Title: The Paradigm Shift of Quality in 21st Century (Case Study from India)

By Aakash Khandelwal,
Director, Foundation for Educational Innovations (India)

Abstract

This paper is the result of a longitudinal study of the improvement interventions in nearly a dozen schools in India over four academic years.

At the outset, we must admit that ‘quality’ has been a shifting goalpost over the four years and still evolving a bit and it is a fascinating record by itself.

The common thread of what affects quality, running through the four years, are: the school leadership’s ‘definition and expectations of quality’, the language competence of teachers in the academic language for all subjects, the domain competence of the heads of various subject departments, enabling close routine involvement of parents, and language competence of students. 

Besides, lesson planning (including assessment planning), specially designed remedial sessions on a regular basis, daily periods for overall development of students and (thoughtful) activity orientation in the teaching of all academic subjects, were all found to be important impacts of quality delivery.

The consistently important input factors for quality include the frequency and (easy) actionability of assessment reports to parents, continuous teacher motivation development, better books and learning materials, career guidance resources and processes and ‘happy socialisation’ in primary school years.

The paper is a record of the evolving journey of the quality interventions in the schools and showcases a typical path to progress for quality in schools.

School leadership’s ‘definition and expectations of quality’, the language competence of teachers in the academic language for all subjects, the domain competence of the heads of various subject departments, close routine involvement of parents, and language competence of students.

Keywords: quality education, quality improvement, language competence, parental involvement, assessment planning remedial planning, teacher motivation, child-centred books, teacher motivation,
Introduction

Education scenario in India
Rapid expansion, changing paradigms of teaching and learning, and limited resources have led to declining quality of education in many countries including India (Dakar Framework for Action 2000). In India there are about 97% children enrolled in schools. However, the ASER (2014) report suggests that, there is steady decline in quality of education. The percentage of children in Std II who cannot even recognise alphabets as yet has increased from 13.4% in 2010 to 34.5% in 2014.

A high quality education is imperative for human capital essential for economic growth of any nation in this global village.

There are about 1.5 million schools in India where about 24 million children study. There are broadly four stages of school education in India. These are the five years of primary (Class I-V), three years of upper primary (Class VI-VIII), two years of secondary (Class IX-X) and two years of higher secondary (Class XI-XII) stages of education. The primary and upper primary (Class I-VIII) stages constitute the elementary stage of education (EFA Review report 2014).

On the basis of Management, Schools in India stand classified as under:

- Government Schools (totally funded by the Government) - 66%
- Government Aided Schools (partly funded by the Government) - 7%
- Local Body Schools (funded by Municipal body in urban areas or by the District Boards in rural areas) - 14%
- Private unaided schools (privately funded) - 13%

Source: Eighth All India School Education Survey, NCERT, Government of India
Objective of the study

One of the main objectives of this study was to explore the quality improvement interventions in 11 schools in India over four academic years. It also involved understanding the perceived definition of quality by school leaders – school leaders like Principals, head mistresses, head of the department, co-ordinators, and teachers too who are leaders in their rights. Teachers’ perceptions have an enormous effect on the successful implementation of quality education in schools, quality of teaching and quality of learning (Asrat and Aster 2016).

Review of literature

Quality in education is a dynamic concept which has a shifting goal post. In recent years, with newer researches on behavioural sciences, classroom pedagogy, human brain etc, a quality education in school is expected to have a student centric pedagogy with participative and interactive classrooms with teachers as co-learners and facilitator (Bal 2012).

There are as many definitions of quality education as the number of stakeholders defining it. Asrat and Aster (2016) aver that quality and its measurements is complex concepts subjected to interpretations. The existence of many definition of quality in education testifies the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept.

The five dimensions quality education encompasses are - quality learners, quality learning environments, quality content, quality processes, and quality outcomes UNICEF (2000).

Research also indicates that effective school leaders not only influence student learning, but also have the ability to dramatically improve student achievement. (Leithwood et.al. 2004)

Quality in primary education is acts as bridge to the entire next coming stages of education. The quality of education in general is directly dependent on the quality of primary education (Ghazi et.al.)

