F-value Obtained after Comparing Teachers of 'Three Academic Career Range Group' on Six Dimensions of Professional Commitment Scores

<i>Dimensions of Professional Commitment</i>	<i>Up to 10,000 (N=159) (G1)</i>		<i>10,000 to 12,500 (N=140) (G2)</i>		<i>Above 12,500 (N=101) (G3)</i>		<i>F-value</i>
1. Commitment to learners	23.9	1.65	23.6	2.0	23.15	2.1	4.47
2. Commitment to society	22.3	2.9	22.6	2.2	22.1	2.5	1.04
3. Commitment to institute	22.15	2.95	22.75	2.5	22.25	2.4	2.04
4. Commitment to work	22.4	2.65	21.85	2.55	22.25	2.9	0.26
5. Commitment to achieving excellence	24.0	1.65	23.95	1.45	23.5	1.55	0.47
6. Commitment to human values	23.85	1.6	23.85	1.55	23.7	2.0	0.21

All the other F-values pertaining to other dimensions of professional commitment and socio-economic status were found insignificant. The F-value obtained after comparing teachers of three SES groups on 'commitment to institution' was found insignificant (F=2.04, p>0.05). Likewise, F-value calculated to compare teachers of three Socio-economic status groups on the dimension of 'commitment to work' (F=0.26, p>0.05), F-values for 'commitment to achieving excellence' (F=0.47, p >0.05) and F-value for 'commitment to human value' (F=0.21, p>0.05), were found insignificant.

It can, therefore, be inferred that on

'commitment to learner' the teachers of three socio-economic status were found differing significantly, otherwise commitment of teacher is not affected by the socio-economic status of teachers.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn on the basis of findings of the study:

Sex and Professional Commitment

1. Male and female teachers were found to differ significantly on professional commitment.
2. Female teachers were found to be more professionally committed as compared to male teachers.
3. On mean 'commitment to learner' score, female teachers were more

committed to learners than male teachers.

4. Female teachers exhibited more 'commitment to society' than the male teachers.
5. Male and female teachers were similar on 'commitment to institution'.
6. Male and female teachers were similar on 'commitment to work'.
7. Male and female teachers were alike on 'Commitment to achieving excellence'.
8. Male and female teachers were found to be similar in their 'Commitment to human values'.

Socio-Economic Status and Professional Commitment

9. Secondary teachers coming from different socio-economic status were not found to differ significantly on professional commitment. Hence, socio-economic status was not found related to their professional commitment.

10. Teachers of low socio-economic status have been found to be much more committed to learners as compared to teachers of high socio-economic status.
11. Teachers belonging to low, middle and high socio-economic status were not found to differ significantly on 'Commitment to society' scores.
12. Teachers of different socio-economic status were similar on 'Commitment to institution'.
13. Teachers of different Socio-economic status have similar orientation towards 'Commitment to work'.
14. The difference between mean 'Commitment to achieving excellence' scores of teachers coming from different socio-economic status was insignificant.
15. Socio-economic status was not found a discriminator towards 'commitment to human values'.

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6

Job Satisfaction of Government Primary School Teachers: A Study of Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi) District

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Sumin Prakash*

Since the dawn of independence, social and political leaders of India have been attempting to raise the standard of living of its masses. The success of such efforts along with other factors depends to a large extent on the quality of man power, which in turn is influenced by the standard of education. The very shape of India's future depends on the quality and quantity of the products of its educational system.

Quality is at the core of education. It determines what students learn, how they learn and what benefits they draw from their education. While it is difficult to define the quality of education operationally, it can be viewed as the sum total of the quality of various components of input, process and output dimensions. Some of these components are: need-based curriculum, appropriate physical facilities, use of modern approaches to teaching, scholastic performance of

students, professional preparation of teachers, and linking education to life skills and world of work.

It is truism to say that teacher is the heart of every educational institution and the success of an institution in the attainment of educational goals depends largely on the quality and effectiveness of its teachers. Secondary Education Commission 1952-1953, Education Commission 1964-1966, Second Five Year Plan 1956-1961 and National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), 2004 have examined the educational problems of our country and has drawn specific attention to the status and problems of teachers.

Primary schools are the means for acquiring basic education and for diffusing literacy throughout societies (Nias 1989 and Caroline Dyer 2000). In India, for the cause of Primary Education, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*

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(SSA) 2001, has paid more attention towards primary teachers.

Origin and Statement of the Problem

In a number of studies conducted at international level, it has been constantly observed by the researcher that, unless a teacher is satisfied, he/she cannot be able to develop desirable attitudes, values, work habits and adequate personal adjustment in his/her pupils. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the teacher, who is satisfied with his/her work, is a better teacher. An important need of the study of job satisfaction, therefore, emerged in the temple of learning. Yet the investigator has taken a humble venture to determine the relationship between job satisfaction of primary school teachers (BTC and special BTC primary teachers). Thus the research problem investigated in the present study was stated as: 'Job Satisfaction of Government Primary School Teachers: A Study of Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi) District.'

Objective of the Study

To compare BTC and Special BTC Primary School Teachers with regard to their job satisfaction.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between BTC and special BTC Primary School Teachers with respect to various dimensions of job satisfaction, viz.
 - Job Interest
 - Chance of progress

- Use of Ability
- Authority
- Co-worker
- Chance to be creative
- Independence
- Social status
- Security
- Relation with supervisor
- Variety in work
- Service condition
- Personal recreation
- Moral value
- Identification

Method of Research

The normative survey method was used in this study. A test of job satisfaction inventory was administered on primary school teachers of the UP government primary school and data was collected. The obtained data was statistically treated and the corresponding results were discussed.

Population of the Study

The study was conducted on Primary School Teachers working in the UP Government Primary Schools of Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi) city and Bhadohi block area.

Sample of the Study

The study was conducted on 90 primary school teachers. The total sample was drawn randomly from the above mentioned population. For the purpose of taking them as sample, purposive sampling technique was used.

Table Showing the Mean, S.D., and t-value for the job satisfaction scores of BTC and Special BTC Primary School Teachers

S. No.	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	Degree of Freedom	Level of Confidence	
							0.05	0.01
1.	BTC	43	69.61	13.53	3.29	88	S	S
2.	Special BTC	47	61.17	10.37				

N= 90

d.o.f. = [N-2] = 88

Tool Used for Data Collection

For the collection of data, the tool used was job satisfaction inventory constructed by M.N. Wali, 1984.

Analysis

To see the significance of difference between the mean score of BTC and Special BTC Primary School Teacher, t-ratio was calculated.

The table above shows that there is significant difference between the job satisfaction scores of BTC and special BTC primary school teachers. The difference of mean value of the two groups is 8.44 and t-value is 3.29, which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence null hypothesis is rejected.

Finding of the Study

Analysis of data shows that BTC primary teachers are more satisfied than special BTC primary school teachers. The reason may be that the educational qualifications of special BTC primary teachers are higher for

their job, viz. B.Ed., Post Graduate, UGC-NET and Ph.D., as compared to BTC primary teachers. Because of this the aspiration level of special BTC primary teachers is higher and consequently the job satisfaction may not be there.

Educational Implication of the Study

Students' achievement depends on the psycho-social status and condition of their teachers. Only a satisfied teacher can give more attention, and deal sincerely with the students. This study reveals that educational administrators should pay more attention towards teacher's problems and try to satisfy them in order to have better utilisation of their potentialities for the sake of quality education in general and primary education in particular. The lesson one derives from the finding is that recruitment of special BTC primary teachers is not conducive to provide job satisfaction to these teachers and devote to the task of teaching whole heartedly.

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Relevance of Child's School Diary for Improving Classroom Processes

Jaya Singh*

Abstract

In this article, the author examines various school diaries. On analysis, it is found that the school diaries mainly focused on the twin purposes. First, it provides an understanding of the objectives of learning as advocated by the school. Second, it examines the views of teachers and parents as recorded in the diary. The article has been divided into three sections. Section I examines the scope of the diary in terms of printed instructions it contains, Section II studies the communication among the child, parents and teachers and Section III presents the findings of the study and makes suggestions for enhancing the quality of interaction between teachers and students and between school and home in the process of schooling of children.

Introduction

School diary which is regularly carried in the school bag of a child has an important role to play in the child's learning. It acts as a ready reference for schedule of activities, functions, tests, examinations and holidays which are spread throughout the academic year. It is a means of paper-based communication between the parents

and teachers. Communications such as reminders, date change, signing up sheets of assignments, dates for parent-teacher meetings are important aspects highlighted in the diaries. This study has been undertaken on a pilot basis. The study includes primary as well as secondary data. The researcher studied and analyzed school diaries of the students studying at primary, secondary and higher secondary stages.

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Objectives

- (i) To assess the role of school diary in improving classroom process.
- (ii) To understand the role of school diary in assessing and helping children perform better.
- (iii) To assess the effectiveness of school diary in communicating child's strength and weakness to the various stakeholders.

Methodology

The study was based on the primary as well as secondary sources. This study was undertaken in the metropolitan city of Delhi in the third quarter of the academic year, i.e. November-December 2010. The examination of diaries was carried out at both private as well as public schools.

Students were interviewed personally by the researcher. The researcher had informal discussions with the students, teachers and parents. The responses collected were then organised in a systematic way for analysis. The content of the school diaries was also studied by the researcher. The printed instructions as well as the parents', teachers' and administrators' remarks were examined by the researcher. Quotations and references have been used throughout the study.

Sample

The school diaries were collected at random by the researcher. These diaries belonged to the students from the primary stage to secondary stage.

However, the researcher mostly focused on the diaries of primary stage, i.e. children from Classes III to V. In all, 30 diaries were examined, out of which 20 diaries belonged to students from primary stage. Few school diaries available on the internet were also examined.

SECTION 1: Analysis of Instructions in the Diary

School diaries reflect the rules, regulations, norms and policies adopted by the particular institutions. The study was undertaken to see its relevance for the school administration, parents, teachers and the child.

Various aspects associated with the school diary relate to ethical practices as advocated by the school, payment of fees, attendance of children, assignment given by the school, uniforms prescribed by the school, information regarding infrastructure provided by the schools like science lab, audio-visual lab and mathematics lab, and so on. The study indicates that educational philosophy of the school rests on the measures taken for maintaining discipline and order in the school. The child is trained to obey the rules, follow a code of conduct through regularity of work, punctuality, time management, respect and obedience to parents and elders, etc. Parent support is also solicited in ensuring discipline in the school. The diary also makes cautionary mention about the forbidden practices like 'use of tobacco or drug', 'gambling', 'damaging school

property', 'use of mobile', and any kind of violence. In case of schools having co-education, the schools warn against 'sexual harassment'. Some of the schools discourage private tuition thereby implying that classroom teaching is sufficient for understanding a lesson.

Some of these rules are important part of institutions. These rules dominate the child's life, and are important in helping individuals construct meaning and relate productively to others (Carter and Doyle, 2006). The importance of good rules in promoting productive classroom life was underscored in a study by Marzona (2003). He found that in classes where rules and procedures were implemented effectively, the number of disruptions was about 28 percentile points less than in the classrooms where rules and procedures were not implemented effectively. However, it cannot be denied that there are rules which stifle creativity and curiosity among the children. There are arguments which suggest that creativity takes place within the context of overcoming the limits. The task is that of establishing fair rules that do not hinder creativity and curiosity in a productive way.

