The Primary Teacher

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Most children dream and love their world of dreams. Teachers and parents need to support children in their dreams coming true. It is not just a fantasy, dreams do come true as 'Martin Luther Kings' we need dream has Barack Obama has become the forty fourth President of America. The excerpted speech of Martin Luther King could be discussed with children in school assembly as well as in classes.

Regular class attendance is a prerequisite to maximise the school's contribution towards students' achievements. Truancy is a widespread phenomenon that needs attention of researchers and school education planners. The outcomes/suggestions of the action research conducted to explore reasons for truancy and develop remedial strategies can be utilised to develop comprehensive strategies for prevention of truancy for wider implementation in school education system.

The article 'Constructivist teaching in primary classes' explains the principles in constructivist teaching through observations from a constructivist teaching classroom".

The article 'Teaching English as third Language to Tribal Students (The Challenge of Evolving New Teaching Techniques and preparing new Reading and Testing material)' discusses the need of carrying of modifications in the syllabus of English for tribal students as it is a third language for them. It recommends designing/developing need based teaching-learning material as per the content.

There is an urgent need to save the girl child, take care of her health, emotional and educational needs and her self-esteem to ensure an empowered woman of our country. 'The Disappearing Girl Child! It is possible to save her' discusses how a sensitive and a strong administration could successfully save the girl child in a district Nawanshahar of Punjab with continous efforts and raise the sex ratio in 2006.

The gifted students remained undiagnosed because of lack of suitable methods used for assessing their giftedness. Since, there are many such students in schools, a more effective system is needed for proper diagnosis and selection of the gifted children. This article 'A Study of Educational Programmes for Gifted/Talented Students in some Asian Countries' discusses the academic standards and rules of school for talented students in Asian Countries.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme has contributed enormously towards increase of enrolment and retention of children in schools. The article 'Teachers' Perceptions Towards National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education' suggests ways to improve the implementation of Mid-Day Meal for betterment of children's health.

A new and innovative teaching-learning strategy, which includes multi-dimensional, activity based, integrated approach is discussed in the article 'Multi-Dimensional Activity-based integrated approach: An innovative teaching-learning strategy at the school stage', is learner friendly, flexible, innovative and eclectic in nature.

Education of the girl child, especially of the tribal girls in our country has been a major challenge so far and 'Gender Friendly Approach in Curriculum Transaction: Some Issues and Guidelines in Arunachal Situation' sensitises the primary level teachers about the need and importance of a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction in both scholastic and coscholastic areas of school education.

The article 'Child rights: Need for better awareness among student teachers' a study attempts to gauge awareness level of prospective teachers. The authors call for concerted efforts to promote child rights awareness among future teachers through different means.

It is the responsibility of every parents and teachers to help children realise their potential to the fullest and groom them to be contributing citizens of this country. This article reflects how the life of a child with mulitiple physical challenges has changed with the support of her teachers, parents and peers.

Editorial Group (Academic)
G.C. Upadhyay, Padma Yadav
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To the Contributors

The Primary Teacher is a journal for you and we would very much like to have your participation and feedback. You could let us have your preceptions about journal.

We invite you to write articles, field notes and reports for it. We want your honest deliberations on issues that impact elementary education. You may like to focus on issues that bother you and concerns that you are sensitive to, which you feel should be shared with other teachers working at the grassroot level.

Some Dos and Don'ts

- Each article should be of about 1500 to 3000 words.

- Keeping the clientele in mind, the teachers, please include information that they may not have access to.

- You may include field notes and your own preceptions about issues in research, development and training in the area of elementary education.

- Format choosen for the article should be user-friendly and interesting to read.

- The article should be written in simple language and should have a short abstract of about 150 words.

- Any Photograph or illustrations related to te article may also kindly be sent.

- Sent two copies of the article along with the soft copy (in a CD) at the address given below:

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1

A Study on Prevention of Truancy in a Government School of Delhi

Rajashree Pradhan*

Abstract

Regular class attendance is a prerequisite to maximise the school's contribution towards students' achievements. Truancy is a widespread phenomenon that needs attention of researchers and school education planners. A study was conducted on 6th and 7th grade students of a Government Senior Secondary school in Delhi to explore reasons for truancy and to develop remedial strategies. Out of 110 students, 12 students were found to be frequently truant. Qualitative research techniques like observation and semi-structured interview of students, teachers and parents were used. The information obtained was analysed for finding out the possible reasons and factors behind truancy. Different strategies were evolved and implemented for preventing truancy and motivating these students to attend classes regularly. Various motivational, environmental and disciplinary strategies deployed by the researcher were found to be useful in reduction of truancy among students. The experience of this action research can be utilised in other similar situations and comprehensive strategies for prevention of truancy can be developed for wider implementation in school education system.

INTRODUCTION

School life has a perennial impact on children's life. Its positive impact on children manifests in learning better and responsible behaviour which finally makes them accomplished human beings. Punctuality and regular attendance in school is a prerequisite for children's achievement as a student. The child wants to go to school regularly when he finds school climate joyful and exciting. Truancy is a habit that develops among school children who find it difficult to sustain their interest in classroom activities. As a result they run away from the class and engage in unwanted and at times harmful activities outside the

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classroom and school. Considering the problem of truancy, an action research was planned with the following objectives:

1. To identify the truant students in the class.
2. To find out the reasons of truancy among students.
3. To evolve effective strategies and interventions for reducing truancy and to implement them in classroom situation.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Two sections of grade VI and grade VII in a Government Senior Secondary School of Delhi were assigned pupil-teacher for School Experience Programme (SEP) for a period of three months. Through the direct and indirect observation by the pupil-teachers 12 out of 110 students were identified who did not attend classes regularly and were in the habit of leaving the class after first or second period. These truant students constituted sample for the action research.

Tools

Semi-Structured Interview Schedules for students, teachers and parents were developed for collecting necessary information about the possible factors contributing to the development of truancy among students and its possible remedies. The information obtained through these semi-structured interviews and direct observation was analysed qualitatively. The inferences were drawn about the reasons and factors leading to truancy. The investigator developed certain strategies based on her experience as a teacher educator, and the views of students, teachers and parents were recorded. Appropriate interventions were implemented for reducing the habit of truancy among these students.

FINDINGS

All three groups of respondents provided rich information about various factors that might be responsible for truant behaviour among students.

(I) Students' Responses

Responses of 12 truant students about their habit were as follows-

(a) ***Irregularity of teacher in taking class:*** Most of the students opined that they bunk the class because the teachers do not take the classes regularly as a result of which they get ample time for playing and recreation. This gradually develops into a habit of missing the classes.

(b) ***Monotony in teaching methods:*** Most learners felt bored in the class due to lack of variety in teaching approaches to accommodate different learning styles and preferences, and to cater to the individual differences of learners. As a result many of them started running away from the classes and engaged in other activities of their choice.

(c) *No time for recreational facilities:* Every child has a desire for recreation that is helpful in better learning. But when the school timetable does not provide any scope for recreational activities, the students tend to escape from the classes for enjoying recreational activities outside the school.

(d) *Negligence of authorities:* Negligent attitude of authorities specially that of teachers resulting from poor supervision and inadequate disciplinary measures prompts the students to miss the classes.

(e) *Non-completion of home assignment:* Pupils are very much frightened of those teachers who give corporal punishment because of non-completion of home assignments and due to this fear some students remain absent from classes if they had not completed home assignments.

(f) *Lack of appropriate teaching pace:* The teachers often fail to use appropriate pace and learning resources to enhance pupils' interest during the classroom teaching and students failing to adjust with the pace of class get disinterested and miss the classes.

(g) *Disinterest in a particular subject:* Some students develop disinterest in one or more particular subjects due to poor knowledge, lack of appropriate teaching-learning material and faulty feedback system which leads the students to remain away from the classes.

(II) Teachers' Responses

Following inferences were drawn from teacher's responses-

(a) *Importance of class attendance:* 'Most of the teachers agreed that a system of class attendance in every period may deter students from bunking classes. However, they opined, this will not be feasible due to insufficient time.

(b) *Vigilance and monitoring by teachers:* Majority of the teachers agreed that better vigilance by teachers to monitor students' activities inside and outside the classroom may reduce truancy. However, they reported that it is very difficult due to their multiple responsibilities.

(c) *Background of the students:* According to some teachers the students are not willing to study as they come from slums and low socio economic strata of the society which influence their personality in such a manner that they develop the tendency to skip the classes and indulge in other activities. Most of the students are the first generation learners and do not have any family member to help them in the studies at home. According to some teachers, these students fail to visualise the importance of education in their life.

(d) *Absence of effective teaching-learning material:* Due to lack of effective teaching-learning materials the teachers could not make teaching learning process interesting. They also opined that neither they have time nor the resources to make teaching aids on each and every topic they teach.

(e) *Negligence of parents:* Teachers felt that a better vigilance by parents may stop their wards from missing the classes. Parents should supervise their wards' home work and cocurricular activities, so that the students feel that their activities are being monitored by the parents.

(III) Parents' Responses

Parents were able to reflect upon some of the family factors contributing to truancy in their children. Major factors reported were as follows-

a) *Inadequate time to monitor children:* Parents opined that due to their low socio-economic strata they were busy in earning their livelihood. So they do not have enough time to keep a track of different activities of their wards during and after school hours.

b) *Poor educational status of parents:* As they are uneducated, parents cannot help their children in study matters like helping them in completing home assignments or preparing for the exams. This indirectly affects their children's interest and motivation in studies resulting into truancy.

c) *Engaging children in household activities:* Some of the students assist their parents in doing household activities such as looking after their younger siblings or in small business activities like assisting in shop. This is used as an excuse by students for remaining absent from classes.

STRATEGIES DEPLOYED BY THE INVESTIGATOR

After analysing the responses of the students, teachers and parents, the investigator developed a strategy consisting of a combination of motivational, environmental and disciplinary measures for implementation in the class. These measures were implemented and their short term impact was evaluated.

Table 1. Measures for reducing truancy among school children

Motivational Measures	Environmental Measures	Disciplinary Measures
• Displaying a caring and empathetic attitude	• Giving new look to the classroom	• System of class

• Setting realistic but challenging targets • Reinforcing responsible behaviour • Praising the Pupil's achievement • Strengthening 'Can do' factor • Grading system for the best disciplined student • Providing proper and specific feedback • Gaining student's trust and keep trusting them • Activity based home work	• Use of visuals • Buddy System	• attendance Token system • Vigilance in school premIses

(I) Motivational Measures

Motivation, self-esteem and self-efficacy linked together help us understand the different ways to which the learners may respond to the demands and opportunities of the classroom. A strong sense of self-efficacy is a great motivating factor. Absence of self-confidence in the pupils reduces their initiative to work hard.

The investigator deployed certain techniques for raising pupil's self esteem and motivation to attend classes regularly. These techniques are as follows:

a) **Displaying a caring and empathetic attitude:** The investigator raises the self-esteem of pupils by showing that she really cares for them through talking to them informally, addressing them by their names, showing concern, taking their feelings and emotions seriously and giving time to individual pupils.

b) **Setting realistic but challenging targets/goals:** The investigator sets realistic and challenging targets and goals for different pupils depending on their capabilities and potentialities for ensuring individual progress. That means arranging opportunities for success with the philosophy that all pupils are good at something or other.

c) **Reinforcing responsible behaviour:** The desirable behaviours like punctuality and regularity in the class, completing homework in time etc. were reinforced through a monitoring system in which the performance of

pupils was displayed in the class corner resulting in peer appreciation and individual recognition.

(d) **Praising pupil's achievement:** The investigator used the verbal praise by using words like good, very good, excellent etc. as well as non verbal praise like smile, eye contact, different facial expressions for building up the students' self-esteem. This played an important role in fostering a supportive and non-threatening classroom climate.

(e) **Strengthening the 'Can do' factor:** The investigator strengthened the 'can do factor' by breaking down the task into smaller steps and focused on one task at a time and encouraged the pupil for fulfillment of that segment successfully.

f) **Grading system for the best disciplined student:** The investigator followed a grading system for identifying the best disciplined students of the week who can work as pace setter for other students to follow. This worked as a miracle for motivating the students to be in the class and winning the award of the best disciplined student.

g) **Providing proper and specific feedback:** The investigator provided specific, clear and descriptive feedback to each student in the identified area in which the students needed to concentrate more.

h) **Gaining students' trust and keep trusting them**: The investigator gained the student's trust by creating an emotionally supportive classroom and also helped the students to feel that classroom is a safe place where pupils are not at risk from emotional and physical bullying or other adverse factors.

i) **Activity based Homework:** By giving homework assignment that requires creativity rather than mechanistic repetitive task helped students in taking more interest in homework and attending classes.

(II) Environmental Measures

a) **Giving a new look to the classroom:** Classroom should be converted into a comfortable, well organised, clean and physically attractive place through the use of attractive teaching aids like charts, models, posters and interesting quotations. This made the classroom an interesting and exciting place which stimulated the pupil to learn and hence reduce truancy.

b) **Use of visuals:** Using visual images of key topics of different subjects on classroom walls acted as a reminder of what has been learnt by the pupil in the class. This helped in creating interest among students for studies. This indirectly increased the pupil's attendance in the class.

c) **Buddy System:** Use of buddy system allows pupils to support each other in their curricular and cocurricular activities. The pupils

are less likely to be afraid of making mistakes if they are in pairs.

(III) Disciplinary Measures

a) **System of class attendance:** By using the system of class attendance at the beginning of each period it became easy for the teacher in identifying the truant students and keeping a constant check on these students. This also helped in identifying specific periods in which students escape from classes regularly.

b) **Token system:** Under token system a particular token was used in which one student at a time was allowed to go out of the class by taking this token. This ensured that not more than one student remains out of the class at any time.

c) **Vigilance on the play ground and other areas in the school:** The teachers and other staff members of the school were asked to keep a check on students who wander here and there in the school and send such students back into their classes.

CONCLUSION

This action research demonstrates that it is possible to analyse the factors behind truancy and evolve effective strategies to reduce truancy among students. The factors causing truancy are related to the teachers' attitude towards students, teaching approaches, classroom environment, supervisory and disciplinary practices, parental involvement in their children's school activities, children's self-esteem and motivation. The strategies to reduce truancy include motivational, disciplinary and school environment related measures. Motivational measures increase the inherent willingness to be in the school that gets reinforced by the congenial environment and disciplinary checks and controls. The strategies discussed in this paper were found to be successful in bringing down the truancy habit in 8 out of 12 truant students on short term basis. The author recommends more action research of similar nature in different kinds of schools to evolve a comprehensive set of strategies that can be implemented at wider level and become institutionalised in the school education system.

2

Constructivist Teaching in Primary Classes

Santosh Sharma*

The Context

Most of us are products of traditional instruction. As learners, we were exposed to teacher centered instructions, fact based subject matter, and a steady diet of drill and practice. Teacher centered education, teaching by transmission and learning by rote memorisation are part of teachers' personal histories and these practices persist in today's classrooms. In traditional, teacher centered classrooms, individual desks face the front of the room, where the teacher occupies a privileged space of knowing authority. Students work individually on identical, skill based assignments to ensure uniformity of learning.

In this environment, it is assumed that more quiet and orderly the classrooms are, more likely the learning tends to take place. In order to move away from this traditional classroom culture, teachers require critical reflection. Teachers must ask themselves, 'Is my role to transmit authoritative knowledge which I learnt during my school days or to nurture independent thinkers? How can I nurture students as independent thinkers?' Teachers will have to struggle to develop well articulated rationale for instructional decisions. Shifting the centers of authority and activity from teacher to students required both effort and persistence. In the beginning, the teachers can be uncomfortable with their apparent lack of control as students engage in activities with peers. But with persistence, teachers will discover themselves as investigators/guides, trying to find out new instructional strategies and decisions. However, if discrete practices that have been associated with constructivism such as cooperative learning and performance assessment are simply inserted as special activities in their traditional classrooms, then learning will remain as usual for the students. The shift to constructivist teaching requires

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teachers to relook into their roles in the classroom. Constructivist teaching can not be grafted on traditional teaching. This requires a change in classroom culture. Teachers need to understand the basic principles involved in constructivist teaching and reflect upon their existing practices.

Principles in Constructivist Teaching

1. *New learning depends on learners' previous knowledge.* Therefore, first step is to make students' existing concepts explicit. For this, teachers should ask a number of questions, relate these to students' experiences, ask students to speak about their experiences and observations. Do you try to know what students know or start telling/reading the 'definitions'?

2. *Learner actively create, interpret and organise knowledge in individual ways by reconciliation of formal instructional experiences with their existing knowledge in the cultural and social contexts in which these ideas occur.* Teachers must provide students opportunities and experiences to construct their own knowledge. Students should be provided such learning experiences and situations which require students to solve problems, design activities,

experiment, collect and interpret the data. Students should be encouraged to draw their own conclusions and inferences. They should be encouraged to express their understanding of new concepts. They should also be given opportunity to apply and validate their understanding in new ways. Students should also be encouraged to work in groups and to discuss their ideas with peers and teachers. What methodology do you practice? Does it involve active engagement of learners?

3. *Learning is facilitated by social interaction.* Students should be encouraged to speak, discuss their ideas among peers and with teachers. They should be taught to respect others' ideas, validate their own ideas, question their own and others' ideas. Students should be encouraged to provide alternate explanations, compare their results and interpretation with those of other students. Do you allow students to articulate their understanding or compare their understanding with others?

4. *Meaningful learning occurs within authentic learning tasks.* Therefore, teachers should design and construct learning tasks. Teachers should act as guides when students work on

these 'authentic learning tasks'. Do you read activities given in book or provide 'real' situations for interaction?

5. ***Learning is a meaning making process required to solve meaningful problems.*** Passive teaching should be discouraged in the classroom. Pupils' participation in teaching-learning process is very important. Teachers should encourage pupils' participation. They should also work on 'how pupils participation can be enhanced'. For that teachers must respect students' ideas. Students should not be told 'wrong' and sit down. Let students explain their perception, how and why they reached a specific 'answer'. Students should be allowed to justify and argue their own explanations. Are students passive listeners in your class? Do you provide them problem situations? Do students bring problem questions to class?

The following observations from the constructivist classroom may help teachers in evolving the characteristics of constructivist teaching.

Constructivist Teaching – Observations from the classroom

Teacher taught topic of 'Light and Shadows' to students of class V of MCD school, New Delhi. The leading question was 'how shadows are formed'? The teacher started the lesson by asking questions to make students existing concepts explicit.

The questions asked were of the following type :

1. Have you seen your own shadow?
2. Have you ever tried to catch your shadow?
3. If yes, could you catch it and hold it?
4. Is light required to form a shadow?
5. At what time of day, your shadow is smaller than you?
6. Does size of your shadow increase or decrease as you move towards the source of light?
7. Does your shadow form in front of you or behind you when source of light is behind you?

In the beginning students were nonresponsive and silent because they are not used to speak freely and interact with teachers. Students looked at the teacher as if they were asking her permission to speak. Their regular teacher nodded in positive. Then students started responding to the questions. These questions motivated students to think and interact. Some students started looking at their shadows in the classroom itself. One of the students replied that "Shadow runs as I run. Shadow leaps, jumps, does what I do." Responses of students to questions were as follows :

Q. No.	RESPONSE	RESPONSE
1.	20 – Yes	3 – No
2.	19 – Yes	4 – No
3.	01 – Yes	18 – No
4.	13 – Yes	10 – No
5.	11 – Noon	12 – Evening
6.	15 – Increases	8 – Decreases
7.	12 – Behind	13 – Front

The responses of students to questions 4 to 7 suggested that they did not have enough opportunity to play with shadows. Their responses were not based on their observations. These were trivial responses. When probed further, some of them understood light as 'natural Sun light.' Light from bulbs, candles etc; at night was not included when they replied to Question No. 4. The teacher suggested students that they should first observe these phenomenons and then answer questions on the basis of their observations. 'What kind of activities can you do to verify your answers ?'

One of the students suggested that they should be allowed to observe shadows in the Sunlight outside class. 'Yes, students can go to the playground and experiment with shadows.' But before that, can you suggest some activities inside the classroom, asked teacher. Students suggested following activities :

Activity 1

(i) The windows of their classroom had wooden panes. By closing the window panes, the classroom became dark. Students observed that their shadows were not formed in dark room.

(ii) One of the students lighted a candle in the dark room and placed a pen next to candle. Now, they could see the shadow of pen.

(iii) Students moved pen away from candle and again towards the candle and observed the size of shadow.

(iv) Students placed pen at different positions around the candle and observed the position of shadow. They tried to relate the position of shadow to the position of source of

light, that is, the candle. They observed that shadow of pen moves around the candle as the pen moves.

Activity 2

Students threw light from a torch from above the object (ball) and below the object. Students could observe the changing shape of shadow.

Activity 3 (suggested by the teacher)

Keep torch light at a distance of 5 felt from the wall. Now, hold your hand with spread fingers near the torch and observe shadow of your fingers on the wall. Move hand nearer to wall and observe the size of shadow of your fingers. Students observed that shadow of fingers and hand is very big like branches of a tree when hand is near torch and this shadow shrinks to finger size when hand is close to the wall.

Students performed a number of such activities with the help of a torch and candle. They observed the shadow of one student by throwing torch light from his right, left, behind and front.

Similarly, they observed the shadow of a ball when torch, the source of light, is placed below it, above it, to its left and to its right.

Activities outside the classroom : Students played and made fun with their own shadows.

After performing all these activities and making their observations, students verified their earlier answers and changed their responses as follows :

1. We all have shadows.
2. When we run in Sun, our shadows run with us. Shadow does what we do, that is, when we raise hand, shadow also raises hand, when we jump, shadow also jumps.
3. We can not catch and hold the shadow.
4. Light is required to form shadow.
5. Our shadow is smaller than us at noon but we will observe our shadow in morning and evening.
6. As we move nearer to the source of light, the size of shadow increases. Size of shadow shrinks as we move away from the source of light.
7. When light falls from behind us, shadow is formed in our front and when source of light is in our front. Shadow forms behind us.

Students were suggested some activities which they can do outside classroom. For example, observe the shadow of a tree at different times of the day – 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., 6 p.m.

On 2nd and 3rd day, teacher asked many questions and allowed students to make their responses without any fear or hesitation. Students asked a large number of questions such as :

1. Do Earth, Moon, Sun and Stars have shadows ?

2. Can we make any use of shadows in everyday life ?

3. Can we take photographs of the shadows?

Teacher took all these questions as cues for designing activities. She also asked students to formulate hypothesis and design activities to answer the questions raised by them.

Can you guess time by looking at the shadow of a tree in front of your house or in your school's playground, asked the teacher.

Teacher suggested them to make a Sun dial. Teacher also narrated a good story about Sun dial. She also gave interesting information to students such as "One of the biggest Sun dials in the world was built in India about 300 years ago. The shadow was made by a pointer that slanted up from the Earth to a height nearly eighteen times as tall as man". In earlier times, people used Sun dials to see time. They also used shadows to learn things about the size of the Sun and the Moon.

On 4th day, students formed a Sun clock as follows :

They drew a big circle on the ground. They took a stick about half the size of circle. Placed one end of the stick firmly at the center of the circle so that the stick points to north. At 9:00 a.m. they marked 9:00 at the shadow of stick, then after each hour they marked time at the shadow of stick. Like this they observed up to 1 p.m. They asked their friends of second shift to do the same. Students prepared a Sun dial from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

On 5th day, teacher taught shadows and eclipse. Teacher started by asking questions such as :

Have you seen Moon (lunar) eclipse ? How does the Moon look on 'Moon eclipse day'? Only one or two students had idea that Moon darkens when Moon eclipse occurs. They had heard from their family members that we should not look at the Sun on the day of the eclipse and astronomers can predict the day of eclipse. Teacher further probed that 'Sun is the source of light for Earth, you all know, then will Earth form shadow'?

'Yes, Earth has its shadow. Students themselves told that Moon also has shadow. The Earth and the Moon form shadows into space because the sunray cannot pass through them. Teacher asked the students to verify their answers by doing the following activity :

Take small cardboard circle 'A' as Moon. Hang it against the wall. Take another ball 'B' as Earth bigger than 'A'. Now throw light from torch so that shadow of Earth is formed on the wall. Now move 'Earth' ball and torch in such a way that Earth's shadow covers Moon. What do you observe?

(i) Does Moon darken as the Earth's shadow covers it ?

(ii) How is the position of Sun (torch), Earth (Ball B) and Moon (Ball A) related ?

(iii) Are Sun, Earth and Moon in one straight line ?
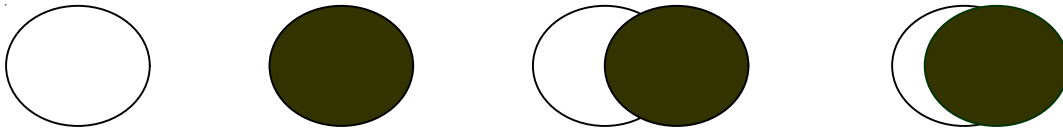
Can you describe the formation of eclipse? Student response, "Both the Earth and the Moon throw shadows into space because the Sun cannot shine through them. When Moon moves into the Earth's shadow, the Moon darkens. Moon eclipse occurs

Earth

Moon

when the Sun, the Earth and the Moon are in one straight line. During an eclipse, the curve of the shadow shown on the Moon.

