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Editorial

This issue has many papers that focus on aspects emphasized in the NEP 2020. The effort towards putting the ideas enshrined in NEP 2020 into practice has begun and many processes are being initiated towards that objective. The papers in this issue explore some of these possibilities and some new ideas around making NEP 2020 work on the ground. They also explore the challenges that may need to be overcome in order to make the implementation effective

The other significant thing that has happened is the opening out of life subsequent to the retreat of Corona in India. As life and face to face interactions come back to what they were before the virus hit the human society things are coming back to normal. As a result of this easing out, schools have finally opened after a long gap. It is now time for the teachers to assess the effect of the long gap and find ways to ensure that the learning by children is continued. There are many stories about instances of teachers finding ways using self-constructed materials or modifying existing materials to focus on those ideas that form the base for further learning. As the teachers continue to engage with the task of ensuring learning of children, some of the ideas emerging during this period could be relevant for further explorations. The use of technology, its access, possibility, its strengths and limitations, when used for classroom teaching-learning has become an important concern. With these explorations, the questions of stage-wise and area-wise suitability of the use of technology have also emerged as an important concern. The use of ICT in education has always been a contested terrain and the NEP 2020 has put forward many critical points that have to be kept in mind while promoting the use of ICT to aid learning in classrooms. Among other things, NEP 2020 underlines the development of a holistic view of the child and his/her education. It emphasises the need to ensure that children remain curious and have the capability to learn more as they explore new horizons. It also reiterates the need to ensure conceptual development and ability to engage with new materials and sources of knowledge to be able to learn on their own rather than to be overburdened and forced into learning by rote and considering remembering facts equivalent to knowing and learning.

The NEP 2020 has made far reaching recommendations for teacher education as it has emphasised again the need for improving the quality of teacher training and has also pointed out the need to attract good quality candidates for the courses of teacher education. It has thus urged for more emphasis on the four year programme and making institutions engaged in teacher education more broad based and not remain just colleges imparting single teacher education courses. The NEP has also urged better control over the quality of the teacher education colleges.

In terms of the structure of school education, the NEP has suggested combining pre-primary years with the first two years. By this step it is placing an emphasis on foundational language and mathematics learning. It has suggested that choices available to students at secondary level and beyond should be flexible, allowing them freedom to pick up subjects, that are currently not considered to be from the same stream. Given the important radical suggestions made by the NEP 2020, the effort to understand how these would be put on the ground would continue. As these become operational, experiences from them would need to be continuously analysed and shared leading to the development of a deeper understanding. We would therefore continue to carry articles on this theme.

This issue of voices carries 19 articles, 8 of which are linked to the NEP 2020. These include papers by Nimrat Khandpur, Nidhi Gulati and Manish Jain, Gurumurthy Kasinathan, Yukti

Sharma and Priya Gupta, Kavita Sharma and Purnima Sharma, Pallavi Kaushik, Jasim Ahmad and Aerum Khan, Haneet Gandhi and the paper by Smriti Sharma and Kalyani Akalamkam. There are 5 articles that are related to teacher Training and its challenges , , these include the papers by Shamim Aara Hussain and Varinder Singh , Sindhu Mathai, Preeti Vivek Mishra, S Prabhu Shankar and the paper by Prasanna, E, and Thiyagu, K, There are 2 articles related to pedagogy. These include papers by M Jabir and the paper by M. Balamurugan. The article by Krishan Kumar Chauduri is focussed on the mental trauma of students due to COVID and the articles by Aarti Yadav on education of migrant workers. The next paper is by Kadeeja Sanam K.P. and. K. Abdul Gafoor is focussed on the claendar for anganwadi workers and the last paper by Emel Guler, Buket Karatop, Gülsün Kurubacak and Ramesh Chander Sharma on open and distance technology enabled environments

The paper in the first category include:

The paper by Nimrat KD with the title Flexibility and Choice: Imagining the Implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 for the Secondary Stage focusses on the restructuring school education into a 5+3+3+4 structure, with the last stage, comprising grades 9 to 12, viewed as a single stage as proposed by the NEP (2020). The paper also discusses the fact that the students would be empowered through 'increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study, at the secondary school stage. It brings out the point that NEP suggests no hard separation among 'curricular', 'extracurricular', or 'co-curricular' subjects, among 'arts', 'humanities', and 'sciences', or between 'vocational' or 'academic' streams.

