

## TEACHERS OPINION ON QUALITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF DISTRICT SRINAGAR

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### ABSTRACT

*The study aims at knowing the opinion of primary school teachers of government schools of district Srinagar regarding content, coverage, language, printing, durability and illustrations of primary school textbooks. The data was collected from 128 teachers working in 32 primary schools of 8 educational zones of district Srinagar at an average of four teachers from each primary school and 10 faculty members from DIET and SIE Srinagar. The data was collected through self constructed opinionnaire. Data was statistically analyzed by using percentages. The result shows that 59(46.09%) Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the content of Textbooks, 62 (48.44%) were average satisfied with the coverage of Textbooks and 58, 62(48.44%) Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the quality of Textbooks. Out of 10 faculty members of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar, 6(60%) were highly satisfied with the content of Primary School Textbooks, 5(50%) were highly dissatisfied with the coverage of Primary School Textbooks and 5(50%) were highly dissatisfied with the quality of Textbooks.*

**Keywords:** Teachers opinion, Quality, Primary, School, Textbooks, Government Schools, District Srinagar

### Introduction

#### Introduction

Schools are the prominent part of contemporary society's formal organization of education, they are particular institutions, separated out from other spheres of social life and invested with the function of socializing young people into the culture of society. As the pace of change has accelerated markedly in the decades, an increasingly important part of the socializing process is to prepare young people for adult life in this dynamic ever changing world. As society changes so too does society's expectations of school. The overriding expectation from education is that it should provide the individual with the means to be successful in the world which she or he inhabits so educating is about achieving. There is an expectation that the individual wants to achieve in order to succeed in life. The ability of the Education system to enable each individual child to achieve success is bound up in the form, structure and conception of the knowledge that makes up the school curriculum.

Curriculum is perhaps, best thought of as that set of planned activities which are designed to implement a particular Educational aim- set of such aims in terms of content of what is to be taught and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which are to be deliberately fostered.ö[Winch] together with statement of criteria for selection of content, and choices in methods, materials and evaluation. (Stenhouse)

Textbooks are the part of the curriculum and place a vital role in our educational system. They are the primary conduits for delivering content knowledge to the students and teachers base their lessons plans on the material given in the textbooks. 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.

The content of Textbooks is usually considered to be the most important component of developing Curriculum. Content and objectives are interdependent, we select content on the basis of objectives and objectives can be achieved through well-defined content. Content refers to subject matter or the compendium of facts, concepts, generalizations, principles and theories. 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. NCF-2005 pointed out that the quality dimension also needs to be examined from the point of view of the experience designed for the child in terms of knowledge and skills (pp8)

Coverage refers to area or amount covered. NCF-2005 pointed out that content must meaningfully incorporate experiences of children and their diverse cultural contexts, including languages, it is important that Textbook writing is decentralized keeping in view the capacities that are required as well as the systems that will make this possible (pp119).

Language is not only a means of communication. It is also a medium through which most of our knowledge is acquired. Language is a very power set of symbols and one can express everything in language. NCF-2005 pointed out that language used in Textbooks should be age appropriate and in accordance with the cognitive reach of learner. The language used in Textbooks should be simple, precise, clear and correct and should be within the apprehension of weak students and should not affect their learning.

As a measure of Textbook life or duration, durability has both economic and technical dimension. Economic dimension refers to physical state of Textbook and technical dimension refers to content matter in Textbooks. The researcher here is concerned with the economic dimension. In terms of physical state, durability is typically defined as the length of time a Textbook can be used by student before it deteriorates beyond usefulness and replacement becomes preferable to continued repair. This depends largely on paper quality, quality of printing and binding and care of use. The cover of the Textbook, quality of paper the textbook are printed on are believed to influence a student's first impression of that text.

Illustrations are useful in part of a text giving information about items or events which are not encountered in pupil's daily life or in School setting, the region or even the country. They show the pupil more evocative and more accurate representations of the outside world, human life, geographical environment and landscape with which he/she is unfamiliar. Illustrations should faithfully depict and explain what is described in the written text. They should be clear, accurate and not give rise to ambiguities. Decorative illustrations are justified to stimulate and develop a pupil's artistic sensibility.

Visualization is an important factor, because of words or new concepts are related to mental images, they will be easier to understand and memorize. These images can be tangible (drawings, photos) or linguistics. Children with visual intelligence are artistic. They are very aware of their surroundings and are good at

remembering images. They have a great sense of direction. They like to draw, paint and read map. They learn best through drawings and visual aids.

### **Need and importance.**

Textbooks are the part of the School Curriculum and preparation of suitable Textbooks and other teaching material is also basic to the success of any attempt at Curriculum improvement. Thus not only the suitability of the existing Textbooks needs to be verified, but there also seems to be a need for investigation into the best types of Textbooks. The Textbooks prepared by NCERT for class 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> have been prepared keeping in view NCF-2005 guidelines.

