

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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In the field of Indian education, it is the experience that though the general purposes or objectives of education are thoughtful, well studied and created by educational experts, the reality one sees in the field, the implementation of these objectives, is rarely ever fully realized. The ideal and the reality are vastly different.

One glaring example is the nation's literacy campaign of education for all, or 100% literacy. In regard to literacy, the root problem lies in inadequate and incomplete primary education. In reality what one sees in some villages is no school facilities, or if facilities are present, teachers are not available. Very little quality education happens in primary schools in rural areas. When children drop out before the fifth standard, society requires extensive adult education. Any student or adult who continues onward has to restart in the fifth standard. Teachers of primary schools are expected to educate students in a limited number of years. While teachers work feverishly preparing students for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exams in the early years, the objectives of a student's comprehensive development are neglected.

There are many complex reasons for this vicious cycle. Teachers are less willing to go to the rural areas. The level of poverty is such that students are forced to quit school early to work toward securing family income. The general importance of education is seen primarily in terms of employment, but even that may not be achieved. The whole subject of work experience is handled haphazardly due to the lack of time and effort given to it as well as unavailable resources. Usually, only theory is taught with no technical inputs and therefore, few significant results. After all is said and done, the exams hold the highest importance. This attitude encourages the widespread practice of exam copying.

The system says "complete the formalities and give the results." Some policies of the system are faulty. For example, grant sanctioning to schools depends on the percentage of results received in the SSC exams. In order to keep a grant going, the school has to maintain an existing number of divisions and the students in them.

A continuously rising population growth means increasing numbers of students in each classroom year by year. An average of 50 to 60 children in a classroom with one teacher is not uncommon, making it impossible for teachers to pay individual attention to children. Often teachers will set up a separate tutorial session, following formal school sessions, in which the students who can pay a tutorial fee receive the help they need to pass the exams.

In 1986, the government-appointed Kothari Commission promoted the following new objective for high school education: to provide a minimum, general knowledge and skills development in a wide range of subjects. While implementing the plan, certain drawbacks became apparent to educators. Not everybody can acquire the minimum knowledge in all subjects. Subjects like math and the sciences became a burden for many students. The education a person was to receive in junior college, which was intended to be more vocation-oriented, never materialized.

In the midst of all these hardships and struggles India still has been able to make certain remarkable achievements in formal education. When one compares current statistics

with the past decade regarding the increased number of schools, educational institutes, students receiving an education each year, and the number of girls in school - all of these have increased substantially. The campaign of 'basic education for all', which includes compulsory primary education, makes it possible for more students to go to school.

The introduction of a more locally and nationally suited pattern of 10 + 2 + 3 was introduced, which was different from the previous British-influenced patterns. This means ten years of basic education before the SSC examination can be taken. Previously it was eleven, followed by two years of junior college after which one is eligible for a diploma. This is followed by three years of university training to become a graduate. Through opening adult education opportunities, it became possible for people to get an education beyond school age. The open universities provided life long education possibilities and facilities for millions who desired to continue their education.

New ways of looking at the context of education are developing continuously. For instance, the subject of population education is introduced into schools by creatively linking the content and message about family planning with various subject matter. A wide variety of competitions and tests are introduced to provide growth opportunities for the child's hidden capacities and gifts. A continual push for vocational education gives a way for exploring practical solutions.

Comprehensive development of children is made possible by giving more importance to life related skills and capacities which go beyond textbooks. For example, physical education is treated very seriously today. Special organizations and projects have been initiated to find and aid students who are physically intelligent and have the potential to become sportsmen and women. From an early age, importance to physical education can create champions as they grow.

What changes are essential for the sake of the future of education?

Every parent has very high expectations for their children. While envisioning a better life for their children, parents impose heavy academic demands. Almost everyone wants their children to be an engineer or a doctor. This may be at the expense of neglecting the child's natural competencies and capacities. What a student is interested in is of less importance to parents. Parents will likely disregard a child's interest in art, music or sports in preference to science related subjects. The percentage figure in exam marks becomes the high priority. In the school curriculum the objectives stress the importance of the arts, but in reality these are always devalued in light of the sciences. Sometimes resources to pursue education in comprehensive development are lacking and the motivation for it slowly dies.

