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Editorial

These are difficult times and in these difficult times children and education are silent sufferers. The immediate priorities have been demanding so much attention that these have again got to the back burner. We have more to wait before we can pay these the attention they have required in the past. Indeed with the fact that children have not been able to access any school or education for over a year getting them back to the rhythm of the school and the rigours of learning is not going to automatic. Those who were near the level of independent reading and those who were struggling and reading a few words would have slipped for the lack of opportunity to build on what they knew and the absence of peer and teacher guidance. For those who had developed capability of reading or doing some tasks in mathematics would have to recapture the abilities and that would require patience from all of us. There has been absence of school for a long while for most children and even for those who have had on line classes there has not been as much engagement and learning. Many studies with the teachers, parents and children have shown that they all feel that schools are being missed and would hope that they open as fast as they can. What we all wish is that it should happen soon and we make up for the lost time and here we need to be cautious. In our activity as well as in work with children we have to keep in mind that we move slowly. The school should not try to quickly take the learners to the age expected levels and burden them with texts and tasks that they may have found easy to do when they were having regular schools. There is a need to be patient as there is in the return to the kind of movement and social mixing that we were used to.

The New Education Policy 2020 has presented many ideas that have been a continued thread in Indian educational thought. These ideas about the need to encourage self-learning and building the initial or foundational capabilities to the extent that they become a part of the natural repertoire of the learner enabling him to move forward and become a self-directed learner having the ability to also acquire sources from sources other than the classroom as well. The policy emphasises the foundational literacy and also the foundational mathematical and numeracy abilities and give indicators of what they include.

The report of the committee (Dr. K. Kasturirangan Committee Report) that is supplementary to the briefer National Education Policy 2020 document elaborates how the development of learning should be seen across different stages and not merely across grades. It also points out the need for a holistic view of learning and focus on the enablement of learners towards an anxiety free and wholesome learning. It emphasises not just the Foundational literacy and basic mathematical development but also the development of a person that is emotional and socially ethical following the Constitutional directed and human values among which are included values of justice, equity, liberty, plurality and Fraternity. Needless to say for these schools and conversations among children from different background in a free, open and equal way are essential. The purpose of the school therefore as and when they open has to be looked at with inclusion of all these ideas and the effort to carry all learners in the classroom process of teaching and learning.

It is important to talk about and think about this as we prepare for ways to engage with children and struggle to provide them with some occasions to engage with these broad aspects of the school as well and look at their learning trajectory in language and mathematics also holistically and not in a piecemeal manner. We have the next issue focus on the way forward from the NEP 2020 and there would be perhaps many ideas that we would see that would help us in this journey as well. We hope many more people would write for the next issue.



And now about this issue, which has been delayed due to the difficulties in having review, copy editing and design and finalisation of the issue during lock down but we are once again grateful to the reviewers who have helped us give feed back to the authors and help us identify papers suitable for the purposes of this publication. The focus of this is to enable teachers and teacher educators to write their reflective experiences in a form that is located in the academic discourse and also provide a platform to young researchers working in school and teacher education to present their researches that have some implications for school and teacher education and for the teachers and teacher educators.

We look forward to more papers in these domains in the future as well. This issue I, VOL-X, JULY-2021 has 21 papers and articles including a book review. The largest share, in all 7, of these expectedly are focused on matters related to the Teachers. These include their recruitment, their preparation, professional development and continued education and on their experiences, reflections and perceptions. Two papers are linked to the recent efforts of online teaching in the times of the lock down due to COVID pandemic. Two papers are around secondary education and two deal with early learning and two on inclusive schools. There is therefore a wide variety of issues in school and teacher education and allied issues that has been covered in this issue.

The first article by Yatika Arya and Priti Joshi is titled “Literacy Development in Foundational Years of School: Teachers’ Experiences’. The paper points out the social and cultural embeddedness of Literacy skills and its slow development over a long period of time. The authors point out that research has shown many interesting aspects of this process including that it develops best in a responsive setting. The authors have worked with teachers of some schools of Delhi and documented their practices and interviewed them to seek their experiences and understandings. They conclude that the teachers find it difficult to create occasions and opportunities for exploration and self-expression in early years of schooling because of variety of reasons including a lack of materials. They recommend emphasis of these areas in teacher development programs as the inclination of effort towards these in classrooms is reducing.

The second article by Neelima Khetan and Hriday Kant argues that the recent closure of schools and the attempts to include children in on-line sessions brings to fore the necessity of physical schools and the limitations of the virtual mode. The paper refers to different studies as well as its own data of phone interviews with children to conclude that not just children (who have necessary device and bandwidth to access online classes) and their parents (who are comparatively aloof or those deeply engaged with their learning interactions) are extremely disappointed by the online classes but the teachers also find them extremely inadequate. The paper argues for the need to look for ways of making interactions among children feasible through locally conceptualised mechanisms as early as possible.