Similarly, you can make a model of solar eclipse. "How dose the Sun look when solar eclipse occurs ?" asked the teacher. "Sun is dim, not bright", said students. "Do you know why" asked teacher. "the Moon passes

between the Earth and the Sun", said the students.

To understand the phenomenon of solar eclipse, do the following activity.

Activity : (Suggested by teacher)

Teacher had one green pea and a balloon. Blow up the balloon and make it big in size. Tie it with a string. Imagine that the balloon is the Sun and the pea is the Moon. Teacher put the balloon on her table. Then she asked one student to stand 2 feet away

Sun

from the table. She gave one green pea to the student and asked him to hold the pea at an arm's length in front of one eye. She asked the student to look at the pea and the balloon at the same time. And then move the pea towards the eye slowly. She asked the student to tell us when she did not see the balloon or when the pea covered the balloon completely. When pea was very

close to the eye, student said with joy, "Now the pea has covered balloon." Other students also tried this experiment.

Now, can you explain how this small Moon could cover the big Sun. Students could not provide adequate explanation for this. Teacher further asked some more questions. Can pea cover balloon if pea is at an arm's distance from the eye? 'No', said the students. Only when pea is close to the eye, the balloon becomes invisible. What does that suggest ? 'Distance of the Earth to the Moon should be less than the distance of the Moon to the Sun,' said one student. Teacher then helped the students by giving the explanations.

The Moon is about 390,000 km from the Earth. The Sun is nearly four hundred times as far away (15,00,00,000 miles). This great difference in distance makes it possible for the Moon to hide the Sun.

Teacher also suggested students to make a model of total solar eclipse in the project mode. Groups of students can prepare the model. Based on her experience, teacher evolved the following characteristics of the constructivist teaching.

Characteristics of Constructivist Teaching

1. Teacher must ask a number of questions and probe further to make explicit the existing concepts of students. Students' prior experiences must be taken into consideration while teaching a new concept.

2. Problem should be clearly stated involving pupils in making the problem statement. Questions can also be in terms of research questions or hypothesis.

3. Students must be encouraged to provide alternate solutions to the problem. They should be allowed to discuss their ideas among themselves.

4. Students should be encouraged to design activities, do experimentation, record observations, draw conclusions and provide alternate explanations.

5. Teacher should work as the team leader, as a guide and support.

6. Textbook reading method is not appropriate for science teaching. Difficult words should not be given directly. First explain the process/phenomenon and then give the terms. In constructivism, students should be given opportunity to provide alternate explanations.

7. Students should be encouraged to work in groups. Students should respect each other's ideas. All the students should be engaged in activities. This also helps to maintain class discipline.

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3

Teaching English as Third Language to Tribal Students : Evolving Teaching Techniques and Reading Testing Material

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Abstract

The UGC, under its IX and X plans, has been liberally sanctioning Special Remedial English Coaching Grants for the SC/ST students enrolled in colleges affiliated to and conducted by different universities all over the country. The State of Maharashtra has accepted the **National Education Policy,** *and therefore it has implemented the '****Three Language Formula****' in the primary, secondary and higher secondary schools as well as in colleges. The 'Three Language Formula' expects the student to learn his/her mother tongue* **Marathi** *as* **L1**, **Hindi** *as well as* **English** *as* **L2**. *Though the State has faithfully implemented the 'Three Language Formula', it seems that the same policy does not work properly in the case of tribal students. The tribal students speak their mother tongue '****Bhillori****' and it is* **L1** *for them. The regional language of Maharashtra i.e. '****Marathi****' is L2 to the tribal students and English is L3. The school as well as college syllabus of English has been framed by accepting the 'Three Language Formula' and English as L2 for all the students of Maharashtra. The syllabus of English has been framed by accepting the fact that English is L2. However, for tribal students, English is L3 and therefore, the syllabus of English for them needs several modifications or perhaps a new English syllabus should be designed for English as L3.*

After conducting surveys (one for the tribal students and second for their English teachers) the Paper has enough data to substantiate the difficulties that the tribal students have been facing while learning English as L2 and reading English texts prepared for students for whom English is L2. The paper has suggested that the English texts for the school and college tribal students should be reprepared by accepting the fact that for them English is L3 and not L2. It is now evident that along with the new texts the teaching and testing material should also be redesigned.

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We have been using English in India for the last two hundred and fifty years (approx) as the medium of instruction in colleges and universities. The Indian Constitution has given Hindi the status of official language. However, it further States that English would continue as the associate official language in the country. Paradoxical though it is, it is a fact that English, a foreign language, has remained the cementing force for different parts of India. By now, several of our universities have switched over to regional languages as the medium of instruction. Still, English is one of the compulsory subjects at the college and university level. When a large group of population of any country uses any national or foreign language for more than a century, that foreign language no more remains a foreign tongue for that group of population. This means that since we have been using English for more than 250 years, English is now one of the Indian languages. Prof. V. K. Gokak in his book *The Future of English in India* (Orient Longmans, 1952) says that the way we have been using English in India has now attained the status of one of the modern Indian languages. When we use a language, we make use of it in four ways... we hear a language, we speak a language, we read a language, and we write a language. Prof. R. K. Bansal's book *The Intelligibility of Indian English* (Orient Longmans, 1965) has clarified that with all the limitations of the Indian languages interfering in English, a common spoken Indian English model has come into existence. The written Indian English has also got wide recognition all over the world. Indian English literature – novel, short story, poetry, drama, essay – is today a well accepted literature like the British English literature, the American English literature, the Canadian English literature, the Australian English literature, and so on.

Our schools and colleges have been teaching English as one of the compulsory subjects, though we have accepted the three language formula - the regional language, the national language and English–in Maharashtra. English is being taught from the First Standard in our schools and the College Syllabus makes English a compulsory subject in every faculty from the first year of the collegiate education.

Maharashtra has been an acknowledged centre for higher learning from time immemorial. History has recorded that several erudite scholars from our state had worked in ancient universities like Nalanda and Taxashila. Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya invited the Maharashtrian Sanskrit Scholars, when he established the famous Banaras Hindu University, to observe the rituals of the foundation of the same University and later on some of them were requested to work as faculty at the University. With such a tradition, higher education in this part of the country has been enjoying a unique position in the national

system over centuries. In 1857, based on the report of a committee, three universities including the University of Bombay came into existence. The famous dispatch of Sir Charles Wood to the Board of Directors of the East India Company in 1854 laid the foundation for English education in India. After the famous Declaration of Queen Victoria in 1858, Lord Macaulay presented the Indian Education Bill in the British Parliament. The Minutes of Macaulay, in fact, have been responsible for the introduction of English as the medium of instruction in the Indian education system. The motive was to prepare a band of clerks to serve the *British Raj* in India. When the Bombay University was established, there were only three colleges in the state and some 27 in the entire country. A decade after Independence, three more universities came into existence and at present, we have nine traditional, one technical, one veterinary, one Sanskrit, four agricultural and one open university. In addition to these, we have ten deemed universities and six nationally recognised advanced institutes imparting postgraduate instructions and guiding research. This scenario of higher education in Maharashtra is highly encouraging, extremely advanced and quite satisfactory. But it certainly has some glaring limitations in the fields of assessment and examination, applied and pure research, syllabus framing and effective teaching.

Since Independence, Indian higher education has expanded pheno-menally. Ours is perhaps the second largest higher education system in the world. The phenomenal increase in the field of higher education has resulted in unplanned proliferation and inadequate infrastructure facilities at many centres. The growing mismatch between supply and demand for graduates, increasing complexities of universities, coupled with pressure to expand, and limited resources pose a serious challenge to educational planners in India. In addition to all these predicaments, we have to confront the position of English in our higher education system all over the country.

Even after Independence the language problem remained more or less the same all over the country. The Government of India evolved a policy of universal education for all. This recommended the use of regional language as a medium of instruction at the primary and secondary level. At the university level, English was the medium of instruction. After Independence, 'Universal Education' opened the door of education for all the citizens, but this created many problems too. Unmanageable over crowded classrooms and the non-availability of trained teachers affected the quality of education. Colleges had to face the problem of mixed ability groups in English. This resulted in a wide gap in language efficiency level between English medium and vernacular medium learners. Universities like Nagpur, Pune and

Kolhapur allowed Marathi as the medium of instruction along with English in the colleges under their jurisdiction. Today, almost all universities have adopted this policy of medium for instruction.

For the purpose of education, the Government of India Central Advisory Board of Education devised a three language formula in 1962. The Education Commission revised this formula in 1964-66. It suggested that the mother tongue or the regional language should be the medium of instruction from classes I to X. They made the study of English compulsory as a second or third language from class V to VII respectively.

Recently, the Government of Maharashtra has introduced the teaching of English from class I and has devised a scheme of teaching English at the primary level i.e. from class I to IV.

For lower secondary stage (classes VIII to X), the arrangement of language teaching is as follows-

1. Mother tongue - Marathi
2. Hindi at higher or lower level
3. English at higher or lower level

This has given English the status of L2 and L3. Though Marathi is the mother tongue of the majority of school and college going students, English still has equal importance in the school and college syllabus, and in the university instructional system. English is considered essential in the areas of administration, commerce, banking, education etc. It is true that the state government policy of education at the school, college and university level has been changing from time to time, but English has remained of focal importance and has always remained one of the compulsory subjects. By about 1950's, the state government made English a compulsory subject from class VIII and allowed Marathi alongwith English in schools. In the late 1960's, English was made a compulsory subject from class V and of late, English is taught from class I. This fluctuating policy for English has yielded several negative as well as positive results. Today, we teach English as one of the subjects from class I at the primary level, one of the compulsory subjects at the secondary and higher secondary level, as a compulsory subject at the first, second and third year of the degree course in the arts faculty, and as a compulsory subject for the first year of the degree course in science and commerce faculties. Each university in the state has its own curriculum for different faculties but still English is taught as one of the compulsory subjects either in the first year or the second year of the degree course. Each university offers a special course in English both at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. This is how English is taught either as a language or as a literary course at the collegiate and university level.

Some districts such as Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon have a

majority of tribals population. The percentage of tribals is 68-79 percent.

The basis of the present study is the methodology of teaching a foreign language to students whose mother tongue is Ahirani or Bhilori and who have completed their primary, secondary and higher secondary

a starting point. Such a point of reference between two languages can be found in the theory of descriptive linguistics. In order to characterise the notion 'linguistic description of natural language', we need to distinguish two aspects of such descriptions: that part which concerns

The Tribal Districts in the State: Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon.

Scale   100 K.M.
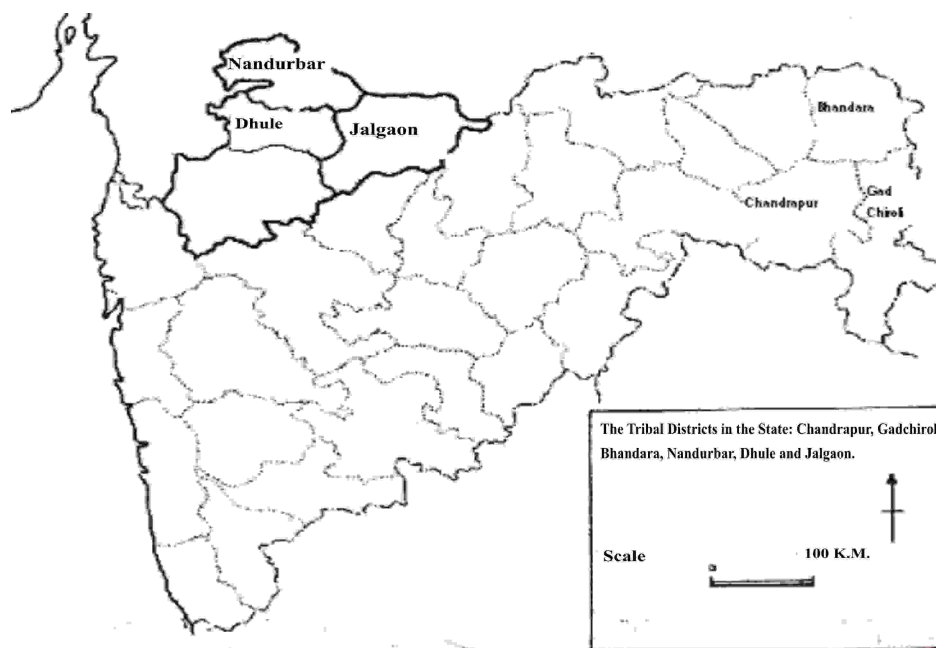
education in the regional language like Marathi. Such a study is based on the general theory of linguistics, i.e., the study of abstract structural relations underlying all human languages. A prerequisite of any attempt to compare the grammars of two languages is of course a common point of reference, without which we shall have neither a justification for bringing two languages together nor

features of the language which makes it different from other languages and that part which concerns features common to all languages. That is, one must distinguish those features of a language that it has by virtue of being a natural language. The features specified in order to characterise it as a natural language are the universals of language (Katz and Postal, 1964: 160).

A general theory of linguistics is a study of abstract structural relations underlying all human languages. It is a study of linguistic universals and not just a study of diversities or idiosyncratic properties of languages. Structural features common to all languages are called language universals. The fundamental assumption underlying general linguistics is that all natural human languages have certain semantic features and abstract formal properties in common; that they are all culturally determined variations on a finite set of universals. The aim of general linguistics is to bring out this rich uniformity underlying surface diversities. The aims of a general theory, says Lyons (1971: 49-50), are-

i)   to arrive at a statement of the rules that formed the basis of a person's ability to speak and comprehend a particular language;

ii) to provide a framework within which the grammar of any natural language can be described; and

iii) to arrive at a statement of the rules of universal grammar, by studying a variety of human languages or also the human organisms.

The claim that human languages are very much alike is often met with skepticism. After all, when we compare linguistic systems in learning a foreign language, for example, we are struck by the differences between them. No one will deny that languages differ from one another in a multitude of details. On the other hand, we must realise that surface peculiarities are much more likely to attract our attention than underlying structural principles, while it is in the latter that we would expect to find language universals. It is evident that surface linguistic diversity often conceals underlying uniformity.

Langacker (1967: 241-242), while clarifying the point, states, "All languages exemplify the same basic organisational scheme. More specifically, every human language comprises an infinite set of sentences, each of which manifests, in phonetic form, a conceptual structure. A complex series of syntactic rules serves to connect conceptual structures with surface structures, which are linear strings of lexical items grouped hierarchically. . . . . There are simply no exceptions to this organisational scheme. No one has ever found a human language lacking syntactic rules, phonological rules or discrete lexical items. No one has found a language in which lexical items were not composed of linear sequences of sound segments. . . . . Linguistic systems differ somewhat in structure, but they vary only within the confines of this common framework."

This is how the general theory of linguistics today has accepted that there are certain phonological, syntactic and semantic units that are universal; their occurrence in any particular language can be treated and identified as instances of a universal set.

Charles Fillmore (1967: 1-2), Chomsky (1965: 27-30), Bach(1965), Halliday (1966) and Greenberg (1963) have elaborately discussed the language universally and have stated their own views on the occurrences of such language universality in several natural human languages.

Descriptive linguistics is often regarded as the major part of general linguistics. A linguistic description of some language is called a grammar of that language. A grammar is a set of statements saying how a language works. It includes a description of the principles for combining words to form grammatical sentences. The linguistic description of languages is often undertaken with no ultimate practical goal in mind. " Descriptive linguistics, in other words, is akin to pure science. A physicist is likely to investigate some aspects of the physical world that interests him with no intention whatsoever of turning the results of his research to practical application; he investigates it because it intrigues him, because he wishes to contribute to human knowledge. Similarly, linguists are interested in one particular aspect of psychological reality, namely the psychological phenomenon we call language. The desire to know more about this phenomenon is ample justification for investigating it." (Langacker, - 1967:6).

Descriptive linguistics involves the description of a language at one point in time. It is concerned with the description and analysis of the ways in which a language operates and is used by a given set of speakers at a given time. This time may be the present (in the case of languages as yet unwritten or only recently given written form, it will inevitably be the present as there is no other way of knowing any other stages of them, though there are methods by which certain facts about such earlier stages may be inferred); the time may equally well be the past where adequate written records are available, as in the case of the so called dead languages like Ancient Greek and Latin, and in the case of earlier stages of languages still spoken such as Old French and Old English. "What is more important is that the descriptive study of a language and of any part of a language, present or past, is concerned exclusively with that language at the period involved and not as a descriptive study, with what may have preceded it or may follow it. Nor is the descriptive study of a particular language concerned with the description of other languages at the same time." (Robins,1960: 4-5).

The present ELT situation in Maharashtra particularly, and in India generally is very complex. English can hardly be described today in India as a second language. "It is now in the process of acquiring the status of a compulsory 'third' language" (Yardi, 1977: 2). The methodology of second language teaching can hardly be useful for the teaching of the third language. To quote Yardi (1977: 4), "Pedagogically considered, such a

distinction between L2 and L3 seems warranted. An active command of a third language is rare. Michael West is of the view that a bilingual person knowing two or more languages is a myth flourishing only in England. The point in the Indian context is whether we can continue to practice second language teaching methodology in a situation where English has acquired the status of a third language. Second language teaching methodology with almost equal emphasis on all the four skills seems unsuited to the emerging situation. The emphasis may have to shift to the acquisition of passive/ receptive skills."

Even in the changing situation, synchronic comparative studies are necessary for the production of graded teaching, testing and reading materials. What we need today is suitable graded teaching material, especially reading material. The insight obtained through a study of this kind, it is hoped, can be helpful in the preparation of adequate reading materials, pedagogical contrastive grammars, remedial grammars, translation algorithms, etc.

As Prof. Yardi has pointed out, "English is now in the process of acquiring the status of a compulsory 'third' language.......................... Second language teaching methodology with almost equal emphasis on all the four skills seems unsuited to the emerging situation. The emphasis may have to shift to the acquisition of passive / receptive skills." (Yardi, 1977: 2 to 4).

The surveys conducted have revealed the difficulties of the SC/ST students in learning English. The experience of the researcher as a teacher of English, teaching English to SC/ST students, so far has been that SC/ST students have difficulties at all the three levels - phonological, grammatical and syntactic. The experiences of the other practicing teachers of English collected through the surveys have added to the knowledge of the researcher. The difficulties encountered by the SC/ST students while learning English have been analysed and the analysis suggests how further steps to improve the methods of teaching, the methods of preparing teaching material, graded reading material could be taken.

The prerecorded cassettes (prepared by the CIEFL, Hyderabad, by the ACEN Laboratory, Pune) can be used in the language laboratory to improve the pronunciation and hearing ability of the students, especially the SC/ST students. The audio-visual aids in teaching the foreign language as L2 or L3 have always given good dividends. Bridge courses, remedial courses, spoken English courses could be designed after collecting the survey material and they would be offered to the SC/ST students in due course of time. The present study would help the practicing teachers of English to revise the pedagogy.

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4

The Disappearing Girl Child! It is Possible to Save Her!!

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is on an urgent need to save the girl child, take care of her health emotional and educational needs and her self-esteem to ensure an empowered woman of our country. It discusses the crime against the girl child in a secure place, her mother's womb, (female foeticide) if she is allowed to be born, her own parents kill her (female infanticide) if she escapes these, she faces intentional neglect in her own family and later in her husband's. With the Government making every possible effort to save the girl child, the situation continues to be grim and sad for the girl child in India. However, the paper discusses how a sensitive and a strong administration could successfully save the girl child in a district of Punjab with continuous efforts. The district Nawanshahar was able to save the female foetuses and raised the sex ratio in 2006.

Indian women have played a significant role in the country's freedom struggle and in developmental processes in the post independence period. Elimination of girls from our society is rampant. It would make it difficult to find women who are empowered. Empowerment of women would mean equipping them to be economically independent, self-reliant, have a positive self-esteem in order to enable them to face any difficult situation and they should also be able to participate in developmental process. They should be able to participate in the process of decision making as well. Education will be an important factor which would play the most crucial role in empowering women.

The Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) Report in 1974 had warned us about the declining sex-ratio. The 1991 Census had done the same. When we talk about the position/

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status of the Girl Child and the empowerment of women in 2001 we were shocked because the decline in sex-ratio was alarming for girls and women. The Census for 2001 reported the decline in the sex-ratio among children in 'Zero to Six' age group. **It is an unfortunate coincidence that this was being reported in 2001 which was also the year of Women's Empowerment.** If the nation does not wake up now then where will we find women whose empowerment we have been talking about for more than three decades.

There was a marked but unmistakable decline in the sex ratio in the last century. **Never has it been so low for 0-6 age group.**

The decline in the sex-ratio has not been checked even in 2008! The National Charter for Child adopted in February 2004 and National Plan of Action for Children, 2005 reiterates the Government of India's committment to the child's Rights to survival, development and protection. Among the 12 key areas identified by **National Plan of the Action for Children, 2005, complete abolition of female foeticide, infanticide, child marriage and ensuring protection of the girl child have found place.**

Female infanticide was banned in 1870 through **Registration of All Births and Deaths Act**. This checked female foeticide to a large extent. However, one had been concerned because it came back in 1980s,

Amniocentesis was introduced to detect abnormalities of a foetus. Unfortunately the test was used to detect the sex of the child and eliminate if the foetus was a female. Sex of the foetus was not to be disclosed.

Modernisation and scientific' discoveries have been misused to harm the girl child. Never in different periods of our history was she as unwanted as she is in 2008. In the ancient period of Indian History, birth of a daughter was a welcome. Gradually preference for a male child led to the unwelcoming of a girl child and it brought sorrow to the family. On the contrary, birth of a son was always desired, looked forward to and celebrated. Increasing marked preference for sons led to the neglect of female children. Marriage is an important institution In India. A woman's child bearing potential is valued. However, she is generally respected only if she bears a son. In the Medieval and Modern periods, a general societal prejudice was prevalent against women and "that is why coming into the world of a female infant meant disappointment to the parents/family."

The girls are also facing severe discrimination in nutrition, health care and education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its schemes such as National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs)are making a positive difference for girls. Girls have silently become wage earners. Parents have

Discrimination against the Girl Child

Boy	Girl	Mother/Family
• Has the right to survive	• does not have the right to be born or survive. She can be sold without hesitation	• consider her as a socio-economic burden
• stays longer in school, is free from the responsibility of domestic chores	• Either not sent to school or is withdrawn from school.	• loves son in the hope that he would look after parents in the old age
• as wage earner has freedom to spend	• She has the responsibility of all the domestic chores	
• Is paid more wages	• She has to give all her earning at home • Paid less for similar	• son brings dowry. daughter takes it son gets skilled and better paid jobs.
• health and education needs are taken care of	• No one is worried about her nutrition and health	• does not see any reason for taking care of health and nutritional needs of a daughter.

more control over the income of the daughters than that of the sons as can be clearly seen in the table given below:

The rural girl child is disadvantaged because she is deprived of all the advantages of the urban girl child, which is due to an inadequate exposure of her parents/family to modern amenities and facilities: transportation, electricity, media, hygiene, health care and access to education. **The urban girl child, however, continues to face the threat to her coming out of her mother's womb alive**.

It is well known that the status of the girl child is related to her mother's which has been low especially in rural India. Marked preference for sons has led to the neglect of the girl child. A mother's child bearing potential is essentially valued. She receives respect and care from her family when she becomes the mother of a son (Devendra: 1993).

There are many socio-religio-economic reasons for the biased attitude of family/society with regard to the birth of a daughter (Devendra: 1993). Socially, parents of a daughter feel humiliated when her marriage is to be settled. The reasons for this could be hypergamy. In case of arranged marriages, which is still the socially accepted type of marriage, parents wish to marry their daughters into families which have higher socio economic status. This could be giving a sense of satisfaction and security to the family

of girls. This can not hold true any more because of the rising dowry demands which have acquired a sense of competition. In recent times, even if the marriage of a daughter is arranged in a family of an equal status or even lower, the demand for dowry is higher. Socially, sons are preferred for continuation of family's line, for looking after old parents and for performing their last rites. Economically, sons are viewed as an asset as they look after the land business, help in farming and in settling the local disputes. Daughters are considered to be an economic liability and therefore, bringing them up, spending a little money on their education and a lot of it on their marriage and husband's family even after the marriage ceremonies are over is a continuous burden that parents find hard to carry on year after year.

The fact that a daughter's birth brings sorrow and that she is unwanted socially, ritually and economically, leads to female infanticide. Female infanticide was checked, to a great extent, by the Registration of All Births and Deaths Act in 1870. Unfortunately, even after hundred years of the abolition of female infanticide, since the 1970s, there has been a marked increase in dowry demands/dowry deaths. Tensions have increased in a family where a daughter has to be educated, married and demands of the in-laws have to be met even after years of marriage. This initially, used to be an urban middle class phenomenon, but now, has found acceptance in the rural society as well. The family of a girl child considers her as a social and an economic burden and a source of tension. This attitude of the parents/ family/society has brought back female infanticide and encouraged sex detection test and female foeticide. In various surveys and studies (1980) it was discovered that 450 women out of 700 who went in for sex -detection test when informed that they were carrying a female foetus, 450 went in for abortion whereas all **the 250 women who were carrying male foetus carried on with their pregnancy even though some of them were informed of the possibility of some genetic disorder**. The girl child who manages to escape death in the foetus or as an infant, faces intentional neglect in the childhood and later in her husband's family. The figures prove that crime against girl child/woman are on the increase. (The Sunday Tribune: 28 August, 1994, national dailies, figure of calls of Crime against women (1995-2008).

