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# THE IMPORTANCE OF DISASTOR MANAGMENT EDUCATION - A STUDY WITH REFRENCES OF CBSE AND STATE'S EDUCATION BOARD'S



#### Sangeeta Rachiyata

# INTRODUCTION: SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA

The progressive review of all seven books on "All India Educational Survey/ School Education Surveys" (done by NCERT on behalf of Department of School Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India) and curriculum archives reveals that school education in India has undergone a number of significant changes over the decades in terms of:

(i)Total number of schools, students and teachers population at pre-primary, primary (for instance, primary schools grew three-fold between the period of 150-51 and 2001-02), upper primary (schools have increased 16 times during this period), secondary,

#### **ABSTRACT**

EDUCATION IS a concurrent responsibility of both the Union and state government as stipulated in the 42nd Amendment of the Indian Constitution in 1976. School education, as a formal socialization process however, is a joint responsibility of the Central and state government. In other words, a of the state, which decides the broad aims of schooling through educational policies, keeping in focus the nation goals. Hence, school education is more formal, structured and rigid in terms of rules and regulations pertaining to criteria of admission, type of curriculum, method of assessment, evaluation and promotion, record keeping, teachers training, etc, as compared to the non-formal system of education. Thus, school is a social institution where consciously designed learning experiences are provided with the objective of achieving social aims at large, over a period of time. Nevertheless, the relationship between any school and its immediate community can be considered only as a part of larger general relationship between education and society.

KEYWORDS: Sustained economic growth, Health care reforms, chronic diseases.

#### **SHORT PROFILE**

Sangeeta Rachiyata is working as a Lecturer in Foods and Nutrition at Department of Home Science in Choudhary B.R.G. Government Girls P.G. College Sri Ganganagar (Raj.)

and higher secondary levels (Table 1); (ii)Types of formal schools (such as, anganwadis, balwadis, EC centres, nursery schools, etc. at preprimary level: alternative schools and alternative innovative education centres, Sanskrit pathshalas, Maktabs and Madrasa as Oriental schools: Ashram schools; Special schools at all levels for different categories of children with disabilities; and commonly found schools at all levels of education); (iii)Application and implication of curricular and cocurricular subjects and activities into life skills education as decided by different school boards such as State Boards, CBSE, ICSE, IGCSE, Madrasa Boards, etc:

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Lecturer in Foods and Nutrition, Dept. of Home Science, Choudhary B.R.G. Govt. Girls P.G. College Sri Ganganagar (Raj.)

(iv)Pedagogy to impart the curriculum;

(v)Last but not the least the comprehensive evaluation methodology of school performance.

# Disaster Management in School Education : The Context

Amidst all these changes, the most discussed topic of national importance is planning for a more contextual, practical, and application oriented curriculum for students enrolled in different types of schools and different levels of schooling. This curriculum not only aims to provide age-appropriate subject specific knowledge, but also aspires to promote life skill education to make schools more relevant to students and their immediate communities along with installing proactive and positive attitudes towards life and people. In this most recently designed curriculum, building competencies in different regular subjects (this may or may not have relevance for all students in future, e.g. in case of a child who drops out or a child goes for higher education in subjects other than school subjects) is combined with life skills education focusing on health, safety and wellbeing, knowledge, skills and practices.

## The Genesis and Rationale for DM Education in Schools

Looking at the later part of the NCF-05 recommendations objectively, the curriculum should have a life long relevance not only for the child but also for the school and the larger community. Although as part of life skills, education health, safety and well-being are intricately interdependent and education health, safety and well-being are intricately interdependent and interrelated with each other. The significance of safety education has been realised very late towards the end of the last decade of the 20th Century, when school community as a whole was affected terribly by a series of devastating disasters following natural and manmade hazards happened in India. The need and relevance of this was re-emphasised

and re-established after the Disaster Management Act-2005 and subsequently by Tenth and Eleventh Five-Year Plans. Thus, the impetus for disaster safety education for school community came from a series of past disasters and subsequent to these disasters it was agreed upon by the decision-makers that disaster management education is more than education, it is a tool for creating a culture of preparedness and mitigation.