The paper 'Local in Education Policy Discourse in India' by Nidhi Gulati and Manish Jain examines the way in which the stress on local context is placed in the NEP (2020). . They analyse the evolving concept of the local in the policy discourse. The paper indicates the urge for 'local' as an aesthetic and provides a historical overview of the idea of local in the context of and in relation to education from colonial to contemporary times. With attention to various policies, reports and 'innovative' programmes. The paper explains how local as a leitmotif operates in NEP, 2020 and offers suggestions as to how local may be given space in policy implementation.

The paper by Gurumurthy Kasinathan, 'National Education Policy 2020 – Imagining Digital Technologies as a Resource to Achieve Educational Aims', is focussed on the manner digital technologies maybe used to achieve educational aims. The paper points out that as per the National Education Policy, 2020 (NEP) education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, and for the development of an equitable and just society. The paper suggests that digital technologies can help create a rich learning environment in all subjects and at all levels. The paper points out that uncritical adoption of the latest craze of 'personalized learning' can derail the basic premise of education as social constructivism, and its purpose as social transformation. The paper also says that teacher development needs to enable teachers to become creators, visualizers, designers of digital technologies to their contexts, and not become users restricted to using products developed by business entities

The paper titled Nurturing Creative Potential of All Children: Exploring the Possibilities of Realizing the Vision of NEP 2020 in Indian Classrooms by Yukti Sharma and Priya Gupta focusses on aspects that would help to operationalize the vision of NEP 2020 with respect to the idea of creativity in education. The paper presents observations and anecdotes from Indian classrooms that show evidence for the creative potentialities amongst children and convey the possibilities of nurturing these potentialities.

The paper NEP 2020 and EVS Curriculum contributed by Kavita Sharma and. Purnima Sharma brings to our notice an analysis of the current EVS program (curriculum and the

text books) in the light of the NEP (2020). It analyses the curriculum load, nature of the EVS, pedagogical and assessment aspects using the existing literature, different policy documents and research studies and how people look at the issue. The study suggests that a misconstrued understanding of EVS and conventional approaches to its teaching learning and assessment lead to its poor implementation.

Pallavi Kaushik, Jasim Ahmad and Aerum Khan in their paper Teacher education in India viewed through the lens of National Education Policy-2020, studies and reflects on the perspectives of in-service teacher educators teaching in various teacher education colleges in Delhi regarding the changes proposed by the NEP (2020) with reference to the provisions and reinvention of teacher education. The paper suggests that there are tremendous possibilities in the suggestions of NEP (2020) but there are also apprehensions about the implementation and many challenges can be anticipated.

The paper Preparedness and Understanding required for the Attainment of Foundational Numeracy in India by Haneet Gandhi focusses on the need to strengthen the mathematical abilities following the National Education Policy 2020. The paper points out that the policy emphasizes on the development of mathematical skills from early years onwards and the development of 'foundational numeracy'. The article also emphasises the need for sensitivity to take 'numeracy' beyond numerical knowhow and developing a positive mathematical dispositions.

The paper A Study of School Teacher's Perspective on National Education Policy 2020 by - Smriti Sharma and Kalyani Akalamkam presents the responses to the provisions in the National Education Policy (2020) . The study attempts to unravel their perception and opinion regarding some of the issues about the policy that are being discusses. The study considers the teachers as the key stakeholders in this situation and covers both private and public school teachers. Presenting the analysis of the data under four broad themes the paper finds varying degrees of agreement of school teachers on aspects of NEP (2020). It also notes that the responses of public and private school teachers are statistically differently.

The papers in the second category include:

The paper by Shamim Aara Hussain and Varinder Singh Challenges with the title Bilingual Teaching among Teachers of Teacher Education Institutions of Punjab also focuses on the issue of language teaching and learning. The paper brings out the challenges of language diversity faced by teachers in the schools and the support structures available. Through the analysis of the responses of the teachers on this issue the paper underlines the need of intervention to enable possibilities.

