

EDITORIAL

The quality of education, particularly school education, is largely dependent on the quality of teachers, which in turn, is largely dependent on the quality of their professional development and personal motivation. Indeed, the two cannot be separated. Although the subject knowledge of teachers is important, and needs to be updated regularly, there is, in addition, an overwhelming necessity the teachers to be aware of progress in fields other than their own. Systems that encourage reading, discussion and networking would aid teachers' professional development.

The paper 'A Strong Foundation: Early Literacy in North East India' examines the *Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat* document launched by the Government of India on August 26, 2014 in the context of North East India and attempts to explore ways to leverage to support early reading and writing with comprehension for children in class I and II. The paper on ECE and Quality Education for All focuses on the positive effects of the early childhood education and quality Education For All. Early childhood education influences intellectual development besides fostering social and emotional development supported by research evidence. 'Acquiring Scientific Skills through Science Education in Schools: A Critical Reflection' gives a brief introduction of science education and its purpose, with particular emphasis on scientific skill development through science education in the school curriculum.

The efficiency and advancement of technology in facilitating learning and learning in the current time particularly in urban and metro settings is brought out in the paper 'ICT Augmented Elementary Teaching and Learning'. Technology is providing opportunities for collaborative content creation, enhancing creativity as well as fair, transparent and participatory evaluation in order to achieve quantitative, qualitative and acceptable facilitating learning and learning, depicting its trust in the principles of constructivism. 'In Search of a Professional Identity' shows how dedicated, knowledgeable and reflective teachers can foster critical and creative thinking in students. Teaching remains a human endeavour. To disseminate quality education, teachers need to be seen as an active agency who can think for her students, taking into cognizance the multiple socio-political and cultural backgrounds of the learners. The paper argues that the focus should be on empowering teachers so that they can devise the best way to face the challenge of multi-cultural classrooms and to achieve this, a serious rethinking of teachers' professionalism needs to be worked out.

This issue has three papers related to evaluation. One of them attempts to look carefully at the issues that seem to be inhibiting the desired implementation of No Detention Policy along with the policy of Continuous and Comprehension Evaluation. The paper also focuses on the rationale for the two, and argues that perhaps the policy has not been understood in the right perspective. The urge to bring back the No Detention policy may not assure the expected improvement, rather it may push children who are not promoted to next class to withdraw from the system due to demotivation. The second, 'Why CCE still a Challenge' discusses an article in a newspaper, titled "CCE has improved scores, not teaching" - a conversation with the CBSE Chairperson Mr. Vineet Joshi. The conversation concludes with "Shift in teaching methodology still a challenge" focussing on some questions such as why teaching has not improved, even after so many efforts; and why Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation is still a challenge? The article is an effort to find out the answers of these questions as well as to study the attitude of Teachers of Government and Non-Government Schools towards Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation. The third paper, 'Performance-based Assessment for Assessing Science Learning' focuses on the fact that performance-based assessment tasks provide opportunities to students to demonstrate their problem solving abilities by working individually or in groups. The aim of performance-based assessment is to integrate it with learning. During the performance-based assessment, students get opportunities to apply various science process skills such as classifying, formulating hypotheses, interpreting data, and conducting an experiment.

The RTE Act 2009 brought with it a hope of change for parents as well as children. 'Right To Education Act 2009: Power or Plight for a Parent' focuses on whether children have actually got benefitted by it and parents got the long-awaited breath of relief or not. It also focuses on the possibility of the act shorten the gap between underprivileged and middle class family children by bringing equal educational opportunities for all. From the discussion, it can be stated ostensibly enough that RTE's implementation has further broadened the gap between two economic strata, leaving parents of both the groups wondering how RTE has changed the educational scenario. Finally, the paper suggests that to gain its aspired results the government should take some steps like common school system in which all the groups can come onto one platform. It should also aim at creating widespread awareness among parents about RTE Act to make them realise the power instead of plight of RTE. A paper titled, 'Teacher's perception and practice about nature-based teaching at the Pre-primary level' explores the ways in which young children learn about the natural world by interacting with it. Teachers and other

adults must attend to the frequency, nature, and the quality of interactions that take place between children and the natural world during the early years. Constant engagement aids them in the learning process and thus, facilitates their overall growth or holistic development. Also it implies that the awareness and attitude of teachers can be augmented through intervention programmes. Inclusion of natural environment components in the preschool curriculum needs strengthening.

The other articles in this issue are ‘Concept Mapping as a successful tool of teaching-learning and evaluation in primary grades’; Study of Four Main Pillars of Quality Education in Mobile Learning Centre (Delhi) and an interesting reflection on the elementary education in Arunachal Pradesh.

These articles reflect on the nature of teachers’ professional development, covering a wide range of needs and contexts, including sharing the information of varied practices and insight on how technology can benefit teachers. It is up to teachers and educators to make optimal use of them.

— **Academic Editors**