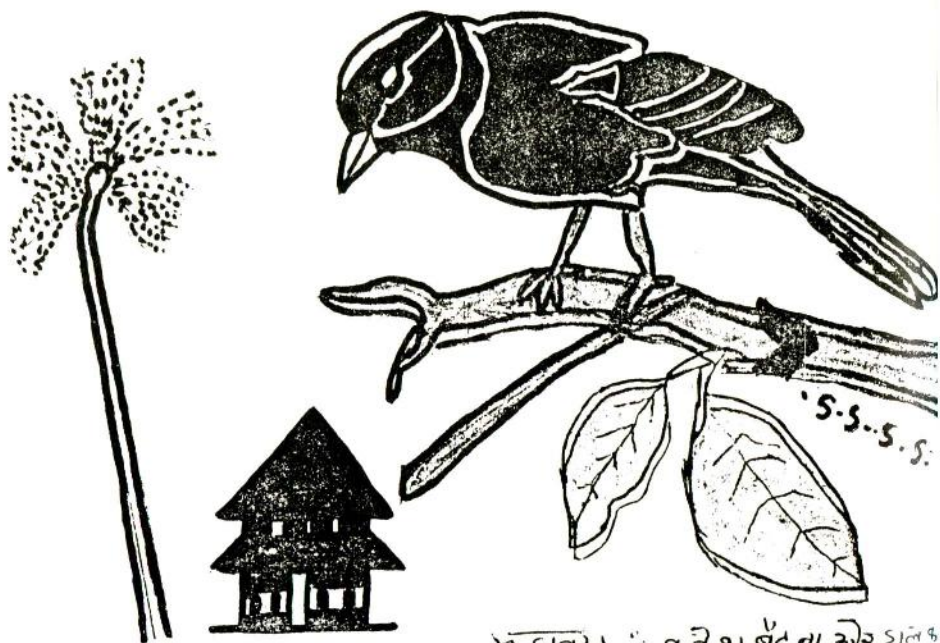


CONCLUSION



मुद्रावरा : कते वा बंद ना कोर डालेक
दृष्टी

फुल्ल्या लाल अलेवेरा उर्फ राजप्वेल
c/o ~~कनवरी~~ शा. उ. मां. विद्यालय
मेघनगर
जिला - झाबुझा (म.प्र.)

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CONCLUSION

In this chapter we shall briefly discuss some of the problems that Prashika faced in its project and provide a bird's-eye view of its achievements and failures. We shall also discuss some of the issues that have remained unresolved in Prashika. The group has returned to these debates again and again, every debate adding to its information base and conceptual clarity.

PROBLEMS

Any innovation in education faces a variety of problems involving children, teachers, parents, administrators and politicians, as well as a variety of intra-group conflicts. Prashika has been no exception. Parents have not always viewed the programme kindly because they feel that Prashika children do not learn as much as other children do. Attempts to involve

A PRASHIKA TEACHER REMARKS . . .

We get very little money to attend these training camps. Often we spend our own money. Eklavya members also contribute. How can you live in Rs 16/- per day?

teachers raise a variety of problems. It is not always easy to have them released from their routine duties in school, particularly when they are expected to play a variety of roles other than that of a teacher. They never get enough money to participate in the teacher-training camps.

Prashika did manage to involve teachers to a considerable extent in the early stages of its develop-

A PRASHIKA TEACHER SAYS . . .

In the beginning, we were consulted a lot. But when the materials for Classes III-V were produced, our participation was minimal.

ment. In the later stages, time became a very strong constraint. There was a pressure to keep up with the school calendar. Teachers also felt the pressure as the

A PRASHIKA MEMBER SAID . . .

We had more or less given up after Class II. But then a group of teachers said: We cannot teach the old books in Class III. You must continue. In fact, a teacher from Shahpur threatened to go on a hunger-strike if we discontinued our programme. We were emotionally blackmailed into Class III.

CONCLUSION

Prashika programme made increasing demands on them.

And yet enthusiasm and involvement of teachers is unquestionably one of the most important factors that sustains Prashika.

As has already been indicated in the preceding chapters, intra-group dynamics is at once Prashika's strength and weakness. The fact that a small group of people saw such a major innovative programme through producing materials and teacher training

A PRASHIKA MEMBER SAYS . . .