The schools appear too strict regarding collection of school fees. Striking of names from rolls of the school in case of 'non payment of school dues', 'failing to pay fees with fine within one month of the expiry of due

date', 'if fees along with fine are not paid for two consecutive instalments', etc. are given.

The infrastructure support provided by a school plays a role in building self-learning skills among children. Children are exposed to variety of books for reading from the very beginning of the school life. Educational magazines, periodicals and newspapers can be procured from the school library. There is also a mention of science lab, audio visual room, and other such rooms indicating the facilities provided by the school and at the same time justifying the high fees charged by the private school.

In an interview with the students, it was evident from their responses that they were aware of the rules and regulations prescribed by the school, such as 'they will not pluck flowers from the school campus;' 'they will borrow books from library only when their turn comes;' 'they will be careful in using apparatus in the science lab;' 'they will not damage school property', etc. They also agreed to conform to the rules of 'writing on the wall is strictly prohibited'; only those paintings which have been approved by the school teachers can be displayed and that too, on the board or space provided by the class teacher. It appears that focus is more on discipline rather than on nurturing the creativity among children.

The diary also includes timetable to be followed by every student in the

class. The students set his/her school bags as per the timetable. This prevents wastage of time in deciding the books to be carried to school, homework to be completed and making preparation for the examination.

Some schools provide an identical diary for all students from upper primary stage to higher secondary stage. On examining the school diaries the researcher came across frequent communications between parents and teachers at the lower stage than in the higher secondary stage. At the higher secondary stage the concerned student had used his school diary for taking class notes. Those who are regular are particular about carrying diaries in their school bags.

SECTION 2: Analysis of Communication between Teachers and Parents

The pages filled in the diary had information related to homework, sickness, specified reasons for leave, reminder for photograph, materials to be procured for project, school dress, and disobedience shown by the child by not bringing things on time or arguing with the school teachers. Some of the teachers reported that they start ignoring the students when parents do not respond to their noting in diaries.

Failing Tests

The Times of India, dated 11 February, 2012 reported that a teacher was stabbed to death by a 15-year-old student in a Chennai school. On investigation, it was found that the

teacher had made 13 adverse remarks in the boy's school diary reprimanding him for failing tests and for poor performance. Should noting in the school diary arouse aggression that it amounts to losing one's life?

Students face stress before and after the examination. Continuous haranguing by the teacher upsets the students. Poor performance in the exam tends to loose his/her confidence. He/She sees no reason why he/she should be reprimanded by the concerned teacher. He/she is broken to the extent that he/she accepts poor performance in the classroom. In some schools teachers are also penalised for the poor performance of the students by stopping their increments or transferring them to remote places. On a discussion, a teacher pointed out the children are demoralised to such an extent that they develop an ill feeling towards the concerned teacher. She stressed that such children have to be dealt with sympathetically. They are given special attention in the classroom. The teacher said she calls the students after the class gets over, takes him/her into confidence and discusses the problem with him/her. She sits with him/her and tries to tutor him/her till he/she is confident to take the exam.

1. Homework

A large number of studies have focused on the views of teachers and parents towards homework (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2001). However, children's views

regarding homework remain noticeably absent from much contemporary homework literature (Bryan, Nelson and Mathur, 1995; Leung, 1993; Warton, 2001; Xu and Yuan, 2003).

The pages of several diaries indicated several reminders for not doing the homework, or not bringing respective subject copies or misbehaving in the classroom. The teacher then writes a note to the parents to look into the matter. Some examples of communication between parents and teacher are as follows:

Teacher: Dear parents, please help Suvin to complete his homework in mathematics.

Parents: Dear teacher, thanks for the reminder. We have helped Suvin complete his assignment in mathematics.

The teacher could have thanked parents for showing cooperation in completing his homework.

Xu and Yuan (2003) examined the way homework was perceived by teacher, student and parents. He found out that the purpose of homework was to review, practice and reinforce what students learned in the class. Another reason stated for homework was developing a sense of personal responsibility and study skills.

Hari's parents changed their evening schedule, so that Hari could sit with them, share the school experience and do the homework. Watching television or reading newspaper or doing any other household work was

avoided by the parents. A regular schedule fixed in this manner benefited Hari (Singh 2009)

The importance of parents' role was evident in another study (Leone and Richards, 1989). Some of the findings as revealed from their study are:

Children were most attentive to homework when they completed it with a parent, rather than with a peer or on their own. It cannot be denied that family involvement in homework may be influenced by a range of variables, including types of homework help, frequency of help, and quality of help as perceived by children (Xu and Corno 2003).

Teacher: Dear Parents, Mayank has not completed his assignment in English, Hindi and Mathematics.

In an informal discussion with the parents, the researcher was informed regarding the adverse impact upon the child. Sometimes when parents read an adverse remark as given above, they behave and react to the problem in an adverse manner. For example, a parent reminding a child to do homework shouts at his child. This shouting further escalates into nagging and yelling, and the child refuses to comply to such a threatening situation. The child also shouts back, and becomes upset, and gets into his room without doing the homework. When problems have persisted, it is possible for family members to have lost confidence in themselves. They can develop a 'problem dominated' view of themselves

and look for evidence that support their view (Durrant, M. 1995).

2. Reminders for Missing Copy

The researcher came across such an incident in her neighbouring house.

Teacher: Dear Parents, Sri is not bringing the class note copies in the classroom. He is copying all his lessons in the loose sheets. Help him to locate the copies in the house and make him write all the class notes in the respective subject copies.

Teacher appeared worried as the loose sheets may be lost and the child will not be able to learn the notes for the class test.

Parents: Dear teacher, we are happy for the concern shown towards Sri. We'll see that Sri carries all his copies in the bag.

The parents then helped him to arrange his bag as per the timetable set for the class. The class note copies along with the homework copy were automatically included in the bag. The child, too, felt comfortable as he was saved from the regular harangue of his class teacher for not bringing the class notes copy in the classroom.

3. Confrontations in the Classroom

Teacher: Dear parents, Sonu appears restless in the classroom, refuses to listen, and argues for petty things.

Parents: Dear teacher, we are sorry for Sonu's behaviour in the classroom and assure you that he will listen to his teachers in the classroom.

The researcher while attending a parent-teacher meeting came across such an incident. The teacher, after reading reconciliatory note from the parent was pleased, in the absence of which, she would have forwarded the case to the school management authorities.

There are times when the teacher has to face unpleasant situation in the classroom. It occurs when the child and the teacher is occupied in heated and emotional confrontation on some issues. The teacher then makes a noting for the parents that 'child misbehaved with teacher' in the classroom. The parents are then expected to interfere on behalf of the teacher and warn him/her against argument in the classroom. As is indicated, it is confirmed that teacher is the sole authority in the classroom and the student cannot challenge her authority. On the other hand, a successful teacher can guess ahead of time that confrontation could develop. The ability to deal and avoid such confrontations is crucial to the effective management of discipline. They are then able to use a variety of social skills and techniques, including humour, to alter the heated discussion and to give both the teacher and the child a face-saving solution to the incident (Smith and Laslett, 1992).

How a teacher can use innovative methods to make children pay attention to the lesson being taught is explained through the following examples. A

teacher noticed a student named Vishal being distracted in the classroom. She shouted from her desk, "Vishal please concentrate in the classroom". There were other children also being distracted in the classroom. The teacher's eye caught hold of only Vishal. Vishal felt humiliated and answered back, "I am concentrating in the class." This was followed by a heated discussion between Vishal and the class teacher. The teacher had made a noting for Vishal's parents in diary which did not make much difference for Vishal. In the next class while another teacher was teaching a lesson on solar system, she too found Vishal distracted in the classroom. The teacher instead of shouting on Vishal raised a question about the planet to him. Vishal became alert when he heard his name being announced in the classroom. His tendency was to hunt for the answer from the textbooks but he had no clue to the question. He felt guilty and apologized for not being attentive in the classroom. The teacher was successful in drawing Vishal's attention in the classroom even without shouting or noting in the diary.

4. Sickness

Attendance problem is a form of passive resistance. Some students make a regular complaint against the school. They do have a feeling of being unwelcome in school. They make several excuses to avoid attending the school. Some communications as shared with the researcher from parents

in this regard are given here as examples:

Parents (1): Dear Madam, Anu was not well. She had vomited whole night on 9th July and hence could not attend the school.

Parents (2): Dear Madam, Abhi has developed severe allergy rashes all over (including eyes) and has high fever. Please excuse his absence from the school from 22-28 July, 2010.

The teacher believed the excuses given by the parents. The teacher needs to be more sensitive to the children's problems. She did not enquire about Anu's health when she attended the school after two days of her illness. The teacher needs to talk with the students who are chronically absent or tardy. Allowing them to explain their situation can often lead them to satisfy the need of the students as well as the teachers (Savage, T.V. 2010).

5. School Uniform

The details regarding the school uniform have been mentioned in the school diary. Some schools have prescribed different uniforms to suit the seasons and it also varied according to the activities volunteered by the child. Students are expected to be neatly dressed up for the school. To ensure its sanctity in the school there is regular checking of the uniform. One of the common arguments against school uniform is that it hinges upon the student's freedom of expression. This has been counter argued that in

the absence of school uniform it might instigate students to come in fancy dresses which can be disruptive to the learning process. Thus school uniforms have been favoured as they prevent indiscipline problems, and create more learning environment (Savage 2010). The researcher noted down the following communication:

Parents (1): Dear Teacher,

My ward is not wearing the school dress since they have been misplaced by the washerwoman.

Sorry for the inconvenience.

Parents (2): Dear Madam,

My ward has not worn the school shoes since they are wet.

The child is so apprehensive that she is prepared to put on wet shoes but her mother prevents her from doing so. The child then lets her mother write a note in the diary requesting her teacher to excuse her for not coming in the school shoes.

Some schools have a regular checking of the school uniform, and in the absence of proper uniform, students are penalised by reducing the marks from his group.

6. Procurement of Raw Material for the Activities

Allowing students to engage in activities makes the classroom learning enjoyable. Jones (2001) believes that activities are convenient and at the same time have an educational purpose. An elementary class teacher had difficulty in handling a group of

students. She decided to engage the class with the help of an activity. Each day she set aside time for engaging students in an activity. Students started enjoying the classroom and the time wasted in managing the misbehaviour was reduced. The class members put pressure on each other to follow the rules. In short, the problems almost disappeared (Jones 1987).

The teacher desired to conduct an experiment in science and made a noting in the diary:

Please procure one or two thermocol, black sheets, 100 cm cotton, glue, scissors, for the science class tomorrow.

On analyzing Neha's diary, this incident was narrated to the researcher. Neha, on return from the school showed it to her mother. Neha's mother Priya rang up her husband Manoj to get the above mentioned things for school. Unfortunately, Manoj was stuck in an important official meeting. He forgot to purchase things mentioned by Priya. Next day, Neha cried and refused to go to school on the pretext that the teacher would not entertain her in the classroom. Her parents did not listen to Neha's excuse and sent her to school. As expected, the concerned teacher punished the child in the classroom and made a noting in the diary:

Neha had not brought the material for science experiment.