The parent's attitude toward school, education and teachers is often not favorable. Their attitude is always determined by the 10th standard examination results. Efforts put towards a child's total growth or life-related skill is given less importance. In order to keep parents and society happy the teachers have to bracket children's overall growth and development and prepare the student for exams by rote learning and memorizing. The higher values and objectives are sacrificed over against day-to-day pragmatic realities. The teachers feel that they do not receive the social status they deserve. Teachers may be called 'social engineers' but they are generally looked down upon. Obviously, this does affect teacher motivation.

For the teachers, a basic commitment to service and social obligation has been decreased dramatically. Very few people become teachers out of choice and interest. Most turn to teaching because they do not have a better choice. To add to that, many new teacher training colleges have mushroomed everywhere. Teachers coming out of these colleges are not fully trained, skilled, nurtured or mature enough to take upon themselves the responsibility of comprehensive development of students. Recent encroachment of commercialization in the field of education is having an effect on all sides. Teachers who have to pay fees to get space in private training schools and then to get jobs naturally have very little sense of commitment, service and social obligation.

Although an investment in education is of long-term benefit to society, it is wrongly considered that it is a dead investment. If the environment in schools is compared with any other government or industrial workplace, it is of very low standards and affects both teaching and teacher self esteem. India's 1993-4 education budget is 1800 crores, but actual allocation is only 200 crores. The government and the society need to look at education from a very different perspective of importance.

All the efforts put towards transformation in education require similar differences in perspective. Old problems are handled by old ways. For example, in order to deal with the problem of acquiring a higher percentage in exam scores, many innovative and expert ideas are tested and promoted to discover methods that can produce the students of highest results and merit.

What is required is to develop new systems of evaluation and examination to judge the academic and overall progress of the students. Adding one more book each year puts more burden on student's minds than educating them in new fields of knowledge. What is required is a basic shift of the objective of dealing with information, data or knowledge to dealing with human capacities that can handle these complexities competently. Emphasis on data transfer and exam results can show short-term benefits but have longer term damage in a student's life. Whereas the approach of human development gives lifelong benefits to students.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs: India, along with its international network of similar nationally autonomous, voluntary organizations, has worked in the field of human development for forty years. The Institute has experience in working with the poorest rural villagers to the highest educated population of urban and economic sector covering all walks of life. This has given the Institute a rich background in the field of human development. By identifying the needs in the field of education, ICA: India has been introducing innovative approaches in teaching and learning to enable comprehensive human development of students.

The ICA: India through its Panvel office works with the education system at various levels to occasion change initiated in local schools by revitalizing and motivating teachers and students. Panvel instructors have developed over three weeks of training programs comprised of recent research findings, concepts, and successful techniques. Through imaginative approaches and methods the instructors assist teachers in deciding in acquiring new teaching/learning processes towards an education transformation.

One offering is a three-day orientation program called Education Motivation Program. This program is intended to motivate the teachers by providing a rich, exciting and informative experience of participative, multi-modal and integrative approach to teaching. In a clear context there is a call to change and serve in the changing times.

Then there are innovative and creative methods to aid teachers in initiating change in their own situation. By gradually impacting teachers' ways of thinking about themselves and their vocation, along with an optimistic view towards life, it assists teachers in moving away from self-imposed negative images which keep them in a state of stagnation and lethargy. By the end of the three days, the teachers find themselves responding positively to the call and deciding to exercise once again their own freedom to create and contribute to the mission they chose for their life.

A Model Education Complex

After impacting the system by conducting orientation programs with over thirty schools, the Institute decided to work with eight selected schools as part of its focused activities. These schools, which had shown more openness and readiness to bring about change by adopting new approaches to education, were chosen for a three-year experiment where training programs go beyond developing innovative skills in teaching/learning processes. The plan includes a careful journey of leadership and effectiveness in teaching as a life vocation, in one's own personal life development, in cooperative efforts as a school.

