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# THE PRIMARY TEACHER

## VOLUME XXXVII NUMBER 3 AND 4

## JULY AND OCTOBER, 2012

### CONTENTS

# *Do You Know*

?

According to the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, free and compulsory education for all children in 6-14 year age group is now a Fundamental Right under Article 21-A of the Constitution.

**EDUCATION IS NEITHER A PRIVILEGE NOR FAVOUR BUT A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO WHICH ALL GIRLS AND WOMEN ARE ENTITLED**

*Give Girls Their Chance !*

**Child Friendly Schools**

*The National Curriculum Framework*–2005 revolves around child centredness – child centred curriculum, child centred teaching learning, child-friendly assessment and school environment. The key recommendation of NCF-2005 is to make the curriculum flexible, so that teachers can adapt curriculum to the child's context, and needs. Curriculum should provide space for children's experiences and voices. Children's curiosity should be addressed giving them opportunities to question, explore and discover. Children from all sections of the society should be able to relate to the curriculum. A child centred curriculum provides children opportunities to construct their own ideas and knowledge; to discuss and negotiate their knowledge with peers and teachers, and also to validate their knowledge.

To translate this vision of NCF-2005 in to practice, teachers need to create a child centred classroom, where each child is actively engaged in learning. The challenging task for teachers is to design a variety of learning experiences and situations to meet the needs of diverse learners. A flexible curriculum requires teachers to discuss knowledge and ideas that are relevant for children even though these are not part of textbooks. For example, if children want to know and understand about Malaria and Dengue in the rainy season of July-August, then the teacher must discuss these in class, even if these are not a part of the textbook. Children should be able to relate school knowledge to their everyday life experiences. Let children bring knowledge that they have constructed outside (home and neighbourhood) to school and negotiate this knowledge with teachers and peers.

Child centred pedagogy requires child centred, learning oriented assessment procedures. Assessment facilitates and guides learning when it is integrated part of teaching learning process. For assessing the 'holistic' development of children, assessment needs to be comprehensive. Continuous comprehensive assessment is child friendly as it does not cause stress and anxiety. Teachers can develop learning portfolios for assessment, which can be discussed with child and parents.

For making school environment child friendly, teachers need to understand the causes of stress and anxiety. Child friendly environment is free from trauma, fear and anxiety. Child friendly school provides facilities for sports, arts, and

crafts. Library is essential for each school. Child friendly school is inclusive in nature, where children from all sections of the society – rich and poor, first generation school goers and differently abled study together. Necessary facilities and equipments need to be provided for differently abled children. Safe drinking water, healthy mid-day meal and separate toilet for boys and girls need to be provided for all children.

Let us make our schools child-friendly where each child feels safe, secure and loved, and develops at his/her own pace.

**Academic Editor**

# 1

# Early Childhood Care and Education Initiatives in India: Provisions and Challenges

Savita Kaushal*

## Abstract

*The paper uses a survey of secondary sources and reflection on the existing body of knowledge in the field of early childhood care and education policy and plans. It undertakes a brief review of policy statements on ECCE, exploring the arguments and understanding behind it, and the efforts that have been made. For the purpose of this paper, the term early childhood care and education (ECCE) refers to all programmes where both learning and care occur for children under the age of six (before the start of formal schooling). ECCE or ECE as referred to in the review of studies includes studies on services as regulated child care services (part-day preschools or nursery schools, full-day child care centres and family child care homes) as well as pre-kindergarten programmes and kindergarten that support learning and care.*

## Introduction

India has the highest child population in the world. According to the Census of India, 2011, about 13.1% (158.78 million) of India's total population comprises children below the age of 6 years. Globally there has been concern about providing care and education to the children in the early years. Improving comprehensive early childhood care and education has been included as the first and foundational goal in the Education For All (EFA) goals set at Dakar (2000) which focus on the need to provide learning opportunities at every stage in life from infancy to adulthood. The fifth Global Monitoring Report defines early childhood care and education as "support for children's survival, growth, development and learning – including health, nutrition and hygiene, and cognitive, social, physical and emotional development – from birth to entry into primary school in formal, informal and non-formal settings."

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(UNESCO, 2007) This has prompted a serious look into quality education programmes for children in this group.

In Indian context, the provision of support in the form of early childhood care and education was not translated into an exclusive policy till so many years. However, it has been recently expressed in terms of draft policy. Therefore, trajectory of development in the area of early childhood care and education in India refers to the broad spectrum of statements and programmes launched to support care and education services for the young children.

## Initiatives towards Investment in Early Years

Investment in overall development of young children was articulated as a priority even soon after independence. Pandit Nehru addressing the 28th session of CABE meeting on 16-17 January 1961 emphasised:

"When I say education, I don't mean just reading, writing and all that, but the capacity to do things in the modern world in several and thousand ways. And this leads inevitably to the spread of education, to all the country. That, of course ought to be done at the initial stages, and the initial stages, it is now recognised, begin from the birth, not from your primary school, but from the pre primary school. That is highly important."

At independence, pre-school education was primarily in the hands of a few voluntary organisations (Aggarwal, 1992). This status-quo was continued with schemes for financial support for the voluntary sector during the 1960s, leaving them with the major responsibility of developing child-care/development services. Preschool education became a welfare concern of the government as the 'Family and Child Welfare Scheme' in 1968 after the Ganga Saran Sinha Committee. Comprehensive child welfare services to preschool children for all round development were provided under this scheme.

The 1970s marked a shift from welfare to development and accordingly child welfare services were expanded to include aspects of health, education, nutrition, etc. Different initiatives in various departments for well-being of infants, children under 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers were sought to be integrated.

If we look at Constitutional Provisions, the National Policy for the Children, 1974 and the National Policy on Education, 1986, all these three important facets throw light on policy perspective in early education and care in India. Provision of services to address multifaceted needs of young children was accorded a high priority in the National Policy for Children, 1974. It enunciated this concern as "it shall be the policy of the state to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and throughout the period of growth." The state is also

committed to 'progressively increase' these services so that all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their growth. To achieve these objectives, it called for the adoption of following measures – comprehensive health programme; provision of nutritional services; free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years; provision of non-formal education; provision of special assistance to children belonging to the weaker sections of society; upliftment of children in distress; protection against neglect, cruelty and exploitation of children; protection against child labour; provision of special facilities for children ailing from various kinds of disabilities and encouragement and assistance to gifted children especially those belonging to the weaker sections of the society.

The constitutional commitment of Article 45 (Directive Principles of State Policy) which directed the state to provide "free and compulsory education for children up to fourteen years of age" was diluted by the 86th Constitutional Amendment (2002). Article 45 was bifurcated into two age groups, 0-6 years and 6-14 years. While the new Article 21A makes elementary education for 6-14 years a Fundamental Right, the replaced version of Article 45 now reads as "The State shall endeavour to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years." Thus ECCE remains a constitutional commitment but not as a justiciable right of every child in the country. Earlier in 1968, preschool education was a welfare concern of the government, it was more focused on health and nutrition for child survival and disease control. After the formulation of National Policy for Children, it marked a shift from welfare to development, and accordingly, child welfare services were expanded to include aspects of health, education, nutrition, etc. It emphasised the need to invest in the development of young children belonging to the poverty group. It enunciated this concern as "it shall be the policy of the state to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and throughout the period of growth." The state also committed to 'progressively increase' these services so that all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their growth.

The National Policy on Education, formulated ten years after this in 1986, made the clear connection between ECCE and inclusion by emphasising its need for "first generation learners." National Policy on Education, and Programme of Action (1986, 1992):

"The National Policy on Children specially emphasises investment in the development of young child, particularly children from sections of the population in which first generation learners predominate.

"Recognising the holistic nature of child development, viz., nutrition,

health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) will receive high priority and be suitably integrated with the Integrated Child Development Services scheme, wherever possible. Day care centres will be provided as a support service for universalization of primary education, to enable girls engaged in sibling care to attend school and as a support service for working women belonging to poorer sections.

"Programmes of ECCE will be child oriented, focus around play and the individuality of the child. Formal methods and introduction of the 3 R's will be discouraged at this stage. The local community will be fully involved in these programmes." An effort was thus made to state the objectives of early interventions for children and their nature.

## A Discussion on the Initiatives

It is important to unfold the layers of assumptions, arguments and reasoning under these policies and subsequent changes. What is the framework in which policy objectives and priorities are being defined? The policy structure descriptions covering relevant programmes, organizations, actors, and their formal relationships and legal settings, are also illuminating.

Looking at the policy objectives first, we see that the need for early childhood education was not articulated in itself

for the first twenty years after independence. The Constitution mentioned the educational needs of the broad age-group of 0-14-year-old children and till 1968 (Kothari Commission) ECCE was perceived as a luxury. It was not a 'necessary' precursor, only a recommended foundation to the educational journey of a child. The development orientation came following developments at the international stage, wherein a framework for policies relating to children was outlined in the National Policy of the Child, 1974.

While in most countries ECCE services emerged first as a response to the needs of abandoned, deprived or neglected children, it developed on different lines and times in the European and North American countries and contrasted with the developing world (Kammerman, 2006). Formalisation of early childhood provision beginning in the early 19th century catered to the demands of an emerging middle-class which was compelled by industrialisation, urbanisation, internal migration to look for a safe and affordable environment for their children which also provided an enriching pre-school education to prepare them for primary schooling.

The development of ECE in India reflects its growth in other developing countries beginning typically since 1970, which emerged as a larger package of health and care for young children whose basic needs were not being met. As such, governmental

responsibility focused on infant and child health, poverty reduction, safe and affordable environments for child-minding, and the transition to primary schooling (UNESCO, 2007). While most clear in terms of differing objectives and nature of early intervention programmes for children in the western world contrasted with the Third world, even within countries, this difference has been expressed by preschools and nurseries for the rich, and state-funded health-oriented programmes for poor children.

Through the successive Five Year Plans, the understanding and appreciation of ECCE has undergone major changes from the perspective of child welfare to a new understanding of child development in the background of the rights framework. Policies operate not just through texts but also through the *discourses* of particular time-periods, which led to emergence of or influence on new programmes (Codd, 2007). The provision of ECCE by private and voluntary bodies supported through different grant-in-aid schemes was followed by the first scheme only in 1968 to take a welfare approach – Family and Child Welfare Scheme. The development aspect came into focus with the Fifth Five Year Plan, as integration for different initiatives in various departments was advocated. The influence of this thinking led to the National Policy for Children, 1974 and is still evident in successive plans and policy documents. Internationally, the ratification of the Convention on Rights of the Child in 1992 led to a new thinking in terms of Child Rights which was expressed in the Eighth Five Year Plan.

Every plan document since the Eighth Plan has mentioned the need for ECCE/day care services to relieve girls for schooling and women for work. Targeting the opening of Anganwadi Centres (AWC) in known backward areas was also recommended by various plans. Thus, the goal of inclusion has been part of the ECCE policy discourse.

Infact, the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) emphasised the significance of sound early childhood education programmes stating that the development of children is the first priority on the country's development agenda, not because they are the most vulnerable, but because they are our supreme assets and also the future human resources of the country. There is an urgent need to ensure that all children have access to quality early childhood programmes in India. Critical to this, is a need for awareness of and demand for the significance of sustainable quality early childhood education programmes that consider the diverse needs of each child.

The 10th Plan sought to ensure the rights of children along with a legal base and major strategies were envisaged to reach out to every young child in the country to ensure survival, protection and development. The 11th Plan went a step further in putting the 'development

of children at the centre of the plan' and claimed that its recommendations are based on rights-based, holistic and integrated framework for ECCE.

A host of issues were mentioned in the sub-group report on ECE for the 11th Plan. It also posed the question of curriculum setting and the hazards surrounding it and working conditions of ECE teachers/child care workers besides some of the issues discussed here.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan clearly stated that the "PSE component of ICDS-Anganwadi is very weak with repetition high and learning levels low. This in turn discourages many children from continuing their education. SSA will have a component of one year pre-primary, which can be universalised to cover 2.4 crore children in a phased manner. This is critical for school readiness/entry with increased basic vocabulary and conceptual abilities that help school retention. Besides, it will free the girl child of sibling care. The existing coverage of pre-primary classes in schools is over 11 million."

Further to this the Approach Paper to Twelfth Five Year stated that there is need for  funding for pre-school children under Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), especially in special focus districts as one of the measures required enhancing provision and improving quality of elementary education.

The document on Twelfth Five year Plan states that "As a society, we

therefore need to move as rapidly as possible to the ideal of giving every child in India a fair opportunity in life, which means assuring every child access to good health and quality education. While this may not be possible to achieve in one Plan period, the Twelfth Plan should aim at making substantial progress in this dimension.

Any commitment for the child has been viewed implicitly to be conditioned on the availability of funds, appropriate time and societal conditions. A policy statement that allocates values or redistributes power is at least ostensibly situated on a logical reasoning of fund availability and feasibility (Rizvi, 2007). The earliest constitutional commitment to ensure free and compulsory education for all children until age fourteen failed to gather the attention of policy-makers for fifty years, which could be translated into a fundamental right only in 2002 (beginning in 1999). And just as simply that taking full responsibility for children's education was avoided so long, the responsibility of all children has been circumvented by pushing out children under six. The exclusion of the 3-6 years age group from constitutional commitments has been noted as an issue in the 10th Plan Mid-term Assessment report, and the 11th Plan sub-group on ECE. While this decision has been taken under the guise of 'comprehensive needs of the young child not being limited to education' and 'non-availability of funds', the lack of political will and social pressure is

the more evident and important truth. The care and development of children is seen as more of a parental responsibility and state involvement becomes optional, saving it from obligations of formulating laws or setting up institutions and putting aside money. This implicit belief held true for many years for education of children, and is likely to hold out a bit longer for comprehensive care for young children.

However, this dispassionate mechanical conception of policy analysis – where value-neutrality of efficiency and viability arguments is assumed – has been greatly criticized (Rizvi, 2007). Separating educational policies or reforms from the broader social context in which programmes operate and schools function, and undermining the effect of status-quo its pressures on deflecting any reform agenda are common fallacies made by policy analysts (Kovach, 2007). The division of labour between policy advocates and policy analysts provides a hint to different values and different socio-political assumptions which might be leading to un-conclusive analysis of why a policy failed or remained ineffective. Using this lens, some lessons can be drawn for ECCE policy in India. The policy mandate of providing ECCE for first generation learners, for supporting efforts of universalization of primary education, enabling girls to attend school and support for working women belonging to poorer sections – all are targets for weaker sections in society. Thus, ECCE was (is) most valuable to the sections of society with the least voice in the political process. A practical analysis of policy effectiveness cannot disregard this fact which might affect the implementation of policy – on the kinds of programmes launched, rules made or actors involved.

## Translation of Policy to Action Plans

Policy is translated into action through governmental schemes and programmes. The comprehensive view of child development taken up by the NPC was soon followed by the first-ever complete package programme for deprived and needy children – the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. Beginning with an experimental thirty-three blocks, the coverage today is close to universalisation. The scheme adopts a multi-sectoral approach to child well-being, incorporating health, education and nutrition interventions, and is implemented through a network of *anganwadi* centres (AWCs) at the community level. At these centres, *anganwadi* workers and their helpers provide eight key services to 0-6 year old children along with expectant and nursing mothers, covering supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check-ups and referral services, health and nutrition education to adult women, micronutrient supplementation and pre-school education for 3 to 6-year-old children.
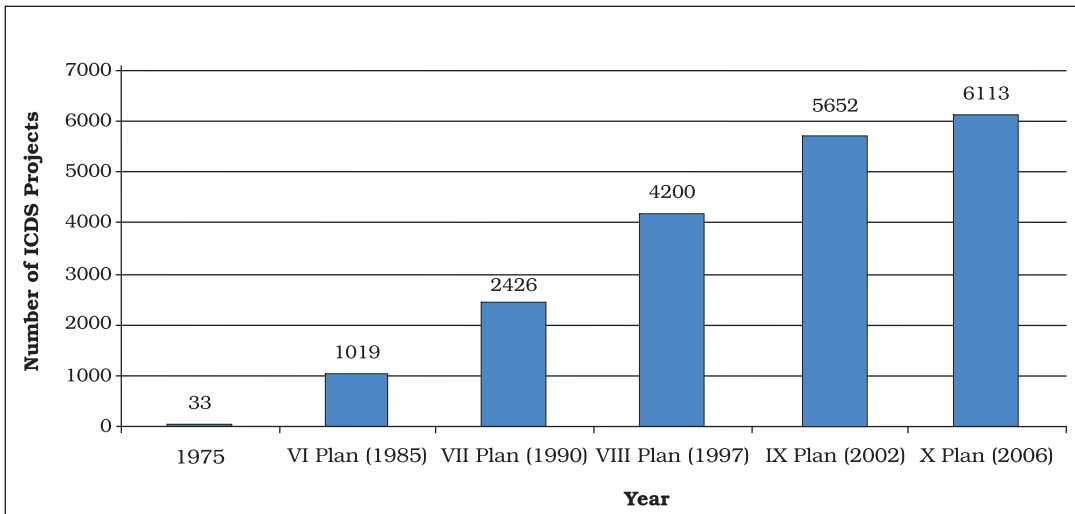
*Source*: Calculated from MWCD, and Planning Commission Reports

**Fig. 1:** Expansion of ICDS Projects over the Plan Periods 1975–2006

Looking at the objectives, the ICDS had a clear focus on the nutritional and health status of preschool children in the age group of 0-6 years. To this end, attention was to be paid to supplementary nutrition for children and mothers, prenatal and ante-natal counselling and care services for the mother, besides a non-formal preschool component. It is instructive here, to look back at the National Policy on Children, and Education (1974 and 1986). The arguments for ECCE that are professed in the policies make a clear linkage between ECE and schooling, and its severe need among the unprivileged first generation learners. The value of ECCE for children from families with low-income or other social disadvantages has been proved in various studies (Bryant & Maxwell, 1997; Yoshikawa 1995 and NIPCCD, 1999 to name a few). However, the first (and only programme as of today) programme to address this need deflects the attention to the health and nutrition needs, tacitly ignoring the education component by making light of ECE under non-formal play learning. As a result, the anganwadi worker– who is not a teacher – is unable to value or focus on it. The goals of inclusion which could have easily fit into rounds of policy revision and programme formation were not associated with preschool education.

Policy analysis cannot move ahead without looking at the relevant organizational structure, actors, financial allocations and legal settings.

The ICDS scheme initially operated under the Ministry of HRD, Director of Child Development, who looked at the coordination between different parts of the service provided by Department of Social Welfare, Health and Women and Child Welfare at state levels. A shift in policies in 1993 led to the new Ministry of Social Welfare taking up the responsibility of coordination with a decreased mandate. However, this did not last long, and after much debate, all ECE responsibility was conclusively transferred to MWCD in the year 2006 as part of the services provided under ICDS, making it a ministry (NIPCCD, 2006). It remains to be seen if this association with ICDS reduces or deflects attention from preschool to nutrition. As of now, the widely recommended policy of a single department responsibility has been given to MWCD, making ICDS the mainstream provider of preschool education in India. The scheme has been centrally assisted since its inception, with 100 per cent financial assistance for inputs like infrastructure, salaries and honorarium for ICDS staff, training, basic medical equipment including medicines, play school learning kits, etc. However, states provide supplementary nutrition out of their own resources. The scheme has been generously supported by different International bodies like World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and UNAID.

In the recent past there has been large scale expansion in the provision of ECCE centres as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme has been universalized and now there are 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres sanctioned by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, covering each and every habitation of the country.

The interventions did have made some impact on the neonatal mortality rate as it has slowed down. However even then most of the infants die during the neonatal period and many of the newborns are having low birth weight, i.e. less than 2.5 kg.
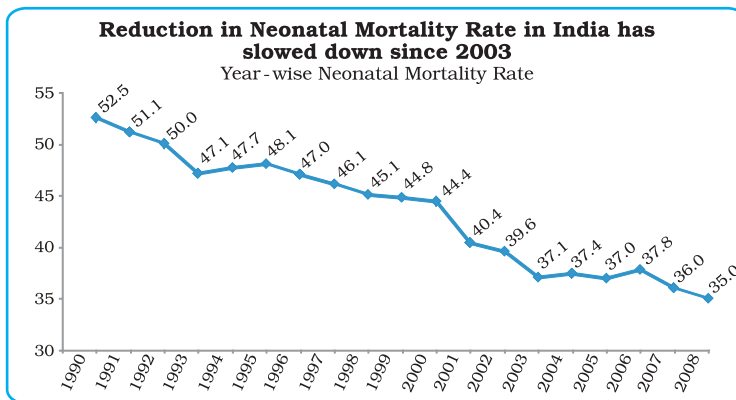


**Fig. 2:** Status of Neonatal Births

While the establishment of policy may be an important step in building effective systems, unless the policy is designed to address the major issues and unless there is a strong implementation plan that is carried out well, the impact of the policy may be minimal. The main actor in the ICDS service delivery mechanism is a minimally educated locally resident woman appointed on the honorary post of 'anganwadi worker' (AWW) assisted by another local untrained woman known as the helper (AWH). The AWW is supposed to be a voluntary good-will based position, much less than that of a job. As a result, this key actor gets a pittance for a long list of services which cover everything from record-maintenance, guidance-counselling, handing out supplementary nutrition to every child, immunization and weight tracking, health inspection and preschool classes. As has been reported often, the overburdened AWW is the weakest link in the implementation plan of the ambitious ICDS scheme (Swaminathan, 1998, MWCD 2007, NIPCCD 2006).

Reviews of ICDS show that access to services is heavily dependent upon locality and particular anganwadi worker, as awareness of ECE and its importance has not been included in the programme. The behaviour change that is intended (all children attending non-formal playschool) is actually based on a presumption of prior knowledge and values of recipients. While the ECE policy statements are clear on the need for ECE to relieve girls for schooling and women for work, this rationale is not part of an AWW's work.

Besides the ICDS, provision of ECCE in India is also available through NGO operated balwadis, crèches, pre-primary sections attached to

government and private schools. As a result, estimating the access to preschool for a general populace is difficult. The Report of the Sub-Group on ECE appointed for recommend- ations for the 11th Plan provides a telling picture of the state of access in ECCE. While the average enrolment for India is between 20 and 30 per cent, none of the major states having even half of their children in preschools (GOI, 2006). Though it cannot be denied that enrolments under public and private services have increased in the last 10 years, more than 70 per cent of the child population in the deserving age group is still missing.