The third paper emergent transition to remote learning online: A study of experience of students’ doing post-graduation in education by Manasi Thapliyal Navani and Shivani Nag is based on conversations with the students as well as their own observations of the online teaching during the pandemic. This paper attempts to examine and situate the experience of students enrolled in two postgraduate programmes in the discipline of education. The paper reports interesting testimonies from students about the online classes and the difficulties in adjusting to them. The authors suggest that a lot of thinking would have to be put into understanding how to use online classes as a part of blended design and that in the case of education special attention would have to be paid to the development of the human element.

The fourth paper is by Dr. Sneh Bansal, Harpreet Kaur and has the title Perception of Inclusive School and Perceived preparedness and Concerns among school Principals in

Chandigarh, India. The paper is focused on the attempt to identify the challenges perceived by the Principals of the schools to make inclusion possible and understand the state of the infrastructure available for it. The school principals and school observations were the source of data. The data obtained was analyzed under four themes: understanding of the concept of inclusion and principal's contribution in making school inclusive for all, Physical and support services in schools, in- service training of the regular teachers in inclusive education and challenges perceived by the principals in the education of disabled children in schools. The results indicated that although principals had a fairly good idea about inclusion, they did not perceive the schools were ready for inclusion of children with disabilities. The study recommends interventions in building capabilities in the staff as well as providing materials to make the schools inclusive.


The fifth paper by Dr. Tattwamasi Palta singh has the title Child-centered Education in Indian Schools: Policies and the Practice and is focused on the barriers to implementing with child-centered education in Indian schools and suggest an effective pedagogical approach for inclusive school education.

The sixth paper by Meenal Arora and Prof. (Dr.) Jasim Ahmad entitled Green School Model: Best Practices from The Field On Education For Sustainability emphasises the importance of a green school in the light of the challenges related to poverty, hunger, inequality, climate change, loss of biodiversity, natural resource depletion resulting in negative consequences on human health and livelihood. Suggesting that schools go Green to help students understand human impact on the planet and how to address the challenges brought out by the wasteful habits. It studies the efforts schools are making in this direction around the themes of energy, water, waste, food, and biodiversity and in that process empowering various stakeholders to embark on the journey towards sustainable development. The study uses both secondary as well as primary data and is exploratory in nature and also highlights the strategies that schools can easily adopt to make themselves green.

The seventh paper by Dr Pankaj Das has the title Critical Pedagogy and Issue of Social Liberation: A Policy Perspective. It looks at the origins of the critical pedagogy its meaning and implications. It presents the way the term is defined in different documents in particular the NCF 2005 and suggests it as the way to transform society to a desirable form. It also presents the implications of critical pedagogy as described in the NCF on the role of teachers and suggests that the main responsibility for translating the recommendations made in the NCF 2005 lies with the teachers and meaning

The next eighth paper Policy Shifts in School Education by Rahul Mukhopadhyay and Archana Mehendale discusses the evolution in the national policy of education starting from the first comprehensive commission report in 1964-66, which paved the way for the first national policy of education. The paper describes the policy statements and the subtle changes in them and the practices on the ground in moving towards the directive principle intention of providing compulsory education to all. It argues that given the nature of the efforts the consistent political will is required to make quality education available to all in a equitable manner.

The ninth paper by Afshan Naz Quazi, Values in Education: An Astounding Wealth of a Nation in the Contemporary World. The paper argues values have to be an essential part of good education which has to be holistic. It contends that good citizens are made through education and humans are not born good or bad. The paper emphasises on ethical principles such as respect, honesty, empathy, equality, solidarity and critical thinking during learning. This would require intellectual depth, self-reflection, rational thinking and these are fundamental to a life of harmony and sustained progress.



The tenth paper in this issue by Dr Prateek Chaurasia is titled Investigating Conceptual Changes and Difficulties in Learning Mathematics during the Transitional Phase from Arithmetic to Algebra. The paper is based on the study of children in class VI and identifies some of the difficulties children face at this stage where they have to generalise and work with equations and letter numbers. The paper can help teachers study and understand where the children are finding bottle-necks to their understanding and based on that find their next steps.

The eleventh paper Research Productivity of Teacher Educators by Dr. R. Suryakala, is focussed on a study of the research productivity of some teacher educators from a district in Tamil Nadu. The paper points out the low research productivity of these Teacher educators and identifies structural factors that are the cause of the low productivity. The paper also points out measures that can improve the research productivity. It suggests that increased research productivity would improve the quality of work of the teacher educator in other areas as well.

The next paper (twelfth) of Amitosh Dubey explores the research studies carried out on programs of teacher education through open and distance learning in the last two decades (1998-2018). The paper considers researches in India and internationally, and points out that journals are giving adequate attention to open and distance system and many papers are being published in this domain. The paper has however, not reviewed the quality of the researches.

