

CHAPTER V

MANIFESTATION

OF

ACADEMIC CULTURE, ITS NURTURE

AND ITS INFLUENCE

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## MANIFESTATION OF ACADEMIC CULTURE, PROCESS OF NURTURING AND ITS INFLUENCE

In this chapter presentation of the ten cases with its analysis is presented

### 5.1 CASE: 1

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#### 5.1.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

A meeting with the Principal with a formal letter of permission paved the way for the researcher's entry into the school as a field of study. Subsequent to clarifications on the nature of study and the details of the activity of the researcher in school ("What exactly will you do in the school?", inquired the principal.) for about ten minutes, the Principal formally declared the presence of researcher to all the students and teachers in the morning assembly on the next day. His openness to the presence of researcher in school was demonstrated as he announced in a matter of fact tone, "All of you be natural and do your work as usual."

The researcher was in the school for a period of approximately three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events occurring on different sites of school observed were assembly, mass drill, teaching learning process in various classrooms, cleaning of classrooms by students, a rally by students for creating awareness of conservation of energy, a meeting between students and Principal, a speech given by an invited guest to students. . In addition to these the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s and the principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were the librarian of the school, the Supervisor of the pre-primary section and a teacher with fifteen years of experience. The Principal had introduced the researcher to the

librarian who was a former student and who had completed thirty years of service in the school as a librarian. ("I am new to the school, she knows more about the school than me", the principal said.). On her own volition, the librarian introduced the researcher to the Supervisor of the pre-primary section who was also a former student of the school, had been a teacher for almost twenty five years and subsequently moved into the rung of management of the school as the supervisor. Another teacher who had fifteen years of experience in this school was suggested by three teachers as someone who would be able to 'tell about the school'. Along with this, interview of the present Principal and the President of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Vice President of Old Students Association were conducted. Appearing relaxed and eager to share information about the school, the three principal informants also made the researcher comfortable in school taking care of the tea and snacks during recess.

### **5.1.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

Taking its name after the name of the industry that founded the Trust to manage it, this school stands as the face of social responsibility of the industrial sector. This social responsibility found expressed in the initiative taken by an industrialist of Vadodara city in 1942 for the welfare of the industry's workers' children. The school was shifted to the resident campus of the industry in 1948 and named after the industry. A formal shape to this initiative was given when during the first Five Year Plan there was a call to contribute in the field of education for national development. In the desire to be good corporate citizens a Trust which was financially supported by the industrial house and in which core power remained with the family members of the industrialist was set up in 1959 to manage the school. Though the initial target group was the industry's workers' children, the facility of the school was extended to the children of the entire city.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department of Government of Gujarat for salary expenditure. It is financially also supported by the Trust for other expenses. The Trust is very rich and does not have any financial problem for the school. The school is affiliated to Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction of this school

is Gujarati. The grant-in-aid status has different implications for each stakeholder. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees 40 per month for standard IX, Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by the Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary is ensured for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State thereby the control of the school authority (Principal) is relatively lesser. The affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision, mission and objectives of the school as noted from the website of the school and from the boards displayed in front of the Principal's office were: (i) to impart good education as per the prevailing time; (ii) to encourage students to participate in co-curricular activities and; (iii) to motivate the students to become good citizens to help the nation. The vision, mission and objectives of the school recognize the dynamic nature of changing contemporary and future contexts of society and the necessity to change education to suit it. The second emphasis is on contribution to society and national development as it motivates students to become good citizens to help the nation. A sense of responsibility to the larger society is recognized.

Key policy decisions with respect to teachers were avoidance of malpractice in the recruitment process and not to compromise on the remuneration of teachers. Sustained professional development program for the teachers in the form of annual seminars was compulsory for all the teachers. Creating an equal opportunity for development of learners, *Baal Sabha* was a program which offered platform to all the learners to perform on the stage provided an equal platform to all for all round development. Cleaning of classroom by the learners was a signature program of this school based on



equality as the duty of cleaning the classrooms was allotted by rotation on the basis of roll numbers.

In view of the objective of the school to develop responsible future citizens for the society, two programs were very consciously designed: *Samoochik Jeevan* (Community living) and Leadership Camp for the newly elected student council. The program of *Samoochik Jeevan* was for the learners of standard VII who were about to enter the secondary section with standard VIII. The students were taken to schools of tribal area or schools of under privileged with a view to sensitize them to those and also to realize the significance of the privileges they enjoyed. Also, this program offered an opportunity to learners for living in groups. The second program on Leadership Camp for newly elected student council emphasized on preparing the students leaders for their responsibility. The oath taking ceremony for the elected student leader was always in the presence of a public official in leadership position. In the year of the present study, the oath was administered by the Police Commissioner of the city. The attempt here was to explain to the leader that this is training for taking leadership initiatives in society as future citizens. Keeping up to its focus on social responsibility the school organizes a mock prelim examination for standard X and XII which is open to all the children of the city. The rigour of this examination is explained by the present teacher, "There is very little difference between this examination result and the Board examination result."

Parents as significant stakeholders were catered through an annual seminar called *Vaali Seminar* in which exposure to parenting and aspects of education of children were presented. A platform for parents and teachers was created through Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and a tour for parents and teachers called *Vaali Pravas*.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the lay out of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/ infrastructure resources to all learners. As informed by the Office Superintendent on the basis of the school records, the total area of the school premises is 99,295 square feet and the built up area is 20,025 square feet. There are two playgrounds one admeasuring 56200 square feet and another admeasuring 23070 square feet. There is an open stage. The school has clearly demarcated sections for the pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher secondary section. The classrooms open on the

corridor and the corridor opens to the view of open space. There is an auditorium with the seating capacity of 1500 and a prayer hall with the seating capacity of 400. There are four laboratories: physics, chemistry, biology and general science. The computer laboratory has 30 computers. Two learners work on a computer simultaneously. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records, the library has 21,065 books and 35 journals and magazines. She informed that the second Principal provided her total freedom to buy books for the library. The area of a classroom in the Secondary section is 500 square feet and in the Higher Secondary section is 600 square feet. The students' strength in the secondary section ranges from 59 to 79 per class and in the Higher Secondary section from 57 to 63 per class. The classrooms have adequate benches for all learners and space for the teacher to move in the class. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil ratio in a class is 1: 57 and at the maximum level is 1:79.

As one enters the premise of the industrial resident campus towards the school, the playground on one side and the school building on the other side greets one's view. Inside the building, the corridors opening in the open space provide ventilation and natural light. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.1.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school ; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.1.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is fifty years old (1959-2009). This period has

been administered by two dynamic Principals. Since the last one year, the school has a young Principal, (33 years old and 8 years experience in this school) at the helm of affairs. The school has benchmarks achieved and traditions established during the long tenures of two Principals (1959 to 1981, 1981 to 2005).

There is no distinction between the vision of the Trust and the vision of the school as noted from the website of the school and the boards displayed outside the principal's office. It is stated as: (i) to impart good education as per the prevailing time; (ii) to encourage students to participate in co-curricular activities and; (iii) to motivate the students to become good citizens to help the nation. Imparting 'good education' was interpreted as provision of infrastructure facilities and programs for the development of the learners. The first Principal who is described as *prakhhar kelavnikar* (great educationist) by a teacher of one of the sister concerns of the Trust and a visionary by the Supervisor of the pre-primary section, created the facility of the open stage for learners in the early sixties. The present Principal informed that the Trust is constructing a library for the school. The school already has a library which stocks 21065 books and 35 journals and magazines as per the records of the librarian.

The programs of the school enabled it to maintain a competitive edge over the other schools of the city. The present Supervisor of the pre-primary section informed with pride, "Fifteen years ago, most of the doctors and engineers of the city were students of our school." The President of Old Students Association recalled, "Ours was a Gujarati medium school. We would often meet students of other schools of the city. When we talked about our schools, we felt what these students learn in extra classes, we learn in our school itself. *Ham kisise peeche nahi the* (We were not lagging behind). We felt confident and proud of our school." Elaborating on the confidence of the learners, the present Principal said, "*vo darenge nahi, vo to poochenge* (They will not fear, They will ask (questions))."

This school has carved its own identity through its distinct policies and programs. The grant-in-aid status of the school imposes restrictions in terms of articulating distinct policies for admission or recruitment of teachers and staff. The space for distinction in this regard was found by the Trust by adopting the policy for recruitment of teachers based on transparency and avoidance of malpractice. This policy is based on respect for the merit and talent of the teachers. The teachers in turn feel committed to the

school. The present Principal explained, "I was from a village. I never expected to be appointed for this school. But I was because I was good. *Ab mujhe school ke liye kuch karna chahiye aisa lagata hai* (Now I feel I must give return to the school)."

Another signature program of this school, initiated by the first principal is cleaning of classrooms by learners. Three students from each class had the duty of cleaning the classroom on rotation basis. There was a teacher in charge of this activity who supervised the cleaning activity in all the classrooms. In this way all the classrooms were being cleaned. The researcher observed this program in practice during the field work.

