



# JOURNAL OF INDIAN EDUCATION

Volume XXXIV

Number 3

November 2008

## CONTENTS

Editor's Note	3
Education for a Faith in the Future <i>Manoj Das</i>	5
Bringing Children Back to School <i>Perspectives from Education Policies and Child Labour Laws</i> <i>Ajeey Sangai</i>	15
Conflict Situations and Children's Education in Manipur <i>N. Rebecca</i>	25
Child's Rights in Sweden <i>An Experience</i> <i>Saroj Pandey</i>	32
Perception of Community Members Regarding SSA and its Implementation <i>Kashyapi Awasthi and R.C. Patel</i>	41
Quality Education: Perception of Students (With reference to the higher secondary level) <i>Ramakar Raizada</i>	63
A Comprehensive Analysis of Various Teaching Strategies and Innovations at Higher Education Level <i>Alka Mittal and Neeru Mohini Agarwal</i>	83
Creating Thinking Accountants <i>Focus on the Approaches in Teaching-learning of Accounting Practices</i> <i>Shipra Vaidya</i>	88

Developing Time – Sense in History <i>Seema S. Ojha</i>	98
Analysis of Evaluation System in different Departments at the <i>College of Education Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia</i> <i>Messeret Assefa</i>	106
Student Teachers Perceptions on Enhanced Duration of Secondary Teacher Education Programme in India <i>Kiran Walia</i>	127
Book Reviews	148

## EDITOR'S NOTE

We believe that there is an urgency now than ever before to really ponder upon and understand the very purpose of education. A world obsessed with the worldly success and material prosperity has reduced the very meaning of education to a mere catering and equipping of mankind for a competition where only the fittest survives. In this whole orientation of education, the self of an individual and its values have deteriorated to a situation where mankind has become more of a machine. To arrest further deterioration of values and redirect the very purpose of our education, it is important to revisit our great saints and imbibe their vision of education. The NCERT organises a series of memorial lectures in which lectures on great visionaries are delivered by eminent scholars from diverse background. The Council publishes these lectures to reach out to a large audience. In this connection, a lecture on Sri Aurobindo on the theme "Education for a Faith in the Future" delivered by Manoj Das is being reproduced here so for our readers. Manoj Das in his lecture on education said that in today's world of moral crisis, education has to play a very important role. Education ought to be learning for the sake of knowledge and one has to educate oneself in order to grow in consciousness. His lecture also throws light on the very purposes of education and also expectations from various aspects of society to stop the increasing deterioration in the system.

We have been emphasising on children's right including education since long, but the real achievement is far from satisfaction and there are various reasons for this. Even after making the provision for free and compulsory education for children, there are many children who are out of school. In this issue, we include three papers on different aspects of child's right. Ajey Sangai in "Bringing Children Back to School – Perspectives from Education Policies and Child Labour Laws" pleads for a broader definition of "child labour in consonance with Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Children, 1989" so as to include children who have been denied education because of their occupation which even though, are not listed under Schedule 1 of the Child Labour (Protection and Regulation) Act, 1986. The paper also argues for vocational, life-skill and craft-based education at elementary level. The next paper by Rebecca on "Conflict Situations and Children's Education in Manipur" tries to understand how the basic rights of children including their education have been deprived of in a conflict ridden society like Manipur. In a State like Manipur which has been witnessing different forms of armed conflict, children become the inevitable victims. The paper also suggests possible measures to ensure their basic rights even during times of conflict. Saroj Pandey in her paper "Child's Rights in Sweden – An Experience" recounts her experiences in Sweden and discusses how Sweden is dealing with the issues of children's right. She feels that we have much to learn from their experiences that we can ensure a better future for the country only by ensuring better living conditions and rights for our children who are the future of this country.

In this regard, one can appreciate the efforts of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) to provide quality education for all children in our country. Kashyapi Awasthi and

R.C. Patel in their paper, "Perception of Community Members Regarding SSA and its Implementation" study the role of community under the SSA scheme. The paper, while highlighting the important role of the communities, also studies the perception of the various village committees in relation with SSA and its implementation and draws implication of the study. Some of them are provision for vocational education among the rural children, operational freedom at the village level, etc. Furthermore, Ramakar Raizada in his paper says, "Students are ultimate stakeholders and direct consumers of the education system who feel and judge the quality of education". But, it is also important to understand how they perceive of a quality education. Raizada's paper conceptualises students' perception about their school environment and facilities of education with their likings and reasons for weakness in different school subjects at higher secondary level. The paper also calls for a teaching strategy which can further facilitate interaction between the teacher and the students. Adding to this, Alka Mittal and Neeru Mohini Agarwal's paper "A Comprehensive Analysis of Various Teaching Strategies and Innovations at Higher Education Level" suggests some of the strategies and innovations to make the learning more interesting.

Different disciplines require different teaching techniques and methods to enhance the understanding of the subject among the students. Shipra Vaidya in her paper, "Creating Thinking Accountants – Focus on the Approaches in Teaching-learning of Accounting Practices" attempts to contextualise the teaching methodologies in order to make transaction of Accounting curriculum purposeful, meaningful and interesting at the school level. Another paper by Seema S. Ojha, "Developing Time – Sense in History" discusses about how we understand the record of change in time. The paper suggests that a particular moment in the history should be taught with the corresponding contexts. It also discusses how usages of graphical representations of time concept in the form of timelines, time charts help students develop a sense of time and chronology. Another paper is on the system of evaluation adopted in Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. The study attempts to assess the extent to which the teachers adhere to continuous evaluation system in the University through an empirical study among the University teachers. The last paper of the issue by Kiran Walia highlights the perceptions of student teachers about the duration of Secondary Teacher education programmes.

Of the two book reviews, the first review of the *Meeting Special Needs in School – A Manual*, by S.R. Mittal explores the very concept of disability and inclusion of children with special needs in the whole educational setting. He applauds the attempt of the author and believes that such manuals would help the practitioners realising the goal of inclusive education. The other review of the edited volume of *Education and Social Change in South Asia* by Pratima Kumari and Rakesh Meena while providing highlights of the chapters reflecting educational scenario (past and present) of various south asian countries observe that the volume is beneficial for all the educationists, teachers, policy makers, educational planners and researchers who are engaged in curriculum development, teacher training and educational researches.

*Academic Editor, JIE*

# Education for a Faith in the Future<sup>1</sup>

MANOJ DAS\*

---

## Abstract

---

*In the history of recorded time there had never been another century more dominated by paradox than the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the formidable backdrop of the current decade. Great adventures and explorations were contrasted by devastations and disillusionments. While the evolutionary spirit seems intent upon opening up a vast avenue for a new humanity through scientific, technological and progress in human relationship, an ominous sense of uncertainty and anxiety characterises our life – a situation that has brewed confusion in practically every aspect of our existence. Education is that which liberates – had been a cardinal doctrine in Indian prudence. Has that doctrine grown anachronistic? Is the sweeping spell of pragmatic, if not totally utilitarian, forces at work in the field of education necessarily the highest ideal because it is modern? It is time to have a deeper look at the very purpose of education – a question that spontaneously leads to the far more profound issue of the very purpose of life. Is there an ideal or a vision that can challenge the prevailing trends and offer us a way out of the present gloom? The talk will attempt a brief examination of these issues in the light of Sri Aurobindo's vision of human destiny and education.*

---

### Of Roots and Branches

With the proliferation of newspapers and newsmagazines as well as the gradual increase in the number of their pages, reports and essays on important issues and topics, sometimes through special supplements, have become a regular feature and one such recurrent topic, no doubt, is education. Also more volumes

on the subject have been published, including a series by the UNESCO, during the past three decades than ever before. My observation in this regard, of course, is limited to publications in English. It shows on one hand that public interest in the subject has grown wider, but on the other hand, if this speaker can be pardoned, there is reason for us

---

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from the booklet *NCERT Memorial Lecture Series* published by NCERT on a lecture delivered in the First Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture, at Dorozio Hall, Presidency College, Kolkata, on 2 July 2008.

\* Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Puducherry.

to wonder about the nature of this wider interest, for a wider interest alone is not a sure sign of a serious or deeper interest. The interest the media has cultivated among an even wider readership in a category of news that are billed out as art, culture and literature are rarely anything more than entertainment, glamour and items for titillation.

No doubt, the level to which the concept of Education can be diluted has a limit, unlike topics of culture such as art or literature. The danger in the case of Education is less perceptible. When something ugly or vulgar is presented as art or music or dance, we can shut our eyes or ears to it, we can very well do without them, but when Education is presented as a discipline entirely devoted to external accomplishments, mastering ever new inventions in technology, promotion of career and prosperity, we may not find anything amiss in it because we need such opportunities; there is nothing vulgar or apparently degrading in them. The worldwide challenge of competitions and the demands of what is often termed as fast life does not give us respite enough to reflect on the question if what we accept as Education today is the genuine stuff, if Education did not have some greater role to play in our life than obtaining to us the aforesaid accomplishments and vocational facilities.

That brings to mind a brief dialogue, but a significant one. Thoreau and Emerson both had been students at Harvard. Once while the two celebrated alumni were reminiscing over their days in that famous university, Emerson said that by now their alma mater had

several branches of Education. Thoreau, who was better acquainted with the ground realities, observed, "Yes, indeed, prolific branches there are; but what about the roots"?

Life, it was agreed, was the greatest university, but a certain outlook was required to be cultivated in the young to transform their bare experiences in the world to lasting lessons. From its very indeterminable beginning, Education in its classical sense had two aspects: first it cultivated in the student a quest for knowledge and next trained him or developed in him a skill for supporting himself in the existential sense as well as for playing a purposeful role in the community. Innumerable testimonies are there in the Indian tradition of literature and philosophy to suggest that the teachers of yore succeeded in striking a balance between these two ideals of Education for a considerable length of time. They studied the *pravritti* – the inherent inclination of the student and accordingly helped him to choose his *vritti* or vocation. If the vocation was already fixed by heredity, the pupil was taught the way of taking equal care, if not more, of his *pravritti*, that was generally in consonance with his *swadharna*, the inner law of his being.

It will take long to identify the historical forces that disrupted this balance, resulting in those who cared for their inner self-breaking away from the so called worldly life and those who led a normal life as social beings distancing themselves from their inner self. This unfortunate development, by now, has reached its culmination. We rarely remember that beneath our surface self-dominated by our senses, craving for

pleasure and pride and given over entirely to satisfaction of ambitions and desires, we had an inner self thirsting for truth and the knowledge of a different order.

But, such is the constitution of man that the satisfaction his surface self seeks does not come. Hence, the multiple innovations in the means of enjoyment and search for pastures new for pleasure.

This is the psychological state of affairs that had inevitably given a diabolical boost to consumerism. As a thinker observed, once we knew necessity to be the mother of invention whereas today it is the invention that is the mother of necessity. Our illusory needs, illusory hopes for joy are continuously whetted by the militant intelligence behind consumerism manipulating our taste and dream. By and by it is the culture of hedonism that prevails and blinds us. "Modern man is drinking and drugging himself out of awareness, or he spends his time shopping, which is the same thing", says Earnest Becker, in his *Denial of Death*.

### **A Confession and a Question**

May I be allowed to bring in the confession of a gentleman, as a representative illustration of the pattern at work? This is from a successful scholar, about ten years senior to this speaker, who as an entrepreneur proved equally successful but had stopped short of reducing himself to a robot. I quote:

"You know, like many other youths of the immediate post-independence decade I carried in my mind the residues of idealism that had inspired the best among my preceding generation for so much sacrifice. In the changed

circumstance, I had two ideal ways open before me. I become an element in the bureaucracy and serve the country honestly or contribute to the economic progress of my country through some independent enterprise. I chose the latter, for I had some dynamism in me. I do not know when I forgot my mission. It was, I'm afraid, a gradual but fast process of decline that my mind was unable to detect. I was amidst a corrupt gang of business associates and I could not have competed with them without being corrupt. To my amazement my college-day friends who were equally idealistic like me and some of whom were by then either in politics and power or in the administrative service and whose help naturally I needed from time to time, seemed to have subjected their minds to the same brand of morphine. Thus together we continued to slip farther and farther down along the path of moral paralysis. But there was still that puny substance called conscience somewhere deep down the self and at times it would hum a sad song; there was somewhere in me that forgotten love for silence and serenity that would nostalgically remind me of Davies we studied in our High School: *What is this life, if full of care; we have no time to stand and stare?* But the demand of exigency, of strike in the factory, of betrayal by a distributor, blackmail by hoodlums, sudden fall in export, to mention of a few, would drive those precious moments away into oblivion. My children grew up amidst affluence and in their show of loyalty to me shouldered the burden of my wealth as well as my worry, but without the idealism that had launched me into the adventure or the knowledge of the

struggle I had put into it. My grandchildren grew up amidst a new culture or call it a lack of culture if you please, and divided their time between pleasure on one hand and the care of their early diabetes, blood pressure, etc. I was condemned to look on as one of my grandsons, in his early thirties, was dying in the intensive care ward, suffering from a heart ailment. He had returned from the West, with the highest training available in management. Poor boy! The last query he made, before closing his eyes finally, was regarding the very first export deal he was handling. While the family wept, I only wondered, what was the use of all his super specialisation in management if he could not manage his heart? What is the education we imparted to him if the very last question he must ask should be nothing nobler than export? What was the meaning of our having inspired him to study more and more, do better and better when it led to his forgetting that there were more worthy issues for reflection at that moment than an export deal? Now, in my eighties, I wonder what the meaning of my own life was either. In search of happiness I spent the whole life in tension. I read the other day, what I had read fifty years ago, that making a cosy bed-room at a cost of one million rupees is no guarantee for even one minute's sound sleep. The truth overwhelms me now; but why had it no effect on me at all fifty years ago? I tell you, my friend, something was grotesquely wrong in the education we received. True, colleges in our time had not been cursed with careerism as it is today, but as I deeply reflect on what went amiss, I find that nothing in our system

told us that life was not all that we lived on the surface, that there was an inner life, that there was an element called soul, that our true happiness or sense of contentment depended on it."

Consumerism thrives on keeping us forgetful of the inner life. Glamour and dazzle constitute the life consumerism would like us to live; momentary sense-satisfaction, through power or pleasure, is the purpose for which we live. This even could pass, but the problem is it is proving to be more and more frustrating. There are some well-researched studies in this regard and I refer to one of them, *The Price of Privilege* by psychologist Dr. Madeline Levin. She observes that students today are much more smart and intelligent. As their parents have more resources to spend, they buy them cell phones, cars, other luxuries and provide them with enough money to spend at will. But they don't give them love or intimate company. They have greater expectations from their children in terms of social and economic success. They drive the kids into the race for excellence, not excellence as human beings, but as status-achievers. And what is the result? I quote a few lines from Dr. Levin's study: "We know that this group of kids has three times the rate of depression and anxiety disorders as ordinary teenagers, as well as substantially higher rates of substance abuse, cutting and suicide. The most dangerous feelings a child can have are of self-hatred; yet middle-class parents are unwittingly instilling those feelings by expecting so much."

The situation conjures up in my mind a comical scene: At the middle of a road there is a boulder, obstructing smooth passage. Atop the boulder there is a



lamp. If you ask why is the boulder there, the answer is, to hold the lamp. Should you ask why is the lamp there, the answer is so that the pedestrians or drivers avoid dashing against the boulder. We embrace tension in order to live, and we must live in order to go on experiencing tension. The illusion is both justify each other; the reality is both cancel each other, thereby rendering the whole thing absurd. The list of factors adding to this condition of absurdity is long and it is better not to refer to them at the moment.

#### **Values Then and Now**

Philosophers and thinkers have identified many a sign that differentiates man from the other creatures on our planet. One of them is, be he conscious of it or not, man lives by some values. Not that the value had to be necessarily lofty. The noted social reformer of Gujarat, Ravishankar Maharaj, devoted years to change the life of a tribe of hereditary burglars. One day, as he talked to a young practitioner of the tradition, he said with disarming frankness, "Maharaj, if you ask me to give up my practice, I will do so. But the fact is, Goddess Lakhmi, buried under their floors of householders, shouts out to me as I pass by, asking me to liberate Her. Only then I dig a hole on the wall and enter the house and coup out the treasure."

Alas, the values in which the masses believed have faded out one by one. Once men were ready to die for their kings; the situation is a distant memory. Religion was the most powerful, the most meaningful and satisfying value people upheld in their life and with which they

justified their existence. But today the tradition is kept alive more for political and egotistic purpose than for true faith. If Gods and Goddesses are worshipped with great hullabaloo, it is not for devotion, but for festivity and rivalry among local formations of collective ego. I am told that in a city that had been the home of some of the greatest intellectuals and spiritual giants not only of India but also of the world, a film star is ritualistically worshipped as a deity, making the devaluation of divinities complete.

If the age of institutional religion is past, spirituality, the only alternative that could play even with greater effect the role religion at its best played, had not yet made a bold debut, not to speak of filling up the vacuum.

We all know how Curzon's move for partition of Bengal created such an upheaval that the British rulers had to agree to "unsettle the settled fact". But later developments brought about not only the partition of Bengal, but also the partition of India, thereby planting the most damaging blow to our value of nationalism and patriotism.

Family values had broken down. This is not to say that the family relationship had vanished. That has so far survived the changing life patterns. But what had received the most horrendous jolt is the institution of human relationship, the trust men could have in men, thanks to the fact that most of the sophisticated criminals, swindlers of the people's treasures and saboteurs of national security and manipulators of legal provisions to serve their selfish interest are people with handsome degrees and diplomas. The respect the educated

commanded till the other day, the term Vidya associating in the popular imagination a personality like Vidyasagar, the epitome of truth and nobility, is only a memory. In other words, the moral value that went with education had been reduced to zero. That reminds me of what the late Dr. Malcolm Adisesaiah, noted educationist who held an important position in the UNESCO, once told us at Pondicherry: London was bombarded during the World War II. The state of aviation being what it was, the degree of accuracy with which the pilots hit their targets was surprising. The mystery was solved when, at the end of the war, it was found out that the bombers were those German students who got their higher education in London as British Council scholarship holders.

And who must occupy the vast space vacated by such values? The answer unfortunately is not any new set of values, but wrong values. They assault intelligence, common sense and higher tastes. Their immediate preys are the students. Let me refer to one such value. Several studies have shown how pop and rock music contributes to both physical and mental problems of the young. I quote from one serious study of the problem, *The Closing of the American Mind* by Allan Bloom:

“...It has risen to the current heights in the education of the young on the ashes of classical music, and in an atmosphere in which there is no intellectual resistance to attempts to tap the rawest passions. Modern-day rationalists are indifferent to it and what it represents. The irrationalists are all for it. ... But rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal to sexual desire

— not love, not Eros, but sexual desire undeveloped and untutored. It acknowledges the first emanations of children’s emerging sensuality and addresses them seriously, eliciting them and legitimatising them, not as little sprouts that must be carefully tended in order to grow into gorgeous flowers, but as the real thing. Rock gives children, on a silver platter, with all the public authority of entertainment industry, everything their parents always used to tell them they had to wait for until they grew up and would understand later...

“Ministering to and according with the arousing and cathartic music, the lyrics celebrate puppy love as well as polymorphous attraction, and fortify them against traditional ridicule and shame. The words implicitly and explicitly describe bodily acts that satisfy sexual desires and treat them as its only natural and routine culmination for children who do not yet have the slightest imagination of love, marriage or family....”

The Indian film lyrics are perhaps not lagging behind in such unabashed suggestiveness, for the clever culture-vultures know that most healthy inhibitions could be eliminated through means that have some pretensions to culture. Academically sound studies have established how this process of reckless exploitation in the name of culture had found as its intimate allies in drug and violence, directly related to mercenary consumerism. In an era of rapid growth of global communication and exchange, we cannot expect such developments to remain confined to any one continent. In fact, it has already become a world-wide phenomenon in the

absence of any bulwark against the nefarious network, often enjoying the patronage of powers that be.

What is wrong with this tide – this collective resignation to hedonism – is not its immoral and unethical character, for one can argue that morality and ethics change from time to time. The situation is bad because it is against the spirit of evolution, because it is a negative reaction to the call for an adventure in consciousness. Hedonism not only fails to deliver the promised pleasure, it drains one of one's zests for life, and leads to either self-destruction or anarchy.

So far I have only articulated the obvious, for nobody can really be unaware of this situation, whether one be involved or not in the world of education. And, needless to say, the obvious is a picture of gloom. Is there any remedial possibility involved in the spirit of education itself? Sometime ago I read a summary of the *Education for All* global monitoring report covering up to year 2005. The situation might have slightly changed, but it says that approximately 103.5 million children do not go to schools. About 800 million adults are illiterate. Of this seventy per cent live in nine countries of the sub-Saharan Africa and East and South Asia, “notably India, China, Bangladesh and Pakistan”. The report calls upon the governments concerned to undo the situation, but what is surprising and disheartening, those who have commented upon the report have, without exception, looked at Education as technology-intensive training. One comment stresses the importance of trade among nations and wishes education in the developing countries to be accordingly oriented.

Here lies the crux of the problem. Trade and technology are indispensable no doubt, but we seem to have forgotten that they are only parts of the external aspect of Education; they must not become synonyms of Education. They are designed to serve man; man is not designed to serve them. They are by no means to be shunned, for the evolutionary time-spirit has placed them at our disposal so that we become more efficient masters of our environment. But trade and technology do not constitute progress, they are external aids for progress and the true progress is a growth in consciousness. Once in a while we come across an essay on Montessori or Bernstein or Sadler and their sophisticated theories, but they are in academic magazines with meagre circulations and are like a cry in the wilderness, for no theory or doctrine could stand the sudden and powerful sway of education for sake of trade and technology.

### **The Crisis and Beyond**

As Sri Aurobindo looks at the situation, “At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; for a stage has been reached in which the human mind has achieved in certain directions an enormous development while in others it stands arrested and bewildered and can no longer find its way.” I wonder if anybody could find a better definition of Education than what the Indian scriptures had given: *Sa vidya ya vimuktaye – Education liberates.*

Education can of course liberate us from this impasse, for it has the greatest support for that action in the process of

evolution itself, for, in a sense, evolution itself is a route along a gradual realisation of liberation. The manifestation of the earliest forms of life as plants out of the apparently lifeless matter was a step towards liberation of the imprisoned consciousness. A far greater degree of freedom of consciousness – and an exercise of that freedom in infinitely variant ways – was possible with the emergence of the primeval creatures, from worms and insects to the whale and the dinosaur, from the birds to the beasts of incalculable varieties. That urge for freedom inherent in Nature, for releasing its possibilities and potentialities, took a new and hitherto most significant turn with the emergence of man and, needless to say, man is the only creature who had never stopped growing. With relentless zeal he had not only adapted himself to the changing environment, but also had obliged the environment to adapt to his demands. Emerging from the state of primeval Nature he had created for himself new worlds of art, architecture, literature, music, philosophy and the spiritual quest. His activities and achievements in all these spheres have again meant nothing but the gradual realisation of his own potentialities, a joy in the freedom of experience, adventure and expression.

If the process of evolution itself is a movement of consciousness realising its own freedom from its bondage to material and other limitations, the 20th century we have just left behind had been the witness to the most momentous events and ideas ensuring greater freedom for man in several fronts. Imperialism, colonialism, monarchy and feudalism all

collapsed ensuring man's social, political and economic freedom. Revolutions and reformations, emancipation of women from social taboos and discrimination, end of apartheid, all point in the same direction. Science and technology have played their role in according a greater dignity to the individual.

But these facts of outer freedom do not come to much – they even are vulnerable to misuse – unless there is achieved the other freedom, the freedom from ignorance. Sri Aurobindo believes that the realisation of such a freedom is not only a possibility, but also is a certainty inherent in the very nature of evolutionary developments. The true role of Education is in preparing and helping man to arrive there – at a new phase of evolution. Man is neither an accident nor a freak of Nature. He is an evolving being, awaiting his fulfilment. No doubt he had come a long way from his primitive state via a stage dominated by vital or raw life impulses; he has been a mental creature for long and has achieved marvels with his intelligence and intellect. But proud of intellect though we may be, Einstein warns, "We should take care not to make the intellect our God; it has of course, powerful muscles, but no personality." (*Out of My Later Years*)

As the Italian thinker Preme Levi stated, "Normal human beings are biologically built for an activity that is aimed towards a goal." A goal always implies a call to go farther than where we are. Till the other day, so far as India was concerned, the ennobling goal of freedom kept the youths inspired. Since the achievement of that goal, we have been fed with the illusion of false goals, bereft of nobler values. We must replace

them with the most optimistic goal, an aspiration for transcending the present dimly lighted state of our consciousness and entering a new phase of consciousness. In his great works such as *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Human Cycle* and *The Ideal of Human Unity*, Sri Aurobindo had elaborately explained this inevitable future and we the teachers could capture from them a thrilling new purpose for our endeavour. Once we subscribe to a sublime vision, feel inspired by an extraordinary destination, our approach to our work spontaneously receives a new impetus.

#### **Towards an Integral Education**

The Mother founded the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education as a part of Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry to enable the student to apply to his life to the extent possible the vision of Sri Aurobindo. To a question why any degree or diploma is not bestowed on a student, she made the following observation:

“For the last hundred years or so mankind has been suffering from a disease which seems to be spreading more and more and which has reached a climax in our times; it is what we may call ‘utilitarianism’. People and things, circumstances and activities seem to be viewed and appreciated exclusively from this angle. Nothing has any value unless it is useful. Certainly, something that is useful is better than something that is not. But first we must agree on what we describe as useful – useful to whom, to what, for what.

“For, more and more, the races who consider themselves civilized describe as useful whatever can attract, procure or

produce money. Everything is judged and evaluated from a monetary angle. That is what I call utilitarianism. And this disease is highly contagious, for even children are not immune to it. At an age when they should be dreaming of beauty, greatness and perfection, dreams that may be too sublime for ordinary common sense, but which are nevertheless far superior to this dull good sense, children now dream of money and worry about how to earn it.

“So, when they think of their studies, they think above all about what can be useful to them, so that later on when they grow up they can earn a lot of money.

“For them study has no other purpose, no other interest.

“To learn for the sake of knowledge, to study in order to know the secrets of Nature and life, to educate oneself in order to grow in consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to become master of oneself, to overcome one’s weakness, incapacities and ignorance, to prepare oneself to advance in life towards a goal that is nobler and wiser, more generous and more true... they hardly give it a thought and consider it all very utopian. The only thing that matters is to be practical, to prepare themselves and learn how to earn money.”

The passages tell us all that Education ought to be and all that it is not today. Without a collective awakening to the ignored purpose of Education, the rapid corrosion of life by utilitarianism inevitably leading to hedonism, cannot be checked. It is the elite who are expected to realise this, to begin with. They can influence the Educational authority or machinery to stop the

macabre deterioration in the system we have already discussed. We must not feel helpless or too weak to do anything in this direction, for the evolutionary time-spirit will be with us. Despite the current signs to the contrary, the secret aspiration in our consciousness will guide us through the present imbroglio.

I conclude with a few more passages from the Mother – on her integral approach to Education:

“The education of a human being should begin at birth and continue throughout his life.

“Indeed, if we want this education to have its maximum result, it should begin even before birth; in this case it is the mother herself who proceeds with this education by means of a two-fold action: first, upon herself for her own improvement, and secondly, upon the child whom she is forming physically. For it is certain that the nature of the child to be born depends very much upon the mother who forms it, upon her aspiration and will as well as upon the material surroundings in which she lives. To see

that her thoughts are always beautiful and pure, her feelings always noble and fine, her material surroundings as harmonious as possible and full of great simplicity – this is the part of education which should apply to the mother herself. And if she has in addition a conscious and definite will to form the child according to the highest ideal she can conceive, then the very best conditions will be realised so that the child can come into the world with the utmost potentialities. How many difficult efforts and useless complications would be avoided in this way!

“Education to be complete must have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal activities of the human being; the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the -spiritual. Usually these phases of education follow chronologically the growth of the individual; this, however, does not mean that one of them should replace another, but that all must continue, completing one another until the end of his life.”

# Bringing Children Back to School

## *Perspectives from Education Policies and Child Labour Laws*

AJEY SANGAI\*

---

### Abstract

---

*If education is to be considered as a capability, then child labour, which either forces the children to quit the schooling or keeps them away from schools, leads to capability deprivation rendering the out of school children as impoverished. The paper presents the need for widening the definition of 'child labour' in consonance with Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Children, 1989 to include children who though are not employed in any hazardous occupations or perform any activities listed under Schedule 1 of the Child Labour (Protection and Regulation) Act, 1986 yet are denied education. The paper also argues for vocational, life-skill and craft-based education in elementary level so as to create interest in education besides equipping the schools with basic facilities and creating a healthy environment for approaching 'disinterest in studies' as a cause for huge number of children being 'out of school'.*

---

### Introduction

Education is empowering, as it is instrumental in building central human capabilities like practical reason, control over one's environment through association and participation besides shaping one's thought and imagination.<sup>1</sup> Child labour is a clog in capability building as it hinders unfettered completion of basic education besides

affecting bodily health. It will be argued that child labour must not be looked only from the lens of exploitation in hazardous employments only but must also include all compulsions that hinder his/her education attainment and development. There exists a correlation between low enrolment, poor retention and child labour and the incidence of poverty because all these aspects leave the

---

\* Student, B.A., LL.B. (Hons.), NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad.

<sup>1</sup> Nussbaum, Martha, *Frontiers of Justice*, 2006, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> Semester, Law and Poverty reading material compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, p. 15.

capabilities, the substantive freedoms an individual enjoys to lead the kind of life s/he values,<sup>2</sup> underdeveloped which further hampers functioning. Sen argues that capability improvement may lead to greater earning power. Thus, basic education may not only improve the quality of one's life directly but may also increase an individual's ability to earn which may also check child labour too as the economic interest in learning is created.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has a right to education and at least elementary education should be compulsory and free while ICESCR makes it obligatory for the nations to devise an action plan for its implementation.<sup>3</sup> India, with the 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment to its Constitution inserted Article 21A<sup>4</sup> which made free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right.

'Out of school children' include both the children who have dropped out of the schools and those who have never

attended the school yet. With Gross Enrolment Ratios nearing 100% level<sup>5</sup>, the attention must shift to a large share of children who fail to complete basic education failing which the productivity of the labour force, the potential for knowledge-driven development, and the reservoir of human potential from which society and the economy can draw, are all fundamentally constrained.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the focus is shifting from universal primary education (enrolment) to the unfettered universal primary completion.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Education as Right and What it Entails**

As mentioned earlier, right to education is now a fundamental right under Article 21A. At this juncture, it is important to know what this right means for the recipients and the co-relative duties of the State for ensuring the enjoyment of this right. In this, it is explained that child labour policies and education policies relating to retention in elementary education must operate in tandem.

<sup>2</sup> Sen, Amartya, *Development as Freedom*, 1999, p. 87, 88 cited in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> semester, Law and Poverty reading material compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, pp. 10, 11

<sup>3</sup> Article 26, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 and Article 14, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 (ratified by India on July 10, 1979)

<sup>4</sup> **Art. 21A, Constitution of India:** The State shall provide *free and compulsory education* to all children of the *age of six to fourteen years* in such *manner* as the State may, *by law*, determine. (Italics supplied). The Article provides that manner for carrying out this task will be determined by the State made law. The Right to Education Bill tabled in the Parliament in 2005 has not yet been passed to have a force of law.

<sup>5</sup> **Gross Enrolment Ratio** basically measures the enrolment to the estimated child population in that age bracket. However, while measuring this ratio, enrolment in these stages includes under-aged and over-aged children giving us the inflated figures.

<sup>6</sup> Bruns, Barbara, Mingat, Alain and Rakotomalala, Ramahatra, *Achieving Universal Primary Education by 2015: A Chance for Every Child*, 2003, p. 27

<sup>7</sup> Second goal in the list of eight **Millennium Development Goals:** Ensure that all boys and girls *complete a full course* of primary schooling. (italics supplied)



Henry Shue averred that a right provides a rational basis for justified demand that the *actual enjoyment of the substance* be socially guaranteed against the standard threats.<sup>8</sup> It implies that the right to full and free elementary education is by itself a good justification for the demands for associated infrastructure (like schools, basic facilities in schools, transport, stationery, etc., to name a few) and productive pedagogy<sup>9</sup>, from the society along with the protection from obstacles such as child labour, household work requirements (which it is argued is a form of child labour even though law chooses to ignore it!), and other factors causing disinterest towards education etc., which hinder the *actual enjoyment of the substance* of this right and either keeps the children out of the schools or compels them to leave their elementary education unfinished and dropout.

However, it is also submitted that in the context of globalisation and need for specialisation, the skill-based education, even if not as basic as security or subsistence rights, as Shue argues<sup>10</sup>, right to education, which largely is a positive right, must not be reduced to a minor right as it is to some extent

cardinal to the constitutional ideals of securing justice, liberty, equality and promoting fraternity among the people of India. The Supreme Court in *Mohini Jain*<sup>11</sup> held that education is basic to the dignified enjoyment of life. Thus, unless the 'right to education' is made a reality, the fundamental rights will practically remain beyond the reach of a large majority; child labour, right to education and dignified life can not co-exist except in a paradox.

Shue (*supra*) expressed that mere declaration of the existence of particular right does not guarantee its 'actual enjoyment of the substance of right'. It is important to know what the contents of this right are. At a very basic level initial education should equip one with core competencies (include 3R's i.e., reading, writing and numeracy), knowledge, skills and attitude that lays the foundation for an individual's life-long learning.<sup>12</sup> The apex court in *Unni Krishnan*<sup>13</sup> observed every child has the fundamental right to free education until s/he completes the age of fourteen years which, perhaps, in light of right-based jurisprudence for elementary education developing globally fructified into the insertion of Article 21A (however, it

<sup>8</sup> Shue, H., *Basic Rights: Subsistence Affluence and US Foreign Policy*, 1980, p 13 cited in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> Semester, Law and Poverty reading material, compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, p. 140

<sup>9</sup> By productive pedagogy, life-skills and employment oriented education system is implied here.

<sup>10</sup> *Supra* n. 24, *ibid.* at p. 20. However, he agrees with that enjoyment of right to education is much greater, richer and perhaps more distinctively human than merely going through life without ever being assaulted.

<sup>11</sup> *Ms. Mohini Jain Vs. State of Karnataka*, (1992) 3 SCC 666, (678-680, paras 8-14) though this case basically dealt with higher education (which is beyond the scope of the paper), yet the judicial dicta on education as a right and jurisprudence behind it is vital.

<sup>12</sup> Bajpai, Asha, 'Right to Development' in *Child Rights in India: Law, Policy and Practice*, 2003, p. 328.

<sup>13</sup> *Unni Krishnan, J.P. Vs. State of A.P.*, (1993) 1 SCC 645 (730-736, paras 171-175)

covered the age group of 6-14 years only). Herein, the issue of enjoyment of this right free from exploitation must not lose sight.

### **Gravity of the Problem**

India has improved upon the primary completion rate over a period of time yet the number of children out of school remains alarmingly high. According to the government estimates (criticised as gross under-estimation; CRY an NGO on Child Rights puts the number at about 4 crore in 2006) the number of out-of-school children in the country is 1,34,59,734 comprising 6.94% of the total children in 6-14 years age bracket.<sup>14</sup> 'Out of school children' includes dropouts and the children who have never attended the school and incidentally the latter are more in numbers. Its proportion tends to be higher in the rural areas than the urban areas where also the difference between primary education completion between girls and boys is more pronounced. These children are doing some work which might be exploitative but unprotected by the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 or even if such works are banned by law, legal loopholes permit them. Nevertheless, this is child labour and

violates the child's right to a life with dignity in as much as it interferes with education and is harmful for child's physical, mental, spiritual, educational and social development.<sup>15</sup>

The provisional statistics for 2004-05 puts dropout rate at 29% for the primary level but it shoots up to 50.48% in elementary level which is a matter of concern. In that it is, 50.49% in case of boys and 51.28% for girls.<sup>16</sup> This should however be seen in relation with dropouts at the primary level, wherein in case of boys it is 31.81% and in the case of girls it is 25.42%. It can be said that there is a sharp rise in the girls' dropout rate not to leave a significant rise in boys' dropout too around primary level,<sup>17</sup> an age when the child can be put to work in employments and homes. Hence, dropouts at primary stage need to be controlled as an essential first step for securing the aim of complete elementary education and eradicating child labour.

Having discussed the right to education and dropout as a detriment to actual enjoyment of this right along with statistics (which though are suggestive but not revealing!) expressing the gravity of the problem in numbers, it would be opportune to understand the causes

<sup>14</sup>All India Sample Survey on 'Out of School Children' in the age group 6-13, 2005 under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, Ministry of Human Resource Development, India, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup>**Article 32, Convention on Rights of Child, 1989:** States Parties recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing *any work* that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

<sup>16</sup>**Source:** *Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05* as on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004, released in 2007, p. XXI

<sup>17</sup>However, in the hindsight it must be kept in mind that dropout would tend to be low if the percentage of 'out of school' children is high since the larger chunk of this number would have never attended the school which is, if not more, equally problematic.

behind dropouts which is partly revealed by the statistics before scrutinising the policies and schemes adopted by the Government of India to tackle the dropouts.

### **Causes of Dropouts**

The active participation of children in primary education hinges on a plethora of factors physical access being one of them. Once children reach school variety of factors determine whether they will continue or dropout and if children dropout rigid gender roles and other socio-economic factors besides presence or absence of any scheme to bring them back determine whether they can get back to school or not. If the schemes are in place, then the moot question is whether they are arresting the causes or merely erasing the consequences, i.e. how deeply and with what perspectives they look into the problem. The edifice of the policies rests on the bedrock of assumptions like: child labour-a 'harsh reality', an element of the 'culture of poverty' which overlooks the dynamics of wants in changing times (taking cue from Baxi's argument for 'impoverishment' for 'poverty',<sup>18</sup> the essence being bringing an attitudinal change to policy making) and differentiating between child work and child labour which exemplifies the aforementioned assumption for example non-formal education customised to the needs of the working children.

National Sample Survey Organisation's (NSSO's) recent survey as reported in the Times of India<sup>19</sup> probed into the high dropout rates in girls especially after primary level highlighted two major causes for the dropout among girls, viz. first, to take care of the household chores and secondly, educating girls not being considered as necessary.

In case of males, the survey points out, the need for augmenting the family income compels them to quit education midway. Related to employment is the age at which the child starts his/her school. The later the start, the likelier it is that the child would quit education when s/he becomes capable for labour. Looking at the education profile of the child labourers most of them, it seems, have either received no education or only the primary education. Interestingly, the modal age of employment is around 9-12 years.<sup>20</sup>

National Health and Family Survey (NHFS)-II conducted in 1999, threw some light on the causes of the dropouts. A significant finding recorded is that a high percentage of pupils in both urban and rural areas dropout because of lack of interest in studies.<sup>21</sup> However, it may be argued that the lack of interest in education can be attributed to the stultifying education system which had hitherto neglected the significance of vocational, craft-based and employment oriented education and to the systemic

<sup>18</sup>Baxi, U., 'Introduction' in Baxi, U. (ed.), *Law and Poverty: Critical Essays*, 1988, pp. vi-x. cited in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> semester, Law and Poverty reading material, compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, p.133-4

<sup>19</sup>*For girls, raw deal begins at home*, The Sunday TIMES OF INDIA, March 9, 2008, p. 15

<sup>20</sup>Child Labour at Work: A Case Study in Mehta, P.L. and Jaswal, S.S., *Child Labour and the Law*, reprint, 2001, pp. 106-7.