While there have been efforts made by the Department of Elementary Education to supplement the efforts under ICDS (the Scheme of Early Childhood Education was introduced as a strategy to reduce dropout rate and improve the rate of retention in 1982, but discontinued soon; preschool centres were opened under DPEP project schools) these ECE efforts have been directed as complementary rather than necessary. This approach continues under the prevalent umbrella programme of education – *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. The SSA programme had provision for taking up ECE projects on a small scale, under the 'innovations' head. This could be utilized either for setting up new centres in areas where there are no ICDS centres or for strengthening linkages with the ICDS programme. This complementary approach provides that

no obligation for the preschool component is necessary in other areas.

A wide variety of service providers in the private field cater to the growing demand of ECE, particularly in urban areas. Most of these run like mini schools and emphasise formal education at an early age which can be more harmful for child's development. This private provision remains uneven and unruly, with not even registration in many states (Das, 2003). These teaching shops also do not follow any norms with regard to infrastructure, water and sanitation facilities, space for indoor and outdoor activities, adult-child ratio, availability of right kind of materials, and above all sensitive teachers with adequate training. The need for quality standards and regulations to safeguard against inequalities and integration for smooth coordination cannot be overstated.

The draft quality standards for ECCE on the website of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, specify the standards and norms to be followed by the ECCE centres. The Working Group Report on Child Rights, 12th Five Year Plan also mentions about formulation of National ECCE Policy and laying down of Quality norms and standards for ECCE provisions. But these are, as yet, policy statements on paper and would take long to actualize on the ground.

Michelle J. Neuman, Special Advisor on Early Childhood Care and Education for the 2007 EFA Global

Monitoring Report Team, recommended that it was necessary to "establish regulations and monitoring systems that apply equally to the full range of public and private settings. Limited regulation of the private sector can negatively affect access and quality, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Instead, policy could require providers receiving public funds to meet or exceed national quality guidelines and follow a national fee scale" (UNESCO, 2002).

## Conclusion

The policy analysis of select documents in India shows the clear concern for the first generation learners and 'needy children'. However there is strong need to go back to the policy intentions and rationale professed in 1986 and make a clear link between need for ECCE and the goals of inclusion. A cursory look at the evidence base of the effectiveness of ECCE shows that good quality ECCE is critical in the initial years for a child from an unprivileged family background to catch up with other students in his class, bestowing him with only a small push, which nevertheless leaves him an equal at the start-line. Thus, it is most valuable to the sections of society with the least voice in the political process. The policy-makers must acknowledge the fact that the greatest strength of ECCE has been overlooked and ignored. This weakness could be turned around into strength if ECCE is conceptualized as a strong means to achieve goals of inclusion and equity, the pressures and investments for which are higher and easier. Besides increased investments as advocated by various review reports, there is also a need to redirect the focus of the ECCE policy and address intentional efforts towards this.

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# 2

## Caste Conflicts and Children's Education[†]

Ajay Kumar Singh*

Caste conflicts continue to structure the public arena in India, as also reflected in the recent controversy over Ambedkar cartoons in NCERT textbooks or in the demand for reservation by Gurjars in Rajasthan which once again brought the issue into the limelight. At least in the Hindi speaking region, the repertoire of caste conflicts appears to be powerful, while the apparent conflict is relatively 'silent'. The crystalisation of caste identities has raised some important questions on the socio-cultural and educational cleavages of Indian society. The impact of conflict on children and its relationship to their education process continues to be one of the most critical areas in research, especially in India.

The present study tries to explore the relationship between experiences of conflict and children's education with special focus on caste conflict. A hierarchical relationship between the adults and children provides a guideline for the study.

First, caste conflict has been one of the most critical phenomena in socialization and education of children in Indian society. An inquiry into the historical events leads us to an understanding of some kind of cultural, political or economical clash of interests behind these conflicts. These conflicts, at one hand, have been a part of the processes involved in establishing dominance, and on the other hand, they have also appeared on the social scene in the form of resistance against deprivation. In this paper, conflict can be understood in a specific sense, with particular focus on caste. The central issue of this research is the impact of caste conflict on childhood vis-a-vis adult-child hierarchical relation.

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Second, an important concern of this paper is children's education, or more particularly, the nature and role of children's education in situations of conflict. In the National Curriculum Framework-2005, schools are expected to work towards enhancement of peace processes and resolution of conflicting situations. However, such an expectation overlooks the sociologically established fact that schooling itself poses a conflicting social character (we must admit here that education is not synonymous with schooling, despite the fact that schooling plays an important role in children's education and life in general). With education becoming a fundamental right, it is hoped that every child will spend at least eight years in school. However, if one looks at the process of schooling with a sociological lens, it would emerge that the years that children spend at school have an unprecedented impact on their conviction towards violent alternatives in conflicting situations– whether in a positive or negative sense. A close observation suggests that conflict is essentially intrinsic to the mere concept of schooling (Niell, 1968). As this idea in all possibilities would apply to all kinds of conflicts, and as such caste conflict as well a systematic and critical research based understanding is required.

Conflict and its implications can also be observed in the nature of content (syllabus, curriculum, time frame etc.),

accessibility and achievement within the school system. For example, the absenteeism problem related to the Musahar children (as claimed by the teachers) has its reasons in the conflict between the character of schooling and lifestyle of a Musahar child. This conflict* becomes more severe in case of a Musahar girl child, the reason being the experiences of the Musahar girl child owing to their caste which incidentally is placed among the lowest in the caste hierarchy; that gets intermingled with their 'gendered' life worlds– with girls being prepared for and expected to shoulder the responsibility of domestic chores and of bringing up younger siblings.

## Locating Children Experience in Discourse on Conflict

Children's experiences of conflict and the conflict inherent in the concept of 'institutions' like family and schooling are presumed to be two different things. This is obvious from an initial observation of curriculum and pedagogical practices where the conflicts related to children's home and school are seen as two different things. This is also acknowledged by the NCF–2005 to some extent. However, children's experience of conflict and the corresponding conflicting situation are always overlapping and this dichotomy formed a potential research area.

The 'understanding' of the impact of conflict and its relation to children's

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* The term conflict hereafter refers to caste conflict, unless otherwise specified

education has been largely dominated and shaped by the adults in a hegemonically organized society. This is clearly visible in both covert and overt forms of conflict. The earlier studies highlight some categorical limitations in understanding the impact of conflict on children. For instance, the definitional periphery of 'conflict' has mainly been established according to the standards of adults. The documents and study of exclusion and dominance, however, have some obscure description of conflict in relation to childhood. For instance, considerable portions of autobiographies by Indian Dalit writers (Valmiki, 1997; Limbale, 2003) have narratives on deprivation of schooling and the humiliation faced by them at school. However, studies of the impact of conflict on children or those based on 'character of schooling'– with reference to conflicts, are difficult to come by. The available studies only throw light on social, economical and political context of this conflict but children, childhood and educational scenario remains hazy even in these studies.

Any form of conflict experienced by children can also be seen as a 'pedagogical event'. Michel (2001, p. 93) talks of a specific strategy for education while exploring the educational possibilities of children in conflict situations. It emerged that the theme needs to be explored further specifically in terms of what other meaning(s) is attributed to conflict by children, apart from deprivation of means of living. Any

conflicting situation ought to be examined in context of the communicative value of any social event or process. In other words, communication; mobility and acceptance of violent processes and activities are much faster than the process in which the 'peace-processes' gain visibility.

Primafacie the reasons for the above can be traced, first of all, to the formation of 'the unconscious' from the experiences of early childhood (Freud, 1986). The socialization during middle childhood (6-12 years) and the understanding of world during adolescence (late childhood) can be regarded as second and third key reasons. Children often observe, or are forced to observe, the methods of resolving conflict resorted to by adults in social cohesion. These methods are to some extent based on peaceful negotiations but, in most instances, they include a gross resorting to violent alternatives. These violent alternatives are responsible for shaping the archaeology of experience, and yet, often remain unnoticed. It is rightly explained by Davis (2004, p 19):

A problem in educational theory is that there has been a neglect of theorizing to explain the differential contribution of schooling to national or global tension. One strong emphasis within the sociology of education has been on its contribution to inequality, looking at reproduction of social class or gender relations. The reproduction of conflict has received far less attention,

except in institutional terms with studies of deviance and labelling. Studies within the psychology of education can give us insights into individual conflicts within the school and the aetiology of aggression. Yet we lack a suitable theoretical framework which can explain the macro issues of how education can act to reproduce conflict on a global scale, or conversely how some educational arenas are active in the struggle for peace and how some schools in conflict zones are resilient while others crumble.

## The Research Problem/Questions

The present study has its origin in the inter-relationship of conflict and children's socialization and schooling. The basic purpose was to understand how children experience conflict, particularly caste conflict, and its relation to their educational processes. In this context, it would be worthwhile to understand the following three main contextual factors which influence the nature of caste conflict in case of children:

i.   The relationship between adults and children is a significant context for the research as childhood is not merely a social and cultural position manifested by historical process (Aries, 1973; Kakar, 1981) rather it is a political framework imposed by the adults (Kumar, 1978). It further explores whether this politics of adulthood is creating any conflict among children and this was augmenting the caste conflict.

ii.  Childhood is a very important phase for cognitive and social development. Institutions like family, community, school; and their pattern of communication, collective and personal memory; all play a crucial role during this developmental phase. Thus, there is a need for an equal focus on both public and private spaces in order to understand childhood and the situations that lead to conflict.

iii. As has been argued by some prominent educational thinkers children are deeply aware of social conflicts and this awareness makes them anxious about the future, but they seldom find opportunities to express their anxiety (Kumar, 1996). The key requirement was to understand the overall matrix of conflicts constructed by children and to specifically know that how the thread of caste conflict was interwoven in this matrix. Whether or not children correlate or differentiate various kinds of conflicts, viz. ethnic conflicts, caste/class struggles, so-called developmental projects, gender positions, violence demonstrated in various forms of media or its more pernicious obscure forms of conflict like hunger, poverty, fear and to examine question of children's identity formation. The process of 'reconstruction' of experiences was dealt with in

relation to their implications for a child, or a group of children, who have experienced conflict in one or more than one of its forms at the same time.

Keeping in view the above background some critical questions that need to be addressed are:

i. How does the experience of conflict mould the child?

ii. What are the situations where children are compelled to do such reconstruction?

iii. What would be the role of schooling in this context?

## Research Methodology

As a preliminary step, a review of literature related to children, conflict, violence and education was done to understand the interrelationship between them. An initial sketch of childhood was developed on the basis of a detailed secondary review of literature. The categorical limitations of earlier studies highlighted in the rationale led to the search for a methodology which can register/articulate the various tendencies especially children's psyche and social change that are taking place on account of conflict. The area selected for study was Gaya in Bihar. The communities selected for the study included the Musahar (SC).

**Musahars in Gaya district (Bhuinya, Kamia\*, Saday)** are at the lowest social strata in their respective categories. Bhuinya is a caste group which is settled between the Chota Nagpur plateau and mid Ganges valley with a strong connection to cultivation. The local economy is largely supported by paddy cultivation and the Bhuinyas, are engaged largely as casual wage labourers. Since paddy is a labour intensive crop, the Kamia system was historically developed to assure the supply of labour and livelihood to the caste groups residing in the area. Kamia system is actually the practice of attaching labour with a regular master, and has a deep rooted history of atrocity and pain. The increasing influence of the Kabir panth is also one of the concrete expressions of Musahar's search for identity. All these are an effort towards acclaiming their dignity, empowerment and to some extent, development.

The Musahar community has its own conviction about culture, identity and history which is very different from the perception of non Musahar communities in the region. A discussion with the non Musahar community members gives a clear picture of the general identity of the Musahars, i.e., as pigs, and low income wage labourers. These two elements have a very significant role in the culture, religion and festivals of the community. Not only these elements construct the identity of their society and life but it also plays a crucial role in their rituals. Pigs have special importance in their day-to-day life. It is important to note that this community does not have a caste-based

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\* It is a system of bonded labour particularly in paddy crops, mostly associated with Musahars of Gaya

profession of their own nor do they have any capital asset apart from labour. Land has always belonged to the landlords and as such Pigs are an asset formation.

**Sampling:** For this research, two villages which have witnessed various forms of prolonged conflict were selected for this study. In Gaya, though caste conflict has not only reached up to the level of caste based violence, it has definitely influenced the village fabric, the lifestyle and the distribution of government facilities at a micro level. The caste boundaries involve higher and dominant castes like Bhumihar, Brahman and Rajput on one hand and the Musahars on the other hand.

The villages were studied by using ethnographic tools with appropriate use of psychohistory for six months, in different phases, with a focus on children and schooling. The researcher partly adopted the tools used by M.N. Srinivasan (1971) in his work 'Remembering Village' and Shyamacharan Dubey (1996) in his work 'Indian Village'.

Before moving ahead, we need to provide some more clarification about conducting field work in Mastipur and Jetian-Tarwana. As experienced by the researcher during the process of study the conflict faced by Musahars in Gaya is multifaceted. For instance, the conflict between Musahars and Paswans is very different from the conflict between Musahars and Rajputs. This observation has been substantiated by secondary sources like *An Anthology of Musahar Culture and Lifestyle\**. Since it is not possible to develop an understanding of all kinds of conflicts, the researcher focused on two major kinds of conflicting situation, i.e., (1) Mastipur\*\* with a considerable population of Musahars and Paswan and (2) Jetian-Tarwana – a Rajput dominated village with 200 families from the Musahar community.

## Cultural Conflict and Schooling– Two Case Studies from Gaya, Bihar

In order to understand the linkages between cultural context, developmental processes and the caste conflict, two case studies have been outlined:

## Mastipur: Three dimensional conflict– Musahar, Paswan and Mahantji

Mastipur and adjacent Muhalla Piperpati are part of Bodhgaya city. People in the 'village' are involved in agriculture and also work in various temples in Bodhgaya. A very clear influence of Bodhgaya\*\*\* and its religious tourism can be seen on the population, culture and work pattern of the village. Majority of the population in the village (around 180 households)

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\* Joshi, Hemand and others. 2003. *Asserting Voices*, Deshkal Publications, New Delhi

\*\* Though this area is not a village in the government documents now yet it continues to be a village from cultural, social and economic perspectives.

\*\*\*Bodhgaya is the place where Gautam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism is known to have attained enlightenment.

belong to Manghi (Musahar) community. Besides these, around 20-25 households are of Paswan community, while 2-5 households belong each to Thakur, Kumhar and Yadav communties. Pasi, Dhobi, Nai and Lala community have one house each. An attempt (muhim) to relocate the village started in 1980s to address the expanding needs of the Bodhgaya city. One woman recalls that the village had around 125 households around 32 years back, i.e. in1980. It is to be noted that the Naxal movement in Bihar was at its peak at that time. The land around the village belonged to Mahantji (the head of the main temple at Bodhgaya) which was being vacated at that time. This process led to a clash with Mahantji who had government on his side. Two people died and three got badly injured. The people who lost their lives in this violence are considered as martyrs among Musahars and are still remembered on 8 August every year.

The clash with Mahant of Bodhgaya has a significant role in the village history as the village was totally scattered after the clash. Some people settled nearby while others were allotted land by the government. The Manghi community believes that the situation of the Paswans and other castes are comparatively better. On the other hand, other communities are of the opinion that even if the government provides facilities, not much progress would happen for the Manghi community because these people spend most of their lives drinking.

Our initial observations, however, tell a different story. As informed by a villager, seven Paswans are in government job (even though it is not exactly clear whether it is a government job or simply any other 'good' job). Most of the elderly person and in many cases children from Paswan families go regularly to Gaya for agricultural work while Manghi family members either work as rickshaw pullers in Bodhgaya or go to other villages for daily wages. To quote an instance: "In October, 'a Manghi family was preparing vegetable of potatoes, with turmeric and chillies, at about seven in the morning. The entire family had this vegetable with rice. Eating utensils were made of steel and cooking utensils aluminium. They eat twice a day. In some instances they eat the leftover food from the morning in the evenings. Children also eat the same food and go to school. Though there was no sign of starvation in the village yet it was clearly seen that food definitely was a challenge in the Manghi families." People from Manghi family go to the nearby villages for daily wages during the rice cultivation. The situation of Paswan families definitely was better than Manghi families mainly in terms of dealing with hunger and employment. This is substantiated by local government functionaries like AWW, school teachers and villagers (both from Manghi and Paswan).

The village has a single room government school with a severely damaged ceiling. Children in the village have no excitement to go to school. A

school run by an NGO is also located in the same village but not all children get admission there. Children from some well off families go to a private school 'Elean Divine' in New Taradih. The village also has two Aanganwadi centres – one each in Mastipur and Piperpati. But major government schemes never reach beyond Piperpati, a neighbouring settlement.

## Childhood in the Village

If we analyse from children's point of view, their main concern is confrontation with the visitors coming to Bodhgaya. Children in the village not only get influenced by the happenings in the village but processes in the village also affect them on regular basis. For example, a child from the Manghi family does go to school but neither he nor his parents understand what he will really do in school. Going to school and clashing because of his 'caste position' after coming back home creates such a conflict situation for this child that he is constantly searching for ways to avoid such situations.

*Umesh, 14 years, never understood why he used to go to school. The daily routine of coming home from school and observing family members involved in wine making continued for three years. Later he got to know that tourists (white tourists) give money to children. The next few years he spent following white tourists after the school hours and at times even during school hours. After a point he went to Mysore with a man for some work. Umesh very categorically tells that children from Manghi families only go out with these men for work while all other children remain here for study.*

Village people see Bodhgaya as a place with lots of work opportunities. Children also develop a similar insight while begging or going to school. This can be explained through the researcher's observation of wine making process, where children were observed standing close to the wine bucket with their mouth stinking of country liquor.

## Association with School

After developing an understanding with the help of parents from Mastipur, it was important to know their interest in the present schooling process and to what extent they actually understand school. An outline of community under-standing regarding school and schooling has been prepared with the help of two classifications based on the Manghi and other families. The outline is in terms of the following points:

- The extent to which they are associated with the schooling of children.
- How they perceive and give meaning to the school and schooling as such.

People in Manghi families were asked whether they have any discussion with children about going to school or with others in the community about the education of their children. Majority of

the people approached first of all took a lot of time and in the end chose to refrain from giving any response. The few who responded spoke about consulting people from outside the village, especially field investigators from Pyagya Vihar (a school run by a Trust). However they do not have any discussion at home or with the children about their education. In fact, there were also some parents from Manghi families who had no idea about the classes their children studied in. They were neither aware of management committees or teachers nor could they recall even one thing said by any of the teachers in the school. They only knew that Kaushlendra babu had asked the children to come to school.

On the contrary, parents and children do talk about the education and schooling in the other castes, especially in the Paswan families. There were only two families in the non Manghi families who were not aware about the classes their children were in. Manghi families were not able to differentiate subjects taught in school whereas non Manghi families had the understanding of individual subjects like Mathematics, English, Hindi, Geography and Science, etc. Most of the children from non Manghi families go to a private school in the nearby village and their fathers often go the school to deposit the school fees. Even parents of some Paswan children, who attend the village government school, pay regular visits.

The common understanding shared equally by majority of the families was the fear of 'passing' or 'failing' in the examination. Irrespective of the background of the family, all wished their children go to school regularly and pass the examinations. An in depth analysis and understanding of the 'hesitation' and 'unfamiliarity' of Manghi families regarding school system brings their deep suspicion on the surface. In reality, what we consider as unfamiliarity and backwardness is actually an intense resistance and conflict between the present nature of schooling and the situation of this caste group. We get the details of the above when we talk about the future of children in the families. This discussion also has links with the question of 'who according to them is educated or what are their expectations from education?'

### Tarwana-Jetian: Two Dimensional Conflicts between Musahars and Rajputs

Despite several similarities in the caste conflict in Tarwana-Jetiyan and Mastipur, there are many differences in the character of both. The difference lies not only in the history of caste conflict but also the caste dynamics. On the way from Gaya to Atari, many small habitations can be seen between Gahlor and Jetian alongside the hill. Atari block and Wajirganj are separated by a hill. The settlements alongside the foothill mentioned above are the Musahar settlements and each locality has a Musahar colony ('*tola*' in local

language) adjacent to it. Establishment of Musahar tola away from the main village is itself an indication of exclusion.

One of these settlements is Tarwana which is part of Jetian village. This settlement is located on the foot of the hill and therefore has its own structural challenges. Stones from the hill top fall to block the way and all the rain water stagnates during monsoons. This not only disconnects the settlement, but also leads to breeding of many small insects and thereby, diseases. Water from some of the wells constructed by the government in Tarwana also becomes unusable due to the rain water mixed in the well.

The community people in Jetian (mainly Rajputs) have their own different perceptions. Many families from the village have shifted to Patna or Gaya city. These people identify themselves as farmers and are mainly dependent on agriculture. The village has three schools– Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Buniyadi High School and Primary school. Children from Tarwana had to cross a road to attend the school in Jetian at about a distance of one km. It is a major challenge for children to reach the school in the Rajput basti.

A preliminary observation of the above areas makes evident the unique geo-cultural identity of caste conflicts. These conflicts are nurtured by the past experiences as well as present interest clashes. But the moment we place children in the centre of our thinking,

limitations of these discourses become visible. Preliminary observations show that caste conflict has certain specific meaning for children.

**Conflict in aspirations: Idea of Pedagogy, Curriculum and Knowledge:** The village has a long history of relations between Rajputs and Musahars and both have articulated this historical past as per their own perspective. Separate discussions were held with both the groups.

### Narrative of Musahar Community

Due to initial resistance from people of Musahar community in Tarwana, it took a few weeks before they opened up to talk about education of their children and the schooling process. The description below is based on the three days discussions with people in Tarwana village. At times when the answers were not very specific and direct, then observation, expressions and support from other people in the community were used to understand the facts.

