

CONCEPT DOCUMENT





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Abbreviations/Acronyms

ASER	:	Annual Status of Education Report
BJS	:	Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana
BJS – SAA	:	BJS-School Assessment and Accreditation
BRC	:	Block Resource Center
BRCC	:	Block Resource Center Coordinator
CABE	:	Central Advisory Board of Education
CBSE	:	Central Board of Secondary Education
CCE	:	Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation
CfBT	:	Center for British Teachers
CII	:	Confederation of Indian Industry
CIS	:	Council of International Schools
CRC	:	Cluster Resource Center
CRCC	:	Cluster Resource Center Coordinator
DEGSN	:	Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs
DISE	:	District Information System for Education
EDUQIP	:	Educational Quality Improvement Program
EFA	:	Education for All
FJEI	:	Federation of Jain Education Institutions
GSQAAC	:	Gujarat State Quality Assessment and Accreditation Council
HEI	:	Higher Educational Institutes
IIE	:	Indian Institute of Education
IIEP	:	International Institute for Educational Planning
ISO	:	International Organization for Standardization
J&K	:	Jammu & Kashmir
KPMG	:	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
KV	:	Kendriya Vidyalaya
LPG	:	Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization
MHRD	:	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MoU	:	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAC	:	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NABET	:	National Accreditation Board for Education and Training
NCA CASI	:	North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement
NCERT	:	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NEASC	:	New England Association of Schools and Colleges

NGO	:	Non-governmental Organization
NIEPA	:	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPE	:	National Policy in Education
NUEPA	:	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
NVS	:	Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti
PDCA	:	Plan Do Check Act
PDSA	:	Plan Do Study Act
QCI	:	Quality Council of India
RMSA	:	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RTE	:	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
SACS CASI	:	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement
SAP	:	Student Assessment Program
SCERT	:	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SMC	:	School Management Committee
SOAA	:	State Quality Assessment and Accreditation
SSA	:	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSHE	:	School Sanitation and Hygiene Education
TEP	:	Trustee Empowerment Program
TQM	:	Total Quality Management
TTP	:	Teacher Training Program
U DISE	:	Unified District Information System for Education
UEE	:	Universalization of Elementary Education
UGC	:	University Grants Commission
UK	:	United Kingdom
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
WERC	:	Wagholi Educational Rehabilitation Centre

Executive Summary

School Education: The Quality Imperative

Today as the whole world reels under the threat of divisive forces and violence, a collective sentiment echoes across all international forums - that of educational equity and the need to sow the seeds of world peace and security from the early stages of education. This marks an important universal goal for school education for India to strive towards. At the same time education has also been recognized as a means to ensure holistic development of learners for nation building, and enabling countries to embark on a trajectory of economic growth and prosperity. The market forces coming into play in the wake of increasing opportunities for our children in this globalized world have demanded that India take determined steps to raise standards of school education in the country.

Enrollment, Retention, and Quality: National Focus

Over the last few decades, the national initiatives at the policy level have been primarily driven to uphold three vital pillars of the Indian school education system, namely, enrollment, retention, and quality. All recommendations in educational policy and the subsequent efforts that stemmed from the visionary Kothari Commission in 1966, the Yash Pal committee in 1993, the Central Advisory Board of Education in 2004, to the latest legislation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, to name a few, have centered around making school education holistic, inclusive and equitable. They emphasized the need for making school education child-centric, contributing to the professional development of teachers and raising the quality of learning outcomes. However in spite of national and state-level initiatives, there is ample evidence to suggest that a gulf exists between the expected student achievement levels and actual outcomes. De facto, this is the state of affairs in 'school performance' in our country. This glaring gap can, to a great extent, be attributed to a lack of effective monitoring mechanisms for the performance of our school systems.

One solution to bridge this gap is to establish a comprehensive system of school assessment and accreditation, which will make schools and all the stakeholders accountable to its stakeholders and more importantly, to the children.

School Assessment and Accreditation in India: The Need of the Times

Accreditation, which emerged as a practice in schools in USA, has gradually gained ground in other parts of the world notably Europe, Australia, parts of Latin America, Asia. However, it has still not been established as standard practice in India's schools. Mention must be made, however, that our country's higher educational institutions (HEIs) have undertaken accreditation and tried to raise the bar for performance standards.

Systemic Constraints: Impediments in Decision Making

Nationally, there have been limited efforts to promote school accreditation as a guiding force to improving quality in school education. Unlike NAAC, which is the accrediting body mandated by the government for HEIs, no such system has hitherto been stipulated at school level. Very few states

have even begun to take cognizance of the importance of getting their schools assessed and accredited by a designated authority and taken the necessary efforts to mobilize resources in this direction.

However, the government machinery is mired in multiple constraints, slowing down the process of conceptualizing, developing, and implementing a school accreditation system across the country. Foremost among the challenges is the sheer number of schools. According to DISE 2013-14 and U-DISE 2013-14 Flash Statistics, there are 14.5 lakh elementary schools in India (an average of 40,000 schools per state) and 2.37 lakh secondary/higher secondary schools. Notwithstanding current lack of expertise, this weighs down heavily on the government's resources in terms of cost, human resource deployment and the time required to carry out accreditation for all these schools.

Shantilal Muttha Foundation (SMF): A Strong Partnership Possibility

Given such barriers that state governments have to grapple with, the role of SMF as an organization with proven competence in the field of school assessment and accreditation assumes crucial importance.

SMF derives its legacy from its parent organization, Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS), which has extensive field experience through its educational interventions, including assessment and accreditation in over 4000 schools since 2003. SMF System for Enrichment of School Quality (SMF SESQ) is a second generation school assessment system. It has evolved with stakeholder feedback and decade-long implementation experience, using as inputs various policy recommendations such as those stated in NCF 2005, RTE 2009 and UNICEF, to name a few.

Our system has been validated by experts from NUEPA and NCERT. This present system has been rolled out in over 150 schools (government as well as private) across India since 2011 till date, covering a broad spectrum of schools. SMF has a dedicated design and development team of competent professionals with diverse domain expertise who are working on various assessment models.

SMF System for Enrichment of School Quality (SMF SESQ): A Ready Solution

SMF SESQ offers a comprehensive methodology of assessment with a distinct action-oriented outcome for every accredited school and is suitably designed keeping in mind the need to optimize time and cost considerations. Its design is influenced by prescribed norms, standards and frameworks like RTE, SSA, NCF, and state board-specific requirements. It is also technically enhanced by several quality management principles adopted worldwide. SMF assessment system has the flexibility to accommodate a choice of methodology with multiple assessment levels and assessors at every level. It assesses schools along well-defined standards for the four broad process areas namely, governance, school administration, leadership and teaching-learning.

SMF SESQ is not just an assessment tool, but also a developmental tool for the school. One of the highlights of SMF SESQ is its multi-level reporting. SMF strives to effect transformation in quality not just at the school-level, but also at decision- and policy-making levels. The SMF SESQ reports (at school, district/block/cluster and state/nodal authority levels) also provide an improvement roadmap for the respective stakeholders, with proposals of concrete action points at the school level that can be implemented in order to initiate the process of school improvement.

SMF SESQ Offerings: Partnership Options

In order to partner with the nodal authorities for the implementation of its assessment system, SMF proposes three different partnership options:

A. Implementation of standard SMF SESQ: This is the standard SMF framework with tools and methodology which can be implemented in the states/assigned geographical territory after an MoU with the nodal authority.

B. Customized SMF SESQ : This option seeks to customize or adapt the SMF assessment system as per the requirements of the nodal authorities, state governments or boards after an extensive dialogue to understand and bridge the gaps as per the requirements of the nodal authority.

C. Develop a new assessment system: SMF can also design and develop a completely need-specific framework to address special contexts/new guidelines/perspectives/ of the nodal authorities.

All the three partnership options are provided with a state-of-the-art software application that can be configured to accommodate changes or customization at any level. SMF also provides support in other areas like documentation and several post-accreditation programs in the schools.

