

## Students Perspective on Quality of Elementary School Textbooks in Government Schools of District Srinagar

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### Abstract

*Quality of school textbooks have become important aspect for effective students learning particularly at elementary level. The study aims at knowing the perception of elementary school students of government schools of district Srinagar regarding content, and coverage, of elementary school textbooks. The data was collected from all the students of class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> reading in 32 schools of eight educational zones of district Srinagar at an average of 4 schools from each educational zone. The data was collected through self constructed interview schedule. Data was statistically analyzed by using percentages. The result shows that out of 230 elementary school students, majority of elementary school students agreed that the sequence of text is systematic, length of each unit is appropriate and textbooks contain exercises for reflection, knowledge provided in textbooks is linked to environmental issues, health related values, peace related values, and work related attitudes and values and sensitize them to social issues-gender equality, caste equality, child labour and illiteracy,*

**Keywords:** Students perspective, Quality, Elementary School Textbooks, Government Schools, Srinagar.

### INTRODUCTION

The textbook is a book used as a standard source of information for formal study of a subject and an instrument for teaching and learning. It provides a syllabus for the course because the authors of the syllabus have made decisions about what will be learned and in what order. It provides a set of visuals, activities, readings, etc., and so saves the teacher time in finding and developing such material. It provides security for the students because they have a kind of a road map of the course. (Graves 2000:175).The aim of education can't be achieved if we provide poor quality of text books to our students. Text books have been a controversial issue in education. It becomes imperative that the textbooks are well structured in their content and delivery. Their content has raised pedagogical and curriculum concerns to such an extent that Central Advisory Board of Education constituted a committee in 2005 for evolving regulatory mechanism for textbooks. The Yashpal committee set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1992 recognized that both the packed content and dense nature of textbook writing add to mental burden of children. So preparation of suitable textbooks and other teaching material is also basic to the success of any attempt at curriculum improvement. Content and its coverage are important because objects can be achieved through well defined content. The curriculum content should enable students to gain and apply knowledge in day to day life. The content selected should contribute to the student's knowledge or understanding of the reality of human life.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective framed for proposed investigation was.

1. To know opinion of elementary school students regarding content and coverage of elementary school textbooks.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken in eight educational zones of District Srinagar out of which only four elementary schools were selected from each educational zone on random basis. The sample consists of all students of class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> reading in 32 Elementary schools of eight educational zones. The sample thus comprised of 230 students out of which 131 were males and 99 were female students.

## TOOL USED

On the basis of research objective formulated for the present study the investigator collected data with the help self constructed interview schedule. An interview schedule was prepared on following popular indices of content, and coverage; Organization of content, presentation of content, linkage of knowledge to environment, health, peace, work related values and sensitization to social issues.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

In order to accomplish the objective of the present study the data was analyzed with the help of percentages.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table-1. Showing opinion of primary school students (class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) regarding organization of content in Textbooks (N=230)**

Items	Organization of content	No. of Student opted		%age
1.	Sequence of Text	Systematic	140	60.87%
		Unsystematic	90	39.13%
2.	Length of each unit	Appropriate	130	56.52%
		Inappropriate	100	43.48%
3.	Exercises for reflection	Yes	200	86.95%
		No	30	13.05%

A perusal of the table shows that out of 230 Primary School students of class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 140(60.87%) agreed that sequence of text is systematic and 90(39.13%) were against it, 130(56.52%) stated that length of each unit is appropriate, whereas 100(43.48%) were against it and 200(86.95%) pointed out that textbooks contain exercises for reflection and 30(13.05%) were against it.

**Table-2. Showing opinion of primary school students (class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) regarding presentation of content in textbooks. (N=230)**

Items	Presentation of content	Student opted 'Yes'	%age	Student opted 'No'	%age
1.	Explanation of concepts is systematic	195	84.78%	36	15.22%
2.	Linkage to previous units	165	71.74%	65	28.26%
3.	Linkage to previous class Textbooks	179	77.83%	51	22.17%

4.	Helps you to study independently	64	27.83%	166	72.17%
5.	Linkage of knowledge in Textbooks to your everyday experiences	187	81.31%	43	18.69%
6.	Linkage of knowledge in different subjects	154	66.96%	76	33.04%