The reason for the lukewarm response to the discussion on 'education of children' can be traced to the details shared by the villagers about their past. These past details encompass a wide range of issues such as demanding land from the District Collector of Gaya to make a house, digging a well, complaint to the local MLA or DM for not receiving the full payment or proper government facilities etc. During the sharing process, they

also highlighted migration issue as majority of them have to go out of the city in search of work and issues related to frauds in the preparation of job cards under MNREGA. It is not a mere coincidence that the question of children and their education did not come to surface in the entire description of their past experiences and struggles. On being directly questioned about children and education, many a times they give clear answers and there are also instances where they lack complete clarity. For instance, one mother wanted to educate her son despite her poverty so that he should get a job. But when she was asked to name the people in the community who have got employment after getting educated, there was doubt written all over her face. Many such doubts and suspicions surfaced at various levels.

Two phenomena emerged very categorically:

1. It is one of the toughest works to get someone educated. In poverty stricken and discriminated lower caste societies, poverty and migration are two prominent hindrances in the way of providing proper education. Most of the elders in the village work as daily wagers and many a time they have to go out of the city to brick kilns in order to fulfil their needs. The slogans like, '*Bhatta majduri ya gulami*' (literally meaning, work in brick kilns versus bonded labour) appeared time and again in the conversations. In the circum- stances, hunger and the problem of insufficient food often take the shape of a larger challenge forcing children to drop out of school.

2. Secondly, the nature of the experience of people in the community regarding education per se is very ambiguous. People did share that they want to educate their children as they feel it is for their own good but they fail to substantiate it with concrete examples of education having brought an impact or change in the locality. The sole example which was shared repeatedly was of a youth who was selected as a Shiksha Mitra.

The caste group many times had this discussion about how their locality should also have a school like Jetian. They were of the opinion that related issues such as children's fear to attend school could be easily resolved if teacher was from their own community and this would further enhance the performance of children in the school. During one such discussion, community people opined, "We do not have educated people among us (Musahars) therefore we do not have teachers from our community". However, in a prior discussion, a separate group in the same community had said that their children are not educated as theoretical education is of less utility for them and household poverty too poses a hindrance in schooling which somehow seems to point at a vicious circle.

The entire episode has led to an obvious question of whether going to school is a painful experience for children. It was enquired with parents whether children face any kind of misbehaviour, abuse or discrimination in school. Some parents confirmed the dominance of upper caste children, while their own children had to remain submissive because the school is located in their basti (settlement). The fear in children to 'ask anything' from the upper caste teachers formed a constant threat in discussions. This was specifically shared by the Class X passed youth in the group discussion.

In the process of study, an effort was made to have discussions with parents of school drop outs. They either had no answer or were not willing to share the reasons for their children dropping out. The next challenge was to decode the reasons of lack of interest. The following responses were received:

- Children did not learn to write a single sentence after four years in school.
- Used to bunk school.
- Went to work in brick kilns.
- School is very far and located in another settlement.
- Could not understand what was being taught.

### Narrative of Rajput Community

Contrary to the above arguments and understanding of Musahar community, people in Rajput community were clear as to why and how they wish to educate their children. Generally, they aspire for government jobs especially in the case of boys. They do not perceive access to job as a challenge. Rather quality of education in school is a major challenge for them. Many parents would prefer to send their children to Gaya or Patna if they find there is lack of quality education in their locality schools.

The difference regarding the understanding, aspirations and interest in education by both the communities also impact their epistemology and pedagogy. The expectation from education decides the nature of education they prefer for their children. Musahar on one hand had no obvious expectation from education due to the reasons found in their past where there was hardly any example of abrupt change in life as a result of a better education. Rajputs, on the other hand, had a clear expectation of a job (preferably a government job) after education because they have examples around them of people who have a better life due to quality education. These examples strengthen their hope that today's education (without drastic change) will have a clear and positive influence in the lives of their children, if imparted in a proper manner.

**Discussion and Observation:** Taking insight from above mentioned two cases some basic trends of conflict are apparent:

## 1. What is worth knowledge and adequate pedagogy

One of the questions for this study was to know the knowledge and pedagogy of different caste groups. Therefore, small group discussions were held in both the localities in various stages with the objective of getting their understanding on the following questions:

- What a child should know after he/she finishes the school education?
- Where, other than school, do children learn?

An attempt was also made to know their opinions on classroom processes which would lead to positive changes in the life of their children. The answer to these questions provided the initial outline of the conflict developed due to caste and cultural contexts.

The Mushar community in Tarwana as well as of Mastipur underlined the following on the basis of a consistent enquiry about what a child should know if he/she goes to school:

- Record/ Negotiation of wages
- Able to do the paper work
- Able to understand the language of 'outside world'

People in this group agreed that children do learn many things outside the school also especially while doing some 'work'. 'Work' in most of the cases was referred as 'manual work'. An example of the process of taking the bundle of rice crop to the fields, shared by an elderly person, would clarify this further; "if you try to pick it up suddenly or without anyone's help, you may get injured". Also you have to maintain and walk in a particular rhythm. A child will not be able to learn all these without actually doing it. He also provided other examples of brick making and agriculture.

The abilities enshrined in doing the paper work have the following elaboration:

- Able to understand papers related to MNREGA.
- Able to understand other government schemes.
- Able to get papers made for their own land.

Another significant elaboration was related to understanding the language of 'outside world'.

The local language of the area is 'Magahi'. Most of the times these people are unable to negotiate either with the contractor who arranges for work outside the village or with their actual employers. Due to this lack of language and negotiation skills, cheating and fraud is not uncommon. However, why the school does not teach negotiation for work, could not be answered by Musahar parents.

On the contrary, people from Rajput locality demanded some 'significant' improvements in the school system:

- Teacher should teach properly.
- Teacher should attend the school regularly.
- At least English and Mathematics should be taught properly as the

understanding of these subjects prepares the children for government jobs.

A clear conflict is reflected when we compare the responses of Mushar community from Tarwana and Rajput community of Jetian. Here we see two mutually contradicting interest groups on curriculum development and teaching methodologies. One group wants an education which can enable it to do justice with its wages while the second group aspires for an education which will ensure a government job.

The discussion related to pedagogy was also not different. People in Rajput community feel that children learn while visiting the houses of relatives or by observing elders in the house apart from school. However, in case of girls they admitted their learning through manual work at home. On the other hand, Musahar community very clearly highlighted manual work as a learning process.

The statement given by the government teachers supports a status quo. For them, curriculum is all right and does not discriminate against children from any community. On listening to the shared views of Musahar community, it was extremely difficult for teachers to understand how the negotiation of wages could be part of the curriculum. Their response was very similar to the responses of Rajputs that children learn at home or while going to the relatives. etc.

## 2. Location of the schools– usually away from Musahar Basti-

There are three schools in Jetiyan, Tarvana– a Primary School, a Basic School and a Navodaya School. The first two schools are attended/accessed by children from the village and around, whereas the other school also caters to children from outside. The basic school had about 45 acres of land, of which around 30 acres of land got allotted to the Navodaya Vidyalaya when it was made. It is necessary to clarify here that the school which is called 'Basic School' is a basic school only in terminology; it has nothing much to do with the Gandhian Basic Education anymore. Today, even the teachers are unaware about the concept of Basic Education.

## 3. Inside the Class: Poor attendance– a long list of problems and nature of resistance

As for the reasons of poor attendance of children from lower castes, the teachers put forth a long list of problems. They said that the children's families/households have exhausted all their stocks of wheat, and as such have nothing to eat for breakfast. The students who came to the school ate only rice in the morning. Therefore, many children are forced to accompany their parents to work in brick kilns.

There appeared to be two major reasons for children's absence. Tarvana's children were not present because they went to brick kilns or migrated with parents (on work) or were

taking care of younger siblings at home. The absence of children was directly linked with the means of earning a living in the village. Parents go outside to other states to make bricks; the children accompany them and come back to the village when this work gets over. Apart from this, many children were those who came to school only after feeding the cattle at home or had to leave the school in between for this purpose. At the time of the field visit, the season for harvesting certain specific varieties of 'Dhaan' (rice) had started and many children were engaged in this work. For instance on enquiring "why Geeta hasn't come", a student replied "She has gone to harvest Dhaan." However, this was not the case as after a few minutes the same girl (11 years of age) was observed in Tarvana looking after her younger sibling. On confronting the Masterji it was informed that the child who informed about 'Geeta' did not have the correct information. In reality teachers have very little knowledge about children coming from the lower caste strata.

## 4. The seating arrangement/ pattern

Initially it did seem that children were sitting randomly, but careful investigation unfolded a pattern of seating arrangement. One clear trend was that the basis of seating was not the class or grade but the village from which they came – children from Jetiyan sat together while those from Tarvana sat together. (It also needs to be clarified here that Jetiyan is a village of the 'upper caste' whereas Tarvana is a Dalit Basti). There was also clear distinction in the appearance of children from Jetiyan and Tarwana in relation to their physical structures, glow of the face, clothes, their school bags, etc. Nobody was in a position to provide a clear answer on the reason behind these demarcations.

## 5. Children's belongings

Many children from Jetiyan wore torn and dirty clothes to school and almost each one of them carried a small bag ('jhola') in which they would carry their textbooks and notebooks. While observing a child's bag it was found to contain a Class II Bihar Textbooks Corporation's Hindi books. Apart from this, there was a 'Khaini' (tobacco) box which was now used for keeping small pieces of pencils made of lime stone. The bag also had a graphite slate which was broken at one edge. There was also a small book which was very well kept covered with newspaper and plastic stapled on it. On removing the pins the name of the book and the publisher was visible– Saroj Publications, Shahjahan Ganj, Patna and was titled 'Good' English (although this book was in English it had many Hindi words).

Tarwana's children used to sit at one place. Describing their clothes as torn will be an incomplete expression. That is why we will go in a little more depth. On keen observation of every child's shirt and pants (the children from this basti consisted only of boys, there was

not a single girl) it was observed that besides being torn, there were no buttons in their shirts and the button holes were also torn. Most of these children did not have school bags; they only brought a slate and a pencil. While trying to speak to an eight-year-old child, he could not understand me and started crying. We cannot traditionally understand this expression of crying. There were a whole bunch of emotions involved, which not only states his poverty status but also expresses his feeling of fear regarding the outside world embedded in his inner world.

## 6. Children who had passed out from the primary school of the village

One major reason for disinterest towards the elementary education was the plight of children who have already passed out from the school. There was a young boy from Tarvana, who passed the fifth grade but couldn't study further and as such had started working as a labourer in the village. Masterji informed that there were at least 40 to 50 such youngsters in Tarvana basti who somehow managed to study only till the third, fourth or fifth. One collective reason for this abrupt discontinuation of education was definitely the pressure to earn. Ironically, there were only 15 to 20 youngsters/adults in the whole village who could actually read and write.

## Conclusions

On the whole, the study traces the relationship between caste conflict and institutional education across three salient features:

1. A substantive corpus of diverse and sometimes conflicting experiences.

2. A range of politics of representation (Questions related to whose experiences and what is the nature of experience), and

3. An official structure for acceptance of experiences and validation processes.

The extension of these three can be seen in the questions on identity and the dilemma of adjustment causing various levels of conflict and finally expressing itself in the form of resistance. Some of the major conflicting trends observed are as summarized below:

– **'Being educated'** holds different meanings for different castes, based not only on their position in caste hierarchy but also on different geographical settings (caste position being the same).

– **Aspirations** from education are different for all castes (both within the hierarchy and geographically).

– **Question on the content of curriculum** in school education got different responses from different castes. Most of the respondents from upper castes stressed on mainstream subjects which are usually associated to high and elite social status like Mathematics and English. Whereas, most respondents from lower castes thought that

the curriculum should provide education which:

- is related to their daily lives,
- empowers them against exploitation,
- makes them capable of earning and demanding a respectable wage,
- helps to know ways in which they can harvest more from smaller pieces of land/field,
- enables them to fill MNREGA forms independently,
- enables them to avail services provided by the government, especially health services.

– **'Pedagogy'**– idea that community is the most significant factor in learning, and culture being the most significant context within. Most of the respondents from upper caste believed that children learn good things mainly at school, with the family and in some cases through family relation-ships. On the contrary, majority of the respondents from lower castes were of the view that good things can be learnt in community, at work and even while being involved in household chores. They visualized their work and culture as pedagogy. However, in both the cases responses for girls were different with the respondents largely believing that girls learn good things only at home. Thus,

gender discrimination existed across caste lines.

– **Meta-structure of Schooling**– that gives constant messages to the people from lower castes that there is nothing that schooling has to offer them.

– **Work and Caste**– Another way in which the meta-narrative of caste operates is through the work in which the children are involved, which in turn shapes their aspirations. The nature of work in which the child sees his parents and relatives engaged influences the psyche of children not only directly but also through other people's perception of that work.

– **Spared of Conflict,** is not only limited to public spaces such as schools, but it is also very much in existence in the private spaces such as family and community. Seemingly it all happens in a simple society where many forms/ processes of conflict are prevalent like caste conflict or in other social conflicts arising from 'developmental process' and 'peace processes' mostly by the state.

As the field notes suggest, the dominant culture tends to reproduce itself but resistance also has the capacity to do the same. The increasing cases of drop outs, learning disorders, cases of pathology; aggressive behaviors etc. are not only the instances to be looked as maladaptive behaviours and

psychological problems; but it also needs to be understood in the light of the resistances emerging from caste conflicts. The greatest threat of the simplified and fact-distorting narratives on caste conflict is that these communities not only have ideas nourished by "silence" but also by words. Official "accuracy" about caste conflict does not necessarily provide exhaustive pictures of the situation, which is also reflected in the constant struggle of children from these communities.

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# 3

## Changing Perceptions about Children: Challenges for Primary Teachers

Dr. Bharti Dogra*

### Abstract

*Development of the child is not only a precondition but also a product of education. Recently, human development has taken a turn towards a more "first-person" point of view, i.e. how the world appears to children themselves, a view that allows us to accept that children are not 'blank slates' or 'empty vessels' and they too have an understanding of their physical, biological as well as social worlds. Older terminologies related to children like "skills", "abilities", "potentials" cannot define the actual beliefs, intentions, understandings and misunderstandings of the children. The pedagogy of child learning today is based on the latter. This new approach about children's knowledge requires not only a new pedagogy but a new perception about the classrooms as well. Classrooms are not places where information is transmitted by an authoritative teacher to children but rather they are places where children collaborate and form communities of learners. Teachers' role becomes highly challenging in such circumstances. This paper discusses various adjustments required on the part of the primary teachers in the light of changing perceptions about children's knowledge, learning theories, pedagogy, designing activities and catering to individual differences.*

### Introduction

Primary education needs a complete revamping in the light of the human development studies. All educational practices are rooted in a set of beliefs about the minds of children. Earlier educational practices were also based on certain assumptions. Educational practices are constantly reviewed and reconsidered for the welfare of the children. Any type of teaching-learning approach is based on certain beliefs about the learner like collaboration is based on a belief 'learner as a collaborative thinker'. Teachers too have certain personal theories related to

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learners. For understanding and enhancing educational practices at primary stage, models of the child's mind must be considered in tandem with a model of the teacher's theory of children, and their minds and learning skills, and how this affects their choice of pedagogic method. This paper discusses various adjustments required on the part of the primary teachers in the light of changing perceptions about children's knowledge, learning theories, pedagogy, designing activities and catering to individual differences. This paper will help primary teachers as well as educators in better understanding of primary children as well as educational interventions required at this age.

## Seeing Children as Thinkers

The notions about nature of children's mind have changed. Children are not seen as 'doers' or 'knowers' but as 'thinkers'. Children, like adults, are now seen as constructing a model of the world to help them in making sense of their experiences. Children just like adults have their own point of view and they must be encouraged to recognize their own point of view. Children must also be helped to recognize that others too have their own point of view which may or may not match with their point of view. These different views are based on recognizable different reasons which may have their origin in different beliefs. Sometimes I may be wrong, sometimes others may be wrong, and at times both

of us may be right. Reasoning plays a very important role in proving a view right or wrong. Children can also reason out, can make sense on their own or through discourse with others. Children too can think about their own thinking and can make corrections in their ideas or notions through reflection. Piaget took the first step in seeing children as epistemologists; a slight transition now is that children can see themselves as epistemologists.

So, children hold theories about the world, about the mind and also how it works. The harmony between the theories held by children and those held by parents and teachers is possible not through imitation, and not through didactic instruction but by discourse, collaboration and negotiation. Knowledge is, what is shared within discourse (Feldman, 1991), within a 'textual' community (Stock, 1983), or within a paradigm (Kuhn, 1962).

## What is Knowledge?

The earlier theories in the history of epistemology emphasized on absolute or permanent nature of knowledge (absolutism) whereas the recent theories put the emphasis on its relativity or situation dependence (relativism) which in other words its continuous development or evolution and its active interference with the world and its subjects and objects. According to Heylighen (1993), the whole trend moves from a static, passive view of knowledge towards a more and more adaptive and active one.

Constructivism is an epistemology in which knowledge is seen as Relativistic (nothing is absolute, but varies according to time and space) and Falliblist (nothing can be taken for granted). Constructivism rejects the traditional philosophic position of realism and adopts a relativist position.

Another important issue is where do you get this knowledge from? When children enter a school, they assume that the teacher has knowledge which she will pass on to the class. Then when they interact with others, they realize that others too possess knowledge, and this knowledge can be shared. So, knowledge exists in the group but inertly. What about group discussion as a way of creating knowledge rather than merely finding who has what knowledge? (Brown and Campione, 1990)

## Personal Beliefs and Theories of Primary Teachers

Teaching is based on the beliefs, values and personal theories of teachers. During their school days, the teachers may have experienced educational settings which reinforce the notion that learning means knowing the right answer. Their classroom experiences could be characterised by the use of worksheets, and other product oriented forms of assessment, an emphasis on external forms of motivation such as grades, and other strategies to control their behaviour. They may not have experienced classrooms where they were encouraged to solve their own problems, develop their own questions and search for answers, or use critical analysis and reflection to develop their own ideas about issues. Research suggests that teacher beliefs and reflections are important drivers of classroom practices and thus must be considered to understand any changes in practice (Peterson, Fennema, Carpenter, and Loef, 1989). Beliefs act as the theories that guide actions, and reflections allow on examination of those actions in terms of one's beliefs, thereby promoting necessary modifications in either actions or beliefs.

If children are seen as 'thinkers' then teachers too need to see children as 'thinkers'. Teachers need to understand what children think, and how they arrive at what they believe in. The teachers' pedagogy should be such that it helps children to understand their learning as well as thinking. A careful, supporting and sensitive classroom environment can help children to understand their interests, inclinations and orientations. Claxton and Carr (2004) suggest that adults should at the very least create environments that are 'affording', i.e. provide opportunities for children's active engagement. Better still is an 'inviting' environment which highlights clearly what is valued and gives some guidance to the child. Best of all is what they call a 'potentiating' context, which stretches and develops young children. They argue that potentiating environments involve frequent participation in shared activity.

### Classroom Pedagogy

Classroom pedagogy is based on treating children as human equals, providing them a sense of inner satisfaction and success so that they move beyond extrinsic rewards. The classroom pedagogy for early childhood education must provide children:

- *Opportunities to interact and collaborate:* Learning happens when children share ideas, listen to others' views, fearlessly criticize others, observe others, test ideas, watch others and collaborate. The interaction with caring teachers creates a sense of security in children and they feel confident to take challenges in their learning. When children interact with their peers then they challenge each other and thereby expand their thinking. Collaboration is the vehicle for enriched learning. Let them have a discussion on junk food vs healthy food. Let them share their experiences.

- *Recognising children's powers of thinking:* Children can think and can make meaning. They are curious by nature and want to find out about the world. They can learn on their own. They require a responsive and challenging environment for their learning. Teachers are active researchers. What is the role of the teacher? The teacher has more experience than the children. Therefore, teacher can extend their thinking by co-creating experiences through observation, listening and opportunities to ask questions. The teachers' own questions and investigations of learning are valued. The learning of the children is based on their previous knowledge; therefore the learning of the children must be recorded by teachers by clicking photographs, recording videos, note taking and maintaining entries in the reflective diaries. In reflective diaries teachers can record interactions of children with the environment as well as adults like teachers. Such kind of methodology helps in studying the process of learning, reflecting upon it and if required then new ideas can be used for adding variety or complexity to renew the whole experience.

- *Providing direct experiences:* Young children are always engaged in activities like moving, listening, manipulating objects etc. These self-initiated activities help them in learning concepts and they create their own symbols or abstractions. For helping children in making sense of the world around them, they should be provided direct experiences to interact with people, objects, ideas and events. Why is it required? It is required to initiate and promote their thinking which helps in their development. Children observe natural objects (wool, cotton, soil, water, plants, rock pieces etc.) as well as manmade materials (nylon, plastic etc.),

household objects, toys, equipment, and tools in their surroundings. Children manipulate these objects by using their sense organs as well as body which helps in active learning. Acting on objects initiates thinking. Such concrete experiences with real objects provide basis for the formation of abstract concepts. "Children perform real actions on materials which form the learning base, actions as concrete and direct as the materials can be made to allow." (Flavel, 1963, p. 367).

## Role of the Primary Teachers

Teachers create a safe and conducive environment for the children. Teacher is a researcher and works in collaboration with children. Both children and teachers co-construct knowledge. Children work in collaboration with adults as well as peers. The role of the teacher is to be with them, support them and to be sensitive to their needs. Teacher acts as a participant observer. Designing learning experiences, keeping in mind the interests and needs of learners, triggers the learning process of children. This process of learning is a continuous process. Researchers Mark Lepper and Melinda Hodell identified four essential requirements if children are to have intrinsic motivation. These requirements are challenge, curiosity, control and fantasy. Teachers can motivate children by:

- *Designing challenging activities*: The task for the teacher is to design a range of activities that are far enough within the comfort zone to make the child feel competent, yet far enough outside the comfort zone to challenge her to achieve more. The level of challenge has to be high enough that she is motivated to achieve the task, but the task must not be too difficult, or it will fail to engage her and may diminish her self-motivation.

- *Arousing curiosity*: In order to evoke strong curiosity, children need to undertake activities that challenge their current level of understanding. If an activity challenges the child's sense of equilibrium he will be prompted to fully engage in learning to resolve the discrepancy. Again, the level of challenge must be appropriate, as a large discrepancy between what the child understands already and what is presented through the activity will be likely to discourage him from engaging fully in the task.