One of the major problems facing Prashika has been its limited manpower. The question is not just that people were not available. Every group acquires its own dynamics over a period of time and it is not always easy to allow a newcomer space that is due to him or her.

packages for a complete primary school curriculum indeed speaks of the enormous strength of the group. The fact that the group could not enlarge itself and that there is not always a clear consensus on some of the basic issues is perhaps suggestive of intra-group conflicts.

DEBATES

Though Prashika has been involved in primary education for over nine years and has produced curriculum, teaching materials and models for classroom teaching and teacher-training camps, certain issues have remained unresolved for the group. In most of these cases Prashika opted for eclectic, pragmatic and workable solutions. The debates, however, are still very much alive.

EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

It has not always been possible to define what constitutes a child's environment: her/his family, peer group, village, state, nation or the whole universe. What do we really mean when we say education should be environment based? The implicit understanding in Prashika appears to be that education of primary schoolchildren should as far as possible be related to their immediate environment. In a sense the child is motivated to go beyond her/his environment through its careful observation and analysis.

Where relating the teaching of different subjects such as language, maths and social sciences to the child's environment is concerned, Prashika has achieved limited success. On the other hand, if envi-

A PRASHIKA MEMBER SAYS . . .

The school is not a ground for revolution . . . overtly doctrinaire things are out . . . we do not want to create uncomfortable situations in the classroom. Regarding patriotism etc. we want to stay away from 'the child should be educated for the nation' philosophy. Education is for the child, period.

ronment rootedness is to be interpreted in terms of interaction with the children and teachers, and building a curriculum in terms of field trialling, Prashika may be said to have achieved a substantial success.

It is in the area of 'education leading to social change' that Prashika has been engaged in a series of inconclusive debates. Though most members of Prashika believe that the kind of education they are trying to provide might eventually contribute towards social change, they in general don't believe in active political intervention.

INFORMATION, ROTE LEARNING AND CLARITY

There is no doubt that Prashika wants to alter the existing curriculum which is biased in favour of information and rote learning. It does not deny the

important role information bases and rote learning might play in education but it feels it should take a very strong stand against these in order to counter the overwhelming importance the traditional curriculum and methodologies attach to them. Yet it is not very clear what amount of information base must precede conceptual clarity. Is it worthwhile practising algorithms without understanding them? Is it useful to memorize alphabets and tables? Some Prashika numbers and associates believe that conceptual clarity can wait while algorithms are mastered.

Another issue that Prashika has constantly been concerned with is the pressure of social and academic expectations on the children. Very often parents complain that early education in Prashika simply means fun and frolic and children do not learn anything. For example, it is complained that even after Class II they cannot count upto 100 or recite tables.

LANGUAGE AND MATHEMATICS

There has been considerable debate within Prashika whether common strategies underlie the learning of mathematics and language. Are there shared cognitive structures that are involved in their learning? Is it possible to use the same materials for teaching mathematics and language? If one were to go by the

Prashika materials, it would appear that in Classes I and II mathematics and language are often taught through the same materials. In subsequent classes one witnesses an increasing separation between the two disciplines.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES

The best way to give a picture of the achievements and failures of Prashika is to let the Prashika members speak themselves.

A PRASHIKA MEMBER SAYS . . .

As I look back, I think of our successes and failures. I think we succeeded in bringing about an attitudinal change among some teachers and making the act of learning a matter of joy for children. But I think we also failed on several counts: we never had a clear policy; books were often delayed and teacher training became increasingly mechanical. Manpower was always a problem. In the beginning, we had too many resource people and very few teachers. Vice versa in the later stages. We were really weak in implementing the programme. The complete Prashika philosophy, materials and methods were fully implemented only in a handful of schools. Elsewhere it was half-hearted.

A PRASHIKA MEMBER SAYS . . .

If you ask me about our successes, I would mention at least three. Some teachers, say, about ten out of sixty, have acquired the Prashika spirit and have converted their classes into a joyful experience. Second, about fifty per cent children have been liberated, that is, in the twenty-five schools Prashika adopted over fifty per cent children really want to come to school. Third, Prashika has succeeded in generating a debate about change in education.

If you ask me about the failures of Prashika, I would say that Prashika has failed to fully involve the teachers in the process of curriculum making. I'm sure a curriculum made by the teachers will be entirely different from the one made by Prashika. We should have accepted more inputs from the teachers. We often felt that nobody else was more aware of the limitations of the Prashika programme than the Prashika members themselves.