*Three male students were cleaning classroom of IX B. Two of them had brooms with which they were sweeping. The in-charge teacher of the cleaning activity entered the classroom. After taking a look around the classroom, she indicated to the students that there was dirt under a bench. One of the three students bent down to check and then swept it. The third student collected the dirt and paper pieces in a supadi (plate like structure for collecting dirt). By this time the sweeping of the classroom was almost over. The second boy took the supadi to dump the dirt into a common dustbin placed in the corridor.*

*The three students glanced around the classroom to check if all was cleaned. They began talking among themselves as they observed the classroom. One of the student leaders came to check if cleaning was done or not. She said (in a soft voice), "Be quiet" Then they left the class.*

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*The Student Council members were sitting in a common classroom. It was the responsibility of the Student Council to monitor the cleaning activity. One of the monitoring activities was issuing and collecting brooms. The three student leaders had a notebook in which there was a record of brooms issued to each class and brooms received from each class. Each class was given three brooms and one supadi. The three brooms issued to one class were tied together. One tin box was kept in which the brooms per class were to be deposited.*

*As the students of a class returned the brooms and supadi issued to them, the student leaders made a tick mark in their record to acknowledge it.*

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*After the revision was over, the teacher discussed examples from the textbook. The students began the task of solving the discussed examples.*

*The teacher then looked around the classroom as if inspecting it. She asked in a raised voice, "Whose turn was it today to clean the class?"*

*Three students raised their hands.*

*Looking at them the teacher said sharply, "Why was the blackboard not cleaned?"*

*Viewing the blackboard, one of the three students tried to explain in a low voice, "Madam the class teacher is absent so...."*

*The teacher did not allow the student to complete her explanation. She stated in a sharp tone, "There are reasons to do a work and more reasons for not doing a work. Yesterday the mock test got over. The roll numbers are written with wet chalk. So use a wet cloth to clean the blackboard. Once a week, the window panes also are to be cleaned. Girls know how to clean and boys have to prove that you are better than girls."*

*The teacher smiled as if to convey that she is right. The boys also smiled to communicate that they knew that the teacher was right and some boys smiled sheepishly and gently.*

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The learners who cleaned the classroom appeared relaxed. They exhibited ease in the activity of cleaning and sweeping the classrooms which comes with regular practice. The facial expressions of learners indicated their sincerity and diligence. Although a teacher was also made in charge of this activity, this program was managed by the learners to a large extent as the monitoring of this program was also entrusted to the student council. The learners who were the members of the student council appeared to be carrying out their task with responsibility and seriousness. They explained the

register maintained for the issuing of brooms and supadi to the researcher very cheerfully and proudly. The teacher in charge of this activity looked at the learners with pride as they explained the procedure to the researcher. Though the program of cleaning of the classrooms by the learners had been initiated by the first Principal of the school it appeared that the rigour of the program was not lost on change of leadership in school. One of the factors for maintaining the rigour was attention paid to it by teachers in the every day life of school. The researcher observed that even the learners of the primary section folded the carpets very cheerfully, playfully and with diligence. While explaining about the school in general, the teachers, the librarian and the president of the Old Students Association mentioned proudly about this program of the school. A sense of responsibility was observed to a large extent by the learners and the teachers. The learners appeared self disciplined. Simultaneously they also developed value for cleanliness and work.

A continuous and a conscious engagement with stakeholders: teachers, learners and parents characterize the school. This engagement is channelized through formal organizations: a vibrant and active Old Students Association and Parent Teacher Association. The goal of the engagement with the stakeholders is to involve them in the overall programs of school. Also there is an attempt for the collective development of the teachers and parents. Two chief programs in this direction are the annual seminars for teachers and for parents. The annual seminar for teachers, aimed at professional development of teachers, is residential in nature wherein an exposure to the various aspects of education is provided. In making this compulsory for all teachers, equal opportunity for professional development is provided to all the teachers. The annual seminar for parents is a one day seminar in which experts, from the field of education, address the parents on issues of children, parenting and education. Two incidents indicate the engagement with the stakeholders for the various decision making processes in school. The president of the Old Students Association narrated the process for change of uniform in school:

*When the students suggested that we would like to change the uniform, then the (second) Principal readily agreed. He collected suggestions from each class through the class representatives. He then displayed uniforms of a few schools of the city. He asked students to observe these uniforms and*

*suggest any other combinations also. Then the final combination for uniform was decided.*

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Similarly, a change in the school timing was made as per the views of students and parents. The Supervisor of the pre- primary section however remarked,

*The second Principal was not very convinced about the change in school timing but he heeded to the request for the change in timing. He made it very methodically. He took request letters for change in school timing from each parent before changing the school timing.*

The Principal involved in these two events was known for his administrative skills and acumen. The school also had a well defined program for managing the stakeholders (parents and teachers). In both the events the freedom of stakeholders-learners in the first event and parents in the second event was at play. In case of change of uniform, the Principal displayed uniforms of various combinations. Through this process he created opportunities for empowering the learners to exercise a well informed choice in deciding the uniform. In the second instance, the issue at stake was the choice of freedom either for the Principal or for the parents in decision making process of the school. When the interests of the Principal and the parents clashed over the school timing, the Principal ensured freedom of the parents by agreeing to their demand for change against his wishes. The choice that the Principal negotiated thus was between his freedom and the freedom of parents. The administrative acumen of the Principal was also at play. As an administrative requirement in the form of request letters from the parents for their demand, a sense of responsibility that was to be exercised by both the Principal and the parents was ensured.

A significant aspect of the engagement with the stakeholders is efforts for the development of rapport based on equality and respect. A tour of teachers and parents called *Vaali Pravas* is arranged annually. It is a management technique of meeting the stakeholders on a retreat thus creating an equal footing for them to meet. Citing a specific advantage of this tour, a teacher with fifteen years of experience with the school remarked, "Parents are also free, they then casually tell us that something like this happened in school. We (the teachers) also tell them casually that if that was so

they would look into it.” The librarian informed that the first Principal would often fry *puris* in the school kitchen along with the kitchen maids. This practice enabled the Principal to view the school from their perspective as also offer them the opportunities to share ideas outside the boundary of the Principal’s office. During the annual seminar for teachers, the second Principal made it a point to join the teachers during bonfire singing with them to develop an informal rapport with them. The librarian said, “We felt that the Principal was just like one of us.” The librarian thus indicated equality perceived between the principal and the teachers. The second Principal was also described by the Supervisor of the pre-primary section as a person who listened and who had excellent communication skills. By listening, the second Principal conveyed respect for the other stakeholder. In case of an angry parent/s who marched towards the office of the second Principal, the teachers would often remark, “ *Wagh jevo aaye ane bakari jevo jaaye* (He goes like a tiger but he will return like a goat.)” These rapport building practices thus nurtured equality and respect.

Mentoring assumes a key role in the functioning of the school at various levels especially in view of the set traditions. Explaining the practice of allotting duties to teacher for various activities of the school, the librarian clarified that the principle followed in this is to make teams of senior/experienced teacher and a new teacher. This practice facilitated mentoring process which the librarian explained, “*Purani teacher ko sab pata hota hai, vo nai teacher ko bata dete hain, dheere dheere sab seekh jate hain.* (The old teachers know everything, they inform the new teachers, gradually they all learn)” A reiteration of the benefit of this mentoring practice was conveyed in the informal conversation among teachers during recess. The librarian of the school was to retire in a year’s time after a tenure of thirty years. A teacher with five years of experience remarked to her, “Who will guide us from next year?” A strategy employed by the second principal to groom the teachers was not to criticize the failing teachers but to entrust the responsibility of grooming them on the experienced teachers. He would tell the experienced teachers, “*Emne tamara jevu banao* (Help them to be like you).” The young Principal is mentored methodically by the Administrator of the Trust who also was the second Principal of the school. The present Principal informed, “I maintain a diary for the tasks to be done and it also helps me to consult the administrator.” He stated further, “I am in touch with the Administrator and when he is not in country then there are phone calls in the



evening.” A teacher with fifteen years of experience in the school stated, “The Principal is new. We have to allow him to settle. We help him whenever it is required. He also consults us.” In creating this support system, a sense of responsibility is apparent.

There were well laid down practices developed within the school for day to day functioning. When two learners handed over to the supervisor the money collected from the learners of the class for the class photograph, they immediately demanded his signature as acknowledgement. Smiling sheepishly, the Supervisor explained to the researcher, “We have this practice of taking signature whenever money is handed over so that there is no confusion and mismanagement.”

### **5.1.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event 1 Meeting Of Principal, Students And Teachers In The Prayer Hall**

*The purpose of this meeting was to address those students who had failed in the preliminary examination of class X and XII. Approximately a month was left for the final Board examination. The meeting was conducted in the Prayer Hall of the Primary section. It was attended by the Principal, teachers, Supervisor and the students who had failed in Prelims examination.*

*The students spread the durries for the meeting. The peon arranged for chairs for the principal and teachers. After the students and teachers had taken their place, the principal began the address in a calm voice, with lot of concern and absolutely no ridicule, “The first prelims (exam) are over. The result is analysed. Our tradition is to get hundred percent result. It is observed that some students are weak. Parents of weak students have been informed through a meeting held during exam period. This meeting is for you conducted after the exam is over. This result is not the result of your competence but because of some*

*weakness like laziness. Now also there is time. Now in second prelims do you feel there will be difference?" The students nodded their head in agreement. It appeared like a response based on reflex action. The Principal continued, "Hundred percent there will be improvement. There will be a difference. Now you have only told that so you will feel an improvement. So now there will be one more test before second prelims. I have informed parents. Take ten (question) papers, do not solve it, but ensure that you have answers for the questions asked. No one can stop you from (scoring) eighty five percent. The time table will be from 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2009. The order will be the same as in prelims. I hope you will work from your side. Who will benefit?" "We", the students said in a chorus loudly. Some students had smiles of hope on their face. The principal ended the address with satisfaction, "The school result will also improve."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event which occurred in the Prayer Hall of the Primary section brought together three stakeholders: Principal, teachers and learners. The issue was to find ways and means to improve the performance of the learners.

The Principal demonstrated a sense of responsibility in addressing these students. The students also displayed responsibility by spreading the *durries* for the meeting. The Principal's respect for students was manifested in the manner he addressed the students. The tone was positive, encouraging and without any ridicule. He further demonstrated respect for the learners by attributing their failure to some weakness like laziness. He did not demean the individual learner on account of their poor performance. The Principal demonstrated a sense of responsibility by raising the hope among the failed learners that they could also improve their performance. In doing this he demonstrated a respect for the learners. The students also displayed a sense of responsibility as they listened attentively to the Principal.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The researcher could observe congeniality and a sense of comfort among the learners, teachers and the Principal.