<sup>21</sup>Ramachandran, Vimala (ed.), *Gender and Social Equity in Primary Education*, 2004, p. 44

issues such as dysfunctional schools, unfamiliar medium of instructions, lack in motivation and commitment of teachers, quality of schools, etc. Other factors instrumental in the dropout amongst girls, that the survey points out, are requirement for household work or work outside home, lack of proper school facilities (e.g. lack of proper building, boundary walls, toilets, drinking water, etc.), lack of adequate transport when schools are too far from the homes and early marriages.

Education attainment levels of parents are often related with the child's own participation in schooling which is accentuated by a report from UNESCO on out of school children. It said that in India, the primary school-age children whose mothers have had no education are 3.3 times more likely to be 'out of school' than those whose mothers have some education.<sup>22</sup> The probability increases when the student is a girl, finds the report prepared by *Pratham* an NGO.<sup>23</sup>

In nutshell, the factors, thus, for exclusion in elementary level, broadly may be age, gender, income and educational status of the household, place of residence (urban-rural divide and higher share of rural out of school population), *inter alia*, other socio-economic determinants endemic to certain groups and locations. The undercurrent beneath these statistics is

that all these factors are mediated by the social and gender relations in the community, poverty and conception and prevalence of child labour. Whether laws and policies address these undercurrents is the question of the hour.

### **Education Policies: A Bird's Eye View**

From above discourse few causes of dropout appear quite centrally namely: (i) 'Child labour (banned by law) (ii) household chores performed by girls, 'child labour unpaid' (not recognised by laws and policies)<sup>24</sup> (iii) child labour legitimised by law from the loopholes it carries, and (iv) disinterest towards education, the fourth not being unrelated to above three. With the passage of time it has been realised that the government now lacks the capacity to work simultaneously on several fronts like: access, quality and relevance.

'Relevance' of education is an important issue as it, to some extent underlies all the causes mentioned above and also perhaps answers the disinterest factor that keeps the children out of the schools or compels them to quit midway, a little more closely. At very basic level problem comes when the core competencies are poorly taught and what is taught is of little or no value.

Gandhi stressing on harmonising the intellectual with the manual opined that knowledge imparted should be of some use in practical life at least up to the

<sup>22</sup> *Children out of School; Measuring Exclusion from Primary Education*, 2005, pp. 44-46.

<sup>23</sup> *Annual Status of Education Report 2006*, January 2007, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> Collections of water, fuel, maintenance of the house, taking care of younger siblings, preparing meals, etc. constitute important elements of a girl's domestic life especially in villages. While many of these activities do not necessarily fall under definition of hazardous work, inasmuch as they interfere with the normal development of the child and his/her education, they constitute exploitation of the child and hence must be seen as child labour. These factors as explained before pull out, especially the girls out of education.

elementary level. He advocated that skill-based and self-supportive education should be provided to the students which hence will inculcate self-respect amongst them besides opening job avenues.<sup>25</sup> Education then will not be irrelevant to the masses and families who will see the interest in educating the children. Skill learning in schools that augurs a productive future, it is believed, is itself an incentive for sending children there.

However, post independence, science, technology and scientific research and moral education received much emphasis and it seems that the free, compulsory and skilled based elementary education did not get due deliberation from the policy framers.<sup>26</sup> Not before 1968, the first education policy was formulated. It focussed on free and compulsory education to all children up to 14 years but provided for vocational education only at secondary and university level.<sup>27</sup>

The New Education Policy of 1986 adopted a child-centred approach for elementary education. It proposed a programme of non-formal education catering to the primary school dropouts; working children and girls who may not be able attend the whole day of school. It should only be a temporary measure in the long run because it instead of providing for a solution to the problem of

child labour interfering with the child's education, in effect provides for a system of child education which does not interfere with child labour. It also called for 'Operation Blackboard' for improving school facilities and creating requisite infrastructure for primary level.<sup>28</sup> The policy was modified in 1992 which besides enrolment and retention, emphasised on 'universal access' in elementary education and strengthening the non-formal education by equipping it with technological aid.<sup>29</sup> Quite evidently what was envisaged was not achieved not surprisingly questions were raised about the efficacy and implementation of these guidelines.

It must be noted that no policy concerned with eradicating child labour which as has been discussed is a clog in educational attainment. Moreover, no attempt has been reflected in policy to introduce vocational and life-skill teaching in elementary education. Government of India launched an ambitious project of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* in 2001 with the objective that all children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007 besides the mission of universal retention by 2010. Its implementation was termed inept by the Comptroller and Auditor General Report of 2006. The goals set out by the project became distant dreams due to

<sup>25</sup> Gist taken from *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 13, reprint, 1995, pp. 298-300, 358-9, 462 and Volume 37, pp. 111-2, 301-302.

<sup>26</sup> Immediately after the independence special committees formed dedicated to secondary and university education like University Education Committee (1948-49), Secondary Education Committee (1952-53). Only the Kothari Commission on Education (1964-66) gave some space to elementary education.

<sup>27</sup> National Policy on Education, 1968, pp. 1-8.

<sup>28</sup> National Policy on Education, 1986, pp. 9-12.

<sup>29</sup> National Policy on Education, 1986 (as modified in 1992), pp. 13-5.

continuous under-funding and deficient interventions by the project implementing agencies.<sup>30</sup>

### **Bringing Child Labourers to Schools**

The point emphasised here is that education policy and child labour policy must operate in tandem and present cogent connections while also looking at wiping the notion of non-usefulness of education for certain group of children (mostly the girls). Looking at law, the Supreme Court directed the government to persuade the workmen to send their children to nearby schools and it must arrange for schools and strive to provide books and other facilities free of charge.<sup>31</sup> The Court has directed the Government to convene meetings of different ministries and departments and take requisite steps to bring the children working in hazardous employments to the schools.<sup>32</sup> It also considered that basic employment-oriented vocational education should be imparted to the children so as to empower them; to

retrieve them from poverty; develop basic abilities, skills and capabilities to live a meaningful life and economic and social empowerment.

However, it seems that laws and courts have considered child labour only from the perspectives of hazardous employment in factories and industries and not from the labour in private spheres (like families) which has passively received legitimisation; the roles have been fixed and stereotyped. The spread of education is facing an ominous roadblock. The Child Labour (Protection and Regulation) Act, 1986 has more of a regulatory stance than prohibitive inasmuch as it prohibits child labour only in certain sectors elucidated in Part A and B of the Schedule and specifically keeps itself away from homes and families<sup>33</sup> thereby excluding from its purview huge number of children working with their families in agriculture, dairy and other family concerns. Article 32 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,

<sup>30</sup> CAG terms *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* implementation 'inept', The HINDU Businessline, August 20, 2006 (e-paper link: <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2006/08/20/stories/2006082002220500.htm>). For example: The revised target of SSA to enrol all children in schools, education guarantee scheme, alternative schools, back to school camps by 2005 was not achieved, as there were still about 40 per cent children out of school in the 6-14 age group.

<sup>31</sup> *Labourers Working on Salal Hydro-Project Vs. State of J&K*, AIR 1984 SC 177, *ibid.* at 183.

<sup>32</sup> *Bandhua Mukti Morcha Vs. Union of India*, (1997) 10 SCC 549 (Mirzapur carpet industries), *M.C. Mehta Vs. State of Tamil Nadu*, AIR 1997 SC 699 (Sivakasi crackers factory).

<sup>33</sup> **Section 3, Child Labour (Protection and Regulation) Act, 1986: Prohibition of employment of children in certain occupations and processes:** No child shall be employed or permitted to work in any of the occupations set forth in Part A of the Schedule or in any workshop wherein any of the processes set forth in Part B of the Schedule is carried on: *Provided that nothing in this section shall apply to any workshop wherein any process is carried on by the occupier with the aid of his family or to any school established by, or receiving assistance or recognition from, Government.* (The Government itself has proceeded on the assumption that child labour cannot be eliminated completely and that certain forms of child labour are inevitable.)

1989 though leans towards 'hazardous employment' perspective, yet it contains right of the child to be protected from any work that interferes with the child's education and development. In this light the domestic/household chores performed by the girls that forces them to remain out of schools is child labour and infringement of her right under Article 32 of the Convention which however, is seemed to have been overlooked by the lawmakers and the courts. UNICEF has called it as 'unpaid and invisible' child work.<sup>34</sup> Thus, there is a case for expanding the application of the term child-labour by assuming that a person below fourteen years of age away from school or basic primary education is a child labourer.

The observations of UNESCO and ASER (*Pratham* Publication) report that when the mothers are not educated it is likelier that the children (even more likely in girls) would either remain out of school or will dropout before completing the basic education. This must be kept in mind while formulating the girls' education schemes and female adult education for fighting exploitation caused due to the stereotyping of roles in the households on gender lines and sending the message across that this stereotyping is nothing but child labour and an infringement of the child's rights. Therefore, while educating girls, adult education of women in this light (even if it be seen as a temporary measure in the

long run) is paramount to create a home that is conducive for education.

### **Appraisal**

The primordial concern is to bring child labourers back to schools and this requires the adoption of Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in its true spirit and the recognition of the fact that any non school-going child is an exploited child. A great departure from the existing policies is not suggested, rather it should be appreciated that programmes like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* and the schemes enabling it are powerful means to bring the dropouts back to the schools.<sup>35</sup> What is suggested is an attitudinal change in setting priorities and appreciating that the ultimate goal of education policies for tackling dropouts and child labour laws is the same, i.e. holistic development of a child. In that regard, as discussed before, education system must insist for productive pedagogy and relevant curriculum.

For this it is essential to have children and the community in confidence by spreading awareness about the meaning and ills of child labour and the benefits of education. Simultaneously, steps for improving the quality of education must always be considered. Inside the schools, the following should be observed: if they are equipped with basic facilities; the treatment meted out to the children;

<sup>34</sup> Dak, T.M. (ed.), *Child Labour in India*, 2002, p. 13.

<sup>35</sup> Enrolment, particularly amongst the girls has substantially increased after 2001; Gender Parity Index has improved; Dropout has declined significantly from over 40% in 2001 to about 29% in 2004 besides the growth noticed in recruitment of teachers and infrastructure. **Source:** *Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05* as on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004, released in 2007.

activities performed by them and their learning thereof and accountability of the administration, thereby, focussing on both the pull and push factors<sup>36</sup> affecting the access and retention of children in schools. Also it should be ensured that while the education is relevant to the needs and schools are equipped with facilities for preventing the children quitting education or parents withdrawing their admissions due to unhealthy school environment and disinterest in studies. The success of MV Foundation (R.R. District, Andhra Pradesh) in eradicating child labour and mainstreaming the 'out of school' children into the formal schools through bridge courses, camps, helplines, etc. is an example.<sup>37</sup> Its 'spiral' (phenomenon explained by Glover wherein an individual's efforts, when replicated by others can effect a significant change to arrest an insurmountable problem)<sup>38</sup> is reflected in the experience of *Baljiyothi* which started 250 schools in the slum areas of Hyderabad with the community support. On similar lines, CINI ASHA with community-support and help from other NGOs and municipalities in Kolkata, works to educate children living on the streets, railway platforms, slums, squatter settlements and the children of sex workers. Several activities were undertaken specifically to win the

children's trust and help them face their everyday problems before introducing them to formal education.<sup>39</sup>

While NGOs have been reasonably successful in bringing back dropouts and 'out of school children' to the schools, the Government responded by spreading awareness about the importance of schools and education through the schemes under the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. However, the State must realise that compulsory elementary education is primarily its responsibility and it must not detract from it by calling it an 'unfinished agenda' and 'passing the buck' to the NGOs (as Sainath calls it.<sup>40</sup> The researcher would, however, resist from calling these NGOs as money making industries).

Moreover, the State has not quite appreciated the idea that the policies regarding eradication of child labour and bringing 'out of school' children to schools must be complimentary to each other with case studies, research, statistics and opinions echoing the same. It has not enacted the Right to Education Bill tabled in Parliament in 2005, which is vital for realising the Right to Education under Article 21A. Considering this indifference, the State has not given an evidence of the political will for the compulsory elementary education of all children.

<sup>36</sup>Ramchandran, Vimala (ed.), *Getting Children Back to School*, 2003, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup>*Mainstreaming Out of School Children: MV Foundation Experience*, case study, (2000)

<sup>38</sup>Glover, J., 'It Makes No Difference whether or not I Do it' in Singer P. (ed.), *Applied Ethics*, 1975, pp. 133-5 cited in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> Semester, Law and Poverty reading material, compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, pp. 53-4.

<sup>39</sup>Case studies from Ramchandran, Vimala (ed.), *Getting Children Back to School*, 2003.

<sup>40</sup>Sainath, P, *Everybody Loves a Good Drought*, 1996, pp. 424-34 cited in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> Semester, Law and Poverty reading material, compiled by Prof. Amita Dhanda, pp. 117-21.



# Conflict Situations and Children's Education in Manipur

N. REBECCA\*

---

## Abstract

---

*Manipur has been witnessing various forms of conflict for a long period of time and children have been the most vulnerable section to such situations. From the immediate to the long-term effects, children have been the victims of conflicts. The paper tries to understand how situations of conflict in Manipur have seriously impeded the development of children by denying them their basic right to education. It also suggests the possible measures towards ensuring this basic right even in times of conflict situations.*

---

Education, as we all accept, plays a vital role in the overall development of a child. It gives shape and structure to children's lives and instills community values, promotes justice and respect for human rights and enhances peace, stability and interdependence. Realising the importance of education in children's lives, the Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 20, 1989, and ratified by India in 1992, *inter alias* ask the States to recognise the right of the child to education. With a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, the Convention recommends to make primary education compulsory and

available free to all, and also to take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of dropouts. It must be mentioned here that the Constitution of India had also placed the need for Universal Elementary Education in the Directive Principles of State Policy under Article 45 of the Constitution of India. It is, therefore, stipulated as an important duty/obligation of the State to follow it in implementing programmes and public policies. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act 2002, has reinforced it by making it as a Fundamental Right by inserting Article 21 (A), stating that 'the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6

---

\* *Research Scholar*, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

to 14 years in such as the State may, by law, determine'. Making elementary education a Fundamental Right has meant that the denial of the right can be challenged in a court of law.

However, children's education becomes a serious casualty in situations of armed conflict and their basic right severely violated. While situations of conflict is a perennial phenomena and are occasionally manifested in visible forms of violence, the repercussions are nevertheless prolong which affects the well-being of the overall population in the affected zone. Children are one of the most vulnerable sections of the society; and conflict carries every potential of disturbing not only the normal growth but also affects the opportunity to develop their capabilities.

This paper tries to understand how situations of conflict in Manipur have seriously impeded the development of children by denying them their basic right to education. In Manipur, since the last few decades, various forms of conflict have taken place ranging from ethnic conflicts to conflicts between the state and the non-state actors. In fact, the State has a long record of conflicts. Violations of civil rights including the right to life have become daily routine. Studies on conflict in Manipur while addressing the issue of human rights violations, often misses the issues regarding deprivation of education, not necessarily induced by violent conflict per se but also by the ramification associated with the corollaries of conflict. The paper is an honest attempt to highlight the issue.

### **Effect of Conflicts on Children**

In this paper, the term conflict refers to situations of violent armed conflict. A conflict occurs when two or more parties believe they have incompatible objectives in power, resources, wealth, and status. In addition, significant factors that lead to conflict and absence of peace are numerous. The major impetus can range from ethnic and social divisions, failure of government institutions and so on.

Armed conflict in any form affects the everyday lives of the people and children are the most vulnerable section of the population. They are the primary victims of armed conflict; they get killed or hurt, made orphans, abducted, deprived of education and health care and left with deep emotional trauma. Children of this region are witnesses, survivors and direct victims of different forms of armed conflict. Many have seen the loss of many lives in the continuous armed conflicts. Children are not just getting caught in the crossfire but are also being targeted in many cases and are bearing the brunt of violence. The trauma caused to children who are rendered homeless, orphaned and destitute through the indiscriminate and senseless killing of their parents and relatives, has created a fear psychosis in their minds. These children are going up as disturbed individuals, many of them afflicted by depressive illness.

In every situation where violent conflicts occur, we always find two undercurrents— first, conflict manifested in its physical form, and secondly, derivatives of conflict (*bandhs*, curfews, economic blockades, strikes,

participation in protest movements, etc.), These derivatives of conflict linger on for a long period impeding the prevalence of a conducive educational environment in conflict situations. Education is disrupted and not progressive. In spite of the positive values engrained in education and schools as agents of positive change and development, the inability to function properly rendered by the conflicts neutralizes the positive elements inherent in education or the schools.

Among the most serious repercussions of conflicts on children is the deprivation of their basic education. During conflict, fear and disruption make it difficult to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, and the morale of both teachers and students is likely to be low. As conflict drags for months, economic and social conditions suffer and educational opportunities become more limited. Sometimes even when educational opportunities exist in the disturbed areas; parents are just reluctant to send their children to school. They are afraid that the children will not be safe while they are on their way to and from school. Overall, during conflict situations, not even schools are safe from attack and children lose the opportunities to learn and are denied the structure, stability and predictability they need to develop their potential. Ultimately, it can lead to a situation in which they lose their sense of trust and hope for the future.

Manipur is not innocent as far as conflicts are concerned. In Manipur, since the last five decades various forms of conflict has taken place ranging from ethnic conflicts to conflict between the

state and the non-state actors. Different forms of conflicts have been ravaging the state for a long time. Besides the long drawn armed conflicts induced by insurgency, there are also conflicts borne out of the ethnic feuds among various communities in the state. As stated above, these forms of conflicts severely impeded the normal growth of the children with their education being the most serious casualty. The disruption of education in the violence-torn states of the North East in general and Manipur has seriously affected the development of children. Undeniably, education is the most powerful tool for social change and development. When a child's education is affected, the whole life of the child is affected, and the recurring violences in the state have brought education to a grinding halt.

The problem of insurgency in the state has been the most serious threat to children. Growing up with violence all around them, many children are often caught in a precarious dilemma. According to Allan Court, India's representative for UNICEF who recently completed a study on the effect of insurgency on children:

*"They (children) are being forcibly recruited, coerced and induced to become insurgents. Manipulated by adults, children have been drawn into violence that they are too young to resist and with consequences they cannot imagine."*

A very common disturbing phenomenon in the State is that children often get recruited into different warring groups against the State forces. Once they are into these forces, there is little chance for these children to continue with their schooling. Instead, they

become engaged in the fights with the state forces. In Manipur, the toll of armed conflict on children has risen remarkably since early 90s. The Global Report on Child Soldier-2001 Asia-Pacific Conference reported that 28 children were arrested or injured and 10 children killed in Manipur in just five months between January and May 2000 ("Global Report on Child Soldier-2001" in *Children of Wars Newsletter*). Innocent children also get caught in the crossfire between the state forces and armed insurgents.

Besides, the State has also been witness to inter and intra-ethnic conflicts among various communities in the State. Children have to flee from their villages in times of an ethnic conflict among different communities. For example, during the infamous Naga-Kuki clash in 1992-95 and also in 1997-98 between the Thadou Kukis and Paite Zomis, there was huge exodus of population from their native villages. During these periods, there were cases of children dropping out of their schools while fleeing to their safety in other villages. As a result, many students have had to be transferred to safer school areas to prevent being assaulted by warring sections. Many children have had to discontinue their studies completely. Children in refugee camps are forced to abandon their studies and work for their livelihood. The disruption of education is very common when conflicts break out.

Armed conflict affects all aspects of child development – physical, mental and emotional. Such effects accumulate and interact with each other. In order to understand the impact of armed conflict on children, we should look at the related effects on women, families and

the community support systems that provide protection and a secure environment for development. Children's well-being is best ensured through family and community-based solutions that draw on local culture and an understanding of child development.

### **Education: Ensuring Children of their Right**

Ensuring children of their basic education during conflict situation is easier said than done. The State as well as the civil societies has an important role to play in ensuring the basic right to children. Efforts should be made to bring an end of the on-going imbroglio and pave way to an atmosphere conducive to learning and education for children. This also calls for all parties to the conflict to strive towards peace and harmony. Conflicts sometimes become unavoidable, but that should not hamper the educational atmosphere of the children. Even during the times of conflicts, efforts should be made to provide education because, education has a crucial preventive and rehabilitative part to play in fulfilling the needs and rights of children in conflict and post-conflict situations. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Children established that "children should enjoy the right to education so that there can be development of child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, the development of respect for the child's parents, his/her cultural identity, language and values, national values of the country in which the child lives, preparation of the child for responsibilities life in a free

society and friendship among all people, national and religious groups". Education can and should also be part of all humanitarian responses – including those in a conflict situation. Early investments in education protects children from the most damaging aspects of conflict and play a significant role in building peace, restoring countries to a positive development path and breaking the cycle of violence.

In the light of the escalating trends of violence everywhere, the *National Curriculum Framework-2005* also recommends a space for peace education within the framework of national school curriculum document. The framework also stresses on education as a 'significant dimension of the long-term process of building up peace–tolerance, justice, intercultural understanding and civic responsibility'. However, it is critical of the education as is practiced today for it 'promotes forms of violence, both real and symbolic' and therefore, suggests the need to reorient education. Peace 'as a value cuts across all curricular areas and coincides with and complements the values emphasised therein'.

It is a common knowledge that education begins at home. One can learn and receive knowledge from parents, family member and even from an acquaintance. But in school, children get a formal education. As stated above, school acts as one of society's agents in socialising the child and in transmitting a common culture. Through socialisation as an educative process, the child learns to get along with others and to take the roles expected of him/her in view of his social position. School education brings contact with great ideas.

It is true that sometimes children might not listen to their parents but listen what the teacher says, thinking that educational guidance given by the teacher is more appropriate than the ones given by the parents. Here, educational practices inspired by Vygotsky's theory could be useful which includes reciprocal teaching – a method of teaching in which a teacher and students form a collaborative group and co-operative learning in which peers resolve differences of opinion and work toward common goals. Going to school can increase a child's chances of surviving conflict. Schools can equip children with the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe and healthy, and to survive conflict and cope up with its aftermath. Schools are vital in protecting children and supporting their emotional and social development by giving them comfort, security, and opportunity. The routine of school develops an environment in which children are allowed to be children. Teacher can recognise signs of stress in children as well as impart information and promote tolerance and respect for human rights.

### **Conclusion**

For societies affected by conflict, education is integral to building long-term peace and prosperity. Simply going to school each day can transform the lives of children living in conflict zones. Even in situation of armed conflict, it is important to carry out on educating children and young people, irrespective of the circumstances. Education promotes their psychosocial and physical well-being. Every individual should come

over to protect the educational rights of children. In such situations, what is pertinent is to reduce the frequency and intensity of conflict, keeping in mind the likely negative impact that is bound to occur amongst the children, ranging from optimal development of the capabilities and the stunted opportunities especially in the field of education. Children deserve the attention and protection of the national and international community.

Besides, all possible efforts should be made to maintain education system

during conflict. Child-friendly schools should also be developed with well-trained teachers in the areas of child development, child rights, conflict resolution and those who can give guidance and counselling. People should also be made aware of children's rights so that schools can become violence free, safe and secure. We can also encourage parents to take part in the child's education by involving in school activities. Civil societies should also play an important role in ensuring the children of their basic right.

### REFERENCES

- AHLUWALIA, B.K and SHASHI AHLUWALIA. 1987. *Social Change in Manipur*. Cultural Publishing House.
- BERK, E. LAURA. 2003. *Child Development*. Pearsons Education.
- BOSE. 1994. An Introduction to the Ethnic Problem in Manipur. Solidarity Group in Support of the Restoration of Civil and Democratic Rights in the North-East and other Media, New Delhi.
- CHENYOY, KAMAL MITRA. 2005. 'Nationalist ideology, Militarisation and Human Rights in the North-East', *Eastern Quarterly*. Vol.3, No.1. Manipur Research Forum, Delhi.
- GANGMUMEL, KABUL. 1991, *History of Manipur, Pre-Colonial Period*, Vol. I. National Publishing House, Delhi.
- GUPTA, M.C., K. CHOCKALINGAM and JAYTILAK GUHA ROY (eds.). 2001. *Child Victims of Crime: Problem and Perspectives*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi.
- HAVIGHURST, ROBERT J. AND BERNICE L. NEUGARTEN. 1959. *Society and Education*. Allyn and Bacon, Inc. Boston.
- Hindustan Times*. 2001. 'Ceasefire Crises in Manipur: Manipur Burns'. 12 June.
- IBUNGOHAL, L. 1987. *Introduction to Manipur*, 3rd ed. The Saraswati Printing Works, Imphal.
- KHANNA, S.K. 1998. *Children and Human Rights*. Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi.
- KIPGEN, DONN MORGAN. 2005. *The Bane of Bandhs & Blockades in Manipur*, Manipur Online, 30 September.
- KRIESBERG, LOUIS. 1982. *Social Conflict*, Prentice -Hall, Inc. New Jersey.
- KUMAR, RAMNARAYAN and SONIA MULLER-RAPPARD. 2006. *Critical Reading in Human Rights and Peace*, Shipra Publication, Delhi.
- MACHEL, GRACA. 1996. *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, UNICEF.

- MADAN, RAM GURUMUKH. 1987. *Indian Social Problems*. Allied Publishers Private Ltd.
- MIALARET, GASTON. 1979. *The Child's Right to Education*, UNESCO.
- PHANJANBAM, PRADIP. 2001. 'Insurgency and its Impact on the Development of Manipur', in C. JOSHUA THOMAS et al. (eds.) *Constraints in the Development of Manipur*. Regency Publications, New Delhi.
- RAI, RAHUL. 2000. *Human Rights: UN Initiatives*, Authors Press.
- SHARMA, S.P. 2006. *Child Development*. Vista Publication, India.
- TAWIL SOBHI and HARLEY ALEXANDRA (Ed.). 2004. *Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion UNESCO*. International Bureau of Education.
- THANGJAM, HOMEN. 2005. 'Armed-Conflict and Women's Well-being in Manipur', *Eastern Quarterly*, Vol.3. No.3.
- <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>
- <http://www.un.org/rights/impact.htm>

# Child's Rights in Sweden

## *An Experience*

SAROJ PANDEY\*

---

### **Abstract**

---

*The rights of the child is one of the major area of concern and since the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 international community has committed itself to the protection of these rights. SIDA and Children's Ombudsman, Sweden are working in cooperation with each other to organise training programmes for different regions of the world to expose functionaries of these countries about the rights of children and their protection. This article is based on my experiences of a recent visit to Sweden to attend one such training programme on Child's Rights.*

---

This article is based on my experiences of a recent visit to Sweden to attend a training programme on Child's Rights, organised by the Children's Ombudsman, Stockholm in cooperation with SIDA. The training programme centred around the four Pillars of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), i.e. (a) the Right to Participation, (b) the Right against Discrimination, (c) the Best Interest of the Child, and, (d) the Right to Life and Development. However, it was strongly stressed that before any of these rights become operative, the right to life of the unborn child should be given priority. In that case all other rights will be complementary, and the absence of one

will make the promotion and protection of the rights of the child meaningless. The programme was started with team building activity focused on a session called knot **tying and untying the knot**. This session reiterated the importance of cooperation and networking in the task of promoting the rights and best interest of children. The session also included the **paint/draw yourself** activity where the participants described themselves in a drawing. It is a common observation that all the applicants have their respective families in the core centre of their life, and most of them have hobbies related to reading, travelling and swimming. The programme provided very comprehensive learning experiences on

---

\*Reader, Department of Teacher Education and Extension, NCERT, New Delhi.



what are the rights of children in general, and how it being is addressed and protected in Sweden in particular.

Sweden is one of the largest countries of Europe, and only Russia, Ukraine, France and Spain are larger than Sweden. However, the population of this large country is not very large, and is only nine million people, with two million children sharing 25 per cent of the total population. Sweden ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) following a decision of the parliament in 1990 and implemented it throughout the country to fulfil various obligations aimed at equal treatment for all children and protection against discrimination. The purpose of the act is to safeguard and promote equal value of each individual and everyone's right to be treated as an individual on equal terms. Sweden firmly believes that in a democratic society there is no place of discrimination and each individual—child or adult, has the right to be treated as an individual on equal terms. To translate this conviction into practice the Swedish Government enacted a bill (Government Bill *Security, respect and responsibility—the prohibition of discrimination and other degrading treatment to children and school students* (Govt Bill 2005). The purpose of this bill is to safeguard and promote equal value of each individual and everyone's right to be treated as an individual on equal terms. The Act prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnic origin, religion or other beliefs, sexual orientation and disability. It also covers other degrading treatments such as bullying and sexual abuse, etc. It ensures that each pre-school and school has equal treatment

plan for each activity with a view to promote equality and combat harassment. In case of any harassment in school, the child has a right to lodge a complaint which is thoroughly investigated upon and it becomes the responsibility of the school to prove that no such harassment has taken place. The Act applies to all stages of education including pre-school activities, school age child care, pre-school classes, compulsory and upper secondary school, special schools for students with learning disabilities, special needs schools, *sami* schools, and municipal adult schools.

The Swedish Government prepared a National Action Plan (2006-2009) to address issues related to human rights in the country. The focus of the NAP is on protection against discrimination. Other issues include the rights of the disabled people, the rights of the child, national minorities, the indigenous *Sámi* people, and men's violence against women including violence in the name of honour and human trafficking, the right to work, housing, health and education, rule of law issues and asylum and migration. Besides a number of measures aimed at increasing knowledge and information on human rights, both, within educational system and among the general public are announced. Finally, the action plan addresses issues pertaining to the organisation of human rights efforts and methods and follow-up and evaluation of action plan.

Sweden has Ombudsman system to protect the interest and rights of its citizens. There are a number of Ombudsman in the country elected for four year period to address the human rights issues of their target groups. These

are as follows:

- The Parliamentary Ombudsman (Justice Ombudsman JO).
- The Consumer Ombudsman (Konsument Ombudsman KO).
- The Equal Opportunity Ombudsman.
- The Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination.
- The Ombudsman against Discrimination Because Of Sexual Orientation.
- The Children's Ombudsman.
- The Office of the Disability Ombudsman.
- The Press Ombudsman.

### **The Child**

Just like India, a person up to the age of 18 years is considered as child in Sweden and protected under children's Ombudsman. The present Ombudsman was established by an Act of Parliament in 1993 and functions under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. Its activities focus around five principal areas;

- The UN convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – information, implementation and application.
- Children in vulnerable situation such as bullying and sexual abuse.
- The influence of children and young people in school and society.
- The condition of children and young people—legally, politically and socially.
- Coordination and development of public activities pertaining to safety of children and young people.

One of the important tasks of children's Ombudsman is to represent

children and young people in public debate, shaping opinion and influencing the attitude of politicians, decision makers and general public on questions relating children and young people. It also coordinates and cooperates closely with other public authorities and organisations dealing with issues affecting children and young people at various levels of society.

The Ombudsman submits an annual report to the government on areas where the rights of children are not fully followed or CRC of UN has been not properly addressed. The report also provides the true picture of conditions under which the children of Sweden are growing up. Therefore, the Children's Ombudsman in Sweden acts as watchdog protecting the rights of children and young people in the Swedish society.

### **Social welfare and Insurance of Children in Sweden**

Children in Sweden are highly valued and taken care of by the government. They are provided with a number of allowances like parental insurance, child allowance, adoption allowance, and maintenance support, care allowance for sick and disabled children, Child's pension and pension rights for child care years. Some of the significant schemes are as follows;

- Basic Child Allowance is paid to each child of the country under the age of 16 years.
- Extended Child Allowance (SEK 950 month) for children aged 16 yrs or over and attending secondary school.
- Additional Child Allowance for families for three or more children. A

supplement amount of SEK 250 month is paid for the third child, SEK 760 month for the fourth and 950 for the fifth and any further children. Clearly big family in Sweden is encouraged.

- Student grants is given to all children attending upper schools.
- Housing allowance is given to approximately 30% percent households of the country. Again the amount of the grant varies according to the number of children in the household and the more children the larger the amount is.
- Maintenance support for a child with parents separated is paid to the custodial parent by the Social Insurance Agency.
- Parents of sick and disabled children are also entitled to an allowance that helps them to take care of these children.

Sweden is a free society with unmarried couples living together, live-in relationships, gays and lesbians relationships accepted by the law and society. Divorces and break-ups are common in the society. Child's interest under such situations becomes a priority of the Government. Therefore, maintenance support for a child, with parents divorced, is paid to the custodial parent by the Social Insurance Agency. The custodian parent's income does not matter in this context. It was quite heartening to know that there was no orphanage in Sweden and such children are placed under that care of foster parent who are in turn given handsome allowances to take care of the child. Human life matters in a society where

population is low and the government has enough even surplus financial resources to provide safety and security to these children.

### **Education in Sweden**

Education in Sweden is the responsibility of Municipalities since 1991. Education is compulsory in the country for all children between the age of seven and sixteen. Pre-school education is open for children from one year to five year of age. In these schools play-way method is followed, and child's interest and needs are taken care of. Municipalities have obligation to provide pre schooling to children whose parents are working or studying. Children whose parents are unemployed are entitled to at least 15 hours of pre-school per week. By 2005, 77.3 per cent of all the children of the country between one to five years were registered in Pre-school, and 6.1 per cent children in family day care homes. There is no fixed fee structure in Sweden, and the fee in these schools are charged on the basis of parents' income ranging from three, two and one per cent of parental income for first, second and third child respectively.

As indicated in the preceding section compulsory education in Sweden starts at the age of seven years and all education in the public school system is free of charge. A national timetable specifies the minimum amount of time to be spent on each subject, which covers Swedish (alternatively Swedish as second language), English, Mathematics, natural sciences, social studies, religious studies, arts and crafts, physical education and health. Within the broader

framework, the individual schools are given freedom to allocate more time for certain subjects.

According to Swedish Education Act, all children of the country have equal access to education without any discrimination. Children proceed according to their own ability and pace and official grades are not given until the autumn term of eighth year where a *three grade system is followed – C for pass, B for merit, and A for distinction*. To get admission into High School a pass is needed in Swedish, Mathematics and English. 89.2 per cent students meet this requirement. The school year is divided in two terms. The autumn term begins around mid August and continues until December, with a one week break. The spring term starts in the second week of January and continues until second week of June with one week off in February and one week around Easter, in March and April. A regular school week is five days long for the entire country.

High School is non-compulsory and free of charge. The duration of high school programme is three years. Students can choose from 17 different programmes with general qualifications to study at collage and universities. In Swedish schools children are given rights in the decision making process, for instance, in compulsory school boards though the parents are in majority but children are also board members with same rights to speak and vote as adults. In upper primary school boards they enjoy the majority. Local school boards are given freedom to decide on school budget, working environment etc, but they can not hire or fire teachers.

### **Juvenile Justice in Sweden**

One of the things that impressed me the most is the juvenile justice system that gives ample opportunity to the young people to reform themselves and be the part of mainstream society. Sweden is a pluralistic welfare State that contributes to the relatively tolerant and humane society that is reflected in its juvenile justice system, which emphasises *treatment rather than punishment that is reflected in its juvenile justice system and the institutional care homes where the young offenders are placed*. In Sweden, the responsibility for responding to crimes committed by young people is shared by the social services and the judicial system (Sarnecki 1991; SOU 1993). The extent to which the judicial authorities and the social services share responsibility for the response to crimes committed by young people is mainly dependent on the age of the offender.

- For those below the age of fifteen, the main responsibility for the response to crime lies with the social services.
- For those aged between fifteen and seventeen, (and in certain cases up to the age of twenty), the responsibility is divided between the social services and the judicial authorities.
- From the age of eighteen to twenty, the responsibility lies mainly with the judicial authorities.

Swedish law places the entire responsibility for responding to the crimes committed by children less than 15 years of age on the social service. Thus, crime during adolescence is regarded as a social welfare problem.

Therefore, the objective of juvenile justice is to help the child come out of situation that forced him/her to commit the offence with active cooperation of the offender himself, instead of punishing him/her. Consequently, in the Social Service Act of Sweden there is no provision of any coercive measures. Schools generally try to solve their own problems of adolescent crimes and often have psychologists and social workers to help children with various behavioural problems. Most of the schools also have trained teachers to handle deviant behaviours. The level of the cooperation between the social services and the school however varies from municipality to municipality. Sweden has relatively low crime rates though it is increasing every year. The most common adolescent crimes are theft, burglaries, drug abuse, stealing of mobiles and other white-collar crimes. It was surprising to know that in a wealthy society like Sweden adolescents are engaged in petty crimes like stealing of mobile which is the most common juvenile behaviour in the society.

Sweden established National Board of Institutional Care in 1994 that is entrusted with the responsibility of juveniles who have been sentenced to care either under Drug and Alcohol Abuse Act (LVM) or the Young Persons Act (LVU) or by the District Courts according to the enforcement of Institutional Care of Young Persons Act (LSU). There are 35 Institutional Care Homes in the country accommodating 760 youths. As indicated earlier, the Swedish law believes in giving a second opportunity to the young offenders to improve their behaviour and be integrated in the mainstream of civil life,

therefore, there are four categories of homes in these institutions and juveniles are kept in these homes according to the severity of their crime with the provision to move from the most severe, with hardly any freedom, to the most lenient category of home where they enjoy considerable freedom to go to school and even visit their parents with or without guards. There is provision of schooling facility in these homes with one teacher for two students to give them education, vocational training, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Relationship Classes and Personal counselling, etc. Solution Focused Therapy (Non-directive Therapy) is used in these Care Homes in order to help these offenders to realise their problems and seek their own solutions.

As the part of programme visits were organised to different institutions. The first visit included an interaction with teachers and children of a local school. The interaction with teachers and student representatives revealed the flexible nature of Swedish school curriculum and participation of students in decision making process through student representatives. We were informed of the class council for each class and school council at the school level in which representatives from each class are members. They have council networks for sixth grade classes (12 years) which meet at different schools in municipality, besides for children of 13-18 years of age Youth net works are there. These networks organise different types of activities, and discussions, invite politicians for discussions on issues related to child welfare. In Sweden, all the children receive free education, and

even free Mid-day meals where they themselves have the right to discuss the preparation of their meals. The ethnic origin of students is kept in mind while preparing meals so as to include the food requirements of all the children. Another specific feature that was observed was the nutritious value of the food provided to the children. We shared lunch with children and since the school had some Asian children also we were lucky to get delicious curry and rice along with the continental food.

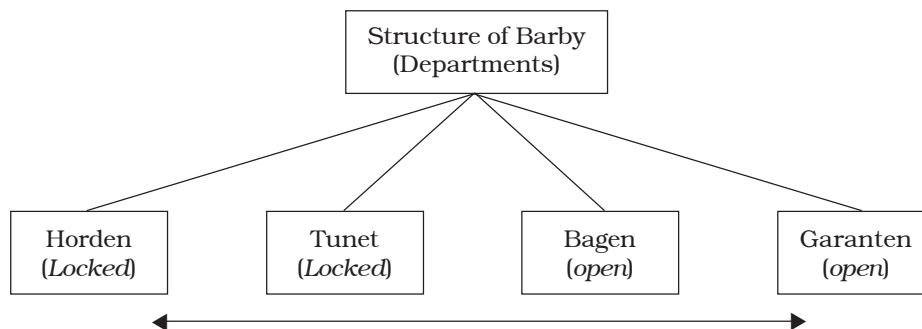
During the visit to the Prosecution Office of Stockholm and the group had a discussion with a prosecutor assigned to handle child cases. Surprisingly, the group was informed that Sweden has no set procedure for trying child cases. There are even situations where children

where kept incommunicado, and in isolation from members of their family during the investigation of the case filed against them. Unlike in other states, in Sweden the offender is not informed of his rights (Miranda warning) during arrest and investigation.

