

CHAPTER –IV SUMMARY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Piaget a child is not a miniature adult with regard to cognition/intelligence. A child's thinking is not inferior to that of an adult, but just different. Each child is unique. Each can express her/ his unique potentialities if provided with adequate nurture, appropriate environment and opportunity. Each one can flourish; shine her/ his own life. Every child needs care and education. A child procures life experiences and derives joy in learning whatever she/ he learns informally around her/ his environment. Therefore, 'life is education and education is life'. Education is a developmental programme for holistic and integral development of a child, but it is regret that the present education instead of becoming joyful has become boring, painful and disgusting to children. The reasons of elementary education being joyless are: 1

- Education is not imparted through play/ games, songs, stories to create enthusiasm in children.
- Teachers seem to lack interest, love for children, love for their profession and they also lack accountability.
- Education is still teacher—centered. There is little or no interaction between teacher and student. A teacher thinks herself/ himself worthy and successful if she/ he can make a class silent. Education instead of being participatory and bi-polar becomes monopolar.
- Primary education today is not play and activity—based. There is no chance of learning by doing.
- There are no/ little play materials or teaching aids for children's play and education. Teachers lack interest to collect the play materials. They are also not trained/ skilled to use the play materials and to improvise the aids if required.

Dhankar, R.D. (2014). Digantar: A Glimpse at an Alternative Approach to Education

 Children are not given opportunity and scope for education through direct experience, observation and appreciation of the beauties of nature.

Today, it is becoming increasingly clear that Indian education system requires more than just an expansion of the school system and an inclusion of the 'alternative education' system, if it is to be set right. Educational opportunities in our country are unequally distributed, determined by various income levels of people. As formal education is expensive, and at the lower economic group children are expected to add to family income and to share expenditure towards their basic needs, they are deprived of education, right from early childhood. They are prematurely compelled to work at farms, factories or at homes. Children in the age group of 6-14 years, therefore, form a critical group to whom 'alternative schools' could provide opportunities for completing their education. Numbers of such children are more in rural and remote areas than in urban cities. (Dhankar, 2014)

Another important aspect is that early maturity of girls, child marriage, need for looking after their siblings and the traditional role imposed on girls prevent them from attending or completing even their primary school education. It is important to understand the gender differences, which exists in socially and educationally backward communities, in order to plan appropriate strategies for education of girls. These educationally deprived girls are the major target for whom 'alternative schools' could provide education at a time and place convenient to them.³

The NCERT concept paper on 'Non Formal Education (NFE) and Alternative Schooling' defines an Alternative School (AS) as a system which has a delivery mechanism distinct from formal schools and Non Formal Education (NFE). The concept paper seems to further indicate that it is essentially the degree of flexibility in curriculum design and teaching—learning approach that makes the difference between the formal and the Alternative School (AS). Alternative School (AS) should be responsive enough to desegregate needs, and provide schooling that children from various sub—sections of the society may relate to. Education must not be isolated and independent events in the lives of the students; it must be closely related with all aspects of the student's identity.

² Purohit,S (2014) .An Analytical Study of Alternative Education Programme Run by Digantar

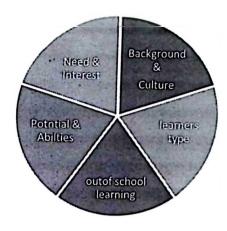


Fig5.1 ASPECTS OF THE STUDENT'S IDENTITY

India is a multicultural, multilingual and multi-religion society. Every state and religious group has its unique identity. Therefore, the culture—specific pedagogy is needed. Hence, instead of using a uniform mechanistic way of teaching-learning, culture based creative activities as educational practices should become strong basis of pedagogy. But the ground reality is that flexibility, localization and need specific strategies have often been used as loopholes to offer sub-standard education. With any alternative practice in the field of education there are certain legitimate concerns, such as:

- Does Alternative Schools (AS) offer something that is not available in formal schools, such as motivation, interest, joy of learning, greater confidence, leadership training, environmental awareness, a sense of responsibility towards community, ownership, etc.
- Does Alternative Schools (AS) fulfill its requirement of attracting previously non-enrolled children?
- What is the quality of education in Alternative Schools (AS) as compared to formal schools?