“Educators, policy-makers and parents are beginning to recognize that minimum standards and basics are no longer sufficient and are calling for a closer match between skills students learn in schools and the skills that will need upon leaving the school” (Khandelwal 2002)

Principals play a key role in the delivery of quality instruction. Their responsibilities include ensuring educational strategies are in place that support effective learning for all students. They serve as a facilitator, guide and supporter of quality instructional practices. (Inclusive school network 2015)

A highly effective principal impact the quality of education imparted in the whole school. Their presence raises the achievement of a typical student in their schools by between two and seven months of learning in a single school year; ineffective principals lower
achievement by the same amount. These impacts are somewhat smaller than those associated with having a highly effective teacher. But teachers have a direct impact on only those students in their classroom. (Branch et.al 2013)

Motivation can be described as goal-directed behaviour. The issue of teacher motivation is important because of its correlation with the quality of education (Akuoko et.al. 2012)

All children do not learn at the same pace because of their biological, psychological and environmental difference. The slow learns need remedial classes in order to catch-up with the rest of their class. Yang et. al. (2005) emphatically question, 'How can the weaker students meet an approved standard within a period of time equal to that of the more able students? The answer perhaps lies in the training of remedial class teachers who apply different teaching approaches. With different approaches, students may be able to learn in more diverse ways. Teachers need to explore learning opportunities in both textbooks and authentic materials, so as to link up the classroom and the real world use of the language.'

The need for paradigm shift (in Indian context) and the dimensions to secure paradigm shift

From the literature review, our work with the schools and the Indian context, the following emerge as the key dimensions of bringing about a paradigm shift in education:

The school leadership’s ‘definition and expectations of quality’, the language competence of teachers in the academic language for all subjects, the domain competence of the heads of various subject departments, close routine involvement of parents, and language competence of students.

1. The school leadership’s ‘definition and expectations of quality’
2. The language competence of teachers in the academic language for all subjects
3. The domain competence of the heads of various subject departments
4. Close routine involvement of parents, and
5. Language competence of students.

The longitudinal study of each of the above dimension that that emerged as the starting point for rediscovering quality:

A. School leadership’s ‘definition and expectations of quality’,

Views on quality in education in an education conference organised by the leading industrial association in India:

"The real purpose of good school education is to equip students with life skills. Schools have to imbibe values and life skills to truly educate a child to face and rise in life."

Views of government in the same conference:
"To promote quality education, the Administration is in the process of opening up more
smart schools, implementing extended school concept etc."

Views of Ministry of HRD, India:

The essence of Human Resource Development is education, which plays a significant and remedial role in balancing the socio-economic fabric of the Country. Since citizens of India are its most valuable resource, our billion-strong nation needs the nurture and care in the form of basic education to achieve a better quality of life. This warrants an all-round development of our citizens, which can be achieved by building strong foundations in education.

Views of a few schools on quality of education:

a. Create worthy citizens of the country with humane qualities by homogenizing the western knowledge while remaining anchored to the Indian cultural moorings.

b. Make education an innovative and enriching experience through unique blend of academic, sports and extra-curricular programmes delivered within student centric culture to enable the younger generation emerge as future leaders.

c. Enable a child to excel in his/her chosen field with the confidence to face the global challenge without forgetting social responsibilities. Perseverance, dedication & hard work to be the key attributes to be build.

The diversity in the definition of quality of education is self-evident and is at the source of the need to seek a paradigm shift in educational quality achievement strategies.

The common thread running through these definitions and expectations is as follows:

1. Academic excellence is not a commonly desired goal
2. Language competencies is not even acknowledged
3. The trampling of the rights of the talented/gifted students is stark
4. There is no commitment to the majority of the ‘slow learners’
5. Inclusive education seems to be getting just a lip service (none of the school in the project is geared for adequately supporting special students in terms of infrastructure or teaching resources)
6. The focus on overall development is coming at the cost of academics
7. There are no sub-goals in school education – there is one overarching goal at the end of school education; there are no differentiation at the end of primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary school segments
8. Skills and sharp career discovery are not focused upon
9. Student-centricity is abjectly absent (visible in several ways, e.g., students and parents are 100% responsible for poor learning outcomes while schools and teachers are 100% responsible for the high performing students)
10. Schools’ expressed mission and vision are too idealistic and quite a variance with the prevailing social psyche/behavior
B. The language competence of teachers in the academic language for all subjects,