Sindhu Mathai in her paper Examining our conditionings: a session with post-graduate students on Critical Pedagogy presents a study of the notion of inclusion among potential educators. She points out that opportunity for self-expression, dialogue and sharing about their own growing up and reflecting on that is helpful for helping them work on their own beliefs and attitudes. This helps unpack the conditioning that happens naturally and helps them modify their attitudes. This is essential in the wake of the expectation of the National Education Policy (2020 that schools would develop caring, inclusive communities.

The article by Preeti Vivek Mishra "Encouraging Teachers to Experience Emodiversity: A Reflective Retelling of a Mental Health Initiative presents the examples and analyses from experience of teachers regarding their interactions and their emotions. The author suggests that teachers need to be allowed to be human in their interactions. They should not be expected to behave like people devoid of feelings like anxiety, disappointment, unhappiness

etc. and should be allowed to share them. Besides this they should also keep away from the other extreme of emotional outbursts and knee-jerk responses without engaging with the conditions of the learners at that time.

The paper by S. Prabu Shankar titled Paradigm shift towards practical oriented teaching of mathematics highlights the need for practical oriented teaching of mathematics for better conceptual understanding and improved mathematical problem solving ability among students studying at the high school level. This paper also attempts to inquire upon the teacher's attitude, preparedness, the possibilities and the pros and cons of whether practical oriented teaching of mathematics is made possible.

The paper 'Virtual Internship training programme: pre-service teachers' perception' by Prasanna, E, and Thiyagu, K discussed the crisis faced by the education sector due to the COVID-19 explosion. It reflects on the basic challenge of providing school experience to trainees during this period. In the absence of face to face school experience being possible it points out the way in which e internship was tried out. The data of the study points to the fact that satisfaction with the quality of such an e-internship was low.

The papers in the next section are:

The paper by M. Jabir titled Role of Short Stories in Teaching English Listening Skill highlights the importance of short stories in Teaching English listening skill through classroom observations and experiences at elementary and secondary level in district Kargil (Ladakh). The paper reiterates the importance of dialogue in classrooms, particularly dialogues where the children also participate and feel free to express their thoughts.

In his paper Learning Anatomical Structures of Dicot Plants using Jigsaw Puzzles among Middle School Students, M. Balamurugan emphasises the need for teachers to try different pedagogical strategies in their classrooms based on the situation of learners. Using the example of a jigsaw puzzle to help standard eighth students understand and learn about the transverse sections of typical dicot stem and root based using labelled drawings. The study shows that using specifically designed jigsaw puzzles helps in being able to remember the structure and function of what has to be studied.

The last four papers are:

The paper by Krishna Kumar Chaudhuri in hindi has the title, "कोरोना महामारी के दौरान विद्यार्थियों की मानसिक स्थिति एवं बचाव के उपाय – एक विश्लेषण". The paper presents an analysis of the mental and emotional condition of the students during the COVID 19 spread. He discusses the kind of fears children have and the trauma they have been through and emphasises that due to COVID children have lost the possibility of face to face contact and most of their interactions have been online if at all they have had some. He argues for measures to respond to this situation. The paper entitled How accessible is education for migrant workers' children? A case study of an on-site school by Aarti Yadav considers the impact of interstate migration of construction workers on the education of their children. She points out that the children are often deprived of educational facilities due to interplay of several social and economic push factors due to several barriers in the educational path of these children.

The paper Implementing Thematic Calendar in Anganwadis of Kerala: Challenges Faced by Anganwadi Worker by Kadeeja Sanam K.P. and K. Abdul Gafoor presents the experience and analysis from the study of the introduction of a thematic calendar for early years with

the objective of holistic development of the children of 3-6 years. This study found that the challenges faced by the Anganwadi workers in implementing the thematic calendar relate to enrollment, and availability of learning aids. There are also difficulties with, teaching-learning practices, infrastructure and logistical facilities, and administrative support functions.

The paper “A Strategic Decision Model Proposal for Open and Distance Flexible Technology-Enabled Learning Environments” by Emel Guler, Buket Karatop, Gülsün Kurubacak and Ramesh Chander Sharma presents the steps through which a flexible model using technology learning environments can be built. It draws attention to the need for taking into account the experience and perspectives of all persons involved in the transactions and attempt to build a synergetic structure. The model must have continuity as well as a dynamic possibility of change.

We look forward to your comments on the issue and also apologise for the delay in the uploading of this issue.