The paper by Savita Ladage, serial number 13, is on the in-service capacity development of one particular cascade model of training. Based on researches across the world that emphasise the need for sustained interaction with teachers instead of just one interaction, the author points out some challenges of using this cost effective way of training. The paper re-emphasises the need for capacity development and continuous engagement of not just the teachers but also the trainers.

The article fourteenth is the review by Nidhi Gulati of a hand book on Child rights. The handbook is called, "Righting wrongs: A Handbook of Child Rights for Teachers" and is written by Monisha Bajaj. The hand book is based on extensive interviews with teachers and the reviewer brings out the essential strengths of the book and what areas does it touch upon.

The next paper, fifteenth in the list, titled 'Effect of social media enabled learning in enhancing achievement in physics at higher secondary level', has been contributed by Mr. Denny John. K , Dr.P.S. Sreedevi. It studies the alternative strategy of Social media Enabled Learning (SMEL) in education. The paper suggests that at secondary level and in the teaching of physics the SMEL strategy is a meaningful possibility particularly in the context of the corona like situations.

The sixteenth article, 'Life History Method to Study Policy Changes and it impact on teacher's lives: Experiences, Dilemmas and Reflections" by Parul Kalra is based on the authors work on the study of teachers and describes the methodology used for a historical study. The paper sketches out the complete process of data collection and throws the light on the participant's views i.e., teacher's views on methodology used by the researcher. In the last two sections the paper delineates dilemmas faced by researcher and reflection on methodology and its dimensions which helped the researcher to navigate through teachers' lives to study the educational policy changes.

The next paper by Pooja Singhal has the title 'A Peep inside an Online Pre-Primary Classroom during COVID-19 Times: Some Reflection, is written from the perspective of a parent and is based on the study of the on-line, pre-primary classes of a private school. It points out that in spite of the policy and what is known from the research on how children

learn and the principles accepted in theoretical ideas on educating young minds, what goes on in these classes in the opposite. They also are not aligned to the values of gender equity and inclusion that have been underlined and have come to be accepted. The author points out that the lessons are only about reading aloud with no conversations and discussion on what the children feel or think about the text.

The eighteenth paper by Shruti Chopra and Abhishreya Sasan, titled, ‘Stories as a Pedagogical Tool for Teaching-Learning of Basic Astronomy’ has also the element of how to use stories in early learning. It focuses on how the intuitive conceptions about the relative movement of the Sun, Earth and Moon and the phenomena of day and night, phases of moon etc can be affected by story-telling. They point out that due to the embeddedness of some of these in culture and the mythical stories heard by them, the children have alternative conceptions that differ significantly from scientifically accepted conceptions and they have little to no understanding of the actual cause and effect relationship involved in the phenomena. The authors suggest that their study shown that designing and enactment of modules to address these preconceptions using story-telling as a pedagogical strategy enabled learners to establish scientifically accepted conceptions

The paper by Pragya Gupta, serial number 19, titled Perception of Prospective Teachers towards Four Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme, is focused on the perceptions of the prospective teachers on the 4 year program. The idea of the 4 year course has gained in importance in the wake of the NEP 2020 as the policy has endorsed quite strongly the 4 year program among other changes concerning teachers. The paper finds that the prospective teachers are favorably inclined to this but suggests that some reforms would be needed to make this effectively possible.

The twentieth paper by Anirban Roy and Sushmita Singh titled “Investigating the Learning Gaps of Senior-Secondary Children through Original (Real-life) Biological Images: What really lacks?” explores the question of the understanding of the Biology students of class XII regarding what they are taught in schools and their ability to relate it to the real life biology. Their work studies the recognition of real life microscopic and macroscopic images of biological entities and events. They point out that these gaps in the understanding accentuate and harden over time. They suggest the need for similar studies in other disciplines and give some suggestions to counter the possibility of such gaps developing.

The last paper Visualising Inclusive school by Ashta Singh and Amita Bajpai is a road map for the important elements that need to be brought in to develop a school as an inclusive one. They point out the infrastructural needs, sitting arrangement, class size, adjustments in curriculum and assessment, individual care and support, assistive technologies for making this possible. They emphasise the fact that the physical and mental wellness of children is the crucial element and that requires trained teachers, special educators and open and flexible teaching methods to make a school inclusive.

We look forward to more papers from you and as we have been pointing out the papers need to be related to school education or teacher development and linked issues about their working environment and their practices. We would like papers that are not merely quantitative data presentations or are attempts to reconfirm prevalent educational ideas and beliefs. It would be nice if the paper has some interesting insights and new dimensions or more vivid details of some aspects of the above mentioned areas emerge from it. As we said the next issue is focused in National Education Policy 2020 and we would welcome more papers on possible ways for it being used effectively or an exploration of the journey leading up to it and what we can learn from the journey as elements to be kept in mind. The time is however short now and we would accept papers that come in by 30th of October, 2021.