Legal ban was essential to check female foeticide. Maharashtra government was the first state to legally ban female foeticide in 1988. After the ban was announced, the number of sex-determination tests came down in the State. Other states should have followed the example of Maharashtra but this did not happen. Requests and pleas from women's organisations and Voluntary Health Associations in India

for a total ban on the test, resulted in a central legislation to ban it. Internalising the ban, should have been a priority issue and a massive campaign should have been organised to motivate public opinion. The Bill was passed in January 1996 and is in implementation since, 2001. Result of its implementation are discouraging.

Punjab has been known to have societal sanction both for female infanticide and foeticide. The five high priests comprising Sikhism's Supreme religious authority have directed the Sikhs all over the world to stop practising female foeticide. The direction has gone further to say that any Sikh found guilty would be automatically excommunicated from the Sikh faith. This order was there because the five high priests unanimously agreed that the incidence of eliminating the girl child was high. The recent census reported still lower sex-ratio. Punjab already had a low sex ratio.

The Supreme Court has directed the Union and State Governments to 'stringently' enforce the existing law banning sex-detection and selection procedures. The Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation) and Prevention of (Misuse) Act must also be implemented as per the direction of the Supreme Court to check the declining sex-ratio. It also directed the Union Government to examine the loopholes of the Act and even amend it to plug the loopholes (The Times of India, 5 May, 2001). However, the figures for 2007-08 defy this. There is hardly any improvement in the declining sex-ratio.

As mentioned earlier, girls who survive face nutritional neglect. Recognising the damage done to generation after generation of girl by the low nutritional levels, the Indian Government started a massive Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in 1975. ICDS infrastructure is also being used to help the adolescent girls (11-18 years). An attempt is being made to meet the special needs of nutrition, health, education, literacy and skill development. It attempts to make the adolescent girl into a better future mother who can also act as an agent of change.

The National Policy on Education 1986 and its revised version in 1992 and the Programme of Action gave unqualified support to Universal Elementary Education and bringing equality between sexes. The focus was on universal enrolment of all children including girls, removal of gender stereotyping and bias in curricular and its transaction. It is, however, more important to remove the difficulties of the parents, and provide support services to bring the two crore out of school children to school education through KGBV

The girl's lesser discrimination in nutrition, health care and education inspire Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its schemes like National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika

Vidyalayas towards making a positive difference for girls.

The Government of India announced its **National Plan of Action for the SAARC Decade of the Girl Child (1991-2000) in 1992.** "It was expected to help sustain the consciousness aroused all over the country during the SAARC year of the Girl Child and achieve its goals set for a brighter future of the girl child in India within the decade". To achieve better status of women in rural and urban India it has to be ensured that **a girl child survives;** is free from poverty, hunger, ignorance and exploitation; is allowed equal and dignified existence with equal opportunities, care, protection, development and most importantly she has the right to enjoy all the above mentioned rights. The survival of the girl child is still under threat.

However, India has initiated the process of reviewing all national laws, policies and programmes to ensure that all these meet all that needs to be done to improve the status of girls/Women. The Indecent Representation of Women Act has been amended to prevent private channels from telecasting derogatory materials. Textbooks have been freed from gender bias. Women's participation is also visible in local self-governments. To check female foeticide and infanticide, registration of all births and deaths has been reinforced.

It is a matter of national shame that the drastically declining sex-ratio is coincided with end of the SAARC Plan of the Girl Child. India has been a signatory to conventions on the child.

What Can We Do?

Ensuring birth of a girl child and taking care of all her needs will lead to achieving women's equality and dignity. We need to continuously remind ourselves that girls are an asset to our nation. Their welfare which makes them confident and healthy in

What Went Wrong?

| Big number of Governmental Policies, Plans, Programmes for Girls/Women's Empowerment and Development | **Biggest number of Laws to help Women and Girls** ↓ Weak Implementation of all these ↓ 2001 has census reported drastic decline in the sex-ratio of Girls (0-6 age group) ↓ 2008 continues to report a further decline in the sex ratio ↓ **Society did not responsibly participate at any level to save the girl child** | Large number of NGOs working to help Girls/Women |

the mind and body will strengthen our country's socio-economic development. We need to work against prejudices, practices, customs and traditions, which lower the status of the Girl Child and her mother.

We need to remember that it is the girl child who is an indispensable part of our society for its normal social development. She should not be considered as a liability. A general societal concern for the girl child has been lacking because the society has been conveniently giving its sanction to the her death as a foetus or in her infancy and if she escapes these, to neglect her needs and also support to everyone who tries to eliminate her.

Mass campaigns starting from neighbourhood, community and village, city/town in favour of survival of girl child and giving her and a woman, human rights, will bring a positive change. The movement to create awareness about the girl child and a woman due to neglect, torture and atrocities committed must become issues of public concern. Once a movement of the people starts, situation will not only begin to improve for the girl child but policing by neighbours, community will help in bringing down crimes against her in the foetus and outside the foetus. It will be possible to keep a watch whenever and wherever a girl child is born, she will be able to survive and women will lead a happier life. This is seen in the news when neighbours united against the family and the police on the issue of a woman's suicide (Times of India, May 3, 2001). Registration of all births and deaths is mandatory now. The society/community needs to ensure it.

Once the platform for girls' survival is taken over by the public, not only the girls will survive but their health and education will also be taken care of. When this happens, India can hope to have its future women empowered. This would lead to the meaningful management of the survival of physically, emotionally, educationally and mentally healthy girls and women who will be able to participate in social, economic, educational and national development by taking right decisions. Education of girls will help them to have a high esteem and confidence Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its scheme NPEGEL and Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya are making a positive difference for girls.

We need to urgently humanise our dehumanised society which gives sanction to an act which will bring survival of our country to a questionable point. Sensitisation seminars need to be organised at the national, state and district levels. Mass campaigns need to be organised in the villages to sensitise the society/community about the threat to the life of the Girl Child (0-6 age group). It will be critical to have continuous discussion with the villagers on the dangerous consequences which the society as a whole will have to face in the absence of the Girl Children! With the help of villagers a demand has first to be created for the survival of the Girl Child and later for her education so that we have empowered women! There is need to sensitise everyone by each of
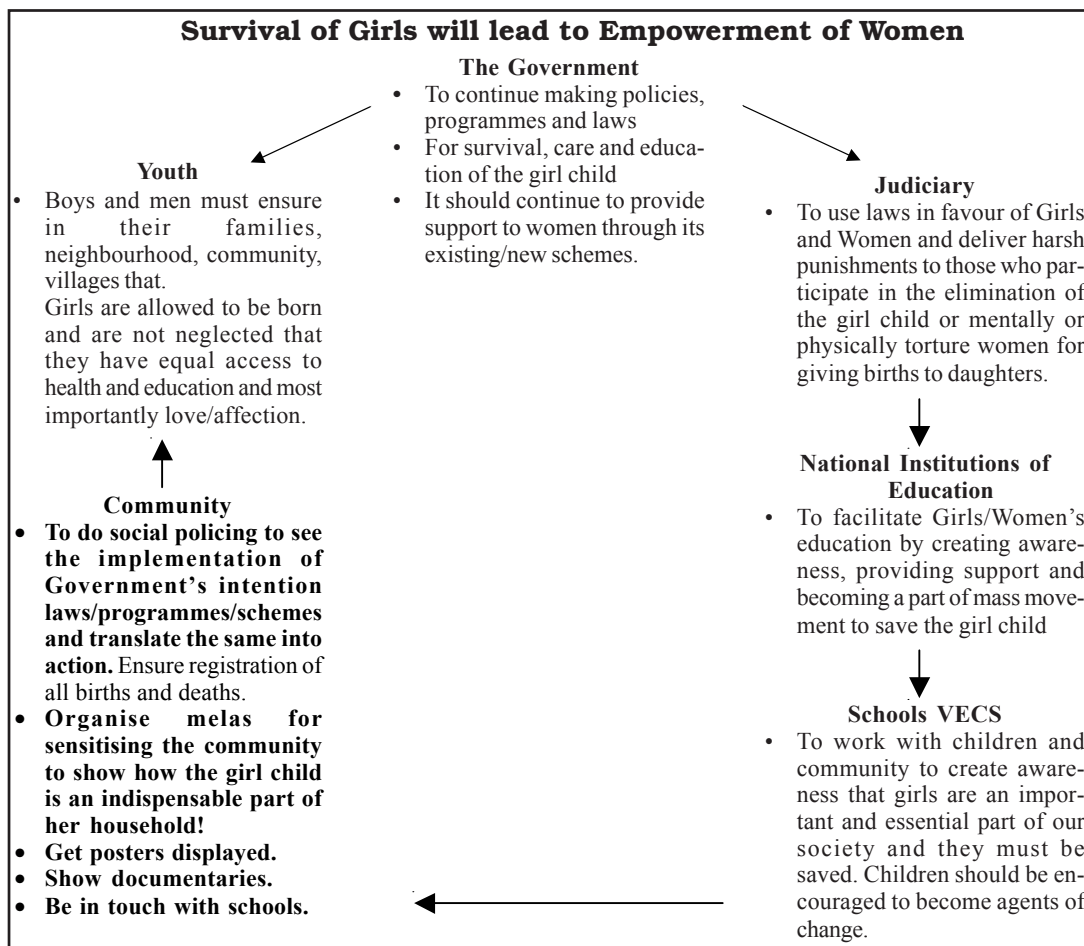
the following playing their roles with sensitivity, responsibility and accountability:
1. The Government
2. Judiciary
3. National Institutions of Education
4. Schools
5. Community
6. Youth

Successful Awareness campaign and enforcement measures to control female foeticide : Nawanshahar

This is how the project was visualised. I first introduced myself in a large number of frequently held meetings and then launched the programme for sustenance by motivating the youth. My office and I remained in touch with the developments in the field on a continuous basis.

Survival of Girls will lead to Empowerment of Women

The Government
- To continue making policies, programmes and laws
- For survival, care and education of the girl child
- It should continue to provide support to women through its existing/new schemes.

Youth
- Boys and men must ensure in their families, neighbourhood, community, villages that.
Girls are allowed to be born and are not neglected that they have equal access to health and education and most importantly love/affection.

Judiciary
- To use laws in favour of Girls and Women and deliver harsh punishments to those who participate in the elimination of the girl child or mentally or physically torture women for giving births to daughters.

National Institutions of Education
- To facilitate Girls/Women's education by creating awareness, providing support and becoming a part of mass movement to save the girl child

Community
- **To do social policing to see the implementation of Government's intention laws/programmes/schemes and translate the same into action.** Ensure registration of all births and deaths.
- **Organise melas for sensitising the community to show how the girl child is an indispensable part of her household!**
- **Get posters displayed.**
- **Show documentaries.**
- **Be in touch with schools.**

Schools VECS
- To work with children and community to create awareness that girls are an important and essential part of our society and they must be saved. Children should be encouraged to become agents of change.

An administrator who can be a part of a peoples movement person like Krishan Kumar can be a guide for all those States where the female sex-ratio continues to decline to help them in their effort to raise the declining sex ratio. His guidance can make a difference. This is how I established my rapport with those who were to work with mission to check female foeticide. This helped me to be a part of the effort.

Dear friends,

It is a matter of great pleasure and privilege for me to get an opportunity to interact with youth like you who vibrate with energy. However, due to some professional compulsion, I am unable to come and have a one to one interaction with you and your prestigious institutions.

Before, I start to explain the various aspects of the project started in district Nawanshahar on female foeticide, I would like to introduce myself briefly. I am technically an engineer and did my Engineering in Electronics and Communication from Engineering College, Murthal, Sonipat near Delhi. After completing my graduation, I was posted as lecturer in the same college and thereafter I joined the Department of Tele Communication, present BSNL.

I am now in the Indian Administrative Service, (1997 Batch and was allotted Punjab Cadre). Before joining as Deputy Commissioner, Nawanshahar, I had tenures as S.D.M. in Jalandhar, three small tenures of A.D.C. in various districts of Punjab followed by my assignment in the Department of Taxation and Finance. I joined the District as District Collector in the month of May, 2005. Before joining this assignment, I happened to interact with some good friends and seniors who sensitised me about the rampant social problem of female foeticide in our society. To be very honest, I myself was not very much aware about the dimension of the problem 4-5 years earlier. After joining the district, I thought it appropriate to take it on me to do some work on the problem of female foeticide which the Society particularly in Punjab. The practice is a slow poison which will ultimately destroy the whole Society. I wanted to actually accept the challenge to stop it.

The main motivation to work on this project was to assess myself as to whether I could achieve some actual results or not. I wanted to be honest with myself and not to anybody else. There were problems which I can **apprehend initially as to no** one was aware about the seriousness and magnitude of this problem. Secondly, the Health Department which is preliminary responsible to maintain the provision of Prenatal Diagnostic Technique Act (PNDT Act) was totally demotivated. The Scanning Centres were not at all bothered as to whether some information needed to be sent to the Civil Surgeon at the end of every month despite punitive measures provided in the Act. Any couple could approach the scanning centres to get sex determination done and in case it was found that foetus is female one, it was terminated by the same clinic or somebody else.

Census conducted in the year 2001 in the country revealed that the sex ratio had been declining in the State of Punjab at an alarming rate as compared to the previous census year 1991. The sex ratio was still lower among the new born babies (0-6 yrs) as compared to the over all sex ratio which was a more serious matter. All the 17 districts of Punjab were among the lowest 34 districts of the country where the sex ratio was low. The sex ratio was **797** in district Gurdaspur, **793** in Amritsar, **782** in Kapurthala, **817** in Jalandhar, **815** in Hoshiarpur, **808** in Nawanshahar, **793** in Ropar, **757** in Fatehgarh Sahib, **815** in Ludhiana, **818** in Moga, **822** in Ferozepur, **814** in Mukatsar, **820** in Faridkot, **795** in Bathinda, **783** in Mansa, **779** in Sangrur, **777** in Patiala and **793** in whole of Punjab. The sex ratio in district Nawanshahar as per census **2001** was **808** and same continued to decline in the subsequent years also. The survey conducted by the Child Development Department, Punjab indicates that child sex ratio has come down to **774 in March, 2005**. Thus, there was loss of another 33 girls per 1000 in just a span of four years. Realising that this social evil was reaching an alarming stage, a campaign to control this menace was launched in the district of Nawanshahar in the month of May, 2005.

The programme which was planned and launched in the district can be broadly divided into three main tasks,

a) Awareness campaign and enforcement measures:-

b) Medical Audit

c) Social Audit

Flow chart for the campaign against female foeticide is also reproduced below :-

Flow Chart For Campaign against Female Foeticide
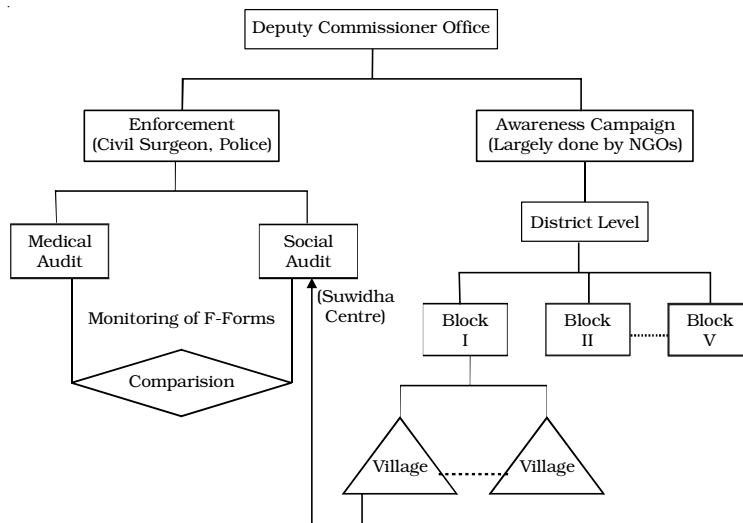
(A) Awareness Campaign and enforcement measures

Registration of Federation of NGOs

Initially, departmental machinery in the department of Child Development and Health were identified to intensify measures against clinics indulging in sex determination test followed by abortion (in case the foetus was female). However, initial results indicated that efforts were not adequate but the same were temporary and personality oriented and to give some sustainability, hence it was thought proper to involve all the NGOs in the district in this process. With this idea, a federation of NGOs namely UPKAR Coordination Society was constituted and registered under the appropriate law where the members of the Federation were NGOs only. Deputy Commissioner was ex-officio Chief Patron of the Federation. There were 35 members of the Non Government Organisations of the Federation and each of them was assigned particular area of his/her choice. The block and village level committees of the **Upkar Coordination Society** had also come up. In case, district level society intended to organise a function or a rally in a village, it was the duty of village level committee to organise it and district level society was only to facilitate it. This was being done with a view to strengthen the grassroots of the society. It would not only provide sustainability to the campaign at large but also ensure the participation of the community in campaigns against social evils. 4000 members had already been registered with Upkar Coordination Society and a special campaign was going on to enroll maximum number of members particularly adults and young couples. After constitution of federation and registration of members, awareness campaigns against female foeticide were launched.

Block Level Meetings

To begin with, block level meetings were held, whereby village Sarpanches, Lamberdars (village headmen), Chowkidars, Child Development workers (Anganwari workers) ANMs and Local Health Volunteers of health department participated. Along with them, other locals also participated in these functions. During the public meetings, cultural programmes / Nukar Nataks highlighting the menace of female foeticide and its future implication on the Society were arranged. During the meetings, all officers from the Child Development Department, Civil Surgeon and Deputy Commissioner used to address and appeal to the public in general that they should not indulge in female foeticide. Sense official letters were written to all sarpanches by the Deputy Commissioner requesting them to ensure that no case of female foeticide took place in their area.

After having block level meetings, district level meetings were held, whereby all Municipal Committee Councillors and other social activists, Medical practitioners also participated.

In all those meetings, cultural programmes were also organised to convey messages against female foeticide.

During campaign, it was noted that survey of pregnant mothers was perhaps not being conducted in a sincere manner. As a result, there used to be some pressure/ inclination on the part of pregnant mothers who normally approached the clinics for sex determination. Medical science have proved that most dangerous period for sex determination of a foetus is between third month to fifth month of pregnancy. **Realising that such pregnant mothers need to be monitored continuously, a computer software was prepared including telephone numbers of pregnant mothers and in case, they did not have telephone numbers, telephone numbers of the village Sarpanches were noted.** All the details of previous children, age of the mothers, their telephone numbers, visits of ANMs was being entered into computer. After this, a list was generated giving details of pregnant mothers. A lady operator in the D.C's office thereafter, regularly contacted all pregnant mothers by telephone and found out if there was any problem with her or the foetus. This leaves an invisible impact on the minds of the pregnant mothers as well as on her in-laws that somebody is monitoring and watching them. It discourages them from not going in for sex determination test and subsequently abortion. The computer software also generated a list of the expected dates of delivery of expectant mothers. Enquiries through telephone as to whether baby boy or girl was born were also subsequently made. In case, nothing was reported, investigations were conducted as to where the foetus had gone and under what circumstances were they aborted. This whole process facilitated better enforcement against the persons involved in female foeticide. A copy of the screen of the software and subsequent report generated are enclosed at Annexure "A".

(B) Medical Audit of Scanning Centres

Recording of Pregnant Mothers and other details

With a view to intensify the enforcement measures further, it was felt appropriate that scanning centres and clinics needed to be monitored more regularly. All scanning centres were required to furnish the details of all scans conducted by them during a particular month to the Civil Surgeon. However, scanning centres on the one excuse or the other, avoided providing this information to the Civil Surgeon. Moreover it became difficult for Civil Surgeon also to monitor all scanning centres manually. To analyse the data submitted by the scanning centres in a more effective manner, a software was prepared at Suwidha Centre, Nawanshahar and all the data collected from scanning centres on the 5th of every month was being fed in the computer. These medical audit reports

were subsequently generated and necessary disciplinary action was taken against scanning centres which indulged in malpractice or did not comply with the rules. Thus, the campaign from both sides i.e. recording of data of pregnant mothers (social audit) from the society's side and medical audit of scanning centres certainly helped to bring down the cases of female foeticide.

(C) Social Audit

Monitoring of survey by Senior Officers

In addition, surveys were conducted in the villages where all district officers including D.C. i.e. undersigned remained present. It also worked as a deterrent among the people who indulged in this menace. Villages had been identified where sex ratio was poor. There are about 25% of the total villages where sex ratio was abnormally low. Special attention was paid to these villages. Efforts were also made to find out reasons as to why sex ratio was low in those villages. To make people further aware, it was decided that those villages should be taken up for the detailed survey where senior officers i.e. Deputy Commissioner, other district heads including Civil Surgeon remained present. During these meetings all the members of the Upkar Coordination Society remained present. The village panchayat also remained present and groups were formed to conduct a detailed survey in the villages. Rallies were being organised simultaneously in these

villages and informal meetings were also held by Upkar Coordination Society with the village women. Those rallies and awareness campaigns were further followed by holding of cultural programmes in the evening in these villages. Visits of D.C. and other senior officers in those villages enforced deterrence among the people indulging in sex determination on one hand whereas it also put administrative pressure on anganwari workers and ANMs who invariably did not collect data correctly. The information collected during those campaigns was invariably compared with the data collected by ANMs and anganwari workers and if there were discrepancies, the same was put to the anganwari workers by the ANMs at the spot. It forced them to identify and report about pregnant mothers and sex of the new born babies correctly.

Identifying midwives, ANMs and Nurses

One big advantage of holding such campaigns in such villages was to identify the basic reasons for the poor sex ratio in these villages. It was surprising to know that sex ratio in a village was as low as 411, whereas the same was almost 900 or above in an adjoining village. Minute examination of the survey ultimately led to a conclusion that there was a nexus between ANMs/Nurses and medical practitioners. The ANMs took the young couples to the scanning centres and subsequently arranged for the termination of the female foetus. By

doing so, scanning centres and medical practitioners were put to least risk and at the same time they were in a position to charge heavy amount of money from the young couples. Medical practitioners also shared heavier amount from ANMs. Not only this, medical practitioners were also appointed Public Relations Officers (PROs) who were supposed to be in touch with all the ANMs/ Nurses and request that such ANMs should bring maximum cases to their employers. **With a view to break this nexus, all midwives/ANMs/Nurses were identified and their telephone numbers were also recorded**. Separate meetings were organised for them and they were strongly warned and advised to restrain themselves, else cases would be registered against them. At the same time midwives were also advised to inform Civil Surgeon at a toll free telephone number 555501 about such couples who came to them for sex determination followed by abortion. This had certainly helped us to bring some of the midwives/ANMs on the Government's side to enable us to curb the practice of sex determination and female foeticide in the district.

Adoption of villages by all departmental officers

In addition to this, it had been observed that there were employees in some of departments who did not have adequate work during most of the year. To utilise their services in a better way their services were used to help in checking this social evil. It was considered appropriate to allot five villages each to all such officers. Every officer was requested to adopt five such contiguous villages where he/she would not only monitor sex ratio but would also take the responsibilities to ensure that all children went to schools as well as ensure discipline and punctuality of all Government institutions in those villages. Such officers had been authorised to inspect schools, veterinary hospitals and such other institutions in these villages. These officers also listened to the problems of the villagers regarding drinking water supply, power supply or any other issue of public importance. These officers, on the one hand worked as a link between the villagers and district administration and at the same time they were in a position to develop personal rapport with the villagers.

Mobilisation of young students and meeting with D.C objective

It was observed that the youth particularly below 25 years who were likely to be affected to a larger extent by the social evil of female foeticide and drug addiction. It was therefore thought appropriate to develop direct rapport with such youth. The other objective was to remove the fear among youth/ general public about the Govt. offices such as Deputy Commissioner office. Therefore, to start with, all college going students in the district were invited to D.C. Office to have a meeting

with D.C. everyday from 11.00 AM to 11.30 AM. Normally 40 students, largely girls participated in such meetings. During such visits officials of D.C. Office as well as single window delivery system i.e. Suwidha Centre were introduced to such youth. During their meeting, they were being advised that, in case they happened to have some work done from D.C. office, they could easily come to Suwidha Centre without any hesitation e.g. for getting driving licenses, arms licenses, birth certificates, affidavits, depositing electricity and telephone bills, passports, marriage certificates, copies of court cases, copy of revenue record, Scheduled caste/Backward certificates etc. While the above said objective was secondary, the primary objective of inviting such youth to the D.C. office was to introduce them to the problem of female foeticide and drug addiction during the half an hour interaction with D.C. An appeal was made to the girl students that Society has given them an opportunity to take birth as girls and women and it is therefore their duty now to protect another girl. The youth was also informed about the alarming trend of falling sex ratio in the State. They were made aware that if such a trend continued, it was not very far when the country will not find women/girls and ultimately the very existence of human beings on earth will disappear. It is shocking to know that many of the students were not even aware about the present trend of this child sex ratio.

During these visits, a data base was also prepared of all the students and the same entered in a computer. Students were also requested to provide their telephone numbers. It helped Upkar Coordination Society as well as D.C. office to communicate with those students. Upkar Coordination Society has offered to give Rs. 100/- to all the students in case they identified pregnant mothers in villages and informed the D.C. office to further register them with Software prepared and maintained at Suwidha Centre. A good response was being received from such students. It became feasible for the D.C. to talk to those students frequently. The students, when they got a call from D.C. office were not only happy but were motivated to devote some more time towards social activities especially the female foeticide.

