

Profile of Dr Vijayam Ravi

Vijayam Ravi has with her, a passion for education and love for teachers who make great leaders and role models for youth.

To support this, she has about 33 years of experience in the field of K12 education

Initial years as a practicing Chemistry teacher for Class 12, for 15 long years in the city of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, she moved to administrative responsibilities as a Principal and later moved to Mumbai with the Raymond's Singhanian School, Thane. This was a large Day school catering to almost 5000 students with about 400 teachers and other staff, gave a great experience in managing Schools and guiding teachers to Perform. Leadership development was a corporate necessity and therefore running educational institutions in a professional corporate way came easily to her. Knowing that innovations and change management are the two important factors to be addressed in educational institutions for 21st century, she launched many innovative programmes in Curriculum development, Assessment and evaluation of students that resulted in splendid student performances and teacher engagement. The Single Text book concept that reduced the burden of huge school bag was an innovation first of its kind in Maharashtra or may be India.

After bringing the Singhanian School as a Country topper in the ICSE examinations, Vijayam Ravi moved on to start a School - a very unique innovative concept School namely India First Foundation School (www.iffschool.in) for the India First Foundation Trust owned by the Bhanushali family and also started a Consultancy services namely Academy for Global education Services Pvt Ltd. (www.agesworld.org)

After playing a significant role in establishing both these organizations, now she is available as an independent Principal Consultant to educational institutions and leaders.

The white Paper

Educational research conducted by McKinsey some time back in September 2007, addressed a very interesting topic - "How best performing Schools always came to top?" Or what are the factors that help Schools maintain their success or sustain credibility. The interesting finding that they came up were three major points:

1. Quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers-so getting the right teachers to do the right job is the priority
2. To improve outcomes, improve instruction-meaning to say the employed teachers need constant development to suit the ever changing needs of the society or classrooms.
3. High performance means every child in the school should succeed-this means no child should be left behind academically and otherwise.

This finding is the result of a study conducted by McKinsey to see why some top performing schools always succeed spectacularly and why some others fail miserably. This calls for a serious introspection on the part of all educational institutions that wish to be always at the top.

21st century has brought challenges to classrooms in terms of knowledge explosion-too much of information and technology and a mobile culture, and along with that brought in social issues of incompatible homes. Lack of ownership of children, competitive atmosphere in schools and college admissions, economic reforms and cost of living and several other psychological issues among parents and children, made the student community vulnerable for all forms mis behaviour and very poor learning outcomes. Teaching community, Parent community, Overambitious student community and the Result oriented managements of Schools and Colleges and unsolicited educational reforms have put the journey ahead very hard for all the above constituents. Tomorrow's world looks in the youth for special skills that suit their industrial and commercial needs and the educational systems do not produce such a mass group of students abundantly.

Schools are therefore facing constant challenges in terms of getting the right team of teachers, teacher attrition and best educational practices. Best instructional practices engaged all students including the learning disabled through inclusive programme.

The ability of the schools to get the right kind of teachers is directly linked to the status of teachers and teacher education in this country. The quality of people who come into teaching profession today is very poor and they land up in teaching with out any motivation. Teaching job is a vocation and not a mere occupation or career. As there is no choice, schools are forced today to appoint these teachers and expecting the schools to fulfill the high aspirations of parents and students is an unrealistic target. Schools therefore need to divert their attention to developing the skill sets of the teachers, leaders and educational programs if they wish to be in the market today

McKinsey report is just highlighting this core need of Leadership and teacher development and development of serious instructional reforms. Converting the teachers into instructional leaders will solve the future problems of solid educational leadership also. McKinsey report intact emphasises the need to concentrate on developing instructional leadership qualities in Principals as one of the ways to surmount the huge problems because it is the leader of a School that needs to be a role model for its teachers and students to emulate. The report also recognizes simple fact that no school can improve any thing that they cannot measure. This is a very significant point. The quality of teaching and learning need to be measured and this calls for excellent assessment and evaluation techniques that bring out the various analytical, problem solving and synthesizing skills of students. Also the same people who are responsible for improving the system cannot be engaged for judging the effectiveness of the system too, if you really need quality.