For Math Teachers, the survey results

- Syllabus completion

Independent handling of

- Quantity of worksheets
- Quality of worksheets
- Class control

Independently handling parent interactions

Aptitude for teaching math

In open-ended interview of heads of math departments in schools, there is no mention of:

- Language competence of math teachers in the language of academics
- Language competence of math teachers in their mother tongue (if beyond basic level)
- Ability of re-organise content and flow of content to supplement/complement books

Interestingly, we also discovered very disconcertingly …

- Teaching grammar
- Essence of story
- Class control
- Handling
- Making children ‘get the story’
- Assessment of teachers reading

We’ve not been able to measure, in any formal way or formal supervisory review, of teachers language skills. However, in informal, in-class and out of class survey of student’s impression of their teachers’ language skills shows the following (for math and science teachers)…

- Excellent English language skills 4%
- Very good English language skills 9%
- Good English language skills 30%
- Average English language skills 21%
- Not sure 36%
The response from parents was ‘better’, but not really comforting as most parents didn’t report more than 2 meetings with the teachers in the past 12 months and no more than a few minutes of conversation; the following is what emerged:

Teachers’ English language conversation skills better than ‘your own’ 32%

Teachers’ English language conversation skills similar to ‘your own’ 47%

Teachers’ English language conversation skills not better than ‘your own’ 21%

It’s also pertinent here that, in the past four years of work with the schools, we must have interacted with a few hundred parents across schools and I must record that I wouldn’t rate the English language of the majority of parents (mostly mothers) beyond basic/communicative level, inadequate for fluidity needed for academic teaching.

C. The domain competence of the heads of various subject departments

All the schools in the project have designated head of departments (HODs) in math. Three of the more important roles of HODs across the schools are (not in any order of importance):

a. Evaluation and examination-related tasks
b. Coordinate syllabus completion and assignment/projects bank
c. Development of teachers, including management of all emergent issues

However, the HODs were simply the most senior teachers in all the schools and received little in the name of a defined role as evident from the following record (out of 39 HODs):

HODs as the senior most math teacher (in their respective school sections, e.g., middle, senior secondary)  #32

HODs as the ‘best teacher’ (as displayed by the ‘quality of teaching’) #3

HODs as the ‘best leader’ (as displayed by the acceptance of other teachers) #1

HODs as the ‘best mathematician’ (as displayed by published work/further study) #0

HODs as the ‘best coordinator’ (as displayed by the knowledge of processes/resources) #3

Special training for the role as HOD  #0

Advanced training in domain  #2

Advanced training in organization management  #0

Advanced training in leadership  #5

Advanced training in education administration/practices  #16
Indeed, there is little to promote and encourage HODs to develop their domain knowledge and seek professional growth through becoming better-than-average' teacher and mathematician.

**D. Enabling close routine involvement of parents**

It emerged from our study that parents wish to be more involved in their children’s education but suffer from the following two main challenges -

1. How do I know that my child knows everything (academic)?  
2. How can a child, who is in the know of things, fail to secure good marks or feel confident?

It also turned out that first question is the more important and interesting of the two because it lays the foundation for the second question. Further investigations into the first challenge threw up the following three sources for parents to know whether their children actually understand the things they ought to know (and all three are unreliable, unfortunately):

1. **Child’s self-certifications** - Self-certification was hailed by parents and teachers as the best input for parents in lending the much-needed helping hand to parents in supporting their children’s education. However, none of the teachers and parents agreed that the children have the requisite level of knowledge and skill to be taken at face value.  
   Thus, the quality of assessment got limited by parents’ own understanding of the academic content that children have to transact. And in the Indian context, where no more than 20% (an informally calculated data) admit confidence to have adequate understanding of the content taught to their children.  
   Thus, in effect, children’s own evaluations of their performance, or educational quality, aren’t a good source. Obviously, this may sound like fuelling a trust deficit with children but the good majority of parents accepted it as a limitation and a safer bet.