Memorandum by young girls to Clinics

To make people aware further about the menace of female foeticide, Upkar Coordination Society devised another method of mobilising those young girls who were yet not involved in the campaign. Such girls were involved to submit memorandum to the various clinics, hospitals and offices with requests to the society to stop the menace of sex determination and female foeticide. Those girls normally put some clothes around their mouths so as to invite attention of the public as well as to enable the girls not to fall in arguments with any of the clinic/doctors.

Personal letters to all lady Sarpanches

Personal letters in the form of postcards were being sent to all the lady sarpanches of the villages as well as wives of the male sarpanches by Upkar Coordination Society and wife of D.C. This found good response from the villagers, particularly women and it generated a social campaign against female foeticide.

Organising Rallies on Scooters and Cars

Rallies on cycles and scooters were organised on appropriate occasions by the Upkar Coordination Society. Such rallies were organised on 2nd October, 2005 (Gandhiji's Birthday) and 23rd March, 2006 (martyr day of Sardar Bhagat Singh). These were in addition to other than rallies held once in a month which was mandatory. People from all age groups invariably participated in such rallies.

Intensive campaign through Mobile Vehicles

To intensify the campaign, Upkar Coordination **Society had taken five vehicles on rent, one for each of the blocks**. Recorded messages of popular singers like Hans Raj Hans and other famous personalities were played on those vehicles. Literature and other materials about Upkar Coordination Society as well on the menace of female foeticide were circulated through these vehicles. Each of the vehicles could easily accommodate 5 to 6 persons and cover about 10 villages everyday. Thus, all five vehicles covered about 50 villages everyday. It was intended to cover all the villages and make people aware about the social evil of female foeticide. It was believed that those vehicles would complete their four week campaign by 21st May, 2006. Sh. Rajan Kashap, lAS, Chief Information Commissioner, Punjab flagged off these vehicles from Balachaur in district Nawanshahar on 26th April, 2006.

Mourning by Society

To carry the campaign further, Upkar Coordination Society decided to mourn the death of a baby girl whenever an abortion took place after sex determination. Upkar Coordination Society had been visiting such villages where cases of female foeticide came to their notice. Village people also accompanied the members of the Society on such occasions. Such mourning and dharanas had also been staged outside the clinics that had been indulging in sex determination and then abortions.

Organising *Langers* on main roads

Young girls and Upkar Coordination Society had also been involved in organising langer on the main roads and making appeals to the general public to save the girl child.

Appeal to the religious leaders

Religious melas/fairs had also been used to take advantage of social occasions where large public gatherings took place. Campaigns were organised by Upkar Coordination Society at those places. They also appealed to the religious leaders by submitting memorandum who in turn made appeal to the public to restrain from evil of female foeticide and drug addiction.

A function to celebrate the birth of baby girls in Ladhana Village.

A function organised to honour the parents of new born baby girls

Naming of new born baby girls by D.C.

Functions were organised every month at the district headquarters where all new born baby girls in a particular month were honoured along with their parents by the Deputy Commissioner. All those girls were named after only one name, so that they can identify themselves when they grow up. Names like "Navjot", "Harsimran" and "Jaspreet" had been given in three such functions organised during last three months at district level.

As a result of continuous enforcement measures the sex ratio in 77 villages out of 475 in the district of new born babies had crossed 900. All those village panchayats were honoured on 8th March, 2006 on the International Women Day by Mrs. Anjali Bhawra, lAS, Commissioner, Patiala. **Reports had been also published in almost all National dailies on the front pages. Out Look, a weekly magazine, carried a cover page story of district Nawanshahar in its issue of February 27, 2006**.

Young mothers with their newly born daughters and D.C, Civil Surgeon, functionaries. The names of all the new born girls in Navjot

A play being enacted on female foeticide

Twin girl children born in the month of January, 2006 and parents and other girl children with the D.C.

To remind parents and the community about the disappearing girl child, it is important that functions be organised one after the other on a continuous basis. This is how Nawanshahar was able to bring about a positive change of raising the sex-ratio in many of its villages. This made it a point to be personally present.

"No money is actually required for these campaigns, one needs to take all those involved in female foeticide". Social audit helps in checking families, individuals, medical practitioners from participating in female foeticide Monitoring and medical audit makes the campaign effective. A strong administration with the will to bring about the change for raising the sex-ratio of the girls, ensures an effective social and medical audit.

It is a matter of concern that when a murder is committed in a district, the highest official reaches the spot. It becomes a matter of state and national concern. It is reported to Human Rights Commission. In a district, the number of murders committed is far less than hundreds of missing girls in villages of a district in Punjab. When the girls are murdered in their mothers' womb nobody is bothered and the sense of guilt is totally absent. It is unfortunate that a girl child is not secure in her mothers womb.

A mother who agrees to get her female foetus aborted should be put behind the bars. This would send a message in the entire community, village, Tehsil that strict action is now going to be taken for supporting or practicing female foeticide. This will have an impact as no family would like their daugher-in-law in jail.

The law needs an amendment, the appropriate implementing authority should be the D.C.

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School For Talented Students In Asian Countries, A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study has been performed regarding the academic standards and rules of school for talented students in Asian Countries. By reviewing the educational system for the gifted, it was evident that Asian countries such as Iran and India are trying their best for achieving higher standard for gifted by educating them in the available education system up to school level. There are no specific educational programmes and some private sectors are active in helping the gifted children in both the countries. The gifted students remained undiagnosed because of only one method used for assessing their giftedness. Since, there are many such students in schools, a more effective system is needed for proper diagnosis and selection of the gifted children.

INTRODUCTION

The Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the term "gifted" as: (1) having great natural ability and (2) Revealing a special gift.

"Gifted" children have been defined as those "who by nature of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance". The term "outstanding abilities" refers to general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, leadership ability, ability in the visual or performing arts, creative thinking or athletic ability.

Most gifted children display a higher rate of concentration and memory capacity. There is no typical gifted child for particular talents and social environments give rise to varying personality patterns. Achievement patterns also vary. Differences among them are found, even when they are grouped together.

Statement of the problem

In the business world, many management studies attempt to find the traits and characteristics of the successful company leaders, as they

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believe that leaders can be nurtured and trained. Likewise, there are also qualities and characteristics that are frequently found among gifted children, although no single child will possess all of them. One way by which parents can tell if their children are gifted is to focus on a range of behaviours that occur in the daily conversations, activities and responses to learning opportunities. A list of characteristics common in gifted four- five- and six-years old includes abilities such as they express curiosity about many things, ask thoughtful questions, have extensive vocabularies and use complex sentence structure, are able to express themselves well, solve problems in unique ways, have good memory, exhibit unusual talent in art, music or creative dramatics, exhibit especially original imaginations, use previously learned things in new contexts, are unusually able to order things in logical sequence, discuss and elaborate on ideas, are fast learners, desire to work independently and take initiative, exhibit wit and humour, have sustained attention spans and are willing to persist on challenging tasks, are very observant, show talent in making and narrating stories and are interested in reading.

A gifted child might not show all the above mentioned characteristics but parents and professionals will generally see a pattern while observing over an extended period of time.

Many parents feel that there is little practical value to get their 'potential' gifted child tested. But there are potential risks with putting off the testing. Knowing the pattern of cognitive strengths and weaknesses can help parents to plan the best learning experience. Also, waiting till school tests, the child can risk a ceiling effect on the tests, one that gets more pronounced each and every year. Many gifted students often appear to be troublemakers and often challenge authority figures by questioning classroom rules. Presently all over the world, there have been different methods and programmes for a better selection and education of the gifted students based on the original educational situation of the country. Some countries are following high standards in their educational centers and this policy has led them to better utilisation of gifted students. This study will compare Iran and India according to their educational system for gifted students.

Significance of the study

The behaviour of a gifted child is sometimes confused with attention disorders such as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). Hence, the test would identify a gifted child from a possible learning disordered child such as ADHD, Asperger's

Syndrome and other problems as early as possible. Children who are gifted are more comfortable with children and classes that deal with them at their own level. Research has shown that gifted students thrive when placed with students of similar ability. In the wrong learning setting, giftedness can be as paralysing as a learning handicap. Unfortunately, these gifted children are terrible introverts, misunderstood by peers and parents, with their undiscovered exceptionality leading to a dead end. Bored and unchallenged at school, they may drop out and choose a direction that will never make use of their exceptional abilities.

Defining the most practical standard regarding the education for the gifted is very important and this will lead us to gain more profit from gifted students.

Aims of the study

To study the educational programmes for the gifted children in India; Singapore and Iran.

Literature review

Nowadays, identification and programming for gifted and talented (GT) students is not only a part of school and university curriculum in developed countries[4], but also is accounted as a model of progress for developing countries[5]. Although the best time for identification of gifted and talented students is at childhood[6], but

several investigators have developed methods for identification of GTs before entering colleges[7]. They have proposed special measures for those identified, for example, acceleration or compacting the usual curriculum content, training the managers and teachers of GTs about the concept and needs of GTs, and annual evaluation of these programmes[8]. Regarding GT education, schools play rual roles:

1. Conducting programmes to educate GTs from elementary to high school: examples are Colorado University training programme for students of elementary and middle schools (GTs go to some classes at the university on Saturday afternoons)[9] and Georgia University programme for high school GTs[10]. Such programmes are also found in other countries such as UK[11].

2. Designing and conducting programmes for their own GT students. Examples are Johns Hopkins University programme (provision of financial aids, accelerated programmes and Early Entrance Programme for GTs)[12] and Brazil universities programmes. Here is a brief of the educational programme faced by Indian and Iranian gifted children have been given.

India

India is the second most populous country in the world with a population of 1.08 billion. The UN predicts that by

2025 India will surpass China as the most populous nation. Life expectancy in india is 64 years. The country is divided into 28 States and seven Union Territories, each with their own elected or appointed governments.

About 70% of Indians live in rural areas, which are often very remote; 64.8% of adults are literate, (75.3% are males, and 53.7% are females). Kerala is the only state that is completely literate. Officially, 23 languages are recognised by the constitution but over 840 dialects are spoken. Hindi and English are the official languages used by the central government.[13]

There are approximately 888,000 educational institutions in India enrolling around 189.2 million students.[13]

In its commitment to raise the quality of education, the central government has been steadily increasing the education budget since Independence in 1947. The goal is to allocate to it atleast 6% of GDP (currently approximately 4% of GDP makes up the education budget). From this budget, 86% goes to support higher education - India's world class management and IT institutes. As a result India produces an elite number of highly educated graduates, but at the same time it is struggling to meet basic educational goals including universal elementary education, the total eradication of illiteracy and improving access and the quality of education in rural areas.

In accordance with the National Policy of Education (1986), the central government envisaged a scheme in which intellectually gifted and talented rural students would be provided with quality residential education free of cost. The government decided to invest on gifted children because they are viewed as crucial to the social and economic development of India. One anticipated outcome of this scheme is that students will return to their rural villages in the future as professionals and thereby help to raise the overall standard of living in their communities. The scheme was started in 1986 with the opening of the first two Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) schools. This has grown to 515 schools at present serving 158,897 gifted and talented students. The goal is to have atleast one JNV in each district of India.[14] According to the last results in 1986, Indian monitory students were estimated 35,000 in more than 9000 schools. Also in 1994, there were 12,00,000 gifted students in 340 "Brilliant Talents" schools. Only 12% of such students have included in public schools educational service.

JNV schools are coeducational residential schools for students aged 11-17. Education is free for all enrolled

students which include residential care, uniform, textbooks, medical care and travel fares to go home. Many of the students come from uneducated and illiterate families, a trend which has never before occurred in Indian education. Admission of the 80 new students to each school each year is made on the basis of a selection test administered by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). It aims to be an objective, class-neutral test designed to ensure fairness regardless of prior educational attainment and is offered in 20 languages. It includes three sections covering mental ability, arithmetic and language, consisting of a total of 100 multiple choice questions. Admission is extremely competitive, the national acceptance rate being roughly 4%.[15]

The JNV head office in New Delhi provided the following list of key objectives of the JNVs:[16]

- **Quality education:** to provide a quality education including a strong component of culture, societal values, awareness of the environment and extracurricular activities to intellectually talented students from predominantly rural areas;
- **Language skills:** to ensure that all students attain a reasonable level of competency in three languages (i.e. Hindi, English and one regional language);

- **National integration:** to promote national integration through the migration programme, a one year exchange programme in which students from Hindi speaking districts attend a JNV in a Non-Hindi speaking district and vice-versa;
- **Social responsibility:** to improve the quality of education in all schools in each district by sharing JNV facilities, programmes and expertise.

All JNV schools follow the standard national CBSE curriculum which includes atleast two languages, general studies, work experience, physical and health education and three of the following: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, biotechnology, economics, political science, history, geography, business studies, accountancy, fine arts, agriculture, computer science, multimedia and web technology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, physical education, music and dance, entrepreneurship or fashion studies. The curriculum is not accelerated, but students are provided with enrichment opportunities. These are:[17]

- **Three languages:** Students have been educated in their mother tongue/regional language in their village school and at secondary

level at a JNV school they are instructed in English for maths and science, and in Hindi for social studies. As a result, students are fluent in atleast three languages

- **Computer education:** Each JNV school has a computer lab to which all students have access and all students take computer classes. In addition there is atleast one JNV 'Smart School' in each state with additional IT resources and expertise including teacher training for the staff of other schools

- **Extracurricular activities:** Sports plays an important role in schools. Each morning consists of an hour of yoga and a wide range of other sports are offered. The JNV head office organises regional and national sports meetings which also provide an extended community for JNV students. An 'Art in Education' programme is also offered which is led by invited guests and other extracurricular activities include Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, debating clubs, traditional dance, speech and song competitions and a youth parliament.

All students appear for exams at the end of Class X (age 15) and Class XII (age 17), which are extremely rigorous and competitive and they have been criticised for promoting rote-learning in Indian schools. JNV students have successively scored much higher than the national average obtained by other students in these exams.[13]

Teaching staff at JNV schools stay on the campus with the students which facilitates a close-knit relationship. Incentives are provided to encourage good applicants to apply for the teaching posts, such as rent free housing at the school and the enrolment of two sons/daughters without having them appear the entrance test. The JNV head office organises extensive teacher training for the workshops to and upgrade skills and identify the needs of teacher. They are also offered extensive computer training in collaboration with IT organisations.[13]

JNV schools also provide educational opportunities to students attending local schools in the district as the goal is to raise the overall quality of education by extending JNV services and facilities to local teachers and students. For example, JNV 'Smart Schools' are part of a computer literacy programme that have been given the responsibility of providing computer training to students at 10 local schools. Till date, over 9000 rural students have benefited from this programme. JNV schools also support their local communities by providing free access to their libraries, by allowing local

teachers to participate in the workshops and seminars organised by JNVs, and also by providing health and hygiene services to local residents. JNV students are also encouraged to use their strengths and skills to contribute to their local communities. The teaching staff expressed the view that these students were part of a unique community that would open the door to many future possibilities. They encouraged the students to recognise this opportunity and search for ways in which they could help these less fortunate. A key feature of the model of gifted and talented education in India is that it is a holistic one, uniting academic development with character formation and the development of social responsibility, and viewing the individual as first and foremost a part of society. However, this should not be divorced from the contextual issues of Indian society and the views presented by government officials, teachers and students alike that education was crucial to social and economic change. Schools dedicated to the education of gifted and talented students are seen not only as a means of educating an elite group of gifted individuals who will go on to improve the quality of life in their communities, but centres of excellence from which the local community can draw on in a wide variety of ways.[13]

SINGAPORE

Gifted Education Programme (Singapore)[17]

The Gifted Education Programme (GEP) is a Singaporean academic programme designed for the gifted1 % of pupils. The Gifted Education Programme was first implemented in Singapore in 1984. It was initiated by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in line with its policy under the New Education System to allow each pupil to learn at his/her own pace. The MoE has a committment to ensure that the potential of each pupil is recognised, nurtured and developed. It was recognised that there are pupils who are intellectually gifted and that there should be provisions to meet their needs. It actually began with two primary centers and two secondary centers, but now it has expanded nine primary centers (as at October 2004).

As of 2007, nine primary schools and two secondary schools offer GEP.

In 2004, with the first five secondary schools implementing their own Integrated Programmes with their affiliated Junior Colleges, they are officially no longer under the GEP. However, they still have their own programmes within their respective Integrated Programmes to cater to these gifted students, who still retain their "gifted" status. Despite all the changes, there have not been any major changes to the programme, and this is basically just a change of name.

However, the Integrated Programme proved so popular that in 2004, the

remaining schools officially in the programme (Dunman High School and Victoria School) saw a drastic decrease in enrolment.

As of 2005, four of the secondary schools officially offer only the Integrated Programme (Hwa Chong Institution, Raffles Institution, Raffles Girls' School (Secondary), Nanyang Girls' High School.

Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) and Dunman High School are exceptions: it offers both the GEP and IP to its students. There are also two GE-IP classes in the school who are offered both the programmes of GEP and IP.

From 2008 year-end, the MoE will phase out the secondary GEP due to the impact of the IP. However, GEP pupils who do not wish to take up the Integrated Programme after 2008 can enroll in schools with school based special programmes at Secondary.

The mission statement of the Gifted Education Programme is to provide leadership in the education of the intellectually gifted. The programme is committed to nurture gifted individuals to their full potential for the fulfillment of self and the betterment of society. Their vision is to make the Gifted Education Programme a model of excellence in the education of the intellectually gifted. They will achieve

this vision by providing professional expertise and exemplary resources to develop intellectual rigor, humane values and creativity in gifted youths to prepare them for responsible leadership and service to country and society.

At Primary three students, at the age of nine, can choose to take 2 rounds of tests, the first round being the Screening Test, and the second round being the Selection Test. The 2 GEP tests allows the top 1 % pupils to enter GEP.

During the Screening Test, English and Mathematics are tested. After the Screening Test, a certain number of pupils are eliminated. The remaining will go through the Selection Test.

During the Selection Test, English, Mathematics and IQ are tested. Those who get through the second round are identified as the top 1 % pupils. Before 2003, there was a third round of testing to allow entry for pupils who missed the chance in P3, after the PSLE. This last round of testing was offered to students who achieved 3 or more A *s for the examination. Students who got in at this round were referred to as being Supplementary Intake students. However, this practice was discontinued as of 2003 statistics showed that it was too difficult for the Supplementary Intake students to catch up and excel in the Programme.

The pupils studied in this programme from Primary (4 to 6) and

after that, the pupils can choose to continue studying in the programme only, in the Integrated Programme, or in the mainstream. Some parents and pupils have argued that the stress in the programme is too much.

Schools in the programme set separate (sometimes jointly set with other GEP schools) test papers and generally hold more enrichment activities for the students in the programme.

In GEP, pupils in Primary 4 (P4) attend a programme which includes content like Chinese poetry, comics, riddles etc. The programme is called Chinese Language Appreciation (CLA) and is to be attended once a week. Individualised Research Study (IRS) is compulsory for pupils in Primary 4 or 5, wherein pupils do research on a specific topic. At the end of P4, the teachers would select approximately half the pupils to do the Innovation Programme (IvP), where pupils invent items to solve real life problems. Other pupils will have the option to do the Future Problem Solving (FPS), or continue staying in IRS.

Pupils in the GEP have to take Social Studies as a graded subject. They will study textbook based content in depth. Overall, lessons in the GEP are conducted with fewer textbooks and workbooks; lessons are mostly discussion worksheet and project based.

Pupils in GEP learn poetry and literature (Charlotte's Web in Primary 4, A Wrinkle in Time in Primary 5, and Friedrich in Primary 6) as part of the Concept Unit under the English Language subject. Charlotte's Web will be tested under the Miscellaneous section during the end-of-year-examination for P4. A project on A Wrinkle in Time and a Reading Journal will have to be completed in Term 4 at P5. These books replace the English textbook.

The GEP and its students have been criticised by many. The programme being labelled as elitist and the students as arrogant nerds. The issue of the GEP has been raised many times in Singapore, both online in blogs and in the mainstream media. GEP students are sometimes prejudiced against and insulted by others and portrayed as nerds who spend large amounts of time studying and have no interests in sports or other non-academic activities. While this perception may ring true for some GEP individuals, as a blanket stereotype of all GEP students it does not hold true as there have been and still are GEP students who have been good in sports and have taken part in numerous sports competitions, both at Inter School and National levels. The GEP is often criticised to be elitist, as highlighted by the Wee Shu Min elitism scandal, in which the 18 year old

Raffles Junior College and GEP alumnus student caused public outcry in november 2006 for making insensitive and judgemental remarks against others. There was a similar controversy a year before, whereby a Primary Six GEP student wrote a letter to Today openly declaring that Non-GEP students (referred to as "mainstreamers") were immature, and that she preferred to mix with "(similar) people like us[18]".

In an article in The Straits Times on 3 November 2007, the MoE announced its new scheme to "encourage" greater integration between GEP and mainstream students, to combat elitism and encourage socialisation. GEP students in the nine primary GEP centers would spend up to 50% of their lesson time with the top 2% to 5% of the cohort, or the top mainstream students. They would do activities such as building structures with plastic blocks. The announcement of the integration provoked much buzz on the blogsphere. While some felt that this might alleviate some of the stereotypes, prejudices and relieve the generally bad press that GEP students and the GEP had got over the past few years. Others raised objections such as the fact that the only mainstream pupils affected were the top students, which in their view did not eradicate elitism.

Gifted and talented education in Iran

In I.R. of Iran, development of rules and regulations is done by the Islamic Parliament, Higher Council of Education and the Cabinet.[19]

According to the article 30 of the IRI Constitution the government is obliged to provide all citizens with free education up to the end of secondary school and must expand free higher education to the extent required by the country for attaining self-sufficiency.

Compulsory schooling is for five years, at present, which covers 6 to 10 years old children. According to the Third Five Year Development Plan, it will cover 6 to 13 years old children which will improve compulsory schooling to 8 years.[19]

In order to improve the quality of education, the assessment system which is one of the effective factors in teaching-learning process has been revised. There are many reasons why this reform was made, some of which are outlined as: the previous system was based on traditional, non scientific and ineffective methods. The actual usage of the finding in the real life was neglected and there was overemphasis on a great deal of knowledge. In the reform process some objectives like, matching the assessment methods with scientific findings, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of school teachings and students, active

participation in teaching-learning process were taken into consideration.[20] The I.R. of Iran has been trying hard, during the recent years, to increase the enrolment rate, in other words, to increase schooling chances for various groups of people regardless of their gender, age, tribal and ethnic diversities. In this regard the priority has been focused on the education of school age (6-10 year old) children. It has taken efficient measures and practical strategies in the framework of the country's second development plan to achieve this main objective. According to the CIA World Factbook, from information collected in 2003, 85.6% of males and 73% of females over the age of 15 are literate. Thus 79.4% of the population is literate.

Literacy training has been a prime concern in Iran. For the year 2000, adult illiteracy rates were estimated at 23.1% (males, 16.3%; females, 30.0%). A literacy corps was established in 1963 to send educated conscripts to villages. During its first 10 years, the corps helped 2.2 million urban children and 600,000 adults become literate. In 1997, there were 9,238,393 pupils enrolled in 63,101 primary schools, with 298,755 teachers. The student-to-teacher ratio stood at 31 to 1. In that same year, secondary schools had 8,776,792 students and 280,309 teachers. The pupil-teacher ratio at the primary level was 26 to 1 in 1999. In the same year, 83% of primary school children were enrolled in the school. As of 1999, public expenditure on education was estimated at 4.6% of GDP.

The National Organisation for Development of Exceptional Talents (NODET), also known as SAMPAD, maintains Middle and High Schools in Iran. These schools were shut down for a few years after the revolution, but later reopened. Admittance is based on an entrance examination and is very competitive, especially in Tehran (school names: Allameh helli for boys and farzanegan for girls. Their tuition is similar to private schools, but may be partially or fully waived off depending on the students financial condition. Some NODET alumni are world leading scientists.[20]

Gifted Students' education in Iran is under supervision of Iranian Ministry of Education and this ministry manages and controls all Gifted students'centers all over the country.

A central headquarter is located in Tehran and approves all disciplinary terms and conditions for these schools in nearly 500 towns and cities in the country. Teachers and principals are selected and admitted through the yearly evaluation and assessment programme and a close investigation is held on their

yearly activities. These teachers are paid a considerable salary. Most of them have dedicated themselves to serve gifted students of their city. Most of the teachers in gifted high school system are of post graduate level.

At present time, there are 60 educational centres in 29 cities around the country including more than 15000 gifted students.

For admission in these schools a yearly examination is held all over the country for elementary and secondary levels and students who passed such exam are eligible for enrolling in the schools. The entrance rule for these students is the basic number of 19 from 20 in their total marks. But this does not guarantee their enrolment for all three years in each elementary level stage. Each student is closely monitored and evaluated by his/her teacher and all his/her activities are monitored in the system. If any weakness or failure is noted, students are referred to psychological__consultants and monitored for their mental and emotional condition and It is tried to find out the predisposing or causing factors. It is possible that a student may be expelled from the school because of law adaptation ability .

All schools of gifted and talented students in Iran are supported completely by Iranian Ministry of Education and there is a special budget for these educational centers. Educational material and curriculum are much different from ordinary education in the country and gifted students are supposed to pass many practical and theoretical examination in school.