- *Control*: Children need to have shared ownership of the curriculum and be free to make choices in their learning in order to become fully engaged in learning.

- *Fantasy*: Through fantasy and play, children have the opportunity to explore issues and emotions, which in turn can lead to increased intrinsic motivation.

## Summing Up

There is a shift in models of child's mind from passive listeners or blank slates

to competent thinkers. Children can reason out, can make sense on their own or through discourse. Children can see themselves as 'epistemologists'. There is a shift from static or passive view of knowledge towards a more and more adaptive and active view of knowledge. Knowledge can be gained from group members by collaboration. Primary teachers should be aware of the present model of child's mind as well as shift in theories of knowledge. Primary teachers must examine their personal theories related to learner as well as learning tasks and reflect on them. The pedagogic choices must be based on model of child's mind, learning skills and theories of knowledge for effective and safe educational practices at primary stage.

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# 4

## Reach-out of ECCE Diploma Programme

Reetu Chandra*

### Background

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is an integral part of school education, which has strong bearing specially upon primary education. It is also an important component for achieving universal enrolment and retention in primary schools. Therefore, proper linkage must be ensured between pre-primary and primary schools. It can only be done by providing necessary maturational and experiential readiness to the children at pre-primary level for meeting the demands of primary education curriculum. This readiness depends on child's early care and education, which includes health care, nutritional support and psychosocial stimulation. Ensuring availability of qualified and trained teachers in ECCE/ pre-primary centres would be an essential condition for achieving.

Hence, it is important to give priority to capacity building of teachers and teacher trainers, building of resources in terms of training materials both in print and non-print form, provision for field experiences, funding and institutional support.

In order to meet all these demands, the Department of Elementary Education (DEE), NCERT, New Delhi had been organising a six-month diploma course in ECCE since 2006, that enabled teacher trainers to organise State/ UTs/ Institutional level ECCE training programmes, which subsequently enhanced requisite skills in developing resource material for ECCE functionaries, as well as learning and play material for children. It also aimed at strengthening National level resource group for ECCE and building capacities of the States/UTs in this area. Training of personnel from Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs), State Institute of Education (SIEs), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSAs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Middle-Level Training Centres (MLTCs), Anganwadi Training Centres (AWTCs)

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under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) had been the focus of this training (ECCE diploma course) with following objectives:

1. Increasing knowledge-base of teacher-trainers (trainees) regarding growth development and learning process of young children from birth to eight years of age.

2. Inculcating sensitivity towards needs of young children and issues related to ECCE.

3. Developing competence in conducting ECCE training programmes activities for young children in various settings.

4. Creating awareness among teacher-trainers regarding various teaching-learning strategies to be used in training of teachers.

5. Conducting research studies at State/UT/District level in ECCE.

The course was designed with a focus on training with hands-on-experience and practical exposure in different ECCE settings. This course was organized in three phases every year:

**Phase I** (Thirteen weeks), this is a face-to-face training conducted at NCERT.

**Phase II** (Ten weeks), all the participants carried out a project work in their respective places of work and submitted project report as an outcome of second phase of training. These project reports were prepared based on needs, problems and issues of ECCE viewed by the trainees in the context of their respective regions.

**Phase III** (Two weeks), this phase was considered as a contact session. It was interactive in nature and included presentations of project reports and viva-voce examination, based on reports prepared by the trainees.

Trainees of all the diploma courses in ECCE conducted since 2006 till 2012 had successfully completed the course. It was expected that after this training, services and skills of those diploma holders would be utilized effectively by the Institutions who nominated them for the training, for conducting various kinds of ECCE programmes in their respective State/UTs covering personnel of public, private and voluntary sectors. It was felt that there is need to analyze involvement and contributions of diploma holders in ECCE programmes, assess the effectiveness of diploma course and see if Institutions and diploma holders need any further assistance from NCERT to enhance their involvement. With this view, a study was conducted in the year 2009-10 with following objectives:

### Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the initiatives taken by Institutions and diploma holders with regard to ECCE programmes.

2. To assess the nature and extent of involvement of diploma holders in various ECCE programmes.

3. To find out the perceptions of diploma holders about the utilization of skills acquired and knowledge gained during ECCE diploma course.

4. To identify the areas in which Institutions and diploma holders require attention and assistance from NCERT.

Interaction was made with 58 diploma holders of three batches from 2006 to 2009. Heads of various Institutions RIEs, SCERTs, SIEs, DIETs, SSA offices, NGOs and other private organizations of 23 States/ UTs who deputed diploma holders were sent questionnaires to obtain both quantitative and qualitative information. Questionnaires developed were finalised after pilot testing on 10% of total sample, then translated in Hindi for Hindi speaking States. All the

questionnaires were sent through post and e-mail. Frequency and percentage was calculated for each of the items in the questionnaire. In accordance with the nature of study, a descriptive reporting was done after analyzing data quantitatively and qualitatively.

## Major Findings of the Study

With regard to the initiatives taken by Institutions and diploma holders, the data revealed that there were so many programmes conducted by the Institutions with the involvement of diploma holders. Out of all the programmes 36.9% were related to training, followed by development,

**Twenty-three States/UTs who deputed ECCE diploma holders**

| | |
|---|---|
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | Kerala |
| Andhra Pradesh | Madhya Pradesh |
| Arunachal Pradesh | Manipur |
| Assam | Meghalaya |
| Bihar | Mizoram |
| Chhattisgarh | Nagaland |
| Haryana | Odisha |
| Himachal Pradesh | Rajasthan |
| Jammu & Kashmir | Sikkim |
| Jharkhand | Uttarakhand |
| Karnataka | Uttar Pradesh |
| | West Bengal |

**Table 1: ECCE programmes conducted by the Institutions involving diploma holders**

| Nature of ECCE Programmes | No. of ECCE programmes undertaken by Institutions (Frequency) | Percent-age(%) |
|---|---|---|
| Research | 11 | 9.9 |
| Teaching | 12 | 10.8 |
| Training | 41 | 36.9 |
| Development | 13 | 11.7 |
| Extension | 12 | 10.8 |
| Advocacy | 9 | 8.1 |
| Monitoring/ Evaluation | 7 | 6.3 |
| Special Focus Group | 2 | 1.8 |
| Other Activities | 4 | 3.6 |
| Total (%) | 111 | 100 |

teaching, extension, research, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation.

Majority of these programmes were focused especially on the concept of ECCE and policy perspectives. Development, care, behaviour, health and hygiene of children were the content areas considered as core in most of the ECCE programmes. In general all these programmes were aimed at:

- Improving knowledge and skills among teachers and children.
- Creating community mobilization and community participation in ECCE activities.
- Developing innovative techniques of teaching.
- Creating awareness about the contribution of immediate environment on development of children.
- Mainstreaming and Inclusive education.
- Ways and means to establish and develop ECCE centre/ ECCE cell.
- Development of Teaching Learning Material (TLM) such as curriculum, handbooks, manuals, modules, guidelines, audio-visual aids, toys, charts, models and framework.
- Strategies for monitoring and evaluation of ECCE programmes.
- Developing advocacy and awareness about ECCE.

Only few programmes focused on school readiness, linkage and development of communication ability.

It was mentioned by the Heads and diploma holders that apart from successful execution of these programmes, they faced a number of constraints during planning as well as implementation of such programmes, like:

- Unavailability of adequate funds and resources on time.
- Unavailability of trained man power
- Lack of academic support.
- Lack of coordination and logistics of programmes/ policies/ schemes.
- Partial understanding of monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

Since, ECCE programmes were initiated by diploma holders for the first time, their expectations from these programmes and motivation for initiating good quality programmes was found to be very high. They mentioned that, 'our first priority is to train teachers'.

Therefore, they looked forward to implement maximum number of programmes for teachers (Table 2).

**Table 2: Target groups of training/ programmes**

| Target groups | Frequency | Percentage(%) |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher | 62 | 38.5 |
| Educational Administrators | 2 | 1.2 |
| Teacher Trainers | 7 | 4.3 |
| Community | 6 | 3.7 |
| Parents | 15 | 9.3 |
| ICDS Functionaries | 26 | 16.1 |
| Children | 30 | 18.6 |
| Other | 13 | 8.0 |
| Total | 161 | 100 |

Some programmes were targeted to the children, ICDS functionaries and parents. It was also found that very few programmes were conducted for teacher trainers, community and educational administrators. Teachers were trained in the implementation of innovative methods of teaching and use of TLM in classroom. After training, teachers started working sincerely that eventually increased attendance and enrolment of children in pre-school centres.

With regard to the nature and extent of involvement of diploma holders in various ECCE programmes, it was found that, they were involved and they contributed in many ways. In most of the programmes (inside and outside their Institution), they acted as a resource person (34.2%). They coordinated as well as co-coordinated various programmes. They also supported programmes as a member, performed roles and functions of evaluator and contributed as a supervisor of many programmes (Table 3).

It was also found that they coordinated all kinds of ECCE programmes, whether it is capacity building, development of TLM, researches for need assessment and identifying the status of ECCE at various levels, promotion of ECCE, monitoring and supervision of ECCE activities or working for the special focus group children (children with special needs/ SC/ ST, Minorities/ girl child).

## Perception of Diploma Holders about the Course

With reference to the perceptions of diploma holders about the utilization of skills acquired and knowledge gained during ECCE diploma course, all the diploma holders were of the view that, diploma in ECCE from DEE, NCERT made them more focused about ECCE. They further reported that they are competent enough to understand various concerns and issues related to ECCE and identify wrong practices as well as loopholes in planning of any programme whether it is related to advocacy, teacher training, research and monitoring or evaluation. They are skilled enough to develop TLM and organise seminars as well as educational visits. They can observe activities of ECCE and provide consultancy to the Institutions working

**Table 3: Involvement of diploma holders in ECCE programmes**

| Nature of Involvement in ECCE Programmes | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Coordinator | 77 | 21.2 |
| Co-coordinators | 18 | 5.0 |
| Member | 35 | 10.0 |
| Resource person | 124 | 34.2 |
| Supervisors | 28 | 7.7 |
| Evaluator | 31 | 8.6 |
| Consultant | 6 | 1.7 |
| Other | 43 | 11.9 |
| Total (%) | 362 | 100 |

in this area. After training 55 (95%) out of 58 diploma holders were engaged in various ECCE programmes in their States/UTs/Institutions including their own institution and other institutions in different ways. Their heads were satisfied with their performance.

Few of them were not able to devote even their 10% of time in these ECCE activities from their daily schedule of work, as they were loaded with tasks, not related to ECCE. They have to do their regular teaching as well as conduct various programmes like training/capacity building, advocacy, awareness, extension, community mobilization and programmes for out of school children. They provide consultancy, counselling, academic support to institutions or personals working for school education. In addition to this, they have to be involved in administrative work in their offices. Deputation or attachment of diploma holders to other institutions like DIET and SCERT, etc. Absence of ECCE cell in their institutions are issues which restrain them to devote time in ECCE-related activities. Diploma holders stated that, 'No opportunities were given by office, if given responsibility they will do it with dedication.' They can establish ECCE cell, conduct researches, develop innovative techniques of teaching, organise various kinds of ECCE programmes and act as resource person. Most of them accepted that, 'there is an ample opportunity to work in the area of ECCE in the State/UTs. The need is to take a bold and

positive step towards making ECCE a priority area of work'.

Based on their (diploma holders and their Heads) observations, they had given following suggestions for further improvement in the Diploma Course, if it has to be organised again or if new course has to be developed.

- Syllabus must be updated in order to introduce new topics.
- Modules for the course needs to be developed by the NCERT.
- Duration of the practical and internship must be increased.
- More visits can be organised to various organisations and other States/UTs for observing the condition of ECCE Programmes.
- Adequate time for research/field/ project work should be given especially to the trainees from the North-Eastern States (as winter vacations of all the educational institutions in this region falls during the period allotted for research work).
- Deputation should be for field work also and if possible research work should be conducted in Delhi itself.
- Evaluation of assignments and progress report of the trainees should periodically be given and discuss (not at the end) in order to improve their performance.
- Duration of the diploma course should be increased if the same content is to be covered.
- More time should be given for self study and the other activities related

to the course like, development of TLM, writing assignment, power point presentations and preparation for internships and assessment/ test, etc.

- ECCE activities largely depend upon teacher and higher authorities as well as parents and community, therefore, they must be involved. Usually educated parents are benefited from ECCE programmes hence there should be an advocacy of ECCE for illiterate masses of society through this course.

- Same courses must be started in RIEs and if possible at state/ UT level.

- ECCE component should also be included in EDUSAT programmes.

## Expectations for Support by NCERT

With regard to the identification of areas in which institutions and diploma holders require attention and assistance from NCERT for effective implementation of programmes are:

- NCERT must take an initiative to suggest Central Government to attach ECCE scheme with DIETs in the States/UTs. Appropriate guidelines for organising these programmes should be provided through DIET and supervision of ECCE centres should also be done by the trained DIET faculty.

- For smooth organisation and running of ECCE programmes letters must be sent through SCERTs to the DIETs for initiating ECCE programmes.

- In order to strengthen human resources at district and states level, the state authorities should depute more faculty to undergo diploma in ECCE from NCERT.

- Since institutions and diploma holders are not having adequate and appropriate TLM for conducting ECCE programmes, NCERT must provide some support material.

- NCERT must take lead to develop national curriculum on ECCE.

- To equip with current trends and issues in ECCE, NCERT should organize some short term orientation or refresher programmes, especially for ECCE trained personals.

## Conclusion

From data analysis and results obtained through the present follow-up study, it can be concluded that Institutions are more involved in ECCE activities in their states/UTs with special emphasis on training. Programmes for special focus groups were almost negligible. In almost all ECCE programmes (inside and outside Institution) services of diploma holders have been utilized. Though diploma holders were loaded with tasks (other than ECCE) in most of the ECCE programmes they acted as a resource person or coordinated the programmes which were targeted especially to teachers and children. All the diploma

holders were satisfied with the training programme. Heads were also satisfied with their performance. Finally, in a view to streamline ECCE activities in their states/ UTs, it is suggested that NCERT must take an initiative in terms of creating more key resource persons through similar courses at RIEs or State/UT level.

## Recommendations

- There must be an independent ECCE cell in each Institute for smooth implementation and functioning of ECCE programmes.

- Teacher Training Institutions must be given an academic and financial freedom to organize ECCE programmes.

- States/UTs/Institutions must organize various intervention programmes in ECCE, especially for disadvantaged children by using good techniques and strategies to improve the condition of these children.

- There is a need to organise programmes focusing on school readiness, linkage and development of communication ability in children.

- Diploma holders as well as the States/ UTs/ Institutions should be cautious about aims, objectives and quality of ECCE while planning any ECCE programme. They must design good quality programmes having national as well as international significance that can compel the government and non-government agencies for support and sponsorship to these programmes.

- States/ UTs/ Institutions must give attention to resolve the constraints faced by diploma holders in conducting various ECCE programmes.

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5

## Quality Dimensions of Elementary Education under RTE Act 2009

Chiter Rekha*

### What is 'Quality' Education?

Education is the backbone of a nation. The aim of education is expected to reflect the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values. The aim of education serves as broad guidelines to align educational process to choose ideal and accepted principles. We would need to ensure that the aim of education is reflected in curriculum, syllabus, textbooks and other learning materials developed by us. Therefore an intelligent society will always invest in quality education for its children and youth.

According to Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishanan, the aim of education is not acquisition of information although important or acquisition of technical skills, though essential in modern society, but the development of that bent of mind, that attitude of reason, that sprit of democracy which make us responsible citizens.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed that true education is the one that draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical facilities of children; he felt that craft or any other productive work could be the best medium of education. Apart from making education relevant to society, it should resulted in all round development of a child's personality. In Gandhiji's scheme, relevance was an important attribute of the quality of education.

According to the International Commission on Education, the concept of quality education revolves around four fundamental pillars of learning, i.e. learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

According to Section 29 of the RTE Act, eight factors should be taken into consideration to lay down the curriculum and the evaluation procedure for maintaining quality in education:

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1. Conformity with constitutional values;
2. All round development of the child;
3. Building-up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent;
4. Development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent;
5. Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centred manner
6. The child's mother tongue serving 'as far as practicable' as the medium of instruction;
7. Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely; and
8. Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of the child's understanding of knowledge and the ability to apply it.

Quality education must ensure the child's all round development, i.e. physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of his/her potential. Education is a lifelong learning process. The advancements in various aspects require continuous updating of knowledge and skills. Consequently a major function of education should be to promote capability to continuously learn and adopt to changes. Education itself is undergoing change in content as well as in delivery process.

**Quality Dimensions in RTE Act:** The dimensions of quality stated in RTE Act include curriculum, teaching-learning, medium of instruction, learning resources, evaluation, instructional time, teacher qualification and school environment.

## I. Curriculum and Learning Resources

- **Curriculum and Syllabus:** The curriculum tells us what is worth teaching, how much should be taught and in what sequence, with what methods and materials, the linkages across different aspects of knowledge, how learning should be assessed, how teachers be prepared and how schools be monitored. However, while developing curriculum, ground realities are ignored. The language of child, social context of child (many of whom are first generation of school goers), gender disparities do not factor in curricular design. Lack of understanding of these ground realities and common under-standing among different agencies responsible for the core-curriculum components is often seen in the plethora of material prepared by different agencies. Any attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equity and social justice. This can be achieved when children from different backgrounds, particularly those from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections of the society are represented in the curricular group.

There has been general tendency in the system to load the syllabus of early

classes with topics which were earlier introduced in secondary and higher secondary classes. The Yash Pal Committee report, *Learning Without Burden* (1993) had analysed the problem of curriculum load in terms of erroneous concept of knowledge. NCF-2005 has also made an attempt to redress this problem.

According to the RTE Act (2009) following points should be included in framing and designing of the curriculum and syllabus:

– Resonance of the values enshrined in the constitution of India.

– Sensitivity to gender, caste and class parity, peace, health and needs of children with disabilities.

– Infusion of environment related knowledge and work related attitude in all subjects and at all levels.

– Linkages between school knowledge in different subjects and children's development and continuity from one level to next level.

– Inter-disciplinary and thematic linkages between topics listed for different school subjects, which fall under discrete disciplinary areas.

– Nurturing aesthetic sensibility and values by integrating the arts and India's heritage of craft in every aspect of the curriculum.

• **Textbooks:** Textbooks should be designed such that they focus on understanding concepts, encourage reflective thinking, provide interactive space for children and activities for group as well as individual work with evaluation happening in a continuous manner.

– Art and craft education, health and physical education and work education must be incorporated with other subjects in teaching-learning process.
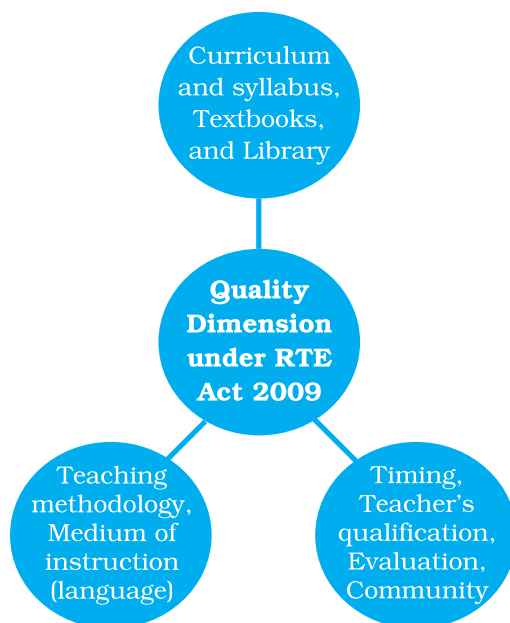


• **Library:** Library is an essential component of the school, providing resources of learning, and also for strengthening the idea of reading for pleasure, recreation and further deepening of knowledge and imagination. Library plays a very important role in education of the students. Therefore each and every school should have a well-stocked library.

- **Community Resources:** Community is a rich local resource. This local knowledge can provide a rich learning resource for children. Schools must explore the potential of such learning resources. NCF-2005 recommends that schools need to relate to children's knowledge and experience and relate knowledge inside the classroom of life outside the school. According to the RTE act community participation would be a central and overarching factor in planning, implementation and monitoring interventions for universal elementary education (UEE).

## II. Pedagogy and Medium of Instructions

- **Teaching Methodology**

  Teachers need to move away from the traditional methods of teaching and bring into the classroom new and innovating approaches to teach the content and lifelong skills. It is important to utilize a variety of techniques for the children to build their own understanding through real world applications and interactions with their peers in group activities. Teacher dominated pedagogy, placing children in a passive role is undesirable. A child-centred, active pedagogy, cooperative learning, problem solving, play way and activity based process of learning should be adopted at the primary stage.

- **Medium of Instruction**

  The choice of language(s) used in school is of utmost importance for the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence shows that instructions in the learner's first language improve learning cost effectiveness and reduce dropout rates. After the first few years of schooling a gradual transition to the second language may take place. Language policy also effects pedagogy.

  "The foreign medium puts an undue stress on our children, makes them crammers and imitators, unfisted them for original work and thought and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses" (*Young India,* 1 September 1921)

  Therefore, till the end of the primary stage, no other language except the pupils first language should be permitted as the medium of instruction.

- **Evaluation Procedures**

  The prevailing examination system treats evaluation as a means of judging and passing verdict. Such a practice is incompatible with the concept of 'child centred education', and has been prohibited through the provision of 'No Detention' under the RTE Act. RTE recommends continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE). CCE means evaluation should be treated as an integral and continuous part of teaching, rather than as an event

which follows the completion of teaching.

- **Instructional Time**

    The RTE Act mandates 200 school days at the primary level and 220 school days at the upper primary level. This Act provides that teachers will not be assigned non-academic work (barring decennial census, election and disaster management). This act provides that teachers should put in 45 working hours per week. This would include time required for planning and preparation, TLM preparation, transacting the curriculum, assessment of children's work, providing academic and emotional support to children who need such support, interaction with parents and community. It prohibits teachers from taking private tuition.

