Society
And
Education

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Unit 1 Society and Education

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INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn what is society?, the nature of Indian society and the network of relationship between individual and society. It also delineates various institutions of society like family, education, religion, polity, economy. Through these institutions you will know the basic structure and its function in society. As the title of the unit is society and education, therefore, major focus directed to understand the relationship between society and education system. Educational institutions are very much part of society and learning is social production. Hence, you will learn the major contributions of education system to the development of society or mankind. Contrary to this, the nature and development of educational institutions are also shaped by the norms and values of society following its socio-cultural factors, economic milieu and political conditions context.

SOCIETY :Meaning and its institutions

Society is a 'web of relationship' and these relations are fundamental for understanding human behaviour and different institutions of society. You must be aware about different forms of relations in your family, community and society. Within the family, there are relations like mother, father, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister which we put under primary relations whereas uncle, aunt, nephew, niece are called secondary relatives. There are also tertiary relatives like friends, neighbourhood relations and many other similar relations. These social relations can be understood with role and status in society. Role is a set of actions of an individual. A teacher in school performs various actions pertaining to teaching, evaluation, group activity in the classroom situation and actions concerning school administration. Similarly, he/she also perform actions within family and other situations. Thus one individual performs multiple roles in everyday life. For instance- A person is playing roles of father for his children, son for his parents, husband for his wife, bother for

his siblings, teacher for his students and other roles. This shows that role is changing with changing social context and each role attached with certain position in society called social status. Both role and status are regulated by certain norms and values of the society. In other word, we can say that norms and values are collective conscience and unwritten constitution of any society, largely known among members of society as well as attached with sanctions (reward and punishment). Therefore, the understanding of social relations, role and status, norms and values are core concern of understanding of society.

The term "society" is rooted in Latin word societas, means friend and ally. The terms used to describe a relation or interaction among group. The concept of society defined by a large number of thinkers-sociologists, social anthropologist and other social scientists. Among these definitions mostly follow two ways as basic unit in society- first is 'social action' and another is 'interaction'. American sociologist MacIver and Page consider, "society as a system of usage and procedures, of authority and mutual aid, of many groupings and divisions, of controls of human behavior and of liberties". Hence, we can see society as a large group of people who interact with each other, share the same culture, territory and way of life. Its usage is very wide and ranges from one small community village) to world human society, from primitive culture to post-modern culture which differs with time and place. However, the concept of community and society are not same. Society is an abstract, broad and general concept whereas community is constituent of society and characterised with definite territory, close relationship called 'we feeling' and cultural similarity. Talcott Parsons, American sociologist, used term social system for society and considered 'interaction' is the basic unit to explain the human behaviour. For him, every action is not social unless multiplicity of people involved in interaction.

Individual and Society

Every individual is a member one society or other society. As a member of society, you must be aware of different institutions of society playing significant contribution towards continuity. To understand society, social relationship and its dynamics, it is pertinent to know its basic constituent units i.e. social institutions and social processes. Social institution refers to 'a set of norms' applied to various aspects of human behaviour regulated by well established, easily recognised and relatively stable norms for smooth functioning of society and social relations. There are some important institutions like family, education, religion, economy, polity which play different roles following the norms

and values of one particular society. Now we will study these institutions in detail.

1. Family is the first school where children start their initial learning. The role of teacher playedmother and other members of family. Even in the formal school system, different roles like teacher, pupil and parents are members of society and always carry their cultural baggage andvalues of same society. This common cultural baggage also led to common reference of learning and similar constructions. Throughout the ages the family has been a fundamental social institution at the core of the society. Family is a basic unit of any community and society which acts as joining institution between individual and society. It has almost universal existence across the world. It discharges many functions to society and individual from regulating marital bond, legitimate reproduction, care for young, controls human behaviour and functioning as an economic unit at least for consumption. It discharges this role with other associated institutions, like marriage and kinship. Family exist almost all human society, however, varies in terms of structure and function from society to society and time to time.

2. Religion: Religion is also one universal institution that exists from primitive to post-modern society. French sociologist Emile Durkhiem defined religion as unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things. Except Karl Marx, there is consensus that religion is functional role in society. However, sometimes its rigidity also becomes dysfunctional. One ofthe most important functions of religion is social control.

3. Economy: Economy institution refers the rules, procedures and norms of production, distribution, consumption as well as working system and patterns. Economic activities and needs are very of any society irrespective of its stages of development. Karl Marx considered economy is the basic structure of any society on which other institutions are dependent.

4. Education: The process of education takes place in every society. However, its forms may from one society to another society. There are two common functions of education in every society. First universal function of education is to socialise the members of society and transmit the culture to the next generation. Second is to fulfil society's needs pertaining to human resource. Major socialising agencies are community, family, peer group and formal educational institutions. Besides this, there are many other functions of education are social mobility and intergenerational change. Present democratic system based on the principle of equal opportunity, competition and achievement, therefore, any educated and competent canenhance his/ her status.

5. Polity: Each society has some or other system of rules. Political institutions are defined as a system of control through its organisations and legal or legitimate use of force. According to T.
B. Bottomore, polity is mainly concern with division of power and authority in society.

These are basic institutions whose prevalence is almost universal with little variation. The structure and functions of these institutions vary with time and can be understand through social processes. Social process describes dynamics of social interactions and social interactions takes place within structure consists of various institutions. Two important social processes are socialisation and social control that we will study later on. Secondly, the interaction between School and community has become increasingly formal and bureaucratic. Following this process, schools are becoming mega structure keeping a distance from community and society. John Dewey writes that 'we are apt to look at the school from an individualistic standpoint, as something between teacher and pupil, or between teacher and parent'. The result of this changingsituation led to deviation of it role and responsibility. If we consider society as a social system then we may divide it into five sub-systems known as family, education, religion, economy, and politics. Each sub-system plays its own functions to sustain and maintain the society as a whole. In this way, we can say that all educational institutions are very much part of society.

EVOLUTION OF INDIAN SOCIETY

India social system is a very old and complex one. The social evolution of Indian subcontinent is rooted since early and middle stone ages. The deep fathomless Indian history often traced with oldest and largest civilization (Indus valley civilization). The archeological evidence reveals that this was one of the organized civic life with developed town planning, a system of writing, havingknowledge of copper and gold, standardization of weights and measures and much other evidence of economic and political institutions. Vedic period known for development of four Vedathe hymns and ritual practices and Vedic model for pedagogical inspiration.

Historically India has been a place of numerous groups of immigrants from various parts of the world particularly Europe and Asia such as Sakas, Parthian, Kushan, Mongol, Moghal, Portuguese, British, French, Dutch and others. These groups also carried their cultures to this subcontinent. All these cultural contact in the long run influenced each

other and created this subcontinent 'a place of melting pot' of diverse cultures. This has resulted that India constitutes diverse cultures and followers of all world religions are living together in this country. Its complex social structure and culture is another distinct feature traced through the existence of various races, castes, communities, religion and languages. Despite such complexity and diversity, it has one identity called unity in diversity.

Unity in diversity

Unity in diversity a well known identity of India you must be hearing since childhood. Since ancient period, this feature has been identified by many foreign travellers – Megasthnese (315 BC), Fa Hsien (405-11 AD), Marco Polo (1288 AD), Ibn Batuta (1325-51 AD) and others. Here we will discuss unity in diversity with reference to its connotations and existing Indian social reality. The factors of diversity in Indian society are multiple races, numerous caste and sub-caste groups, all major religions, sects and cults, distinct communities, different cultural regions and languages.

The features of diversity are as following-

- **Races**- B.S. Guha identified all six major racial elements in the Indian population, namely Negrito, Proto-Austroloid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, Western Brachecephals and Nordic. In which first three are oldest inhabitants of this subcontinent, however, the concept pure is nomore social reality due frequent social mobility. Now a day the term 'ethnic group' widely used.
- **Castes**- Caste is also most common and widely prevalent Indian social reality even today. Anthropological Survey of India reveals that there are more than 4600 castes or sub-castes based community identified in India. It differs with Varna, it is very imaginary classification and reference taken from text. However, it regulates not only social status but also economic and political behaviour in society.
- **Religions**: Most of the major religions of the world like Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Jews, Zoroastrian and many bewildering variety of cults, sects and their followers live together in Indian society.
- **Communities**- Beyond the caste and sub-castes groups, there are more than 700 distinct tribal and ethnic communities comprising almost 7.5 per cent of Indian Population. They are outside to our caste system and maintained isolation from with other cultural groups. However, after independence, the government policy for

development started a process of integration.

- Languages and other cultural diversity: As we are aware that culture is a wider concept, hence, here we include other remaining factors of diversity. There are diverse languages anddiverse cultural regions. According to Grierson, India has 179 languages and 544 dialects but this estimate still need to authenticate. However, Indian constitution has listed 22 regional languages which exclude bhil, Gondi, Kumauni, Tulu, Kurukh and others. Similarly, diverse cultural factor divides India into different culture region in terms of languages, dialects, dresses, fooding habit and other practices.

The features of unity also continued with above mentioned diversity features. Thus we say that diverse feature not always for collide and conflict but also co- exit together. M. N. Srinivas viewed the feature of unity inherent in Hinduism which represents more than three fourth populations. The features of unity also played significant role in Indian nation building.

1. **One political entity**: Politically, almost whole sub-continent was under one kingdom such as Chandra Gupta Maurya and Gupta period in ancient India. Since Mughal Period and British period clearly marked as one political regime. Therefore, Indian sub-continent from ancient period to modern period more or less has political unity except few aberrations.

2. **Territorial integrity of Indian sub-continent:** Geographically, whole sub- continent has one identity separated by Himalayas and Indian Sea. Though it varies within as Northern Himalayan, Aravali ranges, Peninsular India and united by mighty river system which encompasses entire sub-continent.

3. **Common culture:** Common cultural initiatives reflected throughout the Indian history. The emperor Asoka worked for unit to India by achieving cultural and religious harmony with non- violence principles. Mogul emperor Akbar projected the concept of a religion Din-i-illahi, also called a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam. Above all, we can observe our villages where different religious groups live together share their lifestyle, joint each other festivals and tied with one thread of Indianness.

4. **Varna System**: Single Varna model and Varna ashram system encompassing whole India into one society. Varna model of social classification is not restricted to any particular region rather explains all the social groups of India and their specific role and

status.

5. Historicity: Long common historicity of Indian sub-continent makes it unique cultural tradition. More than 5000 years old society shows its uniqueness in terms of cultural syncretism, assimilation, and absorption as well as formation new socio-cultural groups. If we see the number of caste and sub-castes then find many groups emerge in the process of social mobility.

6. The existence of caste system outside Hindu religion: The castes and sub- castes are categories of Hindu social order whereas long common historicity reveals the existence of social stratification and caste other than Hindu believers. Anthropological Survey of India (1991) observed caste based categories among Indian Muslims. These show the cultural assimilation of this subcontinent.

Therefore, one side we have diversity in terms of race, caste, religion, culture and communities while on other side we find unifying features like, one political entity, territorial integrity of Indian sub-continent, existence all major religions but tied with one thread, single Varna model and Varna Ashram system encompassing whole India. Secondly the goal of education is to perpetuate and cement the differences among various social milieus. Through the complementarily of homogeneity and heterogeneity, education plays significant role in nation building which Durkhiem called organic solidarity. A. R. Desai (1976) in his book 'Social Background of Indian Nationalism' also explains the emergence and evolution of Indian Nationalism during independence movement. During freedom struggle, above mentioned different identities considered as hurdles, however, they joined together under one umbrella called Indian National Congress. Different identities co-existed but also fought for one nation.

Second section dealt about the Indian society, its major connotations and evolution as nation building process. Now answer the questions given in check your progress.