Students can benefit from the timely procurement of the art material for the purpose of doing any activity in the

classroom. The teachers should ask the students to procure the raw material a week in advance to avoid non-compliance of the instructions.

SECTION 3: Findings

School diary acts as a ready reference to school schedule of activities, functions, assignments, vacation and other information which are important for both parents and teachers. These activities are spread evenly throughout the year, and information regarding them is available to the users as and when required. It is a paper-based communication between the parents and the teachers. On analysis, some diaries, indicated one sided communication where the parents are set out to carry the command given by the teachers. On analyzing the diaries, the researcher found that some teachers have not acknowledged the cooperation shown by the parents. The school diary acts as a mirror in reflecting the academic records, discipline and daily performance of the students. In some of the diaries, the frequency of reminders regarding missing copies, homework not done and an incomplete project is high. The diary does not provide much space for child's achievement.

Most of the schools prescribe similar kind of school diary from elementary to higher secondary stage. However, the purpose of diary changes as child moves from primary stage to higher secondary stage. In the initial stage, the communication between the

parent and the teacher is high. At the later stage, the diary is used by the students to write assignments and correspondence among the peer group. Parents' initiative and suggestions do not find mention in any stage of the school diary.

Students who were regular in the school were more likely to carry a school diary. Non regular students appeared casual regarding school diary. The study revealed similar kind of finding with respect to the interaction between the parents and teachers. The teachers, too, appeared reluctant when parents did not respond to their comment in the school diaries. On the other hand there was frequent communication between those parents who instantly responded to the teacher's comments. It was also evident that students who receive help from their parents are more likely to carry diary than students who did not receive help from the family members.

The school diary mentions about infrastructure facilities like science lab, library and so on. However, the diary does not mention about safety and security provided to the child. The school does not make any special provision for the protection of the child in summer, winter or rainy season. It has no mention of evacuation during contingencies like flood, earthquake, or any other vagaries of the nature.

Suggestions

School diaries do facilitate teaching-learning in the classroom. The students

need to keep to their timetable, assignments and reminders for future activities. It is an essential part of the student's life. Sooner they are introduced to the child, the easier it is for them to follow. If a teacher decides to apprise the child of large projects, she can plan and break the work into small chunks to allow child to feel comfortable while doing the projects. Instead of complaining, encouragement should be provided to the child. Parents' initiative and encouragement should not be seen as interference in their domain of work, rather, cooperation is needed for the holistic development of the child.

Written comments by the teacher, too, have a very important role to play in the child's life. This should not be ignored by the parents, rather, full support needs to be provided to overcome the child's weakness as pointed by the teacher. At the beginning of the school year parents should have an opportunity to meet and socialise with the teachers, administrators. Parents with special skills or interests, willing to share their knowledge, give demonstration, or help teachers in

conducting an activity, should be invited. The school diary then would be helpful in building positive attitude between the parents and teachers. Regarding assessment, Position Paper on Examination Reforms suggests that it should be beyond the cognitive domain, and beyond pen and paper. It should not be seen as a burden, rather, a tool for diagnosis and further learning. Implementing this vision will require a lot of re-training and education of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

Looking at the important role played by the school diary, its regular use should be encouraged by both the teacher as well as the parents.

Future Research

Further research needs to be carried out with respect to students belonging to diverse cultural backgrounds in urban and rural settings. The study should also focus on the children with special needs. Investigations on this topic need to continue to identify conditions that appear to affect changes in the way teachers as well as students view the school diary.

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NEWSPAPER

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Co-curricular Activities and Science Achievement of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The study was conducted to determine whether participating in sports, computer and internet related activities had any impact on students' achievement in science of secondary school students. The participating students (N=1500) were selected from urban and rural areas of two districts of western Uttar Pradesh. The t-test was applied to see the significant difference between the science achievement scores of different groups of students. Results indicate that the students involved in different activities yielded better science performance. Therefore, it was concluded that co-curricular activities affect academic performance in science.

Introduction

Co-curricular activities*** are activities performed by students that fall outside the realm of the curriculum of the school. Students' participation in co-curricular activities such as drama, music, sports, debating and community work can be important in their overall engagement

with school, and may be related to positive educational outcomes. Most studies find that children who participate in these activities are more successful academically than those who do not. Garibaldi, (1992) and Kunjufu, (1982) observed that participation in activities of music/drama/sports/debating/community work is a useful

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*** The NCF 2005 has considered Art and Aesthetics, Physical and Health Education as core curricular areas. The co-curricular activities are, therefore, part of curriculum. In this paper, the author has used the term co-curricular activities which can be considered as integral part of curriculum in the present context.

and appropriate vehicle for children to gain valuable academic and social experiences, as well as overall healthy psycho-social development. For those children and adolescents having interests in areas other than academics, the availability of other avenues for skill and value building are very important. Holland and Andre (1987) suggested that although extra-curricular activities were not directly academic in nature, they facilitated total development of students.

For many students, co-curricular clubs and sports play a central role in their secondary school years. We associate these activities with developing several important skills that are valued in the workplace, but not regularly evaluated in the classroom. Involvement is viewed as an indicator of teamwork ability, self-confidence, and the ability to succeed in competitive situations (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2005). Co-curricular activities offer alternative environments in which children can learn about themselves and their worlds, and can discover opportunities for carving their individual versions of success (Eccles, 1999; Gholson, 1985). Sports and other activities create opportunities for students to achieve and have meaningful roles in their school community.

Different activities, in which students participate, both inside and outside the school itself, are among the multiple situations that can have an effect on science achievement. Extra-scholastic activities have been

associated with an improved educational level, more interpersonal competencies, higher aspirations and a better attention level (Mahoney, Cairos and Farwer, 2003). Much of the research carried out that examines the access of computer and internet and student achievement seems to emphasise that there is a positive correlation between these variables. There is plenty of evidence to indicate a positive relationship between computer technology and student achievement (James and Lamb, 2000; Sivin-Kachala, 1998; Weaver, 2000; Weller, 1996; Wenglinsky, 1998).

Empirical Studies

Studies conducted within the last decade looked at possible effects of sports participation on academic and social development (Braddock, Royster, Winfield, and Hawkins, 1991; Silliker and Quirk, 1997). Most research on extracurricular activities (sports, games, debates, etc.) shows that participation in these kinds of activities is associated to positive outcomes as academic achievement (Holland and Andre, 1987; Marsh, 1992; Silliker and Quirk, 1997; Cooper et al., 1999; Eccles and Barber, 1999). Moriana et al., (2006) reported that groups involved in activities outside the school yielded better academic performance, especially those that participated in study-related activities and those that participated in mixed activities (both sports and academic). The findings are supported by Darling et al. (2005), whose study showed that students who

participated in school-based extracurricular activities had higher grades, higher academic aspirations and better academic attitudes than those who were not involved.

In today's increasingly technology driven world, it would seem that students who have had access to computers in their home or in classrooms would do better in science and mathematics achievement than those who had no access to it (Berger et al. 1994; Shaw, 1998; Papanastasiou, 2003; Papanastasiou and Ferdig, 2003; Papanastasiou, Zembylas and Vrasidas, 2003). However, there are still occasions, where computer use in schools is associated with lower levels of achievement (Papanastasiou, Zacharia, Zembylas, 2004 and Ravitz et.al 2002).

Research Questions

The research questions for the study include the following:

- (1) Do students' participation in sports (cricket, football, basketball, badminton and volleyball) related activities explain differences in science achievement?
- (2) Do students' participation in computer-related activities explain differences in science achievement?
- (3) Do students' participation in internet surfing-related activities explain differences in science achievement?
- (4) Do students' participation in sports, computer and internet

related activities on the basis of sexes explain differences in science achievement?

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses that will guide the present study are stated in null form as under:

- (1) There is no significant difference in science achievement in relation to participation in sports-related activities of secondary school students.
- (2) There is no significant difference in science achievement in relation to participation in computer-related activities of secondary school students.
- (3) There is no significant difference in science achievement in relation to surfing on internet-related activities of secondary school students.
- (4) There is no significant difference among boys and girls in science achievement in relation to participation in sports, computer and internet surfing-related activities.

Method

Sample

The main sampling technique in this study was stratified random sampling with geographical location (urban/rural) of the schools as the basis of stratification. The sample consisted of 1500 secondary school students (Class IX) selected from 30 schools of two districts of western Uttar Pradesh, (India), in which 813 were male and

687 were female students. The average age of the study sample was 15 years. Within the group that performed different activities, students were divided into two groups – those who carry out sports (cricket, football, basketball, badminton and volleyball) related activities and academic (access to computer and internet) related activities. In what concerns participation in co-curricular activities, 321 participated in sports activities and 1179 did not participate in such activities; 1110 participated in computer related activities and 390 did not participate in this activity; 711 participated in internet surfing activities and 789 did not participate in such activities.

(i) Science Achievement Test: Science achievement refers to students' scores on the science test administered to secondary school students. The data concerning students' achievement in science were gathered by administering

to sample, a standardised instrument developed by the investigators. The test consisted of 50 items of multiple choice type. There were 16 items in the area of physics, 19 items in the area of chemistry and 15 items in the area of biology. The split-half method was used to determine the reliability of the test. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was found to be 0.87 after the application of Spearman-Brown Formula.

(ii) Information Sheet: Information sheet was provided to collect basic information about personal aspects of the students like gender; participation in sports, computer and internet surfing.

Results and Analysis

The statistical method used in testing the hypotheses was the t-test for the differences between the mean science achievement scores of two groups using two-tailed test. The mean, standard deviation and t-tests of two groups are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Mean Achievement Scores on the basis of Co-curricular Activities

<i>Groups</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig/NSig</i>
Sports-related activities	Participation	321	29.04	7.27	8.34	Sig
	No participation	1179	25.25	6.97		
Computer-related activities	Participation	1110	29.43	7.53	11.66	Sig
	No participation	390	24.50	6.10		
Internet surfing activities	Participation	711	30.19	7.37	10.49	Sig.
	No Participation	789	26.320	6.93		

When t-test was employed to determine whether there were significant differences in the students' achievement marks, comparing the group that participates in sports-related activities with the one that does not. Result is summarised in Table 1, and indicates that students in the sports activity group obtained significantly better results ($t=8.34$, $P < .001$ with 1498 df). Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected at .001 level.