The program envisioned is a well-balanced blend of contextual information, practical skills, innovative methods and spiritual experience. This journey takes place as the programs progress with certain intervals for practicing. Two schools with their surrounding feeder schools are chosen to become demonstrations of what is possible to do with this approach to education. This experiment is called a Model Education Complex.

The experience in both physical and social environment gives a very different feel in these schools. Greenery, cleanliness, and educational wall decor indicates extra efforts, interest and responsibility taken by both teachers and students in the totality of life education. The teacher's interest groups, curricular activity committees, regular planning and interchange meetings, cooperative and supportive relationships - all contribute to a model human workplace.

It is not easy to acquire this openness and readiness in the educational system. Five years ago, when the Institute staff decided to work in this field and started experimenting with various program offerings for teachers and students, there was a great deal of resistance. Unwillingness of schools to spare a day or two for training, disinterest on the part of teachers to consider an approach to human capacities development, reluctance on the part of teachers to pick up extra responsibility when they were already overburdened with large numbers of classroom students, were great barriers to the dream of what education might be. Added to this was the overall frustration and negative enforcement within the teaching staff, the education system and the community at large and sensitive ego images on the part of teachers that they were fully educated and didn't need any more training.

So, in the earlier phase of this experiment it was indeed difficult to convince schools and teachers to commit even one day for the program. Now the unique style and methodology of the training program and faculty is appreciated so much that the schools themselves not only adopt the training to daily life but request more ongoing programs and informal guidance.

One example of that experience during the program involved an elderly teacher in one of the schools, who confessed that he had brought along a very good book from the library to read during the program assuming that it would be another boring program with nothing new in it. He stated, "You kept me so involved and occupied that I didn't even think of opening the book."

In another school, the program was organized during the first three days of the holiday vacation. The teachers were not very happy about sacrificing the holiday for a training program. At the end of the program one teacher witnessed that he had packed his suitcase for the vacation before coming to the program. But by the end of the first day he decided that this program was something different and he unpacked his suitcase. "In the beginning," he remarked, "we teachers were concerned about our vacation being used for the program, but now I think that even if the program would have been of six days length, it would have been worth it."

In yet another school, after repeated requests the school did not embark upon the experiment. A couple of years later when the stories of other schools' experiences reached this school through personal contacts, they decided to try it. Today that school is now part of the three years experiment.

Once people are excited and motivated and want to do something, they need to have new practical skills to put their passion into action with a meaningful context. The program introduced them to information and skills from the fields of psychology, sociology, intelligence and brain research. For the first time, teachers experienced how teaching and learning could be exciting, enjoyable and yet informative. In one program, a teacher said, "You taught us how to put life in teaching." One of the education officers said in his concluding statement for a closing ceremony, "I used to think that if a training program was to become highly successful the staff and faculty needed to have degrees and PhDs; but by seeing the results today, my images have changed radically."

Many methods and techniques are put to use immediately by the teachers. They learn that multi-modal teaching gives students a better understanding of the subject, for example using art to teach language lessons creates clearer visual memory also or using role play and music adds new dimensions to data transference. Exercises and games to stimulate individual thinking and inquisitiveness and learning by group interaction and physical involvement are the most favored approaches used by teachers at all levels after taking the program. One teacher said, "The methods and techniques we have learned from ICA are so creative and powerful that we cannot resist the will to try them out. Knowingly or unknowingly, our teaching style and approaches have changed."

All the training programs have a portion focusing on the inward journey: to do soul searching and to tap into their internal resources to face the world. Various exercises give people a positive perspective and story about their own lives. At the end of one program, a teacher approaching retirement said, "By doing a life journey exercise, I realized I have not yet created something significant to leave behind. This made me think that I must create my own contribution for which I will be remembered." Yet another program attendee said this program had helped her see great potential in herself and offered her freedom to take charge of her life. Practical skills - such as creating a daily log; organizing work and time; visioning, goal setting and planning; skills

for interpersonal relationships and management - helps increase participant confidence.