⁴ Purohit,S (2014) .An Analytical Study of Alternative Education Programme Run by Digantar ⁵ Ibid.(171)

- What level of acceptability does Alternative Schools (AS) have vis-a-vis employment, higher education and mainstreaming?
- Are Alternative Schools (AS) structures sustainable? Can they be replicated?
- Is the system of evaluation of pupil attainment effective?
- Does a low academic qualification of Alternative School (AS) teachers affect pupil attainment and quality of teaching?
- Does the community continue to support and sustain Alternative Schools
 (AS) in the long run? Does Alternative Schools (AS) meet community aspirations?

All the above questions may not be answered from one research study. A detailed study and review of some presently ongoing experiments on evolving alternative systems of education is of crucial importance at this juncture in India's attempt to meet the goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) and new sustainable development goals. Findings from a number of researches are needed to be collected for providing a meaningful learning experience to the children. An attempt has been made by the researcher in this area, by conducting this study.

Parvarish the museum school has played a vital role in providing quality education to the poorest of the poor. It has been successful in bringing street and slum children to the school in twelve years of its successful existence museum school are successful in transforming the lives of the street and slum children. The school that operates in museum itself has got international recognition for its innovation through UNESCO.

The Museum School has been running successfully in Bhopal. MP in India since September 2005 in collaboration with 5 Museums: Regional Science Centre, National Museum of Mankind, Regional Museum of Natural History, State Archaeology Museum and State Tribal Museum. 3 Museums in Mumbai: Prince of Wales Museum, Nehru Science Centre and Maharashtra Nature Park; 5 Museums in Delhi: National Science Centre, National Museum of Natural History, National Crafts Museum, National Rail Museum and Shankar's International Doll Museum; 3 Museums in Chennai: Birla Planetarium, Government Museum Egmore and Dakshinachitra; and 1 Museum in Bangalore: Visvesvaraya Industrial and

Technological Museum have already expressed their interest and support for the project.

The museum school of Bhopal has got award for its innovation in education in 2016. Therefore it was chosen for the present study.

Questions regarding the museum school were:

- 1. What is the rationale behind the development of museum school?
- 2. What are the aims and objectives of the museum school?
- 3. Who are the targeted audience of the school?
- 4. How the pedagogical practices are incorporated with the concept of museum by the school?
- 5. What are the barriers in expansion of the school?

Such questions and scarcity in the studies in the area of alternative school has motivated researcher to conduct this research work, entitled 'Alternative schools in practice: Parvarish the Museum school- a case study.

The objectives of the research were:

- 1. To study the history and development of the school.
- 2. To understand the administration of the institute.
- 3. To study the aims and objectives of the school.
- 4. To understand the pedagogical practices followed by the museum school.
- 5. To study the learner and their achievement in the school.

The investigation was a descriptive case study and the nature of data was descriptive along with some quantitative data.

Primary data was collected from the coordinator of the museum school by conducting interviews, from teachers of the museum school by conducting in-depth interviews, and from students through focused group discussion and observation. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished documents.

Technological Museum have already expressed their interest and support for the project.

The museum school of Bhopal has got award for its innovation in education in 2016. Therefore it was chosen for the present study.

Questions regarding the museum school were:

- 1. What is the rationale behind the development of museum school?
- 2. What are the aims and objectives of the museum school?
- 3. Who are the targeted audience of the school?
- 4. How the pedagogical practices are incorporated with the concept of museum by the school?
- 5. What are the barriers in expansion of the school?

Such questions and scarcity in the studies in the area of alternative school has motivated researcher to conduct this research work, entitled 'Alternative schools in practice: Parvarish the Museum school- a case study.

The objectives of the research were:

- 1. To study the history and development of the school.
- 2. To understand the administration of the institute.
- 3. To study the aims and objectives of the school.
- 4. To understand the pedagogical practices followed by the museum school.
- 5. To study the learner and their achievement in the school.

The investigation was a descriptive case study and the nature of data was descriptive along with some quantitative data.

Primary data was collected from the coordinator of the museum school by conducting interviews, from teachers of the museum school by conducting in-depth interviews, and from students through focused group discussion and observation. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished documents.

The collected data and information was complemented by non-participatory observations of school activities with the help of field notes and non-participatory observations of class groups with the help of observation schedule.