The number of students having

access and not having access to computer and internet were 1110 and 390, 711 and 789 respectively. This shows only 74% and 52% secondary school students know how to access computer and internet respectively. It is highly surprising that 26% of the students are so ignorant that they have no idea how to access computer. The data in Table 1 also show that the achievement in science of students having access to computer was significantly better ($t=11.66$, $P < .001$,

Table 2: Comparison of Mean Achievement Scores of Male and Female Students on the Basis of Co-curricular Activities

<i>Groups</i>			<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig/NSig</i>
Sports-related activities	Participation	Male	165	28.97	7.34	0.70	NSig
		Female	156	29.27	7.11		
	No Participation	Male	648	24.76	6.66	0.63	NSig
		Female	531	25.27	7.55		
Computer-related activities	Participation	Male	624	29.12	7.38	1.75	NSig
		Female	486	29.91	7.49		
	No Participation	Male	189	24.65	6.36	0.47	NSig
		Female	201	24.36	5.85		
Internet surfing activities	Participation	Male	411	29.85	7.15	1.66	NSig
		Female	300	30.77	7.50		
	No Participation	Male	402	26.28	7.21	0.37	NSig
		Female	387	26.47	6.85		

df=1498) than those who have no access to it. Similarly, the students having access to internet have significantly better science achievement than those who have no access to internet ($t=10.49$, $P<.001$, $df=1498$). Thus, both second and third hypotheses are rejected at .001 level.

Computation of the mean and SD for male and female sub-groups of each group (participation in sports, computer and internet-related activities) showed that there were no statistically significant difference observed in any group and they performed equally good in science, as the t -values (Table 2) were not significant at any level. So, the fourth hypothesis is accepted and it may be argued that the achievement in science of male and female students who participated in these activities are almost the same.

Discussion

The results presented support the idea that participation in co-curricular activities proves beneficial to the students as it in turn affects their educational outcomes. The students who participate in sports-related activities present significantly better academic achievement in science. Along these lines, there were considerably significant differences in performance in favour of the group involved in academic type co-curricular activities, and that such differences did not appear for those involved only in sports (Moriani et al., 2006). According to

Peixoto (2004), students who participate in extra-curricular activities present higher values on some dimensions of self-concept, and better academic achievement. The findings are further supported by Darling et al. (2005), whose study showed that students who participated in school-based extra-curricular activities had higher grades, higher academic aspirations and better academic attitudes than those who were not involved in extra-curricular activities. Similarly, a study by Adeyemo (2010) has shown that students' participation in school-based extra-curricular activities is an important factor to students' achievement in physics. Research conducted by Broh (2002) neither completely contradicts, nor completely supports these findings. He reported that participation in some activities improves academic achievement, while participation in others diminishes academic achievement. Contrary to this result, Narang (1987) reported that no academic programme of the school (participation of co-curricular activities) was related to higher achievers.

The results further show that students with computer and internet access have significantly better achievement in science, than those who never had access to computer or internet. Improved access to technology is a pivotal feature of almost all information technology plans. While there is immense interest in the use of technology in schools, and rapid

growth in the presence of technology, many students in secondary schools still have limited access to computers. The result shows that 26% of the students indicated that they never had a computer available for them to use anywhere, neither at home nor in school. According to Mangione (1995), all students must have equal opportunity to learn with and about computers to ensure equity, although few schools have achieved the levels of access necessary to provide students with an equitable experience.

Further, when data was analyzed for male and female sub-groups of each group like participation in sports, computer and internet surfing related activities, to see significant difference in science achievement, it is found that there is no significant difference between these two groups of sub-samples and they perform equally good in science.

Generally, students who participate in co-curricular activities (sports and academic) show better performance in terms of their average marks in science. School administrators, teachers, students and parents all need to be aware of the effects that participation in co-curricular activities has on the science achievement of students. The students would perform better if co-curricular activities are encouraged in schools, as it would improve science students reading habit and thinking abilities. Parents need to be cautious that they do not force their children into participating in these activities for increasing their academic performance. Children have likes, dislikes and interests. There are some activities that they will enjoy and others that they will not enjoy. Parents need to determine where their children's attitudes and interests lie, and allow them to participate in those activities only.

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Learning Achievement of Elementary School Students in Urban Slums of Varanasi City: A Comparative Study

Jai Singh*

Abstract

Our country is a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic committed to provide quality elementary education to all children including deprived children in the age group of 6 to 14 in the society. The slum children come from most deprived and downtrodden sections of the population in urban areas. As such, the country has a special responsibility for their education and welfare. In order to provide quality elementary education to slum children, learning achievement of students should be satisfactory. In this research paper, the learning achievement of elementary school students in Varanasi slum areas has been assessed and compared with learning achievement of elementary school students at national level. Descriptive survey method was used in the study. The study was conducted in randomly selected sample of 67 (32 government and 35 private) elementary schools in urban slum areas of Varanasi city. The subjects of the study were 670 students of Class V of these sampled elementary schools. Data was analyzed using per centage method, bar-diagram and t-test. Learning achievement of students of elementary schools in slum areas of Varanasi city was not found satisfactory and the learning achievement of the students of government elementary schools in slum areas was found significantly less than that of the students of private elementary schools. Furthermore, learning achievement of students in slum areas was found significantly less than learning achievement of elementary school students at national level.

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Introduction

Education is the key to national prosperity and welfare. It equips the individual with basic knowledge and technical skills essential for work, productivity and economic survival. Education enhances personal growth, economic advancement and social effectiveness which are vital for success in a competitive society. It is generally said that children are the future of the nation. Nelson Mandela, a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and former President of South Africa, while addressing to the world's children, stated:

“My dear young people: I see the light in your eyes, the energy of your bodies and the hope that is in your spirit. I know it is you, not I, who will make the future, it is you, not I, who will fix our wrongs and carry forward all that is right with the world.” (UNICEF, 2001)

If children are our future, they are the agent of change as well as custodian of continuity (Myers, 1992), and, therefore, Government should be committed to provide quality elementary education to all children in the society.

The Government of India is committed to provide equal educational opportunity to all children. To ensure quality elementary education of deprived children, the Government of India has launched various programmes and schemes. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), launched in 2001, has laid special focus on

disadvantaged group of children in the 6-14 age group like children from rural and difficult areas, children from SC, ST minority communities, children with disabilities, and all those who are out of school. The other programmes and schemes are: Operation Blackboard Scheme, the Alternative, Innovative and Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS/AIE). The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) are specially designed to help girls to achieve education at par with boys. The Mid-day Meal Scheme has been universalised to help children enrol and retain in schools. These initiatives have had considerable impact on children's access to education, but the issue of elementary education with satisfactory learning achievement is still a major concern. In reality, learning achievement of students belonging to disadvantaged groups dwelling in slum areas including poor children, girls, children from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC), is comparatively low. Most of the students do not attain minimum level of learning in slum areas. The students cannot properly read or write even though they have completed their elementary education. Without ensuring elementary education with adequate learning achievement in these deprived slum community, the national as well as international commitments cannot be fulfilled.

To assess the learning achievement of elementary school students in urban slum areas of Varanasi city and compare it with learning achievement at national level, the present study has been conducted.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- To assess learning achievement of elementary school students in urban slums of Varanasi city.
- To compare the learning achievement of Government elementary school children with that of private elementary school children in urban slums of Varanasi city.
- To compare the learning achievement of elementary school children in urban slums of Varanasi city with learning achievement of elementary school children at national level.

Hypotheses

In view of the above objectives, following hypotheses were formulated:

H₀1: There is no significant difference in academic achievement of Government elementary school children with that of private elementary school children.

H₀2: There is no significant difference in academic achievement of elementary school children in urban slums of Varanasi city with academic achievement of children at national level.

Operational Definition of the Terms Used

Some important terms which have been frequently used in this study are defined conceptually and operationally for their clarity:

Learning Achievement

Student learning achievement is defined in terms of the knowledge, skill, and abilities that students have attained as a result of their involvement in a particular set of educational experiences.

Elementary Schools

Elementary schools refer to the schools from Classes I to VIII, (NCERT, 1975; Education Commission, 1964-66).

Urban Slums

In the present study, the term slum has been defined as places where buildings are:

- in any respect unfit for human habitation;
- by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light, sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to safety, health and morals. (Slum Areas Improvement and Clearance Act, 1956)

Urban slums in Varanasi city have been operationally defined as 227 areas by District Urban Development Agency (DUDA) (Base Line Survey Report on

Varanasi City, 2011).

Methodology

To assess the learning achievement of elementary school students, descriptive survey method was used in the study.

Sample of the Study

Multistage stratified random sampling technique was used for selection of sample of the study. The sample consisted of 67 elementary schools (32 Government and 35 private) in urban slum areas of Varanasi city. Further, 670 students of Class V (10 from each selected elementary schools) were randomly selected for the study.

Results

- Learning Achievement of Students in Urban Slums of Varanasi City

Tools Used in the Study

The following tools were used to collect the data:

- Mathematics test for Class V, developed by the Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation (DEME), NCERT
- Language (Hindi) test for Class V, developed by DEME, NCERT

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in accordance with the objectives and hypotheses of the study. Percentage and bar-diagrams and t-test were used for analyzing the data.

Table 1 presents the facts that not a

Table 1

Percentage of Elementary School Students' Frequencies in Different Grades of Learning Achievement in Mathematics

Learning achievement range	Grade	Percentage of students' frequency (Government school)	Percentage of students' frequency (private school)	Percentage of students' frequency (all sampled schools)
0-34	Below minimum grade	83.04	63.19	73.12
35-39	Minimum grade	6.97	10.43	8.7
40-49	Average grade	8.70	13.04	10.87
50-59	Good	1.30	11.88	6.59
60-79	Excellent	0	1.47	0.73
80-100	Mastery grade	0	0	0

single student was found in mastery grade in mathematics either from Government or private schools. In excellent grade only 1.47 per cent of students were found from private schools. In good grade 1.30, 11.88 and 6.59 per cent of students were found from Government, private and total sampled schools, respectively. In average grade 8.70, 13.04, 10.87 per cent of students were found from Government, private and total sampled schools, respectively. In minimum grade the frequency of Government, private and

total sampled schools were found 6.97, 10.43 and 8.7 per cent, respectively. Maximum number of students was found in below minimum grade. The per centages of students in below minimum grade, from Government, private and total sampled schools were 83.04, 63.19 and 73.12, respectively. The bar diagram given in Fig. 1 also depicts the per centage of students of government, private and total sampled schools in different grades of learning achievement in mathematics.