During the field work of the researcher in the school for a period of seven days, she could observe a feeling of stability born out of established practices and a feeling of

pride on the achievements. The dynamics of the everyday life of school rested on continuing the traditions. The present Principal's address to the learners of standard X and XII who had failed in the prelim examination relied heavily on the tradition of school. Further, in aligning the individual success of the learners in the Board examination with the success of the school, the Principal found ways of continuing the responsibility of tradition of the school.

**Event 2: Morning Assembly**

*The Morning Assembly was conducted in the Assembly Hall which has a stage. The students sat in class wise rows on the carpet on the space below the stage. Some benches were placed on the sides of the carpet for the teachers. Some benches were placed in front of the carpet in such a way that the teachers sitting on it face the students. The Principal also sat on the bench facing the students.*

*As the students were arriving in the assembly hall, two girl students lighted the incense sticks from the kitchen of school and placed it near the photo of Goddess Saraswati, Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh. One of the students set the mike. The peon helped him to set the mike. By this time all the students and teachers had gathered. There was a group of five students sitting on the stage that led the prayer. The students, teachers and the Principal folded their hands and closed their eyes as the prayer was sung. There were also a few students and teachers who did not fold their hands and close their eyes. The prayer began with the shloka- Tamaso ma jyotirgamay. Then a prayer for Goddess Saraswati was sung.*

*As the prayer was being sung, students in small groups of three to four joined the assembly. They sat quietly in the last rows. The school follows the system of allotting the duty of cleaning of classrooms by students on rotation basis. As and when the students finish the task of cleaning the classrooms, they join the morning assembly. They quietly sat in the last row.*

*After the prayer was over, the Principal stood up. He addressed the students, "We have with us a researcher who is working on Ph. D. She*

*is going to observe our school. She is studying good schools and wants to know what happens in good schools. All of you continue to do whatever you are doing, be natural." Most of the students glanced on both sides to see who the researcher was. The teachers did not make any attempt to see the researcher. Two or three teachers appeared to talk to each other.*

*The Principal continued in the same tone, "Also remember that practical exam of P T would start from Monday. The time table has been put up on the bulletin board."*

*The announcements by the Principal marked the end of the assembly. The students and the teachers began to leave the Assembly Hall in line. Gradually the murmuring level of the students rose.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event, marking the beginning of the everyday life in a school, occurred in the Assembly Hall which brought the three stakeholders together. It had its own tradition of a 'sit down' assembly.

The students demonstrated a sense of responsibility by making arrangements for the assembly. A sense of responsibility of the Principal, teachers and the students was observed as they all prayed together with almost every one following the ritual of praying (closing their eyes and folding their hands). An absence of this responsibility was observed in some teachers and students who did not follow the ritual of prayer. By joining the assembly after completing the task of cleaning the classroom, the learners displayed a sense of responsibility. In praying together as a collective identity equality among the three stakeholders was manifested. The Principal demonstrated a sense of responsibility by declaring the presence of an external (researcher) in school and reminding the students about the PT examination. By providing this information in a common platform, the Principal also created an equal access to information for all stakeholders.

### ***Analytic view of event***

An ease in the conduct of assembly was observed. Everything appeared to occur naturally. An excessive emphasis on maintaining order was not observed. The facial expression on the face of learners indicated their involvement.

The practice of joining the morning assembly, praying along with the students with folded hands and closed eyes was initiated by the second Principal who was also the present Administrator of the Trust. This practice was also adopted by the present Principal.

### **Event 3      Teaching Learning Process**

*It was standard IX A. The teacher was teaching Mathematics. The teacher drew a line on the right side of blackboard. Indicating to the column thus created, the teacher said, "This space is for revision. Let us revise."*

*Two students got up from the last row and sat in the vacant benches in front.*

*Looking at them with surprise, the teacher said, "Why?" Then she nodded her head to indicate that she understood and further said, "Oh cross ma pade che (vision is blocked from that side) OK."*

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*It was Maths class in IX C. The teacher went near the blackboard and drew a figure. Looking at a particular student named Kevalya, she asked, "Kevalya, what will you do?"*

*Kevalya got up and shook his head to indicate that he did not know the answer.*

*The teacher coaxed him, "Try to kar (try)"*

*Kevalya made no attempt to try, continued to look at the figure drawn on the blackboard and remained silent.*

*The teacher then looked at all the students. She said in a voice of concern, "In maths even if there is confusion in one step, clarify it. Do not be lazy that we will learn it. That time it will help but later you may not be able to solve the sum. Game atlu samay jaay(Let as much time as needed be used.) Get it (the difficulty) clarified."*

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*It was 13<sup>th</sup> of February. The period was of Business Organization. The topic taken by the teacher was 'Types of Finance'. As the teacher entered the class the students got up to wish her. The teacher looked at all of them, wished them and asked them to sit down. The teacher then looked at all the students. She paused. Then she asked, "How are you going to celebrate Valentine's Day?"*

*On hearing this question there was a roar of laughter. Teacher also smiled. Then she began to distribute a leaflet to all the students. The leaflet was on matru pitru puja divas- 14<sup>th</sup> February (the day of worship of mother and father). After this the teacher wrote the topic on the blackboard – 'Types of finance: Sources'*

*T- Before coming to the topic I want to tell you something. We have different cultures. We should take the best from Western culture also. In our culture ways of expressing love are different. Some relations are made while some are with us by birth like our relations with our parents. Our relations with wife, husband and friends are made.*

*T-(Looks at all the students) Do you want to ask anything? (smiles)*

*(Students laugh. The teacher looks at them with an expression of understanding.)*

### **Synoptic view of event**

In the first event a sense of comfort was observed among the learners as two learners shifted from their place to get a better visibility of the blackboard. The other learners also did not appear to be bothered by it. The learners' act of shifting their place to create better view of the blackboard was a simple act of freedom. By communicating that she understood the reason for the learners to move from their place, the teacher ensured freedom of learners.

In the second event the learner did not know the answer. By offering an opportunity to attempt (*try to kar*) the teacher facilitated the learner to exercise freedom to attempt. The learner however did not use this freedom. Instead of pursuing the learner further, the teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility by informing all the learners that they must understand the essentials of a subject.

In the third event the teacher exhibited awareness about the social influences on the students. The school's response to the celebration of Valentine's Day was countering

it with the presentation of *Matru Pitru Pujan Divas*. The approach of the teacher to the issue was devoid of any coercion. It focused on presenting various alternatives. The teacher also created freedom for the learners to express their views on the subject. The response of the teacher to the students' response of laughter also was accepted with a smile of understanding which protected the freedom of learners.

#### *Analytic view of event*

In all the three events the teachers were calm and composed. The three teachers in these three events were driven by sense of responsibility. In all the three events the vision and mission of the school to impart good education impacts the everyday life. The interpretation of good education in each event is different. In the first event it is to understand the needs of learners, in the second event it is informing the learners the need to know the essentials of a subject and in the third event it becomes a counter influence on the social influences.

#### **Event 4      Dealing With Erring Learners**

*The morning assembly was over. The students and the teachers were going back to their classes from the Assembly Hall. One student was standing in a corner of the assembly hall. He had been punished as he was teasing a girl. Before leaving the assembly hall, the Principal called aside one of the teachers. He told her in a very low voice but with concern, "Please talk to this boy, it is complained that he teased a girl." Nodding her head, the teacher walked towards the boy. Sensing that the teacher is walking towards him, the boy looked down. The teacher asked him in a very normal tone, "So did you tease the girl?" Looking down the boy denied shaking his head vigorously. The teacher continued in the same tone, "If you have done so, tell me." This time the boy looked at the teacher but was silent. There was silence for a minute. The teacher observed the face of the student carefully. The teacher then placed her hand on his shoulder with affection, "OK see that it is not repeated." The boy looks down. His eyes appeared watery.*

*The teacher then walked back to the school. On the way, she shared her opinion with the researcher, "I believe that we must treat students as friends. The most notorious and mischievous students are my*

*favourite students. It makes a difference (to them). No one has cared for them so they became like this. They are labeled- 'aa to aavaach che' (he is like this only). Then they become like that only." Then the voice of the teacher is choked with emotion. She says, "See the most intelligent students are remembered but we have to care about these students."*

\*

*It was standard XI. In commerce subject the topic taken up by the teacher was 'Types of Finance'. After discussing the major types of finance, the teacher looked at a student. She said, "Why have you not cut hair? You can go for style in college. In school you all must be disciplined. All of you are losing interest in school. For this tuition is responsible."*

*There was a spontaneous burst of laughter.*

*After pausing for a while, the teacher asked, "Are values taught in school or in tuition?"*

*On student answered boldly and promptly, "Tuition."*

*Again all students laughed.*

*The teacher asked calmly, "Who said it?"*

*Two students answered almost simultaneously, "Vishwas, he has not been coming to school since many days."*

*Looking at Vishwas, the teacher said in an affectionate tone, "Vishwas come to school sometimes. But I must say that if you don't come to school I don't enjoy. And Vishwas do something about your hair."*

*Vishwas (the student) looked at teacher and then took the text book in his hand. The teacher began to explain further. Many students referred their textbooks. Some of them continued to smile even as they listened to the teacher.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

In the first event, it was a case of handling the erring learner. The base for handling the learner was freedom of learner and an avoidance 'imposed discipline'. The Principal let the issue be handled by teacher instead of handling it himself and secondly, he instructed the teacher to talk. The choice of 'talking' as against 'scolding/punishing' created an opportunity for the learner to exercise his freedom by



offering his perspective. The learner however, did not exercise his freedom. The teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility as she at first aimed at knowing if the learner had really teased the girl. Later on she left that line of inquiry and said with a touch of concern that it should not be repeated. It was tacitly accepted that the boy had teased a girl. The approach to dealing with the erring learners is based on a sense of responsibility and respect for individual learner.