Head Start to Quality in School Education

The purpose of SMF SESQ is not just to gauge the current levels of performance of the school system but also to provide an impetus for its continual improvement. This philosophy can motivate stakeholders into directing their efforts towards qualitative development of schools in the country. Such an approach would address the larger picture of raising the intrinsic value of education to empower a whole community and nation for generations to come.

1 Quality in School Education

¹"Sustainable development doesn't have a chance if children don't have a chance " - a profound statement by UNICEF in its announcement of the Global Goals for every Child in its September 2015 brief, is a strong push for nations to actively strive for achieving educational equity. This is seen as the fundamental building block for creating cohesive societies, achieving equitable economic growth and ensuring a peaceful, healthy, secure planet for the children of today and tomorrow. This goal of equity must be consciously realized while ensuring the two other principal aims of education. The EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005 states, "Quality must be seen in light of how societies define the purpose of education. In most, two principal objectives are at stake: the first is to ensure the cognitive development of learners. The second emphasizes the role of education in nurturing the creative and emotional growth of learners and in helping them to acquire values and attitudes for responsible citizenship. Finally, quality must pass the test of equity: an education system characterized by discrimination against any particular group is not fulfilling its mission." Primary and secondary education – the central planks of most education systems – are expected to ensure that all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to be respectable individuals and responsible citizens.

Another perspective on quality education is to see how it translates into better opportunities for students, which could lead to higher lifetime incomes. Improved quality of school education contributing to students' cognitive development and enhanced life skills, directly influences their performance in the employment and/or entrepreneurial market. It thus relates to individual earnings, greater productivity and economic growth. Apart from influencing individual productivity and income, better school quality also has a strong impact on economic growth of countries as studies by Hanushek and Kimko² and Lee and Barro³ have shown.

The current concern for quality has its immediate origins in the changing socio-economic and political orders. With Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) policies from the 1990s, the Indian polity and economy began to change at an unprecedented pace. The changes have been myriad, complex, contradictory and had far-reaching implications for every aspect of human life. To survive in this highly competitive global market, raising educational standards became imperative for India.

¹ UNICEF - Global Goals for Every Child, September 2015

² Hanushek and Kimko, 2000; Schooling, Labour Force Quality and the Growth of Nations, *American Economic Review* Vol 90 No. 5

³ Lee and Barro, 2001, Schooling Quality in a Cross Section of Countries, *Economica* Vol 38 No. 272.

2 National Initiatives in Education and Quality

A review of educational policies in India confirms that the prime objective of all the national initiatives was to make enrollment, retention and quality as hallmarks of educational achievements. Listed below are a few of the related highlights of some important efforts undertaken mostly for school education in our country:

1. Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission) (1964-66) aimed at making education holistic with focus on productive activity with equal stress on attitudes, skills and values for promoting social and national integration. It also emphasized professional development of teachers and a strong contact between the school and the local community.
1. The National Policy on Education (1986), amongst its other efforts, called for a "child-centered approach" in primary education and launched "Operation Blackboard" to improve the performance of primary schools nationwide. It was for the first time that equality of opportunity was formally stated as an educational goal and the phrase "education for the handicapped" was used, though it advocated only the integration of children with locomotor disabilities and others with mild disabilities in mainstream schools. It also enabled the setting up of a team of experts under the Chairmanship of Behrul Islam in 1987 to study the problems of disabled children, which became the core of the comprehensive legislation provided later in the Disabilities Act of 1995.
2. Acharya Ramamurti Committee (1990) called for equity in education by way of a common school system, essential legislation to dispense with the selection process at the time of admissions, regulation of fees, and emphasized the use of the mother tongue in pre-primary and primary education.
3. National Policy on Education, 1986 (as amended in 1992) identified the concerns for improvement in elementary and secondary education, recommending improvement in teachers' working conditions and, at the same time, encouraging people's participation, and the roles of central and state resource institutions like NCERT, NIEPA (now NUEPA), SCERTs, etc. in empowering as well as assessing the systems.
4. Yash Pal Committee (1993) recommended reforms to reduce the academic burden on school students, bringing in a child-centric focus in the policies, curriculum, and processes.
5. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), an autonomous body was established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India at Bangalore in 1994 to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. It was an outcome of the recommendations of the National Policy on Education (1986) that laid special emphasis on upholding the quality of higher education in India.
6. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), 2001, reflecting the Dakar Framework for Action, was an important step after India's adoption of the Millennium Development Goals. SSA aimed for Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time-bound integrated approach, in partnership with state governments. It aimed at providing useful and quality elementary education to all children in the 6 -14 age group by 2010.

7. Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), 2004-05, was reconstituted and activated as the highest deliberative and advisory forum on education in the country. The education ministers of all states and eminent educationists as its members. CABE enabled the formation of the Right to Education Bill in its final form and amongst other recommendations, strongly advocated the Common School System.
8. National Curriculum Framework (2005) was intended to enable teachers, administrators and other agencies involved in the design of syllabi and textbooks and examination reform to make rational choices and decisions in reducing the load of curriculum on children. It also encouraged them to develop and implement innovative, locale-specific programs and learning experiences.
9. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), 2009, aims at universalization of access to and improvement of quality at the secondary school stage. The guiding principles in this regard are: universal access, equality and social justice, relevance and development, curricular and structural aspects, school infrastructure, facilities and staff as per prescribed standards.
10. The 12th Five Year plan emphasized the concept of 'improved quality' in operational terms through clearly identified outcome indicators, viz. learning levels of students, teacher competence, classroom processes, teaching learning materials, etc.
11. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009) specified the duties and responsibilities of all stakeholders in providing free and compulsory education, provisions for a non-admitted child to be admitted to an age-appropriate class, rational appointment of trained and qualified teachers, and practices to be adopted for a child-centered learning environment.
12. Yash Pal Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education in India (2009) recommends significant changes in the university system, especially in curriculum, examination policies and governance systems. It stresses the need to democratize universities to make them more equitable and create inclusive spaces that relate to real-life demands of society. It also calls for all levels of teacher education which includes pre-primary and primary school-level teacher education to be brought under the purview of higher education.

As seen above, there have been numerous efforts to push for a qualitative change in education in India at the policy level. However, the dent in learning achievements, lack of trained and quality teachers for schools, and the growing dependence on supplementary help⁴ show that India is not really making the kind of progress towards school quality education that should have been justifiably expected, given the high priority accorded to education by the government. On the contrary, there exists a chasm between policy initiatives and the ground realities of schooling.

The scenario in higher education stands in stark contrast to that of school education in the country. In India 75.5% of elementary schools (DISE 2013-14: Flash Statistics), 51.2 % of secondary schools and 60% of higher secondary schools (U-DISE Flash Statistics 2013-14) are run by the government, whereas in the higher education sector, there is a dominance of private players. Moreover, UGC has

⁴ ASER Report, 2014

instituted NAAC to accredit higher education institutes. These efforts to uphold quality in higher education would be undermined if there are no complementary efforts at the school level to ensure desirable learning achievements of students, who eventually form the raw material for the higher education institutes of our country.

On the background of the gaps in learning achievements, the lack of trained teaching staff, the influx of private coaching as supplementary help, and the conspicuous absence of a regulating body in school education it is imperative to put a system of **School Assessment and Accreditation** in place. This will enable a fair judgment to be drawn on the effectiveness of all schools and adequacy of the performance of an education system, as a whole, so that a refined student quality can be ensured.

3 School Assessment and Accreditation: International Scenario

Accreditation is a process of recognizing that an institute or a program has met the expected standards. The purpose of accreditation

is to ensure quality education programs through the use of standards and rigorous evaluation criteria, to stimulate institutions toward higher levels of quality and efficiency and to provide a system for public trust and accountability⁵. In evaluating institutional quality and effectiveness, accreditation agencies rely on inputs, interactions and outcomes. The accreditation process has long been recognized in the United States and in international school circles as a highly effective means of initiating and maintaining school improvement and demonstrating adherence to a set of publicly-stated standards.