All the above said facts denote that monitoring and implementing effective educational practices and teacher development may need external intervention.

Quality of education in classrooms is a serious concern for any person involved in education. Getting the right kind of teachers and leader and developing them to the School's philosophy and vision, take enormous time of the management. Unless and otherwise the management has enough time at hand to address all the inherent issues that actually ail our K12 school system, the problem may lead to serious and interlinked failures of the total system. Getting good teachers, developing them, getting great instructional strategies and a good curriculum that allows all children to express themselves very effectively are all related to each other, the fundamental being the leader and the teacher.

Another recent survey suggests that 60% of students spend their study time in internet abled Smart phones - a reason for all parents and educators to be worried.

Who will guide them? How can these students be engaged effectively? Who will take the lead?

A teacher, the Principal is a role model and if that issue is set, everything comes in place.

The basic solution lies in hiring a great group of teachers, training them to perform. The same group of teachers can be trained to develop suitable instructional strategies that suit the philosophy of the School. If a proper leadership training is simultaneously done by the school, that adds more value to the entire strategy. Involving the parents into the actual learning processes of the school as partners will actually reduce the burden of school teachers also.

Sometimes an introspection about the school's strengths and weaknesses in an objective manner by any agency that has no vested interest in the institution also may yield results in knowing what keeps the school from reaching the top.

You may hire any consulting firm's advice to take your School towards the top position-Ultimately education is all about well being of the future society, the present day youth.

This white paper intends to suggest that such basic interventions at the grassroots levels in Schools will help them to perform high.

Dr Vijayam Ravi' s Educational Consulting services addresses your problems with the necessary solutions and assists you in fixing your problems.

Why Dr Ravi's Educational Consulting Services? Why not some other?

A Case study conducted by Dr Ravi few years back on the topic “What are the factors that make teachers leave an educational institution?” revealed that lack of motivation and challenge in schools, the necessity to do repetitive job with out room for innovation, make the teachers lose interest and they leave jobs for newer pastures. This revealed a very interesting revelation to Dr Ravi and she designed methods to engage the teachers in various activities constantly so that they need to be always updated with the latest knowledge, technology oriented and above all develop a reasonable attitude for changing the mind set of teachers.

The single Text book concept created by Dr Vijayam Ravi in Singhania School was a hit and well accepted among teachers and parents. It certainly reduced the load of school bags and it also necessitated the students to refer the School libraries continuously. This engaged both teachers and students and the instructional strategy got automatically developed by the teachers who owned it. As the Curriculum was developed by them, they owned it and made sure that the last stud nest of the school get the benefit.

Refer internet sources - for further read on this innovation of Dr Vijayam Ravi

"A shift from learning by rote" Khaleej times by Muaz Shabandri / 2 May 2012

www.iffschool.in

www.agesworld.org

Education: Business or responsibility?

www.theintelligentsme.com/?p=1885

[PDF]

Magazine Jan- Mar 2012 - Ncqm.com

www.ncqm.com/2012/Newsletter-Jan-Mar-2012.pdf

SIES Journal of Management Volume 6, Issue 1, April - August 2009

Inclusion by Exclusion ? | The Peoples Chronicle

What are the Services offered by Dr Vijayam Ravi?

Dr Ravi has been instrumental in starting and running educational institutions
She can provide expert advice on the following:

1) Establishing Schools

a. New Schools - To those who are geared to venture into starting Schools

What is the package for this segment from Dr Vijayam Ravi

Phase 1 - Interaction with the top management in knowing their purpose of starting the Schools

What is the role of the top Management?

to spare a day minimum to explain and discuss the various aspects of Schooling and knowing how they wish to go about

Phase 2 - Preliminary concept paper to be presented with in one week's time with a feasible financial analysis and commitments by the management to establish the school

Phase 3 - Assisting the management in getting the right team in place and guiding the team for action.