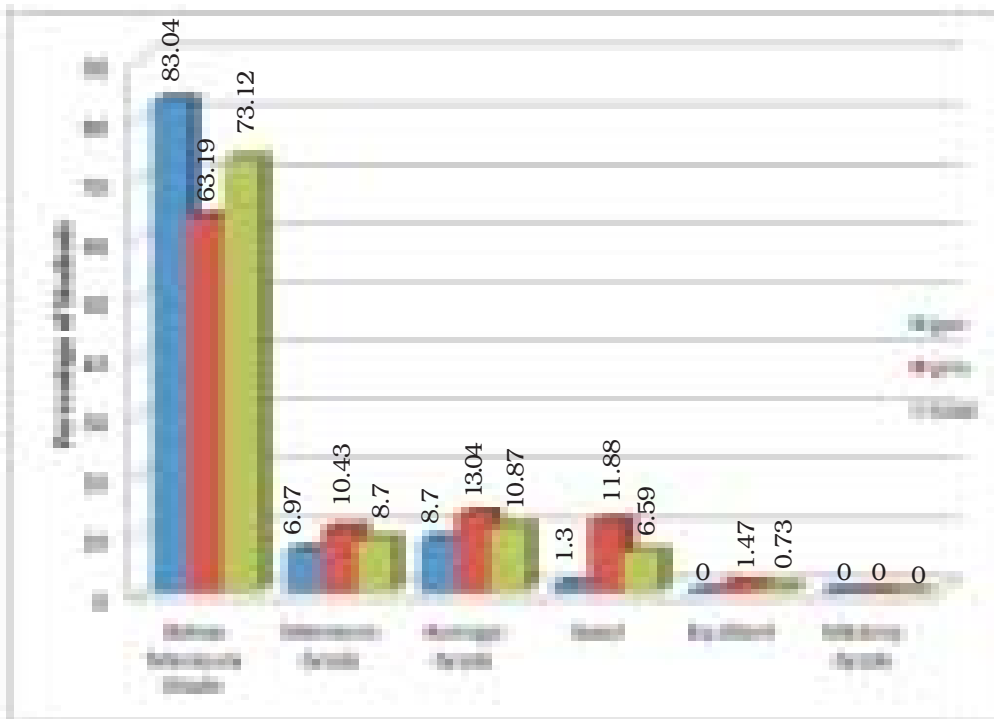


Fig. 1: Percentage of students in different grades of learning achievement in mathematics

Table 2
Percentage of Elementary School Students in Different Grades of Learning Achievement in Language (Hindi)

Learning achievement range	Grade	Percentage of students (in sampled government school)	Percentage of students (in sampled private school)	Percentage of students (in all sampled schools)
0-34	Below minimum grade	61.30	24.06	42.69
35-39	Minimum grade	9.57	11.88	10.73
40-49	Average grade	11.74	23.74	17.74
50-59	Good	6.97	18.84	12.91
60-79	Excellent	10.43	19.42	14.93
80-100	Mastery grade	0	2.03	1.02

Table 2 shows that only 2.03 per cent of students were found from private schools in mastery grade of learning outcomes in Hindi. In excellent grade 10.43, 19.42 and 14.93 per cent of students were found from government, private and total sampled schools respectively. In good grade 6.97, 18.84 and 12.91 per cent of students were found from government, private and total sampled schools, respectively. In average grade 11.74, 23.74 and 17.74 per cent of students were found from Government, private and

total sampled schools, respectively. In minimum grade, the frequency of government, private and total schools were found 9.57, 11.88 and 10.73 per cent, respectively. Maximum number of students was found in below minimum grade. The percentage of students in below minimum grade, from government, private and total schools was 61.30, 24.06 and 42.69, respectively. Bar diagram given in Fig. 2 also depicts the per centage of students in different grades of learning achievement in language Hindi.

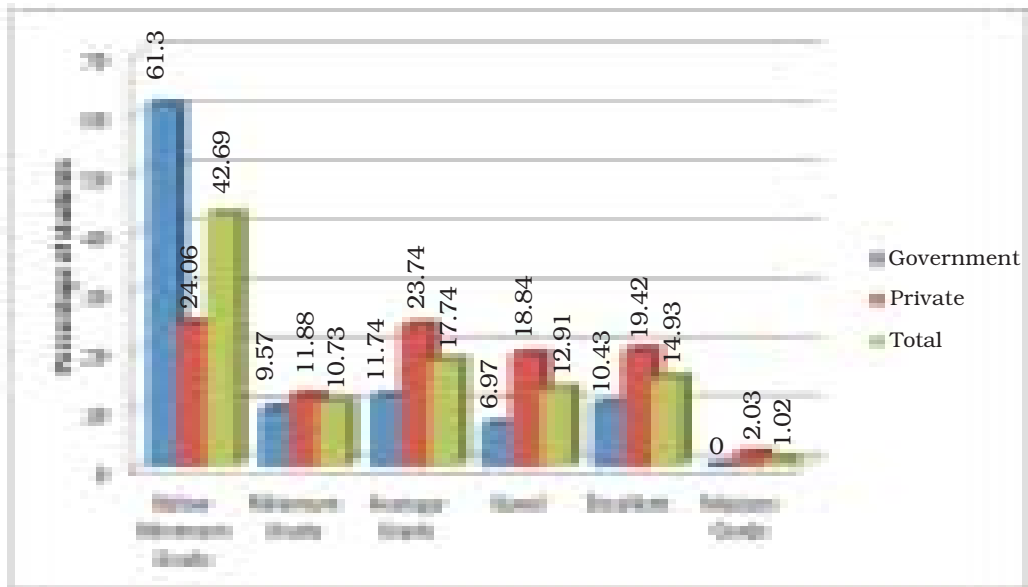


Fig. 2 Percentage of students in different grades of learning achievement in language (Hindi)

- Difference in the Learning Achievement of Government Elementary School Students with that of Private Elementary School students in Urban Slums of Varanasi City

Table 3

t- Value for Difference in Learning Achievement of Government and Private Elementary School Students in Mathematics

Elementary schools	Mean of learning achievement in mathematics	SD	Number of students	t- Value	Sig (2-tailed)
Government school	25	12.54	320	8.626	<.01
Private school	33	11.36	350		

Table 3 reveals that the obtained t-value for difference in students' learning achievement in mathematics for Government and private schools was found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It means that the group of government and private school students differ significantly with respect to the learning achievement of students in mathematics. The above table further reveals that the mean learning achievement of students of private schools in mathematics was found to be higher than that of government schools.

Table 4 reveals that the obtained t-value for difference in students' learning achievement in language (Hindi) for government and private school was found to be significant at .01 level of confidence. It means that the group of

government and private school's students differ significantly with respect to the learning achievement of students in language (Hindi). The above table further reveals that the mean learning achievement of students of private schools in language (Hindi) was found to be higher than that of Government schools.

On the basis of significance of difference in learning achievement in both the subjects, i.e. mathematics and language (Hindi), hypothesis H_01 has been rejected. It may be inferred that learning achievement of students of private elementary schools is significantly better than learning achievement of students of Government elementary schools in urban slums of Varanasi city.

Table 4
t- Value for Difference in Learning Achievement of Government and Private Elementary School Students in Language (Hindi)

<i>Elementary schools</i>	<i>Mean of learning achievement in language (Hindi)</i>	<i>SD of learning achievement</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>t- Value</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Government school	32	11.04	320	17.488	<.01
Private school	46	9.54	350		

- Learning Achievement of Elementary School Children in Urban Slums of Varanasi City in Comparison to Learning Achievement of Elementary School Children at National Level

Table 5
Percentages of Sampled Elementary School and National Level Elementary School Students in Different Ranges of Learning Achievement in Mathematics

<i>Learning achievement range</i>	<i>Percentage of students (at national level)*</i>	<i>Percentage of students (government school)</i>	<i>Percentage of students (private school)</i>	<i>Percentage of students (in all sampled schools)</i>
0-49	58.74	98.70	86.65	92.68
50-59	13.57	1.30	11.88	6.59
60-100	27.69	0	1.47	0.73
Total	100	100	100	100

* National level students' learning achievement at the end of Class V is taken from NCERT study.

Table 5 shows that the students' percentage of sampled elementary schools and national level elementary schools having learning achievement in 0-49 range was 92.68 and 58.74, respectively. In 50-59 range of learning achievement, the per

centages of students were 6.59 and 13.57 and in 60-100 range, percentages were 0.73 and 27.69, for sample schools and elementary schools at national level respectively. The results are also depicted in the following bar diagram.

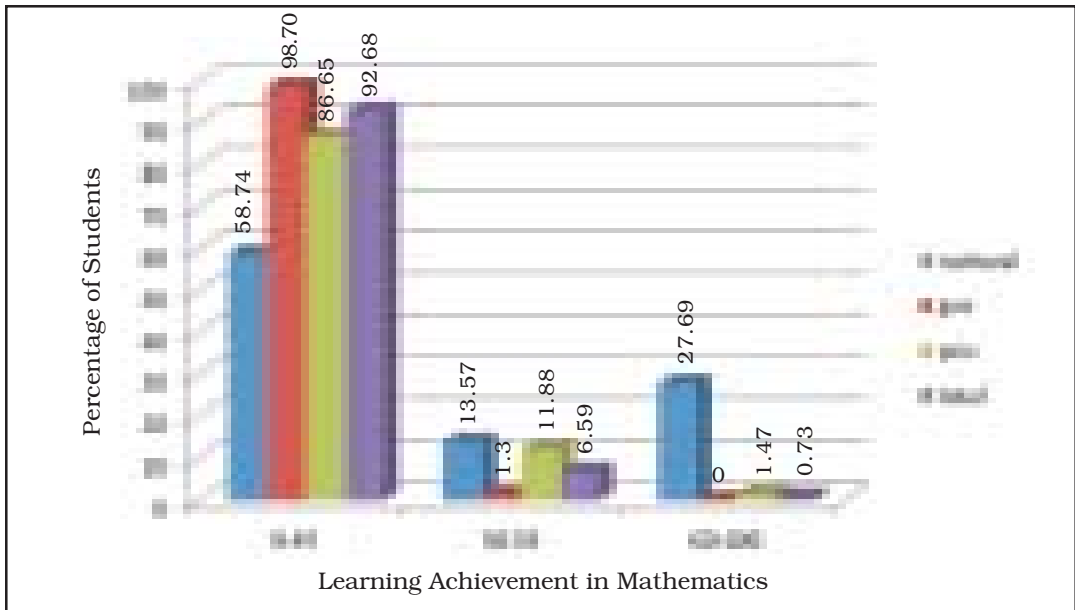


Fig. 3 Percentage of students in different range of learning achievement in mathematics

Table 6
Percentage of Students of Sampled Schools and National Level Elementary Schools in Different Ranges of Learning Achievement in Language (Hindi)

Learning achievement range	Percentage of Students (at national level) in Hindi*	Percentage of students (government school)	Percentage of students (private school)	Percentage of students (in all sampled schools)
0- 49	30.25	82.61	59.68	71.16
50-59	18.68	6.97	18.84	12.90
60-100	51.07	10.42	21.48	15.94
Total	100	100	100	100

* National level students' learning achievement at the end of Class V is taken from NCERT study.

Table 6 shows that in Hindi language, the percentage of students of sampled elementary schools and national level elementary schools having learning achievement in the range of 0-49 was 71.16 and 30.25, respectively. In 50-59 range of achievement, the percentage of

students was 12.91 and 18.68 for sampled elementary schools and at national level of elementary education respectively. In 60-100 range, per centage of students was 15.94 for sampled elementary schools and 51.07 for elementary schools at national level. The results are also depicted in the following bar diagram.