There has been a strong influence of several globally-accepted quality management principles in ensuring and assessing school quality and in developing accreditation frameworks. Considerable effort has gone into translating ideas generated by Total Quality Management (TQM) principles to education, and adapting Deming's 14 points to an educational setup. In 1988, David Longford, a teacher at Alaska was the first to apply concepts from TQM in education. HB 90.7 (HB 90.7—2000) is a handbook published by Standards Australia International with an objective to provide guidance to education and training organizations to develop and implement a quality management system based on ISO 9001:2000 standards.⁶ The International Workshop Agreement IWA 2:2007(E) is a document published by International Organization for Standardization (ISO). IWA 2:2007 was approved at a workshop held in Busan, Korea in November 2006, which was hosted by the Korean Agency for Technology and Standards, with the support and cooperation of the organizations within the Mexican ISO Committee. It provides guidance to educational organizations for implementing an effective quality management system in conjunction with and based on ISO 9001:2000. The objective of this International Workshop Agreement is to assure the overall effectiveness of the education organization's quality management system and the delivery and continual improvement of its educational service to the learner.⁷

As a concept, accreditation originated in the USA sometime in the early 20th century. It was established as a response to the need of the public to know the academic standards of institutions which were proliferating all over the US⁸ in order to take make informed choices. Educational evaluation is done by the Advisory Board of Research Council, the Council of National Academic Awards and the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals.

The American system of accreditation is non-governmental, largely voluntary and a self-regulatory process which adopts a system of self-evaluation and peer review. It respects, even encourages, institutional diversity, protects its autonomy, and more importantly, gives a period to institutions for introspection on strengths and weaknesses⁹.

⁵ Universal Council for Online Education Accreditation (2003), USA

⁶ HB 90.7—2000 Education and Training Guide to ISO 9001:2000

⁷ IWA 2:2007(E)- Quality Management Systems — Guidelines for the application of ISO 9001:2000 in education

⁸ El-Khawas Elaine, 2001, Accreditation in the US: Origin, Developments, and Future Prospects, International Institute for Educational Planning

⁹ Powar K.B., 1996, Accreditation in Higher Education, Viva Books.

Few of the international accrediting bodies are:

1. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), founded in 1885, is America's oldest regional accrediting association whose mission is the establishment and maintenance of high standards for all levels of education, from pre-school to the doctoral level.
2. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA/CESS), founded in 1887, provides accreditation services to public, private, faith-based and international schools and other educational institutions starting from early age through post-secondary in USA. MSA/CESS, which is recognized by the United States Department of Education, works collaboratively with the United States' State Department Office of Overseas Schools and in cooperation with other U.S. and international accrediting agencies as a member of the International Alliance of Accrediting Agencies. MSA/CESS currently accredits more than 3000 institutions in over eighty-five countries including the United States.
3. The Council of International Schools (CIS) is a premier organization in international education. Its accreditation programs for schools and Best Practice development started in July 2003. The central purpose of CIS is to enable member organizations achieve and deliver the highest standards in international education and continually improve the outcome of student learning.
4. In 1993 in USA, thirteen accrediting organizations came together as the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA), which soon established a working relationship with The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA). In 1999, CITA and NCPSA jointly began the International Academy of Educational Accreditors (IAEA), an agency designed to assist other nations establish accreditation systems.
5. In April 2006, AdvancED, the world's largest education community was formed. It has served more than 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 69 countries that educate over 15 million students. **North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI)** and **Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI)** are the accrediting divisions of AdvancED.

4 School Assessment and Accreditation: Efforts in India

NAAC was established to assess and accredit institutions of higher education. It envisages making quality the defining element of higher education in India through a combination of self and external quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance initiatives. Increasingly, the higher educational institutions of our country are seeking NAAC accreditation to enhance their credibility. National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET), a division of QCI was formed and it has developed a school accreditation system. NABET re-launched the accreditation criteria in September 2008¹⁰. NABET school register shows that there are 70 schools accredited for these standards so far.¹¹ However, in spite of school education being a state subject, very few states have initiated efforts towards a system of school assessment and accreditation to cover all schools in the state.

The Government of Gujarat is one state that has initiated a series of steps for the assessment and accreditation of all schools so as to achieve visible and measurable positive change. With this objective, agencies were invited to submit proposals to participate in:

- i) Partnership to develop State Quality Assessment and Accreditation (SQAA) for Gujarat State Quality Assessment and Accreditation Council (GSQAAC)
- ii) Mentoring the GSQAAC for planning and monitoring of the assessment and accreditation of all schools

The entire process of inviting proposals, screening applications, and deciding the criteria of selection was managed in consultation with KPMG, a global consulting firm. All the bidders had to go through a rigorous selection process of:

- i) Evaluation of Eligibility Criteria
- ii) Evaluation of Technical Bids for eligible bidders
- iii) Presentation on following points by all eligible bidders:
 - a. Understanding of Scope of Work
 - b. Approach and Methodology
 - c. Manpower / Resource deployment
 - d. Project Plan / Timelines

Seven agencies, of which BJS was one, were shortlisted for the technical presentation. Each agency/bidder was rated distinctly at each and every step right from the eligibility criteria to each area of their presentation mentioned above and the overall technical score out of 100 was calculated. Given below is the performance of these agencies in the technical evaluation conducted by the Gujarat Government:

¹⁰ Thomas , Liffy (2010). "Improving school education through accreditation", The Hindu, Online Edition, February, 22, 2010 Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/edu/2010/02/22/stories/2010022250040200.htm>

¹¹ Retrieved from NABET website; data as on April 9, 2014
http://nabet.qci.org.in/schools/accr_school.asp

Sr. No	Name of Shortlisted Agency for Project D	Technical Score obtained by the Agency out of 100
1	M/s Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana	90.16
2	M /s Educational Technology & Management Academy	73.33
3	M/s Confederation of Indian Industry CII Institute of Quality	83.49
4	M/s CfBT Educational Services	84.32
5	M/s Educational Quality Foundation of India	70.65
6	M/s Birla Shloka Edutech Ltd.	85.32
7	M/s TUV SUD South Asia	64.49

(Table 1: Technical Evaluation Sheet- Project D; Partnership to Develop SQAA and Mentoring GSQAAC)

The evaluation criteria was stringent and BJS secured the premier position amongst the competitors. Of particular note is the difference in the scores of BJS and the second highest scorer, thereby emphasizing the technical expertise and capabilities of BJS in the field of school accreditation.

However, the terms and conditions laid down by the Gujarat Government were constraining. The first important condition was that the selected agency would have to seek permission from the Gujarat Government to carry out similar work in other states. Secondly, if the agency received the required consent, it would have to enter into a revenue sharing agreement with the Gujarat Government prior to implementation in other states. BJS did not agree to these impeding terms and conditions and so decided to dissociate itself from the process by quoting a much higher price at the financial bidding stage. This strategic decision was in keeping with its objective of extending its quality improvement interventions to as many states as possible across the country.

5 Constraints of the Government System

Although there have been numerous efforts in school assessment and accreditation in international circles, school accreditation has received little priority in India. Policy makers desire to establish a formal school accreditation system but not much headway has been made due to the following inherent limitations:

1. School education being a concurrent subject, school accreditation has not been mandated by the central government in the manner that higher educational institutions are mandated through the UGC. The UGC has linked development grants with the performance of colleges and universities in the NAAC accreditation process, thus ensuring that institutions get accredited and also strive to improve so as to gain a better rating.
2. There seems to be a lack of expertise and technical knowhow at the state level to design and establish an accreditation system. The CRC/BRC officers have been conducting school inspections which focus mostly on the infrastructure and basic facility checks, status of implementation of government schemes with just a cursory feedback on academic processes in schools.

These limitations of government ownership and the system are further compounded by the challenges of scale, the perceived costs and the time required for assessing and accrediting all the schools, as shown below:

1. **Scale of operations:** The status of accreditation by NAAC for Higher Educational Institutions as on June 2015 is that a mere 19% of a total of 677 universities and only 7% colleges out of a total of 48,647 colleges are NAAC accredited.

