

Quality Education for All

Dr. Asim Kumar Sarkar, Moumita Sarkar

Principal, Kabi Nazrul Islam Teachers' Training College, Chotkhanda, West Bengal, India

Abstract: *Quality is a very intriguing term. It has no limit and a definite safe. It cannot be quantified in terms of time and space. In the context of education quality assumes dimensions of varied nature. Naturally many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. Sometimes terms like efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have been used synonymously creating a lot of confusions amongst the commoners. Notwithstanding complexities in the definition of quality in education two key elements stand out to be the basic factors. These two key elements are 1) Cognitive development, 2) Education's role in encouraging learners' creative and emotional development in supporting objectives of peace, citizenship and security, in promoting equality and in passing global and local cultural values down to future generations. Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today.*

Keywords: Quality Learner, Teachers' Behaviour

Quality Education Includes:

1. Learners who are healthy, well nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender sensitive, and provide adequate resource and facilities;
3. Content that is reflected in curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
4. Process through which trained teachers use child centred teaching approaches in well managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
5. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

According to the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the 21st century, Chaired by the French Statesman Jacques Delor education is based upon four pillars;

1. **Learning to know:** It acknowledges that learners build their own knowledge by combining indigenous and external elements.
2. **Learning to do:** It focuses on the practical application of what is learned.
3. **Learning to live together:** Meaning thereby the critical skills for a life free from discrimination where all have equal opportunity to develop themselves, their families and their communities.
4. **Learning to be:** That emphasizes the skills needed for individuals who developed their full potential.

The importance of good quality education was resolutely reaffirmed as a priority for UNESCO at a Ministerial Round Table on 'Quality of Education' held in Paris, in 2003.

The definition given above recognizes 05 dimensions of quality – 1) Learners, 2) Environments, 3) Content, 4)

Processes and 5) Output. Needless to say all the dimensions are founded on the rights of the whole child and all children to survival, protection, development and participation.

Quality education on global perspective is rarely found in our country particularly in the rural areas. The system that has been generated to impart so called universal education suffers from various types of deficiencies and hindrances that may be called unsurmountable challenges at present. This may be studied under the following pages.

Quality Learners:

School systems work with the children who come into them. The quality of children's lives before beginning formal education greatly influences the kind of learners they can be. Many elements go into making a quality learner, including health, early child hood experiences and home support.

Good Health and Nutrition:

It is a fact and well accepted truth that the physically and psycho-socially healthy children learn well. Healthy development in early childhood, especially during the first 03 years of life, plays an important role in providing the basis for a healthy life and a successful formal school experience. A survey conducted by myself reveals that 60% of child enrolled in school at primary level suffer from malnutrition and their parental support is not so effective due to ignorance of their parents in the field of child rearing. To me it appears to be a social problems, particularly, in rural areas. The hygienic conditions at home and at institutions also are not at all satisfactory.

Early Childhood Psycho-social Development Experiences:

Positive early experiences and interaction are also vital to preparing a quality learner. A study has found a high level of quality in early childhood development programmes can be achieved when health and nutrition components are combined with structured psycho-social development in the pre-school years. Psycho-social development includes

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welcoming and non-discriminatory climate within the schools and class rooms. In rural areas attitudes discouraging girls of minority communities to attend the schools act as barriers to provide congenial ambience.

Family Support for Learning:

Parents may not always have the tools and background to support their children's cognitive and psycho-social development throughout their school years. Parents' level of education, for example, has a multifaceted impact on children's ability to learn in school.

In our study about 75% parents in spite of their deep love for their wards are indifferent to the learning environment of the students. Schools play little role to help the parents to enhance the home, curriculum and improve the quality to parental involvement in their children's education. Partnering with organization can affect parenting in the pre-school years such as public health providers, non-governmental organizations, asking parents to participate in assessment of their child's progress offering clear, regular non threatening communication and including parents in decision making group at the school.

Qualities of School Facilities:

Physical environment in the schools are not always encouraging. The quality is so poor that small children are even denied facilities to play while at school. School library are mostly not modern learner centric. Thus lack of infrastructure hinders the normal flow of education. School library are mostly not modern learner centric. Thus lack of infrastructure hinders the normal flow of education.

Teachers' Behaviors:

In school, all the teachers are well qualified. Most of them are also well trained but in reality teachers are not full-hearted to the interest of the students and scarcely keep touch with the family of the students. Action research relating to the socio-economic and cultural problems of the students are not at all found.

Inclusive Environment:

Today's concept is inclusive education. Children of ethnic and language minorities, politically or geographically disfavoured groups, and groups at low socio-economic levels may also suffer from discriminatory policies and practices that hinder the advancement of quality education for all children.

Quality Content:

School Curriculum incorporates many good things like, literacy, numeracy, etc. but 02 items are neglected - these are life skills and peace education. Naturally education who seek to maintain and expand programmes that successfully address important curricular content such as life skills and peace education etc. may face challenges. Emerging issues are not responded in the curricular frame implemented in the school campus.

Professional Learning for Teachers:

It is known to all that many good things are taught during training of the teachers at the training Institute. But it is unfortunate that very few items are practiced in the school area while teaching the pupils. It is a fact that the preparation that teachers receive before working in the classroom varied significantly. But highest skill in teaching is expected to ensure quality education for all. It is now a question whether a teacher uses traditional or more current methods of instruction; efficient use of school time has a significant impact on student learning. Teachers' presence in the class room represents the starting point.

Teachers' competence and school efficiency, therefore, are important factors to impart quality education. The quality of school and the quality of individual teacher is higher in schools that are able to make more efficient use of the available time of its teacher and its pupils. The numbers of such schools are not so great in our country, particularly in rural areas. School efficiency faces stumbling block from many quarters as a result of which the profession and skills of all teachers are not fully utilized.

Ongoing Professional Development:

Professional development can help overcome shortcomings that may have been part of teachers' pre-service education and keep teachers abreast of new knowledge and practices in the field. This ongoing training for teachers can have a direct impact on students' achievement. Needless to confess that such facility of ongoing training are not available everywhere. In some private organization effective programme using interactive technology have been introduced for ongoing training of the teachers. Least effort in such direction are noticed in the case of other schools.

Continuing Support for Student Centered Learning:

Teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, should help teachers develop teaching methods and skills that take new understanding of how children learn into account. Just as curriculum should be child-centred and relevant, so should instructional methods. The limited view of teaching as presentation of knowledge no longer fits with current understandings of how and what students learn. Instead, instruction should help students build on prior knowledge to develop attitudes, beliefs and cognitive skills; as well as expand their knowledge base. Somewhere is school teaching styles remain traditional, teachers centred and fairly rigid or even authoritarian. We may state that a programme similar to life skills of UNICEF standard are almost neglected everywhere. Life skills in the sense depicted by UNICEF has two main ways, (i) to refer to a broad group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills and (ii) to refer to the process of teaching and learning about these skills that require interactive student centred methods.

Administrative Support and Leadership:

The quality of administrative support and leadership is another critical element in school process, both for students and for teacher. At a macro-level, their resources are available on paper but at the ground level the effectiveness of enlightened leadership is not at all present.

Students Access to Languages Used at School:

The languages schools use for instruction can have an impact on learning and academic achievement in general. In West Bengal inclusive philosophy have been tried. Students from tribal communities, various types of religious groups and from disadvantaged classes attend the schools and have enrolled their names as students. But it has been found that after class VIII a lot of students from disadvantaged and tribal communities have abstained from their classes on grounds of their failure to have access to the teaching behavior of teachers. Some parents and teachers believe that learning in mother tongue can impair learning. Based on this belief they have resorted to the programmes of English Medium schools which are virtually more ostentatious than educationally viable. Drop out in great number are noticed adding problem to the society.

Most of the problems in maintaining quality in education can be solved if there is committed will. The method of teaching requires touch of novelties; new technologies have a progressive role to rebuild the educational scenario.

Authors advocate the use of technology to reduce global inequalities through such vehicles as internal based distance learning interactive video and television. The quality education of India advocates rapid digitalization of teaching method and they have already created Portals for Learning Management System and National Teachers Platform. The effort towards digitalization may engage the teachers in some serious efforts of innovations.

In our country with Govt. help a few schools have initiated programmes for digitalization but in normal situation for all the schools such innovative step are poor.

Teachers' workshops, pre-service and in-service orientation of teachers are perhaps unknown regime for the general uplift of the teaching community.

Quality education builds up quality citizens and quality man. Quality education demands, therefore, sincere, committed attention of all sections of the society. In this context it may be recapitulated again that unless quality education are devised, generations facing the challenges of 21st century must confront various obstacles and would be driven to the less quality of life style to live and prosper. We must think of ensuring Quality Education for All.