

Notes from the Editor

This first issue for 2017 presents two articles on early grade reading and two on concepts and status of education quality with special reference to Indian education.

Researchers from the Read Project of Save the Children -- **Jane Leer, Liana Gertsch, Shahana Parvin Lata, and Akter Hossain** -- report on baseline assessment of early grade reading skill in the Khagrachari district in Chittagong Hill Tracts, which is the home of ethnic minorities, whose home languages are not Bangla. Quantitative and qualitative data reveal that language, socioeconomic status, and the home literacy environment -- especially access to reading materials at home -- are the main drivers of learning disparities. Household socioeconomic status is a significant predictor of word recognition and sentence construction skills, as well as the likelihood of being a reader. These challenges are compounded by the dearth of reading materials in indigenous languages, and low levels of parental support for schooling among indigenous families, who have come to expect little from an education system that is not inclusive of their language and culture.

Jurana Aziz writes on an action research on intervention through volunteer tutors for struggling readers of English at the early level in Bangladesh. The proposition of the action research is that volunteer tutor support to assist the struggling learners, who are slow in reading compared to other students in a class, can help overcome their challenge.

Priyanka Bhau and Jasbir Singh write about some challenges in Indian Basic Education. The authors contend that the quality of education services and the provisions that promote the skills and competencies relevant to life and livelihood of learners must be given attention to bring about the necessary changes in the Indian education system. This paper throws light, based on data from the 71st National Sample Survey, on various challenges faced by the Indian education system.

Manzoor Ahmed refers to the recurrent theme of elusiveness of education quality, both in terms of the concept and the practices to realise it in education systems. J.P. Naik's 'elusive triangle' is recalled and the slow advance in this respect in over four decades is discussed. The article concludes by posing the question whether, Target 7 of the single overarching education goal for SDG4, particularly focusing on the purposes of education, does not add to the elusiveness of the quality objectives of education and complexities of realising them.