APPENDIX

The Prashika Family

As must be clear from the preceding chapters, a large number of people from different domains of activity contributed to the growth of Prashika. These include, among others, children, teachers, resource group persons, teacher-trainers, trainees, university and college teachers, academics, state and central government officials and a variety of institutions. It is difficult to list exactly what each component contributed except saying that the programme is the result of a symbiotic interaction between all the components. Though we run the risk of unintentionally leaving out some names, we feel the task of documentation will remain incomplete without listing the people who made it possible.

A. TRAINED RESOURCE GROUP TEACHERS

1. Ganga Gupta, Primary School, Pathai, Shahpur, Betul.
2. Laxminarayan Chaudhary, Primary School, Harda Khurd, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
3. Dinesh Shukla, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
4. Jiyalal Yadav, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
5. Kusum Yadav, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
6. Mangilal Devda, Primary School, Kadola Ubari, Harda, Hoshangabad.
7. Ramcharan Peepraj, Primary School, Raipur, Shahpur, Betul.

B. TEACHERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR TRAINING FROM CLASS I TO CLASS V

1. Suman Nagle, Primary School, Pathai, Shahpur, Betul.
2. Kanti Bhalavi, Primary School, Magardoh, Shahpur, Betul.
3. Ashok Rane, Primary School, Raipur, Shahpur, Betul.
4. Mukesh Malviya, Primary School, Pawarjhandra, Shahpur, Betul.
5. Saroj Chaturvedi, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda, Hoshangabad.
6. Narayan Rao Khare, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
7. Shankarlal Yadav, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
8. Nanhelal Malviya, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
9. Arjun Prasad Khatri, Primary School, Rehta Khurd, Harda, Hoshangabad.
10. Shyamlal Uike, Primary School, Devtalai, Harda, Hoshangabad.
11. Sushma Soni, Primary School, Harda Khurd, Harda, Hoshangabad.
12. Umakant Upase, Primary School, Kantawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
13. B. L. Dhurve, Primary School, Banabaheda, Shahpur, Betul.
14. Ashok Kavre, Primary School, Handipani, Shahpur, Betul.
15. Lalman Batke, Primary School, Handipani, Shahpur, Betul.
16. Shyam Singh Batke, Primary School, Chikhaldra-Buzurg, Shahpur, Betul.
17. A. Mankar, Primary School, Chikhaldra-Buzurg, Shahpur, Betul.
18. Ratan Singh Porte, Primary School, Kundi, Shahpur, Betul.
19. Ramashankar Gohe, Primary School, Deshawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
20. Radheshyam Chinchore, Primary School, Kadola Ubari, Harda, Hoshangabad.
21. Sushma Soni, Primary School, Harda Khurd, Harda, Hoshangabad.

C. TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN SOME TRAINING CAMPS

1. Narayan Shankar Sharma, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
2. Mishra, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
3. Suryavanshi, Primary School, Kadola Ubari, Harda, Hoshangabad.
4. Shashi Dashottar, Primary School, Baretha, Shahpur, Betul.
5. C. S. Uike, Primary School, Mokha, Shahpur, Betul.

