

EDITOR'S NOTE

The core of school education is a child who enters in school in her early childhood and expected to stay there generally till the end of her adolescence. This does not happen with all the children. They start dropping out since their early classes. Data shows more dropouts in girls and also amongst children belonging to marginalised groups.

So, still a good number of children are out of our school system. Open schools are also in place to cater to the needs of those children who cannot join formal schooling. Even then, the number of out of school children draws our attention.

Why this drop out? Of course, socio-economic factors play a greater role in this. But school factors are also responsible for not retaining children. What are these school factors? These are the factors, which not only push children out of the school but also are responsible for the deterioration of quality of schooling.

An article on 'Education for Tribal Children: Need for Improved Pedagogy' written by Malli Gandhi included in this issue talks about various factors which are important to enhance the quality of school education addressing needs of diverse group or children. The article focusses on modification of pedagogic routine in tribal context. Another article by Sunita Chugh entitled 'Civil strife and education of Children: A Study of Districts Affected by Left Wing Extremism' raises issue of schooling in a different contexts where the ever presence of large contingent security personnel and ever present threat of violence breaking any point of time has put off children particularly girl child from schools. This paper attempts to identify areas of concern that need immediate policy attention.

A research article contributed by Deepti Srivastava and Shobha entitled 'Researching with Children's Voice: Challenges in the Field' raises a concern on children's voices not being heard in the formal school situation. When these voices are heard in free spaces, these gave an idea of how children are constantly engaged, reflected, manipulated and guarded themselves in their social world which need to be connected with school knowledge. This concern is further strengthened by an article on the analysis of home assignment of students at the primary level, wherein Kusum Bhatia emphasises upon creation of desire in teacher to engage children in activities and to participate in learning experiences.

When children get opportunity to share their experiences in the classroom, they feel respected, they experience freedom of expression and this leads them towards strengthening their self-esteem. A memorial lecture on the theme 'Rabindranath Tagore and Democratic Theory' given by Amiya Kumar Bagchi in the Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar under NCERT's Memorial Lecture Series reflects upon human freedom in

the context of democratic society. In the lecture the statement 'Democracy and its foundation, human freedom, are both endangered in today's world' points towards educationists, posing a challenge of practicing democracy in the classroom rather than discussing democracy right from the early stages.

This issue also includes an article which looks at teacher as a leader. The article 'Students Learn When Teachers Lead' by Sameena Basu, examines the relationship between leadership behavior of teachers and students' achievement, whereas a research article contributed by Anjali Sharma explores relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

With child in the centre, the essential components such as curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, etc. at different stages seek our serious attention.

Two articles – one on 'Exploring the Science of Society' by Pankaj Arora and the other one entitled 'School Economics in the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER): An overview of the developmental process' by Aerum Khan provides an overview of shifts in subject-specific perspectives. A status report on the growth and development of pre-primary education in Assam by Sumona Roy and Rashmi Rekha Saikiya raises various concerns for pre-primary teacher education in Assam. The issue concludes with the review of a book entitled 'School Without walls: Inclusive Education for All' done by Pushpa Mandal, wherein the author raises the issue of equity and social justice in the context of education.

Let us not sum up the discussion, let us now begin another series of deliberations.

JIE invites your opinions and articles on various aspects of education.

Academic Editor