The group also visited the Central Police Station where situation of children subjected to abuse and how they felt about their offenders was presented. Sweden has Child helpline services known, as BRIS to help the child in distress. BRIS is an NGO started in 1971 to help children against abuse. The organisation is supported by around 10,000 member and 50 staff who help the child in distress. Children can contact them through toll free phones and its website- [www.brie.se](http://www.brie.se).

#### Visit to Barby – A Institutional Care Home

As the part of training a field visit to a remand home (known as Barby) for young offenders, was organised. Sweden established a National Board of Institutional Care in 1994 that is entrusted with the responsibility of the young people engaged in various criminal activities including drug abuse and have been sentenced to care either by county administrative courts according to Care of Drug and Alcohol Abuser Act (LVM), or Care of Young Persons Act (LVU), or by District Courts according to Enforcement of Institutional Care of Young Person Act (LSU). Sweden has at present 35 Institutional Care homes hosting 760 persons in them. This clearly indicates the comparatively crime free society and that provides opportunity to the authorities to take personal care of the inmates of these homes and try for their mainstreaming in the society.



As is clear from the diagram given above there are four departments of Barby, the institutional care home for adolescents, while the first two departments—Horden and Tunet appear to be more strict as the inmates here are put under lock and key, considerable freedom is available in Bagen and Garanten to the inmates. Persons convicted under LVU and LSU are brought to Horden. After staying here for some period and based on the behaviour they show during their stay they are moved to Tunet where there is provision for their treatment, education with the assistance of personal tutors (there is one teacher for two students), vocational training, aggression replacement training (twice in a week), etc. Besides once in a week relationship classes are also held for these persons once in a week along with personal counselling and awareness classes on current affairs, etc. Inmates of Bagen are allowed to go to nearby school with the escort and get education. They are also allowed to visit their homes escorted and sometimes unescorted, depending on their own behaviour. The last phase of a person's institutionalisation is in Garanten that has considerable freedom and adequate training is provided to these persons as a part of their inclusion back in the society when they are free. Though at each stage the level of freedom to the inmate is increased based on improvement in their behaviour, if there is any violence they are sent back to Horden and locked again. The person has to perform his/her journey from one home to other in order to go back to the society again. The maximum sentence under LSU is four years whereas it may be more if the person is convicted under LVU.

The system is impressive as it provides a second opportunity to a young person to improve his/her behaviour, especially to those committing a crime first time or under the influence of peer pressure. Since the number of inmates is almost negligible it is easier for the authorities to give personal attention on the education and vocational and personal counselling of inmates. Efforts are made to ensure that their confinement to institutional care does not hamper their education and prospect of employment once they are back to the society again. Though we cannot compare this elite system of juvenile justice due to the financial limitations, and sheer amount of adolescent crimes committed by our youth but this system does remind us with the philosophy of Gandhi who taught 'hate the crime and not the criminal'. Adolescents need to be given better treatment and a second

chance to improve if we really want to ensure the rights of child in true sense and promote living together in peace and harmony.

### **Corporal Punishment in Sweden**

One of the salient features of child's rights in Sweden is the prohibition of corporal punishment both at home and school. In fact, Sweden was the first country of the world to ban corporal punishment and various surveys have shown that it is strongly supported by the Swedish population also. The Swedish Corporal Punishment Ban was passed in 1979 under which parents and those responsible for children are forbidden to physically hit their children. It is strongly believed in Sweden that *in a free democracy word should be used as argument and if parents cannot convince children with words they can never convince them with violence*. The ban is

now an Act within *Chapter 6* of the *Parenthood and Guardian Code* which expressively forbids physical punishment and degrading treatment “*children are entitled to care, security, and a good upbringing. Children are to be treated with respect for their person and individuality and may not be subjected to corporal punishment or any other humiliating treatment*”. In order to educate parents on this law, a special Boucher was sent to every household in the country in 1979 explaining the antispanking ban, and how to bring up children with methods other than physical punishment. The Boucher was translated in several other languages also.

The subsequent surveys conducted by various agencies in the country revealed substantive decrease in corporal punishment as a result of this ban and subsequent awareness generation campaigns. Though we cannot say that the Swedish society is completely free from corporal punishment, yet, it is an example for us to learn where violence against children is a becoming a day-to-day affair both at home and school. It is true that child learns his/her first lesson of violence from home and unfortunately from the

parents which is later on reflected in their subsequent behaviours while dealing with problems in similar situations. Corporal punishment in school in our country is also increasing, and a time has come when we realise that corporal punishment to suppress indiscipline has only temporary effect and it may result in serious social problems in future.

To sum up my experiences on the status of child's rights in Swedish society, I would like to conclude that Sweden is a relatively child friendly and child-centred society. There are many laws protecting the *best interest of child* and many professionals devote their efforts to the welfare of children, with the result that the community has a large database of knowledge concerning children's needs and development. Efforts are consciously being made to offer children with best possible formative conditions within the family and in the community at large. We the members of developing country have much to learn from the Swedish experiences and realise that we can ensure a better future for the country only by ensuring better living conditions and rights for our children who are the future of this country.

## REFERENCES

- HINDBERG, BARBRO. 2001. *Ending Corporal Punishment*. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden.
- Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. 2004. *Strategies to Implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Fact Sheet, Sweden.
- NYBERG, LENA. 2006. *Juvenile Justice*. The Children's Ombudsman, Sweden.
- SYLWANDER, LOUISE. 2001. *Children as Participants*. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden.



# Perception of Community Members Regarding SSA and its Implementation

KASHYAPI AWASTHI\* and R.C. PATEL\*\*

---

## Abstract

---

*Universalisation of elementary education in India still remains elusive despite the various programmes initiated by the state. However, the two programmes of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and SSA stand out for its innovative design features and its emphasis on community participation. In fact, the National Policy on Education (1986), and its Programme of Action (1992), recommended not only promoting participation of community in primary education but also a move towards empowering the local community to make management decisions in this regard. The problem at village level can be better understood by members of the village and they can think of some viable solution. Considering this factor, Village Education Committees (VECs) are constituted for the management of education at village level and are deputed with powers to carry on the management of school. This generates interest amongst the community members and more and more people get involved in promoting education. The paper studies the different perceptions of the various village committees regarding SSA and its implementation and draws implication of the study towards the end of the paper.*

---

## Introduction

The quest for successful educational attainment of children has been an avowed goal worldwide. This is especially so with respect to primary education among various countries. In the Indian context, the national educational policies clearly envisage universalisation of

elementary education through provision of easy access to educational facilities, promotion of total enrolment, successful grade completion of enrolled children, and reduction in dropout rates and elevation in retention levels. However, the hard reality is that a considerable proportion of children are still deprived

---

\* *Research Scholar*, Centre for Advanced Study in Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara 390 002.

\*\* *Reader in Education*, Centre for Advanced Study in Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara 390 002.

of easy access to primary education, this is especially so with regard to girl child and those belonging to socio-economically backward sections of the population. The 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment has conferred the status of Fundamental Right to Education. With this provision also, no one really can be held responsible for non-compliance but a positive development seen today is the number of schemes and programmes launched in pursuance of the emphasis embodied in the NPE, its POA and the subsequent committees. These schemes and programmes include the scheme of Operation Blackboard (OB), Non-formal Education (NFE), Teacher Education (TE), *Mahila Samakhyas* (MS), state specific basic education programmes like the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project, Bihar Education Project, Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan, Education for All Project in Uttar Pradesh, *Shiksha Karmi* project in Rajasthan, National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education well known as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, District Primary Education Programme and *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*.

#### **Status of Elementary Education**

Consequent to several efforts, India has made enormous progress in terms of increase in institutions, teachers and students in elementary education. Access to school is no longer a major problem. At the primary stage, 94 per cent of the country's need population has schooling facilities within one kilometer and at the upper primary stage, it is 84%. Thus, the country has made impressive achievement in the elementary education sector. But the flip

side is that even after fifty years if independence, the goal supported by the constitutional mandate continues to be elusive despite all the efforts. The proportion of the illiterates in absolute number continues to increase from 294 millions in 1950 to 850 millions in 2000 A.D. which means we still harbor the largest number of illiterates in the world. Education despite being promoted on a large scale by the government still struggles to survive. Increase in dropout rate, decrease in enrolment rate. Lack of infrastructural facilities, indifferent attitude of teachers towards students and vague understanding of the benefits of education among the parents are some of the major ills plaguing educational scenario in our country (Joshi, 2004).

It is disconcerting to note that in 2001 also the pool of illiterates continues to be formidable as before. There is a common agreement among scholars that the performance of Indian education in case of all three dimensions of UEE, i.e. universal enrolment, universal retention, poorer in case of retention and poorest in case of achievement levels. There are problems relating to dropout rate, low levels of achievement and low participation of girls, tribal and other disadvantaged groups. Compounded with it are various systemic issues like poorly functioning schools, high teacher absenteeism, large number of teacher vacancies, poor quality of education and nearly one-lakh habitations in the country without schooling facility. In short the country is yet to achieve the elusive target of UEE, which means 100 per cent enrolment, and retention of children with quality education. To achieve this goal, community

involvement has been visualised as an important thrust area in various intervention programmes. It is realised that the village-based education can sustain for a longer period of time only if the village community is able to take over its running. Community participation in education not only ensures physical and human facilities at schools but also motivates the teachers to achieve higher quality of education. Thus, people's participation in the overall development of the nation has been recognised as a vital process since independence. Among the many centrally sponsored schemes aiming at achieving UEE, the DPEP and SSA stand out for its innovative design features and the emphasis that is laid on community participation.

#### **Education and Community Participation**

Education policy makers all over the world have come to view community participation as an effective means of promoting primary education, in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Further, community participation and empowerment in decision making has commonly been understood and propagated as an attempt to counteract centralised actions. It is assumed that community participation and empowerment has the potential to make a major contribution towards education people, increasing their awareness levels, improving their health and living conditions as well as enriching their life styles. The literacy campaigns in different parts of India have also, though not uniformly in all cases, demonstrated the potential role that community members can play for their betterment.

The National Policy on Education

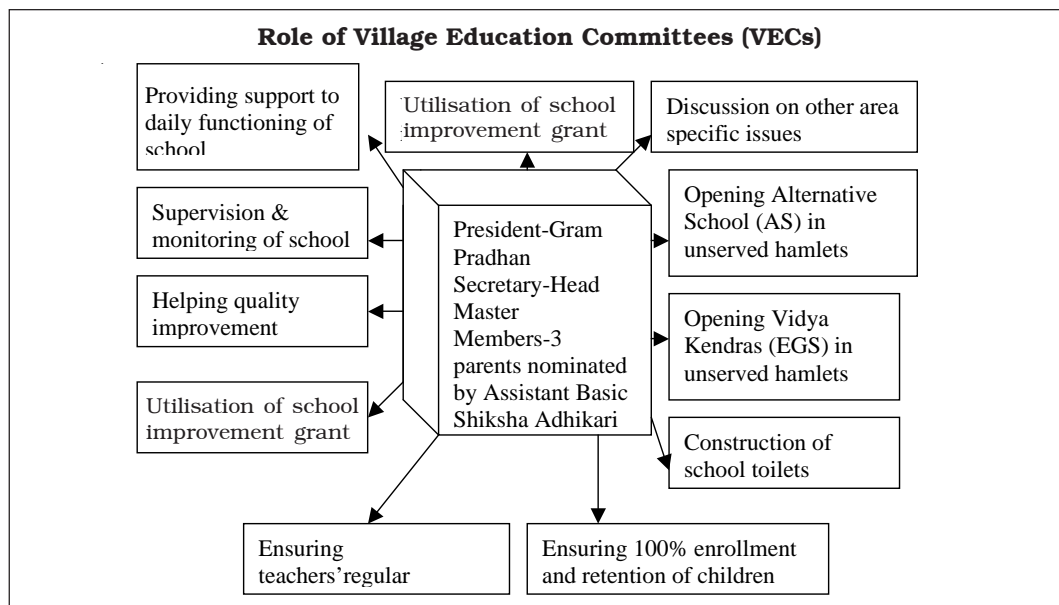
(1986), and its Programme of Action (1992), recommended not only promoting participation of community in primary education but also a move towards empowering the local community to make management decisions in this regard. The Eight-Plan Document clearly enunciated that "in the process of development people must operate and government must cooperate." Thus, community participation over the past decade has been appropriated by almost any group working for change, be it in agriculture, welfare or education. In order to address this issue, the government launched in 1995 the DPEP in a few educationally backward districts and through its experience in 2000 the "SSA" in the entire nation that once again called for community ownership of schools through decentralised participatory approach. These programmes have the promotion of community participation as a major thrust area in their activities; they have tried to evolve special strategies for bringing community and school closer, and also to involve community members in a significant manner for development of primary education. Numbers of informal and formal structures have come into existence such as Mother Teacher Associations (MTA) under the District Primary Education Programme, DPEP, Core Team and Women's Group under Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan apart from Village Education Committees (VECs) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in many states. Community participation and empowerment for primary education is gradually acquiring a place of importance not only in education but also in public administration.

### Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

*Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* is an effort to universalise elementary education by community participation of the school system. The main tasks are to enable the persons in the community, who still believe that issues related to access, enrolment, retention and quality education depend largely on government machineries and teachers, realise the actual situations and to motivate them for performing their specific tasks to reach the social target through SSA. Since then, concerted efforts have been made under SSA to maximize community participation. At the village level different committees like VEC, MTA, PTA, VCWC, etc., have been constituted and specific roles have been assigned to each to ensure community ownership of schools. The procedure of constitution and the functions of these committees are as follows:

### Village Education Committees (VECs)

VEC is constituted for the management of education at village level. The problem at village level can be better understood by members of the village and they can think of some viable solution. Considering this factor VEC is constituted and is deputed with powers to carry on the management of school. This would generate interest amongst the community members and more and more people would get involved in promoting education. The members of VEC are *Sarpanch* as the chairperson, coordinator of that primary school and coordinator of Mid-day Meal (MDM) scheme. The co-opted members could be a principal of secondary school, (if there is one) a retired teacher, parents of physically/mentally challenged child, parents of SC/ST children. The following figure shows the role and function of VEC.



### **MTA (Mother Teacher Association) and PTA (Parent Teacher Association)**

To get maximum cooperation from parents and other members of community in district primary education programmes, MTA and PTA are constituted. The framework of SSA envisages that the constitution of different members in these committees be on democratic grounds providing opportunity to people from all sections of the society. A five-member working committee of PTA and MTA be formed, amongst whom one to be the Chairperson. The principal of the primary school becomes the chairpersons of MTA/PTA.

Thus, SSA has very clearly demarcated the roles and responsibilities of each committee and empowered the numbers of community for effective supervision and monitoring. In this context, this study aims to assess the functioning of the committees formed at village level and their perception regarding the SSA and its implementation. This would lead to realistic and sustainable policy interventions. Presumably, community participation is with reference to the participation of those who are either left out or are participating from the margins. The study aims to find out.

- Is the constitution of the different committees as per the SSA framework?
- Is equal representation given to women and members of SC/ST or OBC?
- How effective are the different committees in performing their functions?

- Is there a feeling of ownership amongst the members of different communities?
- How are SSA and its implementation perceived by the members of different committees?
- How do the members other than those in the committees perceive SSA and its implementation?
- How effective are these management committees?
- What is the extent of preparedness of these committees to achieve the goals of SSA?

### **Title of the Study**

*Perception of Community Members Regarding SSA and its Implementation*

### **Objectives**

- To study the constitution of different committees, viz, VEC, PTA, MTA and others.
- To study the functioning of VEC, PTA, MTA and others.
- To study the perception of members of different committees, viz, VEC, PTA, MTA and others regarding SSA and its implementation.
- To study the perception of members other than those of different committees regarding SSA and its implementation.

### **Operationalisation of the Terms**

*Constitution:* In the present study 'constitution' means appointment of members in each committee as stipulated in SSA framework.

*Functioning:* Here, functioning means the roles and responsibilities of members of

each committee as envisaged in SSA framework.

*Perception:* Here, perception means the understanding or the way of seeing at of members as well as non-members of different committees towards SSA and its implementation.

*Limitation of the Study:* Probing the role/functioning of different committees formed at village level and studying their perception about SSA and its implementation is an extremely salient topic of research. This study by design is modest in its objectives and only sheds light on the perceptions that different members of the committees and other non-members have shown regarding the SSA and its implementation and the information that they gave about their functions and that which was evident from the records.

### **Methodology**

*Population:* The population constituted all the functionaries of primary school at village level in the Gujarat state.

*Sample:* The sample as selected through multi-stage random sampling procedure. Four districts of Gujarat, viz Sabarkantha, Navsari, Panchmahals and Bhavnagar respectively from each zone, i.e. North, South, East and West were selected randomly. In the second stage three blocks from each districts, in the third stage, four clusters from each block and in the fifth stage ten per cent schools from each cluster were selected randomly to study the constitution and functioning of different committees like VEC, MTA, PTA, VCWC, etc., constituted under SSA. The perception regarding SSA and its implementation was also

studied from the members of these committees and non-members. The non-members of the different committees were selected through snowball sampling technique. The table given at next page shows the distribution of schools in different districts.

### **Sources of the Data**

The data for the present study were collected from the members and non-members of different committees including the school records, the official documents of SSA and the coordinators of BRC and CRC.

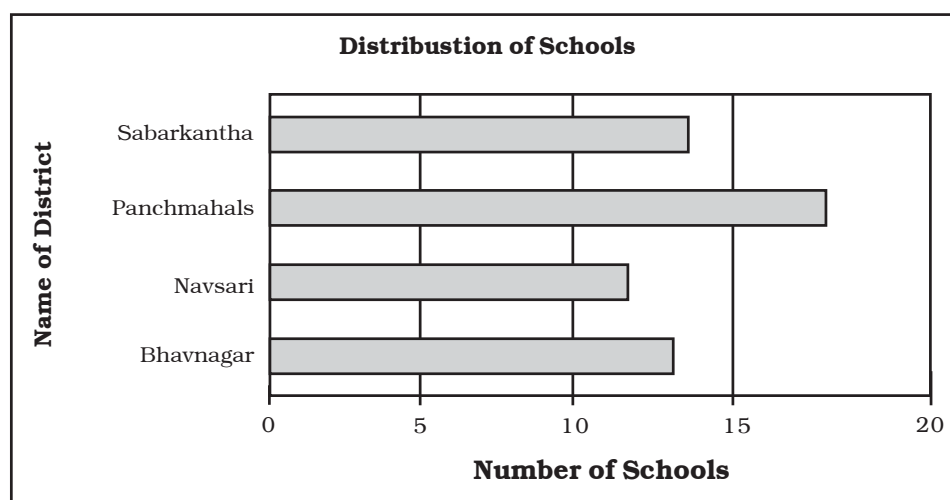
### **Tools**

The following tools were used in the study were prepared through a two-day workshop. The expertise from the department of education, Bhavnagar University and the Maharaja Sayajirao University Of Baroda and Gujarat Council of Primary Education, Gandhinagar were invited.

1. For the first and second objective, an informal schedule cum checklist was constructed to get the record of the constitution of the different committees such as VEC, PTA, MTA, SMC, VCWC, number of meetings conducted, attendance in the meetings, agenda discussed, type of community involvement, programmes initiated, follow up process, records of the expenditure, different roles performed, etc.
2. For the third and fourth objectives, a face-to-face interview was conducted for the community members. A detailed questionnaire targeting the key respondents like village *sarpanch*,

**Table: Distribution of Schools**

S.No.	District	Block	No. of Schools	Total
1	Bhavnagar	Mahuva	5	13
		Palitana	4	
		Vallabhipur	4	
2	Navsari	Gandevi	4	12
		Jalalpor	4	
		Vansda	4	
3	Panchmahals	Halol	6	17
		Lunawada	5	
		Santrampur	6	
4	Sabarkantha	Bhiloda	4	14
		Khedbrahma	6	
		Prantij	4	
	<b>Total</b>			<b>56</b>



*talati* and principal of the schools, coordinator or CRC and female members of gram panchayat, parents, teachers and few villagers was prepared and used to interact with the community members to study their perception about SSA

and its implementation at village level. The questionnaire contained questions to probe the different members on the different aspects of SSA including its structure, the formation of different committees under it and its functioning, the

teacher training, the grants, the community participation and the teaching learning activities.

3. A focus group interview schedule was also decided to probe into the complexities in the entire process of community participation. Key questions were prepared focusing on those areas and in those schools where there was a scope of further probing.

#### **Data Collection**

The research associate along with the field investigators made field visits to the sample districts to collect data. During the field visits, data from the official records were taken through the information schedule and through questionnaire different members of the committees or the key persons like principal, *sarpanch*, *talati*, coordinator or CRC, parents, coordinator of MDM and other members of the different committees were interviewed.

#### **Data Analysis**

The data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively based on the type of data. The factual information collected through objective one and two were analysed quantitatively by using frequency and percentage analysis. Information obtained through observation schedule, face-to-face interviews, informal interactions and focus group interview was qualitatively analysed through qualitative content analysis technique which includes (a) Summarising: it means to reduce the data, thus drawing out only the most relevant information. (b) Explication: it

means to explain in a formal way drawing implications and removing the ambiguous words or statements (c) structuring: it means to organise the data therein giving it a form based on the objectives of the study.

#### **Major findings**

- With regard to the constitution of different communities, it was found that all the sample schools constituted all the communities.
- In 76.86% schools, the committees were constituted as per norms in the SSA framework.
- In 19.64% school members were co-opted in different committees.
- In 83.28 schools, the members had received community leadership training.
- In 66.5% schools all the members were literate.
- In 19.58% schools, no official records were found.
- In 42% school, the members met only to discuss the condition of different festivals like Pravesh Utsav, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 15<sup>th</sup> August and if orders were received from GCPE, Gandhinagar.
- In 38% schools, the members met only to discuss the utilisation of grants.
- In 20% schools, the members met with a constructive agenda of increasing enrolment, improving retention rates and increasing the achievement levels.
- With regard to the grants, except the TLM grant; the members of the different committees and the non-members shared a similar view that the grants have helped improve the



- dilapidated conditions of the primary schools.
- As far as the TLM grants are concerned, a mixed response has come from the members as well as non-members. There were very few who enjoyed teaching through TLMs and did not mind maintaining their records, largely teachers said that they are burdened with the maintenance of records, there is no new idea for preparation of TLM, children cannot help in making these TLMs and so the concept of involving children should be done away with. Children largely were unaware of what was displayed in the classrooms in the form of TLMs but wherever the TLMs were used effectively children enjoyed studying.
  - The study revealed the inappropriate use of the grants especially the sanitation facility, drinking water facility and the computer facility which in most schools were out of order.
  - The structure of SSA as perceived by the members has helped minimise the corruption in the receipt of grants and the decentralised structure with division of labour has ensured quick and effective functioning. Here the non-members were not much aware of the decentralised structure though they knew that different meetings were held at school of different purpose.
  - The community participation has made them feel comfortable and has given them an opportunity to express their opinions in matters regarding the primary education of village. SSA has helped in bringing awareness in parents with respect to the education of their wards and the functions of the school.
  - With regard to the teacher training, output of teachers training was largely found to be dependent on the way of organisation of these trainings and the attitude of individual teachers.
  - The failure of the teacher training could be largely attributed to the unequal distribution of the trainings through out the year, unavailability of experts or the required expertise of the experts and lack of quality training materials.
  - With regard to the achievement of the students, there was an increase in the number of the students passing out in the upper most class since three consecutive years in the sample districts. Out of fifty six sample schools, in the year 2002-03; in twenty one (37.5%) schools, the numbers of pass outs were same as the number appeared. While in 2003-04, this number increased to twenty eight (50.0%) and in 2004-05 to thirty two (57.1%) schools.

### Discussion

The need to expand and upgrade elementary education in the country had been recognised as early as 1950 and India made its commitment for it in the constitution. While the goal of UEE is still not within reach, it needs to be acknowledged that government has been making consistent efforts towards it. Among the most efficacious interventions to ensure speedy and expeditious realisations of the goal of universal access along with the stipulations of quality results have been the DPEP and

SSA. Both these programmes had a focus of concern to accelerate the national resolve to achieve UEE in a time bound manner through decentralised planning and community ownership. The education policy makers as well as bureaucrats all over the world have come to realise the indispensable role of community in the successful implementation of any extension and development programme as a participant in decision making, implementation and utilising the benefit of the programme. Since then concerted efforts have been made to maximise community participation in different sectors. In the elementary education sector, the twin programmes through constitution of different communities for the school management at different levels ensured participation of community members.

The present study in this context is an effort to study the constitution and the functioning of different committees formed at village level and to study the perception of the members involved with regard to SSA and its implementation. Education policy makers are looking forward towards such studies to improve the efficiency of the forthcoming interventions and lead to realistic and sustainable policies. Thus, the present research is an attempt to know the way the people involve at grass root level perceive such a robust programme. Moreover, is there any difference in the perception of the members and the non-members of different committees? Answering this question would entail studying the constitution and functioning of the committees and perception of the community members.

With regard to the constitution of the different committees like VEC, MTA, PTA and VCWC, all of these were constituted. Of these the constitution of VEC was as per the norms of SSA while the constitution of MTA and PTA in maximum cases was by the choice of the principal and not on democratic grounds. Of the fifty six sample schools, only in seven of them the principal reported that they had called a meeting of all the parents and elected members on the working committee of MTA and PTA. In case of VCWC the resolutions for the election of members were not found on the record books but the headmaster in many cases reported that VCWC was constituted with the consent of the members on VCWC working committee were elected from VEC. In few cases the members on VCWC working committee were elected from VEC or PTA itself. Here, it may be noted that the discussion is on the basis of results drawn from the records and interaction with headmaster and other members of the committee.

The framework of SSA envisaged maximum participation of the community members and therefore specified in its norms the democratic election of the members on the working committee of MTA and PTA. But the field visits, records and interactions made it evident that the constitution of MTA and PTA was by choice, which in the words of the head master was based on the individual parent's enthusiasm, willingness and literacy status. Of the fifty-six sample schools, in eleven (19.64%) school members were co-opted on different committees. This may be due to the fact that from the list of the members who could be co-opted on VEC, PTA and MTA

do not exist for example, a principal of higher secondary school, a retired teacher, parents of handicapped children, *angan wadi* workers or parents belonging to SC/ST category.

The constitution of these committees at village level is with the sole aim of achieving the targets of UEE through different interventions. Trainings are imparted to these members to make them aware of their responsibilities. The results of the study however reveal that only in twenty-six (46.4%) schools, all the members had received community leadership training while in nineteen schools either half or one third members have received training and in five schools none of the members were trained while six schools had no information. The community leadership training is imparted only once in a year. The researcher feels that at places where half or one third members are trained, the constitution of the committees must have changed after the training was imparted or it may be due to the quality of the trainings that the trainees failed to recognise that they were being trained. This interpretation was drawn from the interaction of the coordinators of CRC and BRC with the different members of the committees. In an interaction with the research team, the members refused to have received training while the coordinators of CRC and BRC made attempts to persuade them that the day had assembled at the bahawan was a training session. The lack of understanding at the trainings also throws light on the literacy status of the members because still only thirty six (64.3%) schools, all the members were literate while in twelve (21.31%) schools,

half the members and in three (5.4%) schools one third of the members were literate of which most of them were only at the stage of learning their signature, while thumb impressions still decorated the official records of the schools. This is the researcher feels will answer how and why a programme which seems to be very appropriate at planning stage fails at implementation.

Probing into the matter entails a discussion on the functioning of these committees. To encompass the functioning of the different committees, the discussion is divided into following three stages:

(1) meetings (2) community mobilisation (3) development of school.

With regard to the meetings, it is important to discuss that how many times in a year the members met, how many members met, what was the purpose of the meetings, when were these meetings arranged was a follow up of the meetings ensured and the reasons behind the existing status. The findings of the study exposed the following facts that while forty five (80%) schools fulfilled the minimum requirement of three meetings a year, only in sixteen (28.6%) schools all the members attended the meetings, in other sixteen (28.6%) schools half of the members attended the meetings and in thirteen (23.2%) school meetings were conducted without fulfilling the requirement of quorum. It is also worth noting that in twenty four (42.9%) schools, all the three meetings were arranged between May to August and one in December mainly for conduction of Pravesh Utsav and celebration of Independence Day and Republic Day. In eleven (19.6%) schools,

no data was available and in twenty one (37.5%) schools there was distribution of meetings through out the year. The finding also disclosed one very important aspect that in twenty four (42%) schools, the members met only to discuss the celebration of different festivals while in twenty one (38%) schools the members met with a constructive agenda of increasing enrolment, improving retention rates and increasing achievement levels. One most significant observation was that there were joint meetings of all the committees, viz VEC, PTA, MTA and VCWC in all sample schools except for the one meeting which was held to announce the elected members of MTA, PTA and VCWC. On the basis of the field experiences and the interactions with the different members and non-members of the committees, it can be said that as far as the meetings are concerned, everything seems to be going finely on records but the distribution of meetings only between May to August and the discussion being limited to celebration of festivals and utilisation of grants exposes the lackadaisical attitude of the functionaries, who are making just piece meal services to the programme and the nation as a whole. The joint meetings of the different committees though they have their own benefits have miserably failed to fulfill the main purpose of the constitution of MTAs and PTAs. The parents especially mothers who otherwise remain confined to the four walls of the house or their veils should get an opportunity to share their views in public, to come forward and fight for their wards education, to promote the education of their daughters. In the joint

meetings, the women again shy away and due to socio-cultural bindings do not open up or gather the courage to voice their beliefs. Thus, the joint meetings seem to have brutally killed the very purpose of MTAs and PTAs. Not only had that but the academic issues had also taken a back seat. The results show that (87.5%) forty nine out of fifty six schools took follow up of the resolutions made in the VEC meetings. The significance of this finding cannot be denied but it needs to be considered in the light of the agenda made and that the results fo follow up were solely based on the responses of the committee members.

Community mobilisation is also one of the important functions of the different committees. But it was sad to see that community mobilisations was understood only in terms of gathering funds from the community in cash or in kind or seeking help for the celebration of different festivals and for physical development of school. A glance at the statistics reveals that in thirty two (57.1%) schools the community raised funds for construction of balmitra varg (a child friendly classroom); in twenty five (44.6%) schools the contribution was in kind. At other places modest support in cash/kind was received. Different kind of support was received at different schools based on the socio-economic status of the people. Some of these included buying slates and pens, preparing play ground for children, procuring benches or infrastructure items such as furniture, fans, etc. play equipments, rendering services like carpentry, masonry, cooking, helping in celebration of Independence Day, Republic Day and Pravesh Utsav.

One can say that the ideology and trend of community involvement in children's education has certainly begun but has been limited to donations only. This speaks the lack of understanding of the functionaries, be it the head master or the coordinators of BRC and CRC regarding community mobilisation. Educating the functionaries regarding the involvement of community members not only for donations or celebration of festivals but also for promotion of different school activities is required. The success of SSA depends on quality of community based planning, implementation and monitoring process. The lack of involvement of the community members at all these exposes their lack of awareness and sensitisation regarding their roles and powers bestowed on them. The field experience of the researcher are a witness to the misconception of the community members who still believe that power lies with somebody else and they are just a party to all the happenings at school but do not have any voice in it. Thus community based planning and implementation does not seem to be working and community based monitoring ensuring transparency remains a distant dream. Although in thirty-nine (69.6%) schools, the community members reported that they ensured the regularity of the teachers but there is still no check on the quality of classroom interactions and the learning as such. The community does not seem to focus much on retention and quality education. The central and state governments have laid excessive emphasis on enrolment and still we are not able to achieve 100 per cent

enrolment. In Gujarat itself 2.84 lakh children are still out of school. The findings show that in forty five (80.4%) schools, regular efforts were made to increase enrolment, in forty four (78.6%) schools, the community members help in conducting surveys, in forty three (71.4%) schools the members contacted the parents in case of irregularity of their wards and encouraged them for girls' education. even the Chief Minister and the Education Minister of the state are figured begging from people the education of their wards especially the girl child. The failure at the enrolment level itself speaks of the quality of education, which fails to attract the children, sustain them and provide them minimum vocational inputs required to earn a day's living. Gandhi's basic education becomes inevitable here because a hungry man cannot be fed with countries, economic is spiritual for him. So to sustain the interest of the learners and to make them self reliant, modification in our educational system is inevitable. In thirty seven (66.1%) schools, the members of different committees sought help from the community members to develop the infrastructure of the school. In forty three (76.8%) schools, the library facility was available and in every twenty four (42.9%) schools, the books were issued to the different community members, in eleven (16.1%) schools only children were the beneficiaries. Here, it is noteworthy that only four schools had a record of the books in the library and had maintained an issue register. While at some of the schools, the books were piled and tied with a string and kept in cupboards. This throws light on the maintenance of the school facilities.

With reference to the development of the schools and the utilisation of the grants the researcher felt a lack of vision and planning on the part of the members on different committees since in one of the schools a pillar was constructed inside the classroom. Not only that but it seemed that the school was least worried about the governmental funds and an attitude that since amount is provided it has to be utilised was prevailing. In one of the schools, in spite of having sanitation facility through SSA grants, another sanitation facility was being constructed under the grant available at the district.

An additional classroom was being constructed but there was no planning in any of the construction. Everything seemed to be going on in a haphazard manner. It is austerity in monitoring only that can establish the appropriate uses of the grants. The researcher draws these inferences through the field observation wherein at many places the toilets were either in very bad shape and no body bothers about its hygiene or if they are in good shape then they were either kept locked or were used by the teacher, the water tank without potable drinking water, the MDM shed built near the toilet, the OBB grants utilised in purchasing revolving chair, office table, lockers for teachers and cup boards for office use, the TLM grants were spent either in purchasing readymade TLMs or charts, fevicol, scissors and coloured pens and as far as its uses is concerned, the children were rarely aware of what these pictures depict. While on records in thirty nine (69.6%) schools, the VEC members reported to have helped the school in creating child-centric

environment, in thirty eight (67.9%) schools effort were made to improve the quality of education, in nineteen (33.9%) schools, the members on different committees said to have helped in ALS centres, in thirty six (64.3%) schools, the efforts to reduce dropout rates were reported. However, the out-of-school children, low retention rates, high dropout and low achievement levels expose these brazen realities. Insight gained from this and previous researches related to classroom transaction and teacher effectiveness, this serve as a mirror for the ongoing teaching-learning practices. It also lays forward one of the several explanations for the performances below expected levels. These demands further researches to study the effectiveness of the programmes not only in terms of the opinions of the functionaries and the beneficiaries but also in terms of the effective field researches. Here in this regard, an attempt to study the perceptions of members and non-members of different committees has been made.

With regard to the perceptions of members and non-members of different committees about SSA and its implementation, a mixed response was obtained from both on different dimensions of the programme. The SSA programme was divided into following four different dimensions for ease of data collection and analysis.

1. Primary school and SSA grants
2. Primary school and SSA structure
3. Primary school and community involvement
4. Primary school and teacher training.

The members of the community did not differ largely on the dimension of community involvement and SSA grant. With regard to the availability of the grants and its utilisation, more than fifty per cent of the schools receive the entire grant timely and utilised it. These grants undoubtedly helped the growth of infrastructural facilities of the schools and the community involvement gave voice to the aspirations of the otherwise mute villagers. This response was found to be common among most of the sample schools except a few were in complain regarding inappropriate utilisation of grants and differential treatment to members of different categories were made. The researcher also observed that many schools had to no planning regarding the uses of grants. Since the government sanctions grant for development, repairing and sanitation, they were simply utilising the amount. In response to the management structure of SSA, the head master and few other community members expressed great satisfaction in the decentralised structure which helped the distribution of responsibilities and further develop the feeling of ownership through more and more involvement of people. While at other places, the coordinators of BRC and CRC expressed their dissatisfaction. They said that, SSA has created a parallel structure at different levels and accorded it with the financial powers while on the other hand there was an already existing structure. For the want of proper coordination between these two structures, the progress of the schools suffers. In one of the schools, the construction task was hampered due to micro level politics. The following is a

picture of that school with single classroom, fifty students and two teachers.

For the non-members of the committee, the structures of SSA were meaningless since many of them were not aware of the different committees formed, their role and contribution towards the school activities and the incentive schemes. They complain that they were hardly invited for school matters except on *Prawesh Utsav* and Independence Day and Republic day. The only change they could make out with the coming of this new structure was the over engagement of the headmaster and the teachers in paper work and meetings. The researcher feels that the lack of planning and organisation of the office task and the training probably let to such an inference. Probing further, demands discussions on the teacher training. With regard to teacher training, neither the teaching fraternity nor the community members were satisfied the way the teacher trainings were organised and the quality they delivered. Quality improvement of classroom transactions and development of competence and efficiency of teachers is one of the significant strategies of SSA. A huge fund flows into for quality educations with phenomenal importance to improving quality of teachers through teacher trainings. The researcher visited four training sessions at four different blocks and observed that not one of them provided the required teaching skills, the desirable attitude and mindset among the teachers. The sessions included a welcome speech, a political speech, some information, tea and breakfast sessions, gossips and a very little sharing of knowledge by few sincere teachers.

Numbers of researches have been conducted in the area of the teachers training and most of them endorsed the research's field observations. Barik (2001) evaluated teachers' training and found that only in 20% classes activity based learning was going on; out of which a very few teachers were not using TLMs. Mishra(2000) also reported that only 20% teachers used activity method of teaching 60% teachers did not prepare lessons,66% teachers did not conduct evaluation at the conclusions of the class period, and 80% schools did not have activity books. Most of the schools used local market TLMs. Sharma (2000) conducted a feed back study of teachers training inputs and found that majority of teachers after receiving training taught in the routine/ traditional way without involving students. Teaching methods varied from lecturing to reading to question-answer, to mix of all these. Student-teacher relationships were formal, in general; evaluation of learning was not taken seriously. In spite of so many evidences the teacher trainings throughout the country are still miserable and have contributed little towards quality improvement of teachers. Of the several explanations forwarded, it has been observed, that the attitude of teachers is of phenomenal importance. The teachers in general feel that training are only for novice, moreover training do not cater to their needs and are in efficient to satisfy their hunger for innovative strategies and teaching skills, Chaudhari (2000) conducted a study on training needs of primary school principals and found that they required training in school planning and evaluation, financial, educational

and school management. Patel (2000) also studied the training needs found that teachers required trainings for preparation of quality TLMs, while the community members and the coordinators of BRC and CRC felt a need for developing desirable attitude and mind set among teachers. Thus the effect of training has to be observed in real life context, through feedback from trainees and on the basis of difference between entry and exit - level behavioral/ attitude/ knowledge correlates.