In the second event, the teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility as she faced the challenge of refocusing the learners' attention on the rules and regulations of the school with respect to attendance and turnout. The teacher exercised her freedom to integrate it with the regular teaching learning process in the classroom. The approach was based on care and concern demonstrated through the affectionate tone which displayed respect for the students. The students too were ensured their freedom of expression as the teacher did not suppress their response. The students however displayed an absence of a sense of responsibility in the manner of responding to the teacher.

#### *Analytic view of event*

The personal beliefs of the teacher also come into play when dealing with the erring learners. The care and concern for nurturing the learners was also expressed in severe measures when required. This teacher informed the researcher that a learner who had got into the habit of stealing money from home was disciplined with corporal punishment by the second Principal after counseling by him had failed. The teacher with fifteen years of experience informed in a reflective mood, "That student settled abroad. He still remembers the corporal punishment, he says it improved him."

The second event presented the problem of meeting the indirect challenge of alternative institutions (tuition classes) impacting the students and indirectly the functioning of school. This challenge impelled the teacher to interpret the sense of responsibility in dealing with the students to comply with the rules and regulations of the school.

## **Event 5**

### **Discussion Among Learners In The Absence Of A Teacher**

*It was IX C class. The teacher had not come to the class. The students were talking among themselves. The sound of the 'talk' among the students was not loud enough to disturb the neighbouring classes. The two monitors of the class stood near the teacher's table. One of the monitors would write on the blackboard the names of those students who talked.*

*One student called a teacher from the next class. The teacher entered the classroom.*

*T- What are all of you doing? Have you all studied?*

*Four students raise their hand.*

*T- Do it. Do your work.*

*The monitors erase the names of the students written on the blackboard. Teacher leaves the class.*

*Students began to talk. But the voice level is low. Some of them were doing their own work like completing question answers. Some were doing map work. From the two monitors standing near the blackboard facing the students, one monitor looked around and said softly, "Do your work." The second monitor had kept a drawing notebook on the teacher's table. She was drawing. In between she also looked at the students.*

\*

*Students of standard X and XII were on study leave hence regular classes for these two standards were suspended. Students of standard X were called to school especially for the class photograph. About thirteen students had arrived half an hour earlier than the scheduled time of 9 am . They gathered in their classroom. Three students were reading a set of question papers of different schools of the city.*

*One student (S1) read aloud a question, "What is NEERI?" Looking at the student sitting next to him he asked, "What is the answer?"*

*The second student (S2) said loudly and excitedly, "National Environmental Engineering Research Institute. It is given in the textbook."*

*The third student (S3) said in a worried tone, "See here, what is CAC?"*

*The first student (S1) answered quietly, "I know this- Cordex Alimentarious Commission." The third student (S3) read the question paper of Sanskrit subject. He remarked, "In Sanskrit, translation of Gujarati sentences into Sanskrit is asked. It is said that the base of grammar should be strong for this." Then he said, "Memorize some sentences (and) you will be able to do (attempt the grammar question well)."*

*As the discussion among students got a little louder, one of the students got up and sat in a corner. He read his book silently.*

*The class teacher entered the class in a hurried manner. On seeing their class teacher, the second student (S2) complained, "Madam still others have not come."*

*The teacher said calmly, "They were called at 9 am. Now it is only 8.30 am."*

*The teacher sat down on the teacher's chair. One of the students approached her with a textbook to clarify his doubt.*

*Two students (S5 and S6) were sitting on one side of the classroom. Both were solving sums from mathematics. The sum taken up was-  $(x-2)^2 + (y-3)^3 = 0 = (?)$ . One of these two students (S5) looked confused and kept staring at the sum written in a notebook. Looking at her the other student (S6) said in a tone of consoling, "It is simple. Try it." The student (S5) still looked confused and uncertain. Then the other student (S6) solved the sum. The first student (S5) noted the steps of the sum. When she completed the steps she (S6) smiled with satisfaction, "I learnt it yesterday only. Understand and do it." The first student (S5) read all the steps of the sum again. She shook her head. It appeared she had not fully understood the steps to be followed. She read the steps again. The first student (S5) stood up saying, "I want to clarify a doubt with madam," She discussed with the teacher her query.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is a site of learning in school. There was no teacher in this class. One of the students exercised his freedom and sense of responsibility to call a teacher from the neighbouring class. That teacher displayed a

sense of responsibility by attending to the students and instructing them to do their work.

The monitors demonstrated a sense of responsibility as they themselves engaged in doing some work thereby setting example for the other students. Some learners demonstrated a sense of responsibility as they utilized the 'free' period on account of the absence of teacher by not disturbing others and moving away from their place. They however did not utilize their time fruitfully as they relaxed by talking among themselves in low voices. Their facial expression indicated it was not related to studies. Some other learners demonstrated sense of responsibility by utilizing the time to complete their work.

In the second event, the learners demonstrated a sense of responsibility as they fruitfully utilized time even in the absence of teacher for clarifying doubts in various ways such as by peer tutoring (here providing tips to the other learners and explaining a particular sum), by discussing in group and seeking clarification from teacher. The learners exercised freedom in choosing the manner of clarifying their doubts. The freedom was exercised as they approached other learners of the class as well as with teachers. Freedom for learners was manifest when a particular learner chose to study individually rather than in group. In a general way freedom of expression was observed when the learners voiced concern about the absence of other learners. By presenting the hope and the possibility that the other learner could also solve the sum, the learner displayed respect for the learner.

### ***Analytic view of event***

In the first event the learners appeared relaxed. The monitors were not authoritarian. The task of writing names of learners who were talking on the blackboard appeared to be a routine matter to which the learners did not pay much attention. From outside the classroom, it was difficult to judge if a teacher was present in the class or not. The learners exhibited self discipline.

In the second event the learners had met each other after a gap, a lot of excitement was observed in the classroom. Even the arrival of the teacher did not curb the excitement. The researcher could sense informality between the teacher and the learners. The tone of speech of conversation among them was more or less casual.

**Event 6: Informal Discussion Among Teachers in the Staffroom During Recess**

*The school provided snacks and tea at subsidized rate to the teachers during recess. The teachers gathered in staffroom during recess for this. The principal is served snacks and tea in his office. The lady teachers sat together in a group while the gents teachers sat in another group. Some were assessing the written work of students (checking the notebooks), some of them just relaxed doing nothing while some were conversing. The peon brought tea and snacks which he placed on a table in the centre. The teacher served themselves tea and snacks.*

*In the group of lady teachers there were four teachers and one librarian. The librarian was to retire in about a year's time. Informal conversation occurred among these teachers.*

*One teacher (T1) looking at another teacher (T2) said, "Next year the class (that is allotted to a teacher as a class teacher) will change by rotation. So you will get IX C."*

*The teacher (T2) appeared to think for a minute then she said with a smile, "IXC is the most notorious class. It is also equally brilliant. If they do well they will do very well but if they decide on mischief then that also they will do well."*

*The third teacher(T3) was lost in thoughts. She said, "Now I will be completing 19 years of service. I feel relaxed. Doing a job is not compulsion now."*

*The first teacher(T1) asked the librarian, "How was yesterdays' Old Students Association (OSA) function. I had not come."*

*The librarian replied, "It was nice. Then sir (principal) said why not have an Old Teachers Association."*

*The third teacher (T3) said, "That is nice."*

*The second teacher(T2) told the librarian, " Now you will retire next year, then who will counsel us from next year?"*

*The librarian smiled but did not say anything.*

*The second teacher(T2) made a remark, "This year PT practical and computer is scheduled on the same day. This is good. Relax, only one day is 'wasted'."*

*By this time the bell for the recess rang. The teachers got ready to go their classes.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in staffroom during recess. Mutual respect and equality among the senior colleague and the junior colleagues was observed as they sat together in a small group engaged in conversation. Respect for the experience for a senior colleague (here librarian) is observed as also a sense of responsibility demonstrated indirectly through a willingness to learn from her. Respect for learners was observed as the teacher acknowledged both the good and the bad qualities of learners to present a balanced view. Freedom of expression was exhibited as the teachers freely expressed their opinion on the schedule of PT practical and computer examination. A sense of responsibility among teachers is observed as they update their information about school activities.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The staffroom during recess became an informal space created within the formal setting of school. The practice of serving tea and snacks in the staffroom created an opportunity for the teachers to interact with each other informally and to relax. Such informal space aids certain kinds of exchanges among teachers about their own fears, desires and sense of history. The informal conversation among the teachers during recess indicated cordiality among the teachers of this school. The very making of an informal space of teachers within the formal space of school, facilitated a form of bonding among teachers as stakeholder. It became a moment to reflect as stakeholders. The regular informal spaces allow this distinct group of stake holders to reinforce their identity. This identity of teachers as stakeholders becomes important in this school as they are systematically addressed through the sustained professional development programs.

## **Event 7: Meeting of the Teachers, Supervisor and the Principal for Organizing**

### **Picnic**

*In this school, one day picnics were arranged class-wise so the class teachers of each class were responsible for the picnic for their class. Long tours of for a week or so were also arranged for students. Dalhousie as the destination for a long tour was decided. The Principal had called teachers to his office for organizing one day picnic for students of standard VIII. After attending to a telephone call, the Principal begins the meeting.*

*P-So, what about Dalhousie?*

*T- Some students have given money.*

*Supervisor- So it has to be activated.*

*P- So which date is to be fixed (for the picnic) – (is it) 23<sup>rd</sup> ?*

*(There is silence.)*

*P- It is fixed so.....(in a low and inquiring tone) is it because it is Mahashivratri? (with smile) Make sweet potato sheera. I will give one day leave during post prelims as compensatory leave.*

*(There is silence. The teachers fidget in their place.)*

*P- Now I want to know what is the problem with the date 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

*T1- These two teachers have to go out. I have to attend a wedding.*

*P- The year is ending and the activity (picnic) is not completed.*

*T- We are ready to forgo our compensatory leave. And take students for picnic on any other day.*

*P- (checks the calendar and thinks...) Is 24<sup>th</sup> ok ?*

*T1,T2, T3- Yes.*

*P- 24 is fixed.*

*T2- Sir I have to go out of Baroda on Shivratri so...*

*P- In government job the aashta (Faith in religion) can be less. If ministers are going to look at auspicious occasions then how will they function? (There was gentle humour in his voice.)*

*(Teachers are silent.)*

*T1- So now we will make the circular.*

*P- Now, make this final. No turning back. Make the calculations. Is the caterer decided?*

*T2-Not yet.*

*P- Let us call someone else this time. We must change the caterer. Decide the menu which the students will like. It is not Shivratri now (on the day of the picnic) so there will not be any problem.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in the Principal's office which is a focal site for the management of school. The issue was fixing the schedule of the picnic over which there was disagreement between the teachers and the Principal.