Phase 4 - feed back on the execution and Improvement if any required in the processes

b. Stellar Schools - to those Schools who are Star of Stars in knowing how to be still a Star and become a Sun

What is the package for this segment from Dr Vijayam Ravi

Phase 1 - Interaction with the top management in knowing their purpose of starting the Schools and analyzing whether they have reached their mission

What is the role of the top Management in taking the school further-a half day interaction

Phase 2 - Interaction with the senior management team of the School to understand what led them to success and to know where they wish to take their school to-it may require about a 1 or 2 days

Phase 3 - To submit a detailed report and action plan for the school for future projections with inputs

Phase 4 - Deciding the course of action and guiding the management and staff for their execution

Phase 5 - Feed back and improvement if any

C. Struggling Schools - To those Schools that are distressed and struggling to perform

What is the package for this segment from Dr Vijayam Ravi

Phase 1 - Interaction with the top management in knowing their purpose of starting the Schools

What is the role of the top Management?

To spare a day minimum to explain and discuss the various aspects of Schooling and knowing how they wish to go about

Phase 2 - Interaction with the senior management team of the School to understand where have they found challenges and obstacles - with the top management and with out the top management and make out the gaps

Phase 3 - observation of the actual practices of the school, class observation, teacher observation and system observation, interaction with staff

Phase 4 - Suggesting solution with clear cut strategies in those areas that are challenging the staff and students

Phase 5 - Guidance for implementation with feedback

Phase 6 - Improvement if required

2. Leadership development and teacher motivation, teacher empowerment

Leadership development is an ongoing process and there are several aspects of educational leadership Assessment of the leader and his / her personality and career skills to be carried out and very involved developmental strategies that are acceptable and comfortable to the leaders designed.

Teacher empowerment programme depend on the needs of the teachers belonging to the school-after a reasonable interaction with the management and staff, the different training modules will be suggested. Experts in the field concerned will be handling those sessions while Dr Vijayam Ravi also will be actively involved in getting the programme through follow up programme for the proper involvement and utilization by teachers are ensured.

Various aspects of teacher development programme will be considered while designing the programme and indirectly these programme will deal with various instructional strategies.

3. Institutional Assessment

This would be the primary stage in each of the activities because one need to know where we are before we decide to go somewhere.

This involves academic audit by renowned and seasoned academicians and administrative audits.

A formal assessment report which will serve as a report card for the School that touches upon about 10 major limbs of the school will be submitted.

This may involve a maximum of 15 -20 days depending on the size of the school and availability of resources.

4. Curriculum Development

Schools are free to follow any syllabus till 8th standard and after that the examining board takes over. If the management wishes to improve the quality of the student learning, instructional strategies and teacher output, the need of a great curriculum that is well integrated is a must. this curriculum should effortlessly touch upon principles of life and give the students reasonable exposure to various skills this can be generated with the guidance from me and with the team of the school

The time duration would be minimum 3 months - 4 months with concerted efforts from the school team. The school can then own it Dr Vijayam Ravi will lend her brain towards making it innovative, applicable and useful to the schools.

5. Parental development programme

This session with parents of the schools would be a very innovative way of taking them on to the side of the management. If the management gives this as a value added service or a paid programme-in both ways it works. Can address the perennial issue of parents of Schools with

growing up children and help them to sort out their issues with the help of a team of people. The Schools can extend a helping hand to parents and involve them as partners by doing this. This should be a programme at a least 1 day in very month or time that is suited to the school-like clubbing with holidays etc.

The future of the Schools depend on the goodwill created by them by doing yeomen services to the student and teaching Community. The brand gets built through these services. Quality is just an outcome of what one does not a goal to be dream about.

Dr Vijaym Ravi

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