

EDITOR'S NOTE

The futuristic vision proposed by National Education Policy 2020 to make India a global knowledge superpower through a radical change in the realm of School Education, Teacher Education and Higher Education requires dedicated and sustained efforts from all stakeholders. The shift proposed in the pedagogical structure of school education by introducing pre-vocational education, skill development courses, competency based teaching, holistic learning, counseling services, etc., will definitely help our future generations to cope with the 21st century skills and technological advancements. It is essential to have an understanding of the ground realities and systematic efforts to address various concerns that will hinder the progress while implementing the pedagogical recommendations as per the NEP 2020. The articles, case studies and research papers in the current issue of Journal of Indian Education (JIE) discuss some of these concerns and endows with some practical solutions for the improvement of our education system.

First article of this issue highlights the progress of School Education in the state of Manipur by Thiyam Bharat Singh. Author illustrated testimonials to support a progression in the literacy rates over six decades but the State still continues to experience higher dropout rates in its hill districts. The study revealed that scanty geographically-isolated schools, followed by proxy practice of teachers, insufficient staffing, poor infrastructure and transport facilities, incongruous pedagogy, lackadaisical attitude of administrators, deprivation of social support, etc., are few significant reasons for such a state of affairs. Sambit Kumar Padhi and Haripad Kumar Mahato did a status study of the elementary education system in Jharkhand. The study briefly acknowledges the measures taken by the State and Central government in this direction to attain the objectives of Universalisation of Elementary Education through various programmes such as expansion in number of schools, increased school enrolment and teachers' ratios.

Varsha Kapoor shares the findings of an empirical analysis of school going adolescent girls in Jammu. She bespeaks of the impact of socio-cultural settings discussing the influences of cultural norms and other contemporary challenges, problems and constraints such as health and safety issues, routinely faced by these adolescent girls of Jammu in getting quality education. The findings highlight that following the paradigm of holistic approach is the need of hour in such areas to create encouraging educational environments for these girls. In a similar study of education of Muslim girls and girls of other educationally disadvantaged groups of slums in Delhi, Fauzia Khan

reveals economic equality as a pivotal and leading alternative to address the challenges such as cultural, environmental and familial matters faced by these groups.

With changes occurring in the sociocultural milieu, there is an ever-increasing need for gearing up counseling provisions in Indian schools. Shruti Pokhriyal, Vinita Bhargava and Mani Bhasin Kalra shares findings of the review research in germane to the indispensable role and requisite of school counselors for professional development and social civility of the students. Making the right career choice is undoubtedly a complex and knotty decision but is of cardinal importance where the role of parents is just inextricable. The paper by Shubhangi Bhagawati and Deepti Puranik portrays this indispensable and imperative character of parents in the canvas of adolescent's career choices exploring their major role plays over the relationship scales of perceived parental influence, emotional independence from parents and vocational commitment. Sujata Bhau and Sunindher Tung studied practice of bullying among adolescents which poses a serious threat to their physical and psychological well-being. The study assesses the prevalence of bullying while drawing the relationship of familial variables namely, family environment and parent attachment (mother and father) with bullying. The authors propound on the lead-off of anti-bullying programs followed by the inclusion of Counselors in Schools.

Space science and astronomy are one of the appealing and entrancing subjects among children which boosts their spirit of science and creative imagination. The study by Felicita Gali and Sudhakar Venukapalli examines how children's creative imagination contribute to their better understanding of the astronomical world. The findings advocate on using enriching teaching and learning activities such as sky watching, planetarium visits with enthusiastic celebration of National and International Science Days to bridge the abstract learning and creative imagination. Tarun Kumar Tyagi, Manish Kumar and Pragya Gupta through empirical study investigate their the gender and locality differences for influencing the students' English language creativity and academic achievement and English language achievement. The study observed that both of these variables "gender and locality" downrightly affect the performance of learners and moderate the relationship between creativity and achievement.

The study by Vijay Shankar Sharma on the status of teaching mathematics to visually impaired children studying either in inclusive schools or in special institutional settings highlights the need for accessibility of resources and trained staffing for enhancing their attitude and interests towards learning of the subject. The study also recommends to follow a structured format of teaching for these special students to aid their active participation and learning of this abstruse subject of mathematics.

Radhika Khanna tries to shed light on the importance of holistic education highlighted by NEP 2020 through her case study on the movie, "Taare Zameen par". The article promulgates the idea of the pedagogical use of cinema, discussing how media literacy and inclusion of films could aid teachers across various disciplines in careful observation of the needs, interests, strengths and challenges of each learner while creating opportunities for joyful learning.

The clout of ODL (Open and Distance Learning) and DSMNT (Digital Social Media Networking Technology) over the tried and true conventional teaching could be easily seen and felt in the arduous time of pandemic where virtual technology acted as a powerful medium of teaching and training activities, however, its felicitous utilisation does require scholastic drill and practice. Amit Agrawal and Abhishek Kumar Singh endeavoured to reflect on this notable segment by proffering on the possible benefits and challenges of DSMNT as a dynamic pedagogical resource. Almost all the educational institutions have opted for online education to get over the long and adverse consequences of school closure during COVID-19 pandemic. The article by Vandana Singh briefly illustrates the perception of learners towards online education; also exploring the various attributes of online classes in relation to the availability of resources, which are helpful in designing an effective online environment. The conclusion suggests towards the adaption of blended learning in much rigorous ways to be all set for future visions.

The National Education Policy, 2020 is the vision document of education articulated for bringing transformation in the country's education system. Niradhar Dey critically analyses this vision of NEP 2020, in transforming education while focusing on its significant role and recommendations in majorly three areas of education which are School Education, Teacher Education and Higher Education.

The role of Principal and Teachers' Leadership is of high importance in propelling learning and creating a vibrant school. This thought is well set down by Rashmi Diwan in her article centered on the significance of leadership interventions in generating and sustaining a simulative and inclusive environment conducive for learning in the school.

We expect that our readers would be able to relate their personal experiences with the issues or concerns discussed by the authors of these articles or 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 valuable suggestions and comments for improvement of the quality of the journal are welcome.

Vijayan K
Academic Editor