2. **School’s progress reports** – the study revealed that this method of evaluation of a child’s knowledge is fully dependent on the way the child’s school organises assessment design, evaluation parameters, reporting formats and timing as well as the possible motivations of the persons responsible for evaluation (mentioned as a real issue by students in some of the schools in study). Thus, school progress reports become poor quality litmus tests when the aforementioned five parameters are not professionally executed with the highest level of propriety.  
   Here is just a sample of the ethical dilemmas teachers’ have to contend with: poor grades due to 'correct assessment and evaluation' which will impact school’s performance records or why open the Pandora’s box of previous-class weaknesses. **School progress reports, thus, were not taken to be very insightful, actionable, (and continuous)*.  
   *In all schools, despite digital assessment and evaluation reporting system, the formal communication of performance was never more than four times a year.
School’s don’t tend to open up their ‘school ERP’ for parents to continuously observe updated performance records.

3. *Tuition teacher’s reports* – the third source of student performance data - tuition is almost as big as the formal education system in secondary classes and it offers more frequent and personal performance reports/inputs. Interestingly, parents seem to find it more reliable:

Survey of order of importance of performance inputs
- I depend more on tuition teachers’ feedbacks 42%
- I depend more on school teachers’ feedbacks 25%
- I give equal weightage to the feedbacks from tuition and school teachers 33%

However, it’s public knowledge that the process of selection of school teachers in far more rigourous than in the case of 'self-appointed' tuition teachers. Thus, tuition teachers feedbacks also tend to be only as good as a parent’s own ability to judge the reliability of the feedbacks.

Interestingly, school leaders played down the quality of tuition due to the following reasons (we've a broader data set for this dimension, over 200 school leaders are covered), not in any order of importance:
- Tuition teachers tend to report exaggerated performance
- Tuition teachers are not as qualified as school teachers
- Tuition teachers are not organized in their planning and assessment
- Tuition teachers don’t get opportunities for professional development
- Tuition teachers have a limited brief – assist in homework, supplement the school work

On the whole, it emerged that the tuition teachers are far less likely to be objective because a fundamental growth in the child could wean the child off tuition and that is against their basic livelihood interests. Worse, some students reported that tuition teachers find innovative means to justify their continued contribution while showing progress in their students – quite a contradictory situation; children felt living a roller coaster ride of highs and lows across various chapters/topics to help tuition teachers keep their job.

Thus, it becomes an absolute imperative that innovative and powerful means are designed to enable parents to ensure quality in their children’s education.

**E. Language competence of students**

This is a very important dimension for quality in Indian context because of the following three realities on the ground:

1. India is among a minority of nations where a second language (non-mothertongue) is the language of academics
2. India has long been a country of oral traditions and reading skills are rather poor or non-existent; thus, the majority of the country communicates in the mothertongue also at the communicative level; a very small minority reads literature in the mothertongue.
As a result, even the mothertongue is grossly inadequate as the language of academics for the masses. *In India this is a very unique challenge for us and it’s the most important dimension of change and innovation in ensuring a paradigm shift in education.*

Expectedly, we wish to particularly elaborate the language dimension with the conceptual framework we approached this issue. We need to re-visit the connection between intelligence and language, and then connect language competence and learning outcomes. We know that humans took bigger leaps of progress with the invention of language; all the evidences point towards it. We did not have any real language for a good part of our evolutionary history, and for really a very big part of our existence on earth, we evolved painfully slowly. Intelligence and language are related.

*But how exactly are intelligence and language related? Pertinently, the one common component across all the multiple intelligences is - thinking. To have intelligence is to have the ability to think (and more perhaps, but thinking is definitely a part of intelligence). Intelligence and thinking are two sides of the same coin.*

However, our thinking is best done in a language because language is the simplest of all tools for it. Deaf people think in terms of images and we can also think without a language but the symbols that languages give us (the millions of words) to fix ideas, reflect on them and hold them up for observation are the simplest. Use of language allows for a level of abstract associations and reasoning which we cannot achieve otherwise.