Status of Accreditation By NAAC

	Universities	Colleges
Total	677	48647
NAAC Accredited	130	3581
NAAC Accredited (%)	19%	7%

(Table 2: Institutions with valid accreditation as on June 25th 2015)¹²

As compared to the number of universities and colleges, the number of elementary schools to be assessed and accredited, on an average in every state, is about 40,000 and the number of secondary/higher secondary schools is about 3000. Country-wide there are 14.5 lakh (DISE 2013-14: Flash Statistics) elementary schools and 2.37 lakh secondary/higher secondary schools (U-DISE Flash Statistics 2013-14), thereby presenting an even greater challenge to the government. Similarly, since 2009, NABET has been able to accredit only around 70 schools in India till date according to NABET records¹³.

¹² <http://www.naac.gov.in/>

¹³ Retrieved from NABET website; data as on April 9, 2014

2. **Cost factor:** The fees incurred by a college or university to undergo NAAC accreditation ranges from Rs 50,000 (for single faculty colleges) to Rs. 5 lakhs (for universities with more than ten departments, as per the NAAC website). This cost is exclusive of the larger expenses that the institution may incur in preparing for accreditation in terms of creating infrastructure, facilities, human resources, etc. Likewise, the school accreditation fees charged by NABET, inclusive of application and recurring annual fees range from 1.2 lakhs for a school with less than 500 students to 2.65 lakhs for a school with up to 5000 students for a period of 4 years till reaccreditation.¹⁴ These fees do not include the consultancy charges that have to be borne by the school for the engagement of a consultant, which is a pre-requisite in the NABET process. The significance of this factor can be understood when we consider the nationwide figures for schools – 14.5 lakh (DISE 2013-14: Flash Statistics) elementary schools (an average of 40,000 per state) and 2.37 lakh secondary/higher secondary schools (U-DISE Flash Statistics 2013-14), an average 3000 per state, and the cost required for assessment and accreditation of all these schools. With over 75% of elementary schools and 51% of secondary schools being government or government-aided schools, accreditation cost is the major concern in the decision making for school accreditation.
3. **Human resource requirements and the time factor:** Another daunting factor that puts a strain on the state government machinery is the perceived time required for accrediting 40,000 elementary and 3000 secondary/higher secondary schools, the average in each state, which gives an idea of the number of person days that must be diverted from the existing tasks of the government workforce.

5.1 Partnership Possibilities with SMF

These constraints of scale, cost, human resources and time can be addressed effectively if NGOs such as SMF are allowed to provide a supportive role to the government's initiatives in school assessment and accreditation.

SMF brings a technically sound assessment system, rich expertise as well as the resources to implement the accreditation process in a time-bound manner. SMF has proven capability of utilizing the existing government workforce and implementing the school assessment and accreditation processes in a cost-effective manner by virtue of having already tried out various optimizing techniques while assessing 4000+ school in 6 years. The assessment and accreditation system of SMF is robust and rigorous; it is also flexible and can be configured and customized to suit the requirements of different state governments or nodal agencies. It supports schools and decision-makers with a solution-oriented approach in the efforts towards continuous improvements at the school level and beyond.

¹⁴ Fee Structure (2011), Retrieved from NABET website, October 10, 2011 <http://www.qcin.org/nabet/schools/fee.php>

6 Strengths of Partnership with SMF System for Enrichment of School Quality

SMF System for Enrichment of School Quality (SMF SESQ) provides a win-win proposition with an end-to-end solution for all the stakeholders participating in the process. The value propositions offered by SMF are outlined below:

- 1) SMF SESQ has leveraged the exhaustive field and domain expertise of its parent organization Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS) to undertake a pre-design academic study of the domain in order to understand state school educational requirements and quality standards. (For more details on implementation kindly refer to section 12.5: 'Genesis of SMF SESQ')

SMF SESQ has inherited rich field-level experiences through the interventions of BJS in the field of education. BJS Educational Quality Improvement Program (EDUQIP), which comprised various assessment, empowerment, and training programs for all school stakeholders, was designed in 2002. It was implemented in 4000+ schools all across India. BJS designed and developed its first Assessment & Accreditation framework in 2003 and implemented it in more than 4000 schools.

In 6 years since 2004, BJS assessed schools of all types – government or private, tribal, rural or urban. It has assessed and accredited government schools in states like Gujarat and Goa and even the far-flung union territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. BJS has also assessed and accredited 563 NVS schools all over India on the request of the government. BJS has delivered to the satisfaction of all stakeholders – the state governments, officials, school principals, teachers and students. The Government officials extended complete cooperation and commended BJS for its efforts¹⁵.

A critical review after substantial implementation experience led to the revision of the accreditation system. Inputs received from school principals, BRCCs, CRCCs, District Education Officers, parents, and teachers at the grassroots level, and combined with extensive research, led to the design of a revised framework called BJS School Assessment and Accreditation (BJS SAA) to address the need for qualitative improvement in school processes.

SMF had appointed a panel of nationally renowned academicians from resource institutions such as NUEPA and NCERT, as well as educationists, and statistical experts to review the design at every stage.

The revised framework has been implemented in over 160 schools (government and private of all school types and Boards in various states like Gujarat, Goa and Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Meghalaya, Assam, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jharkhand).

SMF SESQ includes a configurable software system for customization as per client requirements, and documentation as part of its deliverables. (Refer section 9: Deliverables

¹⁵ Testimonial by NVS, 2011, Testimonial by Goa Government, 2010.

offered by SMF). SMF/BJS is one of the agencies selected to finalize the accreditation system and conduct the assessment of CBSE schools nationwide.

SMF SESQ also provides the complete technology support for generating the improvement roadmaps for all stakeholders with the appropriate monitoring and tracking mechanisms for gauging the progress made with respect to the roadmap to enable school systems to attain the next level of quality compliance and improvement.

SMF's design and development team has a rich combination of experience and diverse domain expertise that includes quality management specialists, educationists and researchers who have worked in rural, tribal, local body schools to drive quality education initiatives.

- 2) Three Partnership options:** SMF has a flexible approach to address the constraints in managing the scale of operations to cover the maximum number of government and private schools within a reasonable time frame, ensuring cost affordability and effectiveness. Accordingly, SMF SESQ has conceived three partnership options with a proven, technically superior framework, tools, methodologies, and technology support.

The partnership options:

- A. Implement standard SMF SESQ
- B. Implement customized SMF SESQ
- C. Development of a new assessment system

(Refer section 8 for further details of Partnership Options on page 235.)

- 3) Post-Assessment Support:** In order to give the focus areas in the improvement roadmap a head start, SMF enables the various stakeholders by offering suitable programs and trainings, designed and developed in-house, for teachers, HMs, management members.

7 Overview of SMF SESQ

This section explains the philosophical underpinning of SMF's assessment system to improve the quality of education in schools, which is followed by a presentation of system overview.

7.1 Philosophy of SMF SESQ

“Quality is a positive and dynamic idea, achievable by design with meaningful investment. The ‘quality journey’ is characterized by a customer-focused approach to continuous improvement of process, products and services through an independent system of planning, implementing, evaluating and decision¹⁶.” Quality is thus a progressive attribute. It moves from one level to the next for a given standard.¹⁷ Contrary to popular belief that only schools with a well endowed profile are capable of demonstrating high standards of quality, there are plenty of evidences worldwide to prove otherwise; of schools which have ensured provision of good quality education for their children despite very meagre resources in hand. Such schools aspire and also manage to achieve the desired outcomes purely on the strength of effective processes especially in teaching learning and school leadership. Likewise there have also been several instances of well resourced schools that do not match up to the educational standards expected of them.

The SMF SESQ framework has been conceptualized on the backdrop of this profound belief that even schools with under-developed profiles are capable of demonstrating process maturity. Although the availability of infrastructure is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for school quality, SMF SESQ assesses how the school processes optimally utilise the available infrastructure and human resources, and mobilise funds to ensure their adequacy, rather than base its findings only on their availability. Hence SMF SESQ is a school process quality assessment system which aims to serve not just as a diagnostic tool but also a developmental system for school quality improvement.