A perusal of the table shows that out of 230 primary school students of class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 195(84.78%) agreed that explanation of concepts is systematic and 35(15.22%) were against it, 165(71.74%) were of the opinion that each unit is linked to previous unit and 65(28.26%) were against it, 179(77.83%) felt that the content in the textbooks are linked to previous class textbooks and 51(22.17%) were against it, only 64(27.83%) were of opinion that they can study textbooks independently and 166(72.17%) were against it, 187(81.31%) were of the opinion that knowledge provided in textbooks is linked to their everyday experiences and 43(18.69%) were against it, 154(66.96%) claimed that there is linkage of knowledge in different subjects and 76(33.04%) were against it.

**Table-3. Showing %age of respondents (class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) falling on each item of Dimension “knowledge provided in textbooks is linked to”. (N=230)**

Items	Knowledge provided in Textbooks is linked to	‘ Yes’	%age	‘ No’	%age
1.	Environmental issues	228	99.13%	2	0.87%
2.	Health related values	220	95.65%	10	4.35%
3.	Peace related values	193	83.9%	37	16.1%
4.	Work related values and attitudes	175	76.1%	55	23.9%
5.	Needs of children with disabilities	101	43.9%	129	56.1%

A perusal of the table shows that out of 230 Primary School students, 228 (99.13%) were of the opinion that the knowledge provided in textbooks is linked to environmental issues and only 2(0.87%) were against it, 220(95.65%) stated that the health related values are included in the textbooks and 10 (4.35%) were against it, 193 (83.9%) felt that peace related values are included in the textbooks and 55(23.95%) were against it, 101(43.9%) were of opinion that textbooks contain knowledge about the needs of children with disabilities and 129(56.1%) were against it.

**Table-4. Showing the %age of respondents (class 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) falling on each item of sensitization to social issues in primary school textbooks (N=230)**

Items	Sensitization to social issues	‘Yes’	%age	‘ No’	%age
1.	Gender Equality	141	61.31%	89	38.69%
2.	Caste Equality	183	79.57%	47	20.43%
3.	Child Labour	152	66.09%	78	33.91%
4.	Illiteracy	157	68.26%	73	31.74%

A perusal of the table shows that out of 230 students, 141(61.31%) were of the opinion that content provided in textbooks sensitizes them to issue of gender equality and 89(38.69%) were against it, 183(79.57%) were of the opinion that the textbooks contain content that sensitizes them to issue of caste equality and 47(20.43%) were against it, 152(66.09%) were of the opinion that textbooks contain content that sensitizes them to the issue of child labour and 78(33.91%) were against it, 157(68.26%) were of the opinion that textbooks contain content regarding issue of illiteracy and 73(31.74%) were against it .

### **DISCUSSION**

The results revealed that out of 230 Elementary School students, majority of elementary School students agreed that the sequence of text is systematic, length of each unit is appropriate and textbooks contain exercises for reflection, majority of elementary school students were of the opinion that explanation of concept is systematic; there is linkage of knowledge to previous units, previous class textbooks, and student's everyday experience and in different subjects and at the same time majority of students claimed that textbooks are not designed in a way that helps them to study independently, majority of elementary school students were of opinion that knowledge provided in textbooks is linked to environmental issues, health related values, peace related values, and work related attitudes and values and majority of students claimed that knowledge provided in textbooks is not linked to needs of children with disabilities. The results are partially in line with the study conducted by Meimanat, A.B., et al. (2015) in which they found that more attention related to the sense of solidarity was paid in the textbooks. The results are also partially in line with the study conducted by Anna-Lusa, K., et al. (2010) in which they found textbooks covers wide range of health topics that meet the core contents of the National Curriculum. Majority of elementary school students were of the opinion that knowledge provided in textbooks sensitizes them to social issues-gender equality, caste equality, child labour and illiteracy.

### **CONCLUSION**

On the basis of analysis and interpretation and discussion of the results presented above, one can conclude that textbook writer should frame textbooks in such a way that helps students to study independently and more content should be taken from the needs of children with special abilities. This will develop the skill of reading among students that help them in future life and develop awareness about children with special needs in order to cooperate with them and help them in the need of hour.

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