Thoughts that do not have ‘language equivalent’ can never be formulated as effectively. For example, it would not be easy to explain to a person from ‘primitive societies’ the idea of acceleration as ‘metre per second’. And for that matter, thinking about a cat in terms of image is highly restrictive; limited to knowing a few types of cats. Thinking about cats in language terms can easily extend to include lions, tigers, pets, differences in cats and dogs as pets, feline nature (such as stealth, aloofness and cleanliness), use of ‘cat’ as an adjective, etc.

Similarly, red as a colour in pictures is very different from the use of red in a language; in English, red is used richly as ‘red tape’, ‘red carpet’, ‘red card’, ‘to be in the red’, ‘red letter day’, etc.

It is also pertinent to briefly touch upon the ‘science of poor intellectual development due to the rote method’. When we memorise something without understanding it – the rote way to get something – we are actually using ‘images/pictures of the text’ to commit to memory as the ‘thing’ for storing, rather than the symbols of the language. And the possible manipulations and the amount of context in pictures/images are far poorer than in language symbols (as explained in the cat example above). Expectedly, the intellectual development is far lower in rote-based memory.
However, most of us are take language to be simply a means of communication. But communication is not just about 'messages' to share; we also share feelings, imagery, non-verbal cues, values and philosophical ideas etc. And as we discussed earlier, language is indeed a very expansive ability. Naturally, language plays a critical formative role in the development of children. It acts as a subtle, yet perhaps the strongest force, shaping the child's perception of the world, interests, capabilities and even values and attitudes.

To quote the famous educationist Vygotsky – Speech is an extension of intelligence and thought, a way to interact with one's environment beyond physical limitations:

'…the most significant moment in the course of intellectual development, which gives birth to the purely human forms of practical and abstract intelligence, occurs when speech and practical activity, two previously completely independent lines of development, converge.'

Good language skills are critical for overall development and not just for good speaking skills.

Briefly, the following are some of the ways which worked for us to improve the language competence of children in our project:

1. The larger the size of vocabulary heard, the richer the language.
2. The more frequently a language is heard, the better the command over the language.
3. The more the 'long conversations' or debates heard, the better.
4. The more the literary and scientific conversations, the better.
5. The wider the 'genres' of discussions participated, the better.
6. The more animated the discussions, the better.
7. The more immediate the feedbacks on expression, the better.
8. The more consistent the feedbacks on expression, the better.
9. The micro the feedbacks, the better.
10. The more the amount of expressions, the better.

In essence, we multiplied the opportunities expression and tried to improve the quality of feedback available on every expression.

**Strategies in action for a paradigm shift in quality of education**

A. **Lesson planning (including assessment planning)**

We introduced the following changes in the lesson planning process in the schools we work with in the project:

a. Opening the lesson plan to the students, in advance
b. Discouraging the use of the books in the classroom transaction (flipped class)
c. Assessments to be against identified concepts (and reporting to be concept-wise too)
d. Specially targeted remedial sessions (named list of students for every remedial session)
e. Using technology platform to keep easy access to the previous class performance of every student

Interestingly, this change in lesson planning evolved to empower parents in a very significant way in ensuring actionable feedback on their children’s performance.

B. Daily periods for overall development of students

One of the developing challenge for us in quality education emerged to be the fact of finding more time in school timetables for overall development inputs, experiences and discussions. Achieving more time for ‘non-academic’ domains on a daily basis on schools (with the target of half the school periods being used for non-academics) is a major paradigm shift in achieving quality of education.

This is as yet an evolving dimension to be significantly fine-tuned, and as yet we’re using the following two interventions to bring about major improvement in quality -
a. Better books and learning material
b. Continuously motivated teachers

c. Activity orientation in the teaching of all academic subjects

To start with we were in agreement and appreciative of schools’ focus on activity-based learning. But we soon realized significant expectation gaps from activity-based learning. Over the years of the project we have come to implement the following changes in activity-based learning:

a. Compulsory pre-activity (extensive/elaborate) discussion and articulation in writing
b. Compulsory post-activity (extensive/elaborate) discussion and articulation in writing
c. Re-selection of activities to ensure minimizing the use of activity specific materials, things and props; ideally, building the materials and props to be used
d. Practical, simple and daily life demands/situations to be 50% of the total number of activities
e. Completion of the activity itself not to be compulsory by itself.

