

# Challenges and Issues of Quality Education at Secondary Level

## Abstract

Education is the basic necessity to any society. The role of teacher also involves the character building of the taught apart from designing and implementation of the curriculum.

Education has to remain effective and functional coping and updating with the new dimensions. Secondary Education is playing a more active role in our country and this required a Quality Education. Quality is equated with level of human resources and facilities School effectiveness and learner achievement are treated as indicators of quality. Secondary schools must become more innovative leading to quality institution of knowledge production. Quality and innovation in the education sector are the major initiatives of the Government of India in its plans. To achieve the outcome of enhanced quality at all levels of education, Govt of India has been focusing its attention on quality and excellence in secondary education and teacher education.

**Keywords:** Quality Education, Challenges and Issues, Secondary Level, Inclusive Education, Performing Teacher.

## Introduction

During these years, large scale and far reaching developments as well as changes have taken place on the national and international scenes in social, economic, cultural, scientific and technological spheres as well as in information and communication technologies. These developments have affected education, including school education necessitating review and reform of Indian school education. Taking a serious role of these developments, agencies responsible for education from nursery to tertiary and professional education have reviewed/ revised their programmes and courses of study.

## Aim of the Study

The present study is related to the Challenges and Issues of Quality Education at secondary Level. The study will be helpful for the teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers because through this study they will be able to know about the Quality Enhancement and Quality Assurance. At the initial & secondary stage, and Professional leadership that need to be firm and purposeful, participative approach and the presence of a leading professional.

## Quality Education

Quality Education in the process of development has somewhere taken a backseat. The concept of Quality includes two terms- Quality Enhancement and Quality Assurance. At the initial stage, Quality enhancement measures are carried on by the budding institution. No institution even when it is at the budding stage can be said to have zero quality. Therefore it tries to enhance its quality measures. Later on after few years of its inception, the institution tries to provide its Quality Assurance after having established its standards. Quality is equated with level of human resources and facilities School effectiveness and learner achievement are treated as indicators of quality. Quality encompasses a wide range of factors. If we need to understand the quality of an institution it must be understood in the 'context' of that institution. In Teacher Education, NAAC has laid various quality parameters and has helped to set a benchmark for quality. Recently NAAC has identified seven criteria of Quality of Teacher Education Institutions – in curricular aspects, teaching, learning and evaluation, research, consultancy and extension; infrastructure and learning resources; student support and progression; governance and leadership and innovative practices.

## Co-operative Learning

Co-operative learning strategy may be defined as a teaching learning strategy in which the students of a class engage themselves in a variety of useful learning activities in a co-operative and non-competitive



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environment by forming a number of teams, each consisting of a small number of students of different levels of ability for their understanding of a subject. Cooperative classrooms can effectively foster discussion, which is so essential for understanding in science, as well as in other subjects. Hands-on science activities are wonderful vehicles for the use and practice of the process skills. The combining of cooperative learning with science is seen as a natural union for many experienced science teachers who have worked extensively with small groups.

#### **Use of ICT in School**

Technological advancements have caused quick succession in school and society coupled with new challenges. Education has to remain effective and functional coping and updating with the new dimensions. The ongoing and unprecedented development of information and communication Technology (ICT) has led to a widespread intention of using ICT to advance Educational goals (Cheng & Townsend, 2000). ICT facilitates the educational transaction between providers and users by keeping students well informed about the courses, enhancing teacher-learner contact through e-mail, chat session etc., enhancing active learning, sharing ideas, providing immediate feedback, encouraging

#### **Effective Schools**

School Effectiveness is the determinant of good quality. Effective school is one in which students' progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intakes. An effective school thus adds extra value to its student's outcomes in comparison to other schools serving similar intakes. It is essential to have consistency and stability in effectiveness. Consistency and stability in effectiveness for a school to be effective. More and more innovations and value added approaches focussing on progress over time need to be done to increase school effectiveness. Central focus of school effectiveness concerns the idea that "Schools matter" that schools do have major effects upon children's development – 'Schools Do Make A Difference'.

Based on research evidence following are the factors for promoting school effectiveness and improvements which are as follows:

1. Professional leadership that need to be firm and purposeful, participative approach and the presence of a leading professional;
2. Shared vision and goal that should have unity of purpose, consistency of practice, collegiality and collaboration;
3. A learning environment that is an orderly and attractive working environment;
4. Focus on teaching and learning with special emphasis on maximisation of learning time, achievement-oriented and academic emphasis;
5. Purposeful learning with efficient organization, clarity of purpose, structural learning and adaptive practice;
6. High expectations in the environment- with high expectations of communication skill and providing intellectual challenge;
7. Positive reinforcement – clear and fair discipline and atmosphere of feedback is encouraged;

8. Pupils rights and responsibilities – efforts are made to raise the pupil self-esteem, fixation responsibility;
9. Monitoring progress – monitoring pupil performance and evaluating school performance;
10. Home-school partnership – parental involvement in children's learning;
11. A learning organization- school based staff development.