1.3   SOCIETY AND EDUCATION LINKAGES

Education is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability. It is a major aspect of development of any modern society and most significant indicator of overall development of any region. Emile Durkheim emphasis the role of education system in the preservation of society and culture, particularly, it is very important in complex societies where families and other primary

groups are not fully equipped to prepare the young for adulthood that is expected by larger society. John Dewey wrote extensively on this theme and his two contributions are very appropriate here- The School and Society (1899), Democracy and Education (1916). He argues that school is a miniature and reflection of society rather individual. The ultimate objective of school and schooling process is to foster the growth of social progress and expansion of democracy. Many other thinkers or practices has been contributed and discussed the relationship between education and society such as Leo Tolstoy, Antonio Gramsci, Paulo Freire, Brasil Bernstein, Ivan Illich, Pierre Bourdieu, Rabindranth Tagore, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, M. K. Gandhi etc.

Social Functions of Education

Education is concerned with all people and considered as basic social need of all societies. John Dewey viewed that being a social need it performs major functions to the society as following.

(a) Transmission of culture: Human beings are world building creature. The sum total of such creations, its preservation and transmission to the next generation are the core concern of any culture. The culture makes a distinction with other creatures. Each society has its own cultural heritage which they preserve and transmit to next generation. The most important role of education is to transmit the tradition, culture, skill and knowledge to the new members of the society. Thus culture is the most common link between society and education. Now you must be interested to know what is culture and its relation with society and education. Culture is a broad term which includes everything of human society. E.B. Tylor, British social anthropologist, defined culture as 'a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. Since inception of society itself, we can see that each society has some or other mechanism to educate and train their members through various agencies of society, like family, community, and other formal institutions.

(b) Reduce inequality and disparity: Education gives us knowledge and knowledge is power. Education plays a significant role to society by solving its problems. Rabindranath Tagore writes "In finding the solution to our problem, we shall have helped to solve the world problem as well....If India can offer to the world her solution, it will be a contribution

to humanity." Through education one can acquire knowledge and participate in the process of empowerment. Indian traditional education system was neither open to all nor it had any uniformity. It was elitist in character and supported with religious purpose rather based on rationality which has created socio- economic inequality. After independence, constitutional provisions (Article 21-A and 45) changed this elitist approach to egalitarian approach and the process of empowerment observed in various empirical studies. UN Millennium Development Goals (2000) targeted eight goals in which two are significant here- first is to achieve universal primary education and secondly, gender equity. These have been accepted by 189 countries of the world including India. Following this goal Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as a national flagship programme launched. For female literacy many initiative taken as Mahila Sankhya, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) etc. So far as concern of regional disparity, development of any region directly correlated with education status of that region. Thus, regional development is very much dependent on education, health and economic status of any region.

(C) Social mobility and social change: Social stratification is a universal social fact. Social mobility refers the movement of individual and group position or status in the social hierarchy of any society. There are two important factors of social mobility- education and income status. Now, free and compulsory education to all provides opportunity to enhance one's educational and income status. In India, since independence Equality of education opportunity has proved which was earlier restricted.

(d) Development of new knowledge: Education is the way to acquire knowledge to achieve success in its life. Through education we develop new knowledge or addition to the existing knowledge to fulfil our new necessity. As we know that necessity is the mother of inventions. From simple savage society till present postmodern society, we can observe the drastic changes due to many inventions and discoveries. The initial knowledge of metals, fire and wheel played critical role in ancient development throughout world civilisation. It acted as the turning point from food gathering to settled agriculture society. Similarly, there are many other examples of new knowledge in the history of mankind. Contemporary technological revolution through internet, multimedia and communication made the whole world as one village.

(e) Individual development- Education is very important for an individual's success in life. Education provides pupils teaching skills that prepare them physically, mentally

and socially forthe world of work in later life. Higher education helps in maintaining a healthy society whichprepares health care professionals, educated health care consumers and maintaining healthypopulation. If there is a deficit of educated people then society will stops its further progress. Therefore, we can see the role played by the education process towards society as a whole. Here,Education system included all forms including formal, informal and non-formal education. Thecombination of these forms may vary with time and space. Informal education process is the oldest form and its existence is as long as society itself. Formal and non-formal are plays later development. Informal education is characterized with changed relationship between learner andteacher in informal learning context, while the goals of informal education are always rooted firmlyin value system. It has no direct concern with degrees or diplomas and supplements both formal and non-formal education. All these forms of education not evolved uniformly in different parts ofthe world. The Percentages of the population with no schooling varied greatly among less developed countries from less than 10 % to over 65 %, while more developed countries had much less variation, ranging from less than 2 % to 17 % (World Development Report 2000).

1.5. SCHOOLS AS AN ORGAN OF SOCIETY

In earlier section, we read about the role of education to society and school is viewed as democratic, liberal institution committed to our progress. Now, contrary to this, we will discuss the influence of society to education system and particularly the dominant culture, unequal and stratified society. School is a part of society, teacher, learner, and parents are very much drawn from same unequal and stratified society. Schools cannot be taken in isolation. Society also play significant role in the development of education system. The role of socio-cultural factors, political conditions and economic milieu determines the nature of educational institutions, its objectives and curriculum development.

The Influence of Society to Education Process

(a) **Socio- cultural influence:** Education of any society has direct correlations with its socio- cultural factors. The process of education evolved in its social structure, social norms and values system. School is one such creation of human society to transfer the existing cultural content from one generation to next generation. In informal setting, socialisation is a process through which community transact or educate their members about the norms and values of the society. Traditionally, education provided by religious

institutions like Christian missionaries, Islamic Madarsa, Buddhist monasteries and other religious organisations. These institutions have the proselytising feature and they inculcate their religious ideals. These are not limited established religions, each community transmit their norms and values. In this process of education and socialisation, we also transmit the biases and differences of our society- i.e. hierarchy, stratification and inherent inequality. The dominance of elite culture, gender disparity and other socio- cultural features also transmitted to the younger generations. Pierre Bourdieu, French sociologist, viewed education perpetuate the culture of dominant class, this phenomenon he called 'cultural reproduction'. Similarly, Paulo Freire observed the teaching process, teaching method and language makes a difference between oppressors and oppressed. Major roles of school today- School as moral authority, preparing people for an occupation, school should not subservient to the community's dominant class.

(b) **Economic aspects:** Equality of opportunity is a core value of democracy and Indian constitutional provision of education. Yet it has become increasingly clear that equalisation of opportunity is exceedingly difficult to achieve in present economic condition. The economic process creating more and more as well widening the gap between rich and poor. According to Apple (2004) certain knowledge has linkages with economic production, areas of studies highly demand in market situation like professional courses- engineering, medical MCA, MBA and other applied courses are higher demand in Indian context. Therefore, economy of society is important factor which has deep rooted implications on educational development and human development of any region. Karl Marx considered economy the basic structure for getting power and dominance in society. Further educational system also plays an important role in legitimising control of the dominant section of society. Thus, the control economy can create wealth but educational power can only make it sustainable and provide legitimacy in society.

(c) **Political conditions and its influence**: The nature of state, political parties, its ideology and policy directs the nature of education system and its policy in society. Democratic states profess ideals of democratic education development; however, inherent inequality is the weakness of these states. Indian democracy could not achieve the goal the goal of common school system. All democratic societies fail to provide education for all, particularly the deprive and marginalised sections could not have equal access to education owing to differential status. Contrary to this, socialist states claim for common education system but inculcate their own political ideology rather secular education. Communist

regime of USSR and Nazi socialist principle of Germany are two best example of this. In 1933, under Nazi German education system schools were designed to mould children to get them unquestioningly accepts Nazi doctrines. Similarly, USSR, after 1917, used education to continue their communist agenda and educational institutions become the place of political socialization rather the search of truth.

Above mentioned factors have deep rooted influence on education system and it development. Apart from these three factors the historicity of society, geographical context and other complexities indirectly influences the education process and overall development of society. Despite these influences, the differences in ability and family background the children should beequally deserving of respect, equally worth of membership in the school community and equally entitled to develop their unique potential.

Unit 2 COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL

Introduction

Understanding Community (Society vis-à-vis community)

Community in the Context of Elementary Education

Community and School Interface

Influence of Community on Language Development of Learners

Influence of Community on Cultural Development of the Learners

2.4.3 Influence of Community on Life Skill Development of the Learners

INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you have learnt about the society and the diversities existing in Indian society.In this unit you will know about the meaning of community, and how community as a part of larger society having common culture, (a way of life), customs/traditions/folklore/medium of communication (language) and existence of different life skills, influences the child's learning in the school.

The linkage of the school to the community influences the education given in that school. Schoolfulfils the expectation of the community in terms of needs, interests and aspiration of the peopleresiding in that community.

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY

Before understanding community you should know the meaning of community. In ordinary language, community is an inter-dependent unit of people having common interests, observing common tradition, living by its own norms and modes necessary for the welfare and progress of people living in that particular community.

It was Aristotle who first defined the word "community" as a group established by men having shared values. There are different types of communities; the first one is geographic community, which is defined according to its members' place of residence, such as a village or district. The second type is ethnic, racial, and religious communities, in which membership is based on ethnic,racial, or religious identification, and commonly cuts across membership based on geographic location. The third one is communities based on shared family or educational concerns, which include parents associations and similar bodies that

are based on families' shared concern for thewelfare of students.(Bray 1996)

In biology a community is a group of interacting living organism sharing a populated environment. Since the advent of internet, the concept of community no longer has geographical limitations, aspeople can now virtually gather in an online community and share common interests regardless ofphysical location. .Above all, a community is about sharing and communicating knowledge, sothat everyone grows.

Since community is a relatively larger social unit as compared to the family, the functions of the community are the continuation and furtherance of the functions of family. . However, in additionto that community also make arrangements for the formal education of the child. Like home it is a social institutions which takes the responsibility of establishing of educational institutions with a view to realise the functions in a more functional and systematic way. Obviously it functions in amore generalized way than the family and less generalized than society.

Do you find variation in the local communities? Why?

The variation in the local communities may exist because of i) population (e.g. village community, town community or a city community), ii) language, iii) religion, iv) social composition v) Overall economic conditions of the population and cultural way of life. In India the village communities are divided predominantly on the basis of caste, creed, and religion. But in cities the social division is on the basis of socio-economic status of individuals that comprise the community.

People belonging to higher socio-economic status/class are normally more educationally conscious and have better and good quality of educational institutions for themselves. Being economically in a better position, they can afford to provide better educational facilities in theirinstitutions. On the other .hand the village and tribal communities and slum dwellers in cities being economically weaker are unable to establish educational institutions to suit their needs.

As we know there is a continuous interaction between the members of community as they communicate with one another and discuss common social events and issues. It leads to the phenomenon of community life. The nature of community life depends on the nature of intervention among the members of the community. The open life of the community

depends upon the free and frank interaction among the members and vice-versa.

How to understand the community
• Get to know the people of the community by associating with them you need to know theculture of people and how the people are interacting among each other
• Be open minded, friendly and sensitive to local culture, language, and tradition
• Involve yourself in the community celebrations and events?
• Try to meet the key-informants community leaders in different communitycelebrations occasions etc.

There are number of informal ways, i.e. celebrations and community functions like marriage, festivals, religious functions etc through which community transmits its understanding , its social, cultural (way of life), customs, and traditions to its members, which the child imbibes .

Thus it is necessary to understand community for its involvement. It should be noted that various communities may have different factors operating in similar or different manner indicating that community should be considered unique and should be understood and dealt with its specific context. . no community, group, or household is homogenous. Thus, it is crucial to examine and understand community contexts, including characteristics and power balance. It is important to examine the degree of community participation in some activities in society, since some communities are traditionally involved in community activities, while others are not used to working together with schools or even other community members.

COMMUNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

As we know that community helps in continuation and furtherance of social values, cultures, traditions, religions, faith and language. In addition to that it also helps in promoting education. asit is the overall context in which children live and learn and apply what we have taught to them.Community includes the parents, and guardians of our students, other members of families, as well as neighbours, and others who live near the school. There are lot of instances in history. According to Delor Commission (1996) – the main parties contributing to the success of educational reforms are first of all the local community including parents, the school head, and teachers. The countries where the process of

educational reforms has been successful are those where parents, teachers and local communities show determined and sustained commitments backed up by continued dialogue and technical and financial assistance. It is obvious that local community plays a very paramount role in any successful reform strategy.