NCF-2005 recognized that the size of the textbooks have been growing over the years, even as the pressure to include new topics mounts and the efforts to synthesis knowledge and treat it holistically gets weaker. Flabby textbooks and the syllabi they cover, symbolize a systemic failure to address children in a Child Centered manner. Those who write such encyclopedia textbooks are guided by the popular belief that there has been an explosion of knowledge. Therefore, vast amounts of knowledge should be pushed down the throats of little Children in order to catch up with other countries. So we need professional support for age specific content development for Schools which has been found in adequate in many aspects. This is the most daunting task for the State to achieve because the content has to be age specific and continuous from one standard to the other. Usually Content development is taken to be a mechanical job of compiling content into topics and sub topics without regard to Child psychology and age specificity. Many of the times these textbooks find no connection with the real life and child experiences. Much of the attention has not been given to these issues which make our books disinteresting to Children. Teachers too prefer rote memorization over building experiences of Children because books don t serve the purpose, and many times the language is beyond the comprehension of Children. Naturalistic dimension also is not taken care of as pictures and illustrations in many cases do not appeal to children given their print quality, learning by doing principle mostly does not seem to be attended in text because we do not find much of šdo it yourself kind exercises. So it emerges that thrust is on accumulation of information than development of skills and experiences.

### **Statement of the problem.**

The problem for the present investigation was formulated as under.

ōTeachers Opinion on Quality of Primary School Textbooks in Government Schools of District Srinagarö

Operational definitions of variables

**Teachers' opinion:** Teachers opinion for the present study refers to belief of teachers regarding quality of textbooks.

**Quality:** Quality for the present study Standard of textbooks in terms of content, coverage, language, printing, durability and illustrations.

**Primary:** It is a stage that includes the first eight grades i.e., 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade

**School:** School for the present study A place or institution for teaching children

**Textbooks:** Textbooks for the present study refers Books that contain and gives instruction in the main principles of subject.

**Government Schools:** Government Schools for the present study refers Schools run by the Government organization

**District Srinagar:** It is one of the Districts of Jammu & Kashmir, India.

#### **Objectives of the study**

The following objectives were framed for proposed investigation.

1. To know opinion of Primary School teachers regarding content, coverage and quality of Primary School Textbooks.
2. To know opinion of faculty of DIET Srinagar and SIE Srinagar regarding content, coverage and quality of Primary School Textbooks.

#### **Methodology**

The study was undertaken in eight educational zones of District Srinagar out of which only four Primary Schools were selected from each educational zone on random basis. The sample consists of 128 teachers working in 32 primary schools of eight educational zones at an average of four teachers from each school and 10 members from faculty of DIET and SIE Srinagar.

#### **Tools used**

On the basis of research objectives formulated for the present study the investigator collected data with the help self constructed tool opinionnaire. The investigator identified the following dimensions for the opinionnaire i.e., content, coverage and quality in terms of language, printing, durability and illustrations. There were total 36 statements in the final format of the opinionnaire. Out of 36, 22 were positive polarity items and 14 were negative polarity items.

#### **Statistical Treatment**

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

#### **Analysis and interpretation**

**Table-1.0 showing the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding content of Primary School Textbooks (N=128)**

S. No	Content	Range	No. of respondents	%age
1.	Highly satisfactory	32 & above	49	38.28%
2.	Average	23-31	59	46.09%
3.	Highly dissatisfactory	14-22	20	15.63%

The Table-1.0 shows the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding content of Primary School Textbooks. The perusal of the above table reveals that 49(38.28%) Primary School teachers were highly satisfied with the content of Textbooks, 59(46.09%) Primary School teachers were average satisfied with

the content of Textbooks and only 20(15.63%) Primary School teachers were highly dissatisfied with the content of Textbooks.

Therefore, the quick look of the table reveals that majority of the Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the content of Textbooks.

**Table-1.1 showing the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding coverage of Primary School Textbooks (N=128)**

S. No	Coverage	Range	No. of respondents	%age
1.	Highly satisfactory	36 & above	50	39.16%
2.	Average	28-35	62	48.44%
3.	Highly dissatisfactory	20-27	16	12.5%

The above Table shows the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding coverage of Textbooks. The perusal of the table shows that out of 128 Primary School teachers, 50(39.06%) were highly satisfied with the coverage of Textbooks, 62 (48.44%) were average satisfied with the coverage of Textbooks and only 16(12.5%) were highly dissatisfied with coverage of Textbooks.

Therefore, the quick glance of the table reveals that majority of the Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the coverage of Textbooks.