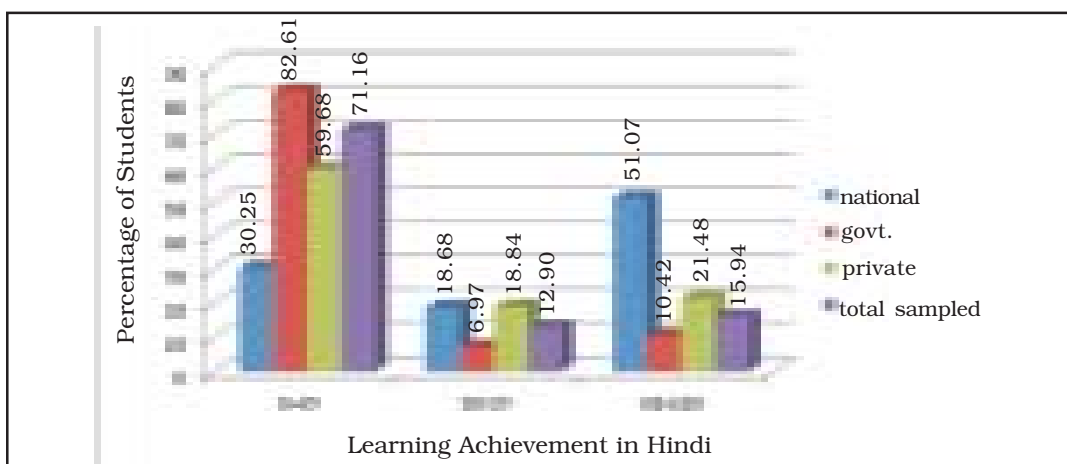


Fig. 4 Percentage of students in different ranges of learning achievement in language (Hindi)

Table 7

t- Value for Difference in Learning Achievement of Students of Sampled Schools and Elementary Schools at National Level in Mathematics

	<i>Mean of learning achievement in mathematics</i>	<i>SD of learning achievement</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>t- Value</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Learning achievement National Level*	46.51	21.30	88271	37.91	<.01
Sampled School learning achievement	29	11.81	670		

* Mean, SD and number of students were taken from learning achievement of students at the end of Class V, NCERT.

Table 7 reveals that the obtained t-value for students' learning achievement in mathematics for elementary schools in slum areas of Varanasi city and learning achievement of elementary school students in mathematics at national level was found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It means that the group of elementary school students at national level and in slums of Varanasi city, differ significantly with respect to the learning achievement of students in mathematics. The above table further reveals that the mean learning achievement of students of elementary schools at national level in mathematics was found to be higher than that of elementary schools in slum areas of Varanasi city.

Table 8 reveals that the obtained t-

value for students' learning achievement in language (Hindi) for elementary schools in slum areas of Varanasi city and learning achievement of elementary school students in language (Hindi) at national level was found to be significant at .01 level of confidence. It means that the group of elementary school students at national level and in slums of Varanasi city differ significantly with respect to the learning achievement of students in language (Hindi). The above table further reveals that the mean learning achievement of students of elementary schools at national level in Hindi was found to be higher than that of elementary schools in slum area of Varanasi city. On the basis of significance of difference in achievement in both the subjects, i.e. mathematics and language (Hindi),

Table 8

t- Value for Difference in Learning Achievement of Students of Sampled Schools and Elementary Schools at National Level in Language (Hindi)

<i>Elementary School</i>	<i>Mean of learning achievement in Hindi</i>	<i>SD of learning achievement</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>t- Value</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Learning achievement National Level*	58.57	18.30	88271	47.652	<.01
Sampled School learning achievement	39	10.51	670		

* Mean, SD and number of students were taken from learning achievement of students at the end of Class V, NCERT.

hypothesis H₀2 has been rejected. The learning achievement of students of elementary schools at national level is significantly better than learning achievement of students of elementary schools in urban slums of Varanasi city.

Discussion

Learning achievement of students was not found satisfactory in elementary schools of Varanasi slum areas. Most of the students could not attain minimum level of learning in both the subjects. Comparatively, learning achievement of private school students was found better than learning achievement of government school students in both the subjects. Furthermore, learning achievement of elementary school students in urban slum areas of Varanasi city is comparatively lower than learning

achievement of elementary school students at national level. The findings of the study that the slum children had lower learning achievement are in accordance with the findings of similar studies conducted by Fraser, 1959; Dave, Mathur, 1963; Douglas, 1964; Tiwari, Chandrashekharaiyah, 1965; Sharma, 1974; and Rath, 1976. It indicates that equal educational opportunity is not available to slum children. Government of India has initiated a number of programmes and schemes with the objective to ensure quality education in access of deprived children in their schools but the target of elementary education with satisfactory learning achievement could not be achieved. It seems that governmental policies and programmes have not been effectively implemented in urban slum areas.

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Access Provisions under the RTE Act (2009) and SSA

Chiter Rekha*

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986/92, which stands as a major landmark in the country's journey towards Universal Elementary Education (UEE) states: "In our national perception, education essentially for all... Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution."

With the formulation of NPE, India initiated a wide range of programmes for achieving the goal of UEE. These efforts were intensified in the 1980s and 1990s through several schematic and programme interventions, such as Operation Black Board, Shiksha Karmi Project, Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project, Bihar Education Project and SSA after 2001.

Currently *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) is implemented as the flagship

programme for universalising elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning level. SSA provides for a variety of interventions, including opening of new schools and alternate schooling facilities; construction of schools and additional class rooms; promoting ECCE, education of girls, SC/ST and special needs children; strengthening monitoring, evaluation and research; and creating learning environments in schools.

The Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 – 14 years as Fundamental Right. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 which represent the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21A, means that every child has the right to full time elementary education of satisfactory

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equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. 'Compulsory education' casts an obligation on the appropriate government to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education. 'Free education' means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education.

Universal Access: All Children in School

Traditionally, access has been defined as physical access to a school/ Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS)/ Alternative Learning Centres and the number of children enrolled. Universal access to elementary education requires schooling facilities within reasonable reach of all children. If schools are not located in or near the habitations where children reside, children are unlikely to complete schooling. In the context of RTE, the definition of access has been expanded to include social, geographical and quality access to a formal, fully functional school that has all the critical conditions (physical facilities, learning materials and human resources) that enable learning. While 99% of habitations now have physical access to a primary school and 93% to an upper primary school within the prescribed norms, the challenges are:

(a) breaking the social and quality barriers for the "last mile child", and (b) ensuring schools have the requisite learning conditions that are maintained and functioning. Many states still need more upper primary schools to ensure universal access to elementary education. Though the primary to upper primary sections ratio improved from more than three at the beginning of the decade to 2.2 now (DISE: 2009-10), the gaps are still large in states like West Bengal, Bihar, and Assam. According to an independent study carried out by SRI-IMRB, 8.1 million children are still out of school in 2009. States like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Odisha account for more than $\frac{3}{4}$ th of all the out of school children. The RTE Act provides children access to elementary schools within the "defined area or limits of neighbourhood." In order to improve access, various provisions are given under RTE Act 2009.

Neighbourhood schools: The RTE Act provides that 'the appropriate government and local authorities shall establish, within the area or limits of a neighbourhood, a school, where it is not already established, within a period of three years from the commencement of the Act'.

A neighbourhood school is a school located within defined limits or area of neighbourhood, which had been notified by the state government under the State RTE rules. The central government has notified the area or limits of neighbourhood applicable to Union Territories without legislature to

factor in distance norms, with provision for relaxation of norms in places with difficult terrain where there may be risk of landslides, floods, lack of roads and in general, danger for young children in the approach from their homes to the school. In case of children with disabilities, the central RTE rules provide for appropriate and safe transportation arrangements to enable them to attend school and complete elementary education.

Mapping to Facilitate Children's Access in Neighbourhood School

Section 12 of the RTE Act mandates that (a) Government and local body schools shall provide free and compulsory education to all children enrolled therein, (b) all aided schools receiving aid or grants to meet whole or part of its expenses shall provide free and compulsory education to such proportion of children as its annual recurring aid or grants, subjects to a minimum of 25% and (c) all unaided and specified category schools, namely Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas, Sainik schools or any other schools having a distinct character as specified by notification by the state government/UT, shall provide free and compulsory education to at least 25% children belonging to weaker sections and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood.

Upgradation of Alternate Schooling Facilities under the RTE Act

In the past, SSA has supported alternate schooling facilities in the form

of centres under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE). EGS and AIE centres across the country have been invaluable in reaching out to children from disadvantaged groups, weaker sections, especially children in unserved habitations.

(i) Education Guarantee Scheme

Centres: Existing EGS centres will continue to be supported for a period of two years (2010-11, 2011-12) during which period state would be required to take steps to upgrade the EGS centres to regular primary schools. No new EGS centres will be sanctioned under SSA with effect from the financial year 2010-2011. In case the existing EGS centre would be closed down the children will be mainstreamed in the neighbourhood school.

(ii) Special Training: 'Special training' will be provided to out of school children who have been admitted to school to enable them to cope with age appropriate enrolment and participation in regular elementary schools.

(iii) Enabling provisions under SSA to universalise access.

Special Training for Out-of-school Children:

The RTE Act makes specific provision for Special Training for age appropriate admission for out-of-school children. A majority of out-of-school children belonging to disadvantaged communities: Scheduled Castes,

Scheduled Tribes, Muslims, migrants, children with special needs, urban deprived children, working children etc. need special training.

SSA will provide support for special training as envisaged under the RTE Act for out-of-school children who have been admitted to regular schools to ensure that they are integrated into the school system. Such support will be in the form of residential or non-residential course as needed and such children will continue even beyond 14 years of age to complete elementary education.

(iv) Residential facilities for urban deprived and children without adult protection: Children on the street suffer from many denials and vulnerabilities: these include deprivation of responsible adult protection, coercion to work each day, work in unhealthy occupations like rag picking, begging and sex work, abysmally poor sanitary conditions, inadequate nutrition from begging, a range of psycho-social stresses, physical abuse and sexual exploitation and exposure to hard drug abuse. For such children, SSA will provide support for residential facilities.

Addressing Systematic Issues for Universal Access

Removal of Financial Barriers: The RTE Act provides that no child in a neighbourhood school, as notified by the state government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee, charge or expense

that may prevent him/her from enrolling, participating and completing elementary education.

Removal of Procedural Barriers: The RTE Act also provides for removal of barriers to school access. It provides that no child shall be denied admission in a school for want of a birth or transfer certificate. The central RTE rules provide that wherever a birth certificate under the Births, Deaths and Marriages Certification Act, 1886 is not available, an anganwadi record or ANM record or a declaration of the age of the child by parent or guardian would be deemed to be a proof of age. Admission of a child in a school is a Fundamental Right and it cannot be denied at any point of time. In case of children in difficult circumstances, including children affected by migration, displacement or ill health, etc. schools may need to be flexible to allow admission at any time during the session.

Ensuring an Eight year Elementary Education Cycle: The National System of Education envisaged a common educational structure. At the elementary level, the National System of Education comprises five years of primary education and three years of upper primary education. Existing SSA norms provide support to states to move towards an eight-year elementary education cycle.

Conclusion

Universal access is an essential component of UEE. Access does not constitute mere physical availability of

school; it implied facilitating full, free and joyful participation of children in learning. Interventions for universalising access, therefore, cannot be limited to school infrastructure, residential facilities or transportation,

but must encompass curriculum, including 'hidden' curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Equitable access must amalgamate with equitable quality to institutionalism and sustain universal access.