What ways community characteristics influence the education?

Community characteristics both structural and functional determine the extent, nature and quality of education of the children belonging to a community. The community factors may act as impediments or facilitators in the education process of these children. The understanding of these factors may be helpful in better planning and implementing the education programs and schemes in school and thereby maximise the impact of education on the development of community. Some of the important structural and functional characteristics of community that influence education are socio demographic and caste composition, occupational patterns, belief system, custom and traditions, gender roles, perceptions about the significance of education attitude towards disabled, under- privileged and marginalised people and decision making process in the community.

Decentralisation of the education system holds out the possibility of introducing greater flexibility in the school system through measures so as shifting of school timing , calendar timing to suit the local socio-economic conditions. Community involvement and local level planning have been important policy postulates since Education Commission of (1964 – 66). Under the National policy on Education 1986 , revised programme of Action 1992 and 73 and 74th constitutional Amendment

Universalisation of elementary education has been a priority in the educational development of our country since independence. Community participation is essential to realize the goal of universalisation of elementary education.

If we want local people to participate, we have to start by getting to know the people, establishing report with them and analysing with them situation and problems and discuss what needs to be done. .One such example is Shiksha Karmi project of Rajasthan to tackle the chronic problem of teacher absenteeism titled" Filling the Vacuum"

Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP) is the project to tackle the teacher absenteeism in remote and inaccessible villages by the selection of two ordinary villagers to replace the (formally qualified but chronically absent) primary school teachers who would be responsible for teaching the children. The scheme explicitly relies on the extraordinary potential of ordinary people .The term ordinary in the sense that they may themselves have only a formal education up to class v in case of woman and class viii for man. Through their effective teaching , the Shiksha Karmis have actually inspired children, parents, and the community to view the schools /centres as positive and desirable places of learning. Another imaginative innovation entails utilising the services of elderly women as Mahila Sahyogi (women helper) to escort girls to school in difficult areas and take care of theirsiblings. This brought back life in once-empty primary school building. The challenge is to sustainthe ethos -an ethos of involvement at the level of feelings, a sense of cooperation and belonging.

Another example of community involvement in education i.e PROPEL which is an action research project that propels rural community to design the primary schools The most important part of theresearch that the ownership and control of project was on the villagers .Thus the credit for the success of the programme and the responsibility of any failure would be that of the villagers.

LOK JUMBISH: Project of Rajasthan whose Rajput historicity attracts the tourists, but the backward state, where the traditional Rajasthani society actively discourages women fromstepping outside the homestead. The creation of a people accountable by a movement of the people and for the people for creating an environment for learning by using people's knowledge and skills at every stage of the process was the main success. Thus the involvement of teachersin the process of providing quality education relevant to the child and community is a major plankof the project.

SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) also places emphasis on decentralisation and community ownership of schools. Community based approach is adopted for planning at the habitation level and monitoring of school activities. Participation of the community is sought through a series of schoolbased activities that open up school as societal institution to the community. Communityownership is nothing but the feeling and attitude. It is our school and it is for our children not in absolute sense but in cooperative and stake holding sense.

The different indicators of community ownership are –

• Give and take relationship gets established between community and school

• Caring for the school in case of exigencies by the community

• Involvement of community in all activities of school

• Community is involved in the teaching - learning activities on decision making on transfer ofactivities and overall say on qualitative and quantitative aspect of school.

Universalisation of elementary education is contextual. This contextuality varies across the country due to the very existence of different types of communities.

2.4   COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL INTERFACE

Education has a social context in which it must be understood. To begin with, this context is observable in the local community which plays a vital role in understanding and giving direction to the educational process. In India, the local communities are varied depending upon nature of habitations that comprise it. The educational needs of different types of communities vary according to their nature.

Community composition

The structural composition of community determines education in many ways. Thus a communitywith a heterogeneous population with diverse castes, languages, religions and ethnicity may pose a challenge to education system in that community or may enrich the system depending on the mutual relationship and harmony between various population subgroups. The hierarchical caste orsocioeconomic systems may lead to exclusion of lower caste and poor people from the educationsystem. The attitudes towards minority ethnic or religious groups may influence the education ofthese groups. The language spoken in the community should play a deterministic role in the medium of instruction in the school.

Occupational and economic factors

Poverty may impede education of many children due to other competing needs for survival. People may not be able to afford to spend on education or may prefer to send their children for work instead of school.

Customs, traditions and belief system

Community traditions and customs based on and shaping its belief system may affect theeducation process in the community children. For example, a community having belief that children are disabled as a result of punishment by God for their (or their parents) sins in previous lives, may consider education of disabled children as an interference in "karma These children and their families may be stigmatised and excluded " from the education system.

Gender discrimination Community beliefs and practices about the gender roles may be discriminative against the girls leading to their exclusion from schools from the very beginning, orearly dropout.

Attitudes towards underprivileged and marginalised groups

The community may have a negative attitudes disabled, underprivileged and marginalised groups due to their belief system sand exploitative practices which may hamper in proper participation ofthese groups in education process.

While the nature of local community determines and influences, the nature of educational facilities to be provided, the educational institutions also influence the local community. From theeducation perspective we cannot consider school as an island with no link to the outside world

i.e. community. Schools cannot and should not operate as separate entities from the community.

To bridge the huge gap between school and community both should come closer. For this dialogue is fundamental Dialogue between whom? Dialogue between community and school. Teacher is the most active agent made this dialogue possible through school and community interface.. Since each group in the community plays a different role in contributing to children'seducation, there must be efforts to bridge the gap between them in order to maximise the contributions. Education takes place most efficiently and effectively when these different groupsof people collaborate. For the betterment of the community.

In this way the relationship between local communities and educational facilities is mutual and reciprocal.

The community expects the school and the teacher to realise societal aspirations and expectations through children. In this way the community influences the school and the teacher orthe educational system.. An educational system is designed keeping in view not only the specific needs of a community but also the needs of a larger society or the nation as a whole.

An educational system, through its curriculum, must contain and propagate new ideas, values andbe haviour. In order that inculcation of such values becomes a reality, co-operative and active participation of parents and other members of the community in the school programmes will greatly facilitate the educational process. The teachers must play a leadership role in all such interactions with the community members to propagate these ideas, values attitudes etc. to the community.

Community being the main stake holder of education should be given the ownership in educationand thereby leads to the belongingness which enhances community involvement in planning, implementation and monitoring of education programmes. At the same time an involved community will be able to provide useful resources i.e human, material and financial resources tothe school.

The only condition is that teacher must understand the community, its needs, aspirations and difficulties. This process can be facilitated if the teachers are enlightened members of the same community. The Delors Commission observes: "when teachers are themselves a part of the community where they teach, their involvement is more clearly defined. They are more sensitiveand responsive to the needs of the communities and better able to work towards community goals.

Strengthening the link between school and the community is therefore one of the most importantways of ensuring that the school is able to be in symbiosis with its milieu"

2.3.1 Influence of community on language development of learners
The development of oral language is one of the child's most natural—and impressive—accomplishments. Almost all children learn the rules of their language at an early age through use, and over time, without formal instruction. The environment itself is also a

significant factor. Children learn the specific variety of language (dialect) that the people around them speak.

As we all know that like learning to walk, learning to talk requires time for development and practice in everyday situations. Children seem born not just to speak, but also to interact socially.Even before they use words, they use cries and gestures to convey meaning; they often understand the meanings that others convey. The point of learning language and interacting socially, then, is not to master rules, but to make connections with other people and to make sense of experiences.

When children develop abilities is always a difficult question to answer. In general, children say their first words between 12 and 18 months of age. They begin to use complex sentences by the age of 4 to 4 & 1/2 years. As with other aspects of development, language acquisition is not predictable. One child may say her first word at 10 months, another at 20 months. One child mayuse complex sentences at 5& 1/2 years, another at 3 years.

Primary education is primarily language education and language is not merely a component of culture, but also the carrier of culture. Therefore, home language assumes importance in understanding the cultural background of the learning child. Emphasis should be given the use ofmother tongue as the school language. The non-use of child's native language capabilities resulted in alienation, non- participation, discontinuation and large scale drop out from the schoolsystem. Children tend to have a context dependent style of thinking, whereas schools focus on context-independent modes of thought .Language of the tribal children is very much influenced by the socio-psycho environment of their community. And when the tribal children schooled through dominant language, they face socio-psycho linguistic problems due to context of the community. Below given a case study of how the language of the child is being influenced by thecommunity to which the child belongs.

Pa Niya is one type of tribes of tribal communities in Gudulur, Tamil Nadu aresocialised in their tribal language. But when they were exposed to spoken and written form of Tamil in school having different grammatical structures, this leads toa psycho-sociolinguistic drift.

From this case study, let us analyse /conclude that the set back to school achievement is attributed to the diglossic nature of Tamil language .Most of indigenous children turn away from school because they do not speak and use the official language which is used as the medium of language in the school.

As we know that school is being surrounded by an unfamiliar language without help to learn which means that children do not pick up national language/state language and find learning very difficult. There are a lot pedagogical imbalances between the needs and interests of the learner and the curriculum and transactional modalities in the school. So many children quickly loose interest and leave the school resulting to high dropout.

there are lots of instances /research studies which show that it is vital to begin education in the language children know the best -mother tongue. Strategies for bridging home language and school language in the context of globalisation in an age of technological advancement a child needs to learn many languages, and that suitable strategy need to be evolved for the process of transition from the home language to school languages. Active participation of parents, children,peers and teachers is needed.

Teachers should encourage students to use their dialect material in the school curriculum and due considerations be given while textbooks are prepared. Highlighting linguistic and cultural diversity of the country and emphasised the need for mother tongue education which was the need of the time, and not a burden. The students in the rural area, and the only strategy to overcome this problem was to give education in the home language of the child . Rather than imparting education in incomprehensible standard languages, we should look for alternative strategies to overcome language disparity, educationally appropriate approach should be to provide mother tongue education with built-in mechanism for acquisition of communicative and academic skills in the school language for its use as a medium in the later stage of education. This would require drastic change in the mindset of the teachers who are practitioners.

Community language learning (CLL) is an approach in which students work together to develop what aspects of a language they would like to learn. The teacher acts as a counsellor and a paraphraser, while the learner acts as a collaborator, although sometimes

this role can be changed.

Barriers in Community Language Learning

When learning a different language while in a multilingual community, there are certain barriers that one definitely will encounter. The reason for these barriers is that in language learning while in a multicultural community, native and non- native groups will think, act, and write in different ways based on each of their own cultural norms. Research shows that students in multicultural environments communicate less with those not familiar with their culture.

Nurturing Language Development

Parents, caregivers, and teachers need to nurture the language development of the learner through certain strategies. Teacher can help sustain natural language development by providing environments full of language development opportunities. Here are some general guidelines for teachers, parents, and other caregivers.

• Understand that every child's language or dialect is worthy of respect as a valid system for communication. It reflects the identities, values, and experiences of the child's family and community..

• Encourage interaction among children. Peer learning is an important part of language development, especially in mixed-age groups. Activities involving a wide range of materials should promote talk. There should be a balance between individual activities and those that nurture collaboration and discussion, such as dramatic play, block-building, and book-sharing. Every area of the curriculum is enhanced through language, so that classrooms full of active learners are hardly ever silent.

2.3.2. INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY ON CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS

As we have discussed about the influence of community on the language development of the learner and how school and community interface strengthens /reinforce it. We can move beyondlanguage and make link with the culture, which is one of the fundamental right of all human beingsto celebrate and enjoy their own culture. According to Article 29 of the convention on the Rights of the child, Education of the child shall be directed to the

development of respect for the child's parents his /her own cultural identity, language and values.