The Principal's approach to the problem was based on a sense of responsibility as he reminded the teachers of their task; inquired into the problems of teachers; inquired for the cause of disagreement; suggested a way out for the given situation (here picnic falling on a day of fasting and a holiday); and explained in a lighter tone the perspective to be adopted when personal faith and institutional obligations clashed. By agreeing to change the date of picnic, the Principal displayed respect for the teachers and their perspectives/problems. The teachers exercised freedom by communicating their disagreement through silence and further by explaining their problems. The Principal safe guarded the freedom for teachers by listening to and accepting their perspective. The teachers also demonstrated a sense of responsibility by suggesting that they would forgo the compensatory leave.

When the teachers entered the principal's office, their body language suggested displeasure. The facial expression suggested that they wanted to speak but were not certain if they could express their perspective. The teachers relaxed and indicated enthusiasm as soon as their perspective was accepted. The principal's tone of communication alternated between strictness, tone of inquiry and gentle humour. The principal appeared relaxed at the end of the meeting. The teachers also appeared relaxed.



### *Analytic view of event*

An open communication between the teachers and the Principal was observed. All were free to express ideas. The school actively engaged with various stakeholders: learners, teachers and parents to ensure their collaboration and support for the smooth functioning of school. The Principal's manner of engaging with the teachers and arriving at a commonly acceptable decision was a part of this engagement with the stakeholders to ensure smooth *functioning of school*.

### **EVENT 9: Interaction Between Learner and Teacher in Library**

*A teacher was reading a book in the library. It was study leave period for students of standard X and XII. These students were called to the school for class photograph. About an hour had passed after the students had gathered in the school. A student of standard XII approached her.*

*S- Madam, when is the photo session?*

*T- (pauses for a while) Ask the supervisor.*

*S- I asked but he said, later. Now this is not an answer. (Shows displeasure by facial expression.)*

*T- (pauses) He must be taking B. Ed. Annual Test Lesson so he must be busy. OK you tell him that we are students of XII standard so we would not like to waste time.*

*S- Madam the students giving extra practice exam will be free at 11.00 am so the photo session will be at 11.00 am. Then so much time waste.....*

*T- Read something.*

*S- We have not brought anything.*

*T- Take book from my table and read.*

*S- OK*

### *Synoptic view of event*

This event in which a learner voiced her grievance occurred in library. A fine balance between sense of responsibility and freedom was demonstrated by the learner as she exercised freedom to voice protest based on her sense of responsibility in view of waste of time being experienced. Freedom enjoyed by the learners was expressed as the learner inquired about the activity of the school (here the delay in the photo session). The learner also expressed displeasure and disagreement about the answer given for her query by the Supervisor. The teacher displayed sense of responsibility by exercising constraint in answering and directing the learner to the appropriate authority; by explaining the organizational duties of the authority in school; and by suggesting an alternative beneficial way for the learner in the given context. In suggesting the alternative to the student the teacher exercised her freedom and responsibility as a professional. This was also done with all respect and humility.

### *Analytic view of event*

Though annoyed, the student was disciplined, responsible and respectful. The teacher was calm and composed. When the formal organizational structure did not function well the student recognized informal structures of authority in the school which in this case was the senior teacher. The teacher who represented the informal power structure however did not upset the organizational hierarchy. She doesn't challenge the formal power structure which in this case is the Supervisor.

## **5.1.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### **Learners**

The grant-in-aid status of the school administratively doesn't restrict access to learners from any particular socio-economic section of the society, thereby equality is ensured for learners. Children of employees of the industry in both the higher cadre and the lower cadre of posts studied in the school. A former student who is also the librarian of the school observed that any kind of discrimination or special treatment to

any group was not observed. The reason for this stated by her were the 'sanskar' (culture) all received at home. It appeared that the 'sanskar' that the learners and the teachers brought to school set equality of treatment for all learners. That these 'sanskars' were acceptable pattern of treatment for all learners was a tacit tradition of the school which nurtured equality for learners. Post liberalization in 1990s, a trend to join English medium schools was observed following which children of higher economic income group section joined English medium schools. This school today has largely children of middle income group section of the society thereby any major socio-economic discrepancy among the learners does not exist.

Freedom of expression was enjoyed by the learners in their communication with teachers and principal. A channel for free expression for learners on any aspect of school was created in the form of suggestion box. Suggestions thus received were addressed in the assembly by the principal. The freedom that marked the relation between students and teachers/principal was explained by the President of the Old Students Association.

*"We were the students of standard XI. After a poem was taught, we were asked to write answers to questions. Many of us did not do it. So the teacher sent us out of the class. The teacher thought that now these students feel as if they are grown up and are college students. When the principal saw us he inquired about the reason for being out of the class. The situation was explained. Then the principal asked us why we had not done the home work. After some time one of us said the truth that the guide is not available in the market and we did not understand the poem so we have not written question answers. What ever had been understood by us that much had been written. The principal smiled and said in a relaxed way that if that was so why didn't you ask the teacher to explain the poem again. He then asked the teacher in a friendly way to explain the poem again. The teacher said that if it was so why we didn't ask him to explain the poem again. The poem was explained and we completed the task. There were no unnecessary punishments or ugly scenes. Such was our relationship with teachers and Principal."*

In this event though the freedom of learners to communicate is visible but the use of the freedom in the teaching learning process to seek more clarification or requesting

teacher for repetition is not observed. The researcher observed students' freedom in interaction with teachers several times during the field work.

In their dealing with each other and with teachers the learners displayed respect manifested in language and tone of communication. Incidents rupturing smooth functioning of school among the learners during the period of study were not observed.

A Sense of Responsibility manifested through the self discipline of learners characterizing their conduct in the school. As one walked the corridors of the school it was difficult to identify the presence or absence of a teacher in the class. A conscious effort for maintaining discipline was not observed. During the period of study, in an address to the learners on career guidance, the invited resource person highlighted the discipline of the school, "Your school is known for its discipline." The supervisor of the pre-primary section recalled her experience as a student in this school, "We studied but we enjoyed also. *Main to bahut masti karti thee* (I used to play many pranks)."

### **Teachers**

The factors that have the potential to create inequality among the teachers are: special preference in the recruitment policy, experience in the school or any special privileges granted. The recruitment policy of the State Education Department which is mandatory for the school to follow owing to its grant-in-aid status plays the role of equalizer for the teachers. The composition of teachers in terms of experience in school is mixed. There were four teachers trained under the first principal and ten teachers who had experience of five years and less in the school. The rest of the teachers had experience in the range of twenty to fifteen years. This group of teachers with more than twenty years of experience provided continuity of tradition of school. Inequality created on the ground of experience is neutralized as the experienced teachers have the responsibility to mentor the inexperienced and new teachers. Though mentoring provides equal opportunity to all teachers to learn, only those teachers who were the ablest for a particular task were selected for it. The supervisor of the pre-primary section remarked, "The second principal was very clear when it came to public functions. Within school I got a chance to speak before an audience but when it came to presentation in public, another teacher who was good in public

speaking would be given the chance.” All the teachers had equal access to information as the circulars from State Education Department were circulated in time.

Freedom for teachers was experienced as expression of views and displeasures among themselves and with the principal. The supervisor of the pre-primary section reflected, “Generally what is decided is done.” The second principal adopted the strategy of not denying immediately but allowing a teacher the freedom to attempt. The supervisor of the pre-primary section recalled, “One of the teachers wanted to conduct a research in our school. The second principal was convinced that it will not be successful. Yet he allowed the teacher to conduct the research. When the research could not be completed, he commented that he already knew that it could not be done. But had he told this to the teacher, the teacher would have been offended. So he wanted the teacher to discover it for himself.”

A respect for each other as colleagues was manifested in the camaraderie felt among the teachers. The general tone in communication was friendly. The teachers listened to the each other. There was a general appreciation for the others. Observing the rehearsal of the pre-primary section on the open stage during the period of study, a teacher of the secondary section remarked, “They (teachers of the pre-primary section) prepare the small children so well for the program. They work very hard with them.”

In the accomplishment of the duties, the teachers demonstrated a sense of responsibility which was expressed through their mutual consultations and their brisk walk to the classroom to teach. They appeared well prepared, utilized the allotted time for teaching and guiding the students.

### **Principal**

The dynamics of relationship between the principals and the Trust defined the freedom of the principals in managing the school. The first two principal ensured freedom for them selves through proven performance and commitment to school. The freedom of the first principal was described by the supervisor of the pre-primary section as ‘no one could oppose her.’ The first principal was a dynamic personality described as ‘*Prakhar Kelavanikar*’ by a teacher from one of the schools managed by the Trust. Her scope of influence went beyond the school as she was retained by the

Trust after her retirement as an administrator. She also became the President of the Nagar Prathamik Shikshan Samiti, of the city. The librarian described the second principal freedom enjoyed by the second principal as 'Trust does not refuse principal's suggestions.' The second principal employed the criteria of proven performance in ensuring freedom for the other stakeholders in school. Explaining the freedom in administrative matters especially for admission of students that she enjoys, the pre-primary supervisor informed, "I did not get this freedom easily. He (the second principal) tried and tested me and when he was sure that I could be trusted did I get this freedom."