Once teachers gain a level of effectiveness achieve excellence as individuals, they are ready to become a team and create organizational culture. The Institute offers advanced programs to broaden teachers' responsibility towards their organization. The training includes creating an organization's philosophy, mission and culture; strategic planning; and management and leadership skills. After having experienced these programs the teachers start to develop a much deeper sense of connectedness towards people and the school benefits.

In one school, after they had worked on their philosophy and mission statements, it suddenly dawned on them that their language had shifted from "I" to "We" and they experienced pride in becoming the larger "We". The feeling of belongingness was in fact much deeper.

In another school, this experience was rather dramatic. This school was struggling with human relations and communication between the staff and the authority. After the strategic planning session, where very honest contradiction analysis and healing had taken place, they admitted that this gave them a platform in which to relate to each other. Within a month after the program, a team of people in leadership was working together. They were proud to report that they had voluntarily completed three major activities that had been decided jointly in the planning session. Having experienced unity and cooperation, the teachers spontaneously formed interest groups to work on self-initiated projects. The achievements of these groups included: creating teaching aids, maintenance of resources and machinery equipment, cultural activities, and wall decor quotations. These voluntary groups later formed into ongoing functional task teams that took responsibility for curriculum development and extra-curricular activities for students, teachers and parents.

ICA also held programs with school governing committees to generate necessary interest and support among them. Teachers from one school have offered their skills and experience to teachers from other schools. Ongoing follow up programs and skills training keep the group journey in motion.

The Institute also conducts an in-depth Advanced Education Method Academy for teachers who are actively picking up responsibility and want to deepen their skills. In all the schools the graduates of the advanced program are emerging leadership and change agents in their locations. Currently these teachers are organizing larger networks and creating workbooks to illustrate practical uses of the new approaches they have learned. Several teachers approaching retirement have expressed interest in taking on voluntary responsibility for this work as a way to stay in touch with the activities and contribute to the joint efforts. They feel that with their new freedom of time, they can do what they had truly wanted to do as teachers and support the network.

SAHYDRAI HIGH SCHOOL, KHOPOLI: CASE STUDY

The Sahydrai High School, Khopoli, Taluka Khalapur, District Raigad, Maharashtra State, is run by an educational institute called, Khalapur Kshikshan Prasarak Mandal. The high school, though situated in a urban setting, is largely made up of rural students. The ICA, in its exploration for a potential school to become part of the long-term experiment of locally initiated educational transformation, visited this high school in 1992.

The first program offered in this school was for students of the ninth standard (14-15 year olds). From the start, Mr. B. B. Savant, supervisor of the school, showed deep interest and openness to the program. His interest was in seeing how students could be enabled to become serious about their educational objectives and to take an active interest in education. His concern was to help students come out of vocational crisis and confusion about the role of education in their lives. When the ICA team explained the program, he began to believe that this program could address his concerns.

The Educational Motivation Program for Students is a three day program covering such topics as: life vision, childhood memories, organizing work and time, creativity, self-study techniques, public speaking, and teamwork skills. It had been created after much experimentation and discussions with headmasters and teachers around the question of life skills for students. The Sahyadri teachers and administrators were pleased to see that the program contained many of the important topics relevant to a student's life which the teachers had always wanted to cover, but never seemed to have the time for.

Each topic introduced presentations with exercises, participation methods, and games. The program was so successful with students that teacher observers become thoroughly convinced of the importance that the larger perspective opened up and the necessity to be trained in new styles of teaching. From the student's program, openness and interest on the part of the teachers paved the way for teacher training.

In Sahyadri High School, the results of successful SSC examinations in the 1991-92 school year (before the program) was 33% of students taking the exam. In the next year (1992-93), following the Educational Motivation Program, 57% received passing marks. But more than this, the teachers felt that the opportunity for students to think through their own life goals and plans was so important that they decided to set up a regular vocational guidance seminar.

TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

The success of the Educational Motivation Program for Students created plenty of enthusiasm and excitement among the teachers to want to learn additional skills and methods. The ICA's approach to human capacity development and creating motivation for self-initiated change was deeply appreciated by the school. Earlier, school authorities may have recognized teachers' desires to do something but were unsure how to facilitate the process for teachers who wanted to take initiative in a cooperative effort. The Educational Motivation Program for Students gave, not only students, but teachers and administrators as well, clear images of what could be initiated that would meet the more comprehensive development objectives.

Fortunately, the appointment of Mrs. Shailaja Sadashiv Apte as new headmistress, coincided with the initial conversations about doing the Educational Motivation Program for students and later for teachers. Her enthusiasm for the program concept and her openness to try new methods led to many people benefitting from the program. As Mrs. Apte put it, "The program came at just the right time. It gave me perspective and skills to understand my teachers' concerns. But, more than that, it helped me create a harmonious staff of enthusiastic teachers with a common vision and understanding of the task which we have to do."

The Educational Motivation Program for Teachers covered the role of education in changing times, interpersonal relations in team building, left and right brain synthesis in the learning process, imaginal education models, the role of a facilitator, creative

thinking, life journey exercises, a conversation method, and the process of change in education in India. Each of these components of the teacher's program was explored through presentations and experienced-based exercises which has become the basis of success of the Educational Motivation Program for Teachers. The teachers experienced something that was meaningful to their lives and their perception of the vocation of being a teacher was transformed.

How do the teachers and administrators of Sahyadri High School talk about what is happening in the school today? They speak about the journey of both individual and organizational growth and the importance for their personal and professional life. The remarkable success in rising academic performance has created a positive image in the community. People can see that something important has happened when students are responding in an optimistic and hope-filled environment of learning. During the past two years, the SSC examination results have increased by 24%. For the first time, a previous practice of "giving away" some extra marks to ninth standard students who were close to the line on passing/failing was not needed. The students clearly excelled on their own and earned the marks, which put them over the line.

Since the idea of self-discipline was introduced through meditation, visualization and various physical and mental exercises in the classes, school discipline also greatly improved. It is practiced and monitored regularly. Teachers now talk about the dramatic decline in individual cases of willful disobedience, vandalism or destruction of property, and the lessening of unhelpful habits such as smoking or drinking.

Students and teachers suggestions for change are invited and followed up regularly. The changes brought about were achieved through individual effort as well as cooperative groups, both spontaneous and planned activities. For example, the idea of promoting home cooked food for student meals rather than vendor stall "snack" food which was readily available just outside the school grounds was raised. The habit of most students was to eat snack food in the groups of small stalls near the school grounds. The food is generally unhealthy, exposed to dust and sun, and created a mess on the playground. The school staff convinced the parents in one of the parent's meetings to provide the students with home cooked food instead of snack money. Once the teachers got the parents to rethink this value, everyone benefitted in a big way. The environment of the school was much cleaner, school absenteeism due to food-affected illness dropped, health consciousness increased, and eating together helped to increase social interaction skills.

Another example was forming a teachers and parents association. The school initiated a process to increase parent's cooperation and involvement in school by forming and registering an association. In Sahyadri High School 700 of 963 parents are members of it. The active committees meet five times a year and everybody gathers together for an annual general meeting to review the activities. With the help of the association, the school was able to handle many education-related problems and activities with clear direction.

A further example was display boards. In order to increase student's inquisitiveness in all fields of life, students were encouraged to find sayings and "great thoughts" from many sources and then put these on display boards. Extra marks were granted to this work in the final exam to add incentives for this activity. The students responded enthusiastically to the discovery quest.

Meditation and contemplation are interwoven in the daily time design. After the initial Education Motivation Program, the school initiated the practice of rehearsing daily activities at the conclusion of the last period. The guided visualization aided in increased memory and helped the student to increase their concentration capacities. This practice led to introducing a few minutes of guided meditation in between two class periods. During this time the students rehearse in their minds what happened in the period they just completed. At that moment, the entire school activity ceases and "pin-drop" silence is observed. Then, the next teacher gently ends the meditation process and initiates the new subject with concentrating and attentive students. The teachers and students attest to the difference these practices have made in the learning process.