### III. Teacher Qualification

Teacher is a person who motivates children to construct his/her own knowledge. The RTE Act recognises the importance of teacher's professional qualification. According to Section 23 of the RTE Act, teacher qualification, laid down by the NCTE, would be followed in future recruitments.

### Conclusion

Quality in and of education has always been a priority area and a prominent agenda of several committees and commissions on education. Consistent efforts have been made in the past to improve the quality of elementary education. The NPE (1986) and modified Plan of Action 1992 had recommended a number of measures for improvement in the quality of education through reforms in content and process of classroom teaching, improvement in school facilities, provision of additional teachers, standardizing levels of learning at primary stage and so on. A large number of national and state programmes were launched in this direction. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 also focuses on quality education. Although there has been substantial improvement in access, enrolment, retention and reduced gender disparities at various levels, the quality improvement in education in general and learner's achievement in particular, have not recorded as much progress as was desired or was considered necessary. Providing quality education to all children up to the age 14 years is one of the major goals of RTE/ SSA. In order to achieve this, a need-based and focused planning along with functional strategies need to be evolved.

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# 6

## Constructivist Lesson Plan

Santosh Sharma*

Lesson planning is an important step in effective teaching. Lesson plan reflects a teacher's philosophy of teaching and learning. The lesson plan guides teachers in selecting and designing learning activities, developing learning materials, organising the class and managing the time. Lesson plan states inputs, interaction during teaching-learning process and expected learning outcomes. Time required, role of teacher, role of students, and plan for assessment of students is also included in the lesson plan. A Lesson Plan has

- theme/topic of the lesson;
- objectives of the lesson;
- time required to complete the lesson;
- planned learning activities/tasks;
- material required;
- engagement of learners with learning tasks (whole class, group work, pair work, individual activity);
- scaffolds (Learning support in the form of resource materials, probing questions, suggestions, etc.);

- discussion on students' work; and
- assessment of learning progress.

### Traditional Lesson Plan

A perusal of lesson plans developed by pre-service and in-service teachers suggests that these are influenced by 'behaviourist' view of learning. Objectives are written in terms of Bloom's Taxonomy, such as: 'at the end of lesson, students will recall definition, describe process, etc.' Objectives are followed by a three-column description of content, teacher activity and pupil response. Some lesson plans have a fourth column of evaluation questions. The teacher activity column contains statements such as teacher narrates story, explains concepts, demonstrates filtration process, writes on the black board, draws a diagram, reads a poem. The pupil response is generally stated as pupils listen carefully, observe demonstration, or copy from black board. Evaluation questions are pre-planned and asked at the end of lesson. Teacher also recapitulates what was

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taught during the lesson. The lesson plan is rigid and does not provide flexibility for adaptation to students' responses, learning styles and needs.

Student teachers are expected to deliver lessons as planned. When class is organised using such lesson plans, it becomes a teacher-centred class. Teacher provides the knowledge and students receive this knowledge in a passive manner. Students are expected to memorize the information provided by teacher and reproduce the same in class test/unit test.

## Constructivist Perspective

Constructivist teaching considers students as active participants in the learning process. Teacher is a facilitator in the process of learning. Children learn better by actively constructing the knowledge. During the process of knowledge construction, students question other students' ideas and give their own ideas, formulate and test hypothesis, design experiments, interpret and discuss results; students verify and validate their own ideas. Students elaborate and interpret ideas from the text. Students do not acquire knowledge, they construct knowledge. Teacher facilitates the process of learning by providing such learning experiences/situations where students discover, explore and generate their own ideas and provide adequate explanations for observed phenomenon and processes.

In a constructivist classroom, the role of teacher changes from transmitter of knowledge to facilitator of knowledge. The role of student changes from passive receiver of knowledge to active participant in the process of learning. The constructivist lesson plan reflects this shift. In constructivist classroom, lesson develops with the help of student responses. The lesson plan is flexible to allow alternate interpretations and pupil generated explanations. For organizing a learner-centred classroom, the lesson needs to be planned in such a way that students work with materials and activities, generate their own explanations and interpretations.

Following table reflects the change from behaviourist to constructivist paradigm.

| Behaviourist | Constructivist |
|---|---|
| • Knowledge is fixed and is objective. | Knowledge is evolving and is subjective. |
| • Teacher provides information. | Teacher provides learning experiences/situations. |
| • Students are passive receivers of knowledge | Students are active participants in the learning process. |
| • Students acquire knowledge. | Students construct knowledge. |
| • Students memorize facts/ theories, principles. | Students develop their own ideas on the basis of their experiences inside and outside class. |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Students learn individually. | Students learn in groups, discussing, sharing and understanding others view point. |
| • Assessment is undertaken as a separate activity. | Assessment is integral part of teaching-learning process. |

## Constructivist Lesson Plan

In constructivist lesson plan, teacher develops lesson into learning tasks. Whole class, group, pair and individual activities are designed to give children opportunities to work with others and also to work on their own. Problems which are relevant to students are selected. Strategies to engage children in meaningful learning activities are planned. Lesson plan develops with the help of students' responses. Students' responses are windows in to their reasoning and help teacher in selecting appropriate scaffolds. Teacher addresses students' curiosity and suppositions; gives situations which question students' beliefs and ideas; assesses students as they progress on the learning tasks. Learning is structured around essential concepts.

Lesson planning requires selecting and designing activities, problems and questions for students, strategies for organisation of whole class, group, pair and individual activity. Assessment, which is part of teaching learning process, is also stated in the plan.

## Constructivist Teaching

Teacher uses students existing knowledge to guide teaching. Teacher can make students existing ideas explicit by challenging pupils' ideas or by providing interesting questions or situations. Teacher elicits children's' ideas before presenting her ideas. Teacher guides students to generate ideas, explanations and alternative interpretations. Pupils explain, clarify and justify their responses. Teacher provides a question-rich learning environment. Questions are based on students' responses. Teacher values students' responses and instead of classifying these as 'right' or 'wrong', asks students to reason and justify. Teacher engages children in active learning. Students work with materials and activities. Students work independently with minimal help from the teacher. Students test their ideas and prove or disprove their ideas. What they think students discuss their ideas with peers, contradict each others' ideas and put forward their own ideas. Students relate their learning to real life situations.

## Behaviourist vs. Constructivist Lesson Plan (Illustrations)

### *Illustration I*
### Behaviourist Lesson Plan

*Theme:* Electric Circuit

*Time:* 30 Minutes

*Objectives:* At the end of lesson, students will,

- Recall that electric cell has a positive (+) and a negative (-) terminal.
- Recall that torch bulb also has a positive (+) and a negative (-) terminal.
- Draw an electric circuit and indicate the direction of current flow.

3. Mark 'True' or 'False' for following statements:
   (a) Electric current can flow through metals.
   (b) Electric current can pass through a sheet of thermo Col metals.

| Content | Teacher Activity | Pupil Response |
|---|---|---|
| Electric Cell | Have you seen an Electric Cell? | Yes |
| | Showing a cell to the students: | |
| | The metal cap is the positive terminal of the electric cell. The metal disc is the negative terminal. All the electric cells have two terminals; a positive terminal and a negative terminal | Observe |
| Bulb | You all have seen bulb. This is a torch bulb. Chart shows a torch bulb and it's inside view. The fine wire fixed in the middle of the glass bulb is filament.This base of the bulb and the metal tip of the base are two terminals of the bulb. | Observe |
| Electric Circuit | Demonstration: Makes an electric circuit and asks students to observe. | Students observe teacher making an electric circuit |
| | Draws diagram of electric circuit on black board and asks students to label it. | Students try one by one. |

- Define a 'closed circuit' and an 'open circuit'.
- Distinguish between a 'closed' and an 'open' circuit.

*Evaluation Exercises:*

1. Draw diagram of an electric cell and label positive and negative terminal.
2. Draw diagram of electric circuit and show direction of current flow.

4. What is the difference between a 'closed' and 'open' circuit.

## Constructivist Lesson Plan

*Theme:* Electric Circuits
*Time:* 60 Minutes (2 periods)

*Objectives*

- Learner explores how a bulb can be lighted using a pencil cell and wires.

- Learner draws on paper a diagram for his/her plans (arrangements) for lightening the bulb.
- Learner provides reasons and adequate explanations for the diagram made (such as why she/he thinks that this arrangement will light the bulb.
- Lights the bulb using her/ his plan.
- Compares the arrangement that lights the bulb with the diagram.
- Students who succeeded in lighting the bulb and also those who failed to light the bulb share their diagrams on the blackboard.
- Label source of energy, path and appliance in the diagram.
- Define 'open' and 'closed' circuits
- Materials (Class has 32 students, they will work in eight groups of four each): Pencil cells (8), bulbs (8), and wires (32).

*Procedure:* For understanding students existing ideas, teacher will use familiar situations such as

- Showing a torch to the students, how this torch bulb lights.

Students responses may include torch has a battery; torch bulb is lighted when the button is pressed; button connects electric cell to the bulb.

- How can you make an electric bell on your desk?

Students' responses may include–by connecting battery to bell with wires.

Teacher: Can you light a bulb in similar manner? What materials would be required to light a bulb?

Let students answer what material will they need and how they will make a bell or light a bulb.

Teacher will ask students to explore ways of lighting a bulb using an electric cell and wires.

*Learning Task*
- Teacher asks students to make groups. Each group will have four students. Students quickly move in to groups.
- Teacher provides package of material containing a battery, wires and a bulb to each group. You have to put these together to make the bulb light.
- Before start putting these things together, draw a diagram of your plan. You can share diagrams and ideas with others in your group.
- Teacher asks students to draw their diagrams on the black board. Teacher asks questions such as:
  - Why did you decide to connect cell and bulb this way?
  - Why do you think, this set up will light the bulb?
  - Can you design another set up that is different and will still work?
- Teacher asks students to put the material together as per their plan and see if this arrangement lights the bulb.
- Some students will be able to light the bulb, others may not.
- Teacher asks students to share their diagrams (both success and

failure) on the blackboard with other students.

- Teacher asks students to explain why their set up worked or did not work?

- Students interact and share their ideas. Through interaction students understand what kind of arrangement is required to light the bulb.

- Teacher introduces the term 'circuit'. Students evolve their own definition of 'circuit' and label
  – Source of energy
  – Pathway
  – Appliance

- Students draw conclusions
  – Closed circuit is complete circuit.
  – Open circuit is incomplete circuit.

## Discussion

In behaviourist approach, teacher explains, demonstrates and draws diagram of electric circuit. Teacher tells students about positive and negative terminals of a cell and how to connect these to bulb using wires. Students observe, listen and copy from the blackboard. Teacher defines 'circuit' and, open and closed circuit. Teacher provides information and knowledge and students acquire knowledge.

In constructivist approach, students explore ways to light a bulb. They draw diagrams for different setups that they think can light the bulb. Give reasons for their setup as to why they think this set would light the bulb. Try out their plans; reason out for success or failure of a set up. Arrive at their own conclusion why some setups worked whereas others did not. Students evolve their own definition of 'circuit' and distinguish between 'open' and 'closed' circuit.

## Illustration 2

### Behaviourist Lesson Plan

*Theme* : Word problem involving money

*Time* : 30 Minutes

*Class* : III

Objectives : At the end of lesson students will

- understand procedures and algorithms to solve word problems;

- apply these procedures and algorithms to solve new problems.

| Content | Teacher Activity | Students Activity |
|---|---|---|
| Word problems involving addition of money | In this lesson, you will learn to solve problem involving addition of money. | |
| | • Let us take up this problem: (Teacher writes problems on the black board). Ramesh buys one note book, one pencil and one eraser. | Students add in their notebooks. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | • The cost of one notebook is ₹ 20, a pencil ₹ 5 and an eraser ₹ 2. What is the total cost of these three items– a notebook, a pencil and an eraser?<br><br>$$\begin{array}{r}20\\+\ 05\\+\ 02\\\hline 27\end{array}$$ | |
| | • Teacher explains whenever 'total amount' is required, use 'addition' operation. | Students listen |
| | • Now solve this problem: cost of one ball is ₹ 30, cost of one bat is ₹ 100, what is the total cost of ball and bat?<br><br>$$\begin{array}{r}100\\+\ 30\\\hline 130\end{array}$$ | Students apply addition in their notebooks |
| Word problems involving multiplication of money | Cost of one notebook is ₹ 20.  What is the cost of five note books?<br><br>$$\begin{array}{r}20\\\times\ 5\\\hline 100\end{array}$$ | Students copy in their note books. |
| | Teacher explains, apply 'multiplication operation', when the word each appears in the problem.  Now, solve this problem:<br><br>What is the cost of 10 balls, if each ball costs ₹ 30?<br><br>$$\begin{array}{r}30\\\times\ 10\\\hline 00\\30\times\ \\\hline 300\end{array}$$<br><br>What is the cost of 20 balls, if each ball costs ₹ 30?<br><br>$$\begin{array}{r}30\\\times\ 20\\\hline 00\\60\times\ \\\hline 600\end{array}$$ | Students copy in their note books. |

### Constructivist Lesson Plan

*Theme* : Word problems involving money

*Class* : III/IV

*Time required* : 60 minutes (Two periods)

*Objectives:* Students will work on the following learning tasks:

1. Discuss daily life situations, where money transaction is involved, with peers and teacher.
2. Identify word problems, from daily life situations, involving money.
3. Discuss with peers and teacher how to solve word problems involving money.
4. Solve word problems involving money (whole class). The problems focus on addition, subtraction, multiplication and division involving money.
5. Solve problems in groups.
6. Make up their own word problems (pairs work).
7. Solve these own made word problems (pairs work).

### Materials

Toy currency of ₹ 1, ₹10, and ₹ 100, chalk, black board, duster.

### Procedure

1. Teacher will ask students to think about daily life situations where they use money or observe their parents using money. Teacher will ask questions of the kind.

- How much money is needed to buy a ball?
- How much money is needed to buy a school bag?

2. To make students existing knowledge explicit, teacher will ask students to role play as buyer (student) and seller (shopkeeper) or a 'canteen' play will be arranged, where students buy things using toy money.

3. Teacher will ask questions when they buy things or sell things.
- How much is the cost of ball?
- How much money have you paid?
- How much is the balance money, that you need back?

Teacher will move from one group to another observing students in role play and asking them why and how of what they are doing?

4. Teacher will explain to the students that they use mathematics every time they figure out how much money they spend, save or need.

5. Students solve word problems as a class. Teacher writes following problems on the Black Board.

(i) You want to buy a notebook, a ruler, a pencil and an eraser for mathematics class. The cost of the notebook is ₹ 20, the ruler ₹ 10, pencil ₹ 5 and eraser ₹ 2. What is the total amount of money, you need to buy these items?

Ask students, which mathematical operation they should use.

| Notebook | - | 20 |
|---|---|---|
| Ruler | - | 10 |
| Pencil | - | 05 |
| Eraser | - | 02 |
| | | 37 |

Teacher observes how students solve the problem. You need ₹ 37 to buy a notebook, a ruler, a pencil and an eraser.

(ii) How much money you need to buy three pencils and two erasers?

Which mathematical operations should you use here? Students' responses may be of the kind,

$$5 \times 3 = 15$$
$$2 \times 2 = 4$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 15 \\ +4 \\ \hline 19 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

(iii) Ramesh takes a rickshaw to come to school. Rickshaw puller charges ₹ 15 for that. Ramesh pays same amount, ₹ 15 for going back to home, from school. How much money he spends on travel, for coming to school and going back home each day. Students may solve this problem in different ways.

$$5 \times 2 = 30$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 15 \\ +15 \\ \hline 30 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

(iv) Rita gets ₹ 5 as pocket money on each day she attends the school. How much pocket money will she get in 6 days? Teacher asks students to make table, so that students relate table to addition and multiplication operations.

| Days | Pocket Money | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | $5 \times 1 = 5$ |
| 2 | 5+5(10) | $5 \times 2 = 10$ |
| 3 | 5+5+5(15) | $5 \times 3 = 15$ |
| 4 | 5+5+5+5(20) | $5 \times 4 = 20$ |
| 5 | 5+5+5+5+5(25) | $5 \times 5 = 25$ |
| 6 | 5+5+5+5+5+5(30) | $5 \times 6 = 30$ |

(v) Abdul works as a daily wager and gets ₹ 50 per day. How much money will he get for 5 days work? Represent in the form of table:

| No. of days | Pocket Money | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 50 | $50 \times 1 = 50$ |
| 2 | 50+50(100) | $50 \times 2 = 100$ |
| 3 | 50+50+50(150) | $50 \times 3 = 150$ |
| 4 | 50+50+50+50(200) | $50 \times 4 = 200$ |
| 5 | 50+50+50+50+50 (250) | $50 \times 5 = 250$ |

Teacher asks students to work in groups and pairs. Teacher selects problems for group work and pair work.

*Group Work:* For Group Work, different groups can work on different problems. The groups then present their problems and solutions. This way, whole class learns to solve as many problems as the number of groups.

*Group I:* If a person who runs a tea stall earns ₹ 30 in a day, how much will he earn in 10 days?

And in a month?

How did you get the answer? Discuss.

*Group II:* Hariya has taken a loan of ₹ 300 from a bank for six months. He will pay ₹ 51 every month to bank.

But Babu has taken a loan of ₹ 300 from Chunnilal. After six months, he will pay back ₹ 360.

Who has to pay back more Hariya or Babu?

*Group III:* 1 kg newspaper costs ₹ 5. What is the cost of 31 kg newspaper?

(Examples of group work taken from NCERT textbooks).

***Pair Work:*** Students make up work problems while working in pairs and also find solutions to their problems.

Some examples of problems made up by students:

1.  I buy one litre milk every day. The cost of one litre milk is ₹ 28. How much will be my bill for one month (30 days)?

    *Solutions Proposed:*

    *   *One day -* One litre milk
    *   *30 days -* 30 litres milk

    Cost of 1 litre milk  = ₹ 28

    Cost of 30 litres milk = ₹ 30 × 28

$$
\begin{array}{r} 28 \\ \times 30 \\ \hline 00 \\ 84\times \\ \hline 840 \end{array}
\quad \text{or} \quad
\begin{array}{r} 30 \\ \times 28 \\ \hline 240 \\ 60\times \\ \hline 840 \end{array}
$$

Each day, I pay ₹ 28 for 1 litre milk. In 30 days, I will pay ₹ 28 × 30

$$
\begin{array}{r} 30 \\ \times 28 \\ \hline 840 \end{array}
$$

2.  Cost of my newspapers is ₹ 5 on all days of the week except Sunday. On Sunday, newspaper coasts ₹ 7. How much will be my bill for one month (30 days).

***Solutions Proposed:***

*   Cost of newspapers on all days except Sunday =₹ 5.

    (Suppose there are four Sundays).

*   Cost of newspapers on 26 days will be, ₹ 5 × 26

*   Cost of newspapers on one Sunday is ₹ 7.

*   Cost of newspaper on four Sundays will be, 7×4

$$
\begin{array}{r} 26 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline 130 \end{array}
\qquad
\begin{array}{r} 7 \\ \times 4 \\ \hline 28 \end{array}
\qquad
\begin{array}{r} 130 \\ +28 \\ \hline 158 \end{array}
$$

*Alternate solution*

*   Cost of newspaper on Sunday = 5+2

*   Cost of newspaper for 30 days, considering ₹ 5 as cost each day =

$$
\begin{array}{r} 30 \\ \times 5 \\ \hline 150 \end{array}
$$

*   On Sundays, it costs ₹ 2 more

- On 4 days, I will pay Rs. 4×2= Rs. 8 more

  Bill amount = $150$

  $+ 8$

  $\overline{158}$

**Discussion:** In behaviourist approach, teacher explains the procedure and algorithms, solves problems on the black board and explains solution. Students learn procedures and algorithms.

In constructivist approach, students evolve their own strategies to solve the problem. Through discussions, students arrive at negotiated solutions. Alternate ways to solve the problems are encouraged. This way students themselves find relationship between addition, multiplication and tables. In constructivist approach, students work in groups, collaborative learning is encouraged. Students learn from each other. In behaviourist approach, students work individually.

## Conclusion

Behaviourist lesson plan is in terms of 'teacher activities', that is, what teacher will do during teaching session. Objectives are defined in terms of 'behavioural change'. At the end of lesson, students well recall definitions, describe processes, draw and label diagrams and solve problems using learnt procedures and rules. Students are treated as passive receivers of knowledge. Students learn individually. Constructivist lesson plan is in terms of learner activities, that is, what students will do during the teaching learning session. How teacher will engage them in learning activities? Teacher plans, and designs activities for students. Collaborative learning and peer interaction is encouraged. Students' progress on learning tasks is assessed and teacher uses feedback to decide scaffolds. Lesson develops on pupil responses. Students are constructors of knowledge and teacher is facilitator of knowledge. Constructivist lesson plan is flexible. Unit planning is allowed in constructivist paradigm. Constructivist approach suggests teaching less and learning more. Lesson plan is developed with essential concepts.

# 7

## Heritage Education: Need of the Hour

Seema Ojha*

### Abstract

*The general notion of the term 'heritage' is associated with monuments and relics with historical value and is often limited to (passive) visits to monuments or museums. Since the 1970s care for heritage has played an increasingly important role in some societies and the phenomenon of heritage has extended by including non-material heritage such as folk tales or traditions, and landscapes. Through new pedagogical approaches, such as cross-curricular collaboration and project work, several western countries have been successful in implementing heritage education in their schools but inspite of its mention in all Indian curriculum frameworks for schools until recently a general introduction to heritage education in an Indian context was missing. CBSE recently launched several programmes to promote heritage education in schools but still there is a long way to go. This article talks about what heritage is, its place in the school curriculum, meaning and importance of heritage education in our schools and some exemplary activities to promote heritage education in schools, etc.*

### What is Heritage?

Heritage is often defined as a legacy that we receive from our ancestors and have to pass on to future generations. If you look in a dictionary, you will find that heritage means something that has been inherited. Here are some of the definitions from dictionaries:

### Heritage

1. That which has been or may be inherited. . . .

2. The fact of inheriting; hereditary succession. . . .

3. Anything given or received to be a proper possession. . . .

4. An inherited lot or portion. . . .

   Somebody may prefer to think of heritage as those places and objects he/ she wishes to keep. We value these places and objects because they come from our ancestors, are beautiful and irreplaceable examples and sources of

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life and inspiration. This heritage often survives today only because of specific efforts to preserve it.

