

EDITOR'S NOTE

The shift in the role of teachers articulated through the National Curriculum Framework–2005 and the rapid technological developments have created challenging tasks for the teachers, as well as, teacher-educators. How far our teachers are able to facilitate learners to construct knowledge by providing them a fear-free and challenging atmosphere, addressing diversity and inclusion, connecting knowledge outside school life, and infusing technology effectively in the teaching-learning process are critical and crucial to ensure quality education. The articles and research papers in the current issue of *Journal of Indian Education* discuss some of these concerns and are endowed with some practical solutions for the improvement of our education system.

Preparing quality teachers and providing continuous support to them at various stages is a prerequisite to address the challenges for ensuring quality education. The paper by Alex M. George and Ram Murti Sharma explores the concept of an ideal teacher based on the field experience as a student-teacher. Using narratives, teacher biographies, analysis of research studies, the authors highlight the stagnation in the pre-service teacher education programme. The importance of continuous capacity development programmes of teachers has been recognised as a crucial aspect for better quality output in all levels of education. D. Thammi Raju, P. Ramesh, G.R.K. Murthy and S. Senthil Vinayagam conducted an empirical study on newly recruited faculty members of different agricultural universities to explore the perceived knowledge and relevance of teaching competencies and to identify their training needs. The study recommends the importance of periodic competency need assessment for organisation of capacity-building programmes.

A deep understanding of any language occurs when a learner is able to use the language in all forms of expressions. The paper by Devika explores the problems faced by rural students in using second language for oral communication and expression and proposes some exercises where students can work on improving their oral presentation skills. Dhanya Krishnan stresses the relevance of conceptual understanding in learning physics. The author suggests the need of integrating pedagogical design in the teaching-learning process so that alternative conceptions could be redirected to conceptual changes. The paper by Mary Vineetha Thomas and R.G. Kothari emphasises on how cooperative learning can be used in elementary leadership and decision-making skills through learning science subjects. Madhu Gupta and Dimple Mehtani reveal the importance of self-regulated learning in the academic achievements of students.

An empirical study by Hema Ramachandran, Divya Sinha and Medha S. Rajadhyaksha addresses the concept of plagiarism and large-scale plagiarism among undergraduate and postgraduate students. The study reveals that most of the students are not aware about the issue of plagiarism and instead believe that these are permitted 'soft crime'. The paper suggests a few approaches to encourage original writings and avoid plagiarism.

Many efforts have been made by the government to ensure universal access to elementary and secondary education in India. The paper by Alka Shah and Sonali Hazra studies the status of school participation among tribal children of Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh through secondary data. The paper explores various reasons for variation of school participation among tribal children from different blocks of the district.

Integrating technology with the classroom teaching-learning process can be considered as a big challenge in our educational system, especially at school level. Vibha Devpura has made an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of smart class on achievement of science subjects at the upper primary level and found that students performed better with integrating technology. An analysis of using podcasts as a medium to blend teaching through technology has been done by Russell D'Souza. The involvement of community in the functioning of school has become a crucial topic of discussion since the National Curriculum Framework-2005. How community members, parents and family members can support academically in various activities of a preschool has been highlighted by Kalpana Venugopal. This issue of *JIE* ends with a review of NCERT published book *Schooling, Socialisation and Identity—A Textbook for B.Ed. Course* by Ranjana Bhatia.

We expect that our readers would be able to relate their personal experiences with the issues and concerns discussed by the authors of these articles and research papers presented in the current issue. We invite our readers from different levels of school education and teacher education to contribute in the journal by sharing their knowledge in the form of articles, action research reports, theoretical papers, book reviews, etc. Your suggestions and comments for improvement of the quality of the journal are welcome.

Academic Editor