We have secured very positive results in improving learning and out-of-context applicability for each of the planned activities

Recommendations - Instruments for bringing about the paradigm shift in quality

1. Frequency and (easy) actionability of assessment reports to parents

Parenting matters! The fact is public knowledge in academia. Our study bears a surprising lack of parental awareness about the critical impact/role in ensuring quality education for their children (in a survey of 672 parents):

School is the most important/critical source of education : 62%
Parents can’t make much of a difference : 27%
Parents can make more difference than the school : 11%
The data on how parents can make a difference to their children’s education is as follows:
Parents can only get the school homework done (somehow) : 46%
Parents who can personally teach their children can only make some difference : 42%
Parents can make a lot of difference by creating the ‘right kind’ of family environment : 12%

The project has grown significantly in showcasing support schools can bring to parents. It must be acknowledged that we haven’t attempted to quantify the change in parents’ perception of their more important role in the education of their children, irrespective of the educational, financial and social endowments. We hope to be able to quantify this in the next academic year.

In general, in all the schools we greatly increased the frequency (by automating a good part of the communication) and the actionable nature of the feedback to the parents on their children’s activities and performance outcomes.

2. Continuous teacher motivation development
Another very interesting dimension that emerged out of the project is that teachers need to be continuously motivated to change! Unlike the prevailing view of motivating teachers to ‘teach better’, use more technology, ‘teach to test’, ‘teach to stress-free schooling’ etc., we discovered the growing need to enable teachers to accept and effectively implement student-centricity in teaching and learning.
Without elaborating further on this well-researched domain of teacher development, the following are the specific interventions we found to be effective for securing maximum teacher support for a paradigm shift in education:
a. Concept-based teaching, assessment, reporting and remedial in math, science and social science
b. A well-conceived thread of concept conversation on every concept; enabling the ‘weakest link’ in teaching to also deliver a much higher level of conceptual clarity
c. Providing teachers with data and tools to extensively improve communication with parents by getting very personalized in their communication to parents
d. Enabling teachers with three (in a couple of the 11 schools that have been part of the project at some point in time) levels of workbooks on every concept to ensure enrichment and even advancement of the talented students while being in the same class
e. Enabling teachers to perform activities for all concepts in the classroom itself and significantly consolidating the learning gains
   1. We’ve observed that teachers have been gaining in motivation due to better success among students and happier/appreciative parents.
   2. Better books and learning materials
      One of the most unexpected and therefore a critical discovery for initiating and sustaining a paradigm shift was the lack of ‘educationally sound learning resources’. In the words of the teachers of the schools in the project, collected over various interactions (and quite a revelation for themselves):
a. The current books in use are hardly meant to be read, at least in the Indian school books, (e.g., there are too many pictures, too many activities in every page, too little conversation)
b. The current books are essentially guide to teachers for plan for teaching (e.g., there are too many abrupt starts and ends in the text and little explanation provided for many topics)
c. There is little or no micro differentiations, e.g., the idea of concepts is too broad
d. Math books are almost entirely practice based, and too many exercises of similar nature; almost no logical conversation in math
e. The syllabus contents of all subjects are almost global, there is almost no customization for local contexts
f. There is no content, and assessment, planning for the actual life cycle of academics, e.g., no segregation of assessment sets for formative 1, formative 2, summative 1 etc.
g. The actual syllabus transaction is highly inconsistent within a school itself – teachers follow their own strengths and weaknesses in planning syllabus transactions, e.g., teachers tend to teach all of algebra in one go and the next time children will transact algebra will be in the next academic session (after a gap of over 9-10 months). There is need for books which force more educationally sounder flow of syllabus
h. The activities in the textbooks are included without any concern for their applicability for conduct in classrooms, all classes can’t be held in laboratories. School books need new class of activities which are doable in class and at home also.
i. The books are far removed from the daily life of the students
j. Social science books in India are particularly unpopular/infamous for killing interest in such a interesting and meaningful domain of knowledge and living; we need a new class of contemporary books in social sciences

Needless to add, we need new genre of books for schools.