Being recognized from UNESCO for its innovation in education Parvarish the museum school was selected for the study. In this all 8 teachers and coordinator along with three alumni of the school were interviewed. All the classes were observed in a period of 15 days and a focused group discussion was conducted with the children from all age group.

6.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis and interpretation of information collected from various sources resulted in the forms of findings. The key findings along with discussion are following:

6.2.1 Ideology of Parvarish the Museum school

Founders of the museum school believe in the idea of providing free and quality education to the urban poor children. They think that education that was introduced to bring equality in the society is widening the gap between the rich and poor. In our country we have schools with world class facilities and in the same country we have schools with one room and one teacher hardly bothering about the education of the children. This way education is increasing disparity among society. They believe that every child have potential it's just that they need an opportunity to unleash that potential. So here Parvarish the museum school provides education using museum exhibits at free of cost. At Parvarish students are also encouraged to learn a vocation that they can take up as their carrier in future. This reflects Gandhi Ji's ideology of learning while doing.

By studying the ideology Parvarish the museum school in the light of various thoughts of educational thinkers and schools of philosophies, it could be said that Parvarish the museum school has a strong philosophical basis. Education system of the museum school follows 'Eclectic Approach', combining the ideas of idealism, naturalism, pragmatism and realism. The educational philosophy of Parvarish the museum school is more pragmatic in approach.

6.2.2 Educational process of Parvarish the museum school

The outcomes related to the educational process of the museum school are presented as following aspects:

6.2.3 Objectives of Education:

The objective of the Parvarish the museum school is providing the same quality education to urban poor kids as that for the urban rich, by making optimum and effective use of its existing infrastructure(the museum and B.Ed colleges), at the lower cost.

It aims at providing conceptual understanding, through museum exhibits and other innovative ways of teaching and learning.

Parvarish the museum school also aims at preserving the cultures through classes in tribal museum and also encouraging children in showcasing their own talent.

It also aims at providing exposure to vocational education so that children can take up these vocations as their career option in future. Hence making them self sufficient.

6.2.4 Admission Process:

The Museum School (also called PARVARISH), takes a fixed number of non-school-going children from slums every year, and grooms them so that they can join a mainstream school. After joining the school, Parvarish acts as their after-school support, teaching them all that they cannot get in their school or afford to buy. Since 2005, Parvarish has groomed over 2500 children, some of whom are now pursuing Engineering, Science and Commerce undergraduate courses in Universities, some are pursuing performing arts education like Bharat Natyam and Acting, some have started their own small livelihoods, and some are exploring various areas of their choice. The transformation of children from unkept, untidy, illiterate, bad mouthed vagabonds, to polished, decent, confident, educated children, has been like a dream come true. Some passing out children are joining back the school as regular Teachers.

6.2.5 Curriculum:

The model follows a curriculum designed to provide holistic education starting from behavioral changes to literacy, to academics, physical and adolescence education, and finally ending with vocational skills and entrepreneurship development. While the children are mainstreamed through Regular Schools and the National Open School for examination and certification, the objective is to make them self-employable, confident, responsible and independent in society.

6.2.6 Learning experience:

At the scheduled Museum, the children fall in line, disciplined and well mannered for the prayer song. Following that, the children separate into groups (as decided post their assessment) and led by their respective teachers to different spots and exhibits in the Museum. The Teachers, who are well equipped with their curriculum, and trained to teach using Museum exhibits, start their class with a story, or questioning some known facts. This catches the children's interest, and provokes their inquisitiveness.

The questions / story lead to the exhibit, that the teacher will be using that day for his/her class. While the students touch, feel and experiment with the exhibit in turns, the Teacher asks about the experience, and the reasons behind it. Getting to know the knowledge level of each child on the concept, the Teacher then starts explaining the exhibit and the concept behind it. Children do not write down anything during the class. After the explanation is over, children ask questions to fill their understanding gaps.

This is followed by the children describing the concept and its explanation in parts, like a story chain, with the Teacher asking questions. Post all explanations and question answers, children sit down in front of the exhibit, to write the concept in their notebooks. While they consult each other to verify their understanding, they are not allowed to copy from each other's notebooks. Those who cannot write well draw the exhibit and label it. These children have separate sessions to improve their writing skills.

