

## EDITOR'S NOTE

National Education Policy 2020 envisions revolutionising the Indian education system by improving the quality of the system to prepare India as a global knowledge superpower. The country has been meticulously devising the plan for its effective implementation through well thought programmes and activities to strengthen the roots of this bulky fruit bearing tree of the country's education system while allowing its boundaries to flourish like a green bay tree. NEP 2020 recommends raising the excellence levels of teachers and teacher education programmes. It suggests mandatory as well as need-based participation of teachers in at least 50 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year to accelerate their own professional growth. These programmes are expected to provide tremendous opportunities to the teachers to be fully acquainted with most recent technology advances and pedagogical strategies in order to meet the transboundaries of global change and the dynamic needs for learning. The policy also seeks to establish the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), which will govern all the facets of teacher career management, professional development initiatives, pay increment, etc., with the inclusion of teacher audits and professional evaluations. To sum up, NEP 2020 policy has broadened the scope of Indian education system and is a sea of opportunities to be explored, discovered and to be dived into. The articles, case studies and research papers in the current issue of *Journal of Indian Education (JIE)* strongly aligns with the promising global prospects of the policy to aid in the construction of a resilient education system for the country.

Nidhi Gulati and Manish Jain did an in depth systematic review of the various government reports, documents, research reports and journal articles on the idea and conception of 'teacher' in India's National Education Policy to discover the rationale for delegating a pivot role to the school teacher in bringing educational reforms. The critical analysis indicated four particular constructs in the policy, namely, language schism, community, incentivisation and performance as the major grounds. The education system has been magnificently accoutred in the past few years and has grown by leaps and bounds. To ace up with these dynamic needs of the 21st century, one should be technologically advanced and versatile. In this line of thought, NEP 2020 recommends enthusiastic participation of teachers in organised Continuous Professional Development Programmes to strengthen their professional competencies. Kriti Maheshwari through her study teachers' self-efficacy and their choice of Continuous Professional Development Strategies examines the major setbacks in effective implementation of CPD strategies. The investigations

of the study reveal that although majority of the teachers have moderate level of self-efficacy and were capable of choosing the appropriate strategy, but the time constraints and lack of autonomy in opting CPD strategy as per their needs refrained them from participating in the programmes conducted. B.P. Bhardwaj undertook a qualitative study in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas of Chandigarh and Niwarsi to determine the effective and dynamic role of pedagogical leadership in proficient and systematic functioning of a school. The study could serve as a promising aid in designing and developing Continuous Professional Development Programmes and Strategies.

M.M. Roy, Meena Sehrawat and Ritika Dabas try to explore the knowledge and readiness of primary teachers on School Based Assessment subsequent to their NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement) training culmination. The crux of the study evinced the need for thorough training to make the programme ride high and achieve its goals. The findings also imply that training in procedural knowledge could prove to be an efficacious capacity building aid in filling the cranny nooks of knowledge and competency of the teachers. One of the NEP 2020 recommendations includes the development of scientific temper among the students where emancipatory pedagogy has a keen role to play. It is a conjugation of empowered teachers with autonomy to experiment and expand pedagogical horizons. Dhanya Krishnan through her paper 'Designing a Blended Learning Course on Pedagogy of Science of Pre-Service Teacher Education Programme', tries to unveil the theoretical pedestals with the pertinence and latitude of approach, providing an exemplar model of a blended learning design for Science pedagogy course in pre-service teacher education programme. The article also tries to shed light on the key challenges in efficiently designing, implementing and adapting the course with respect to the current teacher education system of India.

Both NEP 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 5 lay stress on gender equality and female empowerment to construct a just, sustainable and prosperous society. Shivani Bakshi's case study on school leadership journey of two women leaders of Kerala schools is in the same vein, where she spots on the gloomy areas of tight bureaucratic setup stained with patriarchal beliefs hindering the path of accomplishments of such emerging women leaders while criticising their competence of delivering results. Bhabani Senapati and Gowramma I.P. did a survey research to explore the cognizance of the students of the teacher education institution of Odisha on the subject of sexual harassment. The estimates reported that a huge number of respondents were not acquainted of the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) for handling sexual harassment cases and lacked knowledge on its composition, functions or on the procedures of handling grievances. The delineations also accentuate on the pressing need of training programmes to educate and sensitise the students on such sensitive and serious issues.

Indu Sharma, through her paper 'Ecology and Inclusive', tries to foreground the essence of ecological orientation in inclusive educational practice. The author puts together the diverse and multiple perspectives of ecology to identify its feasibility and pertinence in the teaching-learning process for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) predominantly to understand and assess the students' learning behaviour and outcomes in a classroom environment.

Volunteering for teaching could prove to be a pillar of strength in helping achieve the objective of universalisation of education and foundational literacy and numeracy. Rajiv Kumar attempts to probe the potential and interest of Indian Civil Service aspirants to serve as Educational Volunteers in Special Education Zones where education remains isolated and off the map. The analysis favoured the introduction of mandatory voluntary services in education as it was found that majority of partakers were keenly interested to volunteer and contribute their teaching and mentoring services in various government schemes related to education, particularly in SEZ for the national progress and development.

MD Nawaz Sarif and Vandana did a cross-sectional study to investigate the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among the students in North-East India with respect to their class grades. The findings of the study calls for swift, favourable, and resilient actions including home-school partnership, yoga, and physical exercises with guidance and counseling to rein in the disquieting magnitude of these mental health issues, thus, providing a conducive and supportive environment to students to a meliorate their psycho-social behaviour and conflict resolution skills while easing their adaptability with peers and society.

Eman Haidar Almoussabi and Brajesh Priyadarshi performed a contrasting gender-based research to statically compare and analyse the sequential acquisition of auditory and visual perceptual skills (AVPS) in Arabic-speaking children for Classes I to VIII of government school (lower socio-economic status: LSES) and the private school (higher socio-economic status: HSES) in the Sana'a district of Yemen. Evidences proved that the performance of the children gradually improved from lower to higher grades with no symbolic differences with respect to their gender or school type.

The COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented loss while placing a substantial mental health burden on students, raising several psychological risk factors. Jaya Rajagopalan, through her findings in the light of socio-emotional competence and adjustment of students in COVID-19 pandemic, traces the lowest scores on the regression analysis scale for a majority of students indicating a strong need to include socio-emotional learning interventions in school education.

Ruchi Garg's idea of adding innovative pedagogical techniques to the mathematics classroom would definitely make the learning of this arduous subject easy and interesting. Her idea of providing autonomy to the students to choose the learning material and deciding what and how to learn, combined with a positive way of delivering the feedback, is the most significant part that integrates innovation into these multi-grade and multi-age teaching classrooms.

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 and research papers presented in the current issue. 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 improvement of the quality of the journal are welcome.

Vijayan K.  
*Academic Editor*