Heritage may broadly be classified as natural and cultural. Natural heritage includes natural features, like mountains, forests, deserts, lakes, rivers, seas, climate, flora and fauna.

**Cultural heritage** is the creation of human beings by the use of their intelligence, skill and artistic ability. Cultural heritage can be broadly divided into two categories:

a. Tangible (material/built/ archaeological) heritage can be physically touched such as historic buildings, gardens, secular and religious buildings, streets and towns. It helps us understand how people in earlier times lived and interacted with each other.

b. Intangible (non-material/living) heritage such as music, dance, literature, theatre, languages, and religious ceremonies, traditions of crafts, culinary and medical knowledge, folk-tales and rituals are all part of a heritage that continues to be practised.

Tangible heritage can be further divided into the movable (it can easily be moved from one place to another, i.e. objects) and immovable heritage (it cannot be removed from its place of origin, i.e. buildings).

## Why Heritage is Important?

As UNESCO ICCROM points out heritage is important for everybody because it:

- **communicates various historical, artistic, aesthetic, political, religious, social, spiritual, scientific, natural messages and values that ultimately contribute to give a meaning to people's life**

Archaeological sites and other material remains tell us how men lived in the past so they carry a historical message. For example the Genbaku Dome at Hiroshima (Japan) bears witness to the tragic effects of the atomic bomb and is a warning against war. Similarly temples, mosques, and churches are important not only for their religious significance, but also for their artistic and architectural

| Tangible | | Intangible |
|---|---|---|
| (Immovable) | (Movable) | |
| Examples: | Examples: | Examples: |
| historic sites, historic cities, monuments, windmills, landscapes, canals... | paintings, statues, jewellery, relics, coins, stamps, furniture, tapestries, books, photographs, films, musical instruments, literature, documents... | handicrafts, technical skills, rituals, stories, customs,recipes, languages, rites, beliefs, songs, dance performance, sports and games...... |

virtue. Heritage can communicate more than one message or value.

- **represents the identity of a society**

  People identify themselves through their heritage. You will often find a country identified with a particular monument or site: India with the Taj Mahal; Italy with the Tower of Pisa; Egypt with the Pyramids, and Turkey with Istanbul, just to give a few examples.Sometimes specific monuments or cultural sites are purposely attacked with the aim of destroying the symbol of a people's identity; this happened with statue of Buddha in Bamiyan (Afghanistan).

- **symbolizes a medium for understanding the diversity of people and developing a policy for peace and mutual comprehension**

  Heritage is a way of understanding cultural diversity and recognizing the links that exist between peoples. We must not forget that every person has both given something to and taken something from another culture.

- **is a source of economic development**

  Heritage has always been one of the main attractions for tourists. In recent years it has increased immensely and has become an important economic resource for many countries. If it is well managed, it provides jobs, attracts foreign currency, improves local infrastructures and promotes mutual understanding. On the contrary, an uncontrolled mass tourism can have a damaging impact on local population by destroying its original context.

- **is unique and irreplaceable**

  The deterioration or the disappearance of a heritage property is a loss for the humanity as a whole. A masterpiece cannot be replaced once it has been destroyed.

## Indian Educational Curricula and Issue of Heritage

In India broad guidelines regarding content and process of education at different stages are formulated by the national government. These guidelines for school education are further elaborated by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in the form of curriculum frameworks. Following curriculum frameworks syllabi, textbooks and related materials are prepared for school children. So far four curriculum frameworks have been prepared by NCERT and all these frameworks have talked about enabling children to appreciate India's rich cultural heritage. The curriculum for the ten-year school, 1975 states "The teaching of the Social Sciences should enable children to appreciate India's rich cultural heritage..." National Policy on Education (1986) also mentions India's common cultural heritage as one of its

ten core components. National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education– A Framework, 1988 underlines preservation of cultural heritage as one of the emerging concerns and imperatives which have a bearing on the school curriculum. National Curriculum for School Education–2000 demands for strengthening national identity and preserving cultural heritage as one of the curricular concerns. It says, "Study of Indian civilization and its rich cultural heritage along with other world civilizations and their interconnections may be the major area of study drawn from history." National Curriculum Framework-2005 states that, "to strengthen our cultural heritage and national identity, the curriculum should enable the younger generation to reinterpret and re-evaluate the past with reference to new priorities and emerging outlooks of a changing societal context" and, "oral lore and traditions of craft are a unique intellectual property... By including these in the curriculum for all children, we could provide them with windows of understanding and kernels of ideas, skills and capabilities that could be worked into forms and inventions that could enrich their own lives and Society". NCF–2005 is supported by twentyone position papers. 'Heritage crafts' is one among these position papers which recommends to sensitize younger generation of the potential of the crafts and craftspeople.

## Heritage Education

Since the nineteenth century, the general notion of the term 'heritage' was associated with monuments and relics with historical value. If heritage was on offer at all in education, it was usually in the form of (passive) visits to monuments or museums. Since the 1970s, heritage has taken on a broader meaning in European countries. During the last decade, the phenomenon of heritage has been extended by including non-material heritage such as folk tales or traditions, and developed landscapes which evidence human impact on urban and rural places for agriculture or pleasure. Institutions, such as archives, are also opened increasingly to the public. Reflecting this new openness and interest in the past, heritage is now increasingly used in their classrooms. These countries have successfully implemented heritage focussed projects but in spite of its mention in all our curriculum frameworks for schools until recently a general introduction to heritage education in an Indian context was missing. Under *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) launched in 2009-10 culture/heritage education has been made an integral part of the teaching-learning process at the secondary level. This issue has been addressed at different levels: at the school, block and district level through various programmes such as study tour within and outside the state, art/culture camps in the school, block and district level and training of teachers on

heritage and culture education. A few non-government organisations are working in this area. CBSE has recently launched several programmes to promote heritage education in schools including the celebration of World Heritage Day, Adopt-a-Monument programme and functioning of Heritage School Clubs. Some schools are regularly organising heritage activities in their schools but still there is a long way to go.

## An Integrated Approach

Heritage education is an approach to teaching to better understand history and culture rather than an academic discipline or subject area. It draws its content from history, geography, literature and the arts, architecture, and the social and natural sciences to study the evidence of the past remaining in the natural and built environment, the material culture, written documents, and in community practices and traditions.

The first and foremost step in helping students succeed in any subject is determining what we want them to know and be able to do. There are many different discussions of what students should know and be able to do in social sciences but they all agree that students in social sciences need to know and understand content and also be able to apply specific kinds of thinking skills commonly used in the study of social sciences. NCF-2005 in its position paper 'teaching of social sciences' states:

'Social Science teaching needs to be revitalized towards helping the learner acquire knowledge and skills in an interactive environment. The teaching of social sciences must adopt methods that promote creativity, aesthetics, and critical perspectives, and enable children to draw relationships between past and present...' In order to make the process of learning participatory the position paper calls for a need to, 'shift from the mere imparting of information to involvement...' Heritage education very well fits into these criterions as it–

(a) focuses the learner's attention on the actual evidence of our history and culture, such as the natural and built environment, the material culture, community practices, oral history, music, folklores, as well as written documentation;

(b) engages learners in an interactive exploration of this evidence to enrich their understanding of the themes, issues, events and people that are a part of our historical experiences and cultural expressions;

(c) encourages learners to move from idea to action, from insight into the significance of a resource to commitment to protect it;

(d) allows teachers in different disciplines to work together in teams to introduce elements of heritage education into classroom teaching that will impart to students the desire to know, to cherish and to act in favour of heritage conservation;

(e) through various activities involved it helps in the development of various skills such as information, investigative, speech, written and social skills;

(f) promotes awareness of and involvement in heritage to inculcate a respect for diversity,tolerance, mutual understanding, patience and promote peaceful co-existence in schoolchildren; and

(g) encourages children to learn about national heritage as well as gain exposure to their local heritage.

## How to Practise?

The best means for including heritage education in the curriculum is infusion–integration with existing curriculum patterns–rather than creation of new courses or stand-alone units of study. Established goals and subjects in the social studies provide numerous points of entry for teaching and learning about artefacts and the built environment. And the content of heritage education provides opportunities for connection of the social studies to other subjects as well in the curriculum, such as languages, literature, and fine arts. Heritage education thus infused with all the disciplines at all the stages through various activities will facilitate the integrated teaching approach to heritage. The ultimate goal of these activities will be to inspire and reinforce young people's commitment to preserve our heritage, and to help close the gap between school and society by offering stimulating activities which promote involvement in the community.

Such cross-curricular collaborations and project works lend themselves particularly well to using heritage at primary as well as secondary level.

## An Exemplar Activity

### 1.Visits to Sites/Monuments

Heritage education provides a unique opportunity by offering students to come out of the classroom and let them visit historical areas of cities/towns/ World Heritage sites, archaeological sites and museums in their neighbourhood, or country. They can also go on nature walks/excursions to local parks, areas of bio-diversity and even rural sites. A site visit enhances the student's learning experience, develops observational skills, enables an understanding of the interrelationships between disciplines and encourages a sense of appreciation for our diverse cultural legacy. NCF-2005 states that "heritage sites assume great significance as sites of learning. Not only the history teacher, but also teachers of all subjects need to inculcate in the children under their care a sense of respect for sites of archaeological significance and the desire to explore and understand their importance."

### Preparation

Sufficient preparation is a prerequisite for a successful site visit. This involves:

• A preparatory visit to the site by the teacher(s). During this preparatory

visit, try to gather all the practical information you need (such as the entry fee, opening and closing hours, permission to take photographs, availability of drinking water, food or snacks, souvenir shops, rest rooms, first aid), and check whether all the students can be accommodated at the same time, or if they should be divided into groups.

• Interaction with students on the site selected for the visit is very important. This interdisciplinary activity can either be done by different social science teachers' presentations or by students themselves.

*How to Do this Activity*

Divide the class into different subject groups (history, geography, literature, science, arts, etc.) and ask them to prepare group projects based on various aspects of the site and its history/heritage. For this purpose, they may look into the materials in the classroom/library/internet, etc. Suggested work for each group:

**History group** will provide information about the site throughout the ages such as when was the monument built? Who is the historical figure associated with the monument? etc.

**Geography group** will point out the special features about the site's location and its geographical features, the materials used to construct the monument, the places from where the materials were procured, etc.

**Language group** will provide special texts (literary, poetic, and dramatic) such as a biography on the historical figure associated with the monument.

**Art group** will draw pictures such as murals or frescoes used in the monument, designs of specific style, and the other art forms associated with the building–paintings, sculpture, wood carving, etc.

**Mathematics/architecture group** will write about the shape/size of the monument, using graphs, pie charts and statistics, presents the results graphically or produces scale models of the site, draws an elevation of the monument, define and draw the main architectural features of the building–arch, pillars, brackets, and dome, etc.

**Science group** will write about the natural surroundings (flora and fauna) of the monument, cleanliness of the surroundings and possible threats to the site from tourism.

At the end of the completion of the project work, the different groups may be asked to make presentations followed by discussions. This will enable children to have a better understanding of the site on various aspects and also understand the interrelationships between disciplines.

• Prepare before, on site and after visit student activity sheets in order to measure the change in students' knowledge, attitudes, skills and

behaviour about the site. For example:

Ask students to fill up an activity sheet prior to a site visit.

Name of the site ..............................

Name of student ............................

Date of the site visit ........................

Write down your expectations for the visit (what do you want to discover, learn about, etc.).

- Collect all materials and equipment needed for the visit, such as writing and drawing paper, cameras and pencils. If you have a video recorder, the visit could be taped and a video programme produced to be shown afterwards to students, parents and others.

*The Site Visit*

When you are at the site you can ask students to do the following:

- Make a drawing of a feature or part of the site which you particularly liked.
- Record some facts and figures which you learned about the site.
- Take photos of the monument and its artistic features.
- Carry out interviews (among the students themselves or people living near the site and find out what the site means to them).
- Produce a video (depending upon the feasibility the teacher can decide).

*Follow-up to the Site Visit*

The follow-up to the visit is just as important as the preparations, to allow students to assimilate their experience and to share it with others. This can be done in the form of various interesting activities.

- **Group discussion**

  Children may be asked to discuss on the following lines:

  – Were your site visit expectations fulfilled? Discuss.

  – Why do you think that this site is important?

  – What you saw and learned, including what you liked most and least?

  – How to improve the site to promote tourism while protecting it, examine possible threats to the site and eventual solutions?

- **Exhibition**

  Invite students to make larger paintings or sculptures based on their sketches and drawings, and exhibit their work, develop photographs taken during the visit, label them with appropriate captions and set up an exhibition (students can be given opportunity to select several of the best pictures and prizes may be given to the winners.)

- **Assignment**

  (i) You can ask students to list some steps that can be taken to

make buildings and monu-ments accessible to differently-able people. This will sensitize students towards the needs of differently abled and old people and will help them acquire an understanding of skills of application and attitudes and values.

(ii) Invite students to write an article on their visit for a school and/or a local/national newspaper or write information leaflets or advertising slogans about the site.

(iii) Invite students to write and perform a play about a tourist, who disrespects sites, spreads litter, sometimes damages them with graffiti or otherwise. A respectful tourist is keen to learn more about local traditions and culture (history of the site, local crafts and works of art, music, food, clothing, etc.). Once the play has been written and performed by the students, discuss how such a tourist could be changed into someone who is interested in visiting local and national historical sites and shows respect for them, by referring to the guidelines . Invite students to select a local, national historical site and make a list of suggestions for a campaign which would give tourists a new way of visiting the site. Discuss the suggestions and share them with the local tourist board.

## Some other Activities

### *2. Museum visits*

Visits to museums are another important aspect of Heritage education and museum personnel can be useful partners to teachers. Museums are often the only places where evidence of a particular cultural or natural feature can be seen and studied. For schools which are not located near a museum, other local places, local people, parents and grandparents can play instrumental roles in recalling the past and linking the past to the present. Some museums are enormous and hold thousands of objects and artefacts, too many for young people to assimilate and appreciate during one visit. During their visit to museum students can focus on a particular theme or topic. For this visit you can arrange for a special lecturer (someone who is both knowledgeable and entertaining) or you can also do this job with a little research. Students can be asked to prepare a chart describing physical features, construction, function, design and value of any museum exhibit. This can be shared with others after the visit in the classroom.

### *3. Visits to craft workshops*

Some types of crafts (for example, pottery, embroidery and metal work) seen in museums are still being made today by craftspeople whose art has been passed down from one generation

to another for decades or even centuries. By organising visits to craft workshops, students can touch and see for themselves how traditional crafts, which they have seen in museums, are still being made today. They can interview craftspersons and based upon their interview they can write the step-by-step processes involved in making the craft and also make a timeline of the craft showing its stages of development. They can take photographs of the entire process involved in creating the particular craft and can also try making the craft herself to get a better idea of the craft. All these activities will help them in understanding the linkages between their identity, heritage and local crafts. NCF-2005 considers various such crafts as practical disciplines and believes that 'this important area of human knowledge needs to become a substantial part of the school curriculum.'

### 4. Role play in the classroom

Heritage conservation involves many challenging and sometimes complex questions, such as the choice of different preservation materials and methods, development (demolition of old houses, development of tourism, building of new roads, etc.), conservation and management planning, site inspection, or promotional campaigns. Through role play, students come to a better understanding of these issues and of how to take the appropriate decisions.

The teacher could divide the class into group to reflect and research the position of the group or character which they are to enact. Further help could be given by suggesting where to find the necessary information or data. Each group discusses its position and selects one student to take part in the role play, where each player defends the position of his or her group. The rest of the students play the jury or committee which votes on the decision to be taken in the light of the presentations.

### 5. Experiential learning

Experiential learning or 'learning by doing' is the best way to make learner's understanding clear on a concept related to any type of heritage. This activity can be done to make model of a heritage site or a part of it. This will stimulate creative skills and will help students learn in detail about a heritage site. This activity can be done in group where each student can be given a part of the site to prepare. Before they start this activity show your students the laminated photographs and overhead transparencies. Invite them to select one or several heritage site(s) and make a scale model. The mathematics teacher could explain how to make a model to scale. The art teacher, or a local artist or architect, could advise on how to make the model. The history teacher could advise on historical accuracy. Upon completion of the scale model(s), prepare an exhibition and invite parents and community members.

Workshops with artists, and local classical or folk musician could also be conducted which involve hands-on learning. Such workshops will help students understand the basic vocabulary of their art or musical form.

## Conclusion

Heritage education moves students beyond the pages of textbooks and worksheets to interpretation of evidence from various sources– documents, artefacts, and various objects of the built environment. It fosters an emotional attachment to the past that makes learning enjoyable and memorable and enhances the teaching and learning of different subjects in the social sciences. Through this enrichment of the core curriculum, heritage education contributes to the common learning and cultural literacy of students. The time is now ripe for government, museums and educational institutions to work in partnership towards promotion of heritage education. This initiative would encourage practical, experiential learning, teach historical literacy and promote an understanding and interest in our national and local heritage.

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# 8

# Technology in Language Learning in Early Childhood Curriculum

Dr Pranita Gopal*

## Abstract

*The desire to communicate is one of the basic needs of human beings and we feel this need as soon as we step into this world. Language is the agent that helps us fulfil this need of ours and as we grow our language acquisition process is strengthened. One of the pillars of a good early childhood curriculum is the manner in which language development experiences  are planned for a child– as the child learns the rules of the language without any formal instructions.*

*Technology has now found its place in the early education environment along with books, flannel boards, finger paints, markers, play dough, and other media. As a result, the use of technology in an early childhood setting requires that each of us, as early childhood educators, continue to learn as much as we can about technology issues and trends. Computers and Tablet PCs, along with developmentally appropriate software, interactive CDs, DVDs, and cassette tape audio recorders, can make a unique contribution to the education of young children. How appropriately technology is used is more important than just using it.*

*This paper presents examples of using technology appropriately in the language learning classroom by documenting various studies existing in the area. It also discusses how assistive technology can assist children with special needs as they strive to participate in a regular educational environment.*

*The paper also provides a checklist for early childhood educators and curriculum developers to decide on incorporating technological interventions so that learning experiences are augmented and also other child-related developmental activities do not take a back-seat.*

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## Introduction

Human communication works in an utterly unique way. The desire to communicate is one of the basic needs of human beings and we feel this need as soon as we step into this world. Language is the agent that helps us fulfil this need of ours and as we grow our language acquisition process is strengthened.

There are five components of a language that we make use of every time (1) *phonetics* – the component dealing with the sound system; (2) *orthography*– the component dealing with the rules of a spelling of a word; (3) *morphology*– dealing with the various word suffix and prefix; (4) *syntax*– dealing with the various grammatical structures; and (5) the component of *semantics* – dealing with the prevalent word usage.

Also every language is associated with four basic skills – *listening* to the utterances in the language, *speaking* that language, *reading* and *writing* in that language. We develop these skills in us from the time we are exposed to the various components of the language in our childhood. These four skills – also classified as *expressive language* – includes speaking, reading and writing component (age dependent) and auditory comprehension, i.e, ability to understand spoken language. Learning the expressive language and auditory comprehension of a language is a lifelong activity that begins at birth. Table 1 discusses the various competencies that develop during early childhood.

An important principle of language development is that of the receptive language – the capacity to listen, hear

**Table 1: Language Competencies Developed during Early Childhood**

| Approximate Age | Expressive Language | Auditory Comprehension |
|---|---|---|
| 2 to 4 months | Verbal play through cooing, gooing and laughing. Vowel sounds heard such as oooh, eee, and ahhh. | Turns head toward sounds and can begin to discriminate one sound from another. |
| 4 to 8 months | Babbling begins. Some consonant sounds can be heard. | Anticipates an event (e.g. peek-a-boo) and follows a line of regard (e.g. visually follows toy moving across floor) as well as joint attention (i.e., capable of visually attending to object with caregiver). |
| 8 to 12 months | Syllable variation (e.g. badugatadudah). First word approximations (e.g. dada for daddy). Non-verbal communication. Jargon (i.e., unintelligible speech) is present. | Relates words with physical objects (e.g. understands that the word "ball" actually means the object ball). Responds to simple phrases such as "no". |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 to 2 years | 10-15 words at 18 months, 40-50 words at 24 months. Uses mostly nouns and pronoun me/mine. Jargon (i.e., unintelligible speech) still present | Increased attention to toys. Changes behaviour in response to comments made to him/her. Knows a few simple commands with gestures needed at times. Understands simple questions. Points to simple pictures. |
| 2 to 3 years | 150 words at age 2; 300-400 at age 3 years. Uses two-three words phrases frequently. Asks simple questions. Fluency can be poor. Jargon (unintelligible speech) mostly gone. Vowel sounds intact. | Comprehension shows rapid increase. Responds to more 2 step commands with prepositions (e.g. Pick up the ball and put it on the table). |
| 3 to 4 years | Uses 600-1000 words and 3-4 word sentences. Pronouns and adjectives are used as well as some adverbs, prepositions, past tense and plurals. Answers what, where and when questions. | Understands 1500 words. Recognizes gender differences, plurals, pronouns, adjectives, and colours. |
| 4 to 5 years | Vocabulary increases to 1000-1600 words and 4-6 word sentences. 3-4 syllable words are being used. Articles appears. Use more adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions. Fluency improving. | Comprehends 1500-2000 words. Understands if, because, why and when. Follows complex directions. |
| 5 to 6 years | Vocabulary of 1500-2100 words. Uses complete 5-6 word sentences. Fluent speech. Many multi-syllabic words are used. | Understands 2500-2800 words. Understands more complicated sentences. |

and understand – is almost always greater than the expressive language, which is the capacity to speak and convey messages.

## How Do We Learn Languages?

Different schools of thought have different opinions on this issue – behaviourist and social learning theorists, such as Skinner (1957) and Bandura (1977) say that imitation and positive response is how language develops. Children who are deprived of hearing language can end up permanently incapable of learning and using language.