Considering the present status of community involvement, the teaching learning process and the efforts made by the functionaries to improve the quality of educations and comparing it with the achievement of the students, an increasing trend in the achievement of the students in terms of the number of the students passing out was observed. It suggests that although the functioning of the primary schools is not very encouraging still in the last three years an increase in the numbers of schools, where the students who cleared the exams were same as those appeared was found. However as far as the number of students getting more than 60% was concerned there was no improvement in the last three years.

With out any more ado, let me say, I am convinced more than ever that UEE cannot be achieved in the foreseeable future just by pursuit of quantitative goals. To recall the saying of Gandhi, if one takes care of the means, the end would take care of themselves. If one takes care of the means, in this case the attitude of the functionaries, the teaching learning processes capacity building of all the functionaries, institutional



strengthening and well-structured reforms at different levels in different aspects, the quantitative goals would achieve themselves. Let me buttress my contentions by extrapolating Gandhi's saying. If, instead of taking care of the means, one is driven by the ends, what is achieved is not UEE but inflated and fudged statistics.

The finding of the present study though indicate some positive hope, nevertheless they are not very encouraging or tempting indicate something conclusive, and with further exploration we will perhaps be able to say more in this regard. To conclude the researcher would like to say that what all SSA is doing is like engaging in exploratory skirmishes and what is now needed is a forced march in seven league boots. Here the researcher may be blamed for raising only doubts and questions and offering no answers at all. Para phrasing hamlet, one may even say questions, questions and questions. But then as Poincare, the celebrated French mathematician and philosopher, sagaciously put it, the question is not what the answer is but what the question is. Only right questioning can right answer be elicited.

### **Implications of the Study**

"I enjoy teaching as it can shape children to be good citizen of our country. So I want to become a teacher or a soldier to defend my country", said a child from Meghalaya in an interaction with our Honorable President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Such being the importance of teacher in character making and nation building teacher education and teacher

trainings need to be well-planned and organised.

- SSA spends rupees seventy per teacher per day amounting to approximately twenty-five crore yearly, for a twenty-day training. Thus, the content material designed needs to be rich, the DIET lectures, the coordinator of BRC and CRC, head teacher and other expert teacher need to be identified on the basis of their competency and trained in that area who, in turn, are required to give training to other master trainers who will conduct training at their cluster level. Meeting need to be distributed evenly through out the year and should cater to the needs of the individual teachers instead of a centralised planning.
- Some of the members in the school committees, are part of the committee by of the position they hold and their being part of the school committees was merely ornamental or obligatory in nature. There is a need to make a shift in the constitutional structure of the school committees, from status-quo committees to functional committees for the betterment of the school and for the cause of education.
- There is a need for orienting the members of the schools committees and community members regarding their rights and duties towards the school. The component of community based monitoring and accountability to the community and assurance of transparency towards the community can be realised if the

community are sensitised and trained for the jobs assigned to them. The community needs to move from *involvement to empowerment* which is possible only when the community is aware about its power. In the lack of above prerequisites, the changes that are brought as part of decentralised management merely remain on paper.

- It is essential that the decentralised structure should characterise freedom of operation in the village level. Emphasis should be on the quality education that is provided to the children in the school rather than the elaborate paper work that the functionaries are expected to maintain to substantiate the work that they have done. This system of appraisal takes away a substantial amount of precious time and energy that school teachers can use for improvement of their teaching learning process. Too much of reliance on paperwork has made the whole act ritualistic and burdensome. In order to mobilise the community support for education; there is a need to appreciate the local culture and local context. This entails a blend of the local flavour into the educational programme to create a greater sense of belongingness among the community members for the educational programmed.
- The study has revealed that most of the children live below the poverty line and education becomes meaningless for them if their basic food needs are not met. The study has also alluded that irregularity in the attendance of children has mainly due to the fields while the girls stayed back at home to look after their younger siblings so that their family could manage to meet their ends. On the basis of the research's field observations and the prevailing poverty in rural India, it is very much recommended that children should be provided some vocational education/local craft based education which may not be burdensome, may identify with the local culture and tradition and at the same time may help them earn their daily wages.
- There is typically a lack of significant technical and management skills of local planning. Such training programme should focus in part on management information system and quantitative skills. The planning and management skills that are needed combined with the quantitative (facts and figures) and interpersonal skills form the basis of training. Thus, there is a serious need to envisage a situation where local communities should be called upon to be wholly self-reliant. State level agencies particularly in educational development. It is difficult to envisage a situation where local communities should be called upon to be wholly self-reliant. State level agencies will have an important role to play and will have to work in collaboration with the parallel structure created at different levels.

### REFERENCES

- AGRAWAL, D.S. 1997. The Learned Path: An Experience of GO-NGO Collaboration in the *Shiksha Karmi Project in Negotiating Spaces between Government and Non-government Organisations in Rajasthan*, Vol. 2, 1998. Srijan/Pradan, New Delhi.
- AHMAD, M., C.K. MING, A.K. JALALUDDIN and K. RAMCHANDRAN. 1991. *Basic Education and National Development*, UNICEF, New York.
- AHMAD, M.J. 2000. "Effect of Teacher Training on Teaching Learning Process in Primary Schools" in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (Eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- BARBARINO, S.J. 1987. "A Comparison of the Perception of High School Principals and Parent Organisation Presidents Regarding Actual and Ideal Parental Involvement in the School, District And Community" in *Dissertation Abstract International*, 49 (1).
- BARIK, A.K. 2001. "Evaluation of Teacher's Training" in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- BELL, J.S. 1986. "A Study of the Relationship between Community Participation in Educational Governance and the Socio-political Environment of the School Board" in *Dissertation Abstract International*, 47 (8).
- BUCH, M.B. and G.R. SUDAME. 1990. Study of Achievements of Urban Primary School-children", in *Fifth Survey of Educational Research*, Volume 1 (1998-2002). NCERT, New Delhi.
- CHAUDHARI B.P. 2000. "A Study of Training Needs and Facilities in Training of Primary Teachers" in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (Eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- DEI, G. 2000. "Evaluation of Teachers Training Imparted on Classroom Transactions—An Impact Study of DPEP Interventions", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- ELLER, J. 2004. *Effective Group Facilitation in Education*. Corwin Press, Sage Publications Company, California.
- GARG, A. 2002. "An Assessment of Training Programme of In-service Teachers", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- GARG, B.R. 2004. *Educational Documents in Free India*. Tarun Offset Printers, New Delhi.
- GILBERT, G.D. 1985. "Community Education as a Factor Affecting Attitudes of Selected Opinion Leaders Towards Public Schools in Arkansas", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (5).
- GOVINDA, R. (ed.) 2002. *India Education Report*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
- GOVINDA R. 1997. *Decentralisation of Education Management Experiences from South Asia*. UNESCO, Paris.
- GOVINDA R. 2003. Dynamics of Decentralised Management in Education, in GOVINDA R and R. DIWAN (eds.) *Community Participation and Empowerment in Primary Education*. Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- GOVINDA R. and R. DIWAN. 2003. *Community Participation and Empowerment in Primary Education*. Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- GRIGSBY, L.D. 1985. "An Analysis of Continuing Education—Community Service Programs in the Public Junior Community Colleges of the Texas". *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (5).

- GUPTA, R.K. and D. GUPTA. 1992. "Study of the Extent of Utilisation of the Equipment and Educational Materials Supplied to Primary Schools in Three States, viz Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu, under Centrally Sponsored OBB Scheme", in *Fifth Survey of Educational Research*, Vol. 1 (1998-2002). NCERT, New Delhi.
- JOSHI, J.B. 2000. "A Study of Primary Teachers' Opinions towards In-service Training in Banaskantha District", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- JUNEJA, N. 2004. "Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2004—The Challenge for Rural Areas" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- KHAN, D, G. 2004. "Social Mobilization and Rural Empowerment", In *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- KHATTIYAR, S., J. LALL and M. SINGH. 1997. "A Desirable Devide: A Study of Collaboration between Lok Jumbish Parishad and NGOs for Universalisation of Primary Education in Rajathan", in *Negotiating Spaces, Collaboration between Government and Non-government Organisations in Rajasthan*, Vol 2 1998. Srijan/ Pradan, New Delhi.
- KRISHNAMURTHY. 1985. A Study of Position of Enrolment of Children in the Age Group 6-13 Years and Problems Involved in their Enrolment, SCERT, Andhra Pradesh, in *Fourth Survey of Research in Education* (1991-96). NCERT, New Delhi.
- KUMAR, A. 2004. "Panchayat Raj and Education in Rural Areas-The Madhya Pradesh Model" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- KUMAR, S., R.C. PATEL and A. MEHTA. 1998. *A Study on Community Participation and School Effectiveness*, Department of Education, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.
- KUMAR, S. 2004. "Education for Girls—Building Bridges for Girls" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- KUKRETI, B.R. and M. SAXENA, M. 2004. "Dropout Problem among Tribal Students at School Level: A Case Study" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- LUCHS, K.P. 1980. "Selected Changes in Urban High School Students after Participation in Community Based Learning and Servcie Activities", *Dissertation Abstract Inrternational*, 42 (8).
- MENON P. 1999. *Functioning of Village Education Committee: A Study of Haryana*. NIEPA, New Delhi.
- MISHRA N. 2000. "Evaluation of Teachers' Training Imparted and Classroom Transactions—An Impact Study of DPEP Interventions", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- MITCHELL, B. 1987. "Percpetion of Board of Education Members, Community Leaders and Other Citizens Relative to School Board and Functions, School Reform Proposals and Current Issues in Education", *Dissertation Abstract Inrternational*, 49 (1).
- MITTAL, A. 2004. "Rural Education-Issues and Initiatives" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- MOHAMMAD, A. 1985. "An Assessment of the Perceptions of Education Officers, Head Masters and Parents on the Impact of the Implementation of Universal Primary Educational Programme in Gongola State, Nigeria", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 47 (5).

- NAIK, S. 1992. Development of the Primary Education in Sundargarh District, Orissa, with Special Emphasis on the Role Played by Local Leadership. Ph.D Education North Eastern Hill University in *Fifth Survey of Educational Research* (1998-2002). NCERT, New Delhi.
- NG' WANDU, P.Y. 1981. "Factors Affecting the Participation of Primary School Teachers in Village Community Leadership in Tanzania", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 42 (8).
- PUSHPANATHAN. 2002. *The Decentralised Management of District Primary Education Programme*. CASE, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.
- RAMCHANDRAN. 2004. *Gender and Social Equity in Primary Education, Hierarchies, Access*. Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- RAMCHANDRAN, V. 2004. "Backward and Forward Linkages that Strengthen Primary Education" in *Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development*, 52 (11).
- RANA, A.K. 2001. "Impact of Teachers Training on Activity-based Participatory Teaching Learning Processes in Classroom Transactions", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- RAO, P.D.K. 1994. *A Study on Community Participation Strengthening Primary Education under DPEP, Cheepurupalli in Andhra Pradesh*. DPEP, Andhra Pradesh.
- RAO, D.B. 2004. *Education for All: Issues and Trends*. Efficient Offset Printers, New Delhi.
- RESTAK, L.A. 1985. "A Study to Assess the Monitoring of Off Campus Programmes by State Agencies and Regional Accrediting Associations", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (5).
- SATYABALAN, V. 1993. *Effectiveness of Primary Education in Rural Areas of Tamil Nadu*, An Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Education, CASE, The Maharaja Sayajirao, University of Baroda, Vadodara.
- SAXENA, R.R. and S.C. MITTAL. 1996. Impact of Mid-day Meal Programme on Enrolment and retention at Primary Stage, in *Fourth Survey of Research in Education*, (1991-96). NCERT, New Delhi.
- SELLERS, J.P. 1985. "Perceptions of Texas Public School Teachers and Principals Regarding Recommendations for Educational Reform", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (5).
- SHARMA, C. 1997. "A Study on UEE with Special Reference to Enrolment and Retention at Biswanth Charali Block in Sonitour District in Assam, DIET:" Assam in *Fifth Survey of Educational Research* Vol. 1 (1998-2002). NCERT, New Delhi.
- SINGH, K.S. 2002. "Use and Creation of Low Cost Material for Effective Learning. 80% Teachers Received TLM", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- SWAIN. 1998. *Effectiveness of Parent Teacher Association in Achieving UEE*. DIET, Khoenjhar, Orissa.
- SWAIN, T. 2001. "Evaluation of Teachers, Training in Relation to Classroom Transactions—An Impact Study of DPEP Interventions", in SRIVASTAVA, A.B.L. and N. BALA (eds.) *DPEP Impact on Primary Education*. Ed-CIL.
- WILLIAM, D. 1984. "A Study of the Relationship between Elementary School Parents Opinion of Parent Teacher Conferences and Attitude toward the Elementary Schools", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (5).

- WILLIAMS, N.L. 1984. "An Analysis of Selected Community Education Programs in Mississippi as Perceived by Selected Groups in Each District", *Dissertation Abstract International*, 46 (6).
- Government of India. 1995. *District Primary Education Programmes Guidelines*. Department of Education, MHRD, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 1995. *DPEP Overview*. Department of Education, MHRD, New Delhi.
- Ed-CIL. 1999. *Community Mobilisation and Empowerment for Universalisation of Primary Education*, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 1993. *Education for All-The Indian Scene*. Department of Education, MHRD, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 1986. *National Policy on Education-1986*. MHRD, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 1992. *Programme for Action-1992*. Department of Education, MHRD, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 2001. *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan - A Programme for Universal Elementary Education, Framework for Implementation*. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, MHRD, New Delhi.
- Government of India. 2001. *Selected Educational Statistics, 1999-2000*. MHRD, New Delhi.

# Quality Education: Perception of Students

*(With reference to the Higher Secondary Level)*

RAMAKAR RAIZADA\*

---

## Abstract

---

*Students are ultimate stakeholders and direct consumers of the education system who feel and judge the quality of education. Their perception and feelings for quality education may go a long way in improving the system. National Policy on Education (1986), Programme of Action (1992), National Curriculum Framework (2005), etc. have called for substantial improvement in the quality of school education. But, how students perceive the concept of quality education and what expectations they have in this regard is an important issue. The paper conceptualises students' perception about their school environment and facilities of education with their likings and reasons for weakness in different school subjects at higher secondary level. The paper also suggests changes in classroom practices and shift in position of the teacher from transmitter of information to facilitator for construction of knowledge in the minds of students.*

---

School education has tremendous significance in one's life. It aims at shaping the personality of an individual by providing right kind of inputs throughout all the stages – primary, secondary and higher. The school education draws its aim from the society and accordingly designs its content and also the pedagogy. In this context, the policy documents and curriculum frameworks which provide guidelines to the entire school education system are important. India has its education policies, i.e. 1968 and 1986 (with its Programme of Action, 1992). As per the

mandate of the National Policy on Education, the National Curriculum Frameworks for School Education have also been prepared from time to time i.e. in 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005 by NCERT. Recent in this series, the *National Curriculum Framework-2005* discusses the present scenario of school education in the country and deliberates upon the quality issues in education in a comprehensive manner. The document presents different dimensions of quality.

It looks at quality in education in holistic way and as a system attribute and not merely a feature of instruction

---

\* Reader, Regional Institute of Education (NCERT), Shyamla Hills, Bhopal 462 013.

or attainment. It includes physical infrastructure, teachers, experiences that are designed for the child in terms of knowledge and skills, school environment, etc. as quality indicators. But above all, it emphasises that the attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice. In this context, NCF-2005 states that "quality in education includes a concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. This is why a concern for peace, protection of the environment and predisposition towards social change must be viewed as core components of quality, not merely as value premises".

The diversity of cultures and heterogeneity, such as, rural-urban, tribal, coastal, socially disadvantaged and groups with special needs make the issue of quality in education more complex, contextual and relative in nature. Quality improvement of education in these situations is a slow process and therefore, the impact of intervention cannot be seen or assessed immediately by one parameter. Main indicators of quality education can be visualised in terms of preparation, classroom processes and learners' achievements. The aspects, which are easily quantifiable, like achievements have received attention and the quality dimensions, especially learning and learning conditions of children are difficult to quantify and assess and hence are ignored.

Success of the classroom processes is estimated through achievement of the children. Although we have succeeded in enrolling and retaining about 96% of

the school children at primary level, the dropout rate is as high as 21%; but at the same time, quality education is a big challenge in the country. So, the biggest problem in the country is to retain children in school and to enhance their achievement, skills and capabilities to the optimum level. Hence, quality management of school education has gained significant importance.

Total quality of the school depends on numerous factors, like physical infrastructure, school environment, quality of teachers, parents, students, teaching-learning process, local resources, community support, etc. We have to resolve diversity and low standards of human development along with the other state specific problems in our education system.

There are three basic components for education – classroom teaching, practical or laboratory work and library. The classroom teaching is the assimilation of the subject by an expert teacher through study of many books and articles leading to generation of quality and creative content in a presentable form. The teacher has to present the content in a unique and innovative way to make the content appealing and easily understandable to the students. The second form of content could be on a self-learning method by breaking it into a practical or a job. Third may be self-learning through various books which can be extracted through the library. Now a days, internet also provides a length of information but careful assessment for usefulness and authenticity is necessary before it's use.

Adequate, rigorous, inclusive and continuous monitoring and supervision



are important keys to successful implementation of an educational programme. National Curriculum Framework (2005) has strongly articulated the need for a substantial improvement for quality education. Learner is the kingpin and educational activities do not achieve success without improvement in the learner. The curriculum at different levels of education is designed keeping in view the learners' capabilities, textbooks are developed as per level of the learners and teachers also teach in classroom as per need of students. For quality education, the learner should not be passive listener but should participate in teaching-learning activities.

Students are the stakeholders, direct users and consumers of the education system hence, their perceptions and assessments about the school, teachers, classroom process, etc. go a long way in improvement of the quality of education. In school education, the students at higher secondary level become a little matured and can express fair and frank remarks and opinion on the system. In our country, the biggest problem in formal education system is enhancement of the achievement, skills and capabilities of children up to the optimum level. They are enrolled, pass through the formal system but do not gain much and face problems of employment, etc. in future. School climate varies from school to school due to variance in administrative styles of the institutional head, the Headmaster or Principal. Teachers in schools with open and congenial climate have higher morale and better job satisfaction and such teachers can do better for the students

as per their needs. Much empirical evidence does not exist about the perception of students for quality education. Hence, an exploratory study was undertaken to find out the students perception, views and expectations from their teachers and school.

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the perception and expectation of students on quality issues of school education.
2. To find out the strong points and weaknesses of the system.
3. To find out students likings and weakness in different school subjects.
4. To suggest measures for quality education.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What is the liking and disliking for different school subjects in students?
2. What are the reasons for poor performance in different subjects, as per the students?
3. Whether the students are satisfied with the teaching approaches of different subjects? If not then what type of improvements they suggest?
4. Whether they are satisfied with the school climate, teacher and principal's behaviour? If not then what type of changes they suggest for improvements.
5. Whether adequate infrastructural facilities for their career development and all round development are available in the

schools? And if not, then what modifications the students perceive for their development?

*Limitations:* The investigation is limited to the:

1. Students at Higher Secondary Level.
2. Students of Kendriya Vidyalayas of Bhopal city.
3. On a convenient sample of 120 students.

### **Methodology**

*(a) Selection of Sample:* Education is mainly provided through formal system at school and college level. Students are the consumers of the education system and they judge quality of the institution carefully. More than nine hundred Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in the country foster quality in school education and always monitor its' progress. They admit wards of defence and other all India transferable employees. So, most of the students at higher secondary level in these institutions must have experienced several other KVs also. They are matured and have a better perception of quality education in their schools. In view of this, 120 higher secondary students of local KVs covering, science, commerce and arts sections were administered a format for quality perception and assessment.

*(b) Tools Used:* School education has a significant contribution in career building of the children. When a student achieves a certain percentage of marks, then only he/she can opt for science or commerce to fulfill his/her dreams of becoming a doctor, engineer, chartered accountant, company secretary, manager, etc. School environment,

facilities, laboratories, libraries, etc. along with the caring teachers provide learning opportunities, facilities, motivation and guidance to the students. A format was designed to assess students' perception about school learning climate. It has two divisions:

#### *Part A*

Part A gives general idea about the student, his/her general bio-data along with liking and weaknesses in different school subjects with their reasons. The expectations of the student from the school and teachers, satisfaction from the classroom teaching, students' cooperation, teacher's behaviour, school discipline, learning environment, school results, etc. also are to be expressed by the respondent in this part.

#### *Part B*

This part gives thirty-five statements about the school, its different activities and environment and the students are asked to comment on the statement, as true, partially true, partially false and false. They are also asked to rate the school as very good, good, average and below average with their reasons. Suggestions for improvement of the standard are also to be given by the learners in this part.

*(c) Collection of Data:* The tool/formats were multi-copied and also translated in Hindi for better understanding of the students. These were administered on the sample of 120 students of two local Kendriya Vidyalayas of Bhopal. To seek free and frank opinion, the students were asked not to mention their names on the

format. Discussions were also made with the students to seek their opinion and suggestions about their school.

(d) *Analysis of Data:* The filled formats were analysed to enumerate view-point's frequency and data on various points of the students. Percentages were calculated to compare different dimensions of students' perceptions. Their view-points were categorised in nine groups:

1. Name of the school in society;
2. Discipline and co-operation among students;
3. Academic climate in the school;
4. School teachers and the principal;
5. School Library;
6. Guidance for career development in school;
7. All-round development of students;
8. Social justice for students; and
9. Studies and care of students at home.

Views of the students were also analyzed on frequency and percentages on liking, disliking, reasons for weakness, etc. on various school subjects. Results of the analysis were interpreted giving reasons, suggestions

and recommendations from students, teachers as well as the investigator's viewpoints.

## Findings of the Study

### I - School System

#### (A) Name of the School in Society

Now-a-days, school buses, vans, auto services, etc. are available for children and distance is no obstacle in urban areas, parents admit their wards in the well known schools of the town and Kendriya Vidyalayas are one of them. After admission in the school and reaching to the level of higher secondary their perception about the name of the school is assessed on the two dimensions (Table 1):

More than half of the students of KVs feel satisfied with the school results and its educational standard. When students realize some specialties of their school, they feel satisfied and recommend others friends to take admission in their school. Students' perception on these two aspects was found to be as under (Table 2 and 3):

TABLE 1  
Name of the School in Society

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Fully satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Partly Satisfied</i>	<i>Un-satisfied</i>
a. Standard of the Kendriya Vidyalayas	10.74 %	44.63 %	34.71 %	9.92 %
b. School Results in Public Examination	16.24 %	52.14 %	19.66 %	11.96 %

TABLE 2  
Specialties in the School

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Definitely special</i>	<i>May be something</i>	<i>May be nothing</i>	<i>Definitely nothing</i>
a. Specialties in the school	29.92 %	22.83 %	15.75 %	31.50 %

TABLE 3  
**Recommendation to others in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Certainly recommend</i>	<i>May Rec.</i>	<i>May not Rec.</i>	<i>Will not Rec.</i>
a. Recommendation to others for seeking admission	28.57 %	22.69 %	10.08 %	38.66 %

So, about fifty per cent of the students were impressed with the school standards and results in public examination. They feel there are specialties in their school and recommend it to others, to take admission.

*(B) Discipline and Co-operation among Students*

Discipline among students is necessary for a quality school and the students should also help each other in need. Students' perception on these two parameters was found to be as under (Table 4 and 5):

*(i) Discipline among students:*

So, there are fair chances that the students get punishment on committing mistakes but all teachers do not have command over the students and they are not so disciplined to complete homework in the school but they are cooperative.

*(ii) Co-operation among students:*

*(C) Academic Climate in the School*

Academic climate refers to academic environment, i.e. focus on quality education and making effective learning environment in the school campus, and

TABLE 4  
**Discipline in Students**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially True</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Students get punishment on mistakes	73.50 %	18.80 %	0.85 %	6.85 %
b. Only few teachers command students	57.50 %	20.83 %	5.83 %	15.84 %

TABLE 5  
**Cooperation among Students**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Students cooperate with each other	32.00 %	43.20 %	18.40 %	6.40 %
b. Students complete homework with the help of class fellows	29.23 %	17.69 %	10.00 %	43.08 %

promotion of students initiative and learning in the school. Students' perception on these parameters was found to be as under, (Table 6 and 7):

(i) *Academic Environment:* So, about half of the students are satisfied with the academic environment, focus on quality education in Vidyalayas and their school life. Some brilliant students may lack satisfaction with the school environment. Their initiatives, good work and leadership qualities are well nurtured in the school

(ii) *Promotion of students' learning:*

(D) *School Teachers and the Principal*

(i) *Teachers:* Teachers are the active force to bring the desirable change in the students. In early age of schooling, children follow the words of the teachers in toto and not even consider their

parents. Later, their opinion and views develop and the blind faith in teachers vanishes. Reaching to the higher secondary level, they have great expectations from their teachers. They need active, friendly, cooperative, helping, experienced and caring teachers. Student-teacher relation is assessed on three major heads, as under, (Table 8):

(a) *Rapport with the Students:* More than half of the students were found to be satisfied with the rapport and behaviour of their teachers.

(b) *Classroom Teaching:* Effective classroom teaching is a prime responsibility of the teachers at all levels of education. Students' perception on classroom teaching was assessed on the following dimensions and their responses are as under:

TABLE 6  
**Academic Environment in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Fully satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Partly satisfied</i>	<i>Un-satisfied</i>
a. School's focus on quality education	14.16 %	41.59 %	30.97 %	13.28 %
b. Learning environment of the school	13.45 %	42.02 %	30.25 %	14.28 %

TABLE 7  
**Learning in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. School environment is good for studies	39.67 %	11.57 %	25.62 %	23.14%
a. Good work of students is recognised	67.23 %	20.17 %	5.04 %	7.56 %
b. School promotes students initiative and leadership	48.28 %	18.97 %	13.79 %	18.96 %
c. Students are satisfied with school life	27.35 %	23.08 %	11.11 %	38.46%
d. Students love the school	38.98 %	33.05 %	5.08 %	22.89%

TABLE 8  
**Teachers' Rapport in School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Fully satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Partly satisfied</i>	<i>Un-satisfied</i>
a. Teachers' rapport with students	13.45 %	47.90 %	28.57 %	10.08 %
b. Satisfaction with teachers' behaviour	37.82 %	40.34 %	12.61 %	9.23 %

(a) *Sincerity for teaching work*: Every teacher has to be sincere for teaching work. It is assessed on the following points, (Table 9):

About three-fourth of the students in the sample felt that their teachers are sincere for teaching work and they never try to avoid classes.

(b) *Performance in teaching*: Every teacher teaches with full devotion in the classroom but how much the students

have learned is a matter of thinking. It is assessed on two parameters, as under, (Table 10):

More than half of the students were found to be satisfied with the teaching in the school. But it was felt by the students that the teachers complete courses in hurry without caring for the understanding of the students.

(c) *Deriving personal benefits from the teaching profession*: Now-a-days, the

TABLE 9  
**Sincerity in the Teachers**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Teachers do not avoid classes	65.83 %	10.00 %	15.83 %	8.34 %
b. Teachers are sincere in teaching	42.02 %	31.09 %	15.13 %	11.76 %

TABLE 10  
**Teaching in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Students are satisfied with teaching	8.20 %	50.82 %	27.87 %	13.11 %
b. Teachers complete course without caring for students' understanding.	38.84 %	25.62 %	13.22 %	22.32 %

TABLE 11  
**Tuition by the Teachers**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No idea</i>
Teachers run coaching classes	38.71 %	56.45 %	4.84 %

students at higher secondary level prefer to go to coaching classes than to classrooms. Sometimes, the teachers also try to attract them for their coaching classes but normally, the coaching classes are not run by the school teachers. Students' perception on this parameter is as under, (Table 11):

More than half of the students in the sample expressed the view that teachers do not run their own coaching classes. Some students had no idea as they might have not felt the need of coaching.

(ii) *Principal*: An enthusiastic and dynamic Principal provides academic leadership in the school. He is responsible for creating and maintaining academic climate in the institution and as a result the students love the school. The effectiveness of the principals is assessed on two parameters, as under, (Table 12):

Most of the students of the

Vidyalayas felt that their principal is enthusiastic and caring. He meets the students to enquire about their studies and other related matters. So they love the school.

*(E) School Library*

In the information age and the changing world the libraries play a significant role in the education system. The student and teachers should realize this and utilize libraries. Students' perception on these two aspects was found to be as under, (Table 13):

In all higher secondary schools there are libraries, students have time to visit libraries in school hours but students do not realize the importance of libraries and self-study for their studies.

*(F) Guidance for Career Development in School*

Secondary and Higher Secondary stages of education are crucial in career

TABLE 12  
**Principal of the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Principal often meets students and enquires about studies	54.92 %	20.49 %	4.92 %	19.67 %
b. Students love the school	38.98 %	33.05 %	5.08 %	22.89 %

TABLE 13  
**Use of School Library**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. School libraries help students in their studies.	31.66 %	7.50 %	31.76 %	29.18 %
b. Students have no time to go to the library in school hours	7.69 %	17.95 %	12.82 %	61.54 %

development of a person. There must be counsellors in the school and if not, their role should be played by the regular teachers and the principal. Students' perception on their career development in their school was assessed on the following parameters, (Table 14):

So, teachers encourage students for excellence and guide sincerely in selecting career but special classes for preparation of professional courses are not organised. Students perceived these facts as they have denied that there is nobody to care for the students' career.

*(G) Social Justice for students in School*

All students, irrespective of their caste, colour, sex, language, etc. should be

given equal opportunities and care in the school. This dimension of social justice was assessed on the following parameters, (Table 15):

It is perceived by the students that weak students suffer as teachers pay attention only to the good students in schools. Increasing number of students in schools also hampers chances for equal opportunities to all students.

*(H) All round development of students in the school*

Schools are the places for all-round development of students at all levels of education. Students' perception on this dimension was assessed on the following parameters, (Table 16):

TABLE 14  
**Teachers' attitude in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Teachers encourage students to achieve excellence	51.69 %	34.75 %	4.24 %	9.32 %
b. Students get guidance for selecting career	33.62 %	8.62 %	23.28 %	34.48 %
c. Teachers guide students sincerely	38.21 %	33.33 %	8.13 %	20.33%
d. Special classes are arranged to prepare students for professional examinations	30.00 %	16.67 %	4.17 %	49.16%
e. There is nobody in school to worry about the students' career	15.96 %	20.17 %	15.97 %	47.90%

TABLE 15  
**Social Justice in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Students are given equal opportunities to participate in school activities	17.36 %	19.83 %	35.54 %	27.27 %
b. Teachers pay attention to good students only	37.50 %	32.50 %	9.17 %	20.83 %
c. Weak students suffer in the school	35.83 %	21.67 %	17.50 %	25.00 %



Co-curricular activities are necessary for all round development of the students. Teachers motivate students to take part in the activities but they find less time and the activities are organised only during annual function or some occasion as a ritual.

*(I) Care of students and their studies at Home*

Adequate care of students at their home is necessary for proper development. This dimension was assessed through the three parameters, as under, (Table 17):

The parents are always interested in the studies of their children, so they contact teachers regularly to know their progress. But there is significant dependence on tuitions, although students get sufficient time for self-study.

**II – Perception of Liking and Reasons of Weakness in different School Subjects**

Central Board of Secondary Education has not classified students into Science, Commerce or Arts streams. The students who opt for Accountancy and Business Studies are placed in Commerce Section in the schools as they go for Commerce courses at graduation level. Similarly, the students who opt for Physics and Chemistry are put in Science section. The students in science section were found to take Physics, Chemistry, English, Hindi, Mathematics, Biology, Physical Education, Computers and Informatics Practices, etc. Their perception of these subjects is given in Table 18.

TABLE 16  
**Personality Development in the School**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Teachers motivate students to participate in co-curricular activities.	49.09 %	31.82 %	5.45 %	13.64 %
b. Students have no time to participate in co-curricular activities	24.32 %	14.42 %	16.22 %	45.04 %
c. Activities are organised during annual function or some special occasion only.	82.35 %	7.56 %	0.84 %	9.25 %

TABLE 17  
**Parents' Care**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>Partially true</i>	<i>Partially false</i>	<i>False</i>
a. Parents regularly contact teachers	57.86 %	27.27 %	2.47 %	12.40 %
b. Without tuitions, it is difficult to cope with the subjects.	44.74 %	19.30 %	13.15 %	22.81 %
c. Students get time for self-study	41.96 %	32.14 %	9.82 %	16.08 %

Liking of the science students was found to be the most for Mathematics and Biology followed by Physics, English, and Chemistry. They were found least interested (boring) in Chemistry followed by English, Physics, Hindi and Biology, Informatics Practices, Computer Education and Mathematics. The science students were confident of their performance in examinations in Physics followed by Biology, Mathematics, English, Computers, Hindi, Chemistry and Informatics Practices. Most of the students showed weakness in Chemistry followed by Physics, Mathematics, English, Computers, Biology, Hindi and Information Practices.

The students in Commerce section were found to take Accountancy, Business Studies, Economics, Geography, English, Hindi, Mathematics, Biology, Physical Education, Computers and Information Practices, etc. Their perception of these subjects is given in Table 19.

Liking of students was found to be the most for Accountancy followed by Geography, Mathematics, English, Economics and only some liked Business Studies and Hindi (each) as their favorite subject. They were found least interested in Business Studies followed by Economics, Geography, Accountancy, English, Mathematics, Hindi and Information Practices. They were confident of their performance in Board examinations in Geography followed by Accountancy, Mathematics, Economics and English, Business Studies and only some of the students were confident in Hindi. Most of the students showed their weakness in Business Studies followed by Accountancy, Economics and English, and Mathematics, Hindi, Geography and Computers.

The reasons for weakness in different subjects were as under:

(a) *Physics*: The students felt difficulties in understanding the questions, and solving numerical questions with long

TABLE 18  
Perception about School Subjects in Science Group

Sl. No	Interesting Subjects		Boring Subjects		Scoring Subjects		Weak Subjects	
	Subject	%age	Subject	%age	Subject	%age	Subject	%age
1.	Maths.	32.08	Chemistry	42.53	Physics	32.08	Chemistry	66.04
2.	Biology	32.08	English	23.40	Biology	30.19	Physics	39.62
3.	Physics	24.53	Physics	12.77	Mathematics	22.64	Mathematics	16.98
4.	English	9.43	Hindi	6.38	English	9.43	English	15.09
5.	Chemistry	1.89	Biology	6.38	Computer Edu.	3.77	Computer Edu.	9.43
			Information Practice	4.26	Hindi	3.77	Biology	5.66
			Computer Education	2.13	Chemistry	1.89	Hindi	3.77
			Maths.	2.13	Information Prac.	1.89	Information Prac.	3.77

derivations and calculations in physics. Some of them have less interest in the subject, do not practice and manage the time properly. Some of them blamed the teachers for their un-interested teaching and not doing large derivations and difficult calculations of numerical questions on the black board. A few were careless and felt that they forget everything of physics at the time of examination.

(b) *Chemistry*: Students of science section have least liking for chemistry as it requires more time for mugging-up the concepts; basics are not clear and they also felt difficulties in understanding reactions without any logical base. Teachers do not use mind-catching teaching skills to create interest in students, they lack in English expression and use guides in teaching and do not explain properly. In large strength of the classes, the teachers' control becomes poor and the learning environment

vanishes. Students' personal problems like lack of time management, no habit of long sittings, weak expression, irregular study habits also affect the learning adversely.

(c) *Business Studies*: They expressed that the subject is theoretical and lengthy in which there are more definitions, characteristics, advantages, limitations, etc. of different concepts and as a result they get confused and forget soon. Their difficulties were also with the English medium, language of the books and being a theoretical subject, it is difficult to learn. They realised devotion of less time with less interest in the study of the subjects, pressure of other subjects, also affect their achievement level. Sometimes, the handwriting was found to be slow for writing long answers. Some students depend on coaching for studies. They had expressed that coaching is not available for business studies, so they are weak in the subject. They also blamed

TABLE 19  
Perception about School Subjects in Commerce Group

Sl. No	Interesting Subjects		Boring Subjects		Scoring Subjects		Weak Subjects	
	Subject	%age	Subject	%age	Subject	%age	Subject	%age
1.	Accountancy	43.55	Business Studies	32.73	Geography	35.06	Business Stu.	30.77
2.	Geography	20.96			Accountancy	25.97	Accountancy	25.00
3.	Maths.	16.13	Economics	20.00	Mathematics	14.29	Economics	19.23
4.	Economics	8.06	Geography	16.36	Economics	11.69	English	19.23
5.	English	8.06	Accountancy	12.73	English	10.39	Mathematics	1.92
6.	Business Studies	1.61	English	10.91	Business Stu.	2.60	Hindi	1.92
			Maths.	3.64	Hindi	1.30	Geography	1.92
7.	Hindi		Hindi	1.82			Computers	1.92
			Information Pr.	1.82				

teachers for taking less interest in teaching and sometimes doing other work in classrooms in place of teaching.

(d) *Accountancy*: There are lot of journal entries and calculations in numerical questions, which are time consuming and they always had a fear in mind for correct completion of the numerical questions in time and completion of total paper at the end.

(e) *Mathematics*: The students felt their weakness in mathematics from the beginning, lack of interest, less time devotion and irregular practices further adding to their woes towards the subject. They felt more difficulties and confusions in trigonometry. They also blame teachers for not solving numerical questions on black board.

(f) *Biology*: Long version of topics and lot of materials for learning and teaching were a few reasons, which were responsible for weakness in biology.

(g) *Computer Education*: The students felt computer education a new area of studies and the teachers are not able to explain the content of the subject properly.

(h) *Informatics Practices*: Very few students opt for information practices and they found the contents of the subject are un-interesting, which was the main reason for weakness in the subject.

(i) *Economics*: Understanding of graphs and diagrams was found to be difficult for students. They also lack in explanation of graphs on economic theory.

(j) *English*: The group of students felt more syllabuses in English and due to their grammar weaknesses from beginning the subject seems difficult. Their lack of interest, irregular and inconsistent

habits of studies and shallow knowledge in the subject are also a few reasons for weakness in the subject.

(k) *Hindi*: The students who opted for Hindi expressed the view that heavy syllabus and problems of sentence formation were reasons for weakness in the subject.

When they take accountancy and mathematics, two subjects with numerical questions then they feel more difficulties. They expressed their weaknesses in different subjects due to irregular schedule of studies with less concentration and confidence. Some teachers do not understand students' problems and engage themselves in other duties of the school, like in-charge examinations, etc. and find very little time for teaching the students. About eighty per cent students expressed that the teachers help them is solving their problems. They felt that teachers who have less command over their subject are not serious about the students' achievements. They are not fluent in English also, and are seldom available for solving doubt. They also felt that their shy nature and non-availability of free periods for consultation are also reasons for less interaction with teachers. Sometimes, the school assembly is prolonged, which affects the teaching in the first period.

### **Expectations and Suggestions**

The students' expectations and suggestions may go a long way in improvement of the quality of education in schools. Their gradation of Kendriya Vidyalayas is as under, (Table 20):

TABLE 20  
**Graduation of the School**

<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Below average</i>
6.78 %	42.37 %	42.37 %	9.32 %

Most of the students graded Kendriya Vidyalayas as average and good. They praised the Vidyalayas on account of co-operative students and motivating and good counselling teachers, nice learning environment and remarked that the school provides training for leadership. At the same time teachers' behaviour, less command over English, in-discipline, etc put the school as below average. 52.48% students feel their future safe in the Kendriya Vidyalayas while the remaining 47.42% feel insecure. Some good points of Kendriya Vidyalayas were expressed by them, as under:

1. Natural pollution-free environment with gardens, nice campus and building.
2. Morning assembly in disciplined school environment and quality education to the students to come-up with equal opportunities to all students. Teachers proceed in lesson only when it is well understood by all students of the class. They check notebooks regularly.
3. Co-operative and helping students; and active, friendly, helping, co-operative, caring and experienced teachers who take proper care, attention and provide support to the students.
4. Good infrastructural facilities – building, labs, computers, library,

playgrounds and games and sports materials for all round development. At the same time commerce lab should also be developed in the school.