At the end of each year more than 90% of Iranian talented students are enrolled in high level public universities and continue their study under the supervision of Talented Students System there.[20]

Conclusion

As it is evident from the above detail, Asian countries such as Iran and India are trying their best for achieving higher standard for the gifted children in their educational system. The strategy is being managed by both the countries educational administration, although some private sectors are active in Iran in this field. But it is noteworthy that many Iranian gifted students may be under diagnosed in this system because of only one method of general testing in the country. Since there are many high level students in Iranian regular schools, a perfect system is needed for better diagnosis and selection of the gifted in the country.

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6

Teachers' Perceptions towards National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme)

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Abstract

This study was conducted in Government Primary Schools of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh to find out preceptions of primary school teachers about the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme). A sample of 70 teachers, which included both males and females, were selected using purposive sampling technique. In the present study teachers' preceptions were studied by using a questionnaire. Along with this various problems related to implementation of this scheme were identified and suggestions were provided for making the scheme more effective. This study will be very helpful to the politicians, bureaucrats, researches, teachers and all others who are concerned with the mission to develop elementary education and reach the goal of UEE in India.

INTRODUCTION

Neither a child that is hungry, nor a child that is ill can be expected to learn. Due to problems of malnutrition on UEE, a centrally sponsored scheme National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Commonly known as Mid-Day Meal Scheme) was launched on 15th August 1995 with two fold objectives;

(i) To enchance the nutritional status of school age children and

(ii) Hasten the march of UEE by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance

The programme originally covered children of primary stage (I-V Class) in government, local body and government-aided schools, and was extended in October, 2002, to cover children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres also. As on October, 2004 serving of cooked meal could not be

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universalised in six States and in many of the remaining States, quality of the meal served to the children was not satisfactory. The scheme was revised firstly in September, 2004 to provide cooked meal with 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein and secondly the scheme was revised with effect from June, 2006 to provide meal with 450 calories and 12 grams of protein.

Government of India vide its D.O. No. 9-1/2008-EE-2(MDM) of dated 14.01.2008 allowed the extension of Mid-Day Meal Scheme to Upper primary Stage (Classes VI-VIII) across the country from the year 2008.

In the state of Himachal Pradesh uncooked food grains (Rice) @ 3kg per month per student, were provided to the children of classes (I-V), with 80% or more attendance for 10 academic months in all the Govt./Government aided Primary schools of entire State, till May, 2003. Thereafter, in view of the orders of Honorable Supreme Court of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh decided to provide a supplementary meal which is protein rich, nutritionally balanced with appropriate micro-nutrients. Currently the scheme is in progress covering the primary and upper primary schools (Government/Government Aided) throughout the State.

Objectives

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study teachers' perceptions towards National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme).

2. To identify various problems related to National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme).

3. To provide suggestions for making the scheme more effective.

National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme)

It is revised Central Government scheme to provide cooked nutritive meal to every student studying from class (I-V) in every Government and Government assisted primary schools having a minimum content of 450 calories and 12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days in recess or half time.

Methodology

In the present study survey technique under descriptive method of research was used.

Sampling

A sample of 70 Government primary school teachers both males and females was selected by using purposive sampling procedures.

Tool

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher for the purpose of obtaining responses from the teachers. This questionnaire consisted of three parts in which Part-I is introductory, Parts-II consisted of closed type 26 items concerning all the important aspect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme and

Parts-III consisted of open ended questions in which teachers were allowed to write down freely the problems related to implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme and also the suggestions for its improvements and making the scheme more effective.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The data collected through questionnaire were analysed. Here percentage was used for the interpretation of data.

Conclusions

The major findings of the present study corresponding to its objectives are given below:

1. Major Findings of the Study based on Teachers' Perceptions

♦ Most of the primary school teachers (87.14%) were of the opinion that mid-day meal which is provided to the students in their schools in nutritious and balanced diet. And it can protect the children from malnutrition and other diseases caused by malnutrition.

♦ The perceptions of 70% teachers were that the mid-day meal scheme is helping to achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education.

♦ 58.57% primary school teachers were satisfied with quality of meal provided in their schools.

♦ There is very little increase in the enrolment of students in Government primary schools of Himachal Pradesh after the introduction of mid-day meal scheme as per the responses of 92.85% teachers.

♦ The perception of 40% teachers were that attendance of students has increased very much due to this scheme, but 31.42% teachers were hold the views that there is little increase in attendance and 28.57% teachers noticed no boost in attendance due to Mid-Day Meal Scheme.

♦ On the question regarding improvement of learning level of students especially belonging to disadvantaged section and society only 47.14% teachers were in favour of this statement.

♦ Majority of teachers 91.43% and 97.14% responded that the scheme is devloping hygienic values in the children and there is no discrimination with any child respectively.

♦ The views of 85.71% teachers were that Mid-Day Meal Scheme is able to eradicate discrimination based on caste and other factors.

♦ Still 60% teachers considered the previous scheme of providing uncooked food grains as better scheme as compared to hot cooked meal.

♦ The perceptions of 71.43% teachers were that this scheme wastes the teaching-learning time of teachers and students.

♦ Majority of teachers 91.42% and 94.28% responded that the meal is liked by the students and meal is prepared with all possible precaution and cleanliness respectively.

♦ Average quality of raw material of provided by Food Corporation of India (FCI) as per the perception of 68.57% teachers.

♦ The perceptions of 77.14% teachers were that there is no help on the part of local people regarding the implementation of this scheme.

2. Problems Related to Mid-Day Meal Scheme

Part-III of the questionnaire was concerned with problems related to implementation of the scheme. The major problems in schools in relation to this scheme are:

♦ Mid-Day Meal Scheme wastes the time of teachers. Teachers' time is consumed in maintaining records of Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Thus they do not give proper time for the teaching-learning process.

♦ There is no separate kitchen-cum-store and due to this many porblems are faced by the teachers.

♦ Lack of adequate number of teaching staff in the primary schools creates various problems.

♦ Most of the teachers are not in favour of implementation of this scheme.

♦ The honorarium for helpers and cooks is very less and it is difficult to find suitable person for the job within this amount.

♦ There is always a fear in the mind of teachers about theft of food articles and cooking devices from the schools.

♦ There is very less time left for students to play games and other physical activities.

♦ The teachers are over burdened due to Mid-Day Meal Scheme.

♦ In most of the schools it is reported by teachers that the time table of the school get disturbed due to this scheme.

3. Suggestions for Making the Scheme More Effective

There are some suggestions provided by the teachers to make this scheme more effective in Government primary schools of Himachal Pradesh:

♦ Maximum teachers suggested that proper arrangement must be there before launching any scheme.

♦ There must be some incentive in the form of some extra amount with salary for the teachers who are dealing with the management of mid-day meal in school.

♦ Separate provision of kitchen-cum-store should be made available to all schools.

- There should be the provision of local available fresh fruits in place of meal for twice or thrice a week.

- Teachers must be free from the responisbility of implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme as soon as possible and the scheme should be handed over to any private local agency because no scheme should be implemented at the cost of teaching time of the teachers.

- The participation of local community in context to this scheme should be encouraged.

- Adequate number of teaching staff must be there in all Government primary schools, only then this scheme and other schemes like SSA can be implemented effectively.

Multi-Dimensional Activity Based Integrated Approach : An Innovative Teaching-Learning Strategy at the School Stage

B.N. Panda*
Tapan Kumar Basantia**

Abstract

Teaching-learning aims at bringing holistic and maximal development of students. To achieve this holistic and maximal development, a number of subjects are taught in our schools under different curricular and cocurricular heads, and different teaching-learning strategies are used for teaching the same subject. It is a fact that the nature of one subject is different from nature of other subjects, nature of one topic under same subject is different from nature of other topics, and the nature of one learning paragraph/unit under same topic is different from nature of other learning paragraphs/units. Hence, our teaching–learning strategy needs to be changed in accordance with the change in subjects, change in topics and change in learning paragraphs/units. Also, our teaching-learning strategy needs to be changed in accordance with the change in situation/endeavour, change in time, change in learners' needs, change in demands of the society and change in philosophy of the country. In this article a new and innovative teaching–learning strategy, i.e. multi dimensional, activity based, integrated approach is discussed. This approach is learner–friendly, flexible, innovative and eclectic in nature and it may have wide implications for achieving the broad based objectives in different areas of teaching–learning with respect of attaining multisided devoplement among the learners.

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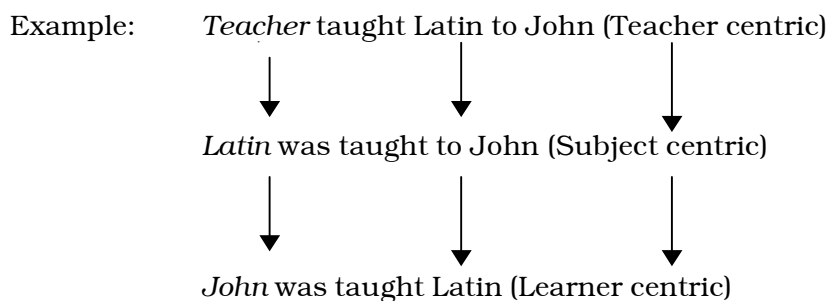** Reader, Regional Institute of Education, NCERT Bhubaneshwar, Orissa.

INTRODUCTION

Securing excellence in learners' achievement has been the characteristic of present day school education. Hundreds and thousands of teaching-learning strategies are used in our schools for teaching different subjects to our students in this regard. But not a single teaching-learning strategy is perfect in itself. It is also a fact that not a single strategy can serve all the purposes of teaching-learning; and each strategy has its own strengths and limitations. However, continuous efforts are being made by educationists, psychologists, researchers and experts in the field of education, teachers as well as many other persons involved in teaching-learning process since long ago till today to make our teaching-learning strategies more goal oriented, purposive, participative, achievable and learner centric. The following example may clarify how our teaching-learning strategies shift their focus chronologically from teacher centric approach to learner centric approach through the media of subject centric approach.

Present day learner centric approach or strategy of teaching-learning is based on the hypothetical rationale that "If I can't learn the way you teach, why don't you teach the way I can learn." Now in different corners of the country and in the world as well, efforts are being made to evolve/innovate/develop different types of learner centric curriculum and teaching-learning strategies which would fit for the maximal developments of the learners. The following paragraphs describe about an innovative and new learner centric approach of teaching-learning i.e. Multi-dimensional, activity based integrated approach, which has the relevance for the present day school education.

WHAT IS MULTI-DIMENSIONAL, ACTIVITY BASED, INTEGRATED APPROACH

Teaching-learning imparted to the students through different activities can secure maximal participation from them.Teaching-learning basedon different multi-sensory activities can also achieve its objective in a great way. Because, it is the innate tendency of the

Example: *Teacher* taught Latin to John (Teacher centric)

Latin was taught to John (Subject centric)

John was taught Latin (Learner centric)

child to like play, fun, enjoyment etc; and the teaching learning imparted through multi-sensory activities, provide a lot of scope to the children for playing, enjoying, making fun, problem solving etc.

Activities are of different types. Those can be quiz, song, puzzle, drama, model preparation, chart preparation, role playing, narrating and speaking, drawing the pictures, observation and reporting, creative use of materials, debates, discussions, story forming and story telling, creative writing, cross words, comments, music etc. There are thousands and thousands of activities used in our teaching-learning process for the betterment of our teaching and learning. Such activities categorised on the following broad heads on the basis of the nature of the tasks:

Head related activities or Head dimension

Head related activities are those activities in which the mental functioning is needed in a greater scale. The Example of some of the head related activities are-puzzle, quiz, debate, telling stories, forming stories etc.

Heart related activities or Heart dimension

Heart related activities are those activities which are concerned more with emotional /feeling aspects of the learners. Some of the heart related activities are – song, drama, recitation, drill, dance and music related activities etc.

Hand related activities or Hard dimension

Hand related activities are those activities which require more functioning of the motor parts or physical parts of the body. The examples of some of the hand related activities are – craft, drama, model preparation, poster writing, art and drawing, role playing, sports and games etc.

'Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach' is a new, innovative and flexible strategy of teaching-learning. This strategy is eclectic in nature. This strategy uses the activity/ activities in teaching-learning of the topic(s) in accordance with demand(s) of the situation. This "Multi-dimensional activity-based integrated approach" may be defined in the following way –

"Multi-dimensional activity-based integrated approach is a teaching-learning strategy which allows the learners to practice a single activity or a group of activities simultaneously coming from one dimension of activities or from more than one dimension of activities (the dimensions of activities are, head related dimension, heart related dimension etc.) for the better learning of a particular topic/ group of topics."

NEED OF MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITY BASED INTEGRATED APPROACH

It is a fact that, the nature of one subject is different from the nature of another subject, the nature of one unit under

the same subject is different from other units, the nature of one topic under the same unit is different from other topics, and the nature of one learning paragraph/unit under the same topic is different from other learning paragraphs/ units. It is also a fact that, the nature of learning materials and objectives of teaching- learning change from situation to situation, time to time, and place to place in accordance with the demand of the society, philosophy of the country, local needs of the learners and the facilities available to it. In the process of teaching-learning, a student has to achieve a number of competencies in different curricular areas in accordance with his/her changing needs for his/her all round development. But, no particular or specific strategy/ activity/approach is appropriate for helping a student to achieve all the objectives of teaching-learning. Rather, it would be better if an eclectic/flexible approach would be followed in the process of teaching-learning. This eclectic/ flexible approach of teaching-learning needs to be changed according to the change in time, place, demand of the situation and the like. Considering all these points of discussion, one can admit the importance of this new, flexible and eclectic approach of teaching-learning i.e. 'Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach.'

NATURE OF MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITY BASED INTEGRATED APPROACH

The following are the some of the important features and characteristics of Multi-dimensional activity-based integrated approach of teaching-learning.

- This approach makes the learning very effective by following principles of learning by doing, in joyful manner.

- This approach is primarily learner-centred, easier, enjoyable, joyful and interesting.

- In this approach, the activities of teaching-learning change from topic to topic and subject to subject according to the nature of the topics, facilities available for teaching, needs of the learners, nature of the content materials available, demand of the situation and so on.

- This approach requires the active participation on the part of the children in teaching-learning process.

- This approach strengthens the relationship between past experiences of the child and her/his present learning.

- This approach provides better scope for applying the knowledge and skill of the learners in a meaningful way.

- This approach includes all types of skills including physical skills, mental skills and emotional skills.

- In this approach of learning, the teacher acts as a friend, facilitator and guide of the learning process.

- This approach of teaching-learning is more learning centered approach than the teaching centered approach.

- Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach creates a caring classroom by developing the following values/ qualities on the part of the learner/learning process.

- developing a sharing atmosphere in the teaching-learning process among the learner.

- creating awareness among the learners towards learning.

- developing a sense of self-respect and self-responsibility among the learners.

- developing a sense of faith among learners towards learning.

- making the learning process purposeful and goal oriented.

APPLICABILITY OF MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITY BASED INTEGRATED APPROACH

The applicability and usefull areas of multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach is very vast. Irrespective of levels of teaching-learning, areas of teaching-learning and the objectives of teaching-learning, this approach can be used as per the demands of the situations. The following are the major applicability areas of multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach.

Different stages of school education

Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach can be used in any stage of school education starting from pre-primary to higher secondary stage. But, the nature of activities would differ according to the stage of school education. For example, at the primary and pre-primary stage those types of activities would be used which are more easier, interesting and enjoyable whereas at the secondary and higher secondary stage, the nature of activities would be some what difficult, Thought-provoking and problem related. At the lower class level, more hand/motor related activities need to be used, whereas at the higher class level more head/mind related activities need to be used. The most preferable activities for the primary and upper primary level may be drama, sports and games, role playing, song, dance, etc. and for secondary and higher secondary level may be puzzle, quiz, debate, discussion, forming the stories, logical contradiction etc. An example in this regard is given as activity for the geography lesson class VI.

Different areas of school education

Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach can be used for teaching almost all the subjects both in curricular as well as co-curricular

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ACTIVITY

Stage of Education - Elementary level (Class - VI)

Subject/Area - Social Studies (Geography)

Sub area - Identifying important rivers and river routes of India

Broad objectives - Cognitive development

Materials required - Outline map of India, colour pencil etc.

Strategy - Drawing activity (showing the rivers and river routes in the outline map of India) followed by peer to peer learning

Mode - Individualised

ACTIVITY FOLLOWED

The students were given the outline maps of India. In those outline maps, they were instructed to show the important rivers and river routes of India. The students had used colour pencil/sketch pens etc for showing the rivers and river routes. This drawing activity was followed by peer-to-peer discussion, peer to peer learning correction of the drawings etc. In the out-line maps of India, the students were instructed to show the following rivers and river routes.

1. Indus
2. Ganga
3. Mahanadi
4. Godavari
5. Krishna
6. Kaveri
7. Narmada
8. Tapti

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areas of school education. In the curricular areas, this strategy can be used for teaching the subjects like general sciences, social studies, mathematics, language, literature etc. and in cocurricular area, this strategy can be used for teaching the different subjects like art and craft, health and hygiene, work experience etc. But the nature of activities would change from subject to subject. For example for teaching of history, the activities relating to story telling, dramatisation, role playing, art and drawing etc. are preferable; for teaching of mathematics the activities relating to cross words, projects, puzzles, induction and deduction etc. are preferable; for teaching of language and literature, the activities relating to dance and music, song, dialogue and discussion, creative drama etc. are preferable; for teaching art and craft, the activities relating to stitching work, picture,

preparation of materials, oral and performance work etc. are preferable; and for teaching about health and hygiene, the activities relating to cutting, pasting and arranging materials in order to display in the class, role playing, art and drawing, model preparation, poster preparation etc. are preferable. An example in this regard is given as activity for civics lesson.
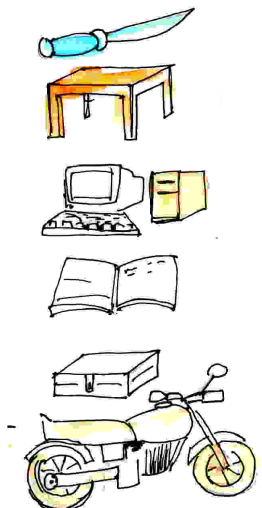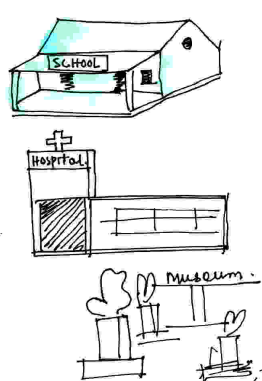
Different objectives of teaching-learning in schools

Teaching-learning process in the school aims at achieving different objectives i.e. developing cognitive abilities of the learners, developing

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ACTIVITY

Areas of School Education - Social Studies (Civics)
Sub-Area - Differentiating between personal property and public property
Broad objective - Cognitive development
Materials required- Some pictures relating to personal and public property
Strategy - Placing pictures in appropriate places
Mode - Individualised

ACTIVITY FOLLOWED

Some pictures of different things/articles/places belonging to personal property and belonging to public property were given to the students. The students were instructed to categorise such pictures on the basis of personal property and public property; and keep them separately in the two columns given below.

Personal Property   **Public Property**

....
....

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creative abilities of the learners, achieving the non-cognitive abilities of the learners etc. Multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach can be used for achieving these objectives. But, at the same time, it is most important point to remember that, on the basis of objectives of teaching-learning, the activity or activities would be chosen by the user and such activity/activities would be implemented accordingly.

For example, for the development of cognitive ability among the learners, only such activity or activities would be chosen and implemented by the user, which would facilitate cognitive development. Some of the activities relating to cognitive ability are dialogue/discussion, developing comments, riddle/quiz, writing one word answer, discover/problem solving model, cross word, puzzles, recognising the symbols, words, sentences etc.

For the development of creative ability among the learners, only such activities would be chosen and implemented by the user which would facilitate the creative thinking ability. Some of the creativity related activities are objectives of brain storming, complete the incomplete with open ended scenario, listing the names and attributes, finding out as much as similarities and dissimilarities, drawing broad conclusions, logical contradictions, writing conclusions, synetics, finding gaps etc.

For the development of non-cognitive abilities, the user would choose such activities which would develop/ facilitate abilities relating to non-cognitive area(s). Some of the activities which can facilitate non-cognitive abilities are games, exhibition, oral and performance activities, performing drill, preparation of learning materials, dance and music activities, craft work, stitching work, preparing model and chart, art, drawing and painting activities, poster preparation etc. The user must remember that, one can't divide the different objectives of teaching-learning i.e. development of cognitive ability, development of creative ability, development of non-cognitive ability etc. like water tight compartments. In the similar fashion, one can't categorise the different activities under different heads also just like water tight compartments. This categorisation needs to be flexible and changeable. This categorisation should be based on the point of emphasis of the objectives/ purposes. For example, when an activity is much related to cognitive aspect, then one can say, that activity is cognitive related activity. Similarly, when an activity is much related to the creativity area, then, one can say it is creativity related activity. The activities which are related much with non-

cognitive area, one can say such activities are non-cognitive ability related activities. An example in this regard is given below -

Objective of Teaching-Learning in School - Creativity Development

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Subject - Social Studies
Sub-Area - City area/urban area and rural area/village area - a comparison
Materials required - Two pictures (one related with city / urban area and the other is related with rural / village area)
Strategy - Brain storming
Mode - Individualised
ACTIVITY FOLLOWED
The teacher showed two pictures to the students. One concerned with characteristics relating to urban / city area and the other concerned with the characteristics related to rural / village area. By showing these two pictures, the teacher asked so many divergent thinking questions to the students. The students wrote the answers in the answer sheets. After the answers were written by the students, the teacher told each student to read the answers question wise. The teacher compared the answers given by all the students question wise and provided many valuable suggestions with regard to such questions, which would ultimately lead to the divergent thinking of the students. Such questions are given below :-
A. What are the differences you find between rural area and urban area (write as many as differences) ?
B. Why the density of population in cities is more than rural area (write as many as causes you can guess) ?
C. More population in cities creates a lot of problems, what are those problems (write as many as problems that you can find out) ?
D. Why life in cities is more faster than the life in rural areas (write as many as causes for it) ?
E. What are the problems that rural people face (suggest as many as problems) ?

WHAT ARE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITIES

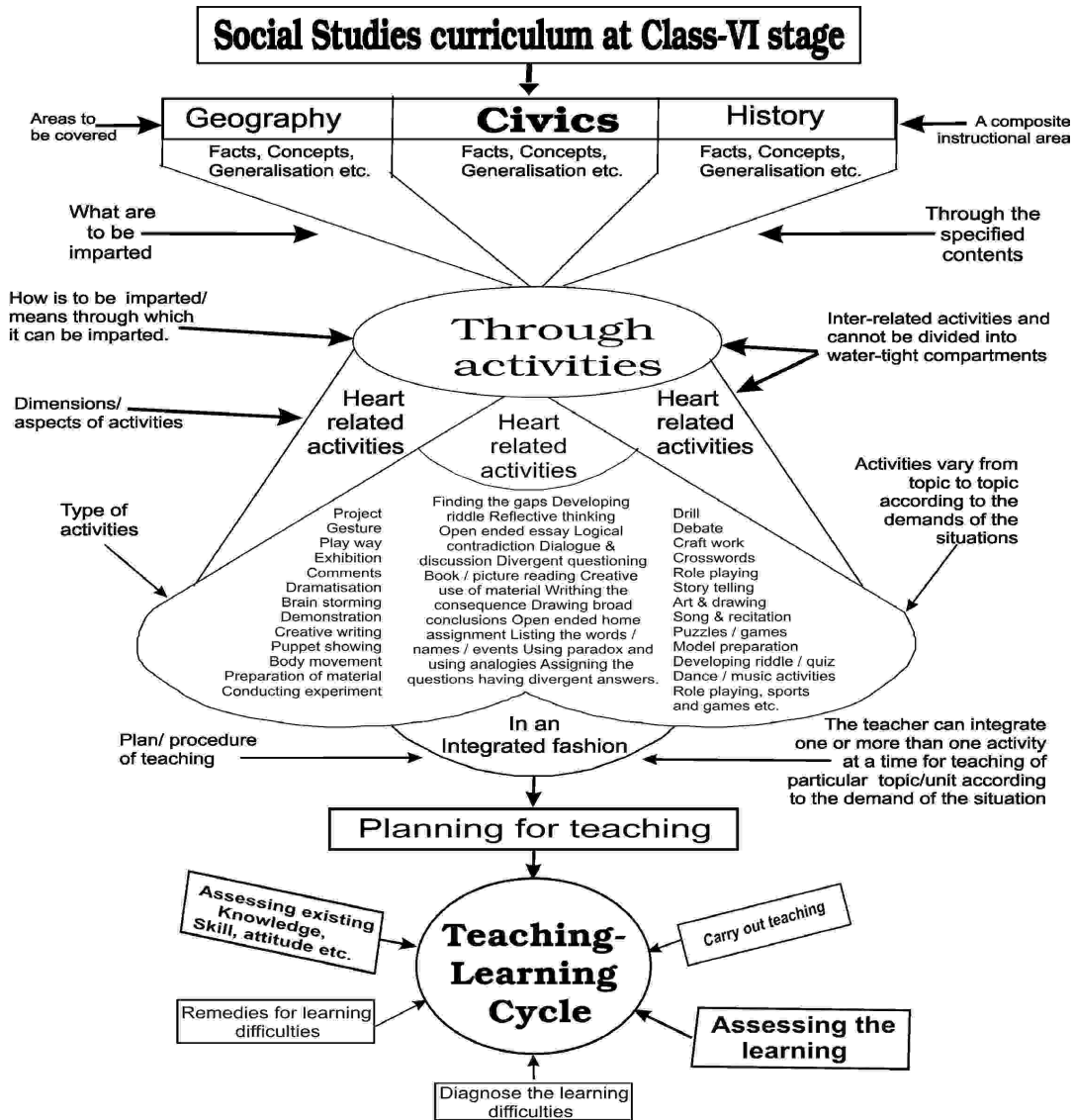Since there are many multi-dimensional activities, it becomes difficult to define them as well to count their exact numbers which are generally used in one teaching-learning process. Here are some of the most common multi-dimensional activities which can be used in our teaching-learning process.

i) Organising role playing/ dramatisation

ii) Story writing and story telling;

iii) Cutting, pasting and arranging materials in order to display in the class;

iv) Art, drawing and painting activities like drawing the different pictures relating to the content, drawing map of India; and paint them;

v) Preparation of models, charts etc;

vi) Stitching work, picture reading etc;

vii) Dance and music activities, craft work etc;

viii) Narrating and speaking the experience, description through writing etc;

ix) Songs/ drill/ recitation;

x) Identifying the symbols, words, sentences etc;

xi) Reading, printing and hand written materials;

xii) Writing one word answer;

xiii) Oral and performance activities;

xiv) Discussion/ dialogue, riddle/ quiz, developing comments etc;

xv) Creative use of materials;

xvi) Play way method, Environmental approach/ field trip;

xvii) Conducting experiment/ project work/ practical work/ laboratory work;

xviii) Puppet showing, Exhibitions

xix) Observation and reporting;

xx) Games, funs, puzzles and cross words;

xxi) Problem solving/enquiry model/ discovery model;

xxii) Inductive and deductive approach;

xxiii) Peer to peer learning/co-operative learning

xxiv) Home work/writing assignment/continuous evaluation;

xxv) Preparation and showing of flash cards and pictures, picture sorting etc;

xxvi) Pledge (solemn promise/ prayer);

xxvii) Programmed instruction, Personal Learning Model (PLM), Self Learning Model (SLM), Mastery Learning Model (MLM), objective based learning etc;

xxviii) Expository teaching/learning approach;

xxix) Critical analysis and reporting;

xxx) Chorus competition, group competition, speech competition etc;

xxxi) Logical contradiction, debate and discussion etc;

xxxii) Creative drama.

xxxiii) Creative writing etc.