From this we can see clearly that language is a carrier of culture. It is one part of the entire cultural heritage and cannot be separated from culture .We should include it not because it is afundamental right of children but it is useful for them for providing quality education

Meaning of culture

Let us talk about the meaning of culture: Every group bound together or by common interests and purposes, whether educated or uneducated, rural or urban, possesses a body of traditions which may be called its folklore. Folk arts are traditional cultural expressions through which a group maintains and passes on its shared way of life. They express a group's sense of beauty, identity and values. Folk arts are usually learned informally through performance, by example or in oral tradition among families, friends, neighbours and co-workers. . A living cultural heritage, folk arts link the past and present. Never static, folk arts change as they are adapted to new circumstances while they maintain their traditional qualities.

Culture represents a tremendous spectrum of human expression that can be studied in a number of ways and a number of reasons. Its primary characteristics is that its ingredients seem to come directly from dynamic interactions among human beings in communal-traditional performance .Asthe culture have grown through time within the group that share the same ethnic heritage, language, occupation, religion or geographic area and these home grown traditional activities serve to identify and symbolise the group. These traditional forms of knowledge are learned informally within a one to one or small group exchange through performance. It is private but it can be made public when used by groups to symbolise their identity to themselves and others. Folklore comes early and stays late in the lives of all of us. In spite of the combined forces of technology, science, television, religion, urbanisation, and creeping literacy, we prefer our closepersonal associations as the basis for learning about life and transmitting important observationsand expressions.

National Policy on Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992) envisage a cultural perspective of education for the development of child's personality and discover

his/her inherentpotentials. The objective of the cultural perspective of education to inspire the teachers and students to collect folk song, folk tale, riddles, local history, folk game and myths from the community which have rich learning potentials for the child' cultural development and overall personality development and it is a source of self -learning in the community by sharingexperiences with others. The Community plays a important role in the cultural development of the child. The local culture if studied minutely reflects another realm of learning which can be foundation of institutionalised knowledge. The local history, its folk traditions, art craft, etc. have immense educational potentials and can be used by teacher to make the teaching -learning process more enjoyable.

Examples from tribal social life and village

For example, the Mahul Tree has a lot of significance in the tribal socioeconomic and cultural lifeand children could be taught about its importance in various spheres of life. The fruit of the tree isused as a vegetable and cooked and eaten as a curry. While the seed is used to extract oil, the byproduct of the seed (pedia) is used as manure in the cornfield. It is also used as a medicine for cows during winter. The seed when burnt emits smoke which is used to cure any swelling on the neck. Liquor is extracted from the flower and apart from drinking purpose, it is used as an antiseptic and also helps treat piles. The trunk of the tree is useful in the household for firewood.

The entire rural economy is regulated by the Mahul tree, as it serves as an important source of livelihood and income generation for the tribals. Every household has about 30-40 Mahul trees and earns money by selling its flowers, fruits and liquor.

The tree finds reference in the village folk songs, tales riddles etc. Thus we find it spurs the creative instincts of the people and inspires their sublime and aesthetic senses.

It is also strongly wedded to their socio-religious life. In tribal marriages the trunk of the tree is planted at the centre where the ceremony takes place. The tree is an auspicious symbol representing family and pro-creation. It is also believed that gods and goddesses reside in the Mahul tree and therefore the tree is worshipped.

Every village has its own local history, myths and legends surrounding its trees, ponds, gods and goddesses, people etc. some of these the children already know, otherwise the

teachers could tellthem about their own village history. This will enable children to take pride in their own culture and traditions.

Festival-a facet of culture

Now let us talk about different festivals which we celebrate in 12 months in a year . Every regionand every community has its own festivals spread over the year. There is festival to celebrate every season and reason. So far the celebration of national festival i.e Independence day and Republic day which never had to do anything with region and community .But now we can seethe same spirit in many religious or community specific festivals. Some such festivals which have cut through all castes and communities i.e Christmas the , Diwali, Navratri/ Durga Puja, Lohari, Basant panchami /Sufi Basant, and Id.

As we know Christmas is a beautiful festival of Christians spreading love and cheer all around. But now-a-days we find every school celebrates this festival complete with Christmas tree, Santa distributing pleasantries to children, and singing carols etc. for its cheerful spirit.

Like this Diwali is the biggest festival of India but its presence felt in other countries due to its beauty. The beauty of earthen lamps candles on dark Amavasya night ,the fun of crackers lights up every heart. So irrespective of Hindu and non- Hindu every house is decorated with lights and enjoy the happiness.

Similarly during Navratri/ Durga puja garba or dandiya ntriya of Gujarat attracts everyone even Bengali people in spite of their own grand Durga puja fell to swing at festival. Similarly the fun andfrolic Holi brings everyone closer.

During Id non-muslim friends wait to savour the delicacies of festivals which their muslim friendsnever fail to give as a token of love and friendship.

We all know about Basant panchami the festival to welcome the spring season when Goddess Saraswati is worshipped. But do you know that on this day Sufi Basant of Muslim is alsocelebrated. There is also a very interesting story about the origin of this Sufi Basant.

Above all festivals are about joy, cheer and happiness for everybody. This spirit of love, happiness, tolerance and respect for each others' culture strengthen secularism and develops positive attitudes to learn best practices from each other's culture. The main objective of stagingany festival include, recreation, socialisation and education

A Folk Game
A traditional game played among the tribal girls in the villages of Kalahandi in which the girls assemble in the village street during their leisure hours and play. This way the games goeson ,that the girls repeat the names of fishes and names of different paddy. This game continues tilleach one plays a role.

Through the game the children can learn the names of different types of fishes as well as paddy.This can be used to teach them more about the fishes their habitat, food etc. Similarly they can betaught about paddy , the names of seasons and months when they are grown, and the regions where they are found etc. Girls can enact the role of fisher women and customers. They learn the units of measure of paddy and fish. By enacting the role helps the children to develop theirconversational skills, questioning

As a teacher you should know about the cross cultural understanding of the community where theschool is. This can be done through

- Exploring the diverse aspects of the variety of culture in the community.
- Understanding the characteristics and practices that comprise a
  culture andthere by strengthening cross -cultural tolerance and
  appreciation of difference.
- Avoid the bias, preconception and myth.

Equip the child with the necessary knowledge and skills for their adult life. . School and community interface plays a crucial role in the cultural development of the learner by including the local culture into the various aspects of school activities as it provides an instant value to the knowledge as it shows communities and children that their own knowledge and beliefs are actually something worth. It also generates higher self -esteem in children of their own cultural identity, lower level feeling of inferiority and self denial which is very

helpful for the overall development of personality.

The purpose of is to change teaching, learning, and school-community relations. In addition to gathering data from villagers, students went to nearby forests to study plants and animals as part of their regular science lessons. Some local villagers came along as "experts" to help them understand various species indigenous to that village.. In addition, the curriculum can be linked todaily life and teachers are able to use a much wider array of resources to improve student learning.

First of all organising cultural mela by inviting parents, grandparents, from the community for displaying their culture in terms of art, dance, folk song, which provides an opportunity to familiarise oneself and students with the diverse culture of the community

- Communities can contribute to schools by sending respected community members, such as religious leaders or tribe heads, to the classrooms and talk about community history, traditions, customs, and culture, which have been historically celebrated in the community
- let the students visit communities and ask questions about village history and the originsand causes of various forest-related problems. Community members should help them understand concepts taught in schools, and students used any resource available within the communities to enhance their understanding.
- Organise the curriculum following the existing cycles i.e. their yearly cycle or the life cycle.
- Involve community members and children in producing indigenous reading material.
- Involve the community members and children for enlisting the folk story, game, riddles,song, to be included in the curriculum
- Document and disseminate the best practices of indigenous knowledge.
- Facilitate the indigenous resource persons of the community by providingtechnical support in pedagogical skills.

Indigenous knowledge is not necessarily restricted to traditional knowledge but it should be understood as indigenous way of transmitting new knowledge. We need to find innovative

ways on how to transmit our indigenous knowledge to new generation if we don't want to loose it.

So you as a teacher can provide a platform to promote the wealth of the traditional knowledge inthe form of story, folk tale, belief, practices and legacies by inviting religious leaders of the different ethnic and tribal communities. This way school and community interface help in reviving this traditional culture in today's context and help the children in getting to know their culture.

2.3.3 Influence of community on the life-skill development of the

learnerA Folk Story

Every day a hen used to go to drink water from a river. In that river lived a crocodile. The

crocodile used to observe the hen coming to the river to drink water. One day he decided to feast on the hen .When the frightened hen came to know of the crocodile's intentions, she called out to him and saying "brother please do not attack me". The crocodile was taken aback; he thought how could he kill the hen who had made him her brother. So he decided to let her go free.
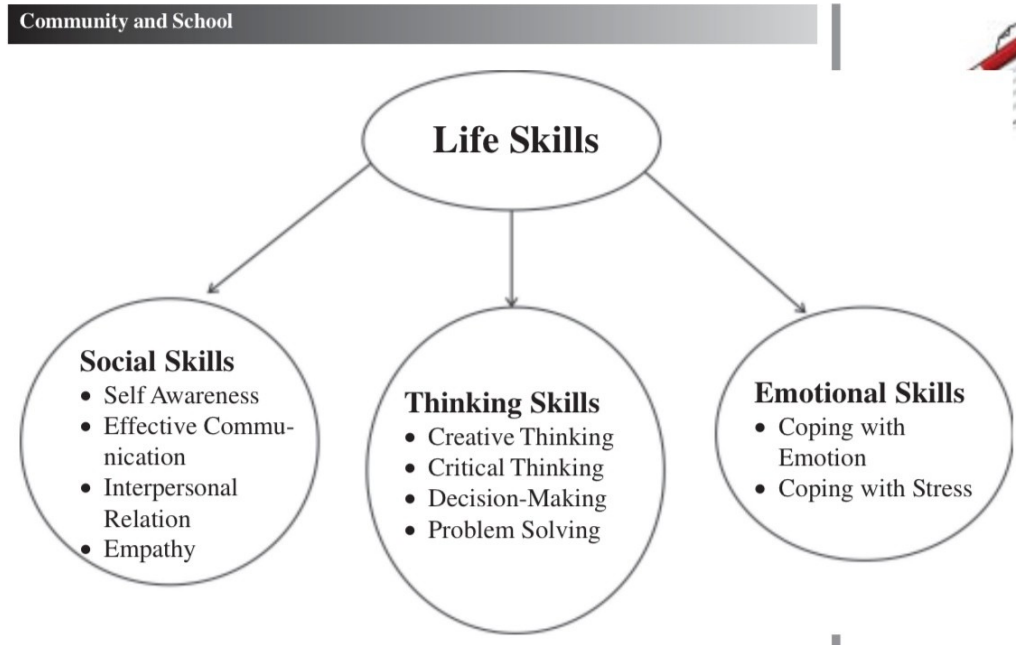
The next day when he saw the hen he decided not to spare her this time. But again the hen cried out "brother, please do not eat me." This time too the crocodile was in dilemma and could not eat the hen. Later on reflecting the hen's statement he thought as to how he could become the hen's brother, "I live in water and she lives on land, so how can we be related?"Unable to find answer to this question, he narrated the whole episode to a lizard and asked him if he could help solve the brother - sister mystery .The cunning lizard immediately cameup with a reply. He said, "do not know that the tortoise, you and I were born from eggs?" Sois the hen. That is why all of us are brothers and sisters". Now the mystery was solved for ever and the crocodile realised how he became hen's brother. From that day he never preyed on the hen.

Let us reflect on the story on the following questions.

• What the story represents in a tribal community?

• Do you feel that this folk story can be used for life skill development

of thelearner?

• If yes, then which life skills does the story tell about?

As we see the story represents the strong inter- personal bonds developed through better communication, positive attitudes and interpersonal skills where people share their joys and sorrows and lead a harmonious existence.

Now a question might come to your mind that what are life skills?

Community and School

Life Skills

Social Skills
- Self Awareness
- Effective Communication
- Interpersonal Relation
- Empathy

Thinking Skills
- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking
- Decision-Making
- Problem Solving

Emotional Skills
- Coping with Emotion
- Coping with Stress

Meaning of life skills- Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday living.(WHO) Life skills are individual skills/abilities that each one of us passes and yet need to enhance in order to meet thechallenges of life. Effective acquisition of life skills can influence the way one feels about oneselfand others can enhance one's productive, efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence. They also provide tools and techniques to improve interpersonal relations .Life skills are needed for effectively utilising the existing folk lore, folk traditions, local history, local belief, customs and

discriminations, of the community which have immense educational potential to make teaching learning process more enjoyable and effective.