The "Model Classroom Award" is another example of implementing suggestions. Through healthy competition among the students from each classroom, students are encouraged to pay attention and work towards the total development of the environment of the classroom, including the quality of the student's participation. Classroom decor, cleanliness, team discipline, performance on all tests, sports competition, and knowledge skills are all factors in determining the award. The "Model Classroom" receives a shield for the year.

During the initial Education Motivation Program, the entire staff was organized into functional teams to carry out particular components of a plan for comprehensive student development. The following are examples of the work done by the teachers in their various team configurations.

The Science Council organized a number of programs in collaboration with outside agencies and research organizations to introduce applications of science to important life issues like health awareness on leprosy, which continues to be a major issue in India. The team brought in experts from leprosy organizations to dialogue with the students about its causes and cures. Another area was on the importance of proper drainage to health and environment. Students became members of various science organizations, visited brick-making factories, and collected bird feathers.

The Literature Team organized activities that would increase student language abilities, for example competitions in story telling, poetry, drama and making speeches. An added benefit to the focus on verbal skills has been that vulgar language is less likely to be heard on the school premises.

Interaction-oriented seating arrangements in classrooms was a very visible manifestation of the Education Motivation Program. Most teachers changed the arrangement of desks to the "U" shape design to enable more openness for teachers and students to interact with one another. Other room arrangements are now being experimented with, demonstrating the freedom teachers and students feel to create the setting for learning that is appropriate to the purpose of the class session.

How has the experiment affected the teachers?

As a result of participating in these training programs, teachers find themselves changing internally. Everybody is excited about wanting to do something new. Teachers make suggestions to the headmaster about new activities or ideas they would like. They all seem to have developed a higher purpose for being a teacher. They say that the ICA program has given them a new perspective to look at their vocation and

life itself. The opportunity to work as a group on purpose, mission and values and to do long-term visioning for the institution has benefitted the school but also their own lives.

Knowledge and techniques related to learning styles have helped teachers to accommodate all the students effectively in the learning experience. Today it has become the natural course of Sahyadri teachers to look for multiple options, rather than excuses. Every teacher now thinks about how to bring about the best results with the resources at hand. Mr. Padmakar Sadshiv Gaikwad, a physical education teacher, illustrated this when he talked about how discouraged he felt when he first came to the school and saw the playing field. When he started thinking through what he could do, given the limitations, he saw that he could teach the basics of sports on the small field and then located a larger ground for once-a-week coaching on the complete program. Attitude changes in teachers affect the students as well. They begin to imagine what is possible rather than dwell on what won't work.

The primary school teachers feel that their confidence and optimism has increased in terms of what they can do. The principles of self-discipline and teaching by demonstrating is being practiced by primary teachers as they see the success of teachers in higher grades.

What has been the effect on parents and society?

The image of this school has shifted positively. Parents' cooperation is illustrated by their participation in fund-raising with teachers and students. They helped collect 41,000 rupees (about \$1,300 US) in donations for a social service project, which helps blind people. Ten parents have generously decided to participate in the school's adoption campaign where ten bright girls from remote, economically poor areas, are given financial support to continue their schooling. The financially supporting parents help convince the girls' parents to keep them in school. Because of this plan, mothers who may have wanted to take the girls out of school to help support the family, now see that the long-term education of these girls is a better option for the future.

The emergence of girls' sports activities is happening in a big way. Under the guidance of teachers, girls have entered into every sport with their own teams. Some have even played at divisional level competitions. The importance of physical education and sports prowess across the nation of India has emerged as a result of global television channels providing information about how other countries are developing sports activities. It is as if the whole country has awakened to the fact that this dimension of growth has somehow been missing.

Women teachers have evolved a more active role than was true previous to the Education Motivation Program. Participation in group sessions during the program helped them feel more comfortable with speaking and stating their opinions. Instead of past images of "ladies first" or "the weaker sex", women teachers see themselves as equal contributors to discussions and decisions.