HOW MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITY BASED INTEGRATED APPROACH CAN BE USED.

The following 'multi-dimensional activity based integrated approach of teaching-learning design' clearly states how multi-dimensional activities can be used in our teaching-learning process.

CHART – I

Social Studies curriculum at Class-VI stage

Areas to be covered	Geography	Civics	History	A composite instructional area
	Facts, Concepts, Generalisation etc.	Facts, Concepts, Generalisation etc.	Facts, Concepts, Generalisation etc.	

What are to be imparted

Through the specified contents

How is to be imparted/means through which it can be imparted.

Through activities

Inter-related activities and cannot be divided into water-tight compartments

Dimensions/aspects of activities

Heart related activities

Heart related activities

Heart related activities

Activities vary from topic to topic according to the demands of the situations

Type of activities

Project
Gesture
Play way
Exhibition
Comments
Dramatisation
Brain storming
Demonstration
Creative writing
Puppet showing
Body movement
Preparation of material
Conducting experiment

Finding the gaps Developing riddle Reflective thinking Open ended essay Logical contradiction Dialogue & discussion Divergent questioning Book / picture reading Creative use of material Writhing the consequence Drawing broad conclusions Open ended home assignment Listing the words / names / events Using paradox and using analogies Assigning the questions having divergent answers.

Drill
Debate
Craft work
Crosswords
Role playing
Story telling
Art & drawing
Song & recitation
Puzzles / games
Model preparation
Developing riddle / quiz
Dance / music activities
Role playing, sports and games etc.

Plan/ procedure of teaching

In an Integrated fashion

The teacher can integrate one or more than one activity at a time for teaching of particular topic/unit according to the demand of the situation

Planning for teaching

Assessing existing Knowledge, Skill, attitude etc.

Carry out teaching

Teaching-Learning Cycle

Remedies for learning difficulties

Assessing the learning

Diagnose the learning difficulties

8

Gender Friendly Approach in Curriculum Transaction: Some Issues and Guidelines in Arunachal Pradesh.

G.C. Baral*

Abstract

Education of the girl child, especially of the tribal girls in our country has been a major challenge so far. The reasons for the relative educational deprivation of the girls may, depend upon different situations. In a tribal society where gender role, stereotypes are perceived to be natural and are perpetuated from generation to generation; amount of incentives to the girls in the form of free tuition, free textbooks, free school uniforms and free hostel facility etc. is considered to be adequate enough for increasing their participation but, in such situations, a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction on the part of a teacher is an important means for giving equal treatment to both the boys and girls at every level of curriculum transaction in the school. This paper aims at sensitising the primary level teachers about the need and importance of a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction in both scholastic and coscholastic areas of school education in the tribal socio-cultural context of Arunachal Pradesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Development occurs when both men and women are able to achieve what makes their lives more valuable. 'Development is much about enhancing the capability of people than meeting their material needs' *(Amartya Sen)*. Human life basically sustains and develops through the contributory roles of both men and women and through the enhancement of their respective capabilities. In a society like ours, however, a girl child is perceived to be less capable than a boy and hence discriminated everywhere, in the family, in the community and even in the school. Gender based discrimination *is* a special feature of socialisation in our country. The parents, community members, peers and even the teachers reinforce the same every time everywhere, leading to an imbalanced

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development of the society. 'The missing of social opportunities on account of 'gender' is a blatant reality of our times which affects our well being and the pace of development' *(Amartya Sen).*

The gender situation in a predominantly tribal inhabited state like Arunachal Pradesh, is in no way different from that of other parts of the country. The practice of gender based discriminations in the state deprives the tribal girls in numerous ways ultimately putting them at an unequal footing vis-a-vis their male counterparts.

Education plays a key role in changing the restrictive attitude of the people in the society with respect to the practice of stereotyped gender role and thereby enhancing the capability of the girl children. Therefore, there has been a strong need to introduce suitable educational interventions so as to eliminate all types of gender biases and gender role stereotypes at the primary level by providing a gender neutral school and classroom environment and a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction from the very beginning.

Not withstanding the importance of gender inclusive education, in terms of providing equal chances and choices to both the boys and girls in the tribal socio-cultural context of Arunachal Pradesh; in this article, an effort has been made to sensitise the primary school teachers about the need and importance of gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction in both scholastic and coscholastic areas of school education.

2. THE GENDER ISSUE

'Gender' as we usually understand is a grammatical term which classifies nouns into males and females. In recent years, the term 'gender' has acquired the status of a concept to describe the socio-cultural differences between man and woman. The term 'gender' is used in place of 'sex' because, while 'sex' refers to the binary division between males and females in terms of their chromosomes: hormones and secondary sexual characteristics etc. 'gender' refers to the socio cultural differences between the males and females in terms of their strength, ability, performance, wage earning capacity and social acceptability etc. In fact the biological process does not discriminate between man and woman, but socially, women are regarded as weak, need protection and hence become subordinate to men.

In every society, stereotyped gender roles i.e., what is accepted to be masculine and what is feminine, continues to have a powerful impact on the lives of people. While these stereotyped gender roles are perceived to be natural, actually they are created by the society and transmitted from generation to generation resulting in the perpetuation of discrimination against women. The stereotyped gender roles are reinforced through the process of' social learning. The boys learn to behave like boys and the girls

learn to behave like girls. While their gender appropriate behaviour is encouraged and rewarded, their inappropriate behaviour is invariably discouraged, ignored and punished. Even in the schools, though conscious efforts are being made to remove gender bias in the school curriculum and the textbooks, the content and process of school education is yet to insulate itself from the impact of gender role stereotypes being nurtured for long by the socio-cultural milieu.

3. GENDER SITUATION IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

The gender situation in Arunachal Pradesh is no way different from that of other parts of the country. The common perception is that, tribal societies do not have gender discrimination, is far from being the reality. Lack of property rights on the part of women and lack of their participation in the decision taking process, prevalence of the system of bridal price and polygamy in some parts of the state reduce the status of women to that of commodities in the society. The tribal girls in the state suffer from the cumulative disadvantage of belonging to the backward communities as well as being females in a social setup where gender based discriminations are wide spread and visible. Girls in most cases are engaged in the household work, entrusted with the responsibility of fetching firewood and water, cooking meals and looking after their siblings. They are also compelled to marry at an young age. Most of these girls who enter into the portals of primary education have a low self-esteem and negative self-image. In the absence of a gender friendly school curriculum and gender sensitive approach in curriculum transaction, the teachers fail to motivate and create interest in them leading to large scale dropouts of these girls before completing their elementary education.

4. EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES TO GENDER ISSUES

In Arunachal Pradesh, to address the gender issues, the Government has been providing a number of incentives to the tribal girls such as free education, free textbooks, free uniform and free hostel facility etc. for a long time. In recent times, a few notable educational initiatives such as appointing lady teachers, opening of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalays (KGBVs) and awarding scholarships to the meritorious tribal girl students; have also been undertaken by the Government. However, mere provision of a few attractive incentives and separate allocation of resources for these tribal girls, in themselves, are not adequate enough in increasing their participation, motivating them to study and increasing their achievement levels. Gender issue is not an educational issue alone. It is a social issue and more importantly a developmental issue; therefore, there is an imperative need for gender sensitisation of the teachers, teacher educators, parents, community members and mahila

mandals etc. about various gender equality and equity related issues and concerns so as to create an enabling environment in the society for these tribal girls to open up, participate and gradually build up their self image and collective strength.

5. GENDER FRIENDLY APPROACH IN CURRICULUM TRANSACTION, WHY?

The prevailing social context, the traditional mindset of teachers the type of textbooks in use and the type of classroom interactions are some of the factors mainly responsible in perpetuating a gender biased environment in the school. In a society, where gender based discriminations are considered to be normal, in a school, where in most cases, classes are run by one or two male teachers with the help of a few elder boys, the boys are always given an upper hand in all the school activities. They are considered to be physically and mentally strong and active and are capable of doing things whereas, the girls are considered to be weak, submissive and are less capable. As a result the girls are usually given activities which are related to the domestic chores such as cleaning, sweeping, dusting and decorating etc. whereas boys are given important outside responsibilities. While games and sports are considered to be the main domain for boys, cultural activities like songs and dance are considered to be meant for girls.

Similarly, the textbooks which are one of the major means of curriculum transaction at the primary level, sometimes are found to be gender-biased in terms of content, characters and illustrations etc. There is predominance of male characters and portrayal of men in lead roles than women. While men are shown as doctors, engineers and leaders etc. women are usually portrayed as housewives, mothers and agricultural labourers conveying the message that men are stronger and more capable while women are less capable, weak and hence dependent. In recent years however, efforts have been made to remove all forms of gender bias from the text books and accordingly the text books have been revised in almost all the states.

In Arunachal Pradesh, the State Government has been following the NCERT curriculum and syllabi for all stages of school education, however, the textbooks at the elementary level (class I - class VIII), as prescribed by the 'State Government and supplied by the private publishers in recent years, need to be analysed to know whether they are free from gender bias or not.

In a classroom situation, as it is observed, the boys, more often, lead in doing a task than the girls. They are more vocal and interact more freely and frequently than the girls. The girls being reclusive by nature, mostly hesitate to speak. As a result, a teacher naturally tends to pay more attention to the boys than to girls. Similarly,

sometimes a teacher uses the stereotype language unconsciously in the classroom such as; 'Why are you crying like a girl?' or 'How can a girl behave like this?' etc.

In such situations therefore, a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction on the part of a teacher is the only means available for giving equal treatment to the boys and girls at every level of curriculum transaction in both scholastic and coscholastic areas. Gender friendly approach is a conscious and sustained effort on the part of a teacher to develop the capabilities of every individual to its fullest extent by removing gender stereotyping. A teacher by involving the girls equally in various classroom activities can bring about desirable changes in classroom interaction. On the basis of his/her ingenuity and initiative, a teacher can undo the damage done by giving the message, that the girls are as capable as the boys and that gender does not affect performance.

6. SOME GUIDELINES FOR A GENDER FRIENDLY APPROACH IN CURRICULUM TRANSACTION

A teacher in a classroom situation, needs to follow some guidelines as given here in order to practice a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction.

6.1. Dos

- First of all the teacher needs to be gender sensitised and develop appropriate skills to break the gender stereotypes in the teaching-learning process by attending specific training programmes.

- He/she has to be fully convinced about the dire need for a gender friendly approach in curriculum transaction for developing a positive self image of the girl students.

- He/She has to understand the social context and create an enabling environment in the community as well by gender sensitising other members of the school, parents and community members etc. through special advocacy programmes or through regular PTA meetings.

- He/She has to create a motivating classroom environment by deco-rating the classroom walls with the photographs/portraits of both men and women in higher capacities and roles. In this regard, the photographs/portraits of local women in higher position should be used to have better impact.

- He/She has to constantly strengthen his/her own knowledge based on different aspects of gender discriminations prevailing in the local situation and accordingly adopt innovative gender friendly approaches and strategies.

6.2. Don'ts

- Do not preach on issues related to gender and social equity as preaching is always counter productive.

- Do not follow any gender-discriminatory practices in the

classroom. Take care that both boys and girls are given similar type of tasks in similar situations.

- Do not make single sex groups for conduction group activites.
- Do not use remarks that are derogatory to girls and boys.
- Do not be over protective or partial towards girls openly as it creates resentment among boys.

6.3. Guidelines in scholastic areas

In textbooks, if instances of gender bias are present in the thematic as well as linguistic content of the subject which is being taught, such prejudices should be set right as per the situation before presentation.

- Illustrations and pictures which ignore women characters relevant to the content, need to be supplemented by women's representation in order to make them gender inclusive.
- While transacting subjects like Mathematics, Environmental studies and languages etc. emphasis should be laid on examples that include both men and women from different walks of life.
- In the teaching - learning process, conscious efforts needs to be made by the teachers to give equal opportunities to both boys and girls to speak freely and frequently.
- In addition to the traditional method of teaching, a teacher can adopt some non-conventional

methods of teaching such as value clarification, Role play and other participatory method to integrate gender sensitisation content in a more meaningful manner.

- While giving career guidance to students, a teacher can provide instances of strong career image for girls so as to enable them to feel to choose a career of their choice.

6.4. Guidelines in coscholastic areas

Gender friendly approach is considered to be very effective while conducting activites in coscholastic areas.

- In Work Education activities, for example - both boys and girls may be assigned cleaning, sweeping and beautification activities on the basis of their roll numbers. During important functions of the school, both boys and girls should be given equal opportunities in offering garlands/bouquet, tea and snacks etc. to the guests.

  In physical and Health Education, girls may be encouraged to play tough games like football, Volley ball and basketball etc. Both boys and girls may be asked to command the morning assembly and Physical Training classes turn wise and both should also be asked to participate in Yoga practice.

- In Art Education classes, girls may be encouraged to learn and play musical instruments and the boys may be encouraged to participate, in group dances. The rural tribal

girls who generally hesitate to participate in creative writing and expression, may be motivated in a sustained manner to participate in speech competitions, Poem recitation and Quiz competition etc.

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9

Child Rights: Need for Better Awareness among Student Teachers

Abdul Gafoor K.*
Rajan A.V. **

Abstract

This study attempts to gauge awareness level of prospective teachers who have almost completed two years, teacher preparation course for primary school level. A sample of 510 second year student- teachers was selected using simple random sampling technique. The sample has given specific introduction to child rights concepts as part of formal curriculum during their Teacher Training Course from 16 Teacher Training Institutes, in Kasaragod, Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram Revenue Districts in Kerala. Thus, the study reveals the impact of child rights education on prospective teachers. A child rights awareness test consisting of 52 items covering rights of children under UNCRC (United Nations Child Right Convention) and Indian Constitution was developed. Awareness regarding each of the items in Child Rights Awareness Test was found out. Though the average score of child right awareness is relatively high, there are serious lacunae in the awareness among Teacher Training Institute students as revealed by the extent of awareness regarding particular Child Rights areas. The authors call for concerted efforts to promote child rights awareness among future teachers through different means.

Children are, the future of humanity. Childhood should be happy and loving. However, for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different. Children around the world every day live with violence, poverty, discrimination and injustice. It seems that as soon as one crisis subsides, another emerges. Examples of child abuse and exploitation abound in history. Children suffer from hunger and homelessness, high infant mortality, deficient health care and limited opportunities for basic education. They are forced to work in harmful conditions. Children have the

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right to survive, develop, get protection and participate in decisions that influence their lives.

Under both domestic and international law, children's right to get protection from harm, and to have their basic physical and social needs provided is uncontroversial. At the International level, the United Nations is the most important organisation coordinating efforts to end child rights violations, and at the National and state level many agencies are working for this aim.

India and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

On November 20, 1989, the general assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989). It comprised of the parts divided into fifty four Articles. The convention specifies a number of basic rights that every child should enjoy. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human–rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. It entered into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49.

The **four core principles of the convention** are: a) non-discrimination, b) devotion to the best interests of the child, c) the rights to life, survival and development and d) respect for the views of the child.

India has acceded to this convention on the rights of the child on December 11, 1992. In the instrument

of accession it was declared that "While fully subscribing to the objectives and purposes of the convention, realising that certain of the rights of child, namely those pertaining to the economic, social and cultural rights can only be progressively implemented in the developing countries. The Government of India undertook measures to progressively implement the provisions of Articles 32..".

India kept in sight the interest of the child when the Constitution was adopted in 1950 and amended subsequently. **Legislative measures** for this can be traced back to the following Acts (Gupta, 2004). The Guardian and Wards Act (1890), The Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929), Children (Pledging of Labour) Act 1933, The Factories Act(1948), Young person (harmful publications) Act 1956, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (1956), The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (1956), Children's Act (1960), Orphanage and other charitable homes (supervision and control) Act 1960, The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986, Juvenile Justice Act 1986, The Infant Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation, Prevention and Misuse) Act 1994, Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act, 1995.

The Indian children's Act, 1960, provides for sympathetic welfare and remedial, rehabilitating and corrective state action including the education, against neglected or uncontrollable

children and delinquent children. At the same time, it cites punishable offences for those who (a) indulge in cruelty towards children, (b) employ children for begging (c) give prohibited drugs to children (d) exploit children's labour. Section 3 of child labour Act 1986, prohibits employment of children in defined occupations and in organised employment sectors like factories, companies, Government employment etc.

Basic Child Rights

According to the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, a child has to be given ten basic rights. These Ten Rights are fundamental to the concept of child rights and hence give overall direction for construction of the test. The Ten Rights are as follows-

1. Child shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, friendship, peace, and universal brotherhood and shall not be exposed to racial, religious or other forms of discrimination.

2. The child shall be protected against all forms of negligence, cruelty, exploitation, and traffic and shall not be permitted to be employed before appropriate age.

3. The child shall be in all circumstances, be among the first to receive protection and relief.

4. The child is entitled to free and compulsory elementary education and such an education is in his best interest and for which parents are to be responsible.

5. The child is entitled to grow up in an atmosphere of affection and moral and material security with public authorities taking care of children without families and other support.

6. The physically, mentally or socially handicapped child shall be entitled for special treatment, education and proper care.

7. Right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services including special health care and protection and prenatal care.

8. The child shall be entitled to a name and nationality.

9. The child shall enjoy special protection to be able to develop in every way in conditions of freedom and dignity.

10. All children irrespective of their race, colour, sex or creed of their parents shall be entitled to these Rights.

Teachers and Child Right Education

'Know your right' is the message of the United Nations. There is always a close relationship between legislative measures, implementation and education. Article 26 (2) of Universal Declaration of Human Rights exhorts that 'Education shall be directed for the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for Human Rights and fundamental freedom'. A key systematic issue of education is to position the school as a place for the

realisation and protection of children's rights enshrined in the Constitution (NCERT, 2006). In order to achieve this goal our teachers need to be equipped to carry out the educational process with the enlightened **consciousness** resulting from **action and practice** of children's rights throughout their career. The basis for action and practice of child right education should be the **skills and knowledge** in this domain. Pre-service teacher education needs to ensure the fundamentals of child right concepts and skills for prospective teachers. Awareness of human rights and the commitment to use this awareness as a means to inspire future generation are necessary ingredients of any teacher education programme (NCTE, 2006).

Are Future Teachers Aware of Child Rights?

This study attempts to gauge awareness level of prospective teachers who have almost completed two years teacher preparation course for primary school level. This sample of teachers has undergone some specific introduction to child rights concepts during their Teacher Training Course. The content covered included rights of children under UNCRC and Indian Constitution. From the informal interview with teacher educators, it was revealed that a minimum of five hours were spent by every student-teacher for discussion, brain storming, and school visit to observe child right implementation at school level which was followed by a seminar and presentation by their supervising teacher. The study among other things will reveal the impact of these steps in creating awareness about child rights education on prospective teachers.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the extent of Child Rights Awareness of the Teacher Training Institute (T.T.I)students from the total sample and the sub samples based on sex, locale, and type of management of the institution.

2. To test whether there exists any significant difference between the mean scores of Child Rights Awareness of:

• Male and female students of T.T.I.s

• Rural and urban T.T.I. students

• Government and Aided T.T.I. students,

• Aided and Unaided T.T.I. students and

• Government and unaided T.T.I. students.

3. To find out the extent of lack of awareness regarding each of the item in Child Rights Awareness Test, among T.T.I. students from the total sample

Child Rights Awareness Test

A list provided by UNICEF on child rights has helped the investigator to identify the different dimensions of children's rights to be included in the Child Rights Awareness Test (CRAT). Content validity was ensured for this test by giving weightage to each of the major Child Rights area mentioned in

the list. The 52 multiple choice test items in CRAT covers the following areas of child rights, viz; definition of the child, non discrimination, best interests of child, right to life, survival and development, respect of the views of the child, civil rights and freedoms, name and nationality, preservation of identity, freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion, protection of privacy, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, access to appropriate information, the rights not to be subjected to torture or other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment, family environment and alternative care, parental guidance, parental responsibilities, separation from parents, family reunification, adoption, basic health and welfare, children with special needs, health and health services, social security and child care services and facilities, standard of living, education, leisure and cultural activities, and recreation, children involved with the system of administration of juvenile justice, sentencing of children, children in situations of exploitations, economic exploitation of children including child labour, drug abuse and children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group. Test retest reliability coefficient of the tool is 0.89 (N = 36).

Sample

The sample for the present study is 510 second year students studying in Teacher Training Institutes, in Kasaragod, Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram Revenue Districts in Kerala, selected using simple random sampling technique. Among 16 T.T.I.s from which the sample was drawn, nine T.T.I.s belongs to Government, four T.T.I.s to aided, and three T.T.I.s belongs to unaided sector. Administration of the Child right awareness test in the sample was taken up in December 2006.

Findings of the study

The data collected have been analysed which revealed the following :

1. Out of the total possible score of 52 in the Child Rights Awareness Test, an average student teacher studying in teacher training institutes had obtained 32 scores. In other words, an average T.T.I. student has 58.81 percent awareness regarding the Child Rights.

2. The result of comparison of mean scores of Child Rights Awareness Test in the relevant sub samples of student teachers is as follows :

a) There is no significant gender difference in the Child Rights Awareness among T.T.I. students $(CR = 0.88; p > 0.05)$

b) There is no significant locale (urban- rural) difference in the Child Rights Awareness among T.T.I. students $(CR = 0.19; p > 0.05)$

c) In Child Right Awareness there is significant difference between :

i. Government and Aided T.T.I. students $(CR = 3.53; p < 0.01)$,

ii. Government and Unaided T.T.I. students $(CR = 5.48; p < 0.01)$,

iii. Aided and Unaided T.T.I. students (CR = 2.17; p < 0.05).

3. Awareness about separate aspects of Child Rights was found out by estimating the percentage of students responding correctly to each item in the Child Right Awareness Test. More than 50 percent of T.T.I. students responded wrongly to more than 25 percent of items (14 out of 52) in the Child Rights Awareness Test. In other words, majority of T.T.I. students lack Awareness regarding these areas of Children's Rights.

Some important children's rights about which majority of T.T.I. students are not aware are the following **(**Note: The value in parentheses is the percentage of students who are not aware about the rights**)** Right to do job is not a right of the child (63%). Parents have the primary responsibility of upbringing the child (59.61%). Child's interests are the primary consideration regarding the matters related to children (56%). Child gets legal protection and care before and after birth (54.32%). Right to do anything and drive vehicles are not rights of children but to seek help is a child's right (51.77%). Adoption is one legal measure to ensure the congenial atmosphere for the destitute children (51%).

The other child rights about which majority of T.T.I. students are not aware are the following: Mothers' knowledge regarding the importance and proper way of breast-feeding is a necessity for child's right.

Government has to approve the activities of organisations for the physical and mental development of children. Government as an agency has to help identify the child and parents in case of disputes. In case of separated parents, the court sends the child with the person who will protect the child the most. Rights of child to express his freedom of opinions are subject to age and maturity. Child rights convention demands for the special care of legal protection for children due to the tender and vulnerable age of children.

