

EDITOR'S NOTE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Academic Editor, JIE