#### **Performing Teacher**

Teaching serves to transmit knowledge and skills from the teacher to taught ones. The purpose of teaching is to explore the new knowledge whereas the function of extension is focus on developing the application of the developed knowledge for addressing the common problem of the society. The main functions of higher education are to seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth and to interpret the old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries. A good teacher is an effective sailor of the ship of the learning. An effective teacher results in effective school effectiveness. Earlier the notion of the teacher as a good teacher was 'an ideal teacher', then it changed to 'Good Teacher', then 'Effective Teacher', then came 'Competent Teacher' and now the notion is 'Performing Teacher'. Teacher Performance refers to behaviour of teacher while in the class, outside class but inside school, beyond school. Performance is a result of teacher competency interacting with the school situation. It is defined as 'What the teacher does?'. Teacher Performance is a product of interaction between teacher characteristics and teaching situation. It is often used as a basis from which teacher effectiveness can both logically and empirically be inferred. Teaching, if defined for teacher performance is a task of a teacher which is performed for the development of a child.

There are five major performance areas of teacher as follows:

1. Performance in the classroom that includes teaching and learning process, evaluation techniques and classroom management, computer aided teaching and learning.
2. School-level Performance – the includes organization of morning assembly, elaboration of national in school-level management and organization of student panchayats.
3. Performance in out-of school activities that includes such educational activities as field visits of learners, observation tours, community living, etc.
4. Performance related to Parental Contact and Cooperation- that includes such matters as enrolment and retention, regularity in attendance, discussing progress, etc.
5. Performance related to community contact and Cooperation- that includes such issues as VEC work, joint celebration of certain events by the community, eliciting community support in the development of the school, etc.

#### **Inclusive Education**

The efforts to bring all children between the age of 6 to 14 years through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

(SSA) and Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act have been successful to a great extent. However, this has resulted in greater heterogeneity in the school classrooms, a challenge for innovative pedagogy for such classrooms, In addition, the inclusion of disabled, disadvantaged and the girls in the main stream of school education has added to the greater diversity of learners' Socio-Economic background. The effectiveness of inclusive education will go school education.

#### **Initiatives**

There are a number of initiatives taken in school education at the elementary and at the secondary stage and also in teacher education.

1. Firstly, if we talk about the elementary stage, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has brought about great reforms since the year 2001, that is, its year of inception. Moreover the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan focusing on all children from 6-14 years to get free education initiated in the year 2000-2001 and got its legal status on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 by Right to Education Act under Article 21(A) of the constitution. It took ten long years to grant it the legal status. Now children from 6-14 years have a right to education and simultaneously it is the duty of the parents to send their children to school.
2. Secondly, at the secondary school stage, the vocational education at +2 level particularly is quite weak. Inclusive education has been initiated in schools. Separate inclusive schools are also working to impart inclusive education effectively; however, it needs pedagogic innovations.
3. SSA and RTE Act are resulting in preparing large number of children for secondary education.
4. Government talks of providing education for minority yet the proper provision for them has not been made in the secondary school sector.
5. With National Curriculum Framework 2005 and the consequent NCERT textbooks quality, came reforms in the examination system. There has to be a tandem in the methodology and the examination system. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation was also introduced recently. Although the teachers' role increased with CCE but undoubtedly there came the more holistic evaluation of the students in a continuous manner. It can be stated that with many of the researchers in the area of CCE, it has given a boost to the quality education. No more the child's performance is assessed on the long 3-hours examination where sometimes he/she is not able to exhibit his true calibre.
6. Thirdly, at the teacher education level, with greater public-private partnership in place, self-financing institutions have started for the last more than ten years. It is required to strengthen the teacher education system in terms of quality and effectiveness. With SSA and the RET, more employment opportunities have emerged in the teacher education and consequently there arises greater need for training of teachers.

#### **Challenges**

Revamping the school education is in process by many of the initiatives being but there lies many challenges also.

1. ICT being the essential need in today's time, sorry to say, has not reached schools yet. It is provided only in selected private schools and is neglected totally in the government schools. Moreover the primary stage has been highly neglected with no provision of ICT in the primary schools.
2. In the inclusive education, there is a dire need for strengthening the pedagogic component. Although the provision for inclusive schools has been made but they are lacking in its pedagogic component and thereby its quality. There can be positive change in the pedagogic component if there is change in the attitude of the teachers.
3. Although Krishna Committee in the late 1990's talked of eliminating burden of the students yet large overhauling of the school system is required in this aspect as well. Creativity and critical thinking should be promoted since the beginning of the school education.
4. Last but not the least. Distance Education needs reform. It is essential that National Institute of Open Schooling and Directorate of Distance Education be strengthened in every State. Also, there is need for greater use of ICT in Distance Education, like teleconferencing, video conferencing, e-mail, etc. via more pupil-teacher contact. Due to all these challenges quality school education and its effectiveness has been seriously deterred.

#### **Conclusion**

While the system needs a change the ---- who impart it too need a change of heart all kind of challenges, tougher they are can be removed and initiatives can be enhanced only if there is the 'Right Attitude'. Where the Indian Education system needs revitalization, the imparters too need to change and realize that each student has different abilities that need to be recognized and nurtured in time. There is need for change from all quarters of people- the educationist, academicians, government teachers, teacher educators, parents, students and the society at large.

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