5. KVs have won various prizes, trophies, awards in scout and guide, science and social science exhibition, debate, games and sports, quiz, athletes, dancing, singing, essay writing competition, etc.
6. Good science models prepared and presented in exhibitions, state competitions, etc.
7. Kendriya Vidyalayas promote all round development and pass-out students are in good positions.

Some of the suggestions given by them for improvement in the school are as under:

- (a) The school should provide an English speaking atmosphere to improve English conversation in students. Difficult words should be explained in advance and proper revisions should also be given.
- (b) Teachers should be impartial, well behaved and understand the problems of the students. They should never try to draw any personal benefits, tuitions, etc. from the students.
- (c) They should teach with full devotion, proceed slowly with good teaching skills in classrooms and should also go beyond the textbooks.
- (d) Teachers should also solve students' difficulties in studies. They should not curse or criticize the students' weaknesses.

- (e) There should be a programme of regular testing to assess progress of the students. Practical should also be given proper attention while teaching theory in the classroom.
- (f) Teaching in junior classes has to be improved.
- (g) There is more homework burden which is to be reduced to provide sufficient time for self-studies.
- (h) More educational tours should be planned for live experiences of the subject.
- (i) More attention should be give to the weak and average students and remedial classes should be arranged for them in the school.
- (j) School should provide counselling to the students and information about new job should be given.
- (k) Students know the drawbacks of the school so their remarks and demands should be considered by the administration.
- (l) The school should arrange preparatory classes for competitive examinations.
- (m) More sections should be made on increasing the number of students in a section. Shortage of classrooms and furniture should be resolved. Classroom should have proper facilities to cope up with weather conditions.
- (n) Some boys tease the girls in the school, do not respect the teachers and spoil the environment. Such bad students of the school should be given psychological counselling, punishment or rusticated.
- (o) Better facilities for games and sports are needed and new students should also be given chance in co-curricular activities. Separate facilities for girls should also be arranged in the school.
- (p) More facilities for computer and internet uses should be provided and these facilities should also be extended to the Arts and Commerce students.
- (q) School administration and discipline needs improvement.
- (r) School library should have sufficient latest books for issue to the students. The library should be kept open through-out the day.
- (s) Organisation of co-curricular activities should be regular phenomenon in the school.
- (t) Schools should provide healthy competitive atmosphere in all walks of school life.
- (u) Morning Assembly should be properly planned and it should not hamper the duration and teaching of first period, daily.
- (v) The students appreciated the young teachers in comparison to the old experienced teachers.

### Implications

1. There has to be only one aim of the school, "Enter for knowledge and proceed for career". It should be a mission for all schools and with the help of the dedicated staff should try to acquire merit positions in Board Examinations. There should be a record of continuous marvellous performance of quality results.
2. Overall objective of education is 'holistic development' of the

- individual in harmony with society and nature. Education should aim at providing knowledge and skill about different subjects. The higher secondary courses should aim at both, preparing children for taking admission in college/professional institutions as well as developing certain skills which are generic or useful across different occupations. If we take the example of the commerce students, then present curriculum is good at providing knowledge but poor in respect of developing skills. Indian Labour Report (2007) has also confirmed this fact. There has to be provision of field visits, industrial internship during summer vacations, project work, seminars, workshops, and discussions with experts from industries, banking or insurance sector. Same is equally applicable in Science and Arts groups also. In this regard an extensive training for teachers is also needed for arranging quality education for the youth to scale new heights of development.
3. The students should also participate in National Talent Search Examinations, Mathematics Olympiad, Astronomical Science Olympiad, Children Science Congress, etc. with creativities and should register their name at national level. Preparatory classes for IIT, AIEEE, PET and PMT, CA Entrance are also to be organised with the facilities of career counselling in the school.
  4. A successful institution must be ahead not only in the educational scenario but should also show similar track records in other qualities by which the personality of the student becomes a complete boon for the society. Here, games, sports and co-curricular activities should also be given adequate weightage.
  5. Communication skills and creativity plays a significant role in the career of students. Their aptitude for professional career has to be recognised. Tastes and talents differ from person to person. Some students may excel with creativity and communication skills, which has to be encouraged.
  6. Obsolete methods of teaching are driving students away from the classroom; chalk and blackboard have far out lived their lives in school and college classrooms. Classroom teaching in present times must be interactive, with technology playing an important role as it is time saving and essential. Syllabus insists on project-based learning. Teachers have to opt for evolution of pedagogical skills and principles. Use of multi-media enhances classroom as it retains attention of the students. LCD Projectors and Overhead projectors make it easy for the students to learn and grasp the subject. With the growth of information technology (IT), e-learning is a promising development which enables online

teaching, and does away with the constraints of time and space. Visuals and graphics can be well shown on OHP but the session should be interactive and should not be monotonous. Here, natural teaching skill also comes into play. Field trips and excursions are also to be encouraged.

7. A good teacher is one who brings out the spark in the students. Technology is just an aid but it can never replace the teacher. Teachers in the schools must be interactive and proactive, firm but friendly, should be gently critical, proficient in the subject while presenting it in a way that generates the curiosity to know more. A good teacher is one who is lively, can connect with the students, and understands them. He should be enthusiastic about teaching and makes teaching or lectures interactive. Teachers should understand the students' thought-process, be a little informal and convey knowledge in the right manner citing every day examples, but such teachers are in a minority. There is need of good teachers with an impressionable mind yearning to choose right direction for the students' future. They should carry the weakest students along with the brighter ones as this can bring about some life altering changes. This passion combined with the ever growing technological aids can change the educational scenario in our country. But only few institutions care about the quality of education. In the present

scenario of educational development computer education has also to play a crucial role. There has to be an updated computer lab in the institution with qualified and dedicated staff.

8. Extra-curricular activities are every college or school students pride and joy, as they break the monotony of classroom and also relieve the pressure that students face, today. Music and sports have always been favorites but barring functions or festivals in the schools these activities rarely get any prominence thus forcing many youngsters to give-up their dreams of turning their hobbies into career and profession. Students are cricket crazy and youngsters around the city are engaging in a wide variety of sports – not just hockey, cricket, badminton, or tennis but also football, basketball, shooting, water polo, chess, squash, swimming and even golf. But in most of the rural schools the infrastructure is poor. In order to execute different kinds of games, sports, cultural and literary activities and ensure all round development of personality the students there should be house-wise weekly activities, monthly internal house activities and annual gathering and aforesaid activities on a large scale. They should also be encouraged to participate in district, regional, state and national level activities. At the same time scout and guide, NCC, NSS are also to be encouraged and implemented.



9. Academicians, social and psychological experts have expounded on the pros and cons of sex education but seldom have an opportunity for students to express their opinions been considered. Sex education basically includes information about changes experienced when growing-up and how one can handle them, and this information is presented in scientific and value-based manner. The school should incorporate sex education; there should be life-skills seminars from Class VIII to make the students aware. Initially, the students especially the girls may feel shy but after some interactive sessions they also feel free to clarify doubts. Sometimes, even teachers feel hesitant to talk, but it is important to make students feel comfortable in such seminars. Students need details about birth-control, use of contraceptives, sexual orientation and consequences of sexual activities. Parents worry that such information along with media exposure and peer pressure may lead to sexual experimentation. But studies have shown that sex education delays sexual activities, giving children a realistic outlook on sex which is as important as giving them food, shelter, security and care. So right education at the right time and in right manner is necessary to eliminate the chances of being silent victim of any type of abuse, for this, if such seminars are not possible than biology syllabus right from primary school to give all essential information, should be included in all streams.
10. There are certain fundamental psychological needs of children, first of all they should be accepted in their own capabilities at home and school and educational and other inputs should aim at their nourishment and development. Parents, teachers and others should recognize them and should not put much pressure on them to change.
11. There is need to develop interest of students in the subjects. Table 18 and 19 give their perception about liking, weakness, scoring, etc. and accordingly the textbooks and teaching methodology should be changed.
- School education plays a significant role in shaping the destiny of the students and the nation as a whole. It inculcates and develops values, habits, good manners, self-confidence, self-discipline, self-reliance, career-mindedness and generates faith in one's potentialities and capabilities to delve deep into the realm of knowledge and scale new height of success and glory. It provides base for building future career and helps to achieve the desired goals. The role of the Principal in providing quality education to the students and bringing excellence in various pursuits of learning is crucial and increasingly important in the domain of school education. Much of the success as well as failure depends on him, his team and leadership style. Dynamic leadership, teamwork and management can scale heights of success.

**REFERENCES**

- ALMAS ALI. 2007. 'Behtar Sansadhan Ban Sakti Hai Jansankhya', with reference to world population day; *Danik Bhaskar*, Bhopal, 11 July.
- NCERT. 2000. *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*. National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.
- NCERT. 2005. *National Curriculum Framework*. National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.
- NCERT. 2005. 'Development of Quality In School Education', *Report of PAC Programme No. 16.05/ 2004-05*.
- NCERT. 2006. *Tools for Monitoring; Monitoring Formats for Quality Dimensions under SSA*. National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.
- CHOPRA, R.K. 2003. Primary School Teachers in Haryana: Explorations in their Working Conditions. *Indian Educational Review*, Vol. 39, No.1, January 2003.
- GROVE R. and NANAVATI. 2008. 'Sex Education'; *Times of India* – Bombay issue, April 28.
- KALAM, A.P.J. ABDUL. 2006. Mission for MANUU, *News Magazine*, issue no. 10, January, 2006, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad.
- MUKHARJEE, SHIKHA. 2007. 'Behtar Shiksha Badi Chunauti'; *Danik Bhaskar*, March 16.
- VAID, D.K. 2007. *A Study of Linkages of School Curriculum in the area of Commerce with Business and Industry*. DESSH (NCERT), New Delhi.

# A Comprehensive Analysis of Various Teaching Strategies and Innovations at Higher Education Level

ALKA MITTAL\* and NEERU MOHINI AGARWAL\*\*

---

## Abstract

---

Teaching strategy helps the teacher to establish interaction between him and his students and the curriculum or subject matter. The selection of effective strategies of teaching in different streams of education at higher level is a challenge of modern time. We are experiencing massive changes in the form of globalisation, liberalisation and privatization. In this situation our learners have face a great challenge for their future. Therefore, a teacher has a great responsibility to change the situation. First of all he/she should adopt permissive style of strategies such as heuristics, project strategy, review, group discussion, paper presentation, independent study, computer assisted instruction, etc. for making our teaching effective, so that students can move back towards their classrooms. In order to make his/her teaching effective, they can use various strategies and innovations to modify their teaching. Some of them are related with ICT and some are without ICT. Strategies such as workshop, conference, seminar, panel discussion, symposium, informal group plan, various co-operative learning techniques such as Jigsaw, think-pair-share, three-step interview, round table, group investigation, student teams achievement division, round robin brain storming, three-minute review, etc. can be used successfully without ICT in order to change teaching-learning process. On the other hand, due to vital role of ICT in present scenario of globalisation and liberalisation, the teacher can take the help of ICT for teaching. The new communication and information technologies have profoundly affected our social structure. There is a growing interdependence between technology, information and society. The use of communication technologies in education at higher level has been identified. The computing and telecommunication technologies are enabling the teacher to develop multimedia in which text, voice, pictures, simulation, etc. can be integrated and delivered through computers as an interactive learning package.

To compete and survive in the competitive world of higher education it is essential for teachers to create, adopt and utilize new technologies for higher education. With the use of above strategies either with ICT or without ICT a teacher can innovate his teaching method according to need of society. And with this, higher education of India will cross the country's border and will change the world into a 'global village'.

---

\* Lecturer, Department of B.Ed., Meerut Institute of Engineering & Technology, (M.I.E.T.), Meerut, U.P.

\*\* Reader, Department of Education, J.V. Jain College, Saharanpur, U.P.

### **Introduction**

Teaching is a social process on which the political system, social philosophy, values and culture of every nation leave their impression. It can be defined by various ways, e.g. in *laissez faire* political system it is an arrangement and manipulation of situation in which there are gaps and obstructions which an individual will seek to overcome and from which he will learn in the course of doing so. Quality teaching can be defined as the ability to captivate students during the lesson, to stimulate them intellectually and move them emotionally to install in them a love for the subject and a desire to learn more about it, to motivate them to work on their own, to see them satisfaction of assisting them to grow into a self actualised individual. For effective teaching, it is necessary to select & use appropriate teaching strategies and innovations because they play significant role in increasing the effectiveness and quality in teaching. Teaching strategy helps the teacher to establish interaction between him and his students and the curriculum or subject matter. The selection of effective strategies of teaching in different streams of education at higher level is a challenge of modern time because higher education occupies the top most stage of formal education in the present educational system of our country. Teaching at higher education means acquiring knowledge, adding to the existing knowledge, transmitting knowledge and generating new knowledge, students at this level are mentally mature and can analyse, synthesise and grasp the concepts easily.

Therefore, the modes of education of higher level have to be different. But we can see in our colleges and universities teachers use only autocratic strategies for teaching, such as lecture & theoretical. Lecture method is the oldest method of teaching used at higher education level by most of lecturers for presentation of subject matter from a long time. In this method students function as passive listeners and they get a few chances for responding and they start feeling boredom. But we are experiencing massive changes in the form of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation. In this situation our learners have face a great challenge for their future. Due to old and autocratic method of teaching, they do not show interest in classroom studies, as this type of studies waste their time only and they do not go to classrooms, instead of it they prepare notes from books and other resources. Some times they take the help of already prepared materials such as published notes or model papers. Due to availability of already prepared notes, they do not want to go into classrooms, because there is nothing to satisfy their curiosity. Our current education system is not helpful in getting any kind of job and students feel insecurity for their future. The low rate of attendance of students at degree level is seen almost in every college. On the other hand, we can see that our students prefer job oriented courses related to modern technologies. They can join the institutions providing professional courses such as medical, engineering, MBA, BBA, BCA, MCA, etc. because this knowledge helps them for getting a job. In these courses lecturers take the help

of modern technologies for making their work effective. It appears interesting and different from traditional pattern of education. Distance education courses of IGNOU and other open universities are based on modern technologies and students can learn with his speed and available times. Besides it he can do his jobs simultaneously. It appears to him that he is utilizing his time and learn something different. But in to traditional educational institution they enter only for getting a degree because they know very well that this degree is helpful in obtaining a job. But they become failed in their work due to lack of knowledge of practical utility of it. In our practical examinations, marks depend on approach of candidates to examiner irrespective of the fact that he has complete knowledge of subject or not. Therefore, our students cannot take the benefit of education of conventional type. It shows that we have to need a change in various teaching strategies and apply innovations to brought effectiveness in our teaching.

#### **Strategies and Innovations without ICT**

Teacher has a responsibility to change the level of higher education. We can make a change in our teaching by adopting permissive style of strategies such as heuristics, project strategy, review, group discussion, paper presentation, independent study, etc. for making our teaching effective and interesting, so that students can move back towards their classrooms. Besides it, teacher should tell them about professional utility of it and its importance for their future. Some socialised strategies of teaching at higher

education level are directed group plan, self-directed group plan, symposium, seminar, panel discussion, conference, workshop, blended learning, various co-operative learning techniques such as Jigsaw, think-pais-share, three step interview, round table, group investigations, student teams-achievement divisions, round robin brain storming, three minute review can be used to improve the position of higher education without ICT. A vast majority of our students view learning organisation as a competitive enterprise where one tries to do better than other. A negative interdependence in cutthroat competition is running the environment of the learning organisations as well as the entire society.

This is resulting into social imbalance, increase in use of short cuts and malpractices, feeling of jealous and hatred and non-cooperative behaviour. Therefore, for generating a healthy, cooperative and value-based environment in the higher learning organisations, these strategies play as an effective measure of learning.

Present century is the age of ICT. Teaching-learning process can be made more effective by the use of ICT. Due to rapid shift of educational technologies and political force we have to change our educational system in the period of globalisation. ICT is an important tool to transfer the present isolated, teacher-centred, book-centred learning environment into a rich student-centred environment. The aim of ICT is to transfer the old traditional paradigm of teaching-learning to new paradigm. ICT has the capacity to accelerate major changes both in pre-service teacher training as

well as in in-service teacher professional development. In order to make our teaching effective, ICT can play a vital role. At degree college and university level, almost all institutions have computer and internet facilities. The teacher can take the help of these facilities for teaching. At degree level students are mature and they can be taught easily by using these technologies. Teachers can prepare programmes for teaching or they can take the help of programmes prepared by other lecturers. Students can also prepare software for self-study under guidance of teacher. Various kinds of teaching-learning aids such as text books, references books, encyclopaedia, documents and clippings, self-instructional modulus, case studies and case reports, gramophone, audio tapes/discs, radio broadcast, telephonic conversation, slide, filmstrip, transparency, microfilm, computer, television, close circuit television, multimedia computer, etc. can be used for effective teaching. Our laboratories and libraries should be enriched with new technologies. Students should be motivated to learn by doing & showing instead of telling. Teachers should be resourceful person for them. Our teachers can take the help of modern technologies for update their knowledge. They should be changed according to need of time and students. Modern technology helps them for effective teaching. Students can also learn according to their need and time by distance education. Modern technologies play a vital role in it. The teachers of arts and commerce group should take the benefit of modern technologies because

in these subjects students do not take the benefit of knowledge of teachers, as a number of teachers use autocratic style of teaching which make their students as passive learners. Students also think that the knowledge of these subjects is not helpful for their future. It is the duty of subject experts to change the entire atmosphere in the light of new technologies. The new communication and information technologies have profoundly affected our social structure. There is a growing interdependence between technology, information and society. The use of communication technologies in education at higher level has been identified. The computing and telecommunication technologies are enabling the teacher to develop multimedia in which text, voice, pictures, simulation, etc. can be integrated and delivered through computers as an interactive learning package. By adopting above technologies teaching can be made interesting for learning.

To compete and survive in the competitive world of higher education it is essential for teachers of degree colleges and universities to create, adopt and utilize new technologies for higher education. Various new information and communication technologies such as interactive broadcasting, tele-text, video-text, computer, video disc, electronic-mail, communication satellite, telephone, fax, teleconferencing, VSATs, Internet can be helpful in this direction.

### **Conclusion**

It may be concluded here that for successful teaching there should be a balance between different teaching

strategies either with ICT or without ICT. All these strategies, if employed systematically and vigilantly are helpful in achieving higher objectives and developing various abilities and skills in them. With the use of above technologies

a teacher can innovate his teaching method according to need of society and students. And with this, higher education of India will cross the country's border and will change the world into a 'global village'.

# Creating Thinking Accountants

## Focus on the Approaches in Teaching-learning of Accounting Practices

SHIPRA VAIDYA\*

---

### Abstract

---

*Is teaching of Accounting confined only to reading the financial data and its presentation in a required structured format? Many people in today's society think of an accountant as simply a glorified book keeper and a steward who manages the financial affairs of other persons. But, the role of an accountant has now shifted from that of a mere recorder of transactions to that of the member providing relevant information to the decision-making team. Accountants today are working in existing new growth areas such as forensic accounting, budget accounting, environmental accounting, e-commerce and the various agencies within the public sector. The advent of information technology have resulted in the development of necessary skills for today's accountant which include the ability to develop persuasion and communication skills; analytical skills; willingness to embrace change and assume risk and develop competence in computer technology. But a question that raises its head from time to time is 'Are we really preparing our students to face the challenges in business operations for the 21<sup>st</sup> century'? The accounting students are widely criticised for their inflexibility in problem-solving and insufficient communication skills. There are several pedagogies recommended by commerce educators to improve the effectiveness in delivering the accounting curriculum. This paper attempts to contextualise the teaching methodologies in order to make transaction of accounting curriculum purposeful, meaningful and interesting at the school level.*

---

### Introduction

On the mention of the word 'accounting' whether formally or informally people immediately start thinking of figures, numbers, adding, subtracting and big lined books covered in dust. Accounting

subjects have traditionally been labelled as 'dry subjects' stuffed with structured definition of technical terms, complex rules and standards, uninteresting number crunching and the 'knowing' of concepts. Accounting students are

---

\* Reader, DESSH, NCERT, New Delhi.



widely criticised for their inflexibility in problem solving and insufficient communication skills. Over decades, accounting education has developed the approach of providing encyclopaedic coverage of extensive topics. This methodology developed because of the fundamental misconception that the objective of accounting education is to teach accounting. One might ask, what could probably be wrong with this effort? The purpose of accounting class is not to teach accounting, but rather to teach students to be accountants. Accounting is much more than just an arithmetical application of accounting rules. The accounting profession is undergoing a change as a result of the evolution towards service-oriented; technology-based international economy that will be prevalent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And business education must adapt to these changes. Accounting is a part of that change where fundamental textbook based rules, intensive lecture/problem style of instruction will soon end. The elements that accounting education should teach include problem-solving skills and methods of solving cases not, generally, found in the school textbooks. Teaching students to deal with these situations is perhaps the greatest challenge to accounting teaching. This is not to say that attempts to cover a variety of specific rules needs to be eliminated. Rather, accounting education must adapt to the changing needs of the profession and balancing the conventional content teaching with skills teaching, constructivism learning, turning passive learning environment into a livelier one and most importantly preparing accounting students for the

dynamic working environment.

How can we make teaching and learning of accounting curriculum more effective at the school level? The *National Curriculum Framework-2005* (NCERT) has proposed the epistemic shift that the textbook should not be perceived as a closed box and the only source of information but one of the ways of understanding issues and be regarded as a dynamic document. Accounting professionals and academicians have expressed significant interest and are pursuing variety of changes in accounting curriculum. There is a broad range of opinions regarding the nature of changes needed in accounting education. Along this same line, a need within the accounting profession showed a shift of the skills needed by students after entering the workforce. It has been largely felt that an opportunity need be given to the child to dwell into the changing role of accounting and understand the shift from just reading *the numbers* to reading *beyond the numbers*.

### **Rethinking the Traditional Approach of Teaching and Learning**

The amount of researches have shown that the ‘why’ approach to accounting is more successful than the ‘how’ approach. But the current methods of teaching Principles of Accounting have focussed on the ‘how’ approach and usually this has accomplished via vehicle of rote learning. Often this process involves a combination of lecture by teacher covering the concepts of any given chapter, followed by a review of exercises and problems located at the end of the chapter. Examination

procedures usually require students to solve by calculation a variety of problems as covered in the reading material. This pedagogy results in passive participation on the part of the student. However, a wider range of learning techniques and models are currently available and although not predominant, are being used on an increasing basis. These methods require students to take an active role in the learning process that it is believed will result in better student retention and performance. The advent of globalisation offers rethinking about the selection and delivery of instructional content and new sources of information in order to develop competence with knowledge. This involves the use of variety of teaching methods and approaches that allow students to have control over their learning activities. Classroom activities need be designed in such a manner so as to build self-confidence in students that focuses on positive way to handle obstacles and learn from failures. No one teaching method would provide the best approach for all student needs and thus, a variety of teaching methods and styles might be required. Also, rather than assuming that accounting students require same skill-sets, it is evident that different skill-sets exist. Creating an effective learning environment addresses these diverse needs, backgrounds and learning styles start with an understanding what these needs are. Teachers are daily designers of effective learning environments. Students learn best when material is appropriate to their developmental level. Children grow through series of definable stages. Teachers should modify their activities to the developmental level of

individual students. This requires awareness and understanding of developmental differences of children with emotional, physical and intellectual differences. Such a teaching-learning process provide opportunities for students to learn by doing, assessing, evaluating and progressing from one step to another through out their lives. Accounting education is not a textbook course. It depends on teachers and the community as a whole having real experiences that enable students to understand how accountants think and behave.

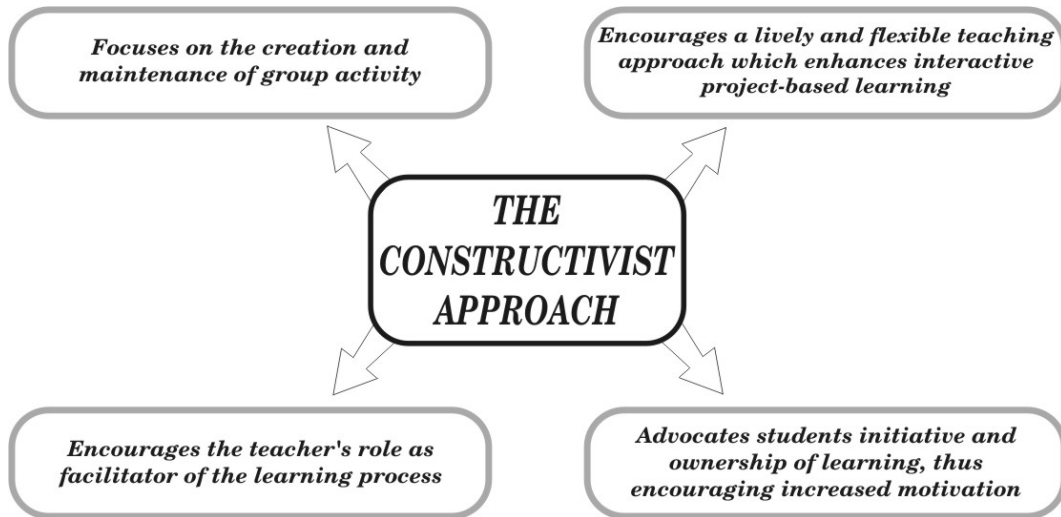
Considering this, the constructivist approach as applied to the course of Accountancy is built upon the following framework:

Each stage of the model offers opportunities for the development of skills, attitudes and behaviours associated.

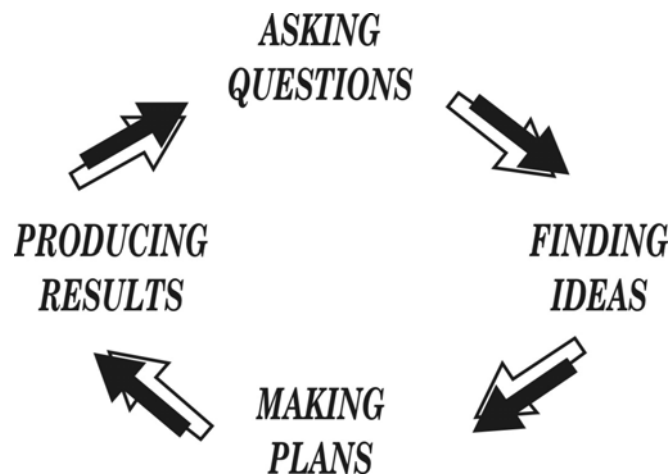
### **The Instructional Strategies**

Commerce educators have long realised that developing learning skills in students is of greater importance than rote learning of technical and specialised material. Much has been written in the literature as to how this theory applies to the teaching of accounting.

To support learning, the instructional strategies that follow are provided as illustrative examples that educators can use or modify to provide useful and engaging educational experiences. Teachers may use or creatively adapt these instructional strategies to best fit the needs of the students and instructional plan. They may be incorporated into a single lesson, project or a group activity or used in



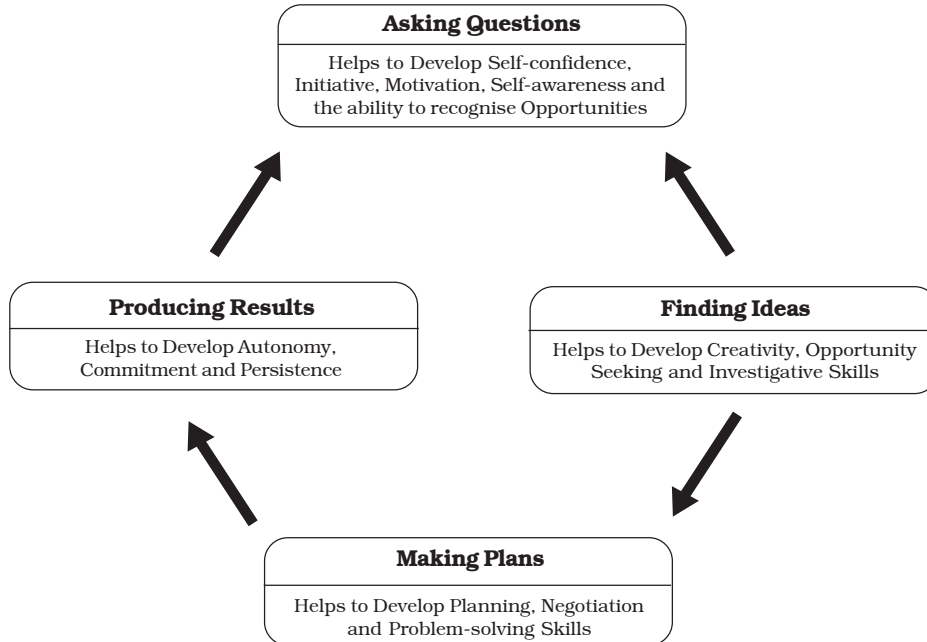
The process is structured around the following cycle:



**Source:** *The Enterprising Approach to Mathematics*, Centre for Enterpreneural Learning, Durham University, 1992.

collaboration. Using and integrating instructional strategies effectively into a teaching process, is an art. Some of the instructional strategies are briefly

introduced hereunder in order to grasp a feel of the subject in a broader perspective with information on 'how to' and 'benefits' of each strategy.



### A. Case Approach

The case approach is considered to be one of the most effective teaching pedagogy for accounting subjects. Through case approach, students learn to exercise professional judgement in difficult and changing situations, such as: (i) Is going concern assumption still valid for a troubled company? (ii) Is an amount sufficient material to require a disclosure? (iii) Is an estimated allowance for doubtful debts adequate?

Textbook coverage and classroom discussions seldom cultivate professional judgement to cope with such problem situations. The Accountancy textbook prepared by NCERT, based on *National Curriculum Framework- 2005*, make use such small cases to provide practical orientation to the subject.

### Exemplar Case-1

One customer has filed a suit against a trader who has supplied poor quality goods to him. It is known that the judgment will be in favour of the customer and the trader will be required to pay the damages. However, the amount of legal damages is not known with certainty. The accounting year has already been ended and the books are now finalised to ascertain the true profit or loss. The accountant of the trader has advised him not to consider the expected loss on account of payment of legal damages because the amount is not certain and the final judgement of the court is not yet declared. Do you think the accountant is right in his approach?

**Cash Book**

<i>Receipts</i>			<i>Payments</i>		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Bank (Rs.)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Bank (Rs.)</i>
2007			2007		
Aug. 01	Balance b/d	1,946	Aug. 02	XYZ Insurance	75
Aug. 01	Kapoor & Co.	249	Aug. 02	Nanda & Co.	206
Aug. 05	V.S. Rao	188	Aug. 04	Daily Ltd.	315
Aug. 08	S.K. Alok	150	Aug. 07	Garage Charges	211
Aug. 10	E. Norries Ltd.	440	Aug. 09	M.D. Finance	120
Aug. 18	Samaira Ltd.	65	Aug. 13	Hill Bros.	22
Aug. 27	Harsh Vardan	520	Aug. 20	Akshey Ltd.	137
Aug. 30	IBP Partners	82	Aug. 27	Kalakriti Ltd.	270
			Aug. 31	Balance c/d	2,284
		<b>3,640</b>			<b>3,640</b>
	Balance b/d	2,284			

**Bank Statement**

SRE 12, Phagun Marg <b>Account No.: 10135678654</b> Date August, 2007				
2007				
<i>Date</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Debit</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Balance Rs.</i>
Aug. 01	Balance			1,946 CR
Aug. 02	Cheques		249	2,195 CR
Aug. 04	XYZ Insurance (DD)	75		2,120 CR
Aug. 04	200101	315		1,805 CR
Aug. 05	V.S. Rao		188	1,993 CR
Aug. 08	Cheques		150	2,143 CR
Aug. 09	200102	211		1,932 CR
Aug. 12	Cheques		440	2,372 CR
Aug. 12	M.D. Finance (SO)	120		2,252 CR
Aug. 20	Cheques		65	2,317 CR
Aug. 27	Kalakriti Ltd.	270		2,047 CR
Aug. 30	Tony Bros.		92	2,139 CR
Aug. 31	Bank Charges	55		2,084 CR
Aug. 31	Surya Finance (SO)	1,000		1,084 CR

*Exemplar Case - II*

As a trainee accountant, one of your tasks is to enter transactions in the company's cash book, check the entries on receipt of the bank statement, update the cash book and make any amendments as necessary. You are then asked to prepare a bank reconciliation statement at the end of the month. The company's cash book (showing the bank column only) and the bank statement are shown below:

You are required to:

- Compare the cash book with the bank statement.
- Make the entries necessary to update the cash book.
- Calculate the adjusted bank balance as per cash book.

In essence, the case approach requires students to apply deep intellectual thinking on the subject matter. It gives students the hands on opportunity to diagnose real issues faced by a business entity. It helps to bridge the 'theory-practice gap' and build student's competency in the subject.

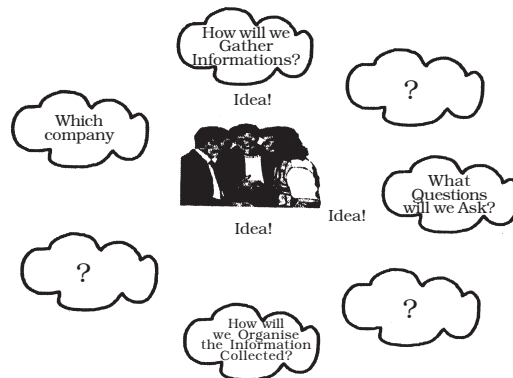
**B. Group Tasks**

Accounting students are widely criticised as ineffective communicators as the curriculum emphasises only on strong quantitative skills. Students prefer problems with clear cut answers that can be obtained from the application of rules that entail math-like certainties. For example, students are comfortable with an exercise that has an application of a specific depreciation method for a specific fact situation and textbooks are filled with assorted and rarely used methods.

The important issues such as selecting appropriate depreciation method, estimating useful life, salvage value are only discussed in general terms. Often communication skills can be enhanced through application of group activities and projects. These group activities and projects are usually of an unstructured nature and assist the students in group problem-solving and understanding of accounting concepts and principles. This method of teaching helps to develop student's critical thinking skills rather than the retention of a common body of knowledge. The conduct of exemplar activity-3 in the classroom calls for participatory and active learning.

*Exemplar Activity-3*

There are two dentists: Dr. Aggarwal and Dr. Mehta in your locality who are competitors. Both of them have recently bought equipment for the treatment of patients. Dr. Aggarwal has decided to write-off an equal amount of depreciation every year while Dr. Mehta wants to write-off a larger amount in the earlier years. They do not know anything about the methods of depreciation. Can you inform them more about the methods of



depreciation they are applying even without knowing anything about accounting in formal?

Who is wiser in your opinion? Discuss.

For students to take on the role of active participants in the learning process, well-organised group learning assignments allow students to develop skills in problem-solving, presentation and communication, which are difficult to develop in isolation.

It is necessarily true that every successful accountant is a problem solver. Yet, it is not true that every successful accountant is a technician. Fundamentals of problem-solving methodology should be discussed in the class. There is a variety of approaches to problem-solving. It involves series of simple steps: identifying issues, gathering issues, reaching to conclusion and communicating the solution. These can be well-translated into the accounting topics in order to bring practical experiences into the classroom.

*For example*, a group assignment on Cash Flow Statement may be given to identify:

- (a) Which method (direct or indirect) is used for the purpose of calculating cash flows from operating activities?
- (b) Whether all companies follow the same Performa of cash flow statement or different one.
- (c) Disclosure of extraordinary items.
- (d) If cash flow from operating activities have been negative over the years. What may be the possible reasons for the above mentioned situation?

The group is expected to prepare a small project file taking into account the following handy tips:

Learning in such an environment enable students to use and rely on other sources as well. An approach that stresses understanding of accounting treatment seems more relevant to the introductory classes. Students are better served learning how to analyse and draw conclusions about the impact of alternative accounting choices.

### **C. Computer-Based Accounting**

Artificial intelligence is gaining a foothold in the accounting profession. The computer-based learning approach is certainly an essential element in all accounting courses. Under this approach, students are required to develop account sets using either accounting software or prepare need based account sets using ACCESS or Excel. Student assignments are graded based on the level of understanding and application of accounting concepts in developing accounting database, retrieving the stored accounting data and preparation of required accounting reports. By implementing computer-based learning, students experience hands on exposure on available accounting soft wares and spread sheets which are essential tools in their profession.

### **D. Ethical Behaviour and Professional Judgement**

Learning ethical behaviour is more complicated than simply reading ethical standards. Accountants must maintain

a confidential relationship with clients yet adequately disclose necessary information on financial statements. Ethical and unethical behaviour are not two extremes separated by a large vacuum. Instead, there are shades of difference between sometimes conflicting standards, there is often only a very fine line separating the two. Professional Judgement often involves knowing where that line must be drawn and has a will power to stand on the correct side of the line.

### **Concluding Statement**

The constructivist approach to the teaching and learning of accounting courses provides a model that lends guidance to accounting faculty. It enables to devise appropriate teaching methods to meet the variety of needs and the skill-level of their students. The paper has provided some evidence to show that a variety of teaching methods should be utilized or at the least considered in teaching fundamentals of accounting. In order to lend further credibility to this prospect, additional empirical work is needed to examine whether these multiple teaching methods would have the desired effect. However, the fact

remains clear that traditional, passive and rote teaching methods are predominant in the accounting area. One way to operationalise this approach would be to incorporate different testing methods in the course content. Considering that some students may be better at multiple choice questions while other students are more suited to essay type questions. Also, some students may have better test-taking skills or mind sets than other students, and therefore, it might be appropriate to offer a variety of graded activities. It is believed that those students who are high achievers would continue to achieve no matter which method is used and that low achievers would benefit from different teaching procedures. Different delivery styles might also improve student comprehension. Some students benefit from the lecture method while others, with shorter attention spans, lose interest quickly and thus fail to understand key concepts being covered. By varying delivery method, say from lecture to group activity to individual presentation, teachers can motivate the interest of students in the course and realize their full potential and at the same time maintaining academic standards.

### **REFERENCES**

- BEEGLE, J. and D. COFFEE. 1991. "Accounting Instructors: Perceptions of How They Teach versus How They Were Taught", *Journal of Education for Business*, 67 (2): 90-99.
- CHANG CHEE FEL. 2006. "Teaching Accounting to Learner's with Diverse Intelligence", Taylor's College, Malaysia. Paper presented at Asia Pacific Educational Research Association International Conference, Hong Kong Institute of Education.