Noam Chomsky's (1965) work broadened the view of how language is acquired with studies that indicate that children from all cultures develop

language skills in the same sequence at close to the same time, supporting a biological approach to language. His idea is that there is a *language acquisition device (LAD)* present in all humans, but not in animals. Proofs of this are the choices in grammar that children make automatically. No one teaches a child to say 'goed' – it comes from the internalization of language. The child converts the tense using an untaught rule. It also causes the switch from 'goed' to went a little later.

Interactionist theorists, such as Bruner (1983), agree that there are behavioural and biological aspects, but they emphasize the role of an environment in which adults support language learning and use.

## Technology in Education

Technology in language learning encompasses devices like the radio and television to computer peripherals and tablet PCs. Technology in the educational set up is seen in many forms– from the computer in lab, to the projection system in the classroom; while at home television also becomes a technological aid.

Parents often can find it difficult to know what is best for children because many of them were unavailable during their times. Plowman and McPake (2013) discuss seven myths about technology and young children as childhood and technology shouldn't mix; young children are 'digital natives'; technology hinders social interaction; technology dominates children's lives;

best educational experiences are based on play; if it is interactive, it must be educational and that children need to get tech savvy for their future lives. Plowman, Stevenson, Stephen, and McPake (2012) suggest that interactions with technologies could support the learning at home:

(i) Operational learning—learning how to control and use technologies, getting them to do the things you want them to do, and having opportunities to make your own inputs and get a personalised response

(ii) Extending knowledge and understanding of the world— finding out about people, places, and the natural world.

(iii) Dispositions to learn—showing greater concentration and persistence and gaining self-confidence and self-esteem while becoming increasingly competent users of digital media

## Technology in Literacy and Language Learning

The relationship between literacy and technology is a complex one as many children nowadays are immersed in technology since their birth. Technology has always been an essential part of literacy. In order to write, one needs tools and the nature of those tools inevitably shapes the writing process. In order to read, one also needs technology—paper, print, computer screen, etc.—on which to present text, and the nature of that

technology inevitably influences the literacy experience (Marsh and Singleton, 2009). However, what is becoming increasingly obvious is that new technologies are fundamentally changing literacy practices and texts (Lankshear and Knobel, 2006). Carrington and Robinson (2009) put forward the term 'digital literacies' to connote reading, writing and meaning-making with texts that are created using digital technologies and disseminated via a range of media such as computers, mobile phones, and televisions. Bearne et al. (2007) discovered that young children are often exposed to computers, interactive whiteboards, televisions, videos, and digital cameras in their school or pre-school setting, while others also used mobile phones and games consoles in their role play situations. Bearne et al. (2007) reported that 'very young children show expertise in on-screen reading, even where homes have no computers', as the handling of such texts is now embodied within a culturally valued discourse. As a result, it appears that young children are developing the skills to become 'digitally literate' (Glister, 1997) before they come into the school setting. While this may mean that young children are developing strategies that allow them to access and read a variety of digital texts with fluency (Levy, 2009).

Segers, Takke and Verhoeven (2004) compare the effects of story reading by a computer and teacher on comprehension and vocabulary learning, whilst Silverman and Hines (2009) consider teacher and multimedia-supported vocabulary instruction (using videos to reinforce vocabulary). De Jong and Bus (2004) evaluate the role of electronic books in supporting story understanding, whilst Eshet-Alkalai and Chajut (2007) explore the use of Living Books in supporting second language acquisition. A further ten studies investigate the use of programs to support phonological awareness and word attack skills. These range from studies of the impact of the personalised support provided by an integrated learning system (Bauserman, Cassady, Smith and Stroud, 2005) to studies of programs, such as talking books or computerised games, designed to develop specific aspects of phonological awareness and letter/sound correspondence (Watson and Hempenstall, 2008;Wood, 2005; Chera and Wood, 2003; Comaskey, Savage and Abrami, 2009; de Graaf, Verhoeven, Bosman and Hasselman, 2007; Chambers, Cheung, Madden, Slavin and Gifford, 2006), letter recognition (Brabham, Murray and Bowden, 2006) or word recognition (Lewandowski, Begeny and Rogers, 2006). Korat and Shamir (2007) compare independent reading of an electronic book with an adult-read story in terms of the impact on children's decoding skills and vocabulary.

Robin Close (2004) reviewed research on the effects of television and

concluded that children who were heavy viewers of television were more likely to have delayed language development. Rich language development needs social interaction and television is a one way mode of communication. Even good quality programmes for young children are unlikely to deliver the possible benefits, unless a familiar adult watches with the child and make connections, either at the time of watching or later.

Christakis et al. (2009) have shown that every extra hour that the television was left on in the family homes, fewer words in total were spoken to under 2s by their parents. The screen time actually reduced personal conversation and the crucial need for babies and very young children to hear meaningful spoken language in context.

Apart from helping normal students, technology can be a boon to students with special needs. Technological adaptations – *assistive technology*– assist children with special needs as they strive to participate in a regular educational environment. Judge, Floyd and Jeffs (2008) provide an assistive technology tool-kit to promote inclusion. This technology tool-kit designed for use with young children with disabilities that can be easily assembled and implemented by early childhood professionals. Table 2 lists the suggested assistive technology tool-kit items and features as provided by Judge, Floyd and Jeffs (2008) for CWSN.

**Table 2: Suggested assistive technology tool-kit items
Judge, Floyd and Jeffs (2008) for CWSN**

| *Purpose of tool* | *Tool* | *Features* |
|---|---|---|
| **Communication** | Visual schedule, calendar, lists | Pictures or symbols representing a desired activity or task are inserted in a schedule, calendar, or list. |
| | Picture communi-cation symbols | Ready-made symbol sets for communi-cation and teaching language concepts. |
| | Boardmaker software | Software program that contains over 3,000 Picture Communication Symbols to make communication displays or educational materials. |
| | Boards with objects, pictures, symbols | Boards with pictures or symbols to use for communicating, scheduling or choice-making activities. |
| | Picture symbol display books/ boards | Books or boards containing picture symbols that are theme based on everyday activities. |
| | Talking switches | A single message communication aid when user activates switch |
| **Movement** | Weighted vests | Vests that open down the middle and the amount of weight is adjustable. The |

| | | heaviness of the vest provides excellent sensory input and often helps increase attention and concentration. |
|---|---|---|
| | Positioning devices (sitting, standing, etc.) | Pediatric positioning equipment that provides comfortable and stable support for seating, standing, and positioning needs. |
| | Adaptive seating | Chairs that are height and depth adjustable with firm backs. |
| | Adaptive tables and desks | Tables and desks that are height and depth adjustable |
| **Learning** | Adaptive scissors | Easy-grip scissors with loop handles and blunt tips. |
| | Pencil grips | Soft rubber triangular grip that fit on pencil to help students top position fingers correctly. |
| | Switches | Switch can be touched anywhere on its surface to operate any adapted item |
| | Electronic toys | Battery-operated toys that can be used with switches. |
| | Switch accessible toys/games | Toys or games that have been adaptive so that children can control their movements with capability switches. |
| | Slant board/ clipboard | Desk-sized easel for students who work best in a vertical orientation; slant/ clipboards promote better functional postural position and stability. |
| | Talking books | Digital books available in different formats that allow children to hear the story read aloud. |
| | Touch screen for computer | Touch screen that mounts on the monitor of the computer; software can be accessed by the touch of a finger to control the computer and interact with software programs. |
| | Adaptive keyboards | Alternative keyboard that features large, well-spaced keys in high contrast colors to make it easy for users to locate letters and numbers |

### *Criteria to Evaluate Software / Appliance for Language Learning in Early Childhood Curriculum*

Table 3 provides various aspects and criteria that can be used to evaluate software/appliance for language learning in early childhood curriculum.

**Table 3: Various aspects and criteria that can be used to evaluate software/appliances for language learning in early childhood curriculum**

| Aspect | Criteria | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| Hardware and Operating System requirement cost | Low Cost | As technology is changing and budget being a major issue in schools, it becomes difficult to have latest technology always in the classes. |
| Utility | Self Access or Guided by Teachers/Parents | Using self access/self-learning software or apps is not advisable for very young learners. They can be used for children from 6-8 yrs of age. |
| Reviews | Software that are to be purchased need to be reviewed in standard publications | Reviews differ from other forms of evaluation in that they typically focus on the software itself rather than on the environment in which the software will be used (Hubbart, 2006) |
| Product type | Game Based/ Drill and Practice | Younger children should be encouraged to learn in a game based environment and there should be scope for sufficient practice if they are to master skills. |
| Content | Age Appropriate Engages the student Colourful Gives scope to develop listening | Listening is the precursor of speaking and research has shown the paucity of listening opportunities has an impact skills on the language learning ability of the students. |
| | Has expanded complexity | If the software has expanded levels of complexity it would also cater to the various levels of the learner. Generally in a game based learning environment this is evidenced by Beginner Level, Intermediate Level and Advanced Level. |
| Images | Colourful and Non-violent Supplement the text or audio Animations | Colourful and non-violent. As the students in this age group are very impressionable. Young children are able to develop their visual and auditory comprehension. Pace of animations needn't be such that the student looses attention or such that the student forgets to blink and stretches the eye muscles. |

| Navigation | Easy<br>Clear icons<br>Between audio and activities simple | So that the students are able to use the software and apply easily |
|---|---|---|
| Audio | Loudness<br>Quality of sound<br>Clarity of speech | The software shouldn't play unpleasant and loud music so that the younger children are unsettled. As listening skill is one of the foundations to develop a clear speech, the auditory input needs to be clear. |

## Conclusion

Technology has strong potential for enhancing the education of young children. The experiences of using software are similar to those of reading a book with a child; the value is as much in the interaction between the child and adult as it is in the content (Irvine and Prejean, 1999). In order to maximize the benefits of computer use in education, all the educators should keep in their minds this question: "Can we use technology to teach the same old stuff in the same way or can we capitalize on the benefits of technology by using integrated computer activities to increase achievement?" (Clements and Sarama, 2002).

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# 9

# Early Childhood Education and Reading Ability

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Sunena Sharma**

## Abstract

*The 'normal' ability at which a child might be expected to be able to read and comprehend written material is called reading ability. As in most areas of learning, people perform at different levels according to their skill, practice, motivation and so on. Reading is a cornerstone for a child's success in school and indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfilment and job success inevitably are lost. Early childhood education prepares the children for school skills. If the children do not receive ECE, their chances of coping with the further and formal education diminish. Keeping this hypothesis in mind that ECE has influence on the reading ability of children, the study aims to observe the difference between the reading ability of the children who received ECE as compared to those who did not.*

## Introduction

At least one in five children has significant difficulty learning to read (Lyon G.R., 1996). Reading difficulties are common and are associated with poor long-term academic achievement. Evidence clearly demonstrates that most school-ability children with reading difficulties fail to catch up with their peers (Swanson, H.L. et al., 1998). They are caused by both environmental and organic risk factors. There is good evidence that individualised instruction emphasising increased phonologic awareness can have a favourable long-term effect on academic achievement. Although most of the children not given early education eventually become literate, many continue to have reading difficulties and never become fluent readers. Early development of reading skills is essential, and efforts should be made to identify children with reading difficulties and implement interventions

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at an early ability (Catts H.W. 2003). A child's third-grade reading ability is reasonably predictive of overall long-term academic achievement (Jinks A, et. al., 2011) Seventy-five per cent of children with reading difficulties who are not identified before the third grade continue to have reading difficulties in the ninth grade, and fewer than two per cent go on to participate in a four-year educational programme after high school (Glascoe F.P., 2007).

School-ability children with reading difficulties should have received individualised instruction to increase phonologic awareness, decoding skills, sight word vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Intervention should begin early, be provided by expert teachers, and use detailed and intensive approaches emphasising phonetics (National Reading Panel, 2006). The present research aims to observe the difference between reading ability of the children who received ECE as compared to those who did not.

## Objectives

The research is focused on the comparison between reading performance among students of classes VI to VIII who received appropriate early childhood education in their early years and those who did not.

1. To assess the reading performance of the students of Classes IV to V who received early childhood education or those who did not.

2. To study the gender differences in reading performance of students in Classes VI to VIII.

3. To observe the other causes of poor reading performance.

## Hypothesis

The hypothesis is as follows:

$H_0 1.$ The reading ability of those students who received early childhood education would be better as compared to those who did not.

$H_0 2.$ The reading ability of boys would be better as compared to the girls.

$H_0 3.$ The reading ability of those girls who received early childhood education would be better as compared to those girls who did not.

$H_0 4.$ The reading ability of those boys who received early childhood education would be better as compared to those boys who did not.

## Design of the Study

The present study aims to diagnose reading difficulty through 'Schonell Reading Test' by Schonell and Goodacer (1971) which assesses the reading ability of children from 6 to 15+ years of ability. Although this performance of children does not confirm that children have learning disability but it is the first step towards diagnosis.

## Sample

The total sample consisted of 30 boys and 30 girls from the private schools of an urban slum, where 15 boys and girls came from the ECE background and

the rest 15 boys and girls came from the non-ECE background. The data was collected through convenient sampling.

## Locale of Study

Sample was collected from an urban slum of Jaipur city.

## Tools

Schonell Reading Test by Schonell and Goodacer (1971) used to test the reading ability of children. The tool assesses the reading ability of children from 6 to 15+ years of ability. Schonnel's reading test, which was written in Australia and first published in Britain 1950, has been reprinted several times. The tool is being rigorously used for diagnostic purpose.

## Methodology

Schonell Reading Test was introduced with the help of a friend and the class teacher. There are 100 words included in the test which the investigator read out loud to the child in a quiet setting. The child read all by her and no help was provided. The investigator ticked every word that was spelt correctly and then the total number of correctly spelt words were counted and reading ability was measured as per the formula in the manual.

## Statistical Analysis

The data was tabulated and t-test was applied to study the significant difference.

## Results

The results were compiled according to the framed hypothesis:

$H_0 1$ The reading ability of students of those who received early childhood education would be better as compared to those who did not.

### Table 1: Reading Ability of Students

|  | Mean | N | SD | t | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students who received ECE | 7.7137 | 30 | 1.1923 | .8149 | 0.5565 |
| Students who did not receive ECE | 7.5559 | 30 | 0.8149 | | |
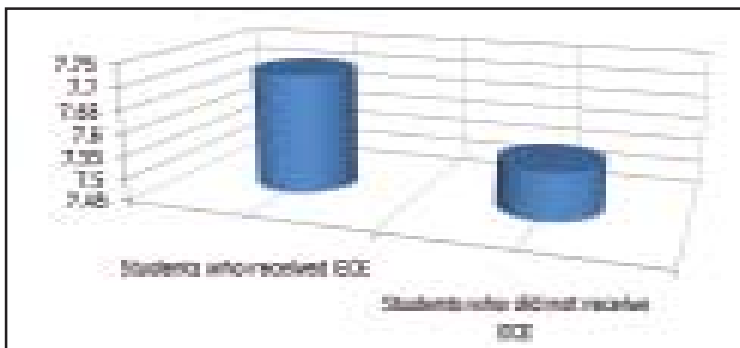
Table 1 shows that this difference is considered to be not statistically significant at 5%. There is no significant difference in the reading ability of children who have ECE background and those who do not.

**H$_o$ 2.** The reading ability of those boys who received early childhood education would be better as compared to the girls.

**Table 2: Reading Ability of Girls and Boys**

|  | Mean | N | SD | t | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Girls | 6.6150 | 15 | 6.3266 | 1.4881 | 0.1625 |
| Boys | 6.8721 | 15 | 0.4344 |  |  |

Table 2 shows that this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. The girls, if given an equal opportunity, shall be more responsive academically.

**H$_o$ 3.** The reading ability of girls who receive early childhood education would be better as compared to those girls who did not.

Table 3 shows that this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. As observed the girls who received ECE had higher reading ability. Hence, proving the influence of ECE on academic achievement.

**Table 3: Reading Ability of Girls**

|  | Mean | N | SD | t | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Girls who did not receive ECE | 6.6150 | 15 | 0.3266 | 12.0189 | 0.0001 |
| Girls who received ECE | 8.7333 | 15 | 0.6499 |  |  |
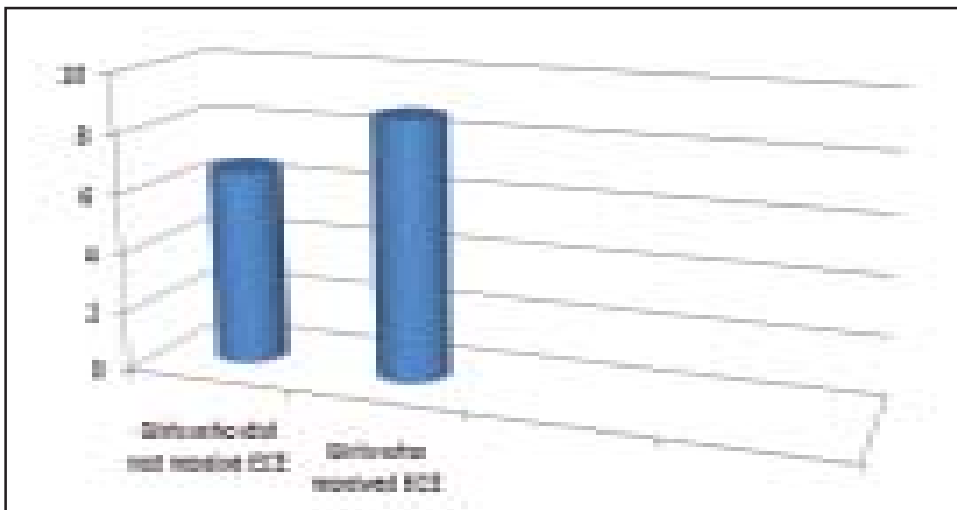
**Table 4: Reading Ability of Boys**

| | Mean | N | SD | t | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boys who did not receive ECE | 7.8570 | 15 | 1.0808 | 1.6073 | 0.1135 |
| Boys who received ECE | 8.2110 | 15 | 0.4965 | | |
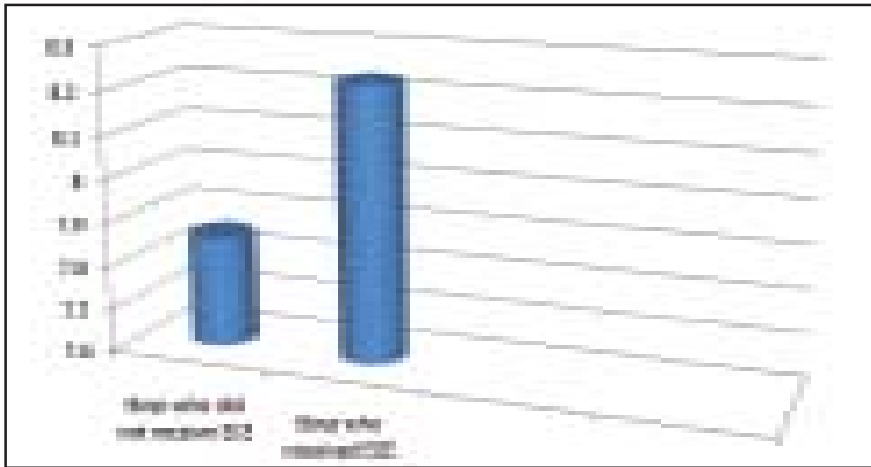


**H₀ 4.** The reading performance of the boys who received early childhood education would be higher as compared to those boys who did not.

Table 4 shows that this difference is considered to be statistically significant. The boys who received ECE had much higher reading ability as compared to those who did not. Hence ECE seems to be beneficial in improving reading performance of boys.

The results revealed that the reading performance of students in both groups differ from each other and the reading performance of the students who received ECE in early days was much better.

**Conclusion**

The result indicates that children who receive ECE have better reading ability. In case of boys and girls both, if ECE is introduced at young ability, it is sure to benefit their academic achievement. Gender discrepancy was observed and the reading ability of boys was found to be much higher as compared to girls. Girls should be given equal opportunity to read, write and grow.

ECE is a vital component in building the base of formal education. Also there is gender discrepancy in giving personal attention to boys and girls in urban slums. Although the government gives equal educational right to girls and boys, but the societal attitude still needs to be changed.

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# 10

## Corporal Punishment: The Slap that Carries the Message of Violence

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### Abstract

*The present article is an endeavour to raise a few important points concerning corporal punishment which breaches children's fundamental human rights. It is a fact that corporal punishment is often practised in educational institutions to maintain discipline thereby promoting effective behaviour. Corporal punishment is a means of discipline that relies on fear and submissiveness and diminishes a child's capacity to grow up as an autonomous and responsible person. This paper focuses on the legal provisions of corporal punishment, pros and cons of this aspect and effective guideline in eliminating this 'threat' to the healthy development and welfare of children.*

"Corporal punishment of children breaches their fundamental rights to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. Its legality breaches their right to equal protection under the law. Urgent action is needed in every region of the world to respect the rights of all children – the smallest and the most fragile of people." (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children – December 2011).

Corporal punishment is a discipline method in which a supervising adult deliberately inflicts pain upon a child in response to a child's unacceptable behaviour or inappropriate language. The immediate aim of such punishment is usually to halt the offense, prevent its recurrence and set an example for others. The purported long-term goal is to change the child's behaviour and to make it more consistent with the adult's expectations. In corporal punishment, the adult usually hits the various parts of the child's body with a hand or with canes, paddles, yard

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sticks, belts or other objects expected to cause pain and fear.

It is a morally repugnant, illegitimate and unjust assault upon another human being and especially reprehensible in that it is perpetrated upon those who are least able to defend themselves.

## Why Resort on Corporal Punishment?

A plethora of debates and discussions including recommendation of stern laws against this primitive method of enforcing order still makes corporal punishment raise its ugly head from time to time in many institutions and home spaces across the country.

Reasons often cited by teachers for resorting to punishment are stubbornness, telling lies, back-answering, questioning the teacher's authority, not doing homework, being tardy and not wearing clean uniforms or the appropriate ones. More serious reasons for punishment include hurting other students, bullying, stealing and cheating.