#### **5.1.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

##### **Freedom**

In this school the manifestation of freedom was in the form of expression of views by students and teachers. The students could express displeasure to the teacher over the school activities. Students could explain their difficulties to the teacher/s and/or principal. The students had access to teachers to clarify doubts. Students could engage in conversation with the principal on matters of general interest. Mechanism for ensuring freedom for learners was created in the form of suggestion box which was attended to by the principal and teachers. The perception of teachers regarding freedom was "we are free" but specifics of the freedom could not be elaborated by them. There was an openness to share information about the school in general. Principals enjoyed freedom for taking initiatives. The principals had the freedom to outgrow the school as their sphere of influence went beyond the school.

The freedom created a better exchange of ideas between the stakeholders. This facilitated two processes: smooth management and achievement of institutional goals. However, the translation of freedom experienced by the learners into dynamic interactions between student and teachers in the teaching learning process was not much visible. The principal's freedom was in proportion to their sense of

responsibility as demonstrated through their commitment to school. The present principal appeared not to have gained much freedom in this respect.

### **Respect**

The idea of respect which caught immediate attention was demonstrated in the language and the tone used for communication among the stakeholders. A practice of addressing the learners by affectionate and socially respectful terms was observed (*bhailu, chella bhai, ben*). The recruitment policy for teachers exhibits respect for merit of an individual. The rapport building initiatives signify respect for the other stakeholders. The general goal appeared coalescence against competitiveness. Thus there was respect for each stakeholder considering their strengths, weaknesses and the scope for improving. Some times respect which was manifest through tone adopted in communication got challenged as the teachers became overpowered by their sense of responsibility.

### **Equality**

Equality permeated the ethos in school. The policy, programs and past initiatives demonstrate a collective endeavour engaging different stakeholders. The collective endeavour underlies equality and respect for the various stakeholders. The compulsory nature of professional development programs for teachers and the involvement all the students in the in school programs reiterate equality.

Equality was the basis of treatment of learners. Classroom teaching learning processes maintained equality of opportunity through the order decided for responding ('turn by turn'; 'have you got chance?'). An endeavour to develop equality ignoring gender based societal norms of inequality was observed. The principle of making duty allocation which made the teachers irrespective of seniority and section-pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher secondary work collaboratively.

### **A Sense of Responsibility**

The school was established as an act of corporate social responsibility. Self-discipline and due diligence marked the working in this school. Performing one's task well was the manifestation of a sense of responsibility. The teachers attended to their tasks with

adequate knowledge and preparation. The teachers' endeavour was to perform their task (teaching, guiding students, updating content related knowledge, integrating values in teaching; learning process ) in an orderly manner. The driving force of teachers' sense of responsibility was the respect they enjoyed, a sense of comfort in school '*ghar jaisa lagata hain*' ( It feels like being at home) and the sustained professional development. The learners were self-disciplined which was manifested in their effort to utilize time fruitfully in school and in the manner of doing their work causing least disturbance to others. The Principal's sense of responsibility found expression in maintaining traditions and facilitating smooth functioning of school.

### **5.1.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Sustained professional development of all teachers***

The teachers as stakeholders were addressed through a well devised sustained professional development program that focused on understanding and learning the contemporary trends. This was initiated by the first principal, improved upon by the second principal and continued in the same spirit in the present.

#### ***Continuity of traditions of the school through knowledge management***

Very few changes in the policy and programs of the schools were observed over a long period of almost fifty years of its establishment. The knowledge generated in the two long tenures of the first two principals was retained by the Trust in the school by continuing their association with the school through post retirement administrative positions. The strategy of knowledge management served the purpose of sustenance of Academic Culture nurtured. The stability and continuity to the school was thus provided. At the same time, it enabled success planning through mentoring of the future principal to provide leadership for Academic Culture.

#### ***Mentoring***

A conduit for the continuity of traditions was found in mentoring. The grooming of the new entrants to the school: teacher/s or principal/s was undertaken through mentoring. A formal structure created was the teaming of senior and junior teacher.



The new principal was mentored by the former principal. Mentoring also occurred in informal ways as teachers shared best practices.

### ***Well defined management of stakeholder***

The school recognized learners, teachers and parents as important stakeholders in the collective endeavour of pursuing knowledge in school. The learners were granted freedom of involvement into the decision making of school through devices of suggestion box and creating platform for free expression of views and displeasures. Recognizing that some senior teachers aspired for the post of principal after the retirement of the first principal, the second principal chose to ignore them. Instead he focused on mentoring the new teachers. Parents as stakeholders were catered to by establishing a formal platform of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) for them. The school engaged with the parents at various levels: in small groups in class wise parents teachers meetings which were organized on Sunday for convenience of all working parents; and in large groups in the parents teachers tour (*Vaali pravas*). The nature of interaction at the *Vaali Pravas* facilitated engagement of the teachers and parents at informal level also. This was a strategy for developing rapport.

The school also enabled the parents by providing exposure to the parents through the platform of *Vaali Seminar*. A shared responsibility based on equality and respect between the school and the parents on education in general and school in particular thus was nurtured.

The alumni student association of the school, Old Students Association (OSA), was another formal platform for engaging with the former students. By creating the convention that the president of PTA will be the Vice president of OSA vice versa the next year, the former students and the parents both were included in the management of school.

### ***Culture of listening as part of open communication strategy***

In the everyday life in school the practices which nurtured academic culture were open communication among the stakeholders. There was exchange of perspectives among teachers, between teachers and principal and between teacher and learner. Listening proved to be a significant tool for this.

Thus it can be stated that the various processes of nurturing Academic Culture in school are hinged on the basic feature of this school: continuity of traditions. The school becomes a continuous experience across the spectrum of stakeholders. This is achieved through engaging, enabling and leveraging these for the strengthening of the Academic Culture of the school. The processes of sustained professional development, mentoring, knowledge management and the strategy of managing all stakeholders-parents, teachers, learners, alumni through formal organizations facilitate the basic feature of this school.

In engaging with the range of stakeholders and through the formation of partnerships was centered on these cardinal constituents of Academic Culture- a sense of responsibility, equality and respect.

### **5.1.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Confidence in the school***

The ease with which the researcher was accepted and helped to gain an insight into the school indicates an overall confidence and pride of the stakeholders: learners and teachers in the institution, its traditions and the capacity of the school to contribute to their development. For learners and teachers and parents the academic culture of the school provided a safe, trusted and a familiar experience. The confidence is seen through willingness to send one's child to the same school.

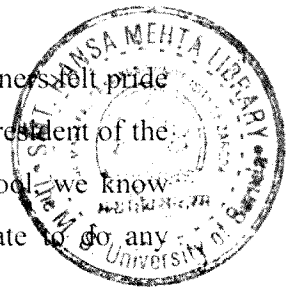
#### ***Teachers***

The Academic Culture developed commitment among the teachers and principal. To a large extent it developed a sense of responsibility among the teachers/principal/s manifest in their general commitment and specific commitments as reflected in the events observed. Performing one's task well appeared a priority. For teachers it was 'teach properly' and 'take care of the weaker ones'. Most of the teachers and principals went about their task with due diligence. The teachers felt pride in belonging to the school.

#### ***Learners***

The learners were 'self-disciplined' in the sense that they kept themselves engaged in some task and/or completed their allotted task in the absence of teachers. They were

conscious of their duty, unhesitating, bold and well-mannered. The learners felt pride in belonging to the school. They were confident and competent as the President of the Old Students Association remarked, "If we meet students of this school, we know they must be knowing all these things." The students did not hesitate to do any manual work or consider some work as 'high' or 'low'.



### 5.1.7 SUMMING UP

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. It is difficult to identify pre dominance of any single constituent. However the events and their analysis indicate the presence of freedom and a sense of responsibility to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through four processes: (i) sustained professional development of all teachers, (ii) continuity of tradition through knowledge management, (iii) mentoring and (iv) well defined management of stakeholder. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school exhibited in pride of the stakeholders in the school, confidence in its ability to contribute to the development of students and a familiar and a safe place where one would like to send one's child; (ii) learners of this school are described as confident, competent, self-disciplined and comfortable with manual work; (iii) teachers are observed as committed, took pride in belonging to the institution, doing their tasks with due diligence.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## **5.2 CASE: 2**

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### **5.2.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY**

Obtaining permission for conducting research in this school was an easy task as it was granted immediately. After agreeing readily, the Director of the school asked the researcher to meet the Vice- principal who was also the In-charge Principal of the school. The Director also introduced the researcher to two senior teachers who happened to be in his office at that time. The Vice- principal demanded a formal letter of permission. He said, "It is needed as a part of the formality." A general confidence and pride in the institution was observed as the Vice- principal told the Coordinator of the junior section, "She is doing research on our school. Coordinate her activities. Show her what she wants to see." Thus amidst attending to their various administrative tasks, the researcher was directed to the next level of authority successively before data collection could be started. As the Coordinator took the researcher on a round of the school, he beamed with pride as he showed her the various sites of the school. He asked her to sit in the staffroom with the teachers whenever she wanted to.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were the teaching learning processes in various classes and on playground, the morning assembly, lunch period in the dining hall, library period, an inter house quiz on mathematics, the conduct of practical examination in computer laboratory and a meeting of the Director, Vice- principal and teachers . In addition to these the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s and the principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were two teachers with thirty years of experience in the school. One of the former principals and the present Vice- principal directed the researcher to these teachers. The Coordinator of the junior section introduced both the teachers as 'they know the school right from the beginning.' In addition to these, interview of a teacher who had joined the school after twenty years of experience in Kendriya Vidyalaya and who

was with this school for the past seven years was conducted. One teacher with twenty years of experience and who was also a former hostel warden voluntarily shared his perspective on the school. Interview of two former students was also conducted. There were also conversations with teachers and students on various sites of the school. A keen interest to share information on their school was observed. One of the teachers interviewed exclaimed, “Oh I have revived memories of the school. I did not understand many decisions then but now I am able to see it in a new perspective.” Care and comfort of the researcher was demonstrated in inquiries made about snacks, tea and lunch.