Even for the area with the highest awareness, nearly one-third (29.95%) of the students have lack of awareness.

Listed below are child rights which lack awareness and may seriously affect the future teacher's job as a social engineer and promoter of child development. (Note: Percentages of trainees who are not aware are given in brackets). Eighteen years is the legal age limit of marriage of Girls (49.61%). None can force Child to be a witness (49.38%). Family is the basic social unit responsible for child's growth and development (49.34%). Children have the Rights to enjoy free time and to engage in entertainment. Nearly 42 percent T.T.I. students are not aware that Indian constitution ensures compulsory education up to the age limit of 14 years. T.T.I. students (49.81%) have lack of awareness that the Right for development, Right to have a name, Right to know Parents, are all Rights of every child. T.T.I. students are

not aware that Cigarette, Beedi workers should have minimum age of 15 years (49.34%). 48.63 percent T.T.I. students are not aware that by registering their birth, the right of the child to get parental protection is guaranteed. Almost 46 percent T.T.I. students are not aware that pregnant women's awareness regarding Nutritional Foods is a very important measure for child rights. Population education, health awareness and environmental protection are all factors essential for children's development (48 %). A life with dignity is applicable to all children irrespective of nationality, status of parents (47 %). Child labour until the age of 14 years is prohibited (47 %). Joyful environment, loving atmosphere and mutual understanding are all essential components for the complete and balanced personality development of child (46 %). Children have right to assemble and form peaceful groups irrespective of Teachers' and Parental wish (45 %). Nation cannot deny the rights for Tribal child to grow along with his social groups to speak his vernacular and develop tribal culture (45 %). One cannot discriminate children based on omissions and commissions of parents, guardians or any other family members (44 %). The rights for education of the child criminal attitude towards alien nations and culture is not a part of right for education (44 %). No Nation can discriminate against a child based on parental religion, nationality or political views (43%).

Conclusions and Suggestions

Though the average score of child right Awareness Test is relatively high, there are serious lacunae in the awareness among T.T.I. students in Kerala. The extent of awareness regarding particular child rights areas reveals this, for example even for the area with highest awareness (with regard to right issues the legal age of child is limited to 14 years by Indian constitution) lack of awareness is nearly 30 percent. This calls for concerted efforts to promote child rights awareness among future teachers through different means. Consider the following in this regard.

- Setting the classroom climate demonstrating respect for justice and child dignity in an experience-based and practice - oriented style with the involvement of prospective teachers, parents and community;

- Arranging action based activities than that of task and talk based activities for teaching of child rights including discussion, role playing, and seminar presentation of field experience etc;

- Structuring conflict situation to promote inquiry and provide opportunities to the prospective teachers for critically analysing Child Rights issues;

- Selecting appropriate learning strategies like brainstorming, cooperative learning, suitable questioning related to the social development of the prospective teachers;

- Selecting appropriate learning activities to provide opportunity to the prospective teachers for expressing creative ideas and solutions to the problem related with child right's issues and to explore and develop personal, moral, social, ethical and democratic values regarding Child Rights;

- Arranging inter institutional and inter school level competitions in essay, quiz, role-play etc., and organising exhibitions for the benefits of teacher trainees and local community, incorporating cultural programmes will all help enhance child right awareness among prospective teachers and the public in general.

Further, there is need for Teacher Educators to become the living models of child rights, practising democratic decisions making process within their classrooms, identifying prejudices and discriminations. Through critical objective thinking, promoting tolerance and other behaviour and attitudes consistent with child rights principles, that emanates from the master teacher, students – teacher can imbibe the child rights concepts, values, attitudes and skills from their own classroom.

The study suggests that due to the better academic quality of students selected in Government Teacher Training Institutes (T.T.I.), The student- teachers have higher child rights awareness. To improve awareness about the child rights among students, the curriculum for teacher education should cater to this need. Today's T.T.I. students are tomorrow's teachers. Creating better awareness of these prospective teachers should catch our immediate attention.

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10

Making Inclusive Education a Reality : It is not Just a Formality

Kiran Devendra*

Abstract

Each child is special. It is the responsibility of every citizen to help children realise their potential to the fullest and groom them to be contributing citizens of this country. A special emphasis has been given by SSA to reach out to Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) not only by way of providing ramps, wheelchairs, spectacles, hearing aids etc. but also by providing home based education to those who have severe disabilities. This article throws light on the efforts of the stakeholders in SSA in two districts of Punjab and a private school in Ambala Cantt. Haryana, where the lives of children with multiple physical challenges have changed with the support of their teachers, parents and peers.

The Government of India appreciated Maharashtra its best practices followed for providing Resource Support to Children with Special Needs (JRM July 2008 and State Project Director, Maharashtara). Punjab has also committed to the cause of the CWSNs by giving beyond the formalities of provisions. Other States/UTs are making efforts in moving away from fulfilling a formality to putting exceptional efforts to make IED meaningful. While one is amazed at committment to CWSNs in Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana and other states/UTs who are working towards reaching out to every child who has a special need, schools in capital of our country find it difficult to provide meaningful support to dyslexic children!! This is causing great anxiety to these children and their parents (Times of India March 13,09) SSA Punjab is putting in a noticeable effort for the education CWSNs. The case of Ravi and Rinku of Ablowal Village of Patiala may be cited in this regard, which is an example of actually reaching out with a sense of purpose of Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs) in the district. The special educators have a specific role

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to facilitate in the provision of any and everything that will help these children to be in schools and provide home based education to those children who are totally incapacitated. The discussion with SPD, SSA Punjab in his office, the visit to the District Programme Office of District Fatehgarh Sahib and visits to centres in District Patiala (June, 2008 and February, 2009) made one realise that the State and its functionaries are committed to making every possible effort to make the education of CWSNs meaningful and creative.

Special attention is being given by the State to the education of CWSNs; providing orientation training in *Special Education* following the guide lines of the Rehabilitation Council of India, Delhi to equip teachers for dealing with the CWSNs; is one such initiative among others. IERTs are not only taking care of IED component but also making every effort in

understanding that each child is special and unique. This observation was further supported by field situations in District Patiala especially Resource Rooms for CWSNs located in

Government Primary School Ablowal, Patiala and in Government Elementary School Yadavindra Colony, all IERTs were committe. In Yadavindra Colony's Resource Room, where a large number of children were deaf and dumb and visually challenged, hugged the IERTs the moment they entered the centre. An interaction with IERTs, CWSNs in both the centres and communities pointed to a feeling of comfort and satisfaction of parents, community members and children who were receiving *Home Based Education* due to severity of their disability.

The IERTs in these centres were creative and often visited each other's centres to share problems and find solutions for each and every child. They do not hesitate in approaching the SPD whenever they run into a problem, which is beyond their purview as they find support every time they approached him for these children.

All, children with special needs in Punjab have been ensured for Rs. One, Lakh with Nirmaya Insurance and Financial Support. The SSA office and functionaries help these children to get a Disability Certificate which they feel will go a long

way to help each child in not only receiving education but later on training as well as jobs. The IERTs have prepared colourful charts to help children in understanding the most beautiful aspects of this is that the IERTs can conveniently converse with every child, no matter what the disability is, the child is dumb or deaf. The IERTs in the centre in Yadvindra Colony were extra careful in ensuring that children with low vision were brought out of the room to read and write. This centre has got children with low vision, and children with speech and hearing disability. The IERTs had no complaints that the Resource Centre was not properly lit. They in fact explained that a lot of construction work was going on in the school and therefore they made an extra effort to ensure that their children in the resource room come and went back safely for which they have to do an extra work. **There is a need to ensure proper lighting and toilet facilities.** In this Centre itself a chart entitled "Taare Zamin Par" was put up to give an idea to visitors about the names of the children in the centre along with the challenges/difficulties/disability that
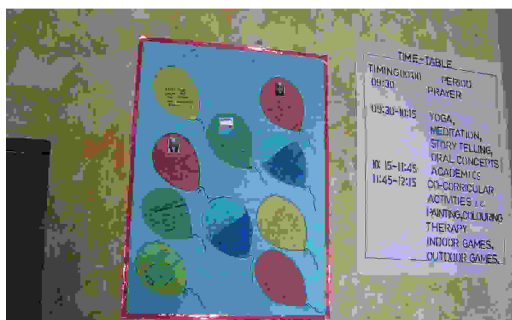
each child suffered from. The IERTs informed that they were able to learn so much from their colleagues, and especially an IERT who himself had low vision. They always approached him for guidance. Ms. Charanjeet Kaur, the IERT of this Centre, had brought a very beautiful bed sheet to cover the table in the centre and arrange the things for the children on it in a practical way to enbale their use by children. She took pride in telling us that although this is the last gift to her from her grand mother who is no more. She brought it to the Resource Centre because of these children who are very dear to her.

Organising sport events for CWSNs is a regular feature of SSA Punjab. It had organised *Indo-Pak Sports Meet* for differently-abled children. Five differently-abled children from the District Fatehgarh Sahib won prizes in the Meet. It is amazing how the IERTs work together in coordination to provide support to each one of their colleague as well as to all these children. The video films prepared by

District Patiala of the sports meet as well as by District Fatehgarh Sahib, point to the fact that what a great effort each IERT makes to keep these children

motivated to participate in an exciting and energizing manner.

"Each child is a special gift from God. It is up to us to help them to face life; to make them realise that they make a difference in the world," says Sister Tara, (Principal since 1992), Convent of Jesus and Mary school, Ambala Cantt. Haryana. According to her, children with special needs are special and they need special care to bring out the best in them. They may be denied certain abilities by God but it is the teacher who can help them realise their potential and bring the best out of them.

There are some children studying in this school who are suffering from dyslexia. Sister Tara informed that special lessons are organised to facilitate these children. Their question papers are easier than the normal children and leniency is observed in their promotions to the next classes. With the understanding and the cooperation of the parents and teachers, these children manage well and cope up with the school environment. The principal also shared that there were no dropouts among these children with special needs.

One among them is a child Kritika who is a student of class XI and has multiple physical challenges yet she is courageous and faces the difficulties bravely. She is the only child of her parents. Principal Tara also told that Kritika is a cheerful and lovely child contented with what she has. She helps her companions and is a wonderful child.

Kritika cannot move on her own. Her parents have to shift her from home to school and back from school to home. Even in the classroom she cannot take out the books from her bag. She needs the help of her friends at every moment for using even small articles of daily use. She is fully satisfied with the cooperation of her parents, teachers and peers. The most astonishing fact which came to the notice was that her friends feel obliged to Kritika for the help rendered by her to them.

Kritika even managed to have a number of friends as interacting with some of her classmates, has also helped to know more about herself. One of her classmates Garima is studying with her since class IV and says, "Kritika is a source of inspiration for me. She listens patiently to my problems and helps to sort them out. She is open to solutions for problems of the friends. Kritika is self dependent and always smiles. She has many talents and one can learn a lot from her." Another classmate Harshleen Kaur is also a friend of Kritika. She said that Kritika is not only friendly to her but to everybody else in the class.

She helps her in academics by removing her doubts. Harshleen takes care of Kritika by helping her to move and shift her luggage. She helps her to take drinking water and takes out the books from her bag. She also helps Kritika in studies by removing her doubts if any.

Some of the excerpts of an interaction between Rajinder Singh Mann** and Kritika are as follows;

_____
** Assistant Project Coordinator, Ambala, Haryana

Rajinder: What do you want to be in life?

Kritika: I have no long term plans, yet I wish to qualify 10+2 examination with good marks and get admission in a good college.

Ques: What profession would you like to join?

Ans : I want to join MBA, Journalism or Law.

Ques: How many marks did you get in 10th class examination?

Ans : I got 91 % marks.

Ques : Do you get full support from your friends, teachers and parents?

Ans : Yes, I get full support from all of them.

Ques : Are there any difficulties faced by you in your daily routine? If any, who comes to your help first of all?

Ans : No difficulties as teachers, friends and parents all are helpful. She tells an episode from her life when she was with her friend named Gunjan Khanna. The electric fan was faulty and it got heated. The plastic melted and dropped down on her friend. But Gunjan Khanna did not care the pain and did not leave me alone. She remained with her friend. I even did not show her injuries to me so that I may not feel depressed or sad.

Ques : How do you feel at the help offered by others?

Ans : I feel lucky to have supportive behaviour of the Principal, teachers of Convent of Jesus and Mary School, Ambala Cantt.

Ques: What are your expectations from the friends, teachers and government for further help?

Ans: I have no expectations. It would be wrong on my part to have all my wishes and expectations fulfilled from the government. I don't know.

Ques: What do you feel when other children play? What would you like others to do for you?

Ans: I feel happy. My friends are always with me. I enjoy with them indoor. We discuss things.

Ques: Are you happy with your life?

Ans: Very happy. I have no regrets (She was actually smiling).

Ques: What is your message to children like you who need the help of others?

Ans: I would like to suggest them to accept life as it is. God created something special in everybody. All of us should make use of the opportunities which are available.

Ques: What is your message to the teachers?

Ans: "I would not comment because they teach us".

Ques: Who is your best friend in your class?

Ans: The whole class is my friend. I don't have any best friend in particular.

Ques: Is there any specific difficulty faced by you?

Ans : I don't think there is any. My life is running smoothly.

The committment of the teachers, classmates and support of the peer group made Kritika overcome all her difficulties with confidence. Her positive attitude gets encouragement from everyone around her.

11

The Coming About of The American Dream

Martin Luther King. Jr

In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvellous new militancy which has engulfed our community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realise that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realise that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And... even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content

of their character... I have a dream that one day... right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers....

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

And this will be the day – this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:

My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing./ Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride,/ From every mountainside, let freedom ring!/ And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true...

And when this happens, when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

Free at last! Free at last!/ Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

Excerpted from the
'I Have a Dream' speech delivered on
August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial,
Washington DC.

Strategic Initiatives for Inclusive Development*

4.1 Along with sectoral policies aimed at improving livelihood support and increasing employment, a strategy of inclusiveness also calls for new emphasis on education, health, and other basic public facilities. Inadequate access to these essential services directly limits the welfare of large sections of our population, and also denies them the opportunity to share fully in the benefits of growth. Indeed, inadequate attention to human resource development limits the growth process itself.

4.2 Child Nurture: Starting Right

4.2.1 Any strategy for removing disparities, bridging divides, and ensuring the well-being of our people, must begin by respecting the rights of our child population. Rights based development of children must be at the

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Box No. 6

Child Nurture - Starting Right

Development of children is at the centre of the 11th plan. We are committed to ensure that our children do not lose their childhood because of work, disease or despair. We aim to give the right start to children from 0-6 years with effective implementation of the ICDS programme. It is to be a community based programme involving parent groups. The nutrition component has to have imaginative menus based on seasonal and regional variations. The scheme will nurture and strengthen pregnant and lactating mothers. Currently, the pre-school component of ICDS centres is very weak. Early Childhood Education (ECE) could be placed under the SSA. The ICDS centres then will concentrate on inculcating good health and hygienic practices among the children. For this it will be essential that these centres have toilets and drinking water. The elders of the community could be asked to visit the children on a weekly basis to narrate folk tales, poetry etc. which are often missing from school's curriculum. This will serve the dual purpose of enriching the child and making the elderly feel part of the education process.

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*Chepter 4, Towards Faster and More Inclusive Growth,
11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012), GOI, Planning Commission

centre of the 11th plan. We must ensure that our children do not lose their childhood because of work, disease or despair.

4.2.2 The Integrated Child Development Programme (ICDS) is aimed at giving children below the age of 6 the right start in life (see Box). The programme covers supplementary nutrition, immunisation, monitoring of weight and height, and in some cases, crèche facilities for a limited period. The effectiveness of the programme varies across States but where it works well, it provides much needed facilities especially to the weaker sections. Its coverage, however, is limited and often the youngest children in the 0-3 years age group get left out of its ambit. The 11th Plan must universalise ICDS and also find practical ways of reaching out to the children in the 0-3 age group. Strong efforts also need to be made to improve accountability through greater involvement of PRIs.

4.2.3 Meeting the nutritional needs of children however is not enough. Child's mental health is a much neglected area in our country. According to the ICMR, at any given time, 7-15% of Indian children suffer from mental disorders. It is thus vital to provide counselling services for children in all schools – private or public – to ensure their well-being. Mental health must be made an integral part of the school health programme in the 11th Plan.

4.2.4 School is an important element of a child's development. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (See Section 4.3) aims at providing elementary education to all children in the 6-14 years age group. Children from socially disadvantaged families often have learning difficulties since, among other things, their vocabulary at entry to primary school is limited. Special help in pre-Primary schools can help them overcome this handicap. Efforts must be made to mainstream differently-abled and other disadvantaged children and to provide them access to education, just like other children their age.

4.2.5 The most vulnerable such as street children, trafficked children, children affected by conflict or calamities, children of sex workers, child labourers, children with HIV/AIDS, victims of child sex abuse, differently-abled children, and juvenile delinquents need special attention. Adoption, rescue and rehabilitation, juvenile police units, shelter homes, counseling and medical aid etc., also need attention as they contribute to ensuring a secure childhood to children.

4.3 Empowerment Through Education

4.3.1 Education, in its broadest sense of development of youth, including sports, is the most critical input for empowering people with skills and knowledge and for giving them access to productive employment in the future. The 11th Plan should ensure that we move towards raising public spending in education to 6% of GDP, which is an NCMP commitment. It must fulfill the Constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory elementary education of good quality

to all children up to the age of 14. This means we must ensure both access and good quality and standards in respect of curriculum, pedagogy, and infrastructure irrespective of the parents' ability to pay.

(a) Elementary Education: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

4.3.2 The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan seeks to provide elementary eduation to all children in the 6-14 years age group by 2010. It also aims to bridge all social, gender, and regional gaps with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. This is a flagship programme and a 2% education cess has been levied on all taxes and earmarked to fund this programme.

4.3.3 Expanding enrolment has been one of the major objectives of the SSA and an almost 100% enrolment of 6-14 years old is likely to be achieved by the end of the 10th plan. Enrolment, however, is only the first step. Children must also complete eight years of schooling and this continues to present a major challenge. The drop- out rate in primary schools for the country as a whole was around 31% in 2003-04 and it was much higher in many states. Dropout rates for both boys and girls of all social groups must be reduced sharply, if not eliminated altogether.

4.3.4 High drop - out rates are the result of a combination of factors. A school that is far away or that does not function regularly fails to retain students. Similarly, a teacher who is absent or engaged in non-teaching work, is intimidating or uses uninteresting methods of teaching also encourage children to drop out. Often the need for children of poorer femilies to work also drives them away from school. With the Employment Guarantee Scheme adding to family income, these pressures are expected to somewhat reduce. Opening of creches for children at the work site will reduce the incidence of girls dropping out to take care of younger siblings. The experience of many NGOs, in both rural and the urban areas, has shown that child workers can be mainstreamed into education through camps that hook them on to good education after withdrawing them from work. Well run residential schools in regions of extreme poverty keep the children from living on streets or railway platforms or joining the work force prematurely.

4.3.5 Experience has shown that the Mid-day Meal Scheme can help increase attendance and improve the children's nutritional status. It also helps in removing caste barriers as all children sit together for their meals.. SHGs formed by mothers should be given the task of preparing mid-day meals. This will guarantee better quality food.Wherever possible, particular attention should be paid to the scope for using the MDMS to tackle micro-nutrient deficiencies through nutrient supplementation and provision of fortified foods. Management and supervision mechanisms must be improved and changes in the nutritional status of

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2 Annual Status of Educauon (ASER) -Rural 2005 facilitated by Pratham

children monitored regularly. School health programmes must be revived and converged with MDMS and MDMS itself merged with the SSA at an appropriate time.

4.3.6 The pre-school education component of ICDS-Anganwadi at present is very weak and the repetition rate in primary classes is, therefore, quite high. This in turn, discourges many students from continuing their education. The SSA should also have a separate component for at least one year. Early Childhood Education (ECE) which can be universalised in a phased manner.

4.3.7 The most difficult task is to ensure good quality of instruction. A recent study[2], (ASER, 2005) has found that 38% of the children who have completed four years of schooling cannot read a small paragraph with short sentences meant to be read by a student of Class II. About 55% of such children cannot divide a three digit number by a one digit number. These are indicators of serious learning problems which must be addressed. Several states have started efforts to raise basic skills in a campaign mode. Their experiences need to be evaluated. A set of national testing standards will be created and a chain of institutions that test and evaluate children according to set norms will be established. These will help us to monitor and improve the quality of learning. However, we should also note that just 28% of our schools had electricity in 2005 and only about half had more than two teachers or two classrooms. Only 40% of primary school teachers were graduates and 30% had not even completed Higher Secondary[3], (EEI, NUEPA, 2006). For a large proportion of our children, school is therefore an ill-lit classroom with more than one class being taught together by someone who may not have completed her own schooling. The monitoring above will need to correlate such facts with learning skills to identify where the real problems lie: pre-school, teachers, state governments, the design of Sarva Sikhsha Abhiyan or the assumed requirements for universal education. Correctives may have to be taken at all these levels.

4.3.8 Our long term goal should be that all schools in India have physical infrastructure and quality of teaching equivalent to Kendriya Vidyalayas. Provision of sports facilities, to the extent possible within school premises must also be ensured. We are very far from this goal at present. One cause for poor quality of teaching is the shortage of teachers reflected in a large number of vacancies. The quality, accountability and motivation of existing teachers are also low. In many areas, teacher absenteeism is a major problem. Teacher training is both inadequate and of poor quality and needs to be expanded and improved.

4.3.9 Empowering panchayats and citizens' education committees to oversee teacher's performance will help increase accountability. The

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3 Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report, NUEPA 2006

management of schools should move away from the highly centralised system of today to a more decentralised one based on local school management committees. These committees comprising of parents and other well-educated people from the neighbourhood will be accountable to the institutions of local self government. Making available ICT solutions, shared management personnel, and management skills with the school committees will be crucial.

4.3.10 Schools are expected to "not just impart education in its narrow sense but, more broadly, to mould children's attitudes. Egalitarian values, compassion, tolerance, concern towards others, respect for cultural diversity, gender sensitivity, and health education must therefore be integrated in the curriculum at the elementary stage itself to help develop healthy attitudes. Gender sensitisation and gender equality must be emphasised early on to help correct the skewed sex ratios and cull all beliefs about inferiority and superiority of sexes.

(b) Secondary Education

4.3.11 Universalisation of elementary education alone will not suffice in the knowledge economy. A person with a mere 8 years of schooling will be as disadvantaged in a knowledge economy dominated by ICT as an illiterate person in modern industry and services. Secondary education is vital because it is in this age group that the child, particularly the girl child is extremely vulnerable and is pushed into child labour, early marriage or trafficking. The 11th Plan must therefore aim to progressively raise the minimum level of education to high school or Class X level. The demand for secondary education will also expand significantly as SSA reaches its goal of universal and complete elementary education. A major initiative for expanding secondary education up to Class X, must be initiated in the 11th Plan and should include access to organised sports and games. However, the pace at which this expansion takes place will also depend on how quickly we can reduce the drop – out rates at the elementary stage.

4.3.12 The required expansion of secondary education calls for both public and private effort. At present, private aided and unaided schools account for 58% of the total number of secondary schools and 25% of the student population. Clearly with state governments finding it difficult to fund public secondary education, the proportion of private schools has gone up and the relatively better off sections of the population have virtually stopped sending their children to public schools. Yet the latter still absorb 75% of all present secondary school students, a pressure likely to increase as more children from poorer families complete the primary stage. The 11th Plan will have to find sufficient resources to end this vicious circle and evolve strategies to significantly expand the number of places in secondary schools, including expansion of intake by private schools wherever this can complement the public effort. The participation of the private sector in a

non commercial manner by involving them in providing facilities like classrooms, laboratories, toilet blocks etc. to government schools will continue to be encouraged. To reward merit, improve mobility, and introduce some competition between schools, it is worth considering a scholarship scheme for bright but poor children who complete primary schooling in public schools that would also be valid in unaided private secondary schools which agree to a common fee structure for the scholarship holders. However, while expansion of private schools should be welcomed, government must bear the responsibility of ensuring that public schools are not only available in areas presently not served or underserved by private schools, but also competitive with private schools where these exist. Special efforts will be made to cater to the educational needs of poor Muslims, SCs, STs and girls whose enrolment is much lower than the general population.

4.3.13 As discussed in the case of elementary schools, it is necessary to also monitor the extent of earning through regular testing by independent bodies. There are strong differences of opinion among educationists on whether parental choice on schools through devices such as vouchers can improve accountability and quality or whether this would only increase existing divides and divert public money to private schools. But parents do need information about quality of their children's schools if they are to have any effective voice in influencing how these are run.

4.3.14 Extension of secondary education in rural areas poses a special challenge since secondary schools cannot be set up in every village. In view of this, the present trend of combining upper primary with secondary school education may need to be strengthened.