**Table-1.2 showing the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding quality (language, printing, durability and illustrations) of Textbooks (N=128)**

S. No	Quality in terms of language, printing, durability and illustrations	Range	No. of respondents	%age
1.	Highly satisfactory	54 & above	58	45.31%
2.	Average	41-53	62	48.44%
3.	Highly dissatisfactory	28-40	8	6.25%

The table shows the opinion of Primary School teachers regarding quality (language, printing, durability and illustrations) of Textbooks. The perusal of the table shows that out of 128 Primary School teachers, 58(45.31%) was highly satisfied with the quality of Textbooks, 62(48.44%) Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the quality of Textbooks and 8(6.25%) Primary School teachers were highly dissatisfied with the quality of Textbooks.

Therefore, the above table reveals that majority of the Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the quality of Primary School Textbooks.

**Table-2.0 showing opinion of faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar regarding content of Primary School Textbooks (N=10)**

S. No	Content	Range	No of respondents	%age
1.	Highly satisfactory	22&above	6	60%
2.	Satisfactory	19-21	0	0%
3.	Highly Dissatisfactory	16-18	4	40%

The table shows the opinion of faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar taken as a sample regarding content of Primary School Textbooks. A perusal of the table shows that out of 10 faculty members of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar, 6(60%) were highly satisfied with the content of Primary School Textbooks and only 4(40%) of faculty members were highly dissatisfied with the content of Primary School Textbooks.

Therefore the above table reveals that majority of faculty members were highly satisfied with the content of Textbooks.

**Table-2.1 showing opinion of Faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar regarding coverage of Primary School Textbooks (N=10)**

S. No	Coverage	Range	No of respondents	%age
1.	Highly satisfactory	27&above	2	20%
2.	Satisfactory	24-26	3	30%
3.	Highly Dissatisfactory	21-23	5	50%

The table shows opinion of faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar regarding coverage of Primary School Textbooks. A perusal of the table shows that out of 10 faculty members of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar, only 2(20%) were highly satisfied with the coverage of Primary School Textbooks, 3(30%) were average satisfied with the coverage of Primary School Textbooks and 5(50%) were highly dissatisfied with the coverage of Primary School Textbooks.

Therefore the above table shows that majority of faculty members were highly dissatisfied with the coverage of the Textbooks.

**Table-2.3 showing opinion of Faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar regarding quality (language, printing, durability and illustrations) of Primary School Textbooks (N=10)**

S. No	Quality(language, Printing, durability and illustrations)	Range	No. of respondents	%age
1.	Highly Satisfactory	27 & above	2	20%
2.	Satisfactory	24-26	3	30%
3.	Highly Dissatisfactory	21-23	5	50%

The table shows opinion of faculty of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar regarding quality of Primary School Textbooks in terms of language, printing, durability and illustrations. Out of 10 faculty members, only 2(20%) were highly satisfied with the quality of Textbooks, 3(30%) were average satisfied with the quality of Textbooks and 5(50%) were highly dissatisfied with the quality of Textbooks.

Therefore from the above table reveals that the majority of faulty members were highly dissatisfied with the quality of Textbooks.

### Discussions

The results revealed that majority of Primary School teachers were average satisfied with the content, coverage and quality of Primary School Textbooks. The results further revealed that majority of faculty members of DIET, Srinagar and SIE, Srinagar were highly satisfied with the content of Textbooks, highly dissatisfied with the coverage of the Textbooks and highly dissatisfied with the quality of Textbooks. The results are partially in line with the study conducted by Shivender Prakash in 2013 in which he found that on the whole there were some lapses in the coverage in environmental education textbooks.

### Conclusions

On the basis of analysis and interpretation and discussion of the results presented above, one can conclude that the opinion of teachers towards the primary school textbooks in government schools of district Srinagar is generally average satisfied in relation to content, coverage and quality in terms of printing, durability, illustrations and language and highly dissatisfied with the coverage of the Textbooks and the quality of Textbooks. This may partly be responsible for the reason that textbooks used in government schools are not framed as full satisfaction of teachers. This perhaps may be attributed to all guidelines are not followed by textbook designers. Therefore following implications can be suggested: A critical review of Textbooks by parents, teachers and other stake holders must be encouraged, and their comments must be made available in the public domain for further discussion and feedback. DIETs under SSA scheme have funds for making innovations and doing research. The need of the hour is to utilize these funds and do more and more researches. Universities can be encouraged to conduct studies of Textbooks so that regular research output on School knowledge is available. Constructive suggestions and feedbacks from parents, teachers, students, DIET s, SIE s, and scholars help in making the Textbooks more comprehensive, relevant, visually appealing and useful for both teachers and students and content of the Textbooks should be in line with the latest curriculum document, reflecting the curriculum aims and expected learning

outcomes of students. And Educationists and subject experts who are assigned the responsibility of writing Textbooks should follow the guidelines strictly.

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