Explanation of life skills

There are ten core skills which are broadly divided in three general categories i.e. thinking skills, Social skills and Emotional skills. As a teacher, you should explain each skill by using simple language and giving simple examples. Life skills are put to use in specific situations. Opportunities have to be provided for developing these life skills among the learners. The processis as important as the content. Life skill can influence the way we feel about ourselves and the way others perceive us.

Thinking Skills

1.   Creative thinking

2. Creative thinking helps us respond adaptively and flexibly in our everyday life situation. It is about looking beyond our direct experience, exploring available alternatives and the various consequences of our actions or non action.

3. Creative thinking is a novel way of seeking of doing things that is characteristic of fourcomponents
- fluency,
- flexibility,
- originality and
- elaboration.

2. Critical thinking
- Critical thinking enables us to analyze information and experience objectively and assessthe factors that influence that way we think and act.
- It is important for any of our crucial life decisions e.g. What option do I have?
- What can each option lend to? • Is this really what I want?

3. Decision making

      • Decision making helps to deal constructively with decisions about our lives.

  • These can have consequences for health if adolescents actively make decision about their actions by assessing the different options and the effects that different options and differentdecisions may have.

4. Problem solving

      • Problem solving skills empower us not only to control our problem, but can turn them toopportunities.

      • It also leads to decision making and managing emotions and stress. Social Skills

Social Skills

1. Self Awareness

Self awareness is the ability to understand our strengths, weaknesses, values, outlook character,our needs, desires, aspirations, ourselves, feelings e.g. I like myself even though I am imperfect.

2. Effective communication

• Effective communication is the ability to express, both verbally and non- verbally, in ways thatare culturally acceptable.

3. Interpersonal relationship skills

      • It helps relate with people in a positive way.

      • It also means being able to make and maintain friendly relationships, which can be ofgreat importance to our mental and social well being.

      • It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively.

4. Empathy

• Empathy is the ability to be sensitive to another person's solution, as in the case of AIDS sufferers, or people with mental illnesses, who may be stigmatised and ostracised by the very people they depend upon for support.

Emotional Skills

1. Coping with emotions

> • It involves recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotionsinfluence behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately.
> • Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we donot respond appropriately.

2. Coping with stress

• Coping with stress means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax.

Life skills may be directed toward personal actions or actions towards others, or may be applied to actions that alter the surrounding to make it conducive.

As we know that children in India live in diverse circumstances and they require guidance and assistance both covert and overt from their parent teachers, peers, and society in general to complete the various tasks of development. They have a right to a safe and supportive environment, accurate and age-appropriate information and skill building. These are required formaking them responsible and productive citizens and at the same time they will be socially adept, successful and asset to the society. Many children in marginalized and vulnerable communities suffer from low sself-esteem and lack of interpersonal skills. Girls especially have low self esteembecause of social and cultural discriminations that exist in the community.

Meaning of life skill education

Life Skill-Based Education (LSBE) refers to an interactive process of teaching and learning, which enable learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes, and skills which are needed to make decision and take positive actions to support the adoption of healthy behaviours.

Life skill education is more than a participatory classroom-based activity. It is an empowering approach helping children to take positive action to protect them and to promote healthy and positive relationships.

You as a teacher should be well equipped to do some activity with the students to enhance their life skills . As you know our culture is rich with folklore and stories that are a rich repository of intellect,. wit and humour. By taking stories from the community legacies, folk stories, teacher can help the students to apply the life skills in appropriate combinations to various life situations

Given below is a story titled" Birbal's secret"

UNIT 3 contribution of community in school education

STRUCTURE

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Policymakers, educators and others involved in education have increasingly recognized the significant role communities can play in the administration, management and monitoring of the educational institutions. There is mounting evidence that community involvement in schooling can have a dramatic impact on education access, retention, and quality. One of the major recommendations made by the National Policy on Education 1986 was related to empowering communities for the management of educational institutions at the local level. The NPE recommended the establishment of an appropriate

institutional framework at the district and sub-district levels such as the District Board of Education and Village Education Committee in order to ensure that the community members play an important role in the management of primary education. The move towards decentralization and empowerment of community got a further fillip with the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment relating to Panchayati Raj Institutions. Since then tremendous amount of experience in the field has accumulated with respect to the involvement of the community in the management of primary education in different states of India. SSA which is an instrument to achieve the target of Universalisation of Elementary education also emphasizes on the participation of community in the planning and management of school education. This unit will help you understand the contribution of the community in the school education. The present unit focuses on the importance of community in improving the access, participation and quality in school education.

CASE 1: THE STORY OF TWO VILLAGES AND A CITY

My name is Gita. I work in the education department. With great anticipation and enthusiasm. I reached the village of Sansi. I saw children playing, the women working in the field and some men sitting on a cot gossiping. I asked them where could I find the cluster resource center/ block resource centre. They looked at each other blankly. After asking many other people I met the cluster resource coordinator. He was sitting outside his office. I told him that I would like to meet the Village Education Committee members and the School Management Committee members. He said that they were busy and could trace only one of the members. I went to cluster resource centre and it was dark inside. I requested him to show the records of the meeting and I discovered that they were poorly maintained and there were no minutes of the meeting. I met two of the SMC members who were parents of the school going children. They informed that they had never attended any meeting for last six months. I visited two schools of the village and found the children and the teachers missing. The midday meal was served but the quantity was not sufficient. I got disturbed and started thinking why the people were not interested in the management of school? Why were the village committee members not supervising the teacher and school attendance?

After few days I went to Surkha village and the scene was like any other village. I asked them if they could show me the way to cluster resource centre. One young person took me to the cluster resource centre where I found that few teachers were sitting and discussing their problems. The cluster resource coordinator took me to the schools where I found most of the teachers and students were in their classroom and some of the students were in the art room. When I asked for the record, they immediately showed all the records. I was surprised to see that all of them were well maintained and the records of the Village Education Committee were in place. The parents who were members of the School Development Committee enthusiastically narrated as to how they formulated the School Development Plan. They also informed that the utensils for mid day meal were contributed by the community. Few members from the community also were taking mathematics classes for the academically weak children. One of the parents would go to school to monitor the mid day meal and another parent was teaching music to students. The SDMC members informed that they organised plays to generate awareness about the importance of education especially for girls and arranged doctor for medical checkup of the students. The members also with the help of social workers and teachers visited those households from where the children were not coming to school. The people we met appreciated the efforts of community and were also aware of the structures like Village Education Committee/ School Development Committee.

I visited Bhalswa slum in urban areas. The lanes were narrow and the people were standing in a queue to collect water. There was no toilet facility and the lanes were filled with dirty water. I asked if I could meet the cluster coordinator and also parents who were members of School Management Committee. They gave me the phone number of cluster coordinator and I could not meet the parents as they had gone for the work. Next day I could meet the cluster coordinator and two of the parents. When I checked the records there were only two meetings in the preceding year and the parents also showed their inability to monitor the school activities as they did not find time from the busy schedule and long working hours. However the representatives from a NGO showed me the bridge course centre they were running for the children and they were also involved in the household survey to find out the children who were not enrolled and who had not been coming regularly to the school. This NGO was creating awareness on the importance of education, running a bridge course centre and also visited the regular government school to help children in getting enrolled. They were also helping the dropped out children to appear for Xth standard exam through

the open school.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY

Community generally denotes a group of people who have common interest and work together.We all live in a community and some of the common factors that bind us to our community are

• language

• territory

• customs

• tradition and culture

• occupation

• common goal

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

There is increasing realisation that involvement of the people, especially rural poor and landless labourers, urban marginalised groups like living in slums and squatter settlements, disadvantaged groups like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women in programmes of educational development is essential.

The objective of community participation in education is to universalise education which means availability of schooling facilities to all children; getting all children to enrol and making the system responsive to retain all students. The goal of any kind of activity that attempts to involve community and parents /families in education is to improve the educational delivery so that morechildren learn better and are well prepared for the changing world.

Participation of the community is a means to increase the mobilisation of the financial, human andmaterial resources required to make the educational system efficient. Participation is also necessary to adopt education to the needs, problems, aspirations and interests of all sections of population especially weaker sections.

Participation is also essential for the democratization of education especially in the perspective ofachieving equal opportunity. Participation is indispensable in order to avoid having the community become indifferent towards the education system. It is also an

important instrument to stimulateinitiative.

GOVERNMENT's INITIATIVE TO INVOLVE COMMUNITY IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

The various government reports and policies started advocating for an education system that is more responsive and accountable to the community. Therefore, community participation became a major agenda of discussion in the country in the mid 1980s when decentralisation began to be recognised as an important component of the educational reform and change processes. The National Policy on Education (NPE 1986/1992) and the constitutional revival of Panchayati Raj Institutions (through the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments), the local self governing bodies created a context for reforming the school system by empowering the community to locally generate and implement institutional practices to support the school.

• The National Policy on Education (1986) and the accompanying Programme of Action called for an integrated and decentralised approach to developing school education systems with a focus on building the capacity of districts in planning and management of school education, particularly at elementary level. Community participation was regarded as a fundamental requirement for improving the entire education system and creating an appropriate framework for accountability at each level of administration. The shift took place from community development to community participation or empowering the people or the grass root democracy. It was emphasised in policy documents that the people need to have power in the decision making process. The community should be involved in the activities of schools, in the planning of school education at village/ward, block and district level.

• In pursuance of the Policy and Programme of Action, the state governments had taken steps to set up local bodies like Village Education Committee (VEC) and various other participatory structures.

• Major responsibility of the VEC should be preparation of micro-level plan, school mapping in the village through house to house survey and periodic discussion with the parents. The other functions of these committees included generation of awareness among the community so as to ensure participation of all members and development of teacher/instructor and community partnership to oversee the effective and regular

functioning of the school.

• In fact community participation in education got translated into reality with the creation of various grass-root level structures such as Village Education Committee (VEC), School Management Committee (SMC), Mothers Teachers Association (MTA) Parents Teacher Association (PTA) Mothers Associations and Women Monitor Groups (WMG). Under various educational programmes such as District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), added emphasis has been given to the formation and involvement of VECs and PTAs in elementary education with specific roles and functions. Although VECs and PTAs have been set up in all schools across the states, variation in their nature and composition, roles and responsibilities is observed.

• Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 also makes it mandatory for all the schools to constitute the School Management Committee and also specifies the functions of Village Education Committee/ Ward Committees in the planning and management of elementaryeducation which would be discussed in great detail.

WAYS THE COMMUNITY CAN CONTRIBUTE IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

Community involvement helps to raise a responsible child. It encourages parents/ communities to actively participate in their children's learning in schools by visiting schools to monitor hygiene and teaching/learning process in the classroom, discuss pupils' performance with teachers and provide support to their children's quality learning.

Community can be involved through different ways:

- participation in the surveys for out of school children, awareness building campaigns on issueof child labour, enrolment drives;
- participation in the school mapping exercise, location of the school, availability of schoolinginfrastructure like building, classrooms, toilet and drinking water facility;
- involvement through the contribution of money, materials, and labour;
- involvement through 'attendance' (e.g. at parents' meetings at school), visiting schools to monitor hygiene and teaching/learning in the classroom, discuss pupil's performance with teachers;

- involvement through consultation on a particular issue like how to improve the infrastructureor teaching methodology;
- participation in the delivery of a service, teaching when the teacher is absent or teaching a vocational skills/ music to the students;
- monitoring the attendance of children, regularity of teachers;
- monitoring the incentives like free text books, uniform reach to the students, monitoring theregularity and quality of mid day meal.

It is evident that there are potentially a range of areas in which communities can be involved in education, from mobilisation of resources and constructing classrooms, to supporting the development of curriculum and design of policy. They can also help in the monitoring of school activities.

