EDITOR'S NOTE

At the time of independence our country inherited a system of education which was struggling with the problems of equity, equality and quality. We have made substantial progress and have created a large system of education over the years to address these issues and challenges. However, quality is still a major challenge and we are still not able to provide education of equitable quality to all children. The present issue of JIE includes articles and research papers related to systemic and curricular issues and reforms in the area of school education and teacher education.

The issue begins with the written text of a memorial lecture delivered by Madhav Chavan. He strongly feels that we cannot improve the educational system simply by expanding it. Instead, we have to create a new system gradually, which not only meets the demands of the present society, but has a futuristic vision as well.

Articles contributed by M. Sen Gupta, Rachna Jain and R.K Parua reflect the systemic issue of teacher education. The research-based paper of Tulika Dey and Manab Deka analysed some of the educational issues of children of a tribal community of Assam.

As recommended by National Policy on Education (NPE-86), community participation is made an essential condition for effective management of elementary education at grass root level. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) and Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 calls for community ownership of school based intervention through effective decentralisation which has to be augmented by active involvement of Village Education Committees (VEC) members, women's group and members of Panchayati Raj institutions. Krishna Kant Tripathi and Anjali Bajpai's paper reveals that the participation of VEC members in primary schools of some of the sampled villages of Uttar Pradesh is not satisfactory.

A large number of school children still have a sense of fear and failure regarding Mathematics. Mathematics teachers have lack of confidence, preparation and support for its effective transaction. Mbuthia Ngunjiri and P.N Singh in their research study found that self efficacy of students in mathematics motivated them to learn mathematics and mathematics teachers should make an attempt to enhance the level of motivation of students, especially girls.

The National Curriculum Framework-2005 advocates that during the process of learning, learners actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new ideas to existing ideas. This process requires a shift in the existing environment of our classrooms. Anil Kumar Jain and Shweta Bhardwaj in their paper elaborate the use of 5E model in Science classroom which is based on constructivist approach.

Environmental education is an integral component of the entire educational system right from the beginning of schooling. In primary classes environmental concerns are addressed using integrated approach in teaching learning process. Kavita Sharma and Leisangthem Binita Devi in their paper conclude that the primary school teachers still lack awareness and skills about using integrated approach in transacting curriculum of Environmental Studies, Language and Mathematics. Bilques Shair and Rukhsana Akhtar compared the level of awareness and use of environmental knowledge to solve environmental problems, among adolescent and higher education learners.

The issue concludes with a study conducted by Saurav Shome and Chitra Natarajan which involves developing a course on Energy and Environment for middle school students using a variety of activities specifically designed to highlight and resolve conceptual conflicts between students' existing understandings.

Academic Editor