- •It is about safe existence of human beings and their survival skills. It adds values to human consciousness and it is an exercise in synergy development of a community for its own existence.
- •Making disaster risk reduction as part of national primary and secondary curricula would foster better awareness and understanding of the immediate environment in which the children and their families live and work. The aim of disaster safety education is to catch the future citizen young to have multiplier effect in learning and safe community development.
- Targeting young minds would ultimately strengthen the disaster prevention and mitigation measures; hence result in more effective disaster risk reduction in terms of disaster associated cost, loss, damage, environmental degradation and vulnerability.
- •Moreover, children are a dynamic and powerful force of social change and can contribute in a unique and technology development. Thus, in the light of changing social need and aspirations, disaster safety education emerged as a common consensus to be imparted through school curriculum. Ultimately, this contributes to a country's progress towards the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs).

#### Global experiences

Teaching disaster related subjects are mandated by law in countries such as Mexico, Romania, New Zealand and Sri Lanka. While

Brazil and Venezuela report significant primary and secondary teaching at municipal or state level. Turkey report significant training to school children. Cuba has incorporated disaster risk awareness into different non-curricular school programmes. Lot of educational activities, education modules and massive awareness trainings were carried out in Kazakhstan. Similarly Afghanistan, Madagascar, Iran, El Salvador, Philippines, Tajikistan and few other countries have taken massive steps in disaster risk awareness, training, and non-formal education for the children community. Under the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC) on Disaster Management, the Guidelines 6.1 specify on integrating disaster risk reduction into school curriculum as a part of mainstreaming DRR into education. About 28 countries have agreed to mainstream DRR into formal school curriculum. Many countries such as Maldives, Indonesia, Nepal, Bhutan, Cambodia, etc in South East Asia with the help of UNDP have started working on the integration of disaster risk reduction into the formal school education curricula.

#### Indian Experiences: Role of CBSE

The pioneering work of integrating disaster management/safety education in subject specific school curriculum was done by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSC) following the devastation that happened to the schools and school community during the Gujarat Earthquake in 2001. CBSE has 10011 schools as on 31st March 2009 including 141 schools outside India and more than 10 lakh students are enrolled in these schools. In their endeavour to disaster safety education, CBSE incorporated disaster management as a front line curriculum sub-subject within geography of standard VIII (2003-04), IX (2004-05), and X (2005-06), and as components of Sociology and Geography at standard XI. This significant movement was continued from 2002-2007 under the Government of India and UNDP Disaster Risk Management Project. Core groups of writers

were formed for the text development. The content development process was primarily done through a consultative mode, which included development of a flow chart, pedagory and training module. The coverage of contents spanned from hazards to the role of different stakeholders and attempted to arouse cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning. The objective of the curriculum was to facilitate current knowledge in this field and to strengthen community social networks. Mere data base and documentary approach were avoided. The pedagogy focused more on detailing real time experiences/ stories/ anecdotes, participative learning, developing empathy and social skills, and extending learning to the immediate community. While the curriculum at standard VIII focused more on detailing preparedness measures (light in contend and high on awareness, sensitivity and motivation), standard IX emphasized on mitigation measures, and standard X highlighted roles of different stakeholders and role of science and technology. Similarly, at standard XI level, the sociology curriculum outlined the gender, child rights, and community oriented disaster management whereas the Geography component brought out core concepts of various geo-physical hazards. The curriculum was planned in a way to facilitate learning across boundaries of schools with an intention to knowledge dissemination to the larger community. The evaluation of the allotted marks (8 marks) for this part of the curriculum is generally done through quizzing, visual recall, short-written response, mock exercises, project work, and team evaluation. Since schools form a crucial link in community empowerment and children are harbingers of important messages to the community, community visits were carried out as a part of co-curricular activities or as a part of the project work done by students. In order to check the relevance and appropriateness of the DRM curriculum CBSE also carried out an impact

assessment survey. The survey process was

carried out through CBSE regional offices in about 8000 schools across the country. The major findings/lessons learned suggested to make the curriculum more illustrative and, pictorial and to make the evaluation more in terms of thought provoking project report mode. On the basis of these findings, the revision of curriculum has been done recently at all levels. Moreover, to ensure quality curriculum transaction CBSE also conducted extensive training programmes on disaster risk management for teachers working in CBSE schools in a phased manner across all states. About 40 training programmes were conducted for teachers, principals and school staff under this component.

# Present Status of Disaster Management/Safety Education in States

Following this historical step of CBSE in disaster safety education and the recommendation of Ministry of Home Affairs, 13 education boards also integrated disaster education as a part of formal school education curriculum at various levels, however mostly at secondary and higher secondary levels. Assam, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Orissa, Delhi, Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Rajasthan, Utter Pradesh, West Bengal are the frontline states to integrate disaster education into formal school board curriculum and mostly as a part of Social Sciences/Geography. Some boards have directly introduced the CBSE book, and some other prescribed their own text.

•Contents: While the focus of the topics/contents included in the curriculum is primarily on natural hazards (except Gujarat and very few others), the contents are very limited in their scope, therefore should be expanded keeping all emerging issues in disaster management in mind.
•Pedagogy: The contents mainly focus on the knowledge part of it as the method of delivering the contents is teaching or project completion in

almost all states. Skill based learning on disaster management, e.g. life skill education, psychosocial care/peer counseling, preparing school disaster plan, evacuation drills, etc. are yet be included in the syllabi. Use of teaching-learning aids/audio-visual aids, such as documentary film, power point presentation, science exhibition, posters, pamphlets, etc are generally not used for imparting a few chapters on disaster management to students at secondary and higher secondary level.

- •Method of Evaluation: The predominant evaluation method followed is through project report or questions during the examination (generally 6-10 marks are allotted). There are also variations across boards in this regard. Some boards follow either NCERT or CBSE books on Disaster Management without any contextualization while some other boards have published/on the verge of publication of contextual text books on the subject.
- •Teacher training/sensitization: In addition to the curriculum, states considered teacher training/sensitization programmes as the key to success and some of the prominent states which took the leadership in this regard are: Kerala, Delhi, West Bengal, Maharashtra, North-East region (assam), Gujarat, and Himachal Pradesh. In this context resource books and training modules were developed by NCERT. In addition to this, preparation of school DM Plans, safety and evacuation drills in schools, and other forms of co-curricular activities on various disaster management themes were also formally introduced in many schools mainly in metro cities.

The action taken up by different states and Centre on imparting disaster safety education in schools are although encouraging, yet a lot of gaps remain within the educational system itself. The understanding of the real challenges for planning human resource development on DM education for the entire school community in India could help us in visualising contextual solutions for actual success.

Table 2: STATUS OF DM EDUCATION IN STATE SCHOOL EDUCATION BOARDS

S1.	School Education Boards	Class where	Subject where integrated
No.		integrated	
1.	Bihar	IX & X	Social Science/Geography
2.	Gujarat	VIII & X	Social Science/Geography
3.	Rajasthan	X	Social Science/Geography
4.	Tamil Nadu	VIII	Social Science/Geography
5.	Andhra Pradesh	XI	Social Science/Geography
6.	Himachal Pradesh	IX & X	Social Science/Geography
7.	Madhya Pradesh	IX & X	Environmental Education & DM
8.	Punjab	XI	Geography & Geology
9.	West Bangal	IX	Social Science/Geography
10.	Jharkhand	XI	Geography
11.	Meghalaya	IX & X	Social Sciences (20 marks & other activities)
			Own books
	Orissa (Was an optional		
	paper, withdrawn and		
12.	then decided to introduce	VIII, IX, X	Social Science Text books are being published
	in the formal curriculum		
	from 2011-12 session		
13.	CBSE	VIII, IX, X, XI	Social Science / Geography / Sociology
14.	ICSE	VIII & X	Social Science/Geography

•The education pattern is diverse across the country. For example, the classes included in various stages of schooling such as primary (1-4 vs. 1-5 standard) upper primary (5-7/6-7/6-8 standard), and secondary (8-10/9-10 standard) higher secondary are different in different sates. Again oriental schools and special schools follow different curriculum. Hence, providing a model curriculum on disaster management for a particular stage of schooling could be a challenge. In addition to that, most of the 14 states that have included disaster management as a part of their syllabi have included this at the secondary stage of schooling. Therefore, devising a curriculum for primary school children with a text book and with

appropriate pedagogy could pose another challenge to the educationists.

- Different categories of schools follow different school boards within the same state. Ensuring uniformity in the learning contents (in terms of knowledge and skills), pedagogy of learning transaction, availability of teaching-learning aids, and evaluation of learning across different boards could be a real challenge.
- Different categories of schools address different levels of cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning for specific target population at specific schooling stage. For example, special schools for different categories of children with disabilities cover learning

contents appropriate to their developmental age and pedagogy is highly dependent on the type and degree of disability. Thus, enven if the schools follow a specific board where disaster safety education is already included at a particular board where disaster safety education is already included at a particular learning stage, ensuring pedagogy for transaction of contents and evaluation methods could be very challenging for these schools.

- •Discrepancy in the textual contents of the curriculums supplied by various school education boards is a real issue. The source of date base used by various writers to provide factual information has to be ensured. There should be no difference in disaster statistics/vulnerability profile/factual scientific information about hazards in textbooks on disaster management across state educational boards. Quality assurance in text books in this field across state boards is a big challenge.
- •Teacher training on disaster safety education is done on ad hoc basis and without any published teacher training module at national or state level. The content and methods of training vary across boards and states. As the subject is yet to be placed in the teacher training curriculum at NTT, CT, B.Ed and M.Ed. level, the quality of training and the knowledge level of teachers in the subject could pose a greater threat towards disaster safety education. Building the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers serving in the entire school education spectrum is highly essential to plan human resource development for school education sector.
- •There is no clear guidance to schools regarding the inclusion of disaster safety education through co-curricular activities, which play a vital role in capacity building of students at any stage of schooling. As preparedness in extremely important for school students and this is instilled in students more through co-curricular activities as compared to the curricular activities, these activities must take place in every school in India, keeping the local hazards in view. The skills of fire

activities must receive priority in schools more preferably following a stuctured but flexible and time bound schedule of activities. There are various other methods of co-curricular and awareness activities to be carried out in schools which could be described in the chapter on awareness.

 Satellite based disaster management education (primarily knowledge based) for school children and teachers is done through EDUSAT programmes by Vigyan Prasar as well as NCERT, however, not in a regular mode. This could be an important medium for providing reliable and quality disaster management knowledge and skill education throughout India at the same time and to a particular target audience. since, these sessions are generally done in an interactive mode in the And this would also hone the knowledge of students and may lead to better performance in this subject, Hence, coordinating with all stakeholders active in this area of EDUSAT. identifying lead schools in every district and develop a more structured and regular time bound schedule of programmes could be real hope.

#### **SUMMARY**

A trail of major initiatives undertaken by different state governments and nongovernment organisations in last few years marked significant changes in propagating disaster management/safety education in the country. This helped not in front line school curriculum but also in spreading the awareness to a larger population across states. Notwith standing the initiatives taken in the past, the progress of disaster management/safety education placed in the school curriculum by different education boards, since the first step taken by CBSE (started working from 2002 and included in curriculum with text books in 2003), is slow, ad hoc, and not very encouraging in terms of contextual text books. Overcoming the gaps and challenges mentioned earlier would need more co-coordinated and sustained

efforts from the Central and state governments and other key role players working in school education and disaster management.

Considering the huge target population (students and teachers/staff), which is more than one-third of India's population. It is important to mention here that this is perhaps the most valuable human resource the country has right now. And as disaster management/safety education is more about learning to exist safety and more effectively, and prevailing a culture of educated preparedness not only in the schools but also i the entire society, it has to be imparted through contextual hazard and DM knowledge, essential life skills for self and others, and new attitudes that shape the culture of preparedness in the entire society. This needs to be achieved by integrating disaster management into curricular and co-curricular activities equally. Otherwise only the knowledge part would be covered, which is again less meaningful and relevant without appropriate and adequate skills and attitudes.

# Suggestions for Human Resource Planning in DM for the School Education Sector

The following are few suggestions that could be considered for HR planning in DM for this population. The Suggestions are mainly meant to provide a coordinated and effective way to ensure equal and uniform progress in integrating disaster safety education into curricular and co-curricular activities of all schools across state education boards. In addition to that the quality of education through the curricular and co-curricular contents/data/activities would also be ensured. Moreover, the method of integration of disaster safety education and method of content delivery would follow a uniform pattern through different schemes of Central and state governments.

Following the Constitutional mandate to universalise elementary education, and success of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), MHRD launched few major initiatives in 2008-09 to move towards the universalisation of secondary education. Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan is the

scheme which is envisaged to make secondary education of good quality available, accessible and affordable to all young persons in the age group of 15-16, to achieve the vision; the broad interventions of the interest of this chapter include creating (infrastructure, creating model schools, strengthening of schools with good infrastructure, creating model schools, strengthening of existing infrastructure (such as library, laboratory, computer room, disabled friendly provisions, electricity, telephone and internet), recruitment and ICT teaching aids. The scheme of ICT @ schools of 2004 and capacity building of State Institutes of Educational Technology by MHRD are of special interest as far as disaster management education and awareness of school children are concerned.

While planning of human resource development in disaster management for school community, the biggest consideration should be the strength of the target population which is more than 400,000,000 (Table 3). The entire gamut of action plans and activities should be a progressively continuous process. The following essential activities if taken up at different phases could make things easier to implement.

# Phase-wise proposed activities 0-3 years:

1. Constitution of one committee at national level and one in each state by taking curriculum developers, disaster management professionals, teachers, educationists, etc to review:

a.The present status of DM education in curriculum across state education boards.

b.the quality and reliable data (one data source should be followed by all) contained in existing text books on DM across state education boards and.

c.The contextual hazard reference in the text content keeping state/UT hazard profile in view.

2.Development of model state specific text

book content outlines for a particular stage of schooling, more preferably, as many states are already comfortable doing it, at the secondary stage at class VIII, IX, X, XI and XII. The syllabus at class XI and XII may consider touching the advantages of the subject of disaster management as an option for a career at the later stage. The contents for a particular class could be placed as appropriate topics across subjects, such as Social Studies, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, and General Science. For example, the economic impacts of disasters on economy, ratio of cost of structural and non-structural mitigation measures and the toatl cost, economic benefit of effective response, relief of effective response, relief and recovery, micro-insurance, etc could be placed as one chapter in Economics at class XI and XII. Similarly, relevant chapters could be planned to be integrated into other subjects such as gender issues and other socially disadvantaged groups in sociology and disaster psycho-social trauma and care in psychology at class XI and XII. This would have two key advantages:

a.The Knowledge would not be limited to examoriented preparation for 6 or 8 or 10 marks. Subject continuity would also be there if a student has chosen any one or two subjects in humanities and Science stream along any one or two subjects in Humanities and Science stream along with Social Science.

b.It will have contextual relevance for the subject so that the trend of capacity building would continue after higher secondary also. Higher education and career options channels may make the students to take real interest.

c.Disaster management as a multi-dimensional and multi-discipline subject would be more justified if done in this way rather than limiting the subject to Geography/Social Studies or Sociology only.

3.Writing of text book contents, peer review and validation of contents. Compact case studies of past disaster, anecdotes, success and failure stories, etc. should get preference while

describing the texts.

4. Development of an outline of a mandatory, structured but flexible schedule of co-curricular activities to all schools at secondary levels.

#### 0-5 Years

1.Content development for curricular and cocurricular activities for the upper primary (Class 6-7) and primary level (perhaps preferably for class 4 & 5) students. Pedagogy of content delivery for the students at primary and upper primary level should be finalised, which has to be followed uniformly by all states. More focus should be on life skills and preparedness measures through co-curricular activities.

#### 0-8 Years

1.Integration of disaster management as a compulsory paper at all levels of teacher training courses.

2.Development of large scale audio visual aids such as documentary pictures, illustrative power point presentations, teaching aids, etc., and supplying these to all schools. While developing these chronological and mental age, and psycho-motor competency development of children should be kept in mind.

3.Providing other necessary help (such as providing experts for developing school DM plans, enabling schools to access satellite based programmes, etc.) to states to implement it successfully.

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Sangeeta Rachiyata Lecturer in Foods and Nutrition, Dept. of Home Science, Choudhary B.R.G. Govt. Girls P.G. College Sri Ganganagar (Raj.)

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