WHAT ROLE COMMUNITY CAN PLAY TO IMPROVE SCHOOL EDUCATION
The community can promote the school education by working with the school principal and teachers, they can act as pressure group or watchdog if they find any irregularity in the school functioning. The community can perform following functions which are described below:

- generating awareness about education benefits and increasing enrolment;
- representation in Village Education Committees/Ward Education committees/Schoolmanagement committees to manage schools;
- To increase the daily attendance rates of school students;
- To increase girls' retention in school;
- To increase the number of parents observing teachers teaching in the classroom;
- boosting morale of school teachers;
- monitoring the appropriate use of financial resources in the school;
- recruiting and supporting teachers;
- making decisions about school locations and schedules;
- monitoring and following up on teacher attendance and performance;
- actively attending school meetings to learn about children's learning progress;
- providing skill instruction and local culture information;
- helping children with studying;
- identifying factors contributing to educational problems and discussing the

possiblesolutions.

FOSTERING SCHOOL-PARENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Increasingly, it is becoming evident that schools and communities should work closely with each other to improve the quality in education. With respect to addressing barriers to development andlearning and promoting healthy development, schools are finding they can do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. Indeed, for many schools to succeed with their educational mission, they must have the support of community resources such as family members, neighbourhood leaders, business groups, religious institutions, public and private agencies, libraries, parks and recreation, community-based organisations, civic groups, local government. If the community is engaged with the school it would lead to better management of school and improved pupil performance. For the community to actively participate in school they should be informed about the challenges and success of a school,know how they can contribute and feel a sense of pride and ownership in the school's achievement.The schools can perform better if there is close linkage between the school and community which can be established in the following ways:

- **Parents and schools who communicate regularly and clearly:** They share information important to students' success. Teachers inform families about learning objectives, schoolprogrammes, and pupils' performance. The parents are actively involved in the cultural programmes, and sports events organised by the school.
- **Schools that are well managed:** Community will be able to contribute in those schools which forms School Management Committees and give representation to the parents of different socio economic groups. The meetings are regularly held and the suggestion givenin the meeting are carried out.
- **Schools that encourage parents involvement:** Parents and guardians are warmly welcomed at the head teacher's office and in the classrooms. parents suggestions are valued and they are implemented.
- **Teachers who are ready to guide and advise parents:** If a parent has concerns about a child, or a child has special needs, the teachers are ready to help with guidance and counselling. Teachers are also ready to talk about ways in which parents can monitor their children's progress and check on their homework. All

parents and guardians, even those who cannot read and write well are treated with respect.

- **Parents and guardians who share their skills and knowledge with schools:** Parents volunteer as classroom aides, assist in field trips, coach sports, help with lunches, monitor school hygiene, such as the latrines and hand-washing facilities, provide teaching aids such as used boxes, seeds, waste material, act as resource persons ready to speak to the children on selected topics, help organise school events such as school annual day, national festivals, attend pupils' performances in drama, music and dance and are active participants in school meetings.

HOW CAN COMMUNITY IDENTIFY AND MOBILISE LOCAL RESOURCESCase 2: Community involvement in Micro-Planning

I am a volunteer working in the Karoli village. It has a population of 5300 people and has only one

school that provides education upto eighth standard. The major educational problem the village is facing that all the habitations do not have school in the neighbourhood, due to poverty large number of children (around 25%)are not enrolled and around 30% of them drop out before the VIIIth standard. After receiving training I thought how can I involve other community members totackle these problem? Are there any resources available in the community to do this.

Few more community members were contacted and they agreed to help me. First thing we did was to collect complete information about the village. With the help of village education committee members we drew a map of the village on the ground and identified different houses, institutions, religious places, well, healthcentre, community centre and other sites. We used different colours, stones, leaves, paper flags and other material to identify these places.

We also used this map for finding out the total population and the households having children of 6-17 years of age. We also identified the households from where the children were going to schooland those households from where the children had never enrolled or had dropped out. Information on the occupation of family members and the income was also collected.

This kind of information was useful as it gave idea about the kind of facilities that existed in village/ ward in urban areas.

The information that the map could provide was

- the number of the houses and location of each house in the village,
- the infrastructure of the village/ward - Anganwadi, preschool, location of school/ healthcentre,
- the number of people in each household
- the number of children going to school and the number of children not going to schoolfrom each household
- the number of literates/illiterates adults both male and female

After drawing the map we were able to identify if the number of schools were sufficient or more schools needed to be opened. We could sit with the community members and discuss with them the educational problems related to availability of schooling facility, participation of children etc. The discussion helped us to understand the educational problems and community members suggested strategies- like identified the place where another school could be opened, arranged the school timings and school calendar that the could come and attend , appointed local teachersetc.

The process of developing the village/ward map is called micro planning. Micro planning can be done with the help of

- Surveys
- Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) techniques
- focus group discussion
- views
- house to house surveys
- observation

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) techniques

PLA techniques rely on the use of symbols to communicate information. This approach is effective because it encourages illiterate adults and children to participate, thus increasing

the number of people actively contributing to the dialogue.

Chapati Community visioning

Involves the symbolic use of chapattis. A chapati is a ?at, round-shaped bread that Indian families eat on a daily basis. To involve the participants, a visioning workshop facilitator distributes small, medium, and large pieces of round-shaped cardboard. Next, he/she asks the residents to associate the most important problems for the community with the large chappati and other, but less signi?cant, problems with the smaller chapattis. Following the workshop, the chappatis are pasted to posters and displayed in popular, public gathering places to enhance awareness, increase dialogue, and garner support around a single issue.

Using Seeds, sticks and flags

To capture information describing the way problems or conditions change over time, facilitators rely on seasonal diagramming techniques. This method of data collection involves the creation of a community seasonal matrix which is populated using small objects like seeds. To begin, the facilitator constructs a matrix. Each row depicts a problem, like no school, over crowded school, insufficient teacher in the school, and each column represents a month of the year. Every participant receives 12 seeds and indicates the time of the year each problem occurred by placing a seed in the appropriate block. As demonstrated in the two previous examples, PLA techniques rely on the use of symbols to communicate information. This approach is effective because people who are not literate can also paticipate. Similarly, community mapping exercises not only allow residents to share information, but they also stimulate discussion and enthusiasm among large groups of people. Facilitators can use chalk to draw a map of the community directly on the ground. Residents are asked to use leaves, pebbles, and sticks to communicate important demographic information about their household. For example, a woman who lives with her husband, her mother, and two children will place a stick (men), two leaves (women), and two pebbles (children) in the square on the map which represents her dwelling to symbolize each member of her household. By using symbols like flags they identify children from those households from where the children are not attending schools. Similarly different symbols for dropped out children separately for boys and girls can be used. These techniques will identify the local problems and with the involvement of the community solutions are found.

CASE 3: INTERFACE OF COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL EDUCATION

National Institute of Urban Affairs practiced the PLA approach in their project on Primary Enhancement Project (PEEP) to achieve the key objectives of PEEP i.e. Universal enrolment and retention in the formal education system through quality teaching and improved school infrastructure. It was proposed to organise communities into neighbourhood committees and enhance their participation in the planning, management and delivery of education. The purpose was to build an interface between the community and education administrators.

To involve the community and make them self reliant, an entry was made into the community by visiting and meeting the community members.

Field facilitators were given the training as to how to meet the community leaders and explain them the objectives of the PEEP programme.

Close contact with community was established through rallies, slogan shouting, campaigns, wall writing. In this process community members were involved to help focus on the issue of education.

Besides creating awareness regarding the importance of education such campaigns helped to win community trust and confidence.

Once people of the community started recognising the resource persons and field facilitators, their involvement in the whole process increased. Campaigns were followed by the community meetings. In these meetings a range of PLA activities were used to understand peoples' problems with regard to schools availability and functioning.

Community resource and household maps were prepared with the help of the community. Groups of 35-40 community members gathered together who drew a map on the ground using the local material like twigs, brick powder, different types of seeds, stones, pebbles, leaves, paper etc. Each map contained information for about 300 households. Maps were then seamed together using a key map that contained major landmarks and community

resources. Mapping helped communities to appreciate their strengths and resource, identify their problems and plan action based on their capacities. Community maps included information and flagged out homes with children out of school, dropouts, working children, women etc.

In the process of using PLA tools, interaction with the community increased and some active and enthusiastic people were identified from within the community to work with the programme as volunteers. Women were organised into neighbourhood groups(NHG). NHG meant a collection of households living spatially close to each other ranging from 50 to 250. Each NHG chose a member to represent the group's interest. Representatives from different NHGs were brought together as a Neighbourhood or Bastee Committee (BC) responsible for discussing the problems and concerns of the whole bastee. Bastee Committee identified a President, Secretary or a few key leaders.

Carved out of the Bastee Committee in the PEEP programme was the Bastee Education Committee (BEC), comprising of two or more members of the NHC Committee. Functions of the BEC were to ensure enrolment, attendance, learning processes and linkages with the school.

Finally these groups were encouraged to make a ward/district association for initiating a dialogue with the local body/state administration. Once people were identified to form these groups (NHC), facilitators of the PEEP programme ensured that the group had representation of all caste, religious and economic groups.

The committees had regular meetings and initiated few activities. They decided to set up SahayakShishu Kendra (SSK) to support the learning needs of the children in their locality. SSK took different forms as per the needs of the families; a balwadi (Pre School) tuition centre, vocationaltraining centre for adolescents. Community members identified space for the centre. SSK workers were trained in teaching pedagogy. The community provided human and financial resources required for managing these centres. (Source Lorene Hoyt, Renu Khosla, and Claudia Canepa)

The above example illustrates that an effort was made to engage community in the decision making process. Community was made a part of the project from the planning to the implementation stage. Structures at different levels were created- neighbourhood committees; Bastee committees having representation from the neighbourhood committees and the Basti education Committees to focus on the education problems.The community helped in the following activities

- generating awareness on the importance of education
- Conducting household survey and collecting information on the non enrolled, dropped out,school going children from each household
- preparing basttee map
- Interaction with the local body/state administrators
- Setting up centres for pre school, remedial classes and vocational skill training
- Provided financial and resource assistance

STRUCTURES THROUGH WHICH THE COMMUNITY CAN BE REPRESENTED

With the information obtained through mapping of the area, surveys, focus group discussion and PLA activities the plans are made to improve the existing schooling facilities, enrollment and attendance of children and teachers , what kind of structures that exist where the community could be represented

- School Management Committees
- Village Education Committees/ Ward committees
- Non governmental organisations
- Volunteers
- Self help Group

The following two case studies clearly reflect the impact of community participation on the functioning of the school. While in one case the community was not encouraged to participate which shows that the school was not properly managed. In the other case the community was actively participating in the school activities.The case studies have been reported by Dr Awasthi Kashyapi, Assistant Professor, NUEPA which were documented during her research work.

CASE 4: AMBEDKAR PRATHMIK SHALA, KRISHIVADI, NAVSARI, GUJARAT: FEBRUARY2006

Ambedkar Prathmik Shala, Krishivadi is a school situated near Navsari Railway station. The school was surrounded by extremely unhygienic conditions. There was a huge lake in front of the school which was filled with dirt from the nearby slums. It was a breeding place for mosquitoes. Goats, pigs and hens moved around in the school class rooms and the place where mid day meal was being cooked. There was no shed for mid day meal, a chulha was placed near the toilets and food was cooked there. The room where grains were stored was extremely dirty and grains also contained insects and dirt. The school did not have a compound wall and the entire school compound was too dirty. In such a huge open ground not one plant was sown. There was a water tank in the school, half of the taps of which were broken. There was a big puddle in front of the tank water of which was directed towards the school entrance. There could not be any other better entrance since other two sides of school were surrounded by lake and the third side had bushes. Door of the one toilet was broken therefore it was not possible to use it and the other toilet was in better condition which was kept locked, probably only teachers could use it. When enquired about its poor unhygienic state the teachers mentioned that the school did not have a compound wall and hence the community would take away most of the things even the door, windows, the taps at times even broke the ramp, Chulha and took the bricks from it.