7.2 SMF SESQ Framework

The SMF SESQ process assessment framework has been designed as per the following:

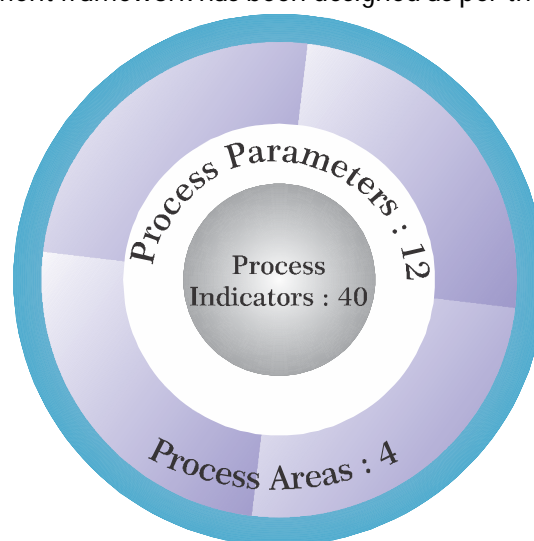


Fig 1: SMS SESQ Framework

¹⁶ Navaratnam, 1977

¹⁷ Quality and Access in primary education by PremKumar Jha, 2005

- This takes into account the school processes in practice in areas of governance, administration, leadership, and teaching-learning
- Every process area has been further divided into three process parameters which contribute to school performance within the respective areas. Together all these parameters contribute to school quality.
- For every parameter a set of verifiable and measurable indicators are identified, which are the lens through which the assessment of every process area is conducted. These indicators are determined based on well-defined standards for the four broad process areas of governance, school administration, leadership and teaching-learning .
- **SMF SESQ standards are influenced by nationally and globally recognized norms, guidelines and principles such as:**
 1. **World Declaration on Education for All and Dakar Framework for Action**
 2. **RTE standards, SSA Framework, RMSA, CBSE Bye Laws, National Curricular Framework, CCE**
 3. **Widely accepted principles of Educational Psychology**
 4. **International Workgroup Agreement 2:2007 (Guidelines for ISO 9001:2000 in Education)**
 5. **Quality management principles, Deming Cycle (PDCA/PDSA), Total Quality Management, ISO, and Process Maturity Models**

The assessment decision, which is an affirmation of school quality, is, therefore, more dependent on the successful interplay between school profile and processes than on the richness of its resources.

Framework Components

The components of the framework are represented in the schematic below:

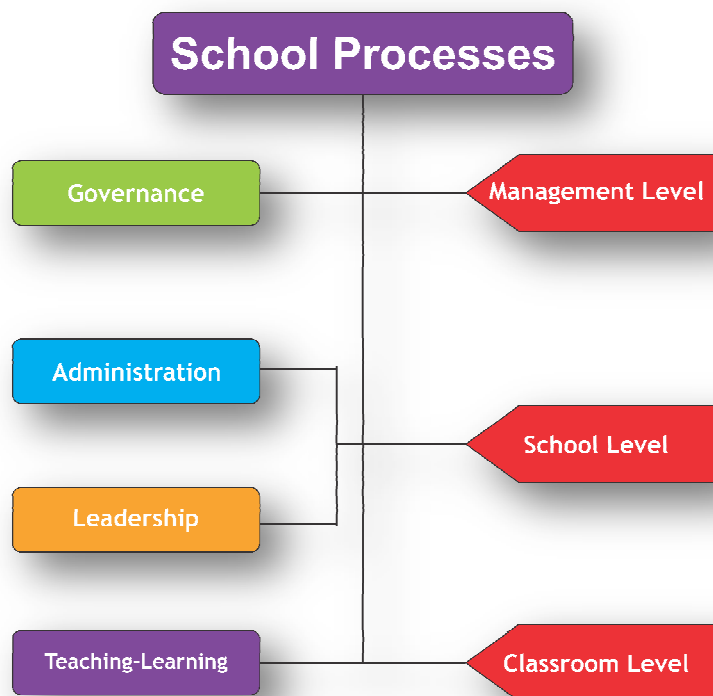


Fig 2: SMS SESQ Framework Components

Four school-level contributors to quality namely, Governance, Administration, Leadership, and Teaching-Learning have been selected as the major assessment areas. The guiding aspects in the attempt to arrive at representative parameters of these four areas are the following:

1. Core traits of operational/working areas and responsibilities
2. Quality impacting activities
3. Factors within internal control for continuous improvement

There can be several other possible dimensions, but the ones chosen are the most objective and observable aspects of each area are chosen as the indicators for the purpose of assessment. These indicators are measurable and verifiable.

7.3 SMF SESQ Methodologies

SMF SESQ methodology provides the option of involving assessor categories namely school side assessors and/or peer assessors along with the SMF certified expert assessors. The expert assessment requires a team of certified experts appointed by SMF to assess the process areas through evidences, interactions and observations. As stated above, the school stakeholders can avail the option of evaluating their own processes through a set of structured questionnaires which are administered to the school side assessors.

The methodology also assess the extent of compliance of the school with the standards laid down under the RTE Act, 2009. Additionally, there is also an option to include a satisfaction survey of all the stakeholders of the school parameters through structured questionnaires. The expert assessment data is analyzed by a purpose-designed software and a detailed report is presented on existing quality levels, recommendations for prioritizing areas for improvement and appropriate action points.

7.4 SMF SESQ: A Multi-Level Reporting System

In order to bring about a constructive engagement among all stakeholders SMF SESQ, generates multiple reports:

1. **School report:** The school-level accreditation report gives a comprehensive picture of the school's performance in the process areas of governance, administration, leadership and teaching learning. The report also highlights prioritized indicators for improvement. The main report is supplemented with an exclusive roadmap containing '**Action points**' that are drawn out for each stakeholder group at the school level – from the SMC/Management and the School Head to the teachers. These action points are derived from the priority areas that are revealed once the main report is generated. These action points are such that they can be implemented by the school level stakeholders without any kind of intervention by the higher authorities. Thus, the school report, with its improvement guidelines, sets up a self-sustainable monitoring and tracking mechanism within the school system striving for continual quality improvement.
2. **District/block/cluster report:** This report is made available to the authorities at the district level – the District Education Officer/Block officer/Cluster officer and/or the local governing bodies like the School Board. This report is important because it highlights the performance

of the whole district and the respective jurisdictions in the field of school education. The aim of this report is to give the authorities an 'at a glance' cumulative and comparative status summary of the schools. It seeks to highlight the level of quality compliance of all the schools assessed. It also aims to expedite decision-making in areas like allocation of funds in a timely manner to every school, capacity building measures like school leadership and teacher training, mentoring, and monitoring the availability of material and human resources.

3. **State/Nodal authority report:** The purpose of the state-level report is to inform the state authorities with a comparative analysis of the performance of every district within the state in the area of quality school education. This report will help state authorities in drawing up suitable action plans to mobilize resources for ensuring productivity at the district level, facilitate policy refinements based on assessment and accreditation and prioritize developmental guidelines, decisions and required funds.

8 Partnership Options for School Assessment

SMF's extensive field experience in assessment and accreditation, and awareness of government requirements and constraints has enabled it to offer multiple partnership options to forge successful alliances with nodal authorities in conducting assessment and accreditation of schools. SMF offers a choice of three different partnership options, each designed with the aim of fulfilling specific needs of partners with respect to school accreditation. These partnership options are detailed below:

8.1 Implement SMF SESQ

The SMF SESQ framework is the result of intensive brainstorming and subsequent refinement in its conceptualization, the design, development and detailing of assessment instruments, and the implementation methodologies. SMF SESQ includes all components and indicators needed to capture authentic, verifiable and concrete data. SMF SESQ is a comprehensive, tested and 'ready to roll out' assessment system offering the following advantages:

- 1) Comprehensive methodology of assessment:** As described in the Overview, SMF SESQ is designed to obtain authentic, verifiable, and concrete compliance information of current practices in schools. It facilitates the assessment of compliance to a comprehensive list of defined standards based on accepted norms that cover all aspects of school education (necessary infrastructure with facilities and amenities, school management, leadership, school administration and teaching-learning). SMF SESQ deploys a statistically-validated scoring methodology to maximize the reliability and accuracy of assessment findings. SMF SESQ framework takes into account inputs from all school stakeholders as obtained by the external certified assessors in order to achieve a participatory and objective assessment.
- 2) Action-oriented outcome of assessment:** The extensive data captured during the course of assessment is analyzed to generate decision points for stakeholders at the school level as well as policy makers at higher levels. The decision and action points have been derived from universally accepted quality management principles.

