

## EDITORIAL

Childhood is the most crucial stage in a person's life, as it is during this period that foundations are laid for motor, sensory, cognitive, language, social and personality development. This makes the role of a teacher an important one since it is the teacher who serves as a link between the children and parents, and children and the outside world. Besides, the teacher has to address students with diverse needs, including Children With Special Needs (CWSN) and those belonging to varied socioeconomic backgrounds. This issue of the journal focuses on 'inclusive education', apart from covering other important topics regarding the teaching-learning process.

The first article titled 'Why this *Kolaveri* about Teaching Vowel Sounds at HKG Level?' by Sanjay Arora and Anshika Arora is based on teaching vowel sounds to children at the higher kindergarten level in a Jaipur public school with the help of a textbook titled *Step Up with English Primer*. It points out how teaching from such textbooks can distort the very foundation of students and induce inappropriate learning style in them. It emphasises that teaching of sounds is the base of spoken English.

The next article titled 'Issues of Inclusive Education in Manipur' by Wangkheirakpam Bidyabati and Lairellakpam Seilendra Singh aims to find out the issues challenging inclusive education as regards to disabled students in schools located in Manipur's Imphal East and West districts. It underlines that none of the schools have trained teachers and resource persons. Besides, they do not prepare Individualised Education Plans to cater to CWSN.

The paper titled 'Engaging with Disability for a Common Right' by Quazi Ferdoushi Islam also tries to understand inclusion from the perspective of disability, and policies and programmes initiated by the government for their inclusion in mainstream education.

The paper titled 'Early Mathematics Learning Assessment' by Satya Bhushan underlines the significance of mathematics education at the early grades of schooling and how mathematical concepts learnt at this stage impacts future learning.

The article 'The Unheard Voices behind the Telephone' by Vandana Kerur acknowledges the work of Alexander Graham Bell and the role he played in the life of Helen Keller, a blind and mute girl.

In the article 'Linguistic Roots — Mother Tongues of Indian Children in South Africa', author Debjani Naskar elaborates how government policies can lead to the rise or fall of a language, taking the example of a large Indian

diaspora living in the country. English is the primary language for most of the Indians living there. The history of South Africa, in terms of policy and society, had a strong impact on Indian communities adversely affecting the growth of vernacular languages. The author stresses it is important for the Indian community in South Africa to keep their native languages alive, and preserve their cultural and linguistic identity.

In the section, 'From the States', Vikas Garad talks about the implementation of *Chavadi Vachan* programme in villages across the State of Maharashtra. The programme, a social audit of reading, aims to promote the mother tongue among students.

The issue also carries its regular features — Book Review, Did You Know and My Page.

In the review of the book, *Culturally Proficient Instruction — A Guide for People who Teach*, by Kikanza J. Nuri-Robins, Delores B. Lindsey, Randall B. Lindsey and Raymond D. Terrell, reviewers Amruth G Kumar and Dinesh G share that the book serves as a manual of culturally proficient instructions for teachers and educational institutions.

The 'Did You Know' section introduces the readers to the world's first Children's University located in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, which works under four dimensions — education, research, training and extension. It covers child and adolescence development — starting from foetus till the attainment of 18 years of age. It also runs health awareness and child rearing programmes for expecting mothers, apart from postgraduation courses in many subjects.

In the 'My Page' section, author Varada M. Nikalje explains how one's assumptions are not always correct or justifiable. In the article titled 'The Mirage of Assumptions', she elaborates on 'mirage' with some examples of assumptions, which may perhaps be embedded in some parents, teachers and other stakeholders in education. This would, in turn, impact the teaching-learning process, and hence, learning outcomes.