3. Career guidance resources and processes
The paradigm shift needed in this dimension of school education needs no emphasis; schools and parents around the world are struggling with making education relevant for a better live and productive career. We successfully piloted the following for better career development opportunities at school:

a. Educating all stakeholders about the primacy of ‘decisions/discussions on the ideal/happy living’ to precede decisions/discussions on career choices
b. Living choices assessment and counseling to start from the start of the middle school
c. The career discovery process to start from the secondary school at the widest level (e.g., engineering, rather than computer engineering; medicine rather than becoming a surgeon)
d. Factoring informed and equipped internship opportunities from the secondary school level
e. An extensive digital platform to record and present a longitudinal view of the developmental milestones in career discovery, starting from the middle school

In essence, we have catalysed a paradigm shift in career support at schools by focusing on:

a. Career discovery over a period of 7-8 years
b. Forcing wider to narrower path, discouraging closer choices before the senior secondary school
c. Specific set of skills and career match-making and its developmental plot captured on a digital platform

4. ‘Happy socialisation’ in primary school years

We all know that emotional well-being affects all other aspects of child development. It’s important for recognizing and managing emotions to establish healthy relationships, seek ‘happy-interactional-endings’, behave ethically and control negative behaviour. School is mostly the first ‘real complex real world’ and schools have a big role in presenting ‘emotional and social zoo’ to every child – a critical must for happy disposition and worldview about stranger children, adults and their ways.

To be true, when emotions and feelings are not well understood and managed, optimal level of thinking should not be expected. We know that the circuits involved in regulation of emotions are highly interactive with those involved those that are associated with “executive functions” (such as planning, judgment, decision-making), which in turn are intimately involved in the development of problem-solving skills in pre-school years.

Simply put, when children are emotionally aware of themselves and others around them, the logical thinking abilities can be gathered and deployed into every situation and every time its needed.

Primary school is essentially a place of high social exchange and emotional difficulties in these years could be devastating for all dimensions of growth.

Most importantly, as young children develop, their early emotional experiences literally become embedded in the architecture of their brains.

**Conclusion**

The paradigm shift in quality education across the world, and very much in the Indian context calls for the following educational interventions in schools:

a. No child left behind in the language of academics by the end of primary schooling
b. No child left behind in achieving highly competent reading skills in literature of the academic language by the end of middle school
c. No parent left behind in micro-complementing the educational processes and levels at school
d. New generation of books, workbooks and ‘real-life lab’ activities, to ensure life-long self-learning capability in every child
e. Explicit focus on professional livelihood discovery and access to communities of interests to every child to support unique overall development needs of every child.
Bibliography

Ghazi, Safdar Rehman; Shah, Sayyed Farooq; & Ullah Irfan. Status of Quality Indicators in Boys and Girls Primary Schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan Journal of Elementary Education Vol.24, No. 2 pp. 51-64
National University of Educational Planning and Administration (2014) Education for all: Towards quality with equity report. MHRD GOI Pages 84-89
Yang, Anson; Cheung, Joei; Chung, Carol; Mak, Josephine; and Tam, Vivien (2005) Tackling Issues Among Remedial Class Students: A Problem-based Approach TESL Reporter 38, 1 (2005), pp. 61-73 61
Aakash Khandelwal is associated with Foundation of Educational Innovations and has a background in economics and education management, and it continues to be his main area of specialism. Mr. Aakash has been involved in teacher training with leading school chain, Delhi Public Schools (DPS). He is actively engaged in professional development of teachers and educational innovations. In over 16 years of experience in school education, he has worked in the field of educational strategy & administration, teacher training & curriculum development. He is also associated as Founder Member of DPS Amritsar (Punjab) & DPS Wave City, Ghaziabad (U.P.).

Email ID: k_aakash@hotmail.com