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6. D. R. Kapse, Primary School, Mokha, Shahpur, Betul.
7. S. S. Darshyamkar, Primary School, Kantawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
8. M. N. Bamankar, Primary School, Pawarjhanda, Shahpur, Betul.
9. Bholanath Sarkar, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
10. P. K. Geed, Primary School, Banabaheda, Shahpur, Betul.
11. T. L. Nagle, Primary School, Sonadeh, Shahpur, Betul.
12. Shamsheer Singh Sareaam, Primary School, Kundi, Shahpur, Betul.
13. Devendranath Yogi, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda, Hoshangabad.
14. Sunita Doni, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda, Hoshangabad.
15. Sheila Shukla, Primary School, Harda Khurd, Harda, Hoshangabad.
16. Daghdulal Mhatre, Primary School, Devtalai, Harda, Hoshangabad.
17. Vishnu Prasad Gaur, Primary School, Samardha, Harda, Hoshangabad.
18. Madhuri Dube, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
19. Revaram Kuresia, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
20. Ashok Joshi, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
21. Radheshyam Shandilya, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
22. Kamal Chand Gahlot, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
23. Mangilal Joshi, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
24. Ramchandra Harne, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
25. K. C. Sharma, Primary School, Kadola Ubari, Harda, Hoshangabad.
26. Uma Vajpeyi, Primary School, Pathai, Shahpur, Betul.
27. T. P. Malviya, Primary School, Raipur, Shahpur, Betul.
28. Shalikhram Soni, Primary School, Patanapura, Shahpur, Betul.
29. Mahesh Tiwari, Primary School, Nishana, Shahpur, Betul.
30. Rajendra Rathore, Primary School, Nishana, Shahpur, Betul.
31. Rajendra Pandavgre, Primary School, Baretha, Shahpur, Betul.
32. P. K. Rudrajwar, Primary School, Sonadeh, Shahpur, Betul.
33. Brijesh Gupta, Primary School, Kundi, Shahpur, Betul.
34. Santosh Verma, Primary School, Deshawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
35. Narmada Prasad Joshi, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda, Hoshangabad.
36. Ramchandra Chaube, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda,

Hoshangabad.

37. Neekhar, Primary School, Samardha, Harda, Hoshangabad.
38. Manoj Shukla, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
39. Prem Dhurve, Primary School, Atarsama, Harda, Hoshangabad

D. TEACHERS WHO CAME FOR ONE OR TWO TRAININGS ONLY

1. Sonare, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
2. Shivnarayan Malviya, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
3. Ganesh Dhurve, Primary School, Pahawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
4. Munshilal Thakur, Primary School, Raipur, Shahpur, Betul.
5. Sagna Mavase, Primary School, Patanapura, Shahpur, Betul.
6. Malviya, Primary School, Patanapura, Shahpur, Betul.
7. R. S. Kavde, Primary School, Patanapura, Shahpur, Betul.
8. Chain Singh Thakur, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
9. Narendra Dev Shukla, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
10. Kesari Singh Thakur, Primary School, Kulharda, Harda, Hoshangabad.
11. Mumtaz Khan, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
12. Mishra, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
13. Tiwari, Primary School, File Ward, Harda, Hoshangabad.
14. Bishnoi, Primary School, Kadola Ubari, Harda, Hoshangabad.
15. Hari Prasad Uike, Primary School, Mokha, Shahpur, Betul.
16. Trilok Chand Badkul, Primary School, Kantawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
17. Soni, Primary School, Pawarjhandra, Shahpur, Betul.
18. Shankarlal Malviya, Primary School, Magardoh, Shahpur, Betul.
19. Om Prakash Sarothe, Primary School, Magardoh, Shahpur, Betul.
20. Sammal Singh Kavde, Primary School, Magardoh, Shahpur, Betul.
21. Gupta, Primary School, Kundi, Shahpur, Betul.
22. Parsoi, Primary School, Deshawadi, Shahpur, Betul.
23. Khalil, Primary School, Shukrawara, Harda, Hoshangabad.
24. Prahlad Bishnoi, Primary School, Samardha, Harda, Hoshangabad.

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92. Madhavi Aggarwal, Chandigarh.
93. Neelu Chauhan, Itarsi.

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, ETC.**

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2. Jaya Vivek, Eklavya, Bhopal.
3. Vivek, Madhyam, Bhopal.
4. Rajendra Yadav, Itarsi.

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7. Rajesh Khare, Hoshangabad.
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2. Tribal Boys' Hostel, Hoshangabad.
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1. State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT).
2. Government School Education Department.
3. Directorate of Public Instruction.
4. The Tribal Welfare Department.
5. The M.P. Textbook Corporation.

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Prashika is easily one of the most exciting adventures in children's education in our times. It brought together a set of remarkable individuals whose interests and background varied, and some of whom would have had nothing to do with primary education had it not been for the opportunity that *Prashika* gave them. The major advantage this group had was that its members were not ridden by the preconceptions and inhibitions inevitably imparted by our conservative teacher training. The ideas they pursued are recognized the world over as the basic ingredients of progressive pedagogy, such as acceptance of individual uniqueness, small-group activities, and relevance of children's out-of-school experiences in classroom work. Many Indian institutions and educationists talk about such ideas these days; in *Prashika*, these ideas have actually been put into action—that's all!

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