

EDITOR'S NOTE

In recent times, there has been a gradual shift in the approach to education as a result of the successful implementation of flagship programmes like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)* and *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)*. There is change in focus from the quantitative expansion of educational institutions to the qualitative approaches of student-centric teaching and hands-on learning practices. This theme has been emphasised by four articles in this issue. The paper by Seema Shukla Ojha proposes a shift in teaching social science, especially history from a mere collection of facts and rote memorisation to an effective student-centred measure, integrated at the elementary stage to enhance critical thinking skills and student engagement. Sunaina K. explores the impact of social writing on the participation of children in the classroom, and tests the theoretical concepts of the 'zone of proximal development' and 'collaborative learning'. Dey et al. have attempted to facilitate the understanding of the earth and its dynamic processes by engaging in various activities and tools from a science kit through hands-on minds-on approach to learning in schools. Lastly, Behera and Mohalik present the effectiveness of the 5-E approach — Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate to develop higher order thinking skills like analysing, evaluating and creating among students.

In the current socio-economic environment, the significance of mindfulness and self-reflection have increased multifold to ensure the well-being of an individual. This has been addressed by Nitika Bose in her paper, which highlights the relevance of reflections as an integral part of pre-service teacher education programme, enabling critical self-awareness and informed education practices.

In 2015, the Government of India launched the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* campaign which aims to generate awareness and improve efficiency of welfare services intended for girls. This has given an impetus to the contemporary issue of gender. Abhilasha Bajaj, in her paper discusses gender, and the implicit messages and values embedded in school culture impacting the student's understanding and perception. The ability to view society from the perspective of gender roles and to understand how this has affected women's needs in comparison to the needs of men has been crucial in building a constructive foundation for equality in our society.

Another government initiative is the economic model of private public partnership (PPP) which has proved to be efficient for the better avenues in

investment, infrastructure and accountability, and has been widely practised by the governments around the world. Devesh Baid proposes a concept paper on developing model residential schools with a PPP model as a way forward to overcome the barriers of socio-economic status.

Realising the importance of including Peace Education in Teacher Education curriculum, the NCTE in January 2015 has made a provision to integrate Peace Education as a component in content designing of the Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) curriculum and to add Peace Education as an independent course in the list of optional courses in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme. Niradhar Dey in his article has created a suggestive course outline for peace education which could provide the Teacher Educators a design for their course at the higher education level.

Some researches show that at the end of elementary schooling, students cannot read the text books of their junior classes and some fail to distinguish between capital and small letters. Making spelling and grammatical errors along with an inability to write correct sentences or a short paragraph on their own are some of the challenges in the way of improving students' learning performance. According to several reports, low learning achievements of learners in English language in elementary schools is a major concern and challenge. Manoranjan Pradhan in his study attempts to investigate the factors responsible for low learning achievements in English language in elementary schools from the Block Resource Group members, who are master trainers in the block.

In the study by Mohapatra and Parida, the possible episodic structures which the pupils are likely to auto-generate while being taught about graphs in kinematics, have been identified. The effects of this episodic conceptualisation on the responses of pupils of Classes X and XII, and practising higher secondary teachers, to comprehend problems related to construction and interpretation of graphs in kinematics have been investigated. The authors also suggested a focused teaching point to be noted while teaching graphs, so as to minimise the generation of alternative conceptions.

As the global community reels under the effects of climate change, Kiran Singh, through the paper addresses the urgency of sustainable development practices through disseminating awareness, and developing curricula and environmental stewardship through geography education. A book reviewed by Ranjita Dawn on the *India: Social Development Report 2016: Disability Rights Perspectives* is also included in this issue.

This edition of the journal provides articles and research papers on a variety of issues and themes under School Education and Teacher Education. We hope that our readers will be able to relate their personal experiences with the issues and concerns discussed by the authors of these articles and research papers. We invite our readers from different levels of School Education and Teacher Education to contribute to 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 improving of the quality of *Journal of Indian Education* are welcome.

Academic Editor