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Maintaining Dignity in Difficult Situations

Kiran Devendra*

I was in Amritsar on 13 and 14 June, 2011. It was an official trip. I utilized the evening of 13 June to visit the Golden Temple. It had a lot of emotional meaning for me. 'My husband, my son and his wife were to visit Amritsar on 28 November, 2010. We were to travel by Air India. We had planned to take Manu and Priya to the Golden Temple and then take them to the Wagah Border for the Retreat Function'. This did not happen as my husband passed away suddenly in his sleep on 13 November, 2010. However, I did see Devendra in my dream on November 28 asking me to find out the timings of flights to Amritsar. I realized that he wanted me to go to Amritsar. My in-laws were in Amritsar when I got married. My son was born in Amritsar. My husband had taken me around in Amritsar. I had lovely memories which gave me an immense happiness in October 2010 when I was on an official trip. This time the visit brought tears in my eyes, and breakdowns, although, I did manage my official lecture somehow as well as

giving *Ardas* (prayer) for my husband at the Golden Temple.

Hundreds of people were patiently waiting for their turn to reach the inside of the *Darbar Sahib* in the Golden Temple. A young woman with an amputated leg was making a great effort with a rustic thick stick to move forward somehow. She was carrying her five-year-old son who was continuously holding on to his mother's rustic stick. The little son did not realize that he was adding to the weight which his mother was carrying with an amputated leg. He was feeling satisfied that he was helping his mother walk and was not letting his mother know that he was tired as well. Both mother and son exchanged smiles whenever the crowd let them stand without pushing. As they reached inside, the smile on this young lady's face was one that exuberated happiness, satisfaction and peace. After the *darshan* which was a rushed one, as the crowd was moving on rapidly, the mother and the son moved out, they found some place to sit outside. The

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mother made a great effort to sit on the floor. Not even once did they request anyone to let them have *darshan* first! Or lost their temper whenever they were pushed by the crowd.

I tried to give some money to this young lady for her rikshaw, bus fare, stay and food, as she was very poor. I did not believe myself when she said '*Rab ne bathera ditta hai. Tussi dena he hai te saanu ashirwad de ke jao*'. (God has given us enough, if you want to give us, give us your blessings). The mother had passed on these values of self respect and dignity to her son. Throughout the night, the peaceful faces of the mother and her son did not

let me sleep, as to how, in such difficult human situation, these two were able to give up temptations to guard their dignity and self respect. The two remotely reminded me of my husband, who, after an accident, completed his Ph.D on the crutches and never complained of pains and aches. He continued to be cheerful and had a great sense of satisfaction that his thesis was a high quality academic exercise. My husband maintained his dignity and self respect till the last day of his life. Devendra always believed that overuse of facilities can weaken a person's own resolve.

CHILDREN IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES*

11. CHILDREN IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

11.1 Goals

- 11.1.1 To ensure that the best interest of the child is upheld in all policies, plans, programmes, interventions and in the strategies for children in difficult circumstances.
- 11.1.2 To create and uphold a safe, supportive and protective environment for all children within and outside the home.

11.2 Objectives

- 11.2.1 The above goals will be achieved through the following objectives:
- To protect all children against neglect, maltreatment, injury, trafficking, sexual and physical abuse of all kinds, pornography, corporal punishment, torture, exploitation, violence, and degrading treatment.
 - To address the survival, development, protection and participation rights of children in difficult circumstances, such as orphans, street children, beggar children, migrant children, children affected by man made and natural disasters, drug addicts, children of nomads, refugee children, slum and migrant children, children of commercial sex workers, children of prisoners, children affected by/in armed conflict, displaced children, evicted children, young children in charge of siblings, children born as eunuchs or brought up by eunuchs, and all other children in need of care and protection.
 - To meet the special needs of children in difficult circumstances and those in situations of particular vulnerability by ensuring equal applicability of all laws.
 - To create an effective support system for all children in all kinds of difficult circumstances and vulnerable situations through creation of an appropriate authority for child protection.
 - To give priority for non-institutional services for the rehabilitation of

* Strategies for child protection as given in the National Plan of Action for Children—2005

children by restoring them to their families and ensuring their reintegration into the home and community, or through foster care, sponsorship, adoption, giving primary consideration to the best interest of the child.

- To prevent children from falling into distress and vulnerability by developing strategies for food and livelihood, security for families and provision of basic minimum services, ensuring special attention to the most vulnerable.
- To provide a home for every orphan or destitute child through creation of a mechanism of foster care or adoption within the framework of the norms and principles laid down by the Supreme Court of India [Guidelines for Adoption of India Children (1995)].
- To promote in-country adoption of all children with special emphasis on the girl child.
- To create a system for foster care for children in need of care and protection, or in especially difficult circumstances, ensuring the best interest of the child.
- To develop appropriate strategies for prevention and rehabilitation of child substance abuse, and envisage an integrated approach to supply and demand reduction for curbing the growing problems of alcoholism and drug abuse in the country.
- To generate awareness through preventive education, mass media, special campaigns and sensitisation programmes to make the younger generation conscious of the ill effects of alcohol/drug addiction, tobacco products.
- To encourage greater participation of voluntary organisations to extend welfare-cum- rehabilitation services for children in difficult circumstances, and non-institutional care, with minimum standards of service.
- To address the needs of shelter, education, health, rehabilitation and prevention from exploitation of children affected by disasters (natural or man-made) and displaced children.
- To address needs of education, shelter and reintegration of children in need of care and protection and children of migrant and nomadic parents and refugee children.
- To develop special interventions for children of commercial sex workers and children of prisoners.

- To develop a system of constant and authentic data collection about the extent, magnitude and nature of children in especially difficult circumstances and vulnerable children, and also put in place a system of tracking and monitoring of all interventions made for the benefit of such children.
- To promote inter-sectoral coordination and convergence of all services for the holistic development of children.

11.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies:

- Develop a system of identification, investigation, reporting, follow-up and referral of children at risk within and outside homes/institutional care.
- Prevent destitution and exploitation of children by ensuring the outreach of all care, protection and developmental programmes for all children.
- Focus and initiate special programmes for withdrawal of child beggars from the streets and their reintegration into the educational/vocational mainstream.
- Mobilise families, civil society and community to respond to the needs of children in difficult circumstances and help them access protective and developmental services for children.
- Facilitate convergence with related Ministries/Departments at Central and State levels, and sensitise allied systems such as the police, hospitals, Municipal Corporations and the railways/roadways towards the problems of children in difficult circumstances, so as to increase the effectiveness and outreach of programmes.
- Respond to children in emergency situations by expanding child help-lines and providing necessary support service infrastructure for referral.
- Rehabilitate all children in need of care and protection and in vulnerable situations, through collaboration and convergence of all government and non-government services.
- Provide temporary shelters and in some cases institutional care for street and other children in exploitative circumstances, in partnership with NGOs and community-based organisations.
- Develop and provide professional counselling services for children affected by psychosocial trauma due to any of the above given situations.
- Support creation of accredited training courses/ institutions for counselling services which meet international standards.

- Facilitate early repatriation of children in institutions to families thereby promoting/encouraging de-institutionalisation of children.
- Ensure that all institutions, housing or care facilities and protective services where children live, meet established standards, and upgrade and expand existing services.
- Ensure that children affected by disasters (natural or man-made) receive timely and effective humanitarian assistance through a commitment to improved contingency planning and emergency preparedness, and that they are given all possible assistance and protection to help them resume a normal life as soon as possible.
- Provide infrastructure facilities and support non-governmental organisations for maintaining destitute and orphan children with a view to rehabilitating them through in-country adoptions, thereby providing the child with a family environment.
- Enhance awareness regarding adoption, foster-care and sponsorship, and putting systems, including programmes and schemes in place to facilitate these.
- Provide effective mechanisms for full coverage of services including holistic treatment and rehabilitation of child substance-abusers through counselling and awareness centres, treatment-cum-rehabilitation centres, de-addiction camps and awareness programmes.
- Combat and prevent the use of children, including adolescents, in the illicit production and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- Arrange for Raen Baseras, drop in centres, temporary shelters and night shelters for safety of the children, in order to ensure adequate and secure shelter and prevention from forced evictions and displacements.
- Ensure access to all developmental and protective services to children of sex workers and prisoners. Sensitise and train all functionaries and service providers dealing with such children.
- Strengthen protective and developmental services to children affected by armed conflict or civil disorder.
- Ensure that children are not used in armed conflict. Also ensure that children affected by armed conflict or civil disorder receive timely and effective humanitarian assistance through a commitment to improved contingency planning and emergency preparedness, and that they are given all possible assistance and protection to help them resume a normal life as soon as possible.

12. CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH LAW

12.1 Goals

12.1.1 To prevent children from getting into conflict with law.

12.1.2 To recognise, promote and protect the rights of children in conflict with law through preventive, protective, reformative and rehabilitative policies, laws, plans, strategies, programmes and interventions.

12.2 Objectives

The above goals will be achieved through the following objectives:-

- To develop appropriate strategies to prevent crimes by children.
- To recognise the separate set of needs for children in conflict with law, and develop measures for their effective care, treatment and rehabilitation.
- To create child-friendly judicial and administrative procedures dealing with children in conflict with law.
- To train and sensitise all personnel dealing with children in conflict with law.
- To ensure expeditious disposal of all child-related cases and provide appropriate support services throughout the legal process to children in conflict with law.

12.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies:-

- Compile, comprehend and address factors leading to crimes by children.
- Educate parents, communities and schools to create a healthy environment for the growth and development of children.
- Establish and implement suitable guidelines for media, IT centres and cyber cafes to reduce their harmful impact on children.
- Ensure convergence of services and programmes to deal with children in conflict with law and their circumstances effectively.
- No child, under any circumstance, should be lodged in prison.
- Implement the JJ Act to ensure that all institutions under it are put in place and adhere to international standards of care and protection. To rehabilitate juvenile offenders in a child-friendly environment, by utilising the network of institutional and non-institutional facilities.
- Set up Juvenile Police Units in every district and sensitise the enforcement machinery to extend humane treatment of children in conflict with law.
- Upgrade basic infrastructure such as water and sanitation, recreational and sports facilities to provide protective and developmental services to children in all Juvenile Justice Institutions.

- Ensure quality institutional and alternative care to promote protection and development of children in conflict with law.
- Identify and set up Model Rehabilitation Centres in each State/UT for children in conflict with law.
- Build partnership with allied services to ensure holistic social re-integration of such children.
- Ensure access to free legal aid and advice. Ensure that children are heard in all legal proceedings against them by involving them, taking into account their dignity and best interest.
- Training and sensitisation of judiciary about child rights and the international and national legal framework for child protection.
- Ensure that any restriction on liberty of any child is registered and reported and that the situation and treatment of such children is regularly reviewed by the appropriate national or state authority.

13. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

13.1 Goal

- To protect all children, both girls and boys, from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.
- To prevent use of children for all forms of sexual exploitation, including child pornography.
- To develop new and strengthen existing legal instruments to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

13.2 Objectives

The above goals will be achieved through the following objectives: -

- To identify and address the root causes leading to sexual abuse and exploitation of children, both girls and boys, and implement preventive and rehabilitative strategies against sexual abuse and exploitation of children.
- To ensure the safety, protection and security of victims of sexual exploitation, and provide assistance and services to facilitate their recovery and social reintegration.
- To criminalise, prosecute and penalise effectively, all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and child pornography.
- To ensure that in the treatment by the criminal justice system of children who are victims, the best interests of the child are a primary consideration.
- To undertake legislative reform to place burden of proof on exploiters and enhance punishment.