The environment of the school grounds is a visible demonstration that the school is a model community. Soakpits, cleanliness of the grounds and classrooms, the presence of potted plants and interesting decorations adds to the effect. Recently built rock walls around the entire facility have helped to protect the environment from unwanted visitors and animals. It feels differently now.

What are some of the key components to this success?

Leadership. The leader who is skilled in identifying creative capabilities and interests of teachers and putting it to the best use for the overall improvement of the school is well appreciated by all. She is Mrs. Apte, headmistress, ably assisted by Mr. Savant, the supervisor. "I never thought," reflected Mrs. Apte, "that the leader's job was only to give orders so that everyone followed them. I believe that a leader is someone who **acts** so that everyone can follow." Teachers appreciate her dedication and hard work, seeing her at the school everyday from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., even forgetting to have lunch. This demonstrates to them the sense of connectedness with mission. As a result, the teachers cooperate creatively and unconditionally.

Mr. Savant, the supervisor, has created the role of enabling plans and ideas to become reality. The teaching team has learned to develop synergy, which gives a lot of energy to the whole working environment. Mrs. Apte is careful to see to it that no one feels they are being used or governed. The coordination and monitoring of responsibilities with mutual understanding, which she and Mr. Savant supply, has helped increase trust and support among the entire team.

Regular interchange meetings for discussions, planning and consensus, have become a way of operation in the school. It is experienced in the broader community that cooperation and involvement of everyone is of high importance and the general opinion of the caliber of the school has risen in the eyes of the community at large. School officials in the greater community have extended their support to what is happening, as well as the government authorities, voluntary organizations and the local community.

What learnings are there to be shared from the experiment?

1. The primary learning has been that the development and utilization of human capacities must continue to grow to higher importance in the education task. This is where the real motivation lies, as this experience has shown, for teachers and students alike.
2. Developing an optimistic understanding toward life is a key to success. This means finding ways to place the educational task in a larger context so that all understand the greater purpose to be gained. For this to happen, schools need to continually develop and restate their purpose, mission and values.
3. The school and teachers need to be continually experimenting and proactive. They need to see how to creatively utilize available human skills and resources.
4. Use the decentralizing of responsibilities to encourage and explore the development of peoples' skills and abilities. For instance, the Science and the Language Teams provided a lot of insight into new connections for learning which might not have been the case if they had merely been set aside to research the curriculum. Active teamwork and application for students made it fun and rewarding.
5. If the school knows how to locate and tap into available resources in the neighboring community, it can easily improve school physical facilities. In-kind materials and donations, involvement of parents, etc. also heightened the awareness of the larger community that something special was happening in the school and offered the opportunity for their involvement.

What is needed to continue the momentum of transformation in this school?

ICA teams will continue to provide training on a regular basis and to follow up with interchange events to maintain motivation and newness. Probably more important is the interest and involvement of local government and other educational institutions as they come to see what has evolved that they can learn from.

What was ICA's role in this process?

The ICA has created valuable motivation and momentum. The students were motivated to learn and be educated. The teachers were motivated to initiate change in the established. The Educational Motivation Program gave them their opportunity to express this and a way to organize and make it happen.

The ICA's role was to enable communication and relationship building among the school staff and the concerned authorities. Through the training programs, the teachers' ways of thinking was changed. They saw that it could happen in another way. New concepts and techniques opened up the possibility for deep satisfaction in teaching with enthusiastically responding students. Conscious efforts were made to help students become self-motivated and self-reliant.

Today, while attention in the field of education is spent trying to find more successful models and methods to bring about 'merit list' students, thus putting a heavy emphasis on exam-oriented teaching, it is vitally important to have a demonstration of what can be achieved in a program such as Sahyadri High School where the importance is placed on the overall human growth of students. At this crucial period in the development of educational systems, Sahyadri School and others like them are finding the ICA's approach to total human development a very valuable option to maintain a higher purpose of education.