Punishing children is regarded as normal and acceptable in all settings – whether in the family or in institutions. It is often considered necessary in order that children grow up to be competent and responsible individuals. It is widely used by teachers and parents regardless of its evident lack of effectiveness, and potentially deleterious side-effects. Its very ineffectiveness tends to result in an escalation spiral which then leads to both a culture of rationalization by those in authority and passive acceptance of the situation as evidence of 'caring' by children. So pervasive is the justification of corporal punishment that a child may not think his/her rights have been infringed upon. Even if the punishment hurts, the child does not feel the importance of reporting the incident.

Therefore, there are layers of beliefs and practices that cloak corporal punishment under the guise of love, care and protection, when it is actually an abuse of authority that harms the child. This follows from the belief that those in where care children are entrusted in school or other institutions are in 'loco parentis', and will therefore always act in the interests of the child. This notion needs to be reviewed in the light of widespread violence that exists in all institutions occupied by children.

## Legal Echoes

### International law

- Article 28(2) of UNCRC requires the state parties to "take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with child's human dignity and in conformity with present convention."

- Article 29(1)(b) of the convention emphasizes that the "state parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of respect for human rights and

fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the charter of United Nations."

- Article 37(a) of UNCRC requires state parties to ensure that "no child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

- Article 19(1) of the convention, which requires states to "take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuses, while in the care of parents, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child."

### *Constitutional provisions*

- Article 21 of the Constitution of India which protects the right to life and dignity includes the right to education for children up to 14 years of age. Corporal punishment amounts to abuse and militates against the freedom and dignity of a child. It also interferes with a child's right to education because fear of corporal punishment makes children more likely to avoid school or to drop out altogether. Hence, corporal punishment is violative of the right to life with dignity.

- Article 39(c) directs the state to work progressively to ensure that "the tender age of children is not abused."

- Article 39(f) directs the state to work progressively to ensure that "children are given opportunities and facilitates to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment."

### *RTE ACT, 2009*

- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which has come into force with effect from 1 April 2010, prohibits 'physical punishment' and 'mental harassment' under section 17(1) and makes it a punishable offence under section 17(2). These provisions read as follows:

  17, prohibition of physical punishment and mental harassment to child –

  (1) No child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment.

  (2) Whoever contravenes the provisions of sub section (1) shall be liable to disciplinary action under the service rules applicable to such person.

- Sections 8 and 9 of the RTE Act place a duty on the appropriate government and local authority to "ensure that the child belonging to weaker section and child belonging to disadvantaged group are not discriminated against and

prevented from pursuing and completing elementary education on any grounds".

- The RTE Act does not preclude the application of other legislation that relates to the violations of the rights of the child, booking offenses under the IPC and SC and ST Prevention of Atrocities Act of 1989.

### *Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989*

- Some provisions of the scheduled castes and tribes (prevention of atrocities) Act, 1989 can be used to prosecute an adult in the general category who inflicts corporal punishment upon Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe child.

### Pros and Cons of Corporal Punishment

Proponents of corporal punishment favour it as it is an easy and temporarily effective method of instilling discipline and nothing, they claim, works better than fear. They believe that to 'spare the rod is to spoil the child'. No proper learning and development can take place through corporal punishment, but children suffer untold harm and their condition has worsened because of stick.

### *Positive outcomes*

Corporal punishment is usually taken as an effective behaviour deterrent because it has immediate, short-term compliance. Most teachers feel that it does not cost anything and can be administered on the spot. It also allows both the parties to return to their usual tasks. Teachers also think that because students, afraid of being humiliated or hurt, behave in the 'required' manner. But whatever, justification is given for corporal punishment, the effects are always negative. Corporal punishment harms everyone. So putting an end to corporal punishment is an ethical duty of parents and teachers.

### Effects of Corporal Punishment

On the part of children corporal punishment lowers the self-esteem, and promotes negativity among students. It is broadly believed that people who are subjected to corporal punishment become stronger; it prepares them for life but on the contrary they are being victimised. Today we know that corporal punishment does not make people stronger rather it makes them more prone to repeating the same mistakes. Corporal punishment interferes with the learning process and hampers intellectual, sensory and emotional development. It diminishes the use of reasoning, it hampers the capacity to understand the relationship between behaviour and consequences. It gives an emotional set back to children making them feel lonely, sad and abandoned. It also promotes a negative view of other people and of the society as a threatening place. It creates barriers that impede parent-child communication and damages the emotional links established between them. It stimulates anger and a desire

to run away from home. As we know that violence begets violence, it gives a false feeling that violence is an acceptable way of solving problems. Children who have been submitted to corporal punishment manifest difficulties with social integration. It does not teach children to cooperate with authority; it teaches them to comply with the rules or to infringe them. Corporal punishment can also cause physical injuries. When someone hits a child, the situation can get out of hand and result in more harm than expected.

On the part of the parents corporal punishment can produce feelings of anxiety and guilt. It promotes violence and increases the probability that parents would show aggressive behaviour in future with growing frequency and intensity and also in other contexts. Corporal punishment inhibits communication and damages the relationship between parents and their children. Parents use corporal punishment because they lack alternative sources of checking their child. They feel the need to justify their behaviour to themselves and to society. Therefore, they unduly justify it and give incoherent and unfounded rationale.

Society is equally responsible for this practice. Corporal punishment increases the use of violence in society and legitimizes it in the eyes of succeeding generations. It promotes a double standard: there are two categories of citizens – children and adults. It is acceptable to assault children, but not adults. It carries a wrong impression. Corporal punishment contributes to broken family patterns. It also makes protection of the child difficult. Because the practice of punishment is tolerated, children lose faith in society as a protective environment. It is misunderstood as a characteristic of the society to be a submissive citizenship, where individuals have learned from their elders that being a victim is a natural condition.

## Guidelines for Eliminating Corporal Punishment in Schools

- All children should be informed that they have a right to speak against physical punishments, mental harassment and discrimination and bring it to the notice of the authorities.

- The conduct of the teacher and administration should be such that it fosters a spirit of inclusion, care and nurturing.

- All school management and authorities should run regular training programmes to enable teachers and educational administrators to understand and appreciate the rights of children and spirit of Right to Education. This is essential to make a shift to a right-based approach to education and abolish physical punishment, mental harassment and discrimination.

- An environment free of corporal punishment should be stipulated as one of the conditions for giving recognition/no-objection certificate to school by state government under the new RTE Act and also as one of the conditions for giving affiliation to a school by the state board.

- Practice of corporal punishment should be stipulated as one of the conditions for withdrawal of recognition given to any school by the state government.

- Clear cut protocols should be framed by schools for redressing the grievance of the students and parents.

- The school management committee should constitute a Corporal Punishment Monitoring Cell (CPMC) in each school to look into the cases of corporal punishment.

## A Few Personal Experiences

"I was first exposed to corporal punishment when I joined a reputed high school on temporary basis just after my B.Ed course. On the very first day, I was assigned the duty to handle 82 lively boys and girls of Class V A. A colleague gave me all the directions of handling the students. All my classroom management tactics seemed to shatter one by one. Along with the chalk piece and duster I was handed over a short stick. I was confused as to whether who was right? Somehow I managed to get inside the classroom I found all students looking at the table and not at me. A kind of noise came buzzing out seeing the cane 'uuuu…….. ssss…….. uuu …….ssss". One boy named Rahul got up and asked "Mam, will you beat us?" The rest of the students joined him pining for an answer. I was so happy to say that at times of emergency I will have to resort to it. A teacher in the adjoining class came out rushing with her frowning eye brows and asked me "just inaugurate your class". The normal procedure was explained artistically. First make them sit with discipline. For that you can use the cane by mild lashings on the thighs, calves, knuckles, palms…. it went on. I felt like piercing my finger tips on my ears. During my entire tenure in that institution, I struggled hard to move without a cane as there was not a single teacher handling classes without wielding the road." (Ms.Bindhu.T.S, Teacher Educator)

I don't mean to tar all teachers with the same brush. I am sure there are a good number of teachers whom I feel privileged of working with and being taught. Stringent laws leading to the arrest of several offenders from among the teaching community, public debates and awareness initiatives are all welcome measures that have helped in controlling the use of corporal punishment in schools today. Teachers too need reassurance, and training them in the rudiments of counselling would help them in the rudiments of counselling would help restore in them a sense of self-worth.

Seminars and workshops suggesting ways of tackling behavioural problems in the young can be organised by schools for parents too, to enable them to be more sensitive and understanding about the needs of their children.

Children should feel that schools as more supportive structures, emphasising cooperation and surveillance and punishment. There should never be a condition where children see schools as a dark, vast sea where there are legions of individuals who can only be described as psychotic sadists who preside over classrooms in the manner of the chief wardens of torture chambers.

Positive, non-violent ways of discipline and child rearing are being promoted and applied in all regions and cultures. Supportive information, resources and guidance for achieving constructive discipline and child rearing should be promoted and made readily accessible to families, schools and communities.

If we wish to raise a generation of fearless, independent young people who are not afraid to think for themselves and find solutions to the many ills that beset us, then the first thing we need to do is to ensure that under no circumstances the body of a child be made the foil for insecurities and aggression of 'teachers'.

Corporal punishment legitimises the oppression of the vulnerable, and justifies the sadism and megalomania of the powerful. It should have no place in our schools. Finally, what remains fundamentally important is to find alternative ways to motivate and guide the children. As a teacher educator, I had a close link with the schools for practice teaching selected by our B.Ed students. A good number of ways to handle the dynamics of the classroom are imparted to the B.Ed trainees before the practice teaching sessions. They are strictly instructed not to adopt any measures of punishment even though much classroom tensions may tempt them to resort to punishments.

During the practice teaching sessions, I had to go to the schools opted by my optional students for observing their classes. I entered one of the classes of my student (teacher-trainee) and sat in the last bench. The fine entry of her class impressed me and when I was about to write the comments on the observation schedule, I could hear the caning from the adjoining classroom.

My teacher-trainee entered her presentation stage. I couldn't concentrate a bit. The sound disturbed me. I felt like rushing out and have a look in the adjoining classroom. Instructions for student-activity were announced by my trainee, she began student grouping. Somehow at this moment, I stepped out of the class and surveyed the happenings of the next class. The person who was engaging the class came out. The verandah had a row of boys and girls standing, half-sitting, balancing one leg on the other. Scratching his head he turned to me.

"Ma'am……to control them is difficult without this." I responded, "Are you the law-maker of the classroom?" I feel you are a 'weak teacher' who cannot build a relationship with a class! Violence is the last resort of the weak.

To my great shock, the teacher was a previous student of our institution and was a person with great ideals and principles. His thought for the day on the topic 'Anger Management' lives fresh in my memory too.

I just left the scene posing him some questions. "How can you pay for the physical ailment you have inflicted on them?" How will the student get compensated for the portions missed while staying for hours in the verandah? The psychological damage created on the minds, the humiliation they offered will be irreparable loss. Taking a deep breath I was about to enter the trainee's class. The class was over. I missed one observation class. I could manage it by observing once again, but the relief I felt while responding to the cruel act is a great gain. (Ms.Vijayalekshmi, N.S, Teacher Educator)

Constructive, non-violent child discipline is needed. It should be formulated and applied in a manner that respects the human dignity and rights of the child and understanding of child development. Positive, non-violent ways of discipline and child rearing are being promoted and applied in all regions and cultures. Supportive information, resources and guidance for achieving constructive discipline and child-rearing should be made readily accessible to families, schools and communities throughout the world.

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## Guidelines for Conducting Teacher Eligibility Test (TET)*

### Background and Rationale

1. The implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 requires the recruitment of a large number of teachers across the country in a time bound manner. In spite of the enormity of the task, it is desirable to ensure that quality requirement for recruitment of teachers is not diluted at any cost. It is therefore necessary to ensure that persons recruited as teachers possess the essential aptitude and ability to meet the challenges of teaching at the primary and upper primary level.

2. In accordance with the provisions of Sub-section (1) of Section 23 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has laid down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in Classes I to VIII, vide its Notification dated 23 August 2010. One of the essential qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in any of the schools referred to in Clause (n) of Section 2 of the RTE Act is that he/she should pass the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) which will be conducted by the appropriate government.

3. The rationale for including the TET as a minimum qualification for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher is as under:

   (i) It would bring national standards and benchmark of teacher quality in the recruitment process;

   (ii) It would induce teacher education institutions and students from these institutions to further improve their performance standards;

   (iii) It would send a positive signal to all stakeholders that the government lays special emphasis on teacher quality.

4. The TET examination may be conducted by a suitable professional body designated by the appropriate government for the purpose. It will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines hereunder.

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\* *Source: Website: http://www.ncte-india.org*

### Eligibility

5. The following persons shall be eligible for appearing in the TET:

    (i) A person who has acquired the academic and professional qualifications specified in the NCTE Notification dated 23 August 2010.

    (ii) A person who is pursuing any of the teacher education courses (recognized by the NCTE or the RCI, as the case may be) specified in the NCTE Notification dated 23 August 2010.

    (iii) The eligibility condition for appearing in TET may be relaxed in respect of a State/UT which has been granted relaxation under Sub-section (2) of Section 23 of the RTE Act. The relaxation will be specified in the Notification issued by the Central Government under that sub-section.

### Structure and Content of TET

6. The structure and content of the TET is given in the following paragraphs. All questions will be Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), each carrying one mark, with four alternatives out of which one answer will be correct. There will be no negative marking. The examining body should strictly adhere to the structure and content of the TET specified below.

7. There will be two papers of the TET: Paper I will be for a person who intends to be a teacher for Classes I to V. Paper II will be for a person who intends to be a teacher for Classes VI to VIII. A person who intends to be a teacher either for Classes I to V or for Classes VI to VIII will have to appear in both papers (Paper I and Paper II).

### Nature and Standard of Questions

While designing and preparing the questions for Paper I, the examining body shall take the following factors into consideration:

• The test items on Child Development and Pedagogy will focus on educational psychology of teaching

**Paper I (for Classes I to V); No. of MCQs - 150**
**Duration of examination: one-and-a-half hours**
**Structure and Content (All Compulsory)**

| I. Child Development and Pedagogy | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
|---|---|---|
| II. Language I | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
| III. Language II | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
| IV. Mathematics | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
| V. Environmental Studies | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |

and learning relevant to the age group of 6–11 years. They will focus on understanding the characteristics and needs of diverse learners, interaction with learners and the attributes and qualities of a good facilitator of learning.

- The Test items for Language I will focus on the proficiencies related to the medium of instruction, (as chosen from list of prescribed language options in the application form).

- The Language II will be from among the prescribed options other than Language I. A candidate may choose any one language from the available language options and will be required to specify the same in the application form. The test items in Language II will also focus on the elements of language, communication and comprehension abilities.

- The test items in Mathematics and Environmental Studies will focus on the concepts, problem solving abilities and pedagogical understanding of the subjects. In all these subject areas, the test items shall be evenly distributed over different divisions of the syllabus of that subject prescribed for Classes I-V by the appropriate government.

- The questions in the tests for Paper I will be based on the topics of the prescribed syllabus of the State for classes I-V, but their difficulty standard, as well as linkages, could be up to the secondary stage.

While designing and preparing the questions for Paper II, the examining body shall take the following factors into consideration:

- The test items on Child Development and Pedagogy will focus on educational psychology of teaching and learning, relevant to the age group 11-14 years. They will focus on understanding the characteristics, needs and psychology of diverse learners,

## Paper II (for Classes VI to VIII); No. of MCQs -150
## Duration of examination: one-and-a-half hours
## Structure and Content

| I. Child Development and Pedagogy (compulsory) | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
|---|---|---|
| II. Language I (compulsory) | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
| III. Language II (compulsory) | 30 MCQs | 30 Marks |
| IV. (a) For Mathematics and Science teacher: Mathematics and Science | 60 MCQs | 1 mark each |
| (b) For Social Studies teacher: Social Studies | 60 MCQs | 1 mark each |
| (c) For any other teacher - either 4(a) or 4(b) | | |

interaction with learners and the attributes and qualities of a good facilitator of learning.

- The test items for Language I will focus on the proficiency related to the medium of instruction, as chosen from list of prescribed options in the application form.

- The Language II will be a language other than Language I. The person may choose anyone language from among the available options and as in the specified list in the application form and attempt questions in the one indicated by the candidate in the application form by him. The Test items in Language II will also focus on the elements of language, communication and comprehension abilities.

- The test items in Mathematics and Science and Social Studies will focus on the concepts, problem solving abilities and pedagogical understanding of these subjects. The test items of Mathematics and Science will be of 30 marks each. The test items shall be evenly distributed over different divisions of the syllabus of that subject as prescribed for Classes VI-VIII by the appropriate government.

- The questions in the tests for Paper II will be based on the topics of the prescribed syllabus of the State for Classes VI-VIII but their difficulty standard as well as linkages could be up to the senior secondary stage.

8. The question paper shall be bilingual - (i) in language(s) as decided by the appropriate government; and (ii) English language.

## Qualifying Marks

9. A person who scores 60% or more in the TET exam will be considered as TET pass. School managements (government, local bodies, government aided and unaided)–

   (a) may consider giving concessions to persons belonging to SC/ST, OBC, differently abled persons, etc., in accordance with their extent reservation policy;

   (b) should give weightage to the TET scores in the recruitment process; however, qualifying the TET would not confer a right on any person for recruitment/ employment as it is only one of the eligibility criteria for appointment.

## Applicability

10. (a) TET conducted by the Central Government shall apply to all schools referred to in Sub-clause (i) of Clause (a) of Section 2 of the RTE Act.

    (b) TET conducted by a State Government/UT with legislature shall apply to :

       (i) a school of the State Government/UT with legislature and local authority referred to in Sub-clause (i) of Clause (n) of Section 2 of the RTE Act; and

(ii) a school referred to in Sub-clause (ii)' of Clause (n) of Section 2 of the RTE Act in that State/UT.

A school at (i) and (ii) may also consider eligibility of a candidate who has obtained TET Certificate awarded by another State/UT with legislature. In case a State Government/UT with legislature decides not to conduct a TET, a school at (i) and (ii) in that State/UT would consider the TET conducted by the Central Government.

(c) A school referred to in sub-clause (iv) of clause (n) of section 2 of the RTE Act may exercise the option of considering either the TET conducted by the Central Government or the TET conducted by the State Government/UT with legislature.

## Frequency of Conduct of TET and Validity Period of TET Certificate

11. The appropriate government should conduct a TET at least once every year. The validity period of TET qualifying certificate for appointment will be decided by the appropriate government subject to a maximum of seven years for all categories. But there will be no restriction on the number of attempts a person can take for acquiring a TET Certificate. A person who has qualified TET may also appear again for improving his/her score.

## Procedure for Conduct of the Test

12. The examining body shall formulate a detailed procedure and lay down instructions for conduct of the TET. Candidates should be informed that a very serious view will be taken of any malpractice or impersonation.

## Legal Disputes

13. All legal disputes with regard to conduct of TET shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the appropriate government.

## Award of TET Certificate

14. The appropriate government conducting the test shall award a TET Certificate to all successful candidates. The certificate should contain the name and address of the candidate, date of birth, Registration No., year/month of award of' Certificate, marks obtained in each Paper, class level of its validity (Class I to V, Class VI to VIII or both), and, in case of Classes VI to VIII, the subject area (Science and Mathematics, Social Studies, etc.). The certificate may be electronically generated with adequate security features. Appropriate goverment may consider utilizing the services of specialized agencies for issuing de-materialized (demat) TET certificates as a security feature to avoid any kind of malpractice.

## Monitoring

15. Following measures would be taken for monitoring the quality and

administration of the TET:

(a) The appropriate government shall appoint a Nodal Officer for the purpose of TET.

(b) The NCTE would organise meetings of the Nodal Officers at least once every year.

(c) Every appropriate government will forward a report of each TET to the NCTE in a format to be prescribed by the NCTE.

(d) The NCTE shall maintain data base and be the repository of experts and resources, including the technological tools for conduct of the TET, and shall share it with the appropriate government.

## My Page

*Municipal Corporation Primary School, Village Mandi, New Delhi has all the facilities – building, furniture, drinking water and toilet. School has required number of qualified and trained teachers. Students are provided free textbooks, uniform and mid-day meal. Library and computers are also there. Students belonging to SC/ST, OBC, minority community and girls are provided ₹ 1000 per year as scholarship and another ₹ 1000 per year for good attendance. In spite of all this, average attendance is only 500 out of 868 enrolled.*

*Teachers visit homes of children who are not regular to school and try to convince their parents. Teachers visit and talk to parents three times. But this is not helping in improving the average attendance. Learning is directly linked to attendance, i.e. learners' presence in school. Poor attendance is also responsible for low achievement of children.*

*Any solution?*

– A Teacher
SDMC Primary School,
Village Mandi, New Delhi

*Pratibha Vidyalayas of South Delhi Municipal Corporation offer education in both Hindi and English medium. One section is Hindi medium and the other section is English medium. Children attending these schools do not have English in the environment – home, neighbourhood and even school. When they do not know the language, how can they study in that medium? Also, this scheme has failed to enhance attendance. What does education policy say?*

– A Teacher
SDMC, Pratibha Vidyalaya,
New Delhi

# To the Contributors

*'The Primary Teacher'* invites you to write articles, field notes and reports for publication. We want your honest deliberations on issues that impact elementary education. You may like to focus on issues that bother you and concerns that you are sensitive to and which you feel should be shared with other teachers working at the grassroot levels.

- Use simple and non-technical language.
- Write in a friendly and communicative tone.
- Each article should be about 1500 to 3000 words.
- Keeping the clientele in mind, which is the teacher, please include information pieces that the teacher may not have access to in her/his place of location. You may include field notes and your own perceptions about issues in research, development and training in the area of elementary education.
- Send two copies of the piece along with the soft copy.
- Each article should also have a short abstract in about 150 words.
- Try to write in a magazine/story/narrative format to make the piece user-friendly and interesting to read.
- Please send photographs and even illustrations prepared by you, if you so desire, to be incorporated in your article.

## MY PAGE...

This column would contain your letters and feedback where you can put forward your responses, suggestions and expectations from the articles, papers and columns presented in *The Primary Teacher*. You may have issues, concerns and doubts related to teaching-learning processes, classroom practices, syllabus, textbooks, evaluation patterns, research pursuits, etc. These could also reflect the concerns of many others working in this area. Please feel free to raise these issues in this column. You could also ask specific questions that would have baffled you.

You may write to us at the following address/email.

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