### **5.2.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

Established in 1966 as one of the chain of schools across the country managed by the Trust, the school takes the name of the Trust and the philanthropist industrialist who donated generously for the school. The colonial rule and the need for regaining a national Indian identity provided a backdrop for the Trust and its mission. Set up in 1938, the Trust was founded to preserve and propagate Sanskrit language. It had grown over the years from being a small indological research institute to a comprehensive, cooperative national movement with an international outlook to promote ethical and spiritual values. The emphasis was on inculcation of value based life through comprehensive educational institutions: from kindergarten to post graduate training in Sanskrit and Vedic studies; dance, drama and music; arts, science, commerce, engineering, management, sociology, life and health sciences. The immediate task for this school appeared to carry forward the vision of the Trust in the local milieu of the city.

This school being a non grant-in-aid school, expenditure is met from fees collected. It is affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education Board (CBSE), New Delhi. It is also a permanent member of the Indian Public School Conference and of National Progressive Schools Conference. The medium of instruction of this school is English. The fee charged for day boarders is Rupees 34,800 per annum while for residential students is Rupees 64,500 per annum. The paying capacity of parent/s does become an important criterion for seeking admission to this school thus restricting admission to

elite section of society. The learner group essentially comes from the elite section of the society, cosmopolitan population of the city, those whose parents have a transferable job across the country and learners requiring hostel facility. The wards of the teaching and non teaching staff of the school also are granted admission.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. As informed by the Director and the Vice- principal of the school the vision of the school is “To be the best school in the state and recognized as bench mark for: High quality education, active contribution to the social development of students and fully satisfy the expectations of the parents and teachers.” The mission of the school is “Pursuit of excellence by enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, to provide value education, bring out the latent potential of the children to the fullest extent possible, and build a happy social environment which characterizes mutual cooperation and trust. The objectives of the school stated are “The school will provide quality education for the all round development of the personality of the child, learning will be child centered and activity based, teaching and learning will be geared to develop creativity and creative thinking skills of children, promotion of national integration and the spirit of universal brotherhood, cultivation of an appreciation for the Indian cultural heritage, effective use of modern educational technology as a tool to groom the students into responsible citizens of the country, and encourage sports and games and other cultural pursuits for the development of leadership qualities.

The vision, mission and objectives indicated an emphasis on quality education and all round development of the child through various approaches. A distinct focus on appreciation for Indian cultural heritage, national integration and universal brotherhood was observed which further reflected the vision and mission of the Trust managing the school. The reflection of the Trust’s vision in the school’s vision, mission and objectives provided a continuity of vision.

Key policy decisions with respect to teachers were recruitment as per the norms established by the Trust. A stringent recruitment process comprising psychoanalysis and interview by a panel with representatives from the Trust office and subject experts is adopted. In a rare case, a teacher opting for hostel duty is given preference. The admission policy for learners is equally rigorous emphasizing on merit of the

learners identified through entrance examination followed by interview. Preference is also given to transfer cases from other schools of the Trust, siblings of students and those who are desirous of availing hostel facility.

As per the vision of the school the programs of the school create opportunities for exposure to various curricular and co curricular activities. The annual function and exhibition of students' projects was an important occasion to showcase students' work for the parents. The valedictory function for the outgoing students of standard XII is a solemn function. In order to develop co operation among the various students and a sense of responsibility for the younger students, inter house competitions are organized. The responsibility of conducting some of the inter house competitions is entrusted to the students of senior and higher secondary section under the guidance of teachers. The program of 'Friday Activity' offers opportunities to students to choose from various options of co curricular activities such as literary, art, sports, music and socially useful productive work (S U P W). The freedom to explore one's likes and talent is ensured as the students are permitted to change their choice of activities in the next year.

As informed by the Vice- principal on the basis of the school records, the total area of the school premises is 36 acres and the built up area is 10 acres. There are three playgrounds spread over an area of 20 acres. There is one open stage with seating capacity of 300 and two auditoriums with seating capacity of 500. The school has clearly demarcated sections for the pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher secondary section. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated with most of the classrooms situated on both sides of corridor.

There are four science laboratories: physics, chemistry, biology and general science and one laboratory for mathematics. The computer laboratory has 48 computers. Two learners work on a computer simultaneously. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records, the library has 20,000 books and 25 journals and magazines. The area of a classroom is 750 square feet. The students' strength ranges from 42 to 44 per class. The classrooms have adequate benches for all learners and space for the teacher to move in the class. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil ratio in a class is 1: 42 and at the maximum level is 1:44. The teacher pupil ratio creates congenial condition for learning.

As one enters the premise of the school, one views a well maintained garden. Near the entrance of the school building, different religious prayers are displayed on the wall of the porch. The simplicity of the furniture of the school strikes immediately particularly in view of the elite learner group of the school. The school premise has plenty of shady trees. One of the teachers of the junior section with twenty five years of experience remarked, “We are lucky to have a spacious and beautiful campus with so many trees. Children love to walk on the campus. Very few schools have such space.”

The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.2.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.2.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. The school is forty three years old (1966- 2009). It has been administered by seven principals in the span of forty two years. The current principal, appointed as Vice- principal and In- charge Principal, was in chair for one year. He assumed leadership of the school as principal after the completion of his tenure of one year of as Vice- principal. Overall the school had a stable leadership in the first twenty years (1966 to 1994) which was administered by four principals. After this the next fifteen years (1994 to 2009) was a period of comparative quick succession of principals as it was administered by four principals. A teacher with



thirty years of experience in the school identified broadly three distinct phases in the development of school irrespective of the tenure of the principals, “The first phase was for strengthening classroom teaching and academics in general. In the second phase the teachers were quite well set for functioning within the school so it focused on more exposure and professional development. The third phase aimed at growing beyond the school.” Speaking of the initiatives taken by each principal, she said, “Each principal did the right thing at the right time.”

The vision, mission and objectives of the school and Trust highlight respect and equality for all. Overtly it focuses on quality education, all round development of students, value education, appreciation of Indian culture, and equipping students with modern technological tools/skills. The vision statement of the Trust ‘Let noble thoughts come to us from every side’ indicates openness and thereby a respect for all. It is a blend of being rooted in the Indian soil and encompassing the best of the modern world which characterizes the vision of the Trust. However, a teacher with the school for the last twenty four years observed that more concentrated efforts for the internalization of the Trust’s vision by the stakeholders in school were needed. He remarked, “Conscious and deliberate rituals to transmit the vision of the Trust are not observed. In my career of twenty four years, an orientation or a symposium on the Trust’s vision has not been organized. The school thus functions like any other school.” However, traces of the Trust’s emphasis on the revival of Indian cultural heritage are reflected in some traditions followed in school. One such tradition is that of distribution of copies of ‘Gita’ (the holy book of Hindus) to students in the valedictory function for the outgoing students of Standard XII. Another tradition is of performing a ‘*Satyanarayan Puja*’ (one of the worships followed in Hindu religion). Though these traditions exhibit the practice of inequality in its overt practice of Hindu religion, equality is strived as all the students bring fruits for the ‘*prasad*’ (food offered to God which is later distributed to all). A teacher with thirty years of experience in the school reflected, “This *puja* is performed so that the students feel they are blessed and are stress free. Religion has no place in it. Students of other religion also participate willingly.”

Policy decisions regarding admission of students in its emphasis on merit and the high fee structure indicate inequality. It is offset to some extent by the provision of free education to the wards of teaching and non teaching staff. A modification in this

policy by making free ship partial for those staff members who joined after 1996 creates inequality among the staff members. A teacher with twenty four years of experience remarked, "This is likely to breed discontent." At the same time, the policy of free ship to wards of teaching and non teaching staff has developed contentment among them. A teacher with twenty five years of experience said, "See we all are satisfied. Our children have studied well and are settled well. Now we only have to do our work properly."

A rigorous process comprising interview conducted by a panel of experts and psychoanalysis for identifying a meritorious candidate for the post of teacher is followed for recruitment of teachers. In its focus on the merit of the candidate the recruitment process demonstrates respect for the teacher. Two informal policies regarding teachers are significant. One has been to recruit teachers from the middle class for the values they bring as explained by a teacher with thirty years of experience in the school. This creates a perception of equality among the teachers. A teacher with twenty five years of experience said, "See we are more or less from similar background." The second one is the compulsion to wear 'sari' for the lady teachers. The exception to this was restricted to those working days on which the students were not present in school. The researcher observed a strict adherence to this policy in practice. This practice appears to reflect the vision of the Trust and school on being rooted in Indian culture.

Collective decision making and consensus building based on equal opportunity to participate marks the functioning of this school. It was started as a management strategy adopted by one of the principals (1979-1984) who joined after the school had entered the second phase of development. The modus operandi of the consensus building was informed by a teacher with thirty years of experience, "He would float an idea. He had a group of teachers who would talk about it and also collect the general feedback on the idea to be conveyed to the principal. Then the principal would conduct a teachers' meeting for the idea floated. He would patiently listen to all agreements and dissents. He addressed the dissents as being very important but at the end he would say that it needs to be done for the institution. Finally what he had decided would be done but it would appear that it was decided on the basis of consensus." As the school grew, the functioning was decentralized with the formation of subject departments and an overall committee providing freedom at the specific

level, and an equal opportunity to all members to participate. A teacher with thirty five years of experience in the school explained the functioning of school which ultimately rested on the respect to the organizational position of the principal, "Whatever can be solved at the local level is solved by us, only when the matter involves issues beyond school, do we take it to the principal. There also we present our views, but the final decision of the principal is accepted. He after all has to take care of many things even beyond school." Collective decision making is also followed in deciding the menu for lunch which involves the prefect council, two teachers and one representative from office.

