

Seminar on

Issues in Inclusive Education of Children from Economically Diverse Backgrounds

-Special Focus on the Proviso of Land Allotment to Private Schools

March 29-30, 2007, NUEPA, New Delhi

Introduction

Recent orders of the Delhi High Court and of the Supreme Court, have led to a number of initiatives to implement a condition of allotment of land to schools in Delhi. As a result of the media attention on the Public Interest litigation (PIL) in the Court, it is now common knowledge that a number of private schools in Delhi have received land at nominal rates in exchange for an obligation to admit and provide free education to children from the economically weaker sections. Although the percentage of such children mentioned in their land allotment letter differs, most of the schools in receipt of such land are under the following obligation:

‘17. The –(society)----- shall ensure that the percentage of free ship from tuition fee as laid down under rules by the Delhi Administration from time to time is strictly complied. They will ensure admission to the students belonging to the weaker sections to the extent of 25% and grant free ship to them

The initiatives to implement the orders of the Courts highlight a number of issues related to inclusion and integration of children from diverse economic backgrounds. These issues relate to law, policy administration, curriculum and pedagogy on the academic front, and to a much wider range of practical concerns in implementation.

However, the efforts for such integration have a long-standing history. The report of the Education Commission (1964-66) had considered it the ‘responsibility’ of the educational system to help the country move towards an integrated society:

“In a situation of the type we have in India, it is the responsibility of the educational system to bring the different social classes and groups together and thus promote the emergence of an egalitarian and integrated society.”
(Para 1.36)

Giving the example of other countries, the Report had pointed out: ‘there are cases in which a social and cultural revolution has been brought about in a system where equality of

educational opportunity is provided and education is deliberately used to develop more and more potential talent and to harness it to the solution of national problems'. This expectation was enunciated in the 1968 Policy on Education, thus:

“the government of India is convinced that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the Education Commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realizing the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society” – (Para 3, National Policy on Education, 1968)

In 1986/92 too, the National Policy on Education had described the role of education in terms of *“furthering the goals of socialism, secularism, and democracy enshrined in our Constitution”*. (Para 2.2, National Policy on Education, 1986/92)

The Urban Land Policy of 1965, and the consequent state legislation based on the model Delhi act, supported the objective of an egalitarian society. It was a fundamental principle of the Model Master Plan of Delhi, a statutory document in itself, to avoid stratification in society along socioeconomic lines. The clause in the land allotment letter to schools was in furtherance of this objective.

More recently, efforts at promoting the socialist and egalitarian society envisioned in our Constitution have been made through clauses in the Bill proposed by the Law Commission, (165th Report) and in the Right to Education Bill 2005 (CABE Bill). Similar principles have also been reinforced through the 93rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2005 which enables the State to make any special provision by law for the admission in educational institutions, (including private educational institutions) of educationally backward classes and groups:

“(5) Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30.”

-The Constitution (Ninety-Third Amendment) Act, 2005, No. 93 of 2005, [20th January, 2006.]

This seminar therefore touches a current topic and encompasses a broad scope of discussions, which promise a rich and meaningful dialogue from the policy perspective.

Objectives

- To highlight issues related to inclusion and integration of children from diverse economic backgrounds, arising from the proviso of land allotment to private schools;
- To share research findings and experiences related to similar contexts,

- To discuss ways and means for realization of the Constitutional objectives of equality of facilities and opportunities through schools

Methodology

Discussion shall take place on papers presented by researchers, administrators and practitioners working on issues related to the themes of the seminar. An interactive panel discussion on moving ahead towards inclusion of weaker sections into private schools have been planned to round off reflection and discussion on this issue.

Tentative Themes

1. Issues emerging from the land allotment clause for including the poor
2. Issues of legislation and administration
3. Issues of Interaction in the classroom and among peers
4. Issues requiring Research and Action
5. Issues in Capacity building for inclusion

Participants

Participants of the Seminar shall include paper presenters, discussants from among educationists, educational administrators, teacher educators and school principals. Representatives from fields and institutions with perceived potential for research and training on these issues shall also be invited to attend the seminar.

Dates and Venue

The Seminar shall take place in Hall No. 113, at the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, 17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016; on March 29-30th, 2007. It shall commence on 29th March at 9.30 A.M. and conclude on the 30th March at about 5 P.M.

Management of the Seminar

On behalf of the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, and the Department of School and Non-formal Education of this University, this Seminar is being coordinated by Prof. Nalini Juneja.

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TIME SCHEDULE

Thursday, the 29th March 2007

9.00 – 9.30 hrs.	Registration
10.00 – 11.00 hrs.	Inaugural Session: Chair: Prof. Ved Prakesh Vice Chancellor, NUEPA <u>Inaugural Address</u> Prof. Shantha Sinha Chairperson, National Commission on Child Rights
11.15 – 11.30 hrs.	Tea Break
11.30 – 13.00 hrs.	Technical Session –I: Background Paper - Prof. Nalini Juneja Chair: Prof. Shantha Sinha
13.00 – 14.00 hrs.	Lunch at NUEPA Guest House
14.00 – 15.30 hrs.	Technical Session –II: Issues within Classrooms Chair: Prof. Anita Rampal
15.30 – 15.45 hrs.	Tea Break
15.45 – 17.15 hrs.	Technical Session – III Legal, Administrative and Policy Issues Chair: Prof. Furqan Qamar

Friday, the 30th March 2007

9.30 – 11.00 hrs.

Technical Session – IV

Issues for Schools

Chair: Prof. Karuna Chanana

11.00 – 11.15 hrs.

Tea Break

11.15 – 13.00 hrs.

Technical Session -V

Issues for NGO Intervention

Chair: Prof. Sudesh Mukhopadhyay

13.00 – 14.00 hrs.

Lunch at NUEPA Guest House

14.00 – 1500 hrs.

Preparation of Recommendations

15.00 – 1730 hrs.

Closing Session: Panel Discussion:-

Moving Forward Towards A Common
Schooling Experience for Economically
Diverse Groups

Chair: **Prof. Krishna Kumar**

Panelists:

- **Ashok Aggarwal**

Senior Advocate, Delhi High Court

- **Vinod Raina**

Former Member, CABE Committee

- **Sr. S.M. Cyril**

Principal, Loretto School, Sealdah

- **Rina Ray**

*Education Secretary, Government of
NCT of Delhi*

1730 – 1800 hrs.

Closing Remarks