(c) Technical Vocational Education and Skill Development

4.3.15 Data collected in the 60th round of NSS shows that only 3% of the rural youth (15-29 years) and 6 percent of the urban youth have gone through any kind of vocational training. Most of them have acquired the skills they have from taking up or changing employment. This is much lower than in other developing countries. The current set up for skill formation and upgradation is woefully inadequate. For inclusive growth, it is vital to enhance the productivity of labour in the unorganised sector. We need to expand vocational training from the present capacity of a mere 2 to 3 million to at least 15 million new entrants to the labour force. While we have 5000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) (under the Ministry of Labour) and 7000 Vocational Schools (under the Ministry of HRD), China has about 5,00,000 Secondary Vocational Schools. The 11th Plan must pay special attention to devising innovative ways of modernising the ITIs and increasing their number substantially. More importantly, industries and industrial associations will be involved in running them so that the scope and

content of the training provided in these institutions is relevant to the needs of the industry and the job market. The number of skills for which training is provided also needs to be expanded to include new skills. ITIs in India typically cater to around 40 skills compared with 4000 in China.

4.3.16 Since 2004 an effort has been made to identify and implement reforms in administration of ITIs so as to facilitate better interaction with the industry. To begin with 100 ITIs have been taken up and it is proposed to expand the programme to cover 500. However, much more needs to be done to meeting the demands of the knowledge economy. It is necessary to give true financial and administrative autonomy to ITIs that are formally registered societies. These ITIs should be run by independent, qualified professional heads who are accountable to boards consisting of stakeholders, such as user industries and public spirited citizens in the locality. Their performance should be measured by the placements income improvements of the trainees who pass out.

4.3.17 Public Private Partnership models which involve industry representatives in management of ITIs and in design of courses are being tried in some states and need to be encouraged further. There are a number of other vocational training and entrepreneurship development institutes in the country in addition to the ITIs. These institutions also need to be strengthened and a process of accreditation evolved for them.

4.3.18 Vocational training for both men and women should be accorded top priority in the 11th Plan. It should be treated as an industry and efforts made to attract private investment into this sector. So far, the private investments have come in only for the higher wage skills – IT, airlines personnel, fashion technology, etc. or for skills linked with government jobs-teachers, instructors, etc. Even these private training institutes are mainly centred around large towns. Small towns that provide avenues for advancement of rural youth have concentrated mainly on academic or college education. It is necessary to encourage a broader based system offering skill enhancement possibilities in smaller towns also.

4.3.19 The possibilities in agro-processing are increasing. There is however little or no training available in processing of agricultural or forest produce. There exist many government schemes with known technologies that need to be taken to the youth through short courses. Starting agricultural schools with strong agro-processing, irrigation, soil conservation, and forestry/gardening components will thus be one of the goals of the 11th plan.

4.3.20 Often vocational training for women is confined to sectors like nursing, sewing etc. in keeping with their traditional roles. If we are to move towards a gender just society, then this has to change. Girls should be encouraged to take up training in secondary and tertiary activities to enable them to compete as equals.

4.3.21 To reach out to rural youth, skill development must be treated at par with school education in allocation of government resources. An initiative at block level for vocational training (VETI) should be taken. VET will be given priority at par with secondary education in allocating public sector financial and physical resources - land and other supportive services

4.3.22 Both public and private institutions should be encouraged to provide training and freedom to train those seeking certification. An appropriate certification system should be instituted by the Central and state governments for certifying the skills of trainees graduating from a variety of institutions and suitable academic credits given to them. The Central Government should provide the necessary guidelines and support for establishing appropriate mechanisms and state governments should institute certification bodies to issue certificates for a variety of skills.

(d) Higher and Technical Education

4.3.23 India has a well-developed and comprehensive higher education system which has served us well thus far, but is now inadequate. The extent

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Box No.7
The Emerging Skill Shortage

While India's young demographic profile has the country favourably placed in terms of manpower availability, talent supply shortages are emerging. This is extremely disconcerting especially for the knowledge services sector, which, over the last few years has emerged as a significant growth engine with demonstrated gains in terms of exports, employment and very visibly in urban development across several cities in the country. Research has shown that so far, only a tenth of the global addressable market for these services has been tapped. With its early lead and strong fundamentals (demographics, economics, and expertise), India is best positioned to take advantage of this opportunity. Yet the unsuitability of a large proportion of the talent pool in the country could lead to significant lost opportunities. The NASSCOM-McKinsey Report 2005 projections indicate that these will fall short by about 500,000 suitable professionals (representing an opportunity cost of US$ 10bn) by the end of the decade and in the absence of corrective action, this gap will continue to grow. However, if current trends are maintained, the IT-ITES sector (IT-ITES) alone of the knowledge sector) will need an additional 1million plus qualified people in the next 5 years and will generate exports of US $ 86 billion in FY 2012. If the country is to capitalise on the huge opportunity in this and other areas of knowledge services, what is needed is a major thrust at all levels of education. Clearly, substantial expansion and radical reform of the education sector are called for to ensure that we are able to meet the quality and quantity of professionals needed by the country.

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of access it provides is limited. Only about 10% of the relevant age group go to universities whereas in many developing countries, the figure is between 20% and 25%. There is an overwhelming need to undertake major expansion to increase access to higher education. The system also suffers from a serious problem of quality. While some of our institutions of higher education have the potential to become comparable with the best in the world, the average standard is much lower. High quality institutions are finding it difficult to get quality faculty given the enormous increase in private sector opportunities for the skills most in demand.

4.3.24 There are serious shortages of qualified research personnel in educational institutions, in national laboratories and in industrial R&D units. Currently the number of scientists and engineers engaged in R&D in the country is 157 per million. Korea has fifty times more, whereas US & Japan have about thirty times more. At present we produce around 5000 Ph.Ds annually in science and about 800 Ph.Ds in engineering. The Prime Minister's Science Advisory Council has estimated that if India has to lay claim to being a knowledge based economic power, the number of PhDs on quality acceptable by world standards should be five times more than the number that we are currently producing.

4.3.25 These considerations suggests that the 11th Plan must undertake a major effort to expand and improve the quality of our higher education system.

In particular, we need to expand higher education in science and create an environment that attracts bright students to careers in science and in R&D. Unless these efforts are made, we will run into skill constraints which will limit our ability to gain competitive advantage in this area *(See Box No. 7: The Emerging Skill Shortage)*. In fact, India should aim to be a global innovation (R&D) hub and a global education hub that attracts students from around the world. Our policies can be fine tuned to achieve this goal.

4.3.26 The regional divide in the matter of educational and R&D institutions is also a matter of concern. Over 60% of these are located in just about 6 to 8 States depending on the segment (for example engineering colleges or biotech R&D labs) one considers. The 11th Plan must address these disparities as they greatly influence distribution of employment opportunities. New colleges and universities must be set up, to provide easier access to students in educationally backward districts. Existing institutions must be strengthened and expanded where possible and open and distance education encouraged. In addition, a specific plan for upgrading a few existing select universities with a "potential for excellence" must be formulated, laying down specific parameters which are in tune with global standards. One University in each state should be made a model university through all-round upgradation during the 11th Plan. Select state universities should be

upgraded to the level of Central Universities, where a share of maintenance expenditure could be met centrally and the State and the Centre could share the development needs. The three oldest universities of Mumbai, Calcutta, and Madras may be taken up in the first instance, in consultation with the respective states so that they could evolve the necessary statutory bases.

4.3.27 Since education is the pathway to economic advancement, the strategy for expanding education must also pay attention to ensuring equitable access. Reservation of seats in educational institutions for SCs and STs, and in many states also for OBCs has been in place for many years. The Centre is taking steps to introduce reservation for OBCs in central universities and other central institutions of higher learning such as IITs, IIMs etc. It has also been decided that the proposed reservation will be introduced in a manner which ensures that there is no reduction of seats in the general category. This involves substantial expansion of seats which was overdue. The details of the scheme will be finalised shortly and the government will ensure that resources are provided to these institution to enable the neccessary expansion in a manner which does not compromise on quality.

4.3.28 Expanding the scale of higher education is only one part of the solution. The 11th Plan must simultaneously address the problems of varying standards, outdated syllabi and also inadequate facilities. Most of all, it must address the need to create an environment that will attract top class faculty to our universities, with the freedom and resources to interact effectively with their global peers. This will require, in many respects, a complete revamping of existing systems.

4.3.29 The triple objectives of *expansion, inclusion* and *excellence* will require a substantial increase in resources devoted to this sector by both the Centre and the states. Successive annual plans will have to provide rising levels of budgetary support. This must be accompanied by internal resource generation by the universities by realistically raising fees. Simultaneously, efforts will be made to develop wider merit-cum-means based loan and scholarship programmes through the banking system and other agencies. The National Merit Scholarship Scheme needs to be expanded to cover at least the top 2 per cent of the student population in fields of education and skill training. We should also strive to increase the scope of scholarships to SC/ST children.

4.3.30 While it is important to expand access to high quality institutions for the poor and socially disadvantaged, it is also important to recognise that the ability to benefit from higher education is effectively determined by the quality of schooling available to these groups at the school level. The access of those groups to high quality schooling must therefore be improved to ensure that they are not at a disadvantage when they enter institutions of higher education.

4.3.31 The open university system is an important instrument for expanding higher education since it overcomes the

infrastructure constraint. Until a larger network of accessible and well supported colleges is developed, the open schooling programme should be strengthened and expanded. In case of subjects that do not require laboratory work it will be helpful for students to access prerecorded selection of lectures, tutorials, and standardised tests available at internet kiosks. Testing and examination centres where students can take standardised examinations in parts can reduce the pressure. For this autonomous institutions charged with the responsibility of testing and examination will have to be developed. The 11th plan should pay attention to creation of electronically available content and testing mechanisms so that the pressure on infrastructure can be eased.

4.3.32　The role of the private sector in providing high quality education also needs to be recognised and a suitably facilitative environment created to allow such institutions to support our objectives of expanding higher education. Since, these institutions are neither aided by the Centre nor by the state governments, their fee structure cannot be expected to be at par with those aided by the Centre/state governments. The present arrangements regarding control over private education institutions have emerged out of a series of court decisions and may not reflect an adequate appreciation of financial compulsions. Private institutions can only develop if they are allowed to charge reasonable fees while also providing need based freeships and scholarships for a certain percentage of

students. There is a need to review the system comprehensively to introduce greater clarity and transparency if we want to see a healthy development of quality private sector education.

(e) Adult Literacy Programmes

4.3.33　The 10th Plan target of attaining 75% literacy rate is likely to be achieved by 2007. The Dakar goal of halving the illiteracy rate by 2015 will thus be achieved ahead of time However, bridging of regional, social. and gender gaps will continue to be major areas of concern.

4.3.34 Our aim is to increase adult literacy to 85% by the end of the 11th Plan period of the 30 crore adult illiterates in our country, a significant proportion is not covered under any adult education programme. A programme using the new computer based self-learning system will be framed for the 35+ age group.

4.3.35　Currently literacy programmes cover 598 out of 600 districts in the country. The Mid-term Appraisal of the 10th Plan pointed out the need for merger of various adult literacy programmes including the Total Literacy Campaign. The quality of the various programmes initiated by the NGOs will be assessed through regular monitoring, and central and state governments will evolve an accreditation process. The NYKS network, synergised with the PRI network, will be fully utilised through the Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan to fulfill the goals of adult literacy under the overall umbrella of the Total Literacy Campaign.

4.3.36　Adult literacy as we measure it today is not an adequate indicator

of the level of functional literacy that is required in the new millennium. A computer based functional literacy tool developed by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has the capacity to make an adult illiterate read a newspaper in 8-10 weeks. If deployed nationally as a mission, *India can become 100% literate within 5 years.* SAC-PM has recommended that this be taken up as a national mission. We must commit ourselves to a much higher level of literacy through continuing education programme. The 11th plan will, as a separate stream, create workable models of continuing education.

(f) The Cutting Edge: Science and Technology

4.3.37   In the current knowledge era, our development depends crucially on the ability to harness science and technology to stimulate innovative solutions. Capabilities in S&T therefore are reckoned as a reliable benchmark for establishing the status of the development of a nation. India must occupy a frontline position in this listing. The 11th Five Year Plan approach to S&T should be guided by this ambition. The emphasis should be on:

(i)   Evolving an integrated S&T Plan and providing the needed resources, substantially stepping up support to basic research, setting up a National Level mechanism for evolving policies and providing direction to basic research.

(ii)   Enlarging the pool of scientific manpower and strengthening the S&T infrastructure. Focused efforts will be made to identify and nurture bright young students who can take up scientific research as a career. Restructuring and revamping the universities and improving the service conditions of the scientists is a concomitant requirement for this.

(iii)   Implementing selected National Flagship Programmes which have direct bearing on the technological competitiveness of the country in a mission mode so that India emerges as a leader in some high technology areas.

(iv)   Establishing globally competitive research facilities and centres of excellence. Kindling innovative spirit so that scientists translate R&D leads into scalable technologies which yield wealth generating products and processes. Attention will have to be paid to the development of new models of public-private partnerships in higher education, and in particular, in research in universities and high technology areas.

(v)   Identifying ways and means for catalysing Industry-academia collaborations for development, application and flow of technologies from lab to the market place and for the industry to invest more in strengthening national S&T infrastructure.

(vi)   Promoting strong linkages with other countries in the area of science and technology including participation in mega international science initiatives.

(vii)   Evolving an empowered National Science and Technology Commission

responsible for all matters relating to S&T (Administrative, Financial, Scientific) including scientific audit and performance measurement of scientists and scientific institutions.

4.3.38 Culture is an integrating force that binds the nation and it is reflected in people's daily life and should be treated as an integral part of all development programmes. Given the continental size of the country, the monumental diversity of its people and their languages, the plurality of faiths and belief systems, conservation and promotional activities of cultural heritage call for ensuring dissemination of our composite culture, special efforts are required to promote all regional languages, to sustain the folk and traditional art, and to maintain, document, research and propagate dissemination of the intangible cultural heritage. Also a system needs to be evolved (with involvement of PRIs) to protect monuments not protected by ASI.

4.4 A Comprehensive Strategy for Better Health

4.4.1 The 10th Plan aimed at providing essential primary health care, particularly to the underprivileged and underserved segments of our population. It also sought to devolve responsibilities and funds for health care to PRIs. However, progress towards these objectives has been slow and the targets on MMR & IMR have been missed. Accessibility remains a major issue especially in areas where habitations are scattered and women and children continue to die en route to hospitals. Rural health care in most states is marked by absenteeism of doctors/health providers, low levels of skills, shortage of medicines, inadequate supervision/monitoring and callous attitudes. There are neither rewards for service providers nor punishments for defaulters. As a result, health outcomes in India are adverse compared to bordering countries like Sri Lanka as well as countries of South East Asia like China and Vietnam (See Table 6).

Table 6: *India and Comparable Countries*

	India	Sri Lanka	China	Vietnam
Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)	60 (2003)	13 (2003)	30 (2003)	19 (2003)
One year olds fully immunised for measles (%)	58 (2002-04)	99 (2003)	84 (2003)	93 (2003)
Population with sustainable access to improved sanitation (%)	30 (2002)	91 (2002	44 (2002)	41 (2002)
Under-five mortality (per 1000 live births)	87 (2003)	15 (2003)	37 (2003)	23 (2003)
Births attended by skilled birth attendants (%)	47.6 (2002-04)	97 (1995-2003)	97 (1995-2003)	85 (1995-2003)
Maternal mortality (per 100,000 deliveries)	407 (adjusted 2000)	92 (adjusted 2000)	56 (adjusted 2000)	130 (adjusted 2000)

4.4.2 Achievement of health objectives involves much more than curative or even preventive medical care. We need a comprehensive approach which encompasses individual health care, public health, sanitation, clean drinking water, access to food and knowledge about hygiene and feeding practice. This is a difficult area because of our sociocultural complexities and also regional diversity. Policy interventions therefore have to be evidence based and responsive to area specific differences. With concerted action including enabling pregnant women to have institutional deliveries and receive nutritional supplements; connecting PHCs and CHCs by all weather roads so that they can be reached quickly in emergencies; (accessibility to hospital should be measured in terms of travel time, not just distance from nearest PHC); providing home-based neo natal care induding emergency life saving measures etc, we can be on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals for IMR, MMR and for combating diseases by the end of the 11th Plan.

4.4.3 To improve the primary health care system, the 11th Plan will first lay emphasis on integrated district health plans and second, on block specific health plans. These plans will ensure

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Box No.8
The National Rural Health Mission

- The National Rural Health Mission is expected to address the gaps in the provision of effective health care to rural population with special focus on 18 States, which have weak public health indicators and/or weak infrastructure.

- The Mission is a shift away from the vertical health and family welfare programmes to a new architecture of all inclusive health development in which societies under different programmes will be merged and resources pooled at the district level.

- It aims at effective integration of health concerns with determinants of health like safe drinking water, sanitation and nutrition through integrated District Plans for Health.There is a provision for flexible funds so that the States can utilise them in the areas they feel are important.

- The Mission provides for appointment of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) in each village and strengthening public health infrastructure, including outreach through mobile clinics. It emphasises involvement of the non-profit sector, especially in the under served areas: It also aims at flexibility at the local level by providing for untied funds.

- The Mission, in its supplementary strategies, will aim at fostering public-private partnerships; regulating the private sector to improve equity and reduce out of pocket expenses; introducing effective risk pooling mechanisms and social health insurance; and taking advantage of local health traditions.

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involvement of all health related sectors and emphasize partnership with NGOs. The NRHM has already been launched to ensure quality health care in rural areas. The next step should be to extend this to make it a Sarva Swasthya Abhiyan that also covers the health needs of the urban poor, particularly the slum dwellers by investing in high calibre health professionals and appropriate technology.

4.4.4 Besides reducing the burden and the level of risk of existing, growing and emerging diseases, the 11th Plan will also take care of the special needs of people who are HIV positive, particularly women. The 11th Plan will recognise the feminine face of HIV and accord it the highest priority.

4.4.5 The 11th Plan will continue to advocate fertility regulation through voluntary and informed consent. It will also address the special healthcare needs of the elderly, especially those who are economically and socially vulnerable.

(a) National Rural Health Mission

4.4.6 A seven year National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), which spans the duration of the 11th Plan, has been launched to address infirmities and problems across rural primary health care (*See Box No.8*). Converging the public health approach with primary health care has been one of the primary objectives of this mission. Another objective is to genuinely empower and support Panchayati Raj Institutions to manage, administer, and be accountable for health services at community levels. Supervision of

health subcentres by gram panchayats will improve attendance of staff, motivate appropriate quality of care and provide constant feedback on patient satisfaction. The NRHM will also converge the management of health delivery across all systems of medicine (including ISM) at primary health care levels.

4.4.7 India has its own well developed indigenous systems of health care like *ayurveda, yoga, siddha, unani* etc, along with diverse ecosystem specific, local health traditions. These systems could be used to complement the allopathic system, as they could be more useful in certain areas of curative/preventive health care. This would enhance the quality and outreach of public health services, which are currently unable to meet the health needs of our people. However, care would have to be taken to ensure that we do not substitute the allopathic system of health care in areas like immuniszation, etc where it has no alternative.

4.4.8 At present, our healthcare system suffers from a severe shortage of trained personnel. Across states, 6.30% posts of doctors remain vacant and random checks show that 29-67% doctors are absent. One way of overcoming the difficulty in recruiting qualified doctors to serve in rural areas is to make greater use of trained paramedical personnel. There is a strong case for reintroducing the 2 year licentiate course in medicine which existed earlier but was abolished. We

also need to devise ways of training and accrediting the rural health providers (popularly called RMPs) and permitting them to provide select services under the supervision of a licensed medical practitioner.

(b) *Disability and Mental Health*

4.4.9 Coping with challenges of living in a rapidly developing society and increasing exposure to a violent world has led to a perceptible increase in mental stress. Provision of mental health care is thus vital. From the children of farmers who commit suicide to victims of violence, calamities and sexual abuse, all need counselling support. Yet this has been a much neglected area in our country. Even today there is a stigma attached to mental illness which prevents many from reaching out. The 11th Plan should recognise the importance of mental health care and should concentrate on providing counselling, medical services and establishing helplines for all – especially people affected by calamities, riots and violence. Adequate budgetary provisions will be made available for this purpose.

4.4.10 The 2001 Census reveals that 2.13% of our population or approximately 2.19 crore people in India suffer from severe disability. The 11th Plan will take special measures to not just prevent discrimination against the disabled, especially children with disability, but also introduce policies to empower them and enable them to lead a life of dignity. The Persons with Disability (Equality Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 which provides various entitlements to persons with disability will be effectively operationalised.

(c) *Financing Health Services*

4.4.11 Energising health systems involves additional government expenditure. The existing level of government expenditure on health in India is just under 1 percent which is unacceptably low and effort should be made to increase the total expenditure at the Centre and the states to 2-3% of GDP. This must be accompanied by innovative financing mechanisms which incentivise performance. The quality of publicly supplied healthcare depends on how healthcare providers are paid. Providers should be paid only if they actually perform a service or satisfy the customer (the patient or the village health committee). Such systems linking payment to performance will increase accountability and should be encouraged.

4.4.12 The 11th Plan should experiment with different systems of private-public partnership, of which many examples already exist in some states. We could explore the possibility of an entitlement system for pregnant women to have professionally supervised deliveries. This will empower them to exercise choice, as well as create competition in the health service sector. Contracting out well-specified and delimited projects such as immunisation can help enhance accountability. This does not mean that

the state will withdraw from the health sector. Studies across the country have shown that expenditure on healthcare is a primary cause of indebtedness. Due to inadequate and non-performing public health infrastructure, the poor are forced to approach private' practitioners who charge exorbitant fees. It is thus vital to ensure access to functioning public sector healthcare facilities.

4.4.13 Experience has shown that severe ill health can lead to disastrous outcomes for individuals and their families especially for the poor. These problems are best handled by health insurance. Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) is emerging as a promising concept and existing experience in different states has shown that well managed pre-payment systems with risk pooling are effective in protecting the poor from impoverishment due to high medical costs during catastrophic health events. CBHI initiatives based on some individual contributions to the premium, plus a government subsidy, deserve to be supported as they would improve the quality of healthcare and expand the healthcare interventions as per requirements. We also need to look at alternative approaches such as comprehensive risk pooling packages through the public system and through accredited private providers. This is possibly an area where multiple experiments need to be encouraged so that we can come to firmer conclusions about what model will work best.

(d) Clean Water for All

4.4.14 Water-borne infections hamper absorption of food even when intake is sufficient. Clean drinking water is therefore vital to reduce the incidence of disease and to check malnutrition. The 10th Plan target of providing potable drinking water to all villages has not been achieved. Under Bharat Nirman, we now plan to cover the 55067 uncovered habitations in 4 years (2005-09). Rural Water Supply is, however, beset with the problem of sustainability, maintenance, and water quality. Thus though more than 95% coverage was achieved prior to Bharat Nirman, 2.8 lakh out of the 14.22 lakh habitations in the country, have slipped back from fully covered to partially covered status. Another 2.17 lakh habitations have problems with the quality of water; about 60,000 habitations face serious problems of salinity or arsenic and fluoride contamination. These habitations will also be taken up under Bharat Nirman. The 11th Plan will emphasise full and timely realisation of the Bharat Nirman targets.

4.4.15 The 11th Plan will also address issues of sustainability by moving away wherever possible from ground water to surface water resources. Where alternate sources do not exist, or are not cost effective, ground water recharge measures will be insisted upon in the vicinity of the project.

4.4.16 The Plan will move away from state implemented and managed projects to encourage community owned and managed projects, like the

Swajaldhara Programme. In the 10th Plan, Swajaldhara had a limited provision of 20% of the allocation of the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). It will need to be upscaled so that more and more schemes are community managed, reducing the maintenance burden and responsibility of the state. For this purpose, the states will have to fully utilise the funds provided by the 12th Finance Commission.

(e) Sanitation

4.4.17 Rural sanitation coverage was only 1% in the 1980s. With the launch of the Central Rural Sanitation Programme in 1986, the coverage improved to 4% in 1988 and then to 22% in 2001. The programme was modified as Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999 changing the earlier supply driven, high subsidy and departmentally executed programme to a low subsidy, demand driven one, with emphasis on hygiene education. Five hundred and forty districts are covered under this programme and the population coverage is expected to increase to about 35% by the end of the 10th Plan.

4.4.18 Lack of sanitation is directly linked to a number of waterborne diseases. It is now generally acknowledged that unless 100% coverage of the community is achieved and proper solid waste management carried out, health indicators will not show significant improvement. Besides, toilets are essential for the dignity and safety of girls and women. The subsidy regime in the current programme is only for BPL families. For full coverage to be achieved however, APL families will have to be motivated to switch over from open defecation to use of toilets. The Information, Education, and Communication (lEC) campaign will therefore receive increased attention in the 11th Plan. Meanwhile, the cost norms for individual household toilets are already being revised and a solid waste management component is being included in the programme. These measures coupled with a focused IEC campaign will significantly increase sanitation coverage in the 11th Plan.

4.4.19 Steps are also being taken to link rural sanitation with the rural health mission. The Nirmal Gram Puraskar, a reward scheme for 100% open defecation free communities has been a motivating factor and is picking up momentum as can be seen from the number of communities competing for the Puraskar. With sufficient allocation of funds in the 11th Plan, the MDG goal for sanitation can be met by 2010, and full coverage achieved between 2012 and 2015.
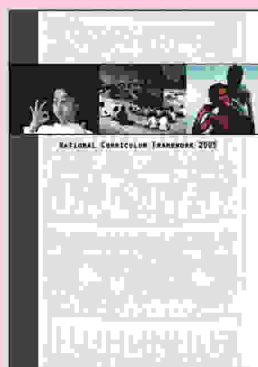
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