The school had a large strength and hence was running in two shifts from 08:00am to 12:00 noon and from 01:00pm to 05:00pm. The community had very few native residents from Gujarat, there were migrants from Mumbai, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan most of them were working in diamond factory. The interaction with the children revealed that they could barely understand Gujarat till standard 3. Students of standard 4th and 5th could understand but did not know to read and write even their name. When inquired from the teachers they said these children were irregular throughout the year. When the attendance register of the past months was checked

they were found to be marked present and this was the case for 6th and 7th standards also. The reason given was that to give them scholarship they needed to have minimum attendance and togive them scholarship the teachers marked them as present even for those days when actually they were absent. The school cupboard was filled with some 300- 400 story books, the ribbons orpacking of which had still not been removed. On the day of the visit only two teachers of the ninewere present and on inquiry it was found that they had been for training which was scheduled between 11:00am to 05:00pm while the morning shift runs between 08:00am to 12:00 noon and there should have been no problem in attending the school at 08:00 am if desired. The two teachers present were also from the after noon shift. The afternoon shift was given a holiday andmay be the morning shift was running because the team had informed of their visit. On talking tothe community members they expressed their dissatisfaction with the staff and principal and mentioned that their children did not receive the scholarship and incentives timely and there wasno teaching going on. One of the parents remarked that her child was studying in standard 5th and did not know anything. The midday meal food grains were also seen transported outside. On inquiring about the community participation and why did they not raise voice in MTA/PTA they voiced unequivocally that they were not invited at all to school. Only few parents who worked atthe directions of the teachers were welcomed and others voices were not heard. One parent said that you must have heard of public holidays like 15th August and 26th January or Sundays but in this school the teachers had one CRC holiday which was scheduled at least twice a month and even after those trainings they found no difference in the teachers teaching styles and their children's learning. In the subsequent visit the members of VEC, MTA and PTA were invited, in introductory round it was found that the members who were members of MTA, PTA did not have their children studying in the school while those children who were attending school, their parentsdid not represent either of the committees. Meanwhile the parents of the children had arrived after learning that the team had come to the school and there were exchange of words between the two groups. The teachers were blaming the community for being indifferent and the community was blaming the teachers for doing nothing. As the school was in the urban area, the elected member of the ward also came to interact with the team who had little vision about education which was reflected in his words "I do not have time but whenever they come with something I sign." Why community participation? How many meetings have been conducted? What is discussed? Does it really help or what is the plan for the school in

future? There were no answersto these and many such questions. The lack of leadership at different stages, indifference of teachers was reciprocated in the behaviour of the community and there seemed to be no rapport

amongst the teachers and community members.

The above case study clearly reflects that the community was not engaged and they could not monitor the physical structure, teacher attendance. The student attendance was also manipulatedand the student performance was also not satisfactory.

CASE 5: JOBANTEKRI PRIMARY SCHOOL, VADODARA

Jobantekri Primary School situated at a distance of twenty kilometres from Vadodara district of Gujarat had two small rooms, a student strength of fifty three with three female teachers. It's an all women team which included the teachers, the mid day meal coordinator, the cook, the sarpanch.A tar road to the school got constructed six months back otherwise it was travelling through eightto ten kilometres of muddy patch with a huge trench. There was high rate of absenteeism, children would keep playing outside or accompany parents to fields, and even those who came would come very shabbily dressed. There was a hand pump in the school compound and people collected water from there and would abuse each other while chit-chatting. The school corridorswere used by villagers to drink and eat meat or gamble in the evenings after school hours, the remains of which remained till morning and the school staff had to do with the cleaning. One of the lady teachers started an initiative to improve the school environment and with her persistentefforts she could reach to the community. She would teach the children mathematical numbers, language and good manners through play way method. While the parents were returning from fields during lunch time she would take children outside the classroom and made them recite loudly whatever they had learnt. The parents passing by would stop to hear their children say and would also prevent others from chit-chatting and disturbing the children. This became a regular affair and gradually the gossips and abusive language being used while fetching water stopped since the parents got interested in knowing what their wards were doing rather than gossiping loudly. Parents also saw their children cleaning the school compound which they littered previous

night and felt ashamed of their acts hence they stopped. Due to lack of ownership for the schooland the intense poverty the parents would even remove the doors or windows of the school at night and sold them off which also stopped.

This teacher also noticed the casteism in the village and the caste and gender based allocation ofduties in the school. She took an initiative to reverse it against the opposition of other staff and community members. Her positive and convincing arguments with selfless efforts made the community believe in her and gradually caste or gender based allocation of duties in the school stopped. When the children and community were interviewed regarding their perception of the rotation system of work an interesting story came up, one parent from baniya community told thatthey had invited guests home. As she was not well, she was worried who would clean the house and serve the tea as she had only two sons. She then proudly mentioned that, thanks to the teacher the stereotyping of the boys not doing household chores was not there and the sons helped in cleaning the house and serving the tea. It had a rolling effect and she tried to convinceothers that irrespective of caste and gender anybody should do any kind of task. Once inmonsoon season this lady teacher came to school wading through waters up till knee level. The villagers stopped her near the trench and asked her to get back since crossing the trench with a two-wheeler was impossible and rest of the path had to be walked through the muddy roads. They asked her to come after monsoons. In response to this she asked them what were theydoing in monsoons. Did they also stop working? She knew that the intense poverty compelled them to work everyday in spite of the tough conditions. She asked them how to cross this trench?You could teach me this instead of telling me to go back. The villagers were touched by her honesty and passion for teaching. Since then there is no looking back disclosed the teacher gladly. Cooperation for all little tasks had been flowing from the community. In her interaction she mentioned that she did not go to meet the community only in times of need or for meetings but reached an hour or two prior to the school timings and moved around the village to each house, and would enquire whether the children were ready to come to school? In this manner a regular contact helped her to establish cordial relationship with the community and community also helped in the management of school. The students became more regular in attending the school.

The most unique factor of the school was the child centred teaching. Basic values were

transmitted through small stories, puppetry, games and music. Puppets of different insects, animals, birds using different material like cloth, cardboard, chart paper, mat paper were made to give students an idea of the natural habitat. All students from 1st to 5th standard were taught integers, tables by singing and dancing method, using drum beats, exercises, yogic postures. They recited the names of the months of Gujarati and English calendar with rhythmic claps. The enthusiasm and ideas of this great teacher could engage the community enthusiastically. The community began to participate in all kinds of school activities like monitoring the attendance of children and teachers, pation in cultural and sports programmes and even extended a helping hand in teaching for example the farmers helped in introducing the concept of germination and other topics related to agriculture.

UNIT 4. PROVISIONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION UNDER SSA AND RTE

STRUCTURE

Introduction

Community Participation In Education

Introducing Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Right of Children To Free And Compulsory Education Act 2009

Community Participation Under RTE/Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Importance of Community Participation

Contribution of Community in Education

Developing Relevant Curriculum and Learning Material

Identifying and Addressing Problems

How can Community participation Improve Education?

Village Education Committees (VECs)

School Management Committees (SMC)/ Parent Teacher Associations

Key Functions Of SMC/PTA

Initiatives Towards Community Participation Across The States

INTRODUCTION

Community participation is a central and important factor in planning, implementation and monitoring interventions for Universal Elementary Education. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 has made provisions to ensure the meaningful participation of key stakeholders, particularly local panchayati raj institutions, parents, students and communities, in education. SSA is a significant tool to implement the RTE which has created structures at the village/ward, block, cluster and school level and assigned them the responsibility to get engaged with the educational activities. Community involvement in education can bring positive social change for socially excluded individuals and communities by creating access to educational facility. Community can also arrange the

campaigns to bring the children to school.

In the previous block you have learned about the concept of community. This block would focus on the involvement of community in various educational activities. The block would help you to analyse the significance of community engagement in education and how the local level participation is useful in improving the access, participation of disadvantaged children. The block would explain the community participation in the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and various schedules of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

You must have heard that the communities have been donating land for opening the school. Few communities send the agricultural produce to the schools. Even now the communities and the corporate sector give utensils, desks, computer, desk etc. to the school. You must have also seen that few parents especially mothers go to school and teach the vocational skills like painting, craftwork etc.

Thus we can say that Community participation in education means the involvement of parents and community members in the planning and management of schools that help in the improvement of quality. Do you know that the community participation in education seems to takeplace principally in two forms: informal and formal.

Informal: The informal manner, in which local communities contribute to educational effort. It may take the form of providing a piece of land for the school building and contributing labour and locally available material for its construction. During the 1950s and 60s, considerable effort was made, particularly in Tamil Nadu, in mobilizing community support for education. Substantial contributions were made in cash and kind by local communities and parents' groups to meet the needs of educational institutions.

Formal: The formal mechanism for community participation has taken the form of what village panchayats and village education committees/ ward education committees do. Under SSA various structures have been created like the Village Education Committees/ Ward committees, Parent Teacher Association, Self help groups, School Management

Committees and have been given specific duties in the monitoring and supervision of the school administration and management.

INTRODUCING SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

Before you know about the community participation under SSA let us briefly discuss the mission of SSA programme.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalisation of Elementary Education. SSA was launched in 2001. It is a tool to implement Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 which came into force in April2010.

SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country andaddress the needs of around 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations.

The programme seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing infrastructure in those schools which do not have sufficient classrooms, drinking water, toilets etc.

Additional teachers are provided to those schools which do not have sufficient teachers. Teachersare also given in service training, grants for developing teaching learning material.

SSA seeks to provide quality education including life skills. SSA has a special focus on girls' education and children with special needs.

The programme calls for community ownership of school based interventions. It makes an effort to involve the Panchayati raj institutions, School Management Committees, Village and Urban Slum level Education Committees, Parent Teacher Association and Mother Teacher Association etc in the management of elementary school.

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009

The major landmark in the education sector in India is the enactment of Right of Children to Freeand Compulsory Education Act 2009 which came into force in April 2010.

Salient features of the RTE Act 2009

- The Act makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14 and specifies minimum norms in elementary schools.

- The government schools shall provide free education to all the children. Free education is to be given to provide equal opportunity to all the children to attend school and the expenses should not become a hindrance in pursuing or completing elementary education.

- The State shall provide school in the 'neighbourhood' within three years from the enactment of act. Children in every habitation will have access to primary school within awalking distance of 1km and to upper primary school within 3 km.

- Private schools shall admit at least 25% of the children in their schools from poor families.

- The Act also provides that no child shall be held back or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education i.e VIIIth standard.

- The act also mentions that each child is given age appropriate education which implies that children will be enrolled in the class that corresponds to their age. For example if nineyear old has not been to school or dropped out earlier, he/she will be enrolled in class IV. To enable the 9 year to cope in class IV 'special training/ bridge course' will be provided on the premises to bring the child upto the age appropriate level.

- Schools shall have adequate number of teachers and classrooms- there is a provision fora teacher for every 30 children at primary level

- Schools will have separate toilet for girls and boys.

- Schools will be managed by School Management Committees.

- RTE reiterates that access not only denote physical access but also ensuring social access by way of addressing exclusionary practices in the school, especially thosebased on caste, class, gender and special needs.

- School mapping exercises will have to incorporate social mapping which means that the children from socio economic backward groups are enrolled. Community and other civil organisation will help in the identification of such children and help in their enrolment. Involvement of civil society organisation and community is desirable to reach to the children living in remote areas, unsaved population in

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villages, squatter settlements, in orphanage and on street.

