

## **An alternative to the classroom: A new methodology**

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UNESCO declared on the eve of the 44<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education that the "failure of education" is the cause of resurgence of violence. Similarly, failure of the school has been reported and low achievement is one aspect of this failure.

A new methodology, the Cultural Clinic (CC) and the Wisdom Kit based on the theory of "Education of the Emotions" was developed using a purposive sample of 69 principals and 71 sectional heads in an education division to remedy the errors in the education system. The intervention programmes developed were also pre-tested in three villages.

It was revealed through the present action research that to remove the causes of low achievement of children in the classroom and at examinations, CC developed by the research is very helpful. Role Model Character which developed through the action research was that of the wise person with five attributes: Spirituality (60%), Aesthetic Sense (14%), Versatility (14%), Secular - Vocational Knowledge (6%) and Good Health Habits (6%).

The Wisdom Kit contains the basic materials required for character building, including reading for versatility, developing basic information skills, understanding basic mathematical concepts, competency in English and identifying and promoting latent strengths (nucleus/nuclear element in the character) as early as possible. It is almost an alternative (especially to the primary classroom) which gives clinical attention to each child - as the name indicates - which can never be achieved through "mass education". CC also serves as an aid to the family for character development of children to endow the "cultural heritage" which every child is entitled to.

"Family CC" and the "General CC" are two types of Cultural Clinics according to location. The general CC serves the children and families in the catchment area of a religious institute or community centre. Thus, it can be used very effectively for character development and promoting versatility/erudition in a child of a rich family in the city, or in the poorest of the poor families in a remote village. It can be used very effectively, to build up the lost confidence in street children, refugees, orphans and to rehabilitate young offenders. Further, the new methodology provides a natural honest system of Evaluation. Mentors are the new type of personnel trained to operate the General Cultural Clinic. It promotes qualities in the whole family materialising the concept of Education for All.

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