

EDITOR'S NOTE

Protecting, conserving and nurturing our environment is the need of the hour today so as to have a healthy and secure life. Steps and measures have been taken to safeguard it as men have realised the importance of the environment. UN has taken initiative to promote and educate the international communities on the environment they are living in. To kindle the collective consciousness of the international communities, UN in 1972 convened 'United Nations Conference on the Human Environment' in Stockholm, 'to inspire and guide the peoples of the world in the preservation and enhancement of the human environment'. This issue includes a comprehensive discussion on this theme in the form of Madhav Gadgil's lecture. Madhav Gadgil, a renowned ecologist presented NCERT's Golden Jubilee Lecture on the theme '*Parisara: A Free, Public Domain Knowledge Resource on Indian Environment Developed in a Collaborative Fashion*' which brings home the essence of environment that we live in and reinforces that it is the collective responsibility of the State and its people to enhance and promote the health and well-being of the environment. He emphasises that the education sector has the potential to play a vital role through teachers and students to promote and spread awareness about our environment. Developing sensibility towards environment through school education is really an effort towards fulfilling cherished dream of inclusive and sustainable growth. In this regard, an article contributed by Shashi Singh, Ajay Singh and Kiran Singh 'Working towards Inclusive Growth: Skill Development Mission' rightly pointed out that skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development of any country. However, the major challenges and obstacles have been the fast growth rate and poor skill index of its population. Nevertheless, with the initiative cooperation of states and the Centre and with public-private partnership India can achieve its cherished dream of inclusive and sustainable growth and development.

Another article entitled, 'The UGC: Financing of Higher Education in India', by Janailung Kamei Francis deals with the emerging issues in public financing of higher education. UGC is an apex and statutory body solely responsible for the disbursement of grants to the colleges and universities. The article also highlights the challenges and problems faced by UGC in delivering its responsibilities as the country opens up to the globalising forces. He further points out that higher education in India needs a huge amount of resources not merely to provide good quality education but to transform the nation as a whole.

'ICT Kit in Mathematics' by P.K. Chaurasia suggests teachers to use ICT based tools in regular mathematics teaching, experimenting innovations as well

as comprehensive evaluation devices. Shamim Ahmad in his study explores the perceptions of prospective teachers towards using open educational resources to enhance knowledge base, improve learning and conduct research. The article of Jose C. C., 'A Study of Work Values of Secondary School Teachers in Relation to Organizational Culture', highlights teacher's understanding on the work values and organisational culture as a means to quality and efficient management of the schools, especially in public institutions. 'Teacher Preparation for Inclusive Education: A Major Concern for India in New Times' co-authored by Radhakanta Gartia and Sushama Sharma is basically seeking inclusive education for special care needs students in regular schools. And for this task teachers are required to be prepared to handle likely challenges and problem when put into practice. 'Policies and Programmes on ECCE in India: An Evaluation' by Sujit Kumar Choudhary raises the issues of ECCE (early child care and education) policies and programmes in India, whose main target are the vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Through the study it is found that we are unable to meet the said target of reaching out to the unreached even today as far as ECCE is concerned. B.C. Das in his paper, through the case study of Class IX students found Self-Study Material (SSM) significantly effective than the traditional method of teaching as it gives choice to learn in his or her preferred ways of learning.

'A Study of Awareness of Open Book Examination System' by Mandira Sikdar and Swati Amraotkar highlights the usefulness of the Open Book Examination in the present context and opines that this system of examination will inculcate critical thinking among students. However, its implementation requires necessary preparation on the part of academic institution and learners.

Though corporal punishment is legally banned in our schools, it is being practised by many teachers in the name of discipline. A study jointly conducted by Naba K. Mondal and Sunayna Prasad endorsed that corporal punishment is still favoured by a large number of teachers in Indian schools.

In view of the NCF 2005 recommendations, the NCERT has recently developed a new course namely, 'Human Ecology and Family Sciences' for +2 level. The issue presents a brief report about the curriculum and textbooks prepared for the course by Sushma Jaireth. This issue of JIE starts with environmental concerns and concludes with a book review done by Aparna Pandey which talks about environmental hazards. Taking forward this dialogue in New Year 2012 we wish you a green year ahead.

Academic Editor
JIE