- DELEO, W.I. and C.A. LETOURNEAU. 1994. "Use of a Problem-solving Model in Teaching Specific Accounting Concept", *Journal of Education for Business*, May/June 94, 69;5, pp 263.
- FELDMANN, D.A. and K.J. DOW. 1997. "Current Approaches to Teaching Intermediate Accounting", *Issues in Accounting Education*, 12(1), 61-75.
- IMEL, P.W. 2000. "Assessing the Preparedness Level of Incoming Principles of Accounting Students Inquiry", *The Journal of the Virginia Community Colleges*, 5 (2), 16-21.
- KNECHEL, W.R. 1992. "Using the Case Method in Accounting Instruction", *Issues to Accounting Education*, Vol. 7, No. 2; Fall 1992.
- LOVELL, A. 1992. "Accounting Education: A Developmental Debate", *Management Accounting*, 70 (3): 20.
- National Focus Group Paper on Teaching of Social Sciences. *National Curriculum Framework. 2005*. NCERT. Also refer Accountancy Textbooks for Classes XI and XII, published by NCERT.
- SMITH, D. "Accounting: I wish someone had told me". *Business Education Forum*, 34 (1), 24.
- TUHKANEN, J. 1976. "Bookkeeping and Accounting: The 'Why' Approach in Teaching Accounting", *Business Education*, 31 (3), 15-16.

# Developing Time – Sense in History

SEEMA S. OJHA\*

---

## Abstract

---

*An understanding of time and chronology is indispensable to the study of history, which is the record of change through times. But teaching time concepts and dates in isolation without the accompanying development of context of the dated events is of no significance. It is true that children's sense of a period is largely shaped by visual images of individuals, clothing, homes or events. But development of time sense in students depends mostly on the kind of teaching and learning strategies we adopt while dealing a particular topic. This paper focuses on how graphical representations of time concept in the form of timelines, time charts help students develop a sense of time and chronology.*

---

## Introduction

What is time? Is a question generally asked by young minds in the preparatory stage when large sweeps of time and chronology are covered by way of stories and biographies? Imparting a sense of time amongst young children though admitted difficult and abstract, but is highly desirable whereby the child develops a proper perspective of chronological sequence. The importance of time and a sense of chronology are important not only for living in the present but also for the understanding of the present as past, present and future are interwoven. The present is the result of the past and forerunner of the future. In this context, time and chronology attempts to indicate the

characteristics of events, achievements, developments at various points of time either of the same country or of different countries.

History is one of the few learning's that is not shared to a great extent with any of the other school subject. It makes a great contribution among all school subjects towards the development of a mature sense of time and chronology. An understanding of time and chronology is indispensable to the study of history, which is the record of change through times. The history teacher often asks "when did this happen? What is its relation to the present day? Where does it fit in with other things in the past? How does it relate to the present and the future?" For children to develop an

---

\* Senior Lecturer, DESSH, NCERT, New Delhi.

understanding of the past and to see its relation to their own lives, they have to move back and forth along a base time line. In no other way can they build a sense of perspective or formulate for themselves significant time concepts. History therefore bears the greatest responsibility for developing time sense.

This is also a controversial area of history teaching in schools. Several researchers and academicians have pointed out that understanding time concepts is very difficult for younger children (especially under the age of 11), and that it is important for teachers not to underestimate these difficulties or assume the understanding of basic time concepts. Bradley (1947), Jahoda (1963), Blackie (1967), Wood (1995) have stressed that the past before the living memory is a nebulous idea for younger children. Pistor and Jahoda felt that additional emphasis to teach time concepts to younger children might not be a productive idea. While others have raised questions like: is there any purpose or gain in understanding from the sequence involved, is there any connection between the events being sequenced; does it matter if children know whether the battle of Plassey or the revolt of 1857 occurred first? These ideas undoubtedly influenced teaching-learning approaches in history. History methodologists such as West (1986) and Blyth (1989) advocated for a number of years the avoidance of dates and thereby emphasise statements such as 'today' 'long ago' and 'a very long time ago', But in recent times these phrases have been criticised as possibly causing temporal confusion. Antony Beevor (1998), author of the best seller *Stalin grad*, asserts that

the move from traditional "through the ages" syllabi has left children without a well-developed chronology or mental map of the past. So for overall grasp of the framework of the past a sense of time is required. Tim Lomas says, "Without a grasp of the concept of time, there can be no real understanding of change, development, continuity, progression, and regression.... if development/change are to be properly understood, there must be some idea of the order in which things happened," Sydney Wood has also suggested that, "the ability to sequence is a fundamental feature of historical understanding. The past is chaos to children, until sequenced." Stow (1999) and Hoodles (1996) also suggested that teaching with the use of historical images and timelines can develop children's sense of time and ability to sequence periods. Hodkinson (2001) makes the interesting analogy between dates and historical knowledge and coat pegs being historical time. He states: "Without the pegs the coats become a confusing mass and extracting any one coat for examination, becomes difficult if not impossible". Therefore chronology provides a mental framework or map, which gives significance and coherence to the study of history.

### **The Concept of Time in History**

The essence of the concept of time in history is the sense of location, distance and duration. Location means pointing out a person or an event in time. This kind of location or in other words giving dates to persons and events in time is useful because we cannot measure the distance between two things unless we

first spot them. But this location becomes significant only when we relate persons and events to other persons and events. Isolated and unrelated dates mean nothing to the students. Distance is the length of time between the present and the past. Sequencing provides meaningful connections for students in terms of their sense of the past, in addition to locating persons or events in the right order. They are required to understand the distance between them, and to have some contextual understanding of the events or persons being sequenced. Ghate emphasised that, "the history teacher must realise that history has got to be measured in terms of life and activity and not in terms of abstract numbers called years." Researches have suggested that duration is both more difficult and more important for students to grasp. To realise fully the significance of the history of our past and to derive benefit from it we need to know accurately what was the duration of historical movements, processes, epochs, dynasties, etc.

The development of time sense in student occurs neither quickly nor easily. Children gradually develop a time sense through clearly targeted teaching and learning strategies. Thornton and Vukelich (1988) pointed out that time concepts need to be explicitly addressed with children, and taught in a systematic way that children abilities in the area of time are crucially dependent upon instruction. Teaching has a significant influence on the development of time sense. Teaching style matters! But of course, sets us a challenge: what should be the mode of teaching to develop time sense and how should it be taught?

### **Development of Time Sense**

Development of time sense depends largely on the development of the vocabulary of chronology if children are to fully appreciate historical people, periods and events. The vocabulary of chronology incorporates:

- Descriptive vocabulary, e.g. before, after, a long time ago, a very long time ago, ancient, old, new, decade, century, millennium, modern.
- Technical vocabulary, e.g. AD, BC, the use of nineteenth century for 1857.
- Conceptual vocabulary e.g. change, continuity, sequence, duration, period, chronology.

However, teachers should also ensure that while employing phrases like long time ago and the past, students understand what period of time is being referred to. Otherwise, childrens understanding of the phrase 'a long time ago' can easily range from one month ago to 10 billion years.

We will have to keep in mind that isolated dates are of no significance to students. Geoffrey Partington (1980) warns against teaching time concepts and dates in isolation, without the accompanying development of context of the events, which are dated. In Partington's words: "Unless children have...some knowledge 'from the inside of a person' or group, unless there is some genuine three dimensionality of understanding there is no point in representing ill defined figures, half-understood events or pictures which do not tie up with children's grasp of character and plot. If children cannot

envisage an Iceni...in any way ‘from the inside’ there could be no purpose in their being able to place them in correct order in a time chart, let alone to space them accurately”. Dates related to a person or an event justifies in our scheme of time and history, only when that person or event is related with other persons and events. Another problem related to dates is the large numbers. Several dates are being given. We should consider dates like milestones. The stones mark the miles and give us an accurate idea of distance between different places mainly because they are not too near one another. But imagine if these stones are placed at each yard it would create a problem. Dates are required, but only a few, to serve as milestones and not as yardstones. A few selected related dates carefully chosen will definitely help to build up the time sense.

Children have a greater chance of developing an enduring map of the past if it builds on a deeper sense of period. How a sense of period develops is depicted in Fig. 1.

The spider diagram suggests the different elements of knowledge that make up a ‘sense of period’. It is quite likely that children’s sense of period is shaped with visual images of individuals, clothing, homes or events-as a form of introductory mental package. Once such package is mentally established, other details can now be added. Sense of period needs to be taught explicitly through specific activities and by using explicit language about ‘sense of period’.

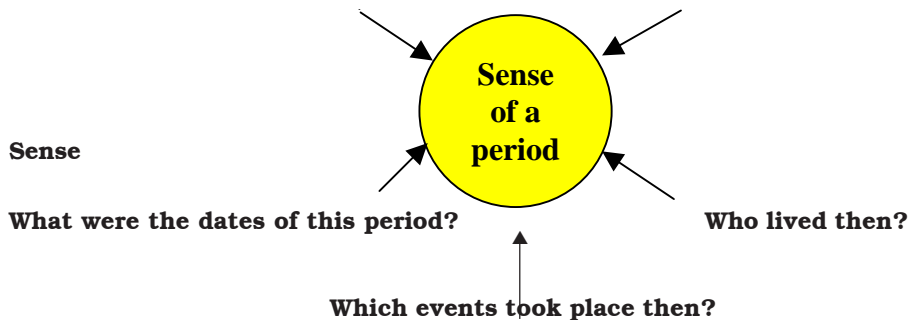
In order to make time relations intelligible in history, we represent them as space relations so that they can be seen, comprehend and compared. Timelines, time graphs and other

**What ideas did people have then?**

For example, how much say did people have in government?  
 What religion did they follow and how tolerant were they?  
 Were all people equal? What did they know about ...Science, Geography, etc.

**What would you have seen?**

For example, what did they wear?  
 How did they travel/communicate?  
 What kind of houses and buildings?  
 What kinds of work did they do?  
 How did they use their leisure time?  
 How did they punish crimes?



**Fig. : 1**



<i>Dates</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>South Asia</i>
6 mya – 500,000 BP	Australopithecus fossils (5.6 mya) Evidence of use of fire.		Use of fire (700,000 BP, China)	Stone age site in Riwat (1,900,000 BP, Pakistan)
500,000 – 150,000 BP	Homosapiens fossils (195,000 BP)	Evidence of use of fire (400,000 BP)		
150,000 – 50,000 BP			Homosapiens fossils (100,000 BP, West Asia)	
50,000 – 30,000		Homosapiens fossils (40,000)		
30,000–10,000	Paintings in caves/rock shelters (27,500)	Paintings in caves/rock shelters (especially France and Spain)	Domestication of dog (14,000, West Asia)	Cave Paintings at Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh); Homosapiens fossils (25,500 BP, Sri Lanka)

**Fig.: 3**

(Source: NCERT Class XI History Textbook), March 2006.

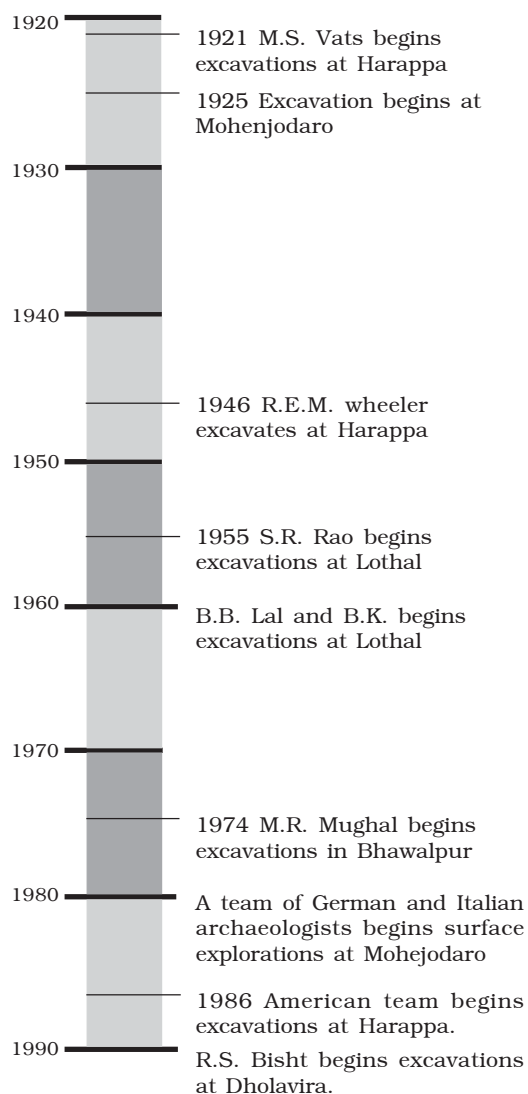
*Time Charts*

The time chart is used to provide a chronological framework. The events and developments are recorded in it. Time charts are of two types viz. pictorial time charts and panorama time charts. A pictorial time chart is a list of pictures pasted on a piece of paper to indicate the development of a particular dynasty. For example if we have to teach about the Mughal Dynasty we should begin with the history of Babur and in a chronological order we may proceed to Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Sahjahan, Aurangzeb, etc. In panorama time charts, events of only one century are presented in a pictorial form as used in

pictorial time charts. For example, while discussing Indian National Movement of 19<sup>th</sup> Century, 1857 can be a starting point.

These time lines do not serve any purpose unless these are taught in a right spirit. So care needs to be taken while drawing and using a timeline. A timeline can be divided into parts of equal length to represent a fixed length of time. For example, an inch should be equivalent to say five years or ten years according to the need of the situation. This division of time into parts of equal length and each part representing the same number of years must be followed throughout the timeline. For example in

Fig.3 major developments in Harappan archaeology have been shown. Here 1 inch is equivalent to 10 years.



**Fig: 4** Major developments in Harappan archaeology

Source: NCERT Class XII Textbook, Part 1, January, 2007.

Listed below are some of the important points we need to remember while drawing and using a timeline:

1. Timeline should contain a few dates covering a long period. So, selected dates with importance can be shown on the timeline.
2. A timeline presents the rise and fall of dynasties, dominance of a particular ideology, etc., therefore, it should not be too small.
3. Attempts should be made to see that the dates presented on the timeline are accurate.
4. Timeline should be drawn artistically to attract the students.
5. A timeline should be properly explained to the students. As a result, they can develop time sense.
6. Teachers should try to use timelines in almost every lesson, so that students can use it.

### Conclusion

Developing a sense of time and a sense of chronology is fundamental to the enhancement of learners understanding of history. A thinking that time sense is not developed until adolescence or even at the adult stage is to ignore the fact that the child gradually develops a time sense when helped with such teaching aids and devices. Time lines and time charts are some of the devices, which help to concretize the abstract dates and chronology and make them more meaningful for the child's understanding. However, time devices also have their own limitations. If not handled carefully and properly, they tend to be more mathematical rather than historical. Therefore, they need be used supplemented by vivid description and visualisation.



**REFERENCES**

- GHOSH, K.D. 1951. *Creative Teaching of History*, Oxford University Press, London.
- HODKINSON, ALAN. 2001. "Enhancing Temporal Cognition, Practical Activities for the Primary Classroom".
- HOODLESS, P. 1996. 'Time and timelines in the primary school,' *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research*, Historical Association, London.
- JAHODA, G. 1963. Children's concept of time and history, *Educational Review*, 16, No.1.
- LOMAS, T. 1993. *Teaching and Assessing Historical Understanding*, Historical Association.
- PARTINGTON, G. 1980. *The Idea of a Historical Education*.
- SYDNEY, WOOD. 1995. 'Developing an Understanding of Time-sequencing Issues', *Teaching History*, 79.
- BEEVOR, ANTONY. 1998. *Stalingrad*, Viking Press, London.

# Analysis of Evaluation System in different Departments at the College of Education

*Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia*

MESSERET ASSEFA\*

---

## Abstract

---

*Evaluation is the use of systematic gathering of information to learn about teaching and learning process. Addis Ababa University is moving from a summative to a continuous evaluation system. This study is an attempt to assess the extent to which the teachers adhere to continuous evaluation system in the University. The empirical basis of the study is a questionnaire-based investigation among the University teachers. The samples consist of forty teachers from different departments of College of Education, Addis Ababa University. The study also make an effort to compare the scores obtained by the students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2005 and continuous evaluation during the first semester of 2006 which was completed in January 2006. The present paper elaborates about the background, objectives, methodology, sample and results of the study.*

---

### **Background of the Study**

Evaluation is a data gathering process to determine the worth or value of the instruction, its strengths and weakness. The identified strengths and weaknesses are used to revise the instruction to improve its effectiveness. It is conducted by collecting data about the instruction from variety of sources, using a variety of data gathering methods and tools. Tessemer (1993) argues that evaluation can be continuous or summative.

Continuous evaluation is a judgement of the strengths and weaknesses of instruction in its developing stages, for purposes of revising the instruction to improve its effectiveness.

The higher education system in Ethiopia followed a summative evaluation system – an evaluation given at the end of the semester. This practice existed for the past four decades. Now, there is a discussion to change the evaluation system. The Ministry of

---

\* Assistant Professor of Education, Addis Ababa University, Teacher Education and Curriculum Department, Ethiopia, P.O. Box 33993.

Education is in favour of introducing a continuous evaluation system. At the request of the Ministry of Education Addis Ababa University is planning to change the evaluation system from summative to continuous evaluation. It is expected that this transition will improve the teaching learning process.

The transition from summative to continuous evaluation system is seen in a phased manner. The teachers will be trained in continuous evaluation and then these teachers will be required to introduce continuous evaluation in their respective departments. As an initial step a higher diploma programme (HDP) was introduced to train university teachers in continuous evaluation. College of education was selected as a pilot case for introducing continuous evaluation in the University.

The higher diploma programme training was carried out largely on-the-job and emphasised the key elements of the role of continuous evaluation required in the college of education. This higher diploma programme started in 2004 September. A batch of 40 teachers selected from 14 departments of the college of education completed the programme in June 2005. They are expected to introduce continuous evaluation system in their respective departments of the college of education from September 2005 onwards.

It is felt that all departments for various reasons are not effectively implementing the new evaluation system. This study is an attempt to assess the progress in implementing continuous evaluation in all departments of college of education.

### **Statement of the Study**

There exist differences in evaluation system followed by HDP trained teachers in different departments at the college of education, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To analysis the evaluation system followed by college of education, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- To analysis of reasons for following the selected evaluation system by departments, College of Education Addis Ababa Ethiopia.
- To compare the scores of the same cohort of students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2005 and continuous evaluation in 2006.
- To analyse the linkage between curriculum materials and the evaluation systems at College of Education, Addis Ababa Ethiopia.
- To Suggest recommendation for implementation of continuous evaluation system at college of education

### **Methodology of the Study**

The methodology adopted involved four steps. First, an analysis of the role of evaluation system in higher education was analysed through review of relevant literature on evaluation system and a review of evaluation system followed in college of education in Ethiopia.

In the second step, an analysis of perception of teachers for following the selected evaluation system by departments, class size, autonomy in choosing the appropriate evaluation, teaching load, and training of teachers

was carried out by reviewing documents and from the information collected from teachers through questionnaires.

In the third step, an analysis of the curriculum materials and their linkage with the evaluation systems was analysed from information collected from the teachers through questionnaires.

In the fourth step, a comparison of the students' scores of the same cohort of students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2004 and continuous evaluation in 2005 was made in order to see the effects of the evaluation system towards the students' performance.

Finally, the study summarizes the major findings of the study and also discusses recommendations that may help solve the major problems and indicates the lessons learned from the research.

### **Sample of the Study**

The higher diploma programme was introduced in 2005. Forty teachers from different departments of College of Education were selected for this training programme. They are the first group of teachers selected to implement continuous evaluation in the University. The study administered questionnaires to all these 40 teachers. The questionnaire sought their views and opinions on continuous evaluation and its implementations in the departments they represent.

Furthermore, the study collected scores obtained by the students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2004 and to continuous evaluation during the first semester of 2005 which

is completed in January 2006. This is the latest data on evaluation scores available in the University. Given the time constraint, only two departments were selected for collection of data.

These two departments are selected on the basis of the largest number of teachers participated in the training programme. The departments which sent 3 teachers to the training programme are 1. Biology; 2. Chemistry; 3. Sport; 4 English; and 5. Mathematics. Among these departments, Mathematics from Science education and Geography education are selected. In total, the scores of 104 students from the II and III semesters are collected for analysis.

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### ***Continuous and Summative Evaluation – A comparison***

In one sense evaluation is about understanding and reflecting on a particular set of activities. Oliver argues that there is no single definition of evaluation. (Oliver, 2003), however he states that evaluation is a process of making judgements about the worth (costs and values) of something. Furthermore, he argues that evaluation can also be used in the context of descriptive studies, intervention studies (e.g. continuous evaluation), empirical research, monitoring and quality assurance processes.

Phillips (2000) on the other hand argues that as human beings we naturally ask questions about how useful and how valuable our activities are. We can think of evaluation as a process of considerably sharpening this natural activity of checking on our ongoing work.

A more formal definition is to think of evaluation as providing information to make decisions about the product or process. Further, in relation to the importance of evaluation and research, he stated that evaluation is not equivalent to research, although it employs research techniques as a means of generating the necessary information, and uses similar criteria for the reliability and validity to judge the quality of the evidence and that evaluation tends to be broader than research, as it usually requires information about a range of situations, products and processes. However, the main similarity between evaluation and research is that evaluation also involves making judgements about the value of what is being evaluated. He further states that in one sense evaluation in an educational setting is the process whereby we seek evidence that the learning experiences we have designed for students are effective. He believes that we evaluate educational activities for two overlapping reasons:

- (a) To obtain information that can inform the ongoing design and development process (often referred to as continuous evaluation);
- (b) To decide whether an innovation is worth retaining (often referred to as summative evaluation). These forms of evaluation often hold together, and each can be difficult to undertake properly.

Evaluation is the process of delineation, obtaining, providing, and applying descriptive and judgmental information about the merit and worth of some object's goals, design,

implementation, and outcomes to guide improvement decisions, provide accountability reports, inform institutionalisation dissemination decisions, and improve understanding of the involved phenomena.

His concept of evaluation deals with context, input, process, and product (CIPP) model. It deals with the four salient aims of evaluation that is (a) guiding decision (b) accountability (c) informing the out come, and (d) developing understanding of the findings.

### **Continuous Evaluation and Student Performance**

Over the last 30 years, a number of empirical studies have shown that continuously evaluating instructional materials has resulted in revised instruction that produces statistically significant increases in student performance over the original, unevaluated versions of the instruction (Nathenson and Henderson, 1980). These improvements have been reported on all types of instruction. Even the use of a single learner for and evaluation has resulted in improved materials. Thus, there is evidence that using continuous evaluation can improve the learning effectiveness of instructional materials.

Can continuous evaluation make instruction more motivation or interesting and effective? Historically, most continuous evaluation studies have measured student performance gains and ignored measures of student attitude or acceptance (or instructor attitude/ acceptance!). However, evaluators have used both experts and students to evaluate the interest and acceptability of instruction to its users, and have

obtained suggestions on how to revise instruction to meet these goals (Flagg, 1990, Nathenson and Henderson, (1980). Certainly, continuous evaluation can be used to obtain criticisms and suggestions on the interest/ motivation of the instruction to its users.

Markle (1979) has indicated that continuous evaluation should be conducted for the life time of the instructional product. Markle suggests that the idea of summative evaluation should be abandoned in product evaluation, since summative evaluation implies that the product is some how finished and no longer in need of revision.

Instead, evaluation should always be done with an eye toward product improvement, even after the instruction has been distributed in the market place.

When comparing continuous and summative evaluation, continuous evaluation is needed if understanding and learning by doing concerns arise in a classroom practice. Otherwise we lose an interest in teaching if we do not give the student a chance to practice different approach in the teaching-learning activities. Continuous evaluation need not be an isolated step or stage of an instruction. Geis (1986), dick (1977) and Braden (1992) have suggested that

#### **Difference between Continuous and Summative Evaluation**

<i>Continuous Evaluation</i>	<i>Summative Evaluation</i>
1. Quick diagnostic that helps students reflect on the class and gives the teacher immediate feedback.	1. Identify the problem of the students at the end of the semester programme.
2. Students working collaboratively in groups on questions or projects in and out of class.	2. The students are doing individually during teaching-learning process.
3. Process evaluation where feed back is provided and shaping the programme in an explicit goal.	3. More general evaluation of the extent to which the better product have been obtained the complete lesson.
4. Conducted during the development or improvement of a programme or product.	4. Conducted after the learning or instruction has taken place.
5. Conducted with a small group of people to examine different aspects of instructional materials.	5. Conducted with a large group of people to examine different aspects of instructional materials.
6. Adjusting the whole learning pattern into manageable units.	6. Stresses more on the wider capability expressed by the concept construct and interpret.
7. Continuous evaluation quizzes are achievement tests over a particular topic of learning.	7. Summative tests are achievement tests over a number of units of learning.
8. A judgement of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching-learning process.	8. Mostly concerned for grading purpose and qualification.

Source: w.w.w//jan.ucc.nau.edu

continuous evaluation can be applied to every step of the design process; that continuous evaluation is a common thread that can be woven through the fabric of the entire design process. For example, a design expert could evaluate the objectives or strategies created in the design stage. An instructor could review activities done in the analysis stage; determining the instruction will solve the defined problem, if the task analysis is accurate, and if key environmental variables have been defined. Whenever there is a design decision or plan made, continuous evaluation can be used. In our current situation in college of education continuous evaluation has an important place thus, we have to move from traditional summative way of evaluation to progressive continuous evaluation method because from experience and researches, we know that it is practical and help full in introducing the practical environment. So far, we have seen that evaluation in general and continuous and summative evaluation in particular plays a great role in enhancing students' performance.

#### **Continuous Evaluation: An analysis of Teachers' Perceptions**

This section deals with presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data collected through questionnaire. The respondents of this study are Forty College of education teachers those who have completed the higher diploma training programme in the year 2005, which oriented them to use continuous evaluation system. A questionnaire was prepared and administered to the respondents with its part seeking personal information.

Accordingly, based on the responses obtained from the sample teachers with reference to their background information, some major characteristics of them are presented as under.

#### **Characteristics of Teachers**

As shown in table I, All the teacher respondents are 100% males because no females were participated in 2005 HDP training. When we see their qualification 2.5% of the respondents were holding Ph.D and 96, 5% of them were holding M.A degree. By their teaching experience 22.5% teachers have served from 1 to 5 years, 32.40% teachers have served 6 to 10 years, 27.5% of the teachers have served 11 to 15 years, 2.5% of the teachers have served from 16 to 20 years, 12.5% of the teachers have served 21 to 25 years and 2.5% have served 26 to 30 years out side college of education respectively. Whereas, 15% of the teachers have served 1 to 5 years, 40% have served 6 to 10 years, 32.5% have served 11 to 15 years, 5% have served 16 to 20 years, 2.5% have served 21-25 years and 5% of them have served 26-30 years respectively inside college of education. Regarding teaching load, 22.5% teachers teach between 1 to 9 periods per week, 50% of the teachers teach between 10 to 12 periods per week, 12.5% teachers teach 13 to 15 periods per week, 15% teachers teach 15 to 20 periods per week.

Concerning class size, from the investigator's work experience all of the teachers, i.e. 100% are found to teach more than 50 students per classroom in their respective departments. In addition to this, 62.5% teachers were reported to be from main campus and 37.5%

TABLE 1  
**Characteristics of Teacher Respondents by Sex, Qualification,  
 Teaching Experience, Teaching Load and Place of Work**

	Respondents (%)	
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	100	
<b>Qualifications</b>		
M.A.	97.5	
Ph.D	2.5	
	<b>Teaching Experience (%)</b>	
Years	Outside College of Education (%)	Inside College of Education (%)
1-5	22.5	15
6-10	32.4	40
11-15	27.5	32.5
16-20	2.5	5
21-25	12.5	2.5
26-30	2.5	5
<b>Teaching Load in Hours</b>		
1-9	22.5	
10-12	50	
13-15	12.5	
15-20	15	
<b>Place of Work</b>		
Main Campus	62.5	
Science Campus	37.5	

teachers were from Science education. Thus, as presented in the table 1, even though the majority of the respondents on their current positions limited on their long years of total services together with their limited services as current positions. One could say that they were the right persons to share their views in support of this study.

### **Results and Discussions**

The percentage for teacher perception,

class size, teaching load, curriculum, teacher training and students' performance were computed and the results are presented below.

As could be observed from table 2 level of perception to use continuous evaluation seems to have been fully met. On further enquiry the majority of the respondents (90.5%) reported that the level of perception of continuous evaluation is very high that they favoured continuous evaluation as an appropriate



TABLE 2  
**Teachers Perception on the Appropriateness of the Evaluation System (in percentage)**

<i>Items</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Low</i>
1. Level of perception to use continuous evaluation	90.5	9.5
2. The teachers prefer summative evaluation than continuous	11.5	88.5

evaluation system. Where as 9.5% of the respondents regard low perception. Teachers' responses to the question indicated that teacher prefer summative evaluation than continuous evaluation. On further enquiry only 11.5% teachers' responded positively very high whereas 88.5% of them have low regard.

Hence, from this result, we can conclude that teachers in the study have shown a clear preference for continuous evaluation to summative evaluation. It has been underlined by many scholars that the main objectives of continuous evaluation are to enable the learners acquire knowledge; develop skill and attitude to fit to the existing society. This objective can be attained only if the students efficiently learn the contents to be learned at different levels of education. The one and the most important means to attain this aim is the continuous evaluation method used by teachers in the teaching-learning process. Nonetheless this suggests that successful use of continuous evaluation is determined by the presence of certain appearances. It should, however, be noted that unless teachers are aware of these conditions and have the skills essential to plan and manage continuous evaluation, its resistance to the students performance is unavoidable prodigious. The teacher is the most significant factor in determining success

of a new material. Teachers' perception and their abilities to adjust to new thinking and what it involves in real terms are critical decisive.

TABLE 3  
**Reasons for using Continuous Evaluation Method (In percentage)**

<i>Items</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Better performance	97	3
Well-informed on the progress of students	95	5
Systematic possibility of getting feed back	94	6

In table 3, the respondents indicated the reasons for using continuous evaluation method in the college of education particularly they have made high level of agreement on the better performance (97%), well-informed on the progress of the students (95%) and systematic possibility of getting feed back (94%). The significant point of reference are more in favour of teachers with high level of perception towards the reasons for using continuous evaluation method than for teachers with low level of attitude. This shows that from the HDP training they have got the necessary training about continuous evaluation and truly they have seen from their classroom practice the importance of continuous evaluation than the

summative one. For example, in table 9 and 10, the Geography students who were subjected to continuous evaluation method perform better than Mathematics students and definitely this students' performance will convince the teachers of the evaluation method who were using summative evaluation through time. However, selecting appropriate evaluation method is an important part of the planning process. Teachers must make it come alive for their students.

All these points make clear that improving continuous evaluation is a difficult enterprise. Some teachers will resist attempts to change for change is threatening. However, feedback has been shown to improve teaching learning process in which it offers each student specific guidance on strengths and weakness. Hence, the way in which continuous evaluation results are revealed back to students is a critical aspect of feed back to students which should not be an overall mark, but pointing out their own strengths and weaknesses, together with the means and possibility to work with this substantiation to overcome problems. While it may also be essential to have a syllabus, such a test cannot be of much value for continuous evaluation process. To this effect, under certain conditions, teachers can play a useful role in this effort, specifically, their mission of promoting collaboration and co-operation within and across departments can be used by enhancing his or her own efforts; the capacity building role is especially important, since it contributes to building and supporting the very components of collaboration and co-operation which are important

determinants of quality within an individual department.

TABLE 4  
**The difficulties Encountered in using Continuous Evaluation Method**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Class size reduce the effect of continuous evaluation	90	10

Table 4 shows that most of the teachers (90%) seem to have positive attitude towards the responses to the questionnaire on the effect of class size in using continuous evaluation system. While 10% of them regard low perception towards class size.

It seems logical – smaller class sizes would allow for greater individual attention by the teacher. As to archive information, smaller class students substantially outperformed larger class students on both standardized (Stanford Achievement Test and Curriculum-based Skills Test). This was true for white and minority students in smaller classes and for smaller class students from inner city, urban, sub-urban, and rural schools. (March, 1999).

- The positive achievement effect of smaller classes on minority students was double that of the majority students initially, and then was about the same.
- A smaller proportion of students in the smaller classes was retained in-grade, and there was more early identification of students' special educational needs.

Furthermore, many of the respondents seem frustrated by the large

number of students they teach. It's not a secret that the fewer students you have in a classroom, the more individual attention a teacher can give to his students. Too many students in a crowded room cause problems. Since class size is a major constraint to introduce continuous evaluation. It is important that the Addis Ababa University explore possibilities of revising norms regarding class size and strictly adhere the norm. Reducing class size request more teachers to be employed which, is very difficult to the financial health of the University. This situation lies in finding a right balance between adjusting the class size and appointment of new teachers.

TABLE 5  
**Perception of Teachers about Autonomy in Choosing the Appropriate Evaluation System (in percentages)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Choosing the appropriate evaluation system	95	5

The item in table 5 is devised to draw information regarding the teachers' autonomy whether they have right in choosing their own evaluation system or not. Thus as can be seen in the above table, the majority of the respondents (95%) of them have autonomy to choose their own evaluation system whereas 5% of them have low understanding. Every teacher has a unique set of personal practice, background, mode of training, teaching skills and personality traits that make him or her more comfortable and effective with certain evaluation system than others. That is why the majority of

the teachers preferred to use continuous evaluation to summative evaluation. But this choice doesn't mean that they practice it systematically.

College of education should adopt and practice continuous evaluation system that link their educational contributions closely with improved centre of excellence to produce quality teachers and to use for Ethiopia in general as well. For it is in the capital and other regional schools that the job is most difficult, the schools then are most in need of transformed schools, and it is in these neighborhood schools that the evaluator can choose to undertake his exceptional role of being a vehicle for change and transformation. Proponents of educational reform advocate change, improvement and restructuring of schools, could be the environments that create wonderful opportunities for evaluators to maintain a critical stance toward theory, research practice and social policy.

Nonetheless, there are evidences where teacher' likes and dislikes, together with their experience, have a bearing on the method of evaluation they use. This is partly related to their philosophy, style and value system but also to their past experiences and their confidence in using new and often less controllable methods (Knott and Mutunga, 1995).

One can apparently understand that teachers tend to select the evaluation method that have proved most successful in the past and that makes them feel most comfortable. This means people naturally resist to change or new innovation as it upsets them and makes

**TABLE 6**  
**Perception of Teachers related to Curriculum Materials (in percentages)**

<i>Items</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
1. Problems of inadequacy in the preparation of training materials	97	0	3
2. Encourage teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills through continuous evaluation	0	10	90
3. Adequate activities and exercises in the training materials to practice	0	10	90
4. Training material emphasizes the use of summative evaluation system	82.5	0	17.5

them feel not confident. In line with this view, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) argued that, the fundamental problem of change is that it disturbs the framework of meanings by which we make sense of the world. It challenges, and thereby potentially threatens the values, attitudes, and beliefs that enable us to make experience meaningful and predictable.

The items under Table 6 were devised in order to get the respondents' views about the curriculum material impact on the continuous or summative evaluation system. Out of the respondents, 97% strongly feel that there is a problem of inadequacy in the training material while 3% of them were arguing that there is no problem of inadequacy. With regard to item 2, 10% of the respondents support that it encourages to use continuous evaluation, but the majority of the respondents (90%) says that the training material doesn't encourage or prepare them to use continuous evaluation method. For item 3, 10% of the respondents said the training material has adequate exercises and

activities. While the majority of the respondents 90% were saying there is no adequate exercise and activities in the teaching material.

82.5% of the respondents under item 4 emphasise the use of summative evaluation method while 17.5% were of the opinion that it doesn't help much. Thus, in reference to the above results we must improve what is needed for example, the syllabus of a teaching material is a plan for the course. The plan typically includes the goals and or the rationale for the teaching material, topics covered, resources used, assignments given, and evaluation strategies recommended. In general it represents the ends and means of the course. Thus, unless otherwise this has to be controlled, improved and geared in line with the standard the quality of education will deteriorate. And the teaching forces who were executing the teaching material in the classroom will lose hope.

Furthermore, due emphasis is also given to whether the curricular materials developed for the college of education

makes the teachers not to use continuous evaluation methods dominantly. Therefore, the teachers are of the opinion that they do not use the continuous evaluation method frequently as the syllabi, the students' textbooks and the teachers' guides of the subject matters they teach are poorly organised. It is true that the content of the curriculum has an impact on the implementation of continuous evaluation method. Further, the curricular materials enforce the teachers to use the summative evaluation dominantly. This is because the materials are very vast, too difficult to understand easily and effectively, chunk in nature and at the same time not activity-oriented.

This shows that, the teachers believe that inappropriateness of the curricular materials prepared for the student teacher for college of education is one of the factors that intimidate them to use continuous evaluation. Therefore, most of the respondents believe that even if the college of education teachers wants to employ the continuous evaluation system, they could not do so as the curricular materials (syllabi and student textbooks) do not invite such teaching approaches. The teaching materials should be prepared in light of continuous evaluation to the level. So that, students can always do and answer certain questions—about the task's purpose, the resources needed to carry it out, what it means to do the task well. They can grasp what is essential about the task, set priorities, and make intelligent judgements. Ideally, this is true not only at the level of a particular assignment, but also when applied to all the courses in a curriculum, taken together.

However, the literature on education indicates that adopting new materials or techniques may not guarantee its implementation. That is, curriculum innovation may fail to do well in attaining its objectives. It is mainly stated that, putting a new curriculum in place does not mean that a change in classroom behaviour will occur. It should, therefore, be stressed that any set of techniques, no matter how good it is need to be executed in practice.

TABLE 7  
**Perception of Teachers related to Teaching Load (in percentages)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Impact of teaching load in using continuous Evaluation	95	5

Table 7 was intended for finding out the respondents' belief that whether teaching load has an impact in the application of continuous evaluation or not in their respective classrooms. 95% of the respondents gave high response indicating their beliefs that teaching load is a hindrance to apply continuous evaluation method. While 5% of the respondents said teaching load is not the cause for not using continuous evaluation method. Nonetheless, teaching load is one of the factors that may enforce teachers to use or not to use a particular evaluation method. Because, teachers do not get sufficient time to prepare activity-based lessons so as to apply the continuous evaluation method in most cases. Hence, the teaching load must be balanced in order to get engaged in the teachers within the expected method of evaluation.

Furthermore, to cross-check the responses given by the informants' regarding teaching loads, Table 1 shows that 15% of the respondents only teach more than 15-20 periods but 72.5% of them were teaching less or equivalent to the average college teachers' teaching loads.

However, reducing class size does not necessarily reduce the teacher's workload, if a teacher is assigned to teach more classes because the number of students in each class is reduced, the teacher spends more time teaching and has no small number of students but this still implies either that teachers teach all year or that more teachers get employed. The common understanding is that small class size allows teachers to increase the time devoted to each student, either individually or in smaller groups, and thereby improve the quality of the students' achievement. If this feeling is true, successful class size reduction programmes will have to attend to the impact on teachers' workloads.

One should be able to conclude from the information presented above that teaching load is fairly evenly distributed across departments, contrary to perceptions that might exist. There may be teachers who are working apparently more or less than the averages presented here, but not whole college of education.

Therefore, in order to alleviate the problem a teaching load policy has to be introduced to recognise the many and varied teaching activities in which college of education staff members are engaged, to recognise and reduce significant disparities in teaching loads through a process that emphasises teaching load considerations in departmental planning

activities, and to ensure fairness across and within departments at the college education level.