An exclusive improvement roadmap is provided to the school stakeholders. This enables them to identify and prioritize areas of decision making, change management and continuous improvement.

The higher level reports for the district administration and state government authorities in the Education department enable them to take informed decisions regarding fund allocations, teacher recruitment, teacher training, and monitoring policies.

- 3) Effective and optimal time considerations:** Despite being exhaustive in its coverage, the time required to implement the entire SMF SESQ framework, including school orientation, assessment, reporting, and facilitation of improvement roadmaps is reasonable. Schools are required to commit only **3 days. No special preparation for the assessment nor the services of consultants are required for the assessment**.
- 4) Cost effectiveness:** The school/nodal authority has to bear **only the project management cost for assessment, which is a onetime expense**. No other expense, recurring or otherwise, is incurred till reaccreditation.

8.2 Customized SMF SESQ

It is quite expected that different nodal authorities, might have different visions for schools under their jurisdiction. The quality output arising from implementing the school assessment and accreditation process, as desired by the nodal authorities, could be in line with state-specific issues that affect the school education system therein. SMF possesses proven competence to identify the nuances of the desired accreditation framework and can support the nodal authorities, state governments or boards in customizing the framework, tools, and methodology to accommodate differences in outlook, approach, emphasis and additional requirements.

The process of customization have the following milestones:

1. Requirements Understanding
2. Gap Analysis
3. Conceptualization of Customized Framework
4. Review of Proposed Customization scope and plan by Nodal Authority/Boards
5. Finalization and Development of Agreed Customization
6. Review and Approval

The premium (bonus) feature for the nodal authority in such a partnership option is that it adapts the best-practice features of the SMF SESQ to the specific needs of the nodal authorities, and to the outcomes of assessment envisaged within the shortest possible turnaround time (a maximum of two months), subject to speedy dialogues between the parties and decision-making by nodal authorities for the processes 1 to 6 (above).

8.3 Developing a New Assessment System

SMF can also design and develop an entirely new model to cater to new perspectives/guidelines recommended by the nodal authorities by seeking participation of all the desired stakeholders to ensure a proper alignment of thoughts and suggestions. The design and development of the new model will have the following milestones:

1. Requirements Understanding
2. Conceptualization of new framework
3. Review of Proposed new framework by Nodal Authority/Boards
4. Finalization and Development of Agreed Framework
5. Review and Approval

However, a completely new assessment model will demand dedicated time from the key decision makers among the nodal authorities to help us conceive the desired product for end-to-end application according to the agreed specifications. This involves a time frame of no less than 18 months after guaranteed and timely interaction with all stakeholders.

9 Deliverables offered by SMF for School Assessment

For all three partnership options, SMF has envisioned the support as detailed below:

1) **Framework with its methodology and tools for implementation :**

As already discussed, SMF will provide the assessment and accreditation framework as per the partnership option decided upon, along with the implementation methodology and the assessment tools.

2) **Software System:**

SMF SESQ is an intricate tool created to gain objective insights into the process maturity and compliance levels of all kinds of schools. Schools are assessed on various parameters and indicators, which have varying importance in the school system. Grades for process compliance and assessment are calculated using a cumulative grade point averaging system, by assigning weights hierarchically to all assessment framework components and also to assessor types and assessment levels, as per the requirement.

The software designed to accommodate this complexity of scale and depth is flexible, but at the same time robust and user-friendly. SMF SESQ is equipped with a fully functional and tested software that generates in-depth reports in the most reader-friendly format. Backed by an easy-to-use data entry interface, the software generates a detailed, completely automated school report. This program ensures high accuracy and reliability with the least possibility of erroneous data.

The SMF SESQ software is designed to support any partnership option is – standard, customized, or an altogether new assessment system.

3) **Documentation:**

SMF will generate master copies of all the required documents, ready for the nodal authorities to replicate and use immediately. SMF supports multi-lingual documentation with English, Marathi, Hindi or other regional versions of all documents and instruments. The nodal authorities will be provided with a complete, ready to use set of documentation that includes:

1. SMF SESQ Framework
2. Tools
3. Statistical model
4. End-to-end assessment process
5. Software specification
6. Documentation of project lifecycle

10 Conclusion

The educational scenario in India got the much needed fillip when 'quality' was promoted as a key determinant in changing the face and the pace of education reforms within the country. It is worthwhile to note that a desirable quality of a school system cannot be attained solely by ascertaining the quality of learning outcomes. Due attention must also be paid to the factors contributing to these outcomes. It is in this context that school assessment and accreditation should be acknowledged as a compelling lever instrumental in giving a definite form to the efforts directed towards ensuring, sustaining and improving quality in Indian school education. This is because school assessment and accreditation chooses to link the inputs and the school processes to the outcomes instead of taking a myopic view.

We are confident that this document will impress upon the minds of all the stakeholders and decision makers, the efforts undertaken by SMF in the area of school assessment and accreditation, its underlying philosophy and unique value proposition, aims and objectives thereof, and the range of SMF SESQ engagement options with a distinct report generation systems. All these are designed to enable every stakeholder to reap rich dividends out of the value chain of the SMF SESQ, which is established with the intention of raising the bar in the quality of school education in our country.

This document is the first major step towards initiating a meaningful dialogue between SMF and the decision makers who form a critical component of our key audience, in order to build a fruitful partnership in working towards the common cause of enhancing the quality of school education in India.

Annexure 1: Expert Panel for SMF SESQ

	NAME	DESIGNATION
1	Prof. Mrs. Snehlata Shukla	Former Head, Department of Teacher Education and Extension, NCERT; served on governing bodies, executive committees and advisory committees of NCERT, UGC and MHRD.
2	Professor G. D Sharma	Director, Higher Education, G D Goenka Group. Served as Secretary, University Grants Commission (UGC), Director, Indian Institute of Education (IIE), Pune and Consultant of UNESCO, UNDP and IIEP, Paris.
3	Mr. Suraj Prakash	Founder Principal CRPF school, Rohini, Delhi. Served as Chairman of National Progressive Schools' Conference.
4	Dr. Sudhakar Gadam	Head, Founder Director, Education & Development Research Centre, Empanelled expert with MHRD for Adult Education, Former Professor at Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics.
5	Dr. Arun Mehta	Professor & Head, Department of Educational Management Information System, NUEPA
6	Prof. Najma Akhtar	HOD, Department of Educational Administration, NUEPA
7	Prof. Neerja Shukla	Professor and Head of Department, Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs (DEGSN), NCERT
8	Dr. Yazali Josephine	Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration, NUEPA
9	Dr. Manju Narula	Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Administration, NUEPA
10	Dr. R. S. Tyagi	Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Administration, NUEPA
11	Dr. Rasmita Das Swain	Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration, NUEPA

Annexure 2: Acceptance Letter for BJS SAA , Rajya Shiksha Kendra, State of Madhya Pradesh

From: **promila singh** <ilasingh56@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Jan 25, 2014 at 11:44 AM

Subject:

To: Manjiri Sule <manjirisule@hotmail.com>, Rashmi Shami <rashmishami@gmail.com>, examrsk@gmail.com, kushal-1960@yahoo.co.in

Dear Manjiri,

Reference our telephonic conversation, I am to inform you that we have recently submitted a brief of the scheme of "Assessment and accreditation of schools in M.P. - 2014-15 to the state govt.

Assessment and Accreditation, a critical component, calls spreading awareness of, and creating demand for assessment driven quality improvement in the education system. Quality in education is now a major national concern, therefore, base line assessment of quality must be done to ensure quality component in education.




Against the above backdrop, state would initiate assessment and accreditation of schools in partnership with BJS. Your initiatives in this direction is well acknowledged and well received. We are all aware of the dismal gaps between policy initiative and policy implementation. **Our joint initiative will help fill the gaps and reinforce and supplement the existing state govt.'s efforts in this direction .**

We invite and request you to please send your acceptance to help co-ordinate the project in terms of designing of tools/ modules suited for schools in rural and urban areas and suit the requirements of the state.