Equality has marked the various initiatives for professional development of teachers. In the attempt to provide exposure of public school to teachers, different teachers were sent on visit to different public schools like the Doon School and the Pilani School. Explaining the impact of this equality based exposure a teacher with twenty five years of experience said, "Only one teacher could not boast." A gender based inequality among teachers was consciously eliminated when the responsibility for picnic was offered to lady teachers ("Why can't the ladies do these jobs?", asked the principal). Special care for the arrangements was made by the principal for the lady teachers which was not done for the gents teachers.

Mentoring for the personality development of teachers formed a significant process in the functioning of school. The school being a public school, students belonging to the elite section of the society and the informal policy to recruit teachers from the middle class of the society have made the mentoring of teachers vital. Various facets of this attention were correcting the language of teachers. One of the gents teacher would say, "*arey ye sala*". The second principal would correct it, "Say, he is out of sorts". The third principal (1979-1984) arranged student exchange programs with foreign universities. He also invited eminent people like Pandit Ravi Shankar, Allah Rakha, Zakir Hussain, K R Narayanan to school. These events provided exposure and an opportunity to learn to conduct functions corresponding to the stature of the eminent guests. The fourth principal (1984-1994) emphasized on the correct manner of attending to guests and serving them tea and snacks. Attention to dressing especially for gents teacher and to personal habits was given. One of the gents teachers who had the habit of chewing the *paan* (beetle leaf) was helped to get rid of it. With principal

presenting themselves as models, the teachers were groomed to attend to eminent personalities who visited school.

Continuity of traditions observed over a period of time presents stability to the school's functioning. Various initiatives have become traditions of the school. A teacher with thirty years of experience in the school remarked, "Generally over a period of time good things (and) traditions are not changed. Whatever is good is continued. The system remains the same like annual day or sports day. The valedictory function is the same from the beginning, same prayer, same tradition, Vedic style Sanskrit *shloka*. Only the names (have) changed. Earlier it was called Investiture, then it was called Valedictory and now since last two years it is called '*Ashirvachanam*' (words of blessings)." To strengthen the continuity of association for learners with the school, there is an informal policy of not changing the 'Friday Menu' for lunch. Explaining the reason for this policy, a teacher with twenty years of experience said, "The former students generally visit us on Friday so the 'Friday Menu' helps them to revive their memories of school. This informal policy facilitates strengthening of association with the former learners an important stakeholder of school.

At the same time, openness to change a tradition / practice if needed is also visible. The practice of a quiz in the assembly to ascertain preparedness and general awareness of learners as well as making various types of presentation in the morning assembly were changed. The teachers pointed out that attending to the preparations needed for the general awareness in the early morning rush to school was dangerous for the students. When this was pointed out to the principal, the principal changed the practice.

The provision of special leave in case of emergency developed a sense of responsibility among the staff. The official provision of special leave and the manner of granting it combined to develop a sense of responsibility. Recalled a teacher with thirty years of experience in the school, "When I went to visit my brother, he passed away. Now the principal went to my place and told my wife that he should not bother about anything else and do his duty there in the brother's family. There was no need for a principal to go to my place but he did it. We have also worked for the school at two o'clock night."

Recognition and appreciation of efforts demonstrating respect for learners and teachers have also set traditions. A dinner is hosted for the winners in sports at inter school competitions to appreciate and recognize students' achievements. A teacher preparing the annual report of school said, "I take suggestions from students also. I also get the annual report proof read by students who are good in English." A suggestion of one of the teachers to hoist the flag of a particular house responsible for the assembly for a week is continued till the present.

#### **5.2.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL IN THE PRESENT**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

##### **Event 1      Morning Assembly**

*The morning assembly was conducted on assembly ground which was an open space with an open stage around which there was a canopy of trees. The duty of conducting the assembly is rotated among the four 'Houses' of the school. The flag of the House which is in charge of the assembly is hoisted for the week.*

*As soon as the students arrived in the school, they assembled in their respective classrooms. The class teachers took the daily attendance. Then the students and the teachers assembled on the assembly ground as the group of students in charge of the school band began to play the drum.*

*When the teachers and students were in their classrooms for attendance, the Vice-principal was standing near the steps leading to the assembly ground. A senior teacher joined him there. The Vice-principal looked at the open stage where the group conducting assembly stood. Observing no student group there, he said in a worried tone, "Band wala nahi aya (The students in charge of the band have not come as yet.)"*

*The Vice principal and the senior teacher continued to discuss. Even as they are discussing, the Vice principal continued to look around the assembly ground. Gradually the students in charge of the group began to play the band. The students arrived at the assembly ground in lines which were not very well formed. The teachers accompanying them stood at different places: some at both the sides and some at the back.*

*One of the teachers walked between the lines and checked the uniform of the students. One of the students had styled his hair in an unusual way with hair spiking upwards. The teacher observed him, gestured to indicate 'what is the style?' The other students also looked at this student and giggled. The teacher gestured him to go out and get his hair straightened with water.*

*The choir led the prayer in which a shloka from the Rigveda was recited. Then prayer was sung. After this one minute silence for invoking peace was observed. All the students and the teachers bowed their heads and stood in silence for about a minute. Everything appeared to be stand still at this moment. After this one of the students of the assembly group presented 'thought for the day'. Another student read a report on the student tour to Madhya Pradesh. The next item in assembly was the announcement for the day. One student announced, "NSC and NSCE exam will be held on 21-11-08. Roll numbers are put up on the notice board. Students are requested to look up the board."*

*With this the assembly ended. The students relaxed, some began to talk softly. A little murmur was heard. Students began to walk back to their classrooms. The teachers also slowly joined the students. Some teachers talked among themselves.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred brought together the three stakeholders: Vice-principal, teachers and students. The morning assembly was conducted with a combination of seriousness, solemnity and informality. The rendering of shloka from *Upanishad* in the morning hours captivated one's attention. The Vice- principal demonstrated his sense of responsibility by indicating a concern about the delay in the playing of the drum. This concern was in response to the announcement made by the P T Teacher in the assembly on the previous day, "Please come on time for assembly. Even today the first period has already begun." The teacher who voluntarily checked the uniform of

the students and asked the student to change the hair style also demonstrated a sense of responsibility. He also demonstrated a respect for the student as he directed the student without ridicule. Many teachers stood in small groups during assembly. The manner in which the Vice- principal and teachers participated in the assembly indicated that it was meant only for the students and was not a collective endeavour of students, teachers and Vice- principal. Equal access to information regarding the display of roll numbers was created as the morning assembly was used to disseminate information to all concerned.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The site of assembly indicated various contestations. The Vice-principal was in office only for one year, there was a quick succession of Principals before this Vice-principal assumed office and the school had teachers with more than twenty years of experience in the school. The Vice-principal faced the challenge of continuing and consolidating his position. The assembly presented continuity as well as change observed in school. Comparing the present Vice-principal to the previous Principals, a teacher with thirty years of experience said, "They were always present wherever an activity was going on and he (Vice-principal) also does so." As the students returned to their classrooms after the assembly, one of the teachers with thirty years of experience in the school presented his view to the researcher, "Look at these students, how they walk as if they are taking a walk in a garden. Earlier it was not like this." The researcher observed that though the students did not walk in absolute straight lines, the lines were quite well formed. Hoisting of the flag of the House in charge of the assembly was a tradition of the school which was implemented on the suggestion of one of the teachers. Respect thus exhibited through accepting suggestions and continuing the practice was observed.

### ***Event 2 Teaching Learning Process In Classroom***

*It was standard VIII C, the subject was science and the topic was 'Light'*

*The teacher had completed the explanation on the topic 'Light'. After revising the topic, the teacher discussed the question answer given at the end of the lesson.*

*The teacher asked, "Angle of incidence is equal to angle of reflection- Always, sometimes, never?"*

*The students replied in a chorus, "Always"*

*One student got up sheepishly and asked softly, "But madam convex mirror?"*

*All other students looked at him. Teacher paused, made a face showing displeasure and looked at the student from above the reading spectacles that she wore. She asked him, "Where were you when it was discussed?" She paused and then said, "O K" She drew a small line on blackboard. She explained to the student, "This is a plane mirror. Now another line, this is also a plane mirror. You can go one like this. Now from the way they are arranged it forms a convex mirror. For each plane mirror, the angle of incidence is equal to angle of reflection." The teacher drew this diagram on the blackboard to show this. She continued, "So for convex mirror also angle of incidence is equal to angle of reflection."*

*The student who had asked the question (S1) nodded his head and sat down. It was not clear whether he had understood it or not. But the other students paid attention to the teacher's explanation.*

*The teacher then asked the next question, "Ok Now see this figure. Tell me what the angle of reflection will be if angle of incidence is 30."*

*SSS- 30*

*T- Now look at this figure. Tell me where will this ray go?*

*The teacher indicated to a student to show the path of the ray on the figure drawn on the blackboard.*

*The student drew the ray crossing the mirror. The path of the ray drawn by the student was incorrect.*

*The teacher made a face and looked at all the students. Then told to the student softly, "This is a mirror, a mirror. Arisa che (Gujarati word for mirror)." She explained to the student. What she explains was not audible to the other students.*

*The student then drew the path of the ray correctly and the teacher nodded her head to indicate that it was correct. The student went back to his place.*



*T- "Now let me change the figure. Tell me where the ray will go. It will go upwards on and on." She gestures to show infinity. O K let me add a mirror on this side. Now where will the ray go? It will reflect back."*

*Just then the bell rang. It was recess. The teacher said, "OK so complete the exercise." She then left the class.*

*Some students gathered near the blackboard. They observed the figure drawn on the blackboard..*

*S2- ye mirror kaha lagana hai? (where should we place this mirror?)*

*S3- Is ray ka path change kar dete hai (let us change the path of this ray.)*

*S3 – kaise karenge? (How will we do it?)*

*Abandoning the effort, the students left the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is a major site of learning in school. This class indicated facