

## **Roles and Functions of the Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education**

The Department, with its major thrust in the areas of educational psychology, guidance and counselling has been engaged in realizing the NCERT's objectives of bringing about qualitative improvement in school education and teacher education through the application of psychological knowledge to educational theory and practice. The department extends its resources and collaborates in providing psychological perspectives to different aspects of school education, viz. curriculum planning, textbook writing, teacher training, assessment etc.

The department is one of the oldest departments of NCERT. It came into being when NCERT was established in 1961. It has undergone changes in its nomenclature and emphasis of work due to organisational changes and changes in thrust areas from time to time. Initially guidance and counselling, child psychology, educational psychology, psychometry, research methodology and statistics were the major areas of work with a focus on large-scale cooperative research projects. The focus, however, always remained only on psychological foundations keeping in view the expertise /resources available in the department.

### **Overview of Thrust Areas**

The major focus of work of the department has been in the areas of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling and of late in Value Education and Peace Education through research, development, training and extension activities. It would be meaningful to have glimpses of the department's major thrust areas.

### ***Educational Psychology***

Earlier work in the area focused more on test development, programmed learning, talent search, developmental norms, achievement motivation, research methodology, statistics, development of psychological laboratory etc. The change in nomenclature from psychological foundations to educational psychology seemed to emphasise on importance of applied aspects in a range of areas like learning, motivation, creativity and behaviour modification with a focus on teacher training and material development.

The research areas pursued were related to the study of physical and psychological study of children; survey of learning problems of primary school children in urban slums; survey of teacher practices of behaviour management; role of acculturation in value development; national survey of educational psychology curriculum in teacher education; case study of an innovative school; study of educational/vocational aspects of high school tribal students, identifying entrepreneurial qualities of students and so on.

Development of psychology textbooks for higher secondary stage has been one of the important concerns of the department. Keeping in view the changing perspectives and guidelines provided in National Curriculum Framework (2005), the psychology syllabi and textbooks have been made more life oriented and experiential rather than purely theoretical and experimental.

The developmental programmes of the department also included reading materials in child and adolescent psychology, popular psychology series, resource book on creativity for teacher educators, audio material on creativity, identification and development of talent, manual of learning for teacher educators, compendium in psychology of teaching-learning for DIET personnel, the handbooks on educational and psychological tests etc.

The department has been organising training programmes for teacher educators in identifying and nurturing creative potential, learning and development and behaviour modification covering different regions. Seminars/national workshops on researches in child and adolescent psychology; learning problems of children; issues in psychological testing; psycho-educational assessment; Indian psychological traditions etc were also organised.

### ***Guidance and Counselling***

Guidance and counselling, the applied area of educational psychology, has been a key concern in terms of research, development of resource materials and training of professionals, and capacity-building at the state level since the past five decades. The beginning can be traced back to the year 1952-53 when the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance (CBEVG) was set up at the CIE, Delhi under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Government. Likewise, Guidance Bureaus were set up at the state level. The role of CBEVG (merged in the present department) was to coordinate, monitor and provide leadership to the state level guidance agencies. Training of guidance professionals became the major area of work of the department, keeping in view the demands of the trained professional counsellors at the state level across the country.

The department has been offering Post Graduate Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling since 1958 to train professionals to serve as counsellors in schools. The department in recent years initiated an International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling for Asian and African countries. The first such course was offered for teachers and teacher educators from Maldives, Sri Lanka and Zambia during 2002-03. The course was further revised and opened to Indian students, and in 2005-06 the course was offered to in-service teachers from the country as well as neighbouring countries. The six month Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling, based on teacher as a counsellor model which was open to the developing countries and a prospective International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling through distance mode in collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) have been some of the recent initiatives. These aim to equip the teachers/educational personnel with skills and competencies to facilitate educational, personal, social and career development of students thus contributing to their overall

development. The department has also prepared course materials for the International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling through Distance /Online Mode in Collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Canada for Afro-Asian countries. A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed between NCERT and COL for launching the course.

As a nodal centre for guidance activities at the national level, department has been offering its academic resources to guidance departments/units/agencies at the state level for training of guidance personnel and for setting up guidance services. It has also played a leading role in organising national level conferences/seminars for sharing of ideas and preparation of action plan/practices for strengthening guidance services. Important extension activities include short-term training of career teachers, orientation of educational administrators, refresher courses for trained guidance personnel/counsellors, special programmes for teachers/managers of educationally backward minorities managed schools, consultancy for organisation of guidance activities in schools, collaboration with NGOs etc.

The researches undertaken in the area of guidance and counselling primarily include status surveys of guidance needs and services at the national level, follow up studies of trained counsellors, research trends in guidance and counselling in the country, career aspirations and guidance needs of gifted, scholastically superior, disadvantaged groups and first generation learners, study of special groups in regard to career planning, maturity and adjustment of scheduled caste/tribe students, girls/creative girls, students in vocational and academic streams etc.

The department has to its credit a variety of materials including resource books in guidance and counselling; career development; occupational information; manual for counsellors; readings for career teachers; occupational literature; multimedia package for training of career teachers; case studies on counselling, multimedia package for enhancing self-understanding and effective interpersonal relationships; guidelines for setting up a guidance centre in school; readings in value education for guidance counsellors; exemplar material for teachers for integration of guidance inputs with teaching of subjects etc.

### ***Value Education and Peace Education***

The work on value education([Education for Values in Schools – A Framework](#)) is relatively of recent origin in the department. Report on the Eighty First Parliamentary Standing Committee, forwarded by the MHRD for implementation to the NCERT during the year 2000, had put forward the agenda for value education. The Committee of Experts on Value Education in MHRD recommended that NCERT may be made a nodal centre for strengthening value education at all levels in the school system. The Council decided to set up the National Resource Centre for Value Education (NRCVE) in the department. The tasks visualized and assigned were to plan, coordinate and implement programmes for value orientation of education at all stages of schooling.

Under the aegis of NRCVE, the department has been pursuing a number of activities and programmes related to development, training, research, coordination, evaluation,

dissemination and consultancy in the area of value education. The department has been involved in identification and networking with the institutions working in value education in the country, evaluating and monitoring the programmes being implemented by NGOs which are given funds from MHRD, organizing and promoting research, development and training etc. The Department has also been sponsoring researches and innovations, bringing out Journal of Value Education, developing resource and supplementary reading materials etc. The work was also taken up to analyse the textbooks with reference to value education inputs and to study value - based practices in schools. Attempts have also been made to document the work done in the country in the form of annotated bibliography of books, journals, articles, research reports and audio-video materials. Another important area of work has been development of resource materials in the form of modules and monographs on the values like compassion, creativity, excellence and human rights, awareness generation materials and video programmes consisting of guidelines which could be used for training and orientation of teachers and teacher educators. Some of the resource materials have also been developed for training counsellors as change agents for value education.

Supplementary reading materials, based on the stories and parables available in the literature of Jainism and Sikhism, was prepared for children. Simple reading materials on value education for parents have also been developed.

The Reference Library of National Resource Centre for Value Education (NRCVE) serves as a treasure house of materials related to value education. The collection includes around four thousand books, journals, training packages, audio and video cassettes and CDs related to value education. A data base of various organisations working in the area of value education has been developed for the NRCVE.

Journal of Value Education has also been a significant activity to provide a forum for exchange and sharing of insights and experiences on significant issues related to value education for academicians and practitioners.

Organisation of the National Consultation followed by Regional Consultations by the four RIEs of NCERT providing a forum for exchange of insights, experiences and innovations in the area of value education has been a significant activity in the recent past. The department also organised extension lectures on value education and related themes by eminent educationists and experts.

The department also carried out the work assigned by MHRD which included evaluation of the programmes of NGOs implementing programmes/ projects with assistance received under Grant-in-Aid Scheme of MHRD for Strengthening Culture and Values in Education; preparation of monthly Action Taken Reports on implementation of value education in NCERT and its various constituents to be placed before the Cabinet Secretariat as agenda for Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council; preparation of Case studies of selected NGOs with a view to create awareness about the work being done by them.

Peace Education has been articulated as one of the national concerns in the National Curriculum Framework (2005) brought out by NCERT. The Focus group on peace education with members from this department and outside NCERT, prepared the

position paper on Education for Peace which is part of the NCF document brought out by NCERT. The department is pursuing the initiative on Peace Education as its area of work. It stresses the need to enrich teacher education so that teachers have an orientation towards peace education. Department's initiative to offer in-service training to teachers across the country is a step in this direction. It emphasises on attaining one of the aims of education which is to foster values of democracy, equality, justice, freedom, concern for others' well being, respect for human dignity and rights and so on.

**Resources:** - A special feature of the department is its following resources.

- a. National Library of Educational and Psychological Tests (NLEPT) established in 1978, is an archive of Indian and foreign tests in psychology and education for consultation by researchers and professionals across the country.
- b. Guidance and Counselling Resource Centre set up for providing training and consultancy in Guidance & Counselling, contains literature/ materials in the form of manuals, monographs, reading material, psychological tests and occupational/career information, counselling etc.
- c. The National Resource Centre for Value Education (NRCVE), set up in the year 2000 has a reference library containing a wide variety of literature and materials related to values in the form of books, journals, instructional packages, reports on various seminars, conferences and audio, video material etc. developed by the NCERT and various other individuals, institutions/ organisations including NGOs.

### **Dissemination and Clearing House Functions**

Outcomes of various projects completed by the department are disseminated and shared across the country in the form of books/journal articles, mimeographed reports/reading materials for transaction in training programmes, paper presentations at seminars as well as through reference library of National Resource Centre for Value Education (NRCVE), National Library of Educational and Psychological Tests (NLEPT), and the Guidance and Counselling Resource Centre.

### **Some Future Thrust Areas**

The Department's vision for the ensuing years focuses on strengthening the psychological bases of school education as well as teacher education. It stipulates to provide leadership role in training professionals and augmenting state level institutions/agencies/existing Bureaus of Guidance and to continue its effort in orienting key functionaries/teachers for greater acceptance of guidance and counselling approach and practices in the school system. Enhancing awareness of the scope of psychology as a subject at higher secondary stage so that it finds a deserving place in the school curriculum is another initiative. The department seeks to provide continuity and fillip to the existing programmes on peace education, continue efforts towards awareness generation and teacher training, development of resource materials and guidelines for integrated approach to education for peace and values.