TABLE 8  
Perception of Teachers related to  
Training (in Percentages)

<i>Item</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
HDP is adequate enough in order to equip you to the necessary evaluation system.	37	63

Table 8 of the teachers' questionnaire was intended to find out the respondents' beliefs about the training programme. Out of the respondents, 37% of them said yes it was very adequate and helpful for our work, and 63% of them were in a position that the higher diploma programme was not adequate enough to equip them for the necessary expected teaching-learning process they were under taking.

Without practicing the evaluation method it is difficult to judge and to expect a big change in a short period of time. Through time, definitely they will see a difference if they were using continuous evaluation method properly and frequently by enriching their classroom creativity and sharing ideas within the department and among departments colleague.

One expected that the more the training advanced the greater the percentage of teachers who would report on the influence of the materials learned on their work in the classroom. However, the success of the educational process depends to a great extent on the character and ability of teachers. Currently, teaching is more than imparting knowledge. It includes helping

learners to learn by themselves, to acquire skills and to develop attitudes in the changing social context. To this end, the mode of training that teachers get in HDP plays a vital role.

However, lack of training is also quite a significant factor that makes the teachers use the summative evaluation frequently in the teaching-learning process. Besides, the respondents were asked so as to check whether lack of training makes them use the summative evaluation method in most cases at the expense of continuous evaluation. But the surprise here is that even after the training some of the teachers were not using continuous evaluation. This shows that for change one has to be convinced both intrinsically and extrinsically.

Furthermore, education in Ethiopian context must assist in shaping students to be able of making studies into practical knowledge through continuous evaluation system. In order to train teachers to manage an educational environment, which will enable them to change information to practical and transferable knowledge, the only possible way is to train the teaching force in HDP as a supportive environment. The college of education must also revise

the HDP training and keep a follow up through a tracer study and do more than just to build a supportive environment for a teacher which trains them mainly to access and deal with information.

Continuous evaluation serves to strengthen students' sense of their own personality over the content. Through their work they become good on one aspect of a problem, and learn to collaborate with other students in the exchange of important facts. Table 9 deals with the comparison between Mathematics and Geography students who were subjected to summative and continuous evaluation in 2005, I and II semesters and 2006, I semester to continuous evaluation.

### Students Achievement

#### Introduction

The performance of the same cohort of Mathematics and Geography students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2005, I and II semesters and continuous evaluation 2006, I semester is summarised in the following tables.

Out of 53 Mathematics students who were taught in summative evaluation 26.42% students showed an

TABLE 9  
**Comparison of the Scores of Mathematics Students  
Related to Summative and Continuous Evaluation**

<i>Subjected to Summative Evaluation 2005, I and II Semesters</i>			<i>Subjected to Continuous Evaluation 2006, I Semester</i>	
<i>No of Stu- dents</i>	<i>Achievement improved in the II Semester</i>	<i>Achievement Decreased in the II Semester</i>	<i>Achievement improved in 2006 I Semester</i>	<i>Achievement Decreased in 2006 I Semester</i>
53	26.42%	73.58%	18.86%	81.14%

improvement in their semester grade average. However, 73.58% students didn't improve in their result. When we see the results of Mathematics of the same cohort of students who were subjected to continuous evaluation method in the year 2006 I semester 18.86% students were improved in their semester result while 81.13% students didn't show any improvement at all. From this, we can simply infer that the teachers were not in a position to use continuous evaluation properly either in summative or in continuous evaluation. Student results are deteriorating; it doesn't show any pace of development. This is because, some of the teachers were not using continuous evaluation regularly or properly as per their training. Then there is no surprise for the students varied result.

Yet, there is no theoretical formula that has factually stood the test of time. Hence, it is all the more urgent and essential to consider how students should be best prepared and take on multiple and new roles in their respective society. Thus, teachers have to be trained to the appropriate evaluation and been fully familiar with the notion of learning in successive stages—training in which

the use of new technology should make a useful contribution in order to cope up with the order of the day.

Out of 51 students, 45.09% of them showed an improvement in their performance. And 54.81% of them didn't improve their results. While those who were taught by continuous evaluation method in 2006, semester I 60.78% of them showed an improvement in their semester grade average but 39.22% of them didn't improve their performance. Geography students who were taught in continuous evaluation improved than the Mathematics students who were subjected to continuous evaluation. Unless they use continuous evaluation method properly the results will remain even worse than this, there must be a conviction and a dedication from both the teachers and the students side otherwise it is difficult to bring the expected result.

In the light of this, one can therefore draw certain implications as regards continuous evaluation practice of teachers of the above type. The above responses imply that such teachers have healthy reliance on the teacher's role as source of knowledge and as an all knowing person who should play decisive

TABLE 10  
**Comparison of the Scores of Geography Students related to Summative and Continuous Evaluation**

<i>Subjected to Summative Evaluation 2005, I and II Semesters</i>			<i>Subjected to Continuous Evaluation 2006, I Semester</i>	
<i>No of Stu- dents</i>	<i>Achievement improved in the II Semester</i>	<i>Achievement Decreased in the II Semester</i>	<i>Achievement improved in 2006 I Semester</i>	<i>Achievement Decreased in 2006 I Semester</i>
51	45.09%	54.81%	60.78%	39.22%



roles in the learners' learning process. Clearly speaking such attitudes and assumptions are far from being helpful for implementing continuous evaluation system.

This would seem to indicate the fact that teachers in the study have more or less clear views about what kinds of evaluation are desirable in their respective departments and the factors influencing selection and application of evaluation methods. On the other hand they are able to realise the impact of continuous as well as summative evaluation method on Mathematics and Geography students' performance.

Further, when we compare the result of 2005 – I and II semesters summative evaluation and 2006 I semester continuous evaluation result, those students who were taught in continuous evaluation results are far better than those who were taught in summative evaluation method. This shows us that teachers were using continuous evaluation system properly. Furthermore, it is a signal that the success of the training already had an effect on their work in their way of

thinking when preparing lessons, in relating the material with other materials and in better understanding of the needs of their students. But as per the result of the students still an effort is needed from the teachers' side to fully apply their training capacity.

From continuous evaluation point of view, learners construct meaning from experience and interaction with others, and the teacher's role is to provide meaningful experience for students. Further more, students come to the classroom with ideas, beliefs and opinions that need to be altered or modified by a teacher who facilitates this alteration by devising tasks and questions that create problem for students. Where as from the summative point of view Rugg and Shumaker (1969) argue that guided by rote and routine, the students mind is submitted to the grindstone of educational discipline which for ever dwarfs his capacity to think for himself, which dulls his interest, in gleaming, pulsing life.

These authorities assert that the key concept in the open or progressive development of the student is

<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Traditional</i>
Teacher as guide to educational experience	Teacher as distributor of knowledge
Active pupil role	Passive pupil role
Pupil participate in curriculum planning	Pupil have no say to curriculum planning
Learning predominated by discovery techniques	Accent on memory, practice and rote
External rewards and punishment not necessary	External rewards and punishment used
Not too concerned with conventional academic concerns	Concerned with academic standards
Little testing	Regular testing

<p>Accent on cooperative group work Teaching not confined to classroom base Accent on creative expression Cognitive and affective domains given equal emphasis Process is valued</p>	<p>Accent on computation Teaching confined to classroom base Little emphasis on creative expression Cognitive domain emphasised, affective is neglected Little attention paid to process</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Source: Brandes and Ginnis (1986)

individualisation. Comparing the two (the new and the old), Rugg and Shumaker (1969) contend that the old maintained silence as the ideal school room atmosphere whereas the new school removes the ban from speech, encourages communication as a vehicle for social understanding and personal development. Brandes and Ginnis (1986) have cited Bennet (1976) who contrasted the progressive approach and the traditional one as follows.

Most of the authorities of the new or progressive view showed the overwhelming effectiveness of this approach over the old/traditional summative evaluation method.

When we see the score of the students in continuous and summative evaluation we can see a variation of results. The teachers were expected to incorporate students' primary point of reference. Thus, the teacher can encourage students to be able to use examples and references from their experiences. Students can also be asked to seek clarification. Encouraging students understanding and relating such ideas to the students' own sphere of interests, concerns and problems is the third classroom technique for utilising the above main strategy (Borich, 1988). Student self-evaluation

can be achieved by providing opportunity for students to reason out their own answers. Still there is room for other students and the teacher to suggest for necessary alternations or amendments.

In general, class size reduction, impact of curriculum, teaching load and lack of training have an impact on the students' achievement. With regards class size, Ferguson (1991) Using data from more than 800 districts containing more than 2.4 million students, found significant relationships among teacher training, class size, and student achievement. Using student/teacher ratio as a measure of class size, Ferguson found that student achievement fell as the student/teacher ratio increased for every student above an 18 to 1 ratio. Further, he measures teacher quality (that is, teacher literacy skills and professional experience) were even more strongly related to higher student scores. It can be concluded that the impact of class size should be given due attention in order to help the students to learn better as intended. However, a considerable commitment of funds and its implementation can have a sizable impact on the availability of trained teachers. Strengthening teacher quality also leads to higher student achievement. Depending on how it is done, the benefits

of class size reduction will be larger or smaller. To bring change with continuous evaluation in the students' achievement all in the system must develop a sense of ownership.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The central objective of this research was to analyse some of the factors attributing to students evaluation system at college of education, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. To attain this objective the following question were posed: Appropriate evaluation system, a chance of choosing an evaluation system, curriculum material, teaching load and training of teachers were considered.

To answer the above general basic question out of 12 departments found at the college of education five departments were selected. Bases for selecting the departments are in reference to the teachers' participation in the training programme that is departments which sent three teachers to the training programme. The departments which nominated three teachers for training are: 1. Biology, 2. Chemistry, 3. Sport, 4. Geography and 5. Mathematics. Among these departments, Mathematics from Science education and Geography education were selected. Further, the study also included a comparison between the scores obtained by the students who were subjected to summative evaluation in 2005 and to continuous evaluation during the first semester of 2006 which is completed in January 2006. This is the latest data on evaluation scores available in the University. In total the scores of 53 teachers from Mathematics education

department and 51 from Geography education department in their, I and II semesters in 2005 and I semester in 2006 were analysed.

Given the time constraint, information collected from two selected departments. To gather the necessary data a questionnaire containing 27 items was administered to the sampled teachers. Document analysis, and observation were incorporated to substantiate the data obtained using the close-ended items of the questionnaire. Finally, after analysing and interpreting the data, the following outcomes were reached at.

- It has been found that the majority of the respondents teaching at College of education use continuous evaluation as an appropriate evaluation method because, all of the respondents had the higher diploma training that provided training in the use of continuous evaluation system.
- Regarding the impact of class size teachers are still using summative evaluation frequently due to the large number of students they teach. Since class size is a major constraint to introduce continuous evaluation, it is important that the Addis Ababa University explores possibilities of revising norms regarding class size and strictly adheres to the norm.
- Regarding curriculum materials on the teachers' choice and application of continuous evaluation method. The teachers reported that the teaching materials prepared for college of education is inadequate

- in the preparation of training material, the teaching materials doesn't encourage teachers to use continuous evaluation, no adequate activities and exercises are included in the material rather the teaching material content emphasise the use of summative evaluation method.
- The research findings revealed that there are a serious shortage of teaching materials in the college of education and this inadequacy compelled some of the teachers select and apply summative evaluation most of the time, the study further showed that there is inadequacy of facilities.
  - Fisher (1994) claims that now a days academic life is becoming increasingly stressful. And among the factors which make teachers stressful are the workloads they have or the time pressure that is put on them in schools. In a similar fashion, in this study it was found that teaching load to some extent intimidate College of education teachers to use continuous evaluation method.
  - As per to Knott and Mutunga (1995), teachers' likes and dislikes together with their experience have a bearing on the method they use. To this end, however, it was found that the impact of teachers' preference in choosing and applying the summative evaluation has been insignificant.
  - The research finding indicates that some of the factors that deter the teachers to use continuous evaluation are class size, lack of facilities and teaching loads. From this we can see the impact of summative evaluation to Mathematics and Geography students performance. Relatively the Geography students' who were taught by continuous evaluation method, the students' performance are better than Mathematics students. This will lead to the assumption that Geography teachers performed better than Mathematics teachers.
  - The mode of training that teachers get in higher diploma programme plays a vital role. Thus, the training and its impact in the teaching-learning process at college of education assisting learners to learn by themselves, to acquire skills and to develop attitudes in the changing social context.
- The final conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that it is difficult to introduce reform confining to selected areas only. The reform should be comprehensive. For example, introduction of continuous evaluation should be accompanied by changes in the curriculum, teaching methods and material and class size (along with the teachers' perception about class size). Unless these changes are not seen together, the efforts in one selected area may not lead to visible changes.

### REFERENCES

- Archived Information. 1999. *Reducing Class Size, What Do We Know?*
- ARENDS, R.I. 1997. *Classroom Instruction and Management*. Mc Graw-Hill Inc., New York.
- BAKER, E.L. AND U.C. ALKIN. 1973. *Formative Evaluation of Instructional Development*, Audio Visual Communication Review.
- BORICH, L.S. 1988. *Effective Teaching Methods*. Macmillan Publishing Company, New York.
- BRADEN, R. 1992. "Formative Evaluation: A Revised Descriptive Theory and A Perspective Model", A paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Educational Communications Technology, Washington D.C.
- BRANDS, D. and P. GUNNIES. 1986. *A Guide to Student Centred Learning*. Basil Black Well Ltd., Great Britain.
- BRUCE, ANNE. 1995. "SCET Contact: The Development of National Bulletin Board Service for Schools—Results and Evaluation of a Pilot Project in Scotland Covering Secondary Schools", A paper presented to the Open Classroom Conference, Oslo (September 95), International Council for Distance Education.
- CAMBRE, M. 1981. *Historical Overview of Formative Evaluation of Instrucional Media Products*, ECTJ.
- CHAUHAN, S.S. 1996. *Advanced Educational Psychology* (6<sup>th</sup> revised ed.). Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
- CHELMISKY, E. and W.R. SHADISH (eds.). 1997. *Evaluation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Handbook*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- DICK, W. 1977. "Applications for Formative Evaluation to the Instructional Design Process", Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, New York.
- DUBIN, F. and E. OLSHTAIN. 1986. *Course Design: Developing Programmes and Materials for Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England.
- EGGEN, P.D. and D.P. KAUCHAK. 1996. *Strategies for Teachers: Teaching Context and Thinking Skills* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Allyn Bacon, London.
- FERGUSON, RONALD F. 1991. "Paying for Public Education: New Evidence on How and Why Money Matters", *Harvard Journal on Legislation*, 28(2).
- FISHER, B. 1990. *Formative Evaluation for Educational Technologies*. Lawrence Erlbaum, San Francisco.
- GAGE, N.L. 1976. *The Psychology of Teaching Methods*, Chicago
- GEIS, G. 1996. "Student Input in the Materials Development", Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association. The University of Chicago Press, San Francisco.
- KELLEGHAN, T. et al. 2003. *International Handbook of Educational Evaluation*. Kluwer Academi Publishers, London,
- KNOTT, M. and P. MUTUNGA. 1995. 'Methods of Teaching and Learning' in MATIRU, B. MWANGI, A. and SCHLETTE R. (eds.) *Teach you are Best: A Handbook for University Lecturers*. Witzenhausen Institute for Socio-cultural Studies.
- LOWE, A., W. THURSON and S. BROWN. 1983. *Clinical Approach to Formative Evaluation in Performance and Instruction*.

- MARKEL S.M. 1989. *The Ancient History of Formative Evaluation in Performance and Instruction*. August.
- NATHENSON, M.B. and E.S. HENDERSON. 1980. *Using Student Feedback to Improve Learning Materials*. Croom Helm, London.
- OLIVER, M. and G. CONOLE. 2000. Assessing and Enhancing Quality Using Toolkits, *Journal of Quality Assurance in Education*.
- PHILLIPS, R. (ed.). 2000. *Handbook of Learning-centred Evaluation of Computer Affiliated Learning Projects in Higher Education*, Murdoch University.
- RUGG, H. and A. SHUMAKE. 1969. *The Child-centred School*. Arno Press and The New York Times, New York.
- SCRIVEN. 1991. in jan.ucc.nau.edu.
- SHINN, M.R. and S. BAMONTO. 1998. "Advanced Applications of Curriculum Based Measurement: Big Ideas and Avoiding Confusion" in M.R. SHINN (ed.) *Advanced Applications of Curriculum-based Measurement*. The Guilford Press, New York.
- SCRIVEN, M. 1967. "The Methodology of Evaluation" in R. TYLOR, R. GAGNE and M. SCRIVEN (eds.) *Perspectives of Curriculum Evaluation*. Rand Mc Nally, Chicago.
- TESSMER, M. and J. WEDMAN. 1992. "The Practices of Instructional Design: A Survey of What Designers Do, Don't Do and Why They Don't Do It?" Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- TESSMER, M. 1993. *Planning and Conducting Formative Evaluations*, Kogan Page, London.
- TOM HUTCHINSON and EUNICE TORRES. 1994. *ELT Journal* 1994, 48(4), 315-328. Oxford University Press.
- TYLER, R.W. 1942. General Statement on Evaluation, in *Journal of Educational Research*.
- VEEN WIM. 1995. "Telematic Experiences in European Classrooms: Overview and Evaluation", A paper presented to the open classroom.
- WELCH A. SANDRA. 1995. "What Stimulated the Rapid Growth of Distance Learning in the USA". A paper presented to the Open Classroom Conference, Oslo (September, 95) International Council for Distance Education.
- WESTON Mc ALPINE and BORDONORO. 1995. in jan.ucc.nau.edu.
- WILLIAMS, J. 1983. *Formative Evaluation in Instructional Design: Theory versus Practice*. Doctoral Dissertation at Northern Illinois University De Kalb Illinois.
- www.//jan.ucc.nau.edu/edtech 2006.
- ZEMEKE. 1985. *The Systems Approach, A Nice Theory but in Training* Oct., pp.103-08.

# Student Teachers Perceptions on Enhanced Duration of Secondary Teacher Education Programmes in India

KIRAN WALIA\*

---

## Abstract

---

*India has one of the largest teacher education systems with about five million teachers and more than three thousand and two hundred elementary and three thousand and five hundred secondary teacher education institutions. The duration of secondary teacher education programmes is generally of one-year. Over the years stakeholders in education have strongly voiced the need for enhancing the duration of teacher education programmes for improving its quality both in theoretical inputs and in internship. An innovative two-year secondary teacher education programme was launched in five institutions in 1999. The study presents an analysis of the feedback received from student teachers on this programme. It presents their perceptions of student teachers' role and responsibility, interests, needs and difficulties faced by them while undergoing this course. It also gives self-assessment on their professional preparedness. The study further reveals their views on enhanced duration of secondary teacher education programme, the need for enriching school level subject content and strengthening practice teaching.*

---

## Introduction

Characterized as one of the longest surviving continuum of cultures, India is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society with a perennial undercurrent of essential unity. Its social base consists of a large number of beliefs, religion and races, continuously competing and cooperating with one another. Despite a long tradition of social reform in all ages,

there still exists various kinds of imbalances such as rural/urban, rich/poor and discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, language, ideology, gender, religion and ethnicity. Education has to play a very significant role in minimising and eventually eliminating these inequities and discriminations. The vital instrument of this projected social change, the teacher, has to be

---

\*Reader, DTEE, NCERT, New Delhi

suitably and adequately empowered to affect this change through a fresh and effective model of teacher education. The teacher needs adequate awareness of the socio-cultural imperatives of modernisation, urbanisation and globalisation. Thus, teacher education programmes must be designed in a way that help student teachers to understand deeply a wide array of things, about learning, social and cultural contexts and teaching and be able to enact these understandings in complex classrooms serving increasingly diverse students. (Hammond 2006)

At present there are over three thousand and five hundred secondary teacher education institutions. Entry qualifications to secondary teacher education programme is twelve years of school and three years of graduation, though a large number of post graduates also take admission in these institutions. The duration of secondary teacher education programmes (B.Ed.) is generally of one year. It has been observed that most of the time on teacher education programmes is spent on theoretical teaching, and less time on teaching practice and other practical aspects. Bhatia (1987) in her study on evaluation of secondary teacher education curriculum found that teacher educators unanimously agreed that practice teaching is the most important part of these programmes and should be organised seriously. It was often experienced in the schools that the products of one-year duration programmes were not fully and comprehensively equipped professionally. Hemambujam (1983) found that the prescribed curriculum was not

effectively implemented due to shortage of time. The whole spectrum of theoretical course and internship in school cannot be achieved within the short span of one academic year. Deo (1985) in the study on practical programme in teacher education institutions found that majority of the student teachers felt that lack of time was a major factor in not being able to achieve the objectives of practical experience. Practice teaching is one of the most important aspects of any pre-service programme, if not the main event (Henry, 1989). The practicum (Fullan, 1989), is often seen as the key element in pre-service teacher education, yet much of the research suggests that as it now operates, it is ineffective in helping students relate theory and practice in teaching. Because of such a situation, Queens University entirely changed their practicum (Upitis, 1999). Now the teacher education programme begins with an orientation in the beginning of the session itself. Student teachers join an associate school, beginning on the first day of school. By starting an extended practicum of fourteen weeks at the opening of the Fall Term it is recognised that people who are ready to become teachers are eager to get in the classroom as regular teachers. Researches in India have found that practice teaching is the weakest link in teacher education programme. Due to lack of time some 30 to 40 lessons spread over a period of four to six weeks are considered sufficient for practice teaching. Increased duration would help the student receive all the experiences that a teacher requires and acquire higher level teaching competencies and



become more effective by enhancing their skills for better communication.

The objectives of secondary teacher education are determined on the basis of internalisation of philosophical aspects of education at this stage by the student teachers. They need to understand the nature, purpose and basis of philosophy of education as also the psychology of pupils at the adolescent stage in relation to pre-adolescent and post adolescent stage. In a multi-cultural and multi-religious society, the process of socialisation, social cohesion and learning to live together becomes extremely important. The critical details to stage specific pedagogy, curriculum, transaction and evaluation have to be understood both in theoretical and in practical terms. The process of teaching and learning can be enhanced in quality and learning attainments only when student teachers are fully equipped in conducting the pedagogical analysis of each and every topic and unit. Skill development at a level that prepares middle level manpower and others for teacher education is the key to quality at this stage. Skilled development takes place most fruitfully on partnership basis. In the context of inclusive education every student teacher requires more time and greater inputs to perform the expected tasks at later stages. Every student teacher deserves thorough grounding in aesthetic sensibility, moral and ethical values and also simultaneously proficiency in modern ICT.

Societal context also includes our constitutional goals and obligations. The preamble of India's constitution envisages the country as 'sovereign

socialist, secular and democratic republic and promises to secure to all its citizens, justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity. It also promises to secure the dignity of all individuals and the unity and integrity of the nature. Teacher education cannot lose sight of these constitutional goals. It has, therefore, the responsibility of sensitising the teachers to these obligations and helping them acquire the requisite moral values to uphold the national resolve. Against this background, the Directive Principles of States and the sections on Fundamental Rights and Duties, from which the educational rights of the hitherto deprived groups like women, the poor and weaker sections of society and minorities, the tribal, the SC and ST and the migrating population emanate, provide another extremely significant perspective for teacher education.

Teacher education has to be conceived as an integral part of educational and social system and must primarily respond to the requirements of the school system. It can no longer remain conventional and static but should transform itself to a progressive, dynamic and responsive system. National values and goals need to be meaningfully reflected and their inculcation attempted with care and caution. The theoretical and practical components are to be balanced appropriately. The theory and practice of education has to be enriched with latest research finding not only in the field of education but also in the allied disciplines and areas. While it is

essential to develop identified competencies to prepare effective teacher, it is equally necessary to develop commitment and build capacity to perform as integral part of teacher preparation. The teachers have to keep abreast of the latest development not only in their field of specialisation but also in the area of educational development and social and cultural issues through continuous in service orientation. Emphasis on continuing life long learning has to become an essential concern of teacher education. A nation concerned with erosion of values needs teachers who are professionally committed and prepared to present a value-based model of interaction with their learners. The basic tenets identified in the national basic education scheme: Head, Heart and Hand need now to be linked to another 'H' — Highways. Information highways, websites and internet are going to become terms of common usage in teacher education. For a sound mind, we need a strong hand and a vibrant heart. Areas like physical education and vocational education will continue to gain greater emphasis in the years to come and will serve as the basis for developing competencies and skills in addition to commitments and values.

A comprehensive theoretical base is essential for a teacher to assume professional role and develop capacity to conceptualise inputs from other disciplines as well as and evolve strategies to utilise them. A true professional is capable of perceiving complexities and uncertainties in the society, has a thorough grasp of the subject, possesses skills to make critical diagnosis, takes decision and has

courage and conviction to implement such decision (NCTE, 1998).

Teacher education in India still needs to get fully rooted to Indian reality and psyche and have the leverage to continuously transform itself to assimilate the emerging changes in pedagogy. In the times of globalisation it needs for more emphasise than earlier times to inculcate the desired level of commitment amongst the student teachers.

A context-based and activity-oriented approach to teacher education with sufficient interactive opportunities within the institution and also in schools and with community could enhance not only the performance competence but also an understanding and appreciation of the social context. In a society that is still struggling to universalise elementary education and ready with plans to universalise secondary education, the role of teachers in years to come would be that of multifarious responsibilities. To obtain competent, committed and willing to perform teachers. India needs to attempt multi-models in teacher preparation. All along, only one year teacher education at secondary stage has continued. Educationists have for a long time now firmly opined that the total time available to student teachers is insufficient as the complexities in teaching-learning have increased and several new dimensions have to be eternalised with proficiency. While ICT has to become a major ingredient, concerns like social cohesion, value education, peace education, local elements of curriculum, environmental issues water crisis, and inclusive education, global warming,

fundamentalism and terrorism can also no more be kept out of the curricular of teacher education. All this in addition to regular pedagogic inputs definitely requires fresh thinking and a comprehensive curriculum that can not be transacted in the one year duration being presented by the institution to student teacher to get a degree in teacher education.

The breaking of isolation from the community is necessary to enable teachers and teacher educators to reconstruct pedagogical and educational principles and practices in the light of experiences gained from mutually beneficial community interactions. The teacher as a professional and an intellectual cannot remain indifferent to the events that are taking place in society. The academic and social issues are interrelated and inter-dependent. In contemporary context, the role of the teacher is not only confined to classroom teaching alone. The teachers are expected to play an active role in the developmental activities responding to progress of the community. In a diverse Indian context such interactions must be extended over a reasonable period of time, which is not practically possible in a programme limited to one year only.

Teacher preparation the world over is considered a professional endeavour. In most of the countries, after the necessary initial schooling, young persons are generally prepared as teachers over a period of three to four years. In India, the duration of secondary teacher preparation is one year. The concern for quality in teacher education was voiced consistently by educationists, teachers and teacher educators in the

seventies and eighties. The significance of the same has been highlighted by the supreme court of India in its judgment of June 15, 1993.

“The teacher training institutions are meant to teach children of impressionable age. We cannot let loose on the innocent and unwary children, teachers who have not received proper and adequate training. True they will be required to pass the examination but that may not be enough. Training for a certain minimum period in a properly organised and equipped training institute is essential before a candidate becomes qualified to receive teachers training certificate. The Supreme Court in the above case quoted observations from earlier judgement: “It is therefore, needless to state that teachers should be subjected to rigorous training with rigid scrutiny of efficiency. It has greater relevance to the needs of the day. The ill-trained or substandard teachers would be detrimental to our educational system, if not to punishment to our children. The government and the university must, therefore, take care to see that inadequacy in the training of teachers is not compounded by any extraneous consideration” (1998 (4) SC 431).

Teachers are central to the question of education's quality and relevance. How they are educated and prepared for their work is a critical indicator of what kind of educational quality and relevance is being sought (UNESCO 1998).

There has been a long felt need to increase the duration of one-year B.Ed programme to two years specially in terms of lengthening the internship

period beyond the 4-6 weeks available at present. Various Commissions and Committees and a large number of teacher educators also expressed the need to increase the duration of the B.Ed. programme. Nemser (1983), argued that expecting student teachers to become expert classroom performers is unrealistic, given the short time of teacher education programme. The Central Advisory Board of Education of India, as early as in the year 1938 recommended B.Ed programme of at least 18 months duration. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) also recommended duration of two academic years, though it was realised that it may not be feasible in the immediate future and would require some time before it could be implemented. Over the years, priority being on preparing more teachers, these recommendations generally remained unattended. However, the deficiencies were being regularly highlighted in professional discourse. Priority on expansion often relegated focus on quality to the background.

The National Commission on Teachers, which felt that one-year B.Ed course must be made effective by lengthening its duration, reiterated the recommendation of enhanced duration in 1983. In 1998, the statutory National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) prepared a Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education and once again recommended extended duration. It ensured implementation of two-year B.Ed. programme, in five institutions in 1999. This is the first case of its type when two years duration was accepted on a pilot basis. The perceptions of

student teachers, which adopted this course needed to be studied. The author undertook this research study after the two batches had completed the course to get the feedback from student teachers as to their perceptions on this innovative programme.

### **Methodology**

Every student teacher of this programme was approached from the four Regional Institutes of Education, which accept student teachers from the specified regions. Thus, the student teachers were drawn from the entire country comprising of a nationally representative sample. Experts in content, pedagogy, ICT, and social and economic concerns were invited to deliberate upon the possible aspects that could be put before the student teachers in the form of a questionnaire. Accordingly questions, especially the components of ICT, action research, new transactional strategies, internship in teaching, school management, and community based field work; evaluation techniques and duration of the course were incorporated in a questionnaire consisting of 48 items, both of open-ended and closed-ended. A few of the items required Yes or No responses, while others were in the form of rating scales. A few checklist type items were also included.

### **Data**

The data consisted of 328 subjects (140 science student teachers out of which 60 were male and 80 female; 188 arts student teachers out of which 93 were male and 95 female) drawn from four Regional Institutes of Education and

from Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad as per details given in the Table 1.

The data had 49% rural and 51% urban student teachers which indicated good representation of students from rural areas and also of female students. In the Indian context, an analysis in terms of rural and urban schools becomes very relevant as rural schools generally suffer greater inadequacy of teachers availability as compared to urban areas. Both categories are generally reluctant to teach in rural areas.

### Analysis and Inferences

After analysis of the data the following results emerged with respect to the different variables of the study:

#### Demographic Status

- The percentage of urban student teachers was found to be only marginally higher than that of rural student teachers. The male and female students were 52 and 48 per cent in the total sample of 322. Occupation of the parents of

student teachers was grouped under four broad categories such as agriculture, service, business and others. 58 per cent of the parents of student teachers were in service category, 27 per cent agriculturists, 8 per cent from other professions and 7 per cent in business. The marital status of student teachers indicated that 83 per cent were unmarried and the remaining 17 per cent married. Regarding their educational qualifications 45% of the students were post-graduates. The minimum educational qualification required for admission to secondary teacher education programme is graduation.

#### Importance of Information and Communication Technology Course

Among the stakeholders in education a consensus exists that the effective use of ICT has a great potential for enhancing learning opportunities and the quality of education. (ILO and UNESCO, 2003). In today's environment it has become

TABLE 1  
Population Distribution according to Institution, Gender and Teaching Subject areas

Institutes/Subject Areas	B.Ed Science/Gender			B.Ed Arts/Gender			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
RIE, Bhubaneswar	11	19	30	10	12	22	52
RIE, Ajmer	17	17	34	22	17	39	73
RIE, Mysore	12	23	35	17	19	36	71
RIE, Bhopal	11	19	30	19	21	40	70
Gujarat Vidyapeeth	9	2	11	25	26	51	62
Total	60	80	140	93	95	188	328
%	43	57	100	52	48	100	-

necessary for student teachers to acquire proficiency in ICT as a necessary part of their skill development. Student teachers need to have well-developed ICT literacy skills that will enable them to effectively locate, retrieve, evaluate, manipulate, save and present data in a meaningful form (Smyth, 1977). In the report of the review of teacher education programmes in New South Wales it included an examination of the issue of integrating ICT into pedagogy.

The inquiry found that generally the use of ICT was not being sufficiently exploited during teacher education programmes (Ramsey, 2000). Perceptions on this count are no different in India. Student teachers should be able to explore the range of possibilities for the use of ICT across the curriculum and place ICT in a meaningful educational context. Based on their ICT experiences, student teachers should be able to approach the process of learning and teaching differently. Over time, they should realise a change in their perceptions of themselves and gain valuable insights into how to cope with the challenges of use of ICT in learning and teaching (Lee, 2001).

In this study 61 per cent student teachers found the course of information technology very much useful, in their performance during internship in teaching, 32 per cent felt it was helpful, whereas 6 per cent felt it was of not much use.

#### **Community Based Field Work**

Most of the available researches in India and elsewhere indicate that family and community involvement has received

little attention in teacher education programme. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) found that only 1.94% of 826 competencies, skills and objectives measured in teacher education examination deals with extra- classroom influences, only one of which was parent involvement. Williams & Chavkin (1987) found that only 4% of teaching programmes have a whole course devoted to the subject, 15% part of the course, and 37% one class period. Researchers and practitioners agree that teacher, family and community involvement practices have a stronger influence on children's success in schools. When parents are involved, students tend to earn higher grades (Deslandes, 1997). Generally student teachers are aware of only traditional ways and means of involving parents and community in the school and vice-versa. Bermudez and Padron (1987) suggest that student teachers should have clinical experiences with parents and community that would familiarize them with families and translate theories of parents and community involvement into practice.

In the present study 54 percent student teachers found community based fieldwork was 'very useful' which they did during the training period. 35 percent of them felt it was 'useful', 10 percent felt it was 'of some use' and rest 1 percent felt that community based field work was 'of no use' during the training period.

Following are some of the suggestions by student teachers for improvement in Community Based Field Work:

- Educational tours should provide opportunity for intensive community interaction.

- Student teachers also need to be trained for initiating Parent Teacher Association in the school.
- More activities regarding social services should be organised.
- Duration of community work programme be increased to at least 15 days in field situations, preferably rural areas.
- Activity schedules should invariably include surveys of some aspects of community-school interaction.
- Feedback should be taken from the students about the community work done by them and skilfully integrated in the subsequent programmes.

#### **Usefulness of the Course Content in Value Education**

Value erosion is a worldwide concern. The magnitude of value crises needs planned and persistent collaborative efforts by teachers, parents and the community. Expectations from teacher education programmes are indeed high. In the extended duration of two-year programme the value nurturance and development components find a significant place in the pedagogy adopted by the teachers. Value education needs to be an integral component in the entire curricular and co-curricular activities (NCERT, 2004). When student teachers were asked whether they found the course on value education useful 54 per cent of the students found the course useful to a large extent, 40 per cent found it useful to some extent, whereas, 5 per cent found it useful to very little extent.

#### **Enrichment of School level Subject Content**

Teaching of content causes concern in certain subject areas like science and mathematics. Majority of the teacher educators feel that student teachers lack mastery in the subject content to be taught in the school. It is essential that the subject content proficiency must be achieved at the level of full mastery at the teacher education institutions. An impressive 63 per cent of the students favoured the need for enrichment of their school level subject content. The rest 37 per cent student teachers found no need of it.

Following are some suggestions given by student teachers for enrichment of school level subject content:

- In biology the students were of the view that the content on nutrition should be included and molecular biology should be dealt in greater depth. In physics, optics and wave mechanics should be included in mathematics; they felt that emphasis should be given on algebra, geometry, co-ordinate trigonometry and functions relations. Students wanted that in English more emphasis should be given on pronunciation and grammar and in social studies value aspect should be added.

#### **Transactional Strategies and Instructional Technologies**

This is one of the aspect in which change percolates very slowly. The most common approach to teacher preparation equipping student teachers with expert

teaching strategies has been convincingly critiqued on theoretical and practical grounds (Hiebert, 2007). Transactional strategies constitute the backbone of teacher education. If developed comprehensively, these could prepare student teachers to internalise fully their role as transmitters and facilitators of learning. To achieve this, the student teacher needs to learn and practice how to ascertain the learning needs of the children as well as the remedial inputs necessary to augment their learning. 55 per cent student teachers were well-equipped to use transactional strategies learnt during the course 'to some extent' and 43 per cent student teachers felt they would be able to use transactional strategies learnt during the course 'to a large extent' and only 2 per cent students felt they would be able to use the transactional strategies 'very little' learnt during the course.

### **Identification of differently-abled Students in the School**

Over the years there has been a growing emphasis on the education of differently-abled students and accommodating these students in the general classroom as far as possible. This demands a pedagogically correct response from teacher education programmes and the teachers. Lipsky and Gartner (1994) describe this situation as 'where the regular classroom teacher is responsible for the educational programme of disabled children alongside their non-disabled peers and where all of this education takes place in the regular classroom. The challenge now in this

regard is: how to support and legitimate difference through a range of resourcing arrangements, pedagogies and curriculum initiatives to expand options for all students. Majority of the student teachers do not have much experience with disabled children (Hamre and Oyler, 2004). Findings of research studies indicate (Avramidis et.al. 2000), that majority of the student teachers wanted more knowledge of different disabling conditions and different strategies for meeting their needs during the teacher education programme. They also wanted more experience and training with differently abled children specially training on managing the behaviour of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A study of disabled children in normal schools (Pathak, 1984), found that some of the problems that disabled children faced in normal schools were fear of the school, difficulty with classroom learning, dissatisfaction with teachers, ridicule by other children and inability to participate in co-curricular activities. Thus, it is strongly emphasised that prospective teachers need to have early and continuous exposure with disabled students preferably through field experiences.

In this study 51 per cent students had not been able to identify physically or mentally challenged students during their practice teaching in the school. 49 per cent student teachers had identified physically or mentally challenged students in the school and had adopted the following strategies:

- After school hour's remedial teaching, was imparted personally by student teachers. In order to



identify the challenged student's different types of intelligence tests along with interest inventories and aptitude tests were used, in addition with individualised instructional programme, observation and interview techniques. Student teachers conducted case studies of disabled children. They also paid special attention and showered more love and affection to the disabled children. The student teachers asked visually disabled children to sit in the front row. They often kept meetings with parents and held discussions with class teachers and principal. Action research projects were also conducted to overcome shortcomings. The disabled children were motivated to participate in discussions and in question-answer sessions in the class and build more self-confidence.

### **Health and Physical Education Activities**

Health and physical education is one of the most critical components of school education, which rarely gets the importance it deserves in teacher education programme. It is an integral part of the education system, which aims at developing a healthy body, mind and a wholesome personality of the student. Every teacher has a role to contribute towards this and therefore, it cannot be considered the responsibility of the physical teacher alone. Deo (1985) found that physical education and participation in games and sports were taken casually by student teachers.

Following are some of the suggestions by student teachers for improving health and physical education activities:

- Student teachers felt that in physical education more games must be included and practice session need to be increased. They wanted that physical education should include training in yoga, judo karate and nature cure programmes. Students complained about lack of equipment and wanted more equipment to be procured for physical education. They suggested that physical education activities should be conducted to give first hand experience to the trainees with more seriousness. Students were of the opinion that competent and experienced teachers should be appointed. They also felt that at least three periods in a week, of one hour duration be allocated for it.