Looking forward to sharing your expertise and vast experiences in this area. A word of confirmation of the meeting date so that the design and logistic of the project may be worked out as per MoU and other terms and conditions.

Warmly
Dr. Promila Yadava
Manager (R&E)

Annexure 3: Acceptance Letter for BJS SAA, SCERT, Chhattisgarh

State Council of Educational Research & Training, Chhattisgarh Shankar Nagar, Raipur (C.G.)		राज्य शैक्षिक अनुसंधान एवं प्रशिक्षण परिषद्, छत्तीसगढ़, शंकर नगर, रायपुर
Telephone-0771-2443596 Fax-0771-2443496 Website: www.scert.cg.gov.in Email: scertcg@gmail.com No./SIEMAT/BJS/School Assessment./2013/ 4420 Raipur, Dated 02.09.13		
To, Mr. Prafulla Parekh, CEO Bhartiya Jain Sanghatana Level 8, Muttha Chambers II Senapati Bapat Marg Pune-411016 Maharashtra, India		
Subject: Acceptance of your proposal for school assessment & Accreditation Ref.: 1. The Order no. F 1-38/2012/20-F, Raipur, dated 25.06.2012 of Government of Chhattisgarh, School Education Department, Mantralaya, Raipur. 2. SCERT letter no. SIEMAT/Evaluation/2012/3504/Raipur Dated 24.07.2012		
<p>With reference to above, your organization 'Bhartiya Jain Sanghatana' had requested for showcasing of the model for school assessment and offered for the pilot implementation of 25 schools with your BJS-SSA tool free of cost, for this, SCERT decided to implement the pilot project in two districts – Mahasamund and Kawardha in 25 schools. Of the 25 schools, 12 (3 High Schools and 9 Higher Secondary Schools) from 3 blocks – Mahasamund, Pithora, and Basna of - Mahasamund and 13 (1 High School, 3 Higher Secondary Schools, 3 Lower Primary and 6 Higher Primary Schools) from 3 blocks – Kawardha, Lohara, and Bodia of - Kawardha were randomly selected.</p> <p>Consequently, BJS conducted the on-site assessment of all selected schools and submitted the reports. The school assessment reports of districts were shared on 15th and 16th July 2013 at Mahasamund and Kawardha respectively and on 17th July 2013 at the state level. The Pilot project presentation was shared by BJS and discussed the report findings.</p> <p>In this context, we accept the BJS report for school assessment & accreditation with the following note & observation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The BJS-SSA tool is useful within the current context of school education. The district-level report—for example, Mahasamund District's report for 12 schools (3 High Schools and 9 Higher Secondary Schools) from 3 blocks which were assessed as part of this pilot project can be considered to take policy decision regarding implementation of BJS SAA on a wider scale. Since the district has 94 Higher Secondary Schools and 9 of these schools are part of this pilot project, the sample size is sufficient - even though it is not representative at this stage—for confirming certain actions at the district-level based on the assessment report and using this as a base pilot study to consider up-scaling on implementation in other districts. 2. This report confirms the findings of some other studies and offers further insights into the gaps that were identified. 3. The district officers commented during the presentation that the School Management Committee in this particular rural school actively participates and shows keen interest in the school operations. BJS SAA assessment methodology is validated because of this statement as the indicator related to Management Committee's Supervision practices has received the highest score for the said school. 4. During the report sharing and explanation session with the schools, the BJS team explained relevance of report components at the school level and also explained how to deal with the priority recommendations. The tool also conveys to the schools how to look for additional explanation for every indicator and how to use recommended action points for each of them. <p style="text-align: center;">We thank you for your cooperation.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  (Anil Rai) Director SCERT Chhattisgarh </div>		
Endt. No./SIEMAT/BJS/School Assessment./2013/ 4421 Raipur, Dated 02.09.13		
Copy to, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal Secretary, Honorable Minister, Government of Chhattisgarh, School Education Department, Mantralaya, Mahanadi Bhawan, Naya Raipur. 2. Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, School Education Department, Mantralaya, Mahanadi Bhawan, Naya Raipur. 3. Commissioner, Directorate of Public Instructions, Pension Bada, Raipur 4. Managing Director, Rajya Madhyamik Shiksha Mission, Chhattisgarh, Raipur <div style="text-align: right;">  Director SCERT Chhattisgarh </div>		

About SMF

Shantilal Muttha Foundation (SMF) is a not-for-profit organization, headquartered in Pune, that is working to bring about fundamental changes in school education. Founded by Mr. Shantilal Muttha, a successful entrepreneur with strong social commitment, SMF leverages on the work done in the field of education for over three decades by Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS), a secular NGO set up by Mr Muttha in 1985.

Steered by an able leadership, SMF has a team of professionals with expertise in programme strategy & process design, teacher training, content development, assessment, and education research. As required, SMF consults external resource persons and agencies, including experts from NCERT and SCERTs, academicians, senior education officials, experienced teachers, and professionals from management and technology domains.

SMF is guided by a body of distinguished advisors including Prof S Parasuraman, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences; Dr. M.P. Vijayakumar IAS (Ret'd), former Commissioner of Municipal Corporation of Chennai and State Project Director, Universal Elementary Education project, SSA, Tamil Nadu; and Mr Vivek Sawant, CEO & Managing Director, Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd.

Our Philosophy

We believe that good education is the bedrock of a good life, for individuals and societies. School education plays a particularly important role. As agreed by the nations of the world, through the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, school education should enable the full development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities, and prepare the child for responsible life, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples.

Unfortunately, these fundamental aims of education are sidetracked in a mass education system that focuses on quantity rather than quality, and attainment of grades rather than acquisition of values, attitudes and competencies required to be a good citizen.

We believe it is our responsibility as a civil society organization to change this situation.

Vision & Mission

Our vision is to ensure that all children get an education that will help them become caring, responsible and productive citizens.

We believe the vision can be attained by engaging with the school system in a proactive and collaborative manner, building on the strengths of all stakeholders. Our mission is to help school-systems, schools and teachers enrich their capacities for fostering the all-round development of children.

Approach

Our educational interventions are based on four basic principles, which we believe define a 'good' school:

1: Schools should be child-friendly.

If children have to learn well in school, they have to like being in school. They have to perceive school as a “child-friendly” place to be in. The “child-friendliness” of a school is determined by its physical and psychosocial environment, educational practices, and policies regarding management of student behaviour.

2: Schools should ensure that all students learn well.

The primary role and purpose of school is to provide adequate and appropriate opportunities for all students to learn well, including students at low learning levels, students from disadvantaged social groups, and students with physical or psychological disabilities. Students learn best when their inner motivation to learn is tapped and given opportunity to flourish, and their self-confidence and self-esteem is allowed to develop continuously, in a positive way.

3: Schools should help students imbibe human and democratic values.

Schools should help students imbibe human and democratic values. Merely transmitting knowledge about these values is not enough. Students have to be given opportunities to appreciate experience and demonstrate the values, and related attitudes and competencies, in a school culture infused with the values.

4: School should involve all stakeholders in the development of the school and students.

A school is an organization within a social ecosystem. As such, it has, apart from students, many internal and external stakeholders. Only when all stakeholders work together with a common goal can the school achieve the holistic aims of school education.

Focus Areas

While school-change involves many areas of work, we are currently focused on three, inter-linked areas in which we have considerable in-house expertise:

- Education for values
- School quality assessment
- Educational and social research

Education for values

SMF has deep knowledge and experience in the domain of education for values, which is derived from an ongoing large-scale project in rural Zilla Parishad schools of two talukas of Beed district, Maharashtra, since 2009. The project is based on *Mulyavardhan*, a programme that evolved from an intensive study of national and international policies, programmes and effective practices related to education for values. The *Mulyavardhan* pilot project has been evaluated by international and national experts from NCERT, Cambridge University, UK and Oregon University, USA. A range of positive outcomes have been reported by all stakeholders.

Based on our experiences and the insights gained from the project, and recommendations by experts, we have developed ***Mulyavardhan- A Whole School Approach***, a programme for schools to

help students imbibe the values/attitudes and competencies necessary for democratic citizenship, in an enabling school environment. Since 2015, this program is under implementation in designated private schools of Goa and government schools of Maharashtra.

Salient Features

- Based on democratic and Constitutional values
- Consonance national policies
- Based on a holistic view with
- of education, with a whole-school approach
- Learner-centred, activity-based pedagogy
- Flexible, implementable by any school

School Quality Assessment

Based on the experience gained from development and deployment of a school assessment & accreditation tool by BJS in over 4000 government and private schools in various states, we have designed two school-assessment offerings:

- **SMF System for Enrichment of School Quality (SMF SESQ)** is a comprehensive assessment system geared towards overall school development. School processes and the school profile are assessed separately, and action-oriented reports are generated with improvement guidelines for the school as well as the relevant agencies at the higher level of the education system.
- **Survey For Assessing Child-Friendly And Value-Based Education In Schools** : This assessment survey is based on defined and documented standards expected of schools for providing an enabling, supportive and conducive environment for students to grasp/experience desirable values and develop related competencies and skills. These standards are in alignment with the Indian Constitutional values and the aims of education described in NCF 2005, the clauses of the RTE Act 2009, and NCERT's framework for value education in schools (2012). It is designed to find out how values are reflected in all (instructional, non-instructional, extra-curricular) practices of the school (living the values/school ethos and culture). It also aims to determine how values are being disseminated through learning experiences to the students (value education). These standards can also be used as benchmarks by schools for their self-assessment of value practices.

Educational & Social Research

SMF has an independent research initiative, EduSocial Research, to help clients design effective interventions in the education and social sectors. EduSocial Research provides consulting services for issues falling within the ambit of school education, and other areas like health, gender, etc that may directly or indirectly impact education. Within these areas, EduSocial Research targets programmes where children and youth are the primary beneficiaries.

Genesis of SMF SESQ

SMF SESQ has leveraged the rich domain expertise and extensive field experiences of its parent organization, Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS), to undertake a pre-design academic study of the domain in order to understand and state school educational requirements and quality standards.

SMF SESQ has inherited extensive knowledge gained from the interventions of BJS in the field of education. BJS Educational Quality Improvement Program (EDUQIP), comprising various assessment, empowerment, and training programs for all school stakeholders was designed in 2002. It was implemented in 4000+ schools all across India after signing MoUs with state governments and other nodal authorities.

EDUQIP Programs include:

Stakeholders	Programs
1. School system	School Assessment and Accreditation
2. Decision makers	Trustee Empowerment Programs/Management Development Programs
	Empowerment Programs for Village Education Committee/SMC
	Principals' Empowerment Program
3. Teachers	Measurement of Teacher Effectiveness
	Teacher Training Program (Modules 1 and 2)
4. Students	Student Assessment Program (Stds IV, VIII, X)
	Value Education Program

Table 3: Programs of EDUQIP

BJS designed and developed its first Accreditation framework in 2003 and implemented it in more than 4000 schools. In 6 years since 2004, BJS assessed all types of schools government and privately owned and managed, and located in tribal, rural or urban areas. It has assessed and accredited government schools in Gujarat, Goa and the far-flung union territory of Andaman & Nicobar. BJS has also assessed and accredited 563 NVS schools all over India on the request of the government. BJS has delivered to the satisfaction of all stakeholders – the state governments, officials, school principals, teachers and students. The Government officials extended complete cooperation and have paid glowing tributes to BJS¹⁸.

A critical review after sizable implementation led to the revision of this assessment & accreditation system. Practical inputs received from school principals, BRCCs, CRCCs, District Education Officers, parents, and teachers at the grassroots level, coupled with extensive research, led to designing a revised framework called BJS School Assessment and Accreditation (BJS SAA) to address qualitative improvement in school processes.

A panel of national level academicians from resource institutes such as NUEPA and NCERT, as well as educationists, and statistical experts were appointed to review the design at every stage.

The revised framework has been implemented in over 160 schools (government and private of all school types and Boards in various states like Gujarat, Goa and Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Meghalaya, Assam, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jharkhand.

¹⁸ Testimonial by NVS, 2011, Testimonial by Goa Government, 2010.

Period of Implementation	Geographic Coverage	Type of School Management
1. 2002 - 2011	EDUQIP implemented in 450 FJEI schools all across India	Private
2. 2005–2008	402 schools of Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Government
3. 2007–2010	1790 schools of Goa state	Government and Private
4. 2008 - 2011	563 NVS schools of the country	Government
5. 2009 – 2011	2005 schools of 2 districts of Gujarat (Bharuch & Narmada)	Government
6. 2009 – 2010	All schools of Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation	Government
7. 2009 – 2010	All schools of Jalgaon Municipal Corporation	Government
8. 2010-2013	Revamped system SESQ implemented as BJS SAA in 134 schools across MP, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Maharashtra and Delhi	Government, private and government aided
9. 2014-2015	SESQ implemented in 29 schools across MP, Jharkhand, Rajasthan Delhi, Goa, Orissa, Assam and Maharashtra	Government and Private

Table 4: Snapshot of SMF SESQ/BJS SAA Implementation

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Glossary

1. **Common School System:** The National System of Education that is founded on the principles of equality and social justice as enshrined in the Constitution and provides education of a comparable quality to all children in an equitable manner irrespective of their caste, creed, language, gender, economic or ethnic background, location or disability (physical or mental), and wherein all categories of schools – i.e. government, local body or private, both aided and unaided, or otherwise – will be obliged to (a) fulfill certain minimum infrastructural (including those relating to teachers and other staff), financial, curricular, pedagogic, linguistic and socio-cultural norms and (b) ensure free education to the children in a specified neighbourhood from an age group and/or up to a stage, as may be prescribed, while having adequate flexibility and academic freedom to explore, innovate and be creative and appropriately reflecting the geo-cultural and linguistic diversity of the country, within the broad policy guidelines and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education as approved by the Central Advisory Board of Education.
2. **Compliance:** Observance of official requirements, conformity; accordance.
3. **Cumulative grade point average (CGPA):** CGPA is a final grade on a particular scale calculated by cumulating averages of weighted scores (Grade Point Averages) for multiple assessment areas and/or for multiple scores at different times.
4. **Educational rehabilitation:** The restoration of someone to a useful place in society through education.
5. **Holistic education:** A philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace. Holistic education aims to call forth from people an intrinsic reverence for life and a passionate love of learning.
6. **Inclusive education:** An approach that seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners, young people - with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services.
7. **Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) policy:** A series of new economic reforms in early 1990s undertaken in India with respect to industrial sector, trade as well as financial sector aimed at making the economy more efficient. It was a period of economic transition and marked the advent of the real integration of the Indian economy into the

global economy through reduction of such barriers to international trade as tariffs, export fees, and import quotas. It was a deviation from self reliance and socialistic policies of economic development, which arose mainly due to the inward looking restrictive form of governance. It also entailed transfer of government services or assets to the private sector.

8. **Life skills:** A set of human skills acquired via teaching or direct experience that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life.
9. **Outcome indicator:** A measurable variable (or characteristic) that can be used to determine the degree of adherence to a standard or the level of quality of, the end result.
10. **Parameter:** A definable, measurable, and constant or variable characteristic, dimension, property, or value selected from a set of data or population because it is considered essential to understand a situation.
11. **Process maturity:** Process maturity is the extent to which a specific process is explicitly defined, managed, measured, and continuously improved. The degree to which processes and activities are executed following 'good practice' principles and are defined, managed and repeatable.
12. **Resource deployment:** To distribute the resources systematically or strategically.
13. **Social justice:** The fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural law that all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice.
14. **Total Quality Management:** A quality management approach in which all members of an organization participate in improving processes, products, services and the culture in which they work.
15. **Universalization of Elementary Education:** In accordance with the Constitutional commitment to ensure free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years, provision of universal elementary education has been a salient feature of national policy since independence. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is aimed at achieving the long cherished goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time bound integrated approach, in partnership with State.



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