

## EDITORIAL

*The Students' Journal of Education and Development (SJED)* is a space to bring forth the voice of the student community of Azim Premji University about issues of public importance and in-terest. It is a space to collate the wealth of academic writing from among the students and share learning with the wider community. This sixth edition of the SJED takes this spirit of engage-ment forward and brings to you a collection of insightful research articles, perspective-building pieces, essays, and notes.

Our first article in this edition is by **Ms. Jayna Jagani**. It is a research study that looks at the perspectives of early childhood education teachers on “autonomy” for children during play-activities and finds that classroom learning and pre-decided objectives continue to take prece-dence over children’s autonomy for various reasons.

The second article is by **Ms. Lipika Kanekal**. It is a research study on “Homeschooling in the Indian context”. Through qualitative evidence, the essay comprehensively looks into the curricula used by families where children are home-schooled and also looks into the impact of RTE on this emerging schooling experience.

Our third article is based on the East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW), often considered as the “kid-neys” of Kolkata. They constitute an important socio-ecological system providing a range of val-uable ecosystem services. However, the system continues to be threatened by the rapid urban sprawl and constant pressure from real estate. As EKW grapples with the challenges of urbaniza-tion, the study, done by **Ms. Madhureema Auddy**, uncovers the multifaceted impact of urbani-zation on the wetlands and thus on people’s lives. The essay captures narratives of change in the EKW and how society, in turn, responds to such transformations.

Fourth, we have **Ms. Nupur Rastogi**’s study which considers perspectives of different stake-holders to study community engagement in schools in a village in Jharkhand. She looks at the perceptions of the community members on their own engagement with the school and closely analyses the factors involved in this engagement.

The fifth article studies the relationships between a science museum (Khoj Museum) and science curricula taught in two upper primary

schools in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. **Mr. Samrudh Dixit** enquires into how museums inculcate conceptual understanding in students and improve their retention of concepts.

The sixth article is by an alumnus, **Mr. Brihas Tiwari**. The essay asks a pertinent question: “Can low-fee private schools be an alternative to government schools?” The answer to this, the author says, is multi-layered and has to do with the social, economic, and political situation in the country. He looks at the perceptions of society, quality of education, and the responsibilities of the government in this respect and also proposes some interventions to turn the situation around.

In the seventh article, **Mr. Nityanand Rai** presents the historical evolution of the post-development theory from development theory. He writes about the ideas of Gandhi and Marx and puts forth the similarities and dissimilarities of their world views. He also goes on to show how Ivan Illich, one of the pioneers of the post-development theory, draws his ideas from Marx and Gandhi.

Next, in the eighth essay, **Ms. Sariya Ali** looks at female genital mutilation (FGM) and female sexuality. The paper notes that FGM is practiced in a number of communities across the world. The paper attempts to understand the practice by exploring the ideological justifications for and the acceptance of this practice. The essay details a number of interventions to tackle FGM under-taken by organizations along with the members of the community.

The last article in this edition is by **Ms. Rituja Mishra**. She reviews a book written by Dr. Nitya Ghotge named *Livestock and Livelihood*. She presents key points from the book highlighting how livestock is an important aspect of rural livelihood across the Indian subcontinent. She also critically analyzes various gaps in modern veterinary science and examines the status of traditional wisdom of livestock rearers.

As is evident, the above-mentioned papers cover a wide range in terms of themes. This issue of SJED has been made possible by the contributions of current students of Azim Premji University, members of its alumni body, the journal’s Advisory Board, the Editorial Collective, and the Coordination and Advocacy teams.

*The Project Coordination and Advocacy Team, Students’ Journal of Education and Development.*