### **Commitment towards Profession, Learner and Society**

In teacher education programmes, commitment has generally been presumed to be omnipresent. Unfortunately it is totally relegated to the background and efforts to generate commitment, motivation and devotion do not receive adequate emphasis during teacher education programme (NCTE 1998). Sandra Feldman (2005) President of American Federation of Teachers emphasised that to have a really skilful teacher who knows what to do in the classroom, you need, first of all, someone who is totally committed to teaching, who loves children and who could give the entire heart to the children. Only a

committed teacher can help in the growth of all-round development of the child. Teacher education institutions have a great challenge and responsibility to produce committed and truly humane teachers.

Sixty three per cent of the student teachers in the study felt that two-year B.Ed. programme had strengthened their profession. Fifty three per cent students felt that two year B.Ed. programme had also made them committed towards the learner and forty five per cent student teachers felt that two-year B.Ed. programme had made them committed to the society.

#### **Career Ambitions in the Teaching Profession**

It is well-known that the teaching profession does not necessarily attract the best talented. Entrants to this profession wait for an opportunity to get into a better occupation and treat teaching as a stepping-stone. Some of the major reasons for not being attracted to this profession are low status and low salaries. In a study conducted by Zhinx Su (2000) it revealed that majority of the student teachers did not enter the profession by choice and were not happy and willing to become teachers. Some of the reasons given by the students for joining this profession were: pressure from parents, especially as this profession is most suitable for girls. Others were in the teacher education institution because their grades were not high for entry into other fields of study. Even those who had good grades but could not enter other professions had to come into teacher education. A few students said that they were in this

profession because their parents could not financially support them for other professions of their choice, which were more expensive. Durchame (1993) found that routinised work, lack of upward mobility and reward, are some of the factors that prompt teachers to leave. Similarly in the Indian context also it is interesting to note that when student teachers were asked about their career ambition, majority of them had ambitions other than being a teacher.

The career ambitions expressed by student teachers who wanted to remain in teaching were: to be a principal of higher secondary school, a school inspector, a teacher educator while few others wanted to become a college teacher. A good number of students desired to be social workers, contribute to women education, adult education and women empowerment. Some wanted to become reputed writers.

#### **Creative Abilities**

One of the major objectives of extending the course duration was to provide extended opportunity to the student teachers to enhance their creative abilities. The creative abilities encouraged during the training were the following:

- Preparation of charts, models and opportunity to exhibit self made teaching aids to improve classroom teaching during Internship.
- Freedom to teach subjects specially physics and mathematics using one's own creative ideas.
- Teaching numerous concepts in mathematics through interesting games.

- Encouragements for playing games that have educational implications.
- Reciting self-composed poetry in school competitions.

Several of these activities may have been replaced by IT. However in the majority of Indian schools these are still relevant. 74 per cent of the student teachers felt that they could use their creative abilities during training, whereas 26 per cent did not get such opportunity to make use of their creative abilities.

### **Action Research**

Action research has been successfully used for improvements in many schools in many countries (Reason and Bradbury 2001); it is a way of questioning your own practices and changing these as a result of the studies (Nofitke and Stevenson, 1995). Action research makes teachers' work more professional (Ponte 2004). They use research methods to reflect on their own practices and they use their insight and understanding gained to systematically improve their practice. Majority of the students had used action research approach of some kind in actual classroom situation. Some students could not undertake action research projects as other assignments were given to them and thus there was lack of time. Some students felt the environment was not conducive. Others felt the lack of experience and confidence to undertake action research. A few students felt that the content was not suitable for action research. 52 per cent felt that action research would be helpful to a large extent in becoming a competent teacher, 41 per cent felt that it would be helpful to some extent,

whereas 6 per cent thought that it would be of little use.

### **Duration**

78 per cent of the student teachers felt that the duration of two-year B.Ed programme was appropriate and desirable. The remaining 22 per cent felt that duration of two-year B.Ed programme could be shortened.

Following are some of the alternatives suggested about the duration of two-year B.Ed. programmes.

A few student teachers felt that the duration of two-year B.Ed programme could be shortened to one and half years including two months of Internship in teaching and it should be held in three sessions, each of 6 months. Students wanted that some areas like work experience and working with community be implemented properly. They desired that the subject content component should be further enriched. Others felt that in a two-year programme, the theory component can be completed in one-year and six months should be devoted towards internship in teaching and the remaining six months be assigned to advance level content. Some student teachers felt that much of the course of first year is similar to second year, so repetition needs to be avoided.

### **Internship**

Practice teaching is the most important and crucial component of every teacher education programme and yet remains the weakest link. Practice teaching is a collective responsibility of the teacher education institution and the school in which it is conducted. Special emphasis

on internship was included in this course to overcome this weakness.

The instructional strategies that were used by student teachers during internship were:

- Demonstration-cum-Discussion method, question-answer method, programmed learning, problem-solving method, project method, activity-based teaching, multi-sensory approach, simulated strategy, inductive method, use of models and charts, heuristic method, case study method.
- Student teachers also used programme learning, microteaching, and simulated teaching very prominently. Computer aided teaching and video-conferencing was preferred wherever available.
- During internship the role of supervisors was found critical and student teachers had clear views about it. 29 per cent student teachers felt very satisfied with the supervision and guidance provided by the college supervisors, 56 per cent were satisfied, 13 per cent did not feel satisfied and 2 per cent student teachers were not at all satisfied with the supervision and guidance provided by college supervisors.

Activities participated/organised by student teachers during internship were:

- School exhibition; morning assembly; participation in arts and crafts exhibition by the students; invigilation duty during exami-

nation; quiz Competition; scouts and guides activities; games and sports; story-writing and story-telling competition; distribution of polio vaccine among small children; PTA meetings; literacy programmes; action research in class; tour management; annual function; cultural programme; organising talks by eminent persons/educationists; handwriting competition; rally for pollution control. Every student teacher became associated with practically all of the above activities. This was distinctly different from one-year secondary teacher education programme in which only few activities could be taken up.

#### **Difficulties faced by Students during Internship**

The difficulties faced by students during internship were that very often there were lack of infrastructure facilities and equipment on one hand and pressures of curriculum and evaluation on the other prevented the conduct of several desirable activities. Use of computer, Overhead Projector, experimental method, cultural programme, screening of films, group discussion, panel discussion, could not be arranged in several instances due to lack of facilities. It applies to trips outside the school campus to conduct projects or observations, recording, analysis and drawing inferences.

There was general appreciation of pre-internship component, which gave sufficient initial inputs to the student teachers.

### **Evaluation Techniques used by Student Teachers during Internship**

The major area of reforms in Indian school system is that of year-end written examination, which decides the total performance of the learner. The student teachers were particularly oriented in different evaluation techniques. They were encouraged to use these in the classrooms. Student teachers found the techniques of oral evaluation and diagnostic tests and remediation, home assignments, aptitude and creativity test, formative evaluation test as very helpful in evaluating learner achievements.

### **Improving Internship in Teaching**

Some of the suggestions given by student teachers for improving internship are as follows:

- Internship must be arranged at the beginning or middle of the academic session.
  - Good schools with good infrastructure facilities must be selected. If possible, opportunity to teach in different types of schools must be given.
  - The number of lesson plans should be reduced to 60 in place of 80 or the period of internship be increased to 45 days instead of four weeks in order to complete 80 lessons in two years.
  - Prospective teachers should assemble once a week to share the problems faced and their experiences in schools.
  - Only experienced teachers should be deputed as supervisors and each co-operating teacher should be requested to observe classes.
- Number of assignments other than teaching need to be reduced during Internship so that more time can be devoted to teaching.
  - Before allotting the schools, medium of instruction should be taken into consideration.

In the total sample of science and arts student teachers, more than 70 per cent felt that duration of Internship was sufficient. 30 per cent student teachers were not satisfied with the duration of Internship programme. Their arguments in favour of extending it were:

- Internship should be of longer duration so that teaching skills can be fully and comprehensively developed.
- It should be between 4 to 6 months so that more guidance can be given.
- Only longer duration internship can enable student teachers to participate in co-curricular and other activities of the school during the Internship programme.

### **Evaluation of Student Teachers**

90 per cent of the student teachers agreed with the procedure of evaluating their knowledge of theory, while 10 per cent did not agree with the procedure adopted by their Institute to evaluate their knowledge of theory subjects. The reasons given for not agreeing with the evaluation procedures were:

A few felt that due to the medium of instruction being a second language, that is English, only few student teachers who could articulate their thoughts in English were given better grades. Some also felt that towards the end of the academic session, students were

overburdened with assignments in each paper. The assignments should be given in the beginning of the session.

### **Recommendations for Improving the Secondary Teacher Education Programme**

One of the main objectives of this research was to motivate the student teachers to articulate their own assessment of the extended duration programme they had opted to undergo. They had good suggestions to offer on practically every aspect. This included change in weightage of theory, practicals, including Internship, curriculum, content, use of IT and the pedagogy being adopted by their teacher educators. As internship in teaching and practicum is a major and vital component of this programme their suggestions on guidance and supervision needed during this period are found very pragmatic.

### **Change in the Teaching Methodology of Teacher Educators**

Based upon the two-year interaction with teacher educators the student teachers had several suggestions to make to enhance the quality of teaching methodology of teacher educators.

Teacher educators must regularly use ICT aids and other teaching aids. Lecture method may be avoided and demonstration-cum-discussion method may be followed. Teacher educators should use approaches like activity method, field trips, excursion, demonstration, etc. Teacher educators must follow the same method of teaching as they expect from the student teachers in the real classroom situation. Only

experienced teachers should be assigned to teach the B.Ed classes. Practical work should be organised in such a manner that it may be completed on time. More lessons in practice teaching may be given. The trainees may be provided with opportunity to get acquainted with Parents Teachers Association and its activities. Theory and practice should go together. More seminars and discussions may be conducted in the class. In the teaching of English, too much of bilingual method is used which could be avoided. Socially Useful Productive Work classes should be held at least twice a week. One full paper should be taught by one teacher only. More emphasis should be given to the strategies of teaching. Teacher educators should continuously refresh their content knowledge, particularly before they come to the class.

### **Effective Supervision and Guidance**

Only academically sound and experienced teachers must be deputed for supervision. Supervisor should sit in the class for the full period to observe the weaknesses of the student teachers. At least two supervisors for each subject should be deputed. Number of supervisors should be increased as per the need of student teachers. Supervisors should not focus only on the negative points, because it demoralises the student teacher. The institution should hold a meeting of the principals of selected schools and they should be properly guided or oriented so that the trainees would be received well by the school. Senior teacher educators should regularly visit some schools during the period and evaluate the performance of the assigned students. Teachers should

give feed back after the class and not in between the period. Supervisors should see how the student teachers organise other activities in the school apart from classroom teaching. Subject teachers should also supervise the class. There should be discussion among the supervisors and student teachers relating to the difficulties of student teachers and their possible remedies. Both the subject teacher and the education supervisor should sit together in the class to supervise the lesson. Fear of examination should be removed so that the student teacher can teach without any stress or strain.

#### **Improvement of Practical Work**

Practical work in different subjects should be arranged daily its record should be maintained. Different instructional strategies be used in practical work. There should be more practical classes in the first year. School should have lab-equipment which can be used to demonstrate experiments and teaching of science be made more effective. Teaching material should be developed for practical class and the students should use them in their classes. The concerned subject teachers should organise practical classes and examination (test) for practical work should be conducted by the concerned teacher. Time for Internship and practical experiences should be increased.

#### **Suggestions of Student Teachers for overall Improvement of two-year B.Ed Programme**

- Admission to the course should be made on the basis of an entrance test including an aptitude test.

- Compulsory internal tests need to be conducted.
- Co-scholastic activities should be increased.
- Mother tongue should be used as medium of instruction. Proficiency in English be provided separately.
- Continuous evaluation, like other professional courses, should be conducted.
- More emphasis on information technology and computer-aided teaching should be given.
- Instructional materials of good quality should be made available. These should be updated regularly.
- Integration of pedagogy and content should be visible in classes conducted by teacher educators.
- Obsolete course content be reduced and repetition of content units be deleted.
- Student teachers should be made familiar with the interview techniques and prepare them for future situations.
- Scholarship should be given to the trainees as the course is of longer duration.
- Community education, work education and computer education should be given more scope and weightage.
- More field experiences would strengthen learning.

#### **More emphasis be given to Enrichment in School Level Subject Content**

#### **Discussion**

The study reveals that majority of student teachers were in favour of

extended duration of B.Ed programme. They felt that the two-year programme had made them more committed towards the profession, the learner and the society. Some student teachers were of the view that first year B.Ed course is similar in several areas to that of second year. Hence the syllabi of the existing two-year B.Ed programme needs to be revised and the similarities or repetition of topics be deleted.

Students start their training with different perceptions and ideas about teaching. In a study on student teachers early conceptions of classroom practice (Calderhead and Robson, 1991) it is interesting to find that some students repeatedly claim that to learn to teach one needs experience in the actual classrooms. Another student teacher said that from her experiences in helping her mother in a primary school, she already feels confident in her ability to teach, what she only wanted from teacher education institution was familiarity with the latest concepts and curriculum materials.

Majority of the students gave more importance to the need for enrichment of school level subject contents. Teacher education institutions need to strengthen this aspect. Researches have found that teachers are usually weak in the subject they teach like mathematics or English, as they themselves have not studied these subjects beyond school. Roberts (2005) remarks 'When I think about the teachers that I have known who are really good at what they do, it seems to me that they, first of all, have a tremendous understanding of the content of what it is they are teaching and they never lose that expertise. So

knowledge about the subject matter and really feeling comfortable with it is very important'.

The student teachers felt that more guidance be provided in the community work and more emphasis be given to information and communication technology. Student teachers need to be encouraged to explore using computers for a variety of tasks. A survey conducted in United States of more than four hundred teacher education institutions to determine the status of technology training revealed that teacher education institutions generally did not adequately prepare students to make effective use of technology. (Basinger, 1999; Wood, 2000). In India also, the effective use of ICT is also limited because of infrastructural deficiencies and resource constraints.

It is generally observed that practising schools do not involve student teachers in all the activities during internship and some are not allowed to use latest equipment and technology even if it is available. Teacher education institutions need to be careful to place student teachers in such schools that have good infrastructure facilities.

Student teachers expressed the need for strengthening the organisation of practical work. In their responses it was evident that Physical Education and other practical activities should be arranged daily and their hours be increased. They further felt that different instructional methods be used. The students also desired that duration of practical in the first year be increased and duration for internship and work experience be also increased. More than 50 per cent of the student



teachers could not identify differently abled students in the school. There is a need to focus on the transactional strategies especially when dealing in an inclusive classroom.

Majority of student teachers felt that action research would be helpful to a large extent for becoming competent teachers. Those student teachers who had not used action research approach in actual classroom teaching were due to lack of time and the absence of favourable environment. While student teachers, undergoing this programme,

were satisfied with the duration of the two-year B.Ed programme, they wanted certain modifications in the existing programme. This innovation needs to be studied and strengthened both in pedagogy and content. Its replication would certainly be adding value to quality improvement in the larger education system. The demographic advantage that India has opens up new avenues globally to its young population. Quality of education comes in focus and hence, the quality of teacher education deserves priority.

## REFERENCES

- AVRAMIDIS, E.et.al. 2000. 'Student teachers attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol.16.
- BASINGER, J. 1999. 'Colleges fail to show teachers how to use technology'. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.45 (27).
- BERMUDEZ, A., PADRON, Y., 1987. Integrating parental education into teacher training programmes. A workable model for minority parents. *Journal for Educational Equity and Leadership*. 7.
- BHATIA, RANJANA. 1987. Evaluation of new B.Ed. curriculum in the colleges of education affiliated to the University Bombay. Ph.D. Education. Bombay University.
- CALDERHEAD, J., and ROBSON MAURICE. 1991. 'Images of teaching: student teachers early conceptions of classroom practice'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol. 7 No.1.
- DEO, D.S. 1985. To study the practical programme other than practice teaching in teacher education institutions. Ph.D. Education. Delhi University.Delhi.
- DESLANDES, S.M. et al. 1977. 'School achievement at the secondary level: Influence of parenting style and parent involvement in schooling'. *Journal of Education*. 32(3) pp.191-208.
- DURCHAME, E.R. 1993. The lives of teacher educators. Teacher College Press. New York.
- FELDMAN SANDRA. 2005. What it means to be a skilful teacher. [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org).
- FULLAN.M. CONNELLY.F.M. and WATSON, N. 1989. Teacher education in Ontario: Current practice and options for the future. Toronto. Ministry of Colleges and Universities/ Ministry of Education.
- Government of India. 1952-53. Report of the Education Commission Ministry of Education. New Delhi.
- Government of India. 1983. Report of the National Commission on Teachers. Ministry of Education. New Delhi.
- Greenwood and Hickman. 1991. 'Research and practice in parent involvement:

- Implications for teacher education'. *The Elementary School Journal*. Vol. 91 pp.279 - 288.
- HAMRE.B. and OYLER. C. 2004. 'Preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms: Learning from a collaborative inquiry group'. *Journal of Teacher Education*. Vol.55 no.2.
- HAMMOND, L.D. 2006. 'Constructing 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher education'. *Journal of Teacher Education*. Vol. 57, No.3.
- HEMAMBUJAM, K.A. 1983. A critical study of teacher education at the secondary level in Tamil Nadu. Ph.D. Education. Karnataka University.
- HENRY, M. 1989. Change in teacher education: Focus on field experiences. Garland Publishing. New York.
- HIEBERT, J. et al. 2007. 'Preparing teachers to learn from teaching'. *Journal of Teacher Education*. Vol.58 pp.47-61
- ILO / UNESCO. 2003. Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel-A Report. Paris.
- LEE, K.T. 2001. 'Information technology integration in teacher education: Supporting the paradigm shift in Hong Kong'. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education and Development*. Vol.4 No.1. Hong Kong.
- LIPSKY, D. GARTNER A. 1994. Inclusion: What it is, what its not and why it matters. Exceptional Parent.
- National Council for Teacher Education. 1998. *Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education*. NCTE. New Delhi.
- National Council for Teacher Education. 1998. Competency-based and Commitment Oriented Teacher Education for Quality School Education. NCTE. New Delhi.
- National Council of Educational Research and Training. 2004. *Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education*. New Delhi.
- NEMSER, S.F. 1983. Learning to teach. In L.Shulman & G.Styles (Eds.) *Handbook of Training & Policy*. pp. 150-170. Longman. New York.
- NIER-APIED. 1997. Report on *Teachers, Teacher Education and Development*. NIER. Tokyo.
- NOFTKE, S.E. and STEVENSON, R. 1995. *Educational Action Research*. Becoming Practically Critical. Teachers College Press. New York.
- PATHAK, A.B. 1984. *A Study of Disabled Children in Normal Schools*. Teachers College. Udaipur. Rajasthan.
- PONTE, P. et al. 2004. 'Teachers' development of professional knowledge through action research and the facilitation of this by teacher educators'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol. 20.
- RAMSEY, G. 2000. Review of Teacher Education in New South Wales. [www.det.nsw.edu.au/teacherv/reports/letter.htm](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/teacherv/reports/letter.htm).
- REASON, P. and BRADBURY, H. 2001. *Handbook of Action Research*. Participative Inquiry and Practice. Sage. Thousand Oaks.
- ROBERTS. G. LINDA. 2005. What it means to be a skilful teacher? [www.edutopia.org/php/question.php](http://www.edutopia.org/php/question.php).
- Selected Educational Statistics. 2002-2003. Department of Secondary and Higher Education. MHRD. Government of India.
- SMYTH, M. 1997. Teaching and learning with technology: A threat or a challenge? Teaching and Learning. [www.unimelb.edu.au/tisp/teaching/teachingms2 .htm](http://www.unimelb.edu.au/tisp/teaching/teachingms2.htm).
- UNESCO. 1996. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education

- \_\_\_\_\_ for the twenty-first Century *'Learning the Treasure Within'*. Paris
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1986. Report on International Conference on Education 40<sup>th</sup> Session. Geneva.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1998. Teachers and teaching in a changing world. Paris. World Education Report. Paris
- UPPIS, R. 1999. 'Teacher education reform: Putting experience first'. *Teacher Education Quarterly*. Spring.
- WILLIAMS, D., CHAVKIN, N., 1987. Teacher/Parent P-Partnerships: Guidelines and strategies to train elementary school teachers for parent involvement. AustinTX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- WOOD, J. 2000. Will new teachers be prepared to teach in a digital age? *A National Survey on Information Technology*. Childhood Education.76 (2).
- ZHIXIN, SU.et.al. 2001. Choices and commitment: A comparison of teacher candidates' profiles and perspectives in China and USA. *International Review of Education*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Netherlands.

## Book Reviews

### ***Meeting Special Needs in School A Manual***

**AUTHOR:** ANITA JULKA

**PUBLISHER:** NCERT, New Delhi

**Year:** 2007

**Pages:** 166, **Price:** Rs.45/-

The Minister for Human Resource Development (MHRD) made a policy statement in the Rajya Sabha on 21st March, 2005 committing the Government to providing education through mainstream schools to children with disabilities in accordance with the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. In pursuance of this Statement, MHRD has initiated steps to strengthen the process of inclusion of children with disabilities in education. A detailed Action Plan for inclusion of children and youth with disabilities has also been formulated for translation of this statement into specific points of activity in each of the identified sectors of pre-school, elementary, secondary and higher education.

Realising that the goal of education for all would remain elusive till children with disabilities are able to access education in an appropriate environment, the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, a major Government of India effort to universalise elementary education by community-ownership of the school system has adopted a policy of zero rejects. Therefore, more and more children with disabilities are being enrolled in regular schools with resource support. Various efforts have been

undertaken to train the teachers but the short teacher training courses have proven to be inadequate for building both knowledge and skills for handling children with special needs in schools.

*Meeting Special Needs in School : A Manual of Children in School* authored by Anita Julka and published by NCERT, New Delhi is a brilliant attempt of reconceptualising the field of special needs education from the perspective of inclusive education. In the first chapter on Introduction, Julka has given an overview of the manual by highlighting its objectives, scope and its utility for various stakeholders. Rather than limiting it to a particular target group Julka makes it clear that this manual would be useful for all those who are making efforts to facilitate the process of inclusion. Be it parents of children with disability, teachers, teacher educators or even an educational administrators, all would benefit by realising the range of special needs that can exist in a classroom and the diverse strategies required to meet these needs at various levels of education.

Persons who are involved in making efforts to promote inclusion of children with special needs in education must also be aware of the conceptual framework and supportive initiatives of the governmental and non-governmental agencies both at the national and the international level. There is a good coverage of this in the second chapter of the manual and Julka has not only given these initiatives but also differentiated

between various terms like special, integrated and inclusive education that cause a lot of mystification at the grassroots. She has done it in simple language that would be understood by all. This is a good approach to combine the concept of inclusive education and description of the policy and legislative frameworks formulated to support this and that also in the beginning part of the manual. This has helped in generating a belief that moving towards inclusion of children with special needs in education is a reality, accepted by all and also promoted through various schemes and programmes. It leaves little doubt in the mind of the reader that inclusive education is a distant dream and will take time to be realised.

Julka then moves towards the classroom situation when she analyses the range of special needs that are to be met at various levels of school education. Her conceptualisation of the range of special needs in the third chapter goes well with the philosophy of inclusive education. She highlights the importance of recognising the uniqueness of each child and stresses that the special needs of children can be met in regular education by practices that are child-centred and not curriculum-centred. It is important at this level to talk about the prevailing discourses that conceptualise disability either as an individual pathology or a social pathology. Going with the spirit of inclusive education she discourages attempts to view disability from a medical perspective. I think this is an important contribution here as it can form the basis of generating a debate on charity

vs. rights issue. Many times, it has been felt by the persons with disabilities that even the basic right to education is denied to them by not getting admission in the educational institutions of their choice on the pretence of the institution not having appropriate supports for meeting their needs.

The manual propagates the improvement of learning environment in both elementary and secondary classrooms. The strategies given to meet the special needs in the school would be of great help firstly in assisting the educators to reorganise the ecology of the classrooms as an environment that is sensitive to the learner's needs, feelings and ideas. Secondly, it can help in providing a classroom learning environment in which children with special needs also feel confident and are able to express their opinions freely. The claim of an inclusive classroom being a good learning environment for all children have been supported by many studies and Julka reiterated it by highlighting the benefits of inclusive education.

The manual also gives a brief write up on teaching competencies to be developed and teaching strategies to be adopted in an inclusive classroom. It is a well-known fact that movement towards inclusive education would not be successful without apposite teacher training. Julka has touched this topic briefly, just enough to create awareness amongst the educators. I wish she would have detailed it more but then also it would not have been possible to describe all strategies as a part of this manual. Possibly, a separate manual needs to be

developed for building the capacity of teachers in meeting the special needs of children.

In the end, Julka has stressed the issues of double disadvantage faced by girls with disabilities, difficulties emerging in large classrooms and need of parental support for inclusion. She has supported her claim of inclusion being successful by giving illustrative success stories. One interesting highlight of this chapter is the table giving examples of the myths regarding persons with disabilities that are prevalent in our society. These myths are harboured in the minds of many and generally remain there for ever. People are hesitant in talking about these for fear of being ridiculed because of lack of knowledge.

Conclusively, I can say this is a very good attempt on the part of the author to present a manual that makes not only simple reading material for all because of its simple language but also gives some hard hitting facts that make you reflect on what all can be done to create a learning environment that encourages all students to participate. I would also suggest that many more such manuals that detail out the various aspects of inclusive education and help the practitioners in realising the goal of inclusive education are the need of the day in our country that is still struggling in this area.

PROF. S.R. MITTAL  
Department of Teacher Training and  
Non Formal Education  
Jamia Milia Islamia  
New Delhi 110 025

***Education and Social Change in South Asia***

**EDITED:** Krishna Kumar and Joachim Oesterheld

**PUBLISHER:** Orient Longman Limited  
New Delhi, 2007

The book *Education and Social Change in South Asia* is a path breaking attempt to understand the nature of education in the countries of the region of South Asia for bringing out indigenous and traditional facets of education that has not been discussed and elaborated as has been done in an international platform. The book is the product of a project conducted at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies (CMO) in Berlin – A Research Institute dedicated to historical, social and cultural research covering a period from the eighteenth century onwards of the Middle East, South Asia and the whole of Africa.

The whole book is divided into four parts. Part I deals with education under colonial rule, part II covers education and cultural change, part III is related with education and nation building and part IV states about education and development. Each part contains four chapters. The very first part starts with the chapter entitled “Secular Enlightenment and Christian Conversion: Missionaries and Education in Colonial India”. The article by Sanjay Seth shows that from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, secular education was thought to be instrumental in undermining Hinduism. When expectations for a transition to Christianity with the help of Western education were not fulfilled, despite the drifting away from Hinduism, the British

Government continued the policy of religious neutrality, but allowed instruction in Indian religions outside school hour.

Heike Liebau in "Indianisation and Education: Reaction from Protestant Christians of the Madras Presidency to the Lindsay Commission Report", illustrates the peculiar situations that Indian Christians were facing in the field of education on the eve of India's Independence. The report gave a more or less non-Christian profile of these colleges as far as curriculum, students and staff was concerned. The recommendations and the discussions it initiated among missionary circles and urban Christians reveal the dichotomy between positions favouring, on the one hand, national interest that is, access to education for all irrespective of caste, sex or creed and imparting of knowledge on India's past social and cultural development within the framework of a common educational system and, on the other hand, the positions which held that education in these institutions should always have a Christian character resting on Christian ideas and that improved types of education were to aim at training Christian leadership. Both positions were prevalent among the ranks of missionaries and Indian Christians. The author comes to the conclusion that on the whole, the debates reflect the conflict between missionary and Indian Christian educationists, but at the same time, they reveal not only different ideas and concepts prevailing in both groups but also a blurring of approaches and positions.

The introduction of Western education in the sub-continental existed

along with the continuation of the indigenous pattern of learning and schooling. In chapter III, "Competing Ideas: The Quest for Knowledge in Early Twentieth Century Travancore", Margret Frenz traces the encounter taking place between the two in terms of their different theories and practices in what she calls a contact zone as an area of negotiation. After she discusses the general educational practice in pre-colonial India with special reference to the particularities in Travancore, she presents in a similar way, the development of major educational ideas in Europe and the intention with which they were introduced in India from the nineteenth century onwards by the representatives of the colonial power and missionary societies. George Oomen in chapter IV, "Education, Self, Perception and Identity: The Experience of the Pulaya Christians of Kerala (1860-1930)" looks into the activities of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in the field of education among the Pulayas, a Scheduled Caste in Travancore, and its larger implications during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The second part of the paper is devoted to the competition that took place between European and local forces in the field of education. In this part, a paper by Antje Linkebach Fuchs, "Education and the process of nation building in pre-independence India: some theoretical reflections" throws light on the development of educational thought and practice and its impact in European countries, with implications for the spread of the concepts of nationhood and notions of citizenship. Without presenting final answers and looking at

state formation in nineteenth century Europe as a process transcending the construction of the political and administrative apparatus of government, she underlines the role of education as an integrative element in popularising the notion of citizenship and concepts of nationhood and national character.

Joachim Oesterheld in chapter VI, "National Education as a Community Issue: The Muslim Response to the Wardha Scheme" considers the scheme as a genuine challenge to the colonial approach of education. The Wardha scheme, a scheme for primary education was started at Wardha and that was partly implemented in British India prior to independence. While first tracing the developing of primary education in the years between the government of India Act of 1919 and the 1935, the author then briefly deals with the emergence of a plan of basic education, the Wardha Scheme. The emphasis of Oesterheld's paper is not on the introduction of the scheme by provincial governments after the Congress had accepted it at its Haripura session in early 1938 and called it 'National Education', the major part of his paper is devoted to Muslim opposition to the Wardha Scheme. Oesterheld underlines the necessity to see this response against the background of the particular milieu.

The issue of education and culture is a complex issue and equally important for majority of countries in the whole world. In this context, Krishna Kumar in his paper, "Education and Culture: India's Quest for a Secure Policy" tries to find an answer to the question of how far education in India has served the secular creed and why it could not

prevent the spread of communal ideas. In examining India's educational policy, he first looks from a theoretical point of view into the relationship between the child's learning at home and at school. Applying various models of his home-school binary to the Indian scene, the author sees the ambivalent role of education in serving the state in disseminating the message of secularism. Though, this has been achieved to some degree, this process, owing to certain limitations of the systems of education (professionally weak teachers, dominance of prescribed textbooks and overarching importance of annual examination), has separated the orbit of home and school. In some kind of self-restriction, secularism was dealt within a manner that turned it into a creed and that did not combat the ideas and values opposed to it, but just promoted itself as an alternative and contrary to the active role prescribed for it in official policy declarations on education. In the second part, the author looks into the controversial issues of religious and moral education and the teaching of history, which is so relevant for the success of a secular framework of education.

Sonia Nishat Amin in chapter VIII, "The Idea of Women's Education in Colonial Bengal" discusses the discourses on education for Muslim girls in Bengal from 1890 to 1930. The source material she uses for her analysis is the popular press, more specifically, articles written about Muslim girls' education. She categorizes the articles under three headings: conservative, centrist and liberal. Taken together, the writers of all the three types represent the reformist mind, which was



negotiating change in all domains of culture, beliefs and values, customs and rituals. On the matter of girl's education, the issues they were dealing with were philosophical, for example, the aim of education, as well as practical issues such as what kind of curriculum should be followed. Amin also examines the writers' engagement with the consequences education might have for Muslim girls.

Part III starts with Martha Caddell's paper as chapter IX. Martha Caddell in her paper "Education and Change: A Historical Perspective on Schooling, Development and the Nepalese Nation State" presents the relationship between particular historical and societal circumstances in employing education and development in the context of Nepal. She demonstrates that for the last 150 years, each shift in political regime in Nepal has been followed by the revision of education system. She has also elaborated the period of renaissance that came in from the 1950s, which gave birth to the "idea of Nepal", nationalism, rights, and the role that it played in the process of democratisation, modernity, political socialisation, and political development. The introduction of multiple languages in the school curricula, "the implicit valuation of 'the external' over the 'local' in regard to intra-national relations" has been stressed upon. The changes that were made during the Panchayat era and the birth of the National Education System Plan [1971] and its influence on the education system have been well narrated. The effect of the "Jan Andolan" and the introduction of multi-party democracy on the lives of the common man and the entire educational system have been discussed in detail. Though

the paper remains to be updated but it provides a proper picture of the educational system and history of the educational system in Nepal.

Rubina Saigol has taken an adventurous attempt in analysing the education system of a nation that has been under constant turmoil till date. In a society that is dominated by a single ethnic group in a multi ethnic community, education has been used as an element to amalgamate various identities into one, trying to forge a national identity. Pakistan still is in search of such an identity for the last six decades, which would bring the five regions of the nation giving it a homogenous character. Urdu, as a national language, Islam, as the state religion, are elements that has been institutionalised by the government, remoulding the nature of the education system by giving birth to a madrassa culture, that has been rather detrimental to the Pakistani societal fabric. For her paper, "Glories of the Past, Aspirations for the Future: Time as a Dimension of National Education in Pakistan", she analyses the policy and power discourses of the Ayub era (1958-1964) in Pakistan. The sources she uses are the speeches made by General Ayub on different occasions and the report of the Sharif Commission appointed by him for recommending policy changes for educational reconstruction.

The next paper by Padmini Swaminathan discusses about the link that 'higher education' has with that of 'development'. She observes a severe misbalance in the number of educated and employed and tries to cull out the reasons for the day by day increase of

educated unemployed masses. The quality of employment, regional disaggregation of unemployment data where the unemployment rate remains higher in the high literacy states has been discussed. Tamil Nadu which remains to be such a state has been taken for analysing the disparity that has been put forth and attempts have been made to find justifiable reasons for such disparity and misbalance. A comparative assessment of education during the colonial era and the principle that was followed and the changing discourses of education after independence have been made. The role of career oriented education and vocational education along with research and traditional educational practises has been discussed at length in her paper entitled "The Interface between Employment and Education in India: the ...discourse"

Language has always been a significant factor in moulding the educational policy of India. Anne Vaughier Chatterjee, in her paper, has presented a distinct presentation of the element of language in India, its influential role and diversity that has provided a unique identity to the nation and its impact on the educational system that was present during the pre-colonial and colonial period and the transformation that was brought in during the post-independence period. The paper entitled "Policies of Language in Education: Policies and Reforms in India" has gone into the roots of the Language policy that had been adapted by the Government of India to divide regions on linguistic basis and bringing the Three Language Formula in educational institutions in the country.

'The question of the place and the role of Sanskrit in Indian education have always been charged with political and ideological interests.' Anne has dealt with the Sanskrit issue and the role of Urdu, bringing out the dilemma that the educational policy makers faced while dealing with the issue of introducing these two languages in the folds of the educational curricula. Suggestive reforms on the Educational Policy that is being practiced by the national educational institutes have also been given by the author where the trend of policies that is coming in has been reflected.

The next paper as chapter 13, part IV, showers light on Sri Lanka, which remain to be a strife ridden society where Sinhali and Tamil spoken populaces are fighting with each other for their socio-political and economic space in the island nation. The pre-colonial educational pattern and the changes that were brought in the colonial period have been elaborately discussed by ST Hettige. The high literacy rates and the change of the official language from Tamil to Sinhali in 1956 and its effect has been analysed in detail. The ethno-linguistic segmentation and its impact on the educational system and the recent changes that has been brought in and suggestive measures as remedies for the conflict have been provided in the paper.

India remains to be the largest country in the region and having the highest illiterate population various programmes have been initiated by the Government to eradicate such a fallacy of a growing and developing society that the Government is pursuing. The Total Literacy Campaign has been such a

programme that has been initiated to address the problem that the country faces. But even after six decades of stressing on literacy programmes, the country suffers from the same even at a mass level. Sadhna Saxena in her paper "Education of the Masses of India" has critically pointed out the major loopholes in such programmes that remain as major hindrances in achieving the goal that has been set before the Government, at the national as well as at the state levels.

The next paper in this series, "The Privatisation of Secondary Schooling in Bijnor: A Crumbling Welfare State?" critically discusses the effect of privatisation of secondary schooling, especially its effect in the Bijnor district, Uttar Pradesh. The paper authored by Roger Jeffrey, Patricia Jeffrey and Craig Jeffrey, is a landmark research work that brings out the fallacies associated with the policy planners and the apathy that is associated with educational policies of the Government. They have mentioned that even after constant suggestions made by eminent academicians against such privatisation, the government has been apathetic in implementing changes as suggested by academics like K.N. Panikkar. Giving a brief introduction of the district, the paper has defined privatisation and its effect on education, especially in Uttar Pradesh. The character of secondary schools in Bijnor has been analysed and the effect of privatisation on such schooling system by using data sampling has been assessed. The impact on the curricula, student teacher relationship, and the pay roll of teachers, the fee structure and the like has been examined.

"Decentralisation of School Management" by Francois Leclercq

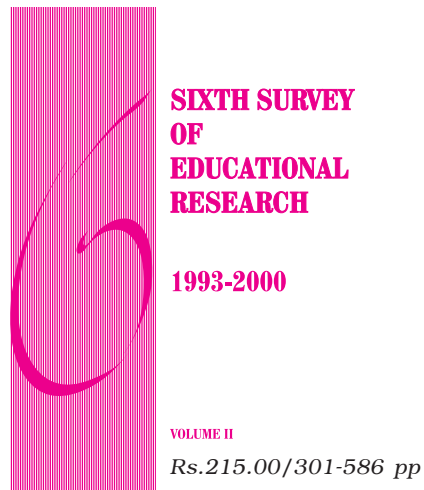
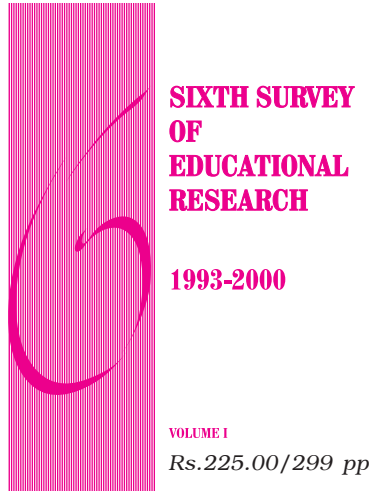
shows the positive and negative dimensions of decentralisation of school management and its effects on the quality of teaching in educational institutions. Making an assessment of such decentralising process that has been initiated in Madhya Pradesh the study has made an attempt to examine the recent educational reforms that has been brought in the state. The decreasing role of the public sector and the impact of the increasing dominance of the private sector were examined by taking assistance of Eklavya, an NGO that has been closely working in the region. Management of public schools by parents and Panchayat institutions, its benefits and its disadvantages has been searched and suggestive measures have been provided to improve the present structure of decentralisation that has been installed in the academic structure in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

The collection of papers contributing to the growing body of interdisciplinary literature on education in South Asia in the form of this volume is really beneficial for all the educationists, teachers, policy makers, educational planners and researchers who are engaged in curriculum development, teacher training and educational researches. The volume as a whole provides a comparative view of education and its social context in the countries of South Asia. Experiences from different South Asian countries compiled in this volume demonstrate that emerging perspectives on education always play an important in social transformation and vice versa.

PRATIMA KUMARI and RAKESH MEENA

*Lecturers*

DESSH, NCERT  
New Delhi 110 016



---

For further enquiries, please visit [www.ncert.nic.in](http://www.ncert.nic.in) or contact the Chief Business Manger, Publication Department, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016