You will realise that is not going to be easy as tracking children who are out of school is a difficult task due to inter and intra migration. A large chunk of children are on the street that may / may not be having linkages with their families. Mapping such children and enrolling them in the age appropriate class is a massive and complex task. Community members can report to the village/ ward education committee about those households from where children are not enrolled or have dropped out. In some of the villages the community/ self help groups have taken this responsibility and have sent the children to school.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION UNDER RTE/SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a vehicle to implement the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE 2009). As said above, RTE makes it mandatory for the State to provide free and compulsory education to all the children of 6-14 years of age. It envisages involvement of community and parents in the planning and management of education. To implement RTE different type of community based institutions has been involved such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Village and Urban Slum Level Education Committee (VEC) and members of Panchayati raj institutions. Almost all States/UTs have formed VEC/PTA/SDMC/MTA/SMC/VEDC under SSA.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

You must have seen that when the community takes interest and is involved in education then the education does not remain limited to the books . The child is able to learn easily as he/she not only learn through the books but also relate to the daily experience of their life. With the involvement of the community it is easy to identify the problems faced by the local people. Village education Committee can help to decide where the new school needs to be opened, which schools need to be repaired. They can also see if the teacher is coming regularly to the school and teaching properly. They can also see if the sufficient classrooms are available and the classrooms are not overcrowded. The community can also supervise if the books are given to students on time and mid day meal is given to them regularly. They can visit and eat with the children to know if the food served is of good quality. They can also visit households and identify the children who are not coming to school. They can also motivate the parents to send their children to school. In short we can say that community

participation is very useful in enrolling thechildren and improving the quality in education.

As has been explained above that under the RTE / SSA Community Participation in education is being envisaged as an efficient strategy to achieve many objectives, including increasing the relevance and quality of education, improving access and coverage, identifying problems reflecting local priorities , developing relevant curriculum and learning materials, improving ownership, local accountability and responsiveness, reaching disadvantaged groups, mobilising additional resources and building institutional capacity

You must be aware that various research studies have highlighted that the children of rural poor,disadvantaged, those living in slums are either not enrolled in school or even if they are enrolledthey dropout. The studies also point out that even if these children remain in school they do not learn much. There is increasing realisation that involvement of the people, especially rural poor and landless labourers, urban marginalised groups like living in slums and squatter settlements, disadvantaged groups like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women in programmesof educational development is essential. If these groups are involved, they can describe their problems and suggest suitable solutions. State can make appropriate intervention.

In short, we can say that the participation of the community in the educational activities is usefulin the following ways:

- It helps to increase the mobilisation of the financial, human and material resourcesrequired to make the educational system efficient.
- It becomes easy to adopt education to the needs, problems, aspirations and interests ofall sections of population especially weaker sections.
- Participation is essential to keep the community involved in the educational reforms. It isalso an important instrument to stimulate initiative.
- Community participation will keep the teachers alert and responsive.

CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY IN EDUCATION

RTE and SSA would be implemented with the support of community and it is believed that community can contribute in different ways by providing financial support as well as academic and administrative help. It can act as a watch dog and help to monitor and supervise the educational activities of school and teachers.

Community as a Watchdog/ Pressure Group

Community can supervise the functioning of school teachers, principal, head master etc. The following example will show you as to how the community pressurised to stop the transfer of a head teacher.

Community as a Resource

You must have observed that the parents are usually concerned about their children's education and often are willing to provide assistance that can improve the education delivery. In places where teacher absenteeism and poor performance are critical issues parents and community members can be part of the system of monitoring and supervising teachers. Community can ensure that teachers arrive at classroom on time and perform effectively in classroom.

It is also seen if need arises the parents also come and take classes or act as a resource person. They can become the core agent of the education delivery. Parents can give the practical knowledge and skills to the children.

The following example will make you understand better that how the community members couldcontribute.

DEVELOPINGRELEVANTCURRICULUMAND LEARNING MATERIAL

You would notice that when the parents and communities are involved in the development of curriculum, the same curriculum becomes easy and interesting. Communities and parents involvement help to formulate curriculum and learning materials that reflect children's everydaylives in society. When children use textbooks and other materials that, they can easily relate withwhat they are learning with what they have already known. The following examples clearly showthat the parents and community members were involved in the preparation and transaction of practical skills.

### 4.2.6. IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING PROBLEMS

Communities can help identify and give reasons that contribute to educational problems, such as low enrolment, dropping out and poor academic performance of the children. In many areas, parents and community are actively involved in identifying the out of school children, helping them to get enrolled.

HOW CAN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IMPROVE EDUCATION?

Community participation makes a difference and can improve education management is evident from the following example From the examples given above , you would have got an understanding as to how community participation can contribute to education delivery through various channels. The following is a list of ways through which communities can contribute to the education delivery especially as envisaged in RTE and implemented through SSA

- help in identifying the out of school children
- getting all children enrolled and making the system retain all students.
  campaigning for enrolment and education benefits;
- raising money for schools;
- ensuring students' regular attendance and completion;
- constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities;
- recruiting and supporting teachers;
- making decisions about school locations and schedules;
- monitoring and following up on teacher attendance and performance;
- forming village education committees to manage schools;
- actively attending school meetings to learn about children's learning progress and classroom behaviour;
- providing skill instruction and local culture information;
- helping children with studying;
- advocating and promoting girls' education;
- scheduling school calendars;
- handling the budget to operate schools;
- establishing linkages between the block, district and the school

Significant Areas of Involvement of Community
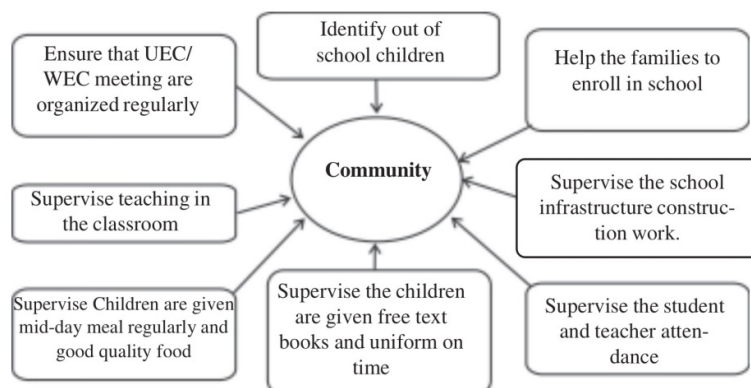
Formal Structures of Community Participation under SSA/RTE

As you know that India is a diverse country and each state has formed the Village education committee and school management committee and has given different names. But the responsibilities and powers of these committees are similar in nature. The structure and functionsof these committees are discussed below.

VILLAGE EDUCATION COMMITTEES (VECs)

Village Education Committees are given the important role of identifying dropouts and left out children. On the basis of the survey done by the VECs, a school register is prepared. School register gives the number of out of school children and then the schooling facility is given to them.

Village School Committees have the following major functions to perform

- Organization of activities like enrolment drive, awareness general campaign, children fair, Maa beti Mela and Kishori Mela to generate community awareness towards elementary education.
- VEC plays a major role in construction activities. It undertakes the purchase of materialsas well as supervises the work.
- Regular monitoring of enrolment, attendance, retention and enhancement of learning achievement level of children.
- It maintains stock registers and cash book. It also supervises allocation of the

maintenance grant as per the needs and priority of the school.

- In some states like Jammu and Kashmir, VECs are involved in the recruitment
- of para teachers. VECs also monitor the activities of the teachers and their regularisationis done on the recommendation of VECs.
- Checking the attendance of students and absenteeism of teachers,
- Maintenance of school building
- Preparation and implementation of habitation/school level annual work plan called micro plan under SSA every year to the achieve goal of Universalisation of elementary education (UEE).
- Motivation to community to donate cash/kind/labour for the all round development of the school.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (SMC)/ PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

Few states like Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh etc have introduced the system of formation of School Management committee known as School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC)/ Parent Teacher Association in each Government school to ensure community ownership and participation in education.

Composition of SMCs

RTE states that three fourths (75%) members of the SMC from the parents/ guardians. From them 50% will be women. Weaker sections will be represented in the SMC in proportion to their population in the village/ward.

Rest one fourth (25%) will be represented as 1/3rd local authorities;1/3rd school teachers;1/3rd academicians/students) .

Significant powers and duties of the SMCs as described in RTE act are as follows:

KEY FUNCTIONS OF SMC/PTA

- Making School Development Plan(SDP) as per the RTE guidelines/norms
- Supervising and supporting implementation of SDP

- Supervision/monitoring of finance, management, academic progress
- Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality of teachers
- To sanction restricted and casual leave to primary, upper primary head masters
- Auction of all useless equipments, furniture and the money to be given to school education fund
- Regular auctioning of crops grown in the school lands and giving the money to the Schooleducation Fund
- Organising programmes for mobilising enrolment and bridge courses for bringing childrenback to school.
- Supervise the construction activities
- Ensuring that the parents enrol and send all the children to school regularly
- Monitor children's growth in the achievement in different subjects
- Supervise and review all development-academic, administrative and financial activities ofthe school.
- Ensuring that all the incentives from the government reach to the students.
- Keeping proper accounts of the fund available and sharing its deployment
- and utilisation with common people
- Creating and maintaining an educational database
- An example given below tells as to how the SMC members articulated the demand for therepair of electric connection.

4.6 INITIATIVESTOWARDSCOMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ACROSS THE STATES

Examples of Initiatives by Community for achieving UEE across the states are presented below toimprove your understanding of the kind of activities the community is involved in

Andhra Pradesh

• Bal Mitra kendras for girls have been started to cater to the needs of girls. Parents play important role in selection of teachers, monitoring the centres and contribution to teachers' salaries.

Assam

• Substituting teachers as per necessity

• Motivating parents of disabled children for their enrolments in schools

• Mobilisation of fund for the development of school

Bihar

• Sanctions and supervision of incentive allowance to students for regular attendance

• Construction work based on cost effective technology

Dadar & Nagar Haveli

• Provision of drinking water facility

• Shala Pravesh Utsavs (Enrolment Drives)

Gujarat

• Early Child care Centres are being run and managed by committees of Sakhi, Sahayogini and Anganwadis. These communities monitor the centres and mobilise local resources in cash and kind.

• Education materials like Asan patta(mats for sitting), books, note books, pen-pencils and snacksto children in Alternative schooling system

Haryana

• Attendance of children and regularity of teachers is monitored by the community

• Incentives reach to the needy are also supervised by the community.

Himachal Pradesh

• Quality and regular delivery of mid day meal is monitored by the community

Jharkhand

• Village Education Committee looks after the school management, teacher attendance, student attendance, construction work, girls enrolment, estimates of out of school children, teacher appointments etc.

• Parent teacher association meet on regular basis to monitor the progress and problems of children as well as teachers.

• Social audit by organising Aam sabha (General meeting) quarterly.

• Substitution by local teachers in absence of regular teachers to facilitatesmooth running of the school.

• Constitution of child cabinet to promote interaction among students.

• Identification of Children with Special Needs for enrolment in schools.

Karnataka

• Sanghas are running balwadis with no financial assistance from Mahila samakhya except the initial setting up and training to the volunteers. These Sanghas consisting of women are playing active role in enrolling children into primary schools.

Madhya Pradesh

• Jan Shiksha Adhinayam act 2002, brings the community to the centre stage for ensuring qualityand equity in education.

• Updation of Village Education Register

• Appointments of Volunteers for Non Residential Bridge Courses, HumanDevelopment Centre in urban slums and Shishu Shiksha Kendras

Manipur

• Appointment of Education volunteers in EGS/AIE centres Mizoram

• Preparation of habitation Plans

• Maintaining Village Education Registers

Nagaland

• Disbursement of salaries to teachers- following the principle of 'No Work No Pay'.

Orissa

• Mobilisation of parents for regular attendance in schools

• Initiatives for enrolment of girls

• Identification of out of school children and their enrolment

• Temporary appointment of teachers in case of the shortage in schools

•

Rajasthan

• Regular monitoring of the attendance of children is done by the community. Monitoring is done for child tracking register prepared by teachers in each Gram Panchayat.

• In Bhuteda Gram Panchayat of Jaipur district, one of the toilets in the school was not built but was shown in the blocks official records. The monitoring committee highlighted the issue and thecorrection was made.

• In Bhuteda, in Upper primary Schools two teachers were removed from the school on the complaint of the community members as the teachers were irregular.

West Bengal

• Development of Educational Plans for children in pre primary, primary, upper primary schoolswithin their jurisdiction

• Maintenance of the micro level database for the children in the age group of 6-14 years

• Maintenance of accounts (vouchers, cashbooks, reports etc.

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