- To enlist the support of the private sector, including the media, in programmes to prevent and combat sexual exploitation of children.
- To eradicate harmful, traditional or customary practices that sexually exploit women and children.
- To take necessary measures to combat the criminal use of information technologies, including the Internet, for purposes of sale of children, for child prostitution, child pornography, child sex tourism, paedophilia, and other forms of violence and abuse against children and adolescents.
- To recognise that children are sexually abused within homes by members of the family and those in positions of trust, and to mobilise community to report such incidents to authorities with the view to penalise the abusers.
- To recognise that children are also at risk of being sexually abused in institutions and services and to take corrective and punitive action.

13.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies: -

- Undertake research to identify the nature and magnitude of all forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation, with a view to improve policy and interventions for the safety and protection of children.
- Set up Crisis Intervention Services and Centres with adequately trained personnel to deal with child victims of abuse.
- Review, revise and enact laws for prohibition and prevention of child abuse and punishment of offenders.
- Sensitise police, judiciary and medical authorities towards victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, especially during the investigation process and trial of victims of rape, incest and sexual abuse.
- Sensitise media to accept social responsibility in reporting cases of child sexual abuse and to respect the dignity and privacy of the child.
- Establish sound information systems regarding trafficking routes, networking of NGOs and other agencies engaged in prevention, rescue and rehabilitation of victims of sexual exploitation.
- Create quality foster care and other alternative services for care and protection of victims who need to be removed from the home/ institutions where they are being abused.
- Protect the identity and respect the privacy of child victims, and take measures to prevent publicising information that could lead to their identification.
- Ensure assistance to child victims for their full physical and psychological recovery, development and social reintegration.

- Promote public awareness of the dangers and harmful effects of such offences with the view to sensitise parents, caregivers and the community.

13.3.1 Build public, private and NGO partnership to address this social challenge.

14. CHILD TRAFFICKING

14.1 Goal

14.1.1 To stop sale of children and all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual purposes, marriage, labour, adoption, sports and entertainment, and illegal activities, like organ trade, begging and drug peddling.

14.2 Objectives

The above goal will be achieved through the following objectives: -

- To identify and address the root causes leading to trafficking of children.
- To implement preventive, protective and rehabilitative strategies for trafficked children and those at risk.
- To ensure the safety, protection, and security of victims of trafficking, and provide assistance and services to facilitate their recovery and social reintegration.
- To criminalise, prosecute and penalise effectively, all forms of sale and trafficking of children including for sexual purposes, marriage, labour, adoption, sports and entertainment and illegal activities, like organ trade, begging and drug peddling.
- To ensure that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in the criminal justice system dealing with child victims.
- To undertake legislative reform to place burden of proof on traffickers and enhance punishment.
- To enlist the support of the private sector, including the tourism industry and the media, in programmes to prevent and combat trafficking of children.
- To eradicate harmful, traditional or customary practices that lead to trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation.
- To take necessary measures to combat the abuse of information technologies, including the Internet, for trafficking of children for the purposes of sale, prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, paedophilia and other forms of violence and abuse against children.

14.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies: -

- Implement the Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, 1998.
- Address the root causes of vulnerability arising out of poverty, especially in chronic supply areas, through female literacy, school attendance,

improved economic conditions of women through formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs), skill development, economic enterprise and better livelihood options for adults to prevent women and children from becoming victims of trafficking.

- Establish facilities for shelter, food, clothing, health care, counselling, education, training, skill development, so as to facilitate social and economic rehabilitation of rescued victims.
- Provide assistance to voluntary organisations to organise temporary shelters for the victims, to facilitate repatriation to their homes, provide assistance during trial, and for rehabilitation of the victims.
- Sensitise police, judiciary, media and medical authorities towards trafficked victims, especially during the investigation process and trial of victims of trafficking, and improve quality of services.
- Establish sound information systems regarding trafficking routes and networking of NGOs and other agencies engaged in prevention, rescue and rehabilitation of victims.
- Establish communication with neighbouring countries and NGOs to prevent cross-border trafficking of children and facilitate repatriation and rehabilitation of victims.
- Create regional mechanisms to prevent cross-border trafficking and for promotion of rescue and rehabilitation.
- Prevent trafficking of boys, and extend care and protection services to the victims.
- Capacity building of State Governments and NGOs to facilitate better coordination in prevention, rescue and rehabilitation.
- Create Central and State Nodal Authorities to exclusively deal with the problem of trafficking.
- Ratify UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children by 2007.

15. COMBATING CHILD LABOUR

15.1 Goals

- To eliminate child labour from hazardous occupations by 2007, and progressively move towards complete eradication of all forms of child labour.
- To protect children from all kinds of economic exploitation.

15.2 Objectives

The above goals will be achieved through the following objectives: -

- To ensure regular and systematic enumeration of all child labour.

- Institute a rights-based uniform definition of child labour and bonded child labour in existing labour laws.
- To rescue and remove children below ten years of age from the workforce by 2010.
- To expand the list of hazardous occupations to facilitate progressive elimination of all forms of child labour.
- To universalise and accelerate school enrolment, attendance and retention so that children are prevented from being employed as labourers.
- To intensify and implement strategies to protect children from economic exploitation.
- To take immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour and to provide for the rehabilitation and social integration of the rescued children.
- To prevent and prohibit trafficking of children for the purpose of labour including domestic service and other informal sectors.
- To create programmes and preventive interventions specially targeted towards the high supply areas, linking these with anti-poverty and developmental measures.
- To recover and rehabilitate children from socially stigmatised occupations like manual scavenging, rag picking etc.

15.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies: -

- Request the Census of India 2011 to enumerate the number, gender, caste, religion, occupation and ages of children engaged in all kinds of child labour.
- Country-wide survey to ascertain the existence, prevalence and nature of child labour below ten years of age in both the organised and unorganised sectors.
- Encourage surveys and researches to gather data on working children including informal sector and children working in domestic service.
- Effectively enforce child labour regulatory legislation and rehabilitation of working children through enrolment in schools, bridge courses of education/life skills training/counselling/recreational facilities and advocacy.
- Link the child labour elimination efforts with education measures with an attempt to ensure that all children in the age group of five to eight years get directly linked to school and the older children are mainstreamed to the formal education system through the rehabilitation centers by 2012.

- Strengthen the formal school mechanism in the endemic child labour areas in the country both in terms of quality and access, so as to motivate parents and children to regard school as beneficial and worthwhile.
- Ensure convergence of national poverty eradication and developmental programmes aiming at prevention and progressive elimination of all forms of child labour.
- Educate society not to employ children or economically exploit them.
- Safeguard the health, safety and developmental rights of working children with interim protective measures.
- Ensure involvement of committed voluntary organisations at the district level to assist in the running of the National Child Labour Project schools.
- Introduce bridge schools for all working children after which they have to be enrolled in the formal schools.
- Develop mechanisms to ensure that children, presently working in the informal sector including domestic service, have access to basic nutrition, clothing, education and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Ensure prevention of trafficking of children for domestic work and their sexual exploitation, and physical and mental abuse, and neglect. Establish a system for reporting of such incidents.
- Encourage PRIs to maintain records of migration and make the information available to the appropriate authority.
- Licence and regulate placement services to ensure that children are not offered for employment.
- Ensure implementation of Inter State Migrant Workman's Act.
- Strengthen and enforce the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, and the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act to ensure prosecution of offenders.

16. CHILDREN AFFECTED by HIV/AIDS

16.1 Goals

- To stop the growth of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections by 2010.

16.1.1 To reduce the proportion of infants infected with HIV by 20 per cent by 2007 and by 50 per cent of all such children by 2010.

16.2 Objectives

The above goals will be achieved through the following objectives:

- To undertake a country-wide assessment of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS to ascertain the spread, reasons and nature of disease among

children and facilitate child specific HIV/AIDS policy development and interventions.

- To ensure a supportive and enabling environment for care, treatment, protection and rehabilitation of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.
- To ensure access and availability of quality health services, including health education, to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS, and to treat and support those infected.
- To scale up prevention of mother-to-child transmission at all levels, i.e., during pregnancy, child birth (ensuring correct birthing practices as per global guidelines and administering Nevirapine) and breast-feeding.
- To ensure availability of treatment including Anti-Retroviral Therapy, free of cost, to all children living with HIV/AIDS from initial stages of infection and to also ensure availability of medicines in paediatric dosages and regimes for such treatment.
- To implement policies and legislations to promote inclusive community-based approaches at national and state level with the aim to reduce vulnerability of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and their improved access to health, education and other support services without any biases or discriminatory practices.
- To provide psychological, educational, and health services to children affected or vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.
- To promote community-based approaches and build capacity of families to deal with HIV/AIDS.

16.3 Strategies

The above objectives will be achieved by the following strategies:

- Ensure non-discrimination through the promotion of an active and visible policy of de-stigmatisation of children infected, orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.
- Ensure easy accessibility, adequate supplies of safe and quality blood and blood components for all, irrespective of economic or social status.
- Raise awareness, improve knowledge and understanding among the general population about AIDS infection and STD routes of transmission and methods of prevention.
- Ensure effective education to children and community on reproductive health, responsible sexual behaviour, blood safety, safe clinical practices, protective hygiene and prevention of substance abuse.
- Include information on sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS, in school curricula.

- Develop appropriate counselling services in schools.
- Ensure ongoing training of health workers (doctors, nurses, counsellors and other paramedical professionals) in communication and coping strategies for strengthening technical and managerial capabilities.
- Create awareness among students through Universities Talk AIDS (UTA) programme and other programmes.
- Enable children affected by HIV/AIDS to attend schools without discrimination.
- Provide special packages for children abandoned on account of HIV/AIDS, provide extended care and protection, especially for disadvantaged and stigmatised children.
- Ensure availability of “Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Services” in all Ante natal care clinics as close to the home of mothers as possible. Availability of Nevirapine and maternal care to ensure safe birth to HIV positive mothers.
- Strengthen linkages with other agencies (Government and NGOs) working towards the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Link programmes for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation with HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Create linkages between TB control programme and HIV/AIDS programmes.
- Create a legal provision to ensure that an HIV positive child is not deprived of his dignity, liberty and rights, including Right to Property.
- Ensure access to medical health services without discrimination faced because of HIV/AIDS.
- Support and promote community-based care for children affected by HIV/AIDS, and ensure their access to shelter and services on an equal basis with other children.
- Provide services for youth-specific HIV education to develop life skills to reduce risks of HIV infection through peer education and partnership with parents, families, educators and health-care providers.
- Provide for effective supply and service system referral mechanism and quality psycho-socio care to all affected children.
- Promote community-based approaches at National and State level to enable non-relation adoption/fostering of children (without separation of siblings) orphaned by HIV/AIDS within the community itself wherever possible.
- Develop/promote community-based institutions that protect and promote the rights of all children including those affected and infected by AIDS.