6.3 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Parvarish the museum school and other schools like this are providing alternative to the education for the underprivileged or deprived children of the society. Parvarish the museum school in particular came out with the solution of providing a low cost but quality education for the urban poor by using innovatively the already existing structures i.e. museums of the state.

School and museums have an age old bonding. Museums are treated as one of the resources for enriching and connecting students with the world knowledge. NCF 2005 also recommended schools for museum visits and field trips as these trips gives an exposure to the students that cannot be given in classrooms. Here museums play a

role of joyful learning. But these trips are limited to once or twice in a year depending upon the school management. These trips can be made more frequent especially for students of class VI to class XI. As at this stage of learning students start embracing knowledge try to understand to the concept. Museum provides conceptual understanding to the students as evident from the present study.

Another educational implication of the museum school is that museums keep children of present generation connected to the culture and it generates a sense of belongingness among children. It provides an opportunity for student to praise and respect the culture of their country.

Researches have shown that science museum visits provide a deeper understanding of science phenomena. It is also evident from the present study that time spent in science museum gives a conceptual clarity for the students. Therefore this supports frequent visit to the science museum. History museum visit gives student a chance to visualize those past events. This helps in understanding historical events even better.

From this study it is evident that museum can be a good space for the educational process if made a part of learning process. Using museum as pedagogy will be beneficial as it makes learning joyful and interesting. Parvarish the museum school has shown no sign of absenteeism this is because of burden free learning at museum school. This can be used by mainstream school to tackle the problem of absenteeism in the school.

Another implication is the vocational training is provided with general education here at museum school. This can also be a part of main stream school beginning from earlier classes

6.4 CONCLUSION

Alternative schools and programs have evolved over the past five decades. These schools were started with the aim of providing quality education for children. Even after five decades there are issues with the success of these schools be it Summer Hills of Kingswinford or Shantiniketan of Rabindranath Tagore. Although these schools are different in the philosophy they follow, but when we consider the future of the children studying in these schools there arises a question of the reliability.

At present we have to go for formal schooling for certification. Certification is important in competitive world or professional world. These schools have failed to connect with the mainstream schools or failed to prepare students for competitive world. Practices that are being followed by alternative school have been beneficial as the achievement was more or less same for both mainstream school as well as alternative school. Questions arise whether these schools are sustainable? Can these schools provide an alternative to mainstreams school?

Present study raises a fundamental question regarding the value of museums in the formal learning of children. The question is about whether museums are as (permanent) sites of learning or museums as (occasional) pedagogical sites for learning. If we see museum as a site of school (replacing the school in its formal set up) then there are arguments regarding its sustainability, as how long can it maintain interest in the students for the museum classes. Museums are the treasure of knowledge but there are limitations to the resources provided in the museum, every exhibit might not be beneficial or incorporated in the regular classes. Repeated exposure to the same museum exhibits might generate lack of interest among children. On the other hand we have museums as a part of pedagogical process. Museums are already a part of curriculum in schools. Based on present study it is suggested that the duration of museum exposure can be increased as per the concept taught in the class, which is at present limited to one or two visits per session.

Research in this area should increase to have a clear understanding of the concept of alternative schools and museum as a site or as a part of school.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Researcher has made an attempt to answer the possible questions regarding the museum school with the present study. All the aspects cannot be studied in one study. So there is a scope for further researches in this particular area. Certain directions for further researches are:

- A comparative study between alternative practicing schools can be conducted.
- Research can also be conducted on the success rate and achievement of children of museum school and mainstream school.
- Another research can be conducted on the impact of museums on the learning outcome of the students.

- NGOs working in the area of alternative education may be taken into account for research.
- Study on the sustainability of the alternative schools may be conducted.
- Study on schools practicing innovative methods for teaching learning can also be conducted.
- A research can be conducted on initiatives by government and NGOs to bring out of schoolchildren in school.

To sum up it can be said that Parvarish the museum school has done exemplary work in bringing out of school children under school system. It has changed the picture of the targeted slums through education. Museum school is a best option for after school hours and for those who are not yet a part of formal schooling. These innovations in education should be appreciated to bring a change in educational processes and system.