

## EDITORIAL

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This combined issue, July and October 2010 of the *Primary Teacher* focuses on different dimensions of elementary education highlighting the challenges of ensuring equality of educational opportunity, ways and means for making right of children to free and compulsory education a reality, articles related to teaching-learning processes, transactional strategies, teacher training and the role of community participation for improving the teaching-learning at elementary stage. There are eleven articles/papers included in this issue.

Presenting the views of great Indian thinkers and educational philosophers is one of the permanent features of the *Primary Teacher*. Under the section *Eminent Indian Educationists* the article 'Mahatma Jotiba Phule: An Educational Philosopher' presents the educational thoughts and work of Mahatma Jotiba Phule. It highlights Jotiba's pioneering work for the upliftment of masses through mass education and paving the way for constitutional provisions for ensuring equality of educational opportunity. The article also informs about the influence Jotiba had on Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar, who regarded him as his *Guru*. His visions about eradicating the social evils through equal educational opportunities for girls, downtrodden and lower castes have been discussed.

Under the section *Articles and Papers* the first article is on 'Role of Play in Enhancing Cognitive and Language Development of Children.' It focuses on the fantasy play and its significance on child's all-round development during early childhood. It elaborates the various elements of fantasy play and culture-specific play preferences of children. The second article is about rights of children to free and compulsory education titled 'Right to Education—A Precious Gift to Children'. It highlights the salient features of RTE-2009 and suggests a way forward to implementation of RTE act in the States and UTs effectively.

The next three articles are related to classroom teaching and transactional strategies. The first two relate to Teaching of English and the third one is about activity-based learning in Tamil Nadu. The first article titled 'Raindrops', a new series of textbooks in English prepared by the NCERT, outlines the special features of these books prepared in the light of NCF-2005. The potential of these books in helping the children living in rural areas, whose exposure to English is limited, learn English faster and in meaningful light has been highlighted. The second article is on 'Literary Texts : Classroom

Interaction' highlights the approaches to teaching of prose, poetry and other forms of literary texts with a view to making the teaching-learning an interesting and enjoyable experience for children. The third one 'Activity-based Learning in Tamil Nadu— The Teachers' Attitude' explores the views of teachers about the ABL methodology. It highlights that the views of teachers bear great significance for the success and sustainability of the new approach and offer suggestions to make the approach an integral part of teaching-learning.

Teachers' training and their attitude are very important factors influencing teaching-learning. The two studies included in the present volume are 'A Study on the Professional Development of Newly Inducted Teachers through Teachers' Talk and Narratives' and 'A Study of Burnout among Primary School Teachers'. The first one highlights an innovative approach to training of teachers and explains in what ways it is helpful in making the teachers' professional development courses more effective. It assesses the impact of narratives used in the in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes. The second study assesses the extent of burnout among primary teachers in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. It explores the difference in the extent of burnout among teachers taking into consideration the variables like male and female, rural and urban and newly appointed and experienced teachers.

Role of community and community-based organisations is of vital significance in realising the rights of children to free and compulsory education. An evolutionary approach towards effective community participation has remained a concern for long. The article 'Primary Education in India: Experiences of Community Participation' highlights the various dimensions of community participation since the implementation of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). 'Morning and Evening *Madrasas* of District Thiruvananthapuram of Kerala: A Case Study' highlights the role of *Madrasas* in educating children along with imparting religious instructions. It provides a first hand account of content and processes of instructions in *Madrasas* in Kerala. The last article 'National Plan of Action for Children 2005; Child Development' under the section *Did You Know* features various aspects related to children's right to development as provided under the United Nations Convention for Rights of Children (UNCRC) and translated by MWCD, Government of India into a National Plan of Action for Children-2005. It addresses various aspects related to child development including education.

The efforts of Seema Irshad, Junior Project Fellow for her hardwork are acknowledged.

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