



QUALITY EDUCATION

- By Nancy Baker

Quality Education has many descriptors and educationists often talk about what is being taught, who is teaching, and what support services are given. One of the factors that are included in what makes a "quality school" is the learning environment. The learning environment can include how appealing the classroom is, how attentive the teacher is to the individual needs of students, and what the "climate" or tone is as you walk onto the campus itself. Friday, I had a meeting at the Shree Krishna Secondary School at Nagarkot in the Bhaktapur District. I have not looked at their "Flash Report" scores, but walking onto the campus it is evident that there must be quality educational experiences happening there. The environmental evidence:

- As soon as the bell rang, students and teachers were in classrooms. There were no strays hanging around the campus.
- The grounds were perfectly manicured.
- There were no papers or garbage on the grounds.
- The building, which was old, was well maintained, showing care.
- The walkways and stairs were clean and swept.
- Storage items were tucked away under stairs, well away from any danger to students. Classrooms were neat, orderly, and clean, ready for students.

The Head Teacher, teachers, and students deserve praise for the way they have kept their school. It shows good leadership and a quality factor in education. I am sure if I was able to watch teachers in their instructional time I would see quality also... Hooray to the staff, students, and leadership for a job, a quality job well done

EDUCATIONAL TERMS:

- 1. Climate:** how it feels in the school; is it friendly, do people work well together
- 2. Head Teacher:** the leader or administrator of the school. The person responsible to the District Office and often has a special certificate or degree.
- 3. Environment:** the surroundings including classrooms, playground, walkways, bathrooms, teachers' room, all buildings.
- 4. Instructional Time:** the time students enter the school until they leave; the moment they enter a classroom until they leave for another classroom

EJG MEMBER'S HELP NEEDED:

1. Small Digital Cameras

Sudarshan Ghimire, is doing a Photo Workshop for Nancy Baker and Geraldine Clarke on a special Photo-Journalist Workshop for Teen Girls in which they are recording in photos and print the educational history of their mothers and grandmothers. The cameras will be used to teach them to take good quality pictures at the workshop and then of their family. The girls are 14-16 years of age and will be supervised with the cameras. NEED TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CONTACT NANCY.

2. A Journalist to teach interviewing skills

Deepraj Sayhal would like to have assistance with a 3-6 hour workshop in teaching young women 14-16 years of age interviewing skills in English and transferring information into a story. Nancy will help. NEED TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CONTACT NANCY

DON'T BE SHY ABOUT ASKING SOMEONE TO JOIN EJG AS A NEW MEMBER....young, old, women, traditional, politically correct or incorrect, men, non-traditional. You name it; we claim it!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

....The questions you have raised are very important such as your questions about teachers, translators and the challenges a student may face in a class taught in a local language when the class is multilingual. I do agree with your arguments. I think your experience will be very useful for policy makers to know. However, sometimes, I found in your article that your arguments do link the real picture of the rural schools and community and research findings that have been published. Without quoting the sources of the claim you have made, your argument would not be less powerful, I am sure you agree with me, don't you? For example, you have said Students going to school in Nepal don't necessarily begin with a good language base.

Most importantly, you seem to have missed the information that new provision of teaching in mother tongue is not mandatory; rather it is the community's choice, where most of the children do not speak Nepali as a mother tongue. If you go to the villages of Terai where the children's first



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language is Bhojpuri and similar, other children in a hill district may be Tamang. (ed.) Purna Shrestha, VSO Education Program Manager

Editor's Note: Mr. Shrestha also noted that Professor Dr. Awashi who specializes in "Multilingualism" has researched and written many articles on this topic which I have asked Purna to share with me and I will make available to you. I know that our own Dr. Bidhya Nath Koirala has written or compiled a dictionary of several languages (do I get a cut on the profits now Dr. K? Just kidding!)

I do not claim to be a linguistics expert. I can only share 25 years of experience as an administrator in a district where 52% of our students spoke another language other than English. Our budget was encrusted with double the problems with teaching materials in two languages, quality teachers who could teach both Spanish and English, support personnel such as counselors and psychologists who spoke two languages, test materials in two languages, etc. etc.

Our test scores started dropping and all of this can be documented! California went from an exciting state with innovative programs and high test scores in the 60's and 70's to one which is known as one struggling to have quality education in its schools. It has good schools and good teachers, but it is no longer the bright star in the galaxy of education. I just want Nepal to think about what can happen and has in other countries.

Thank you for the "heads up". It is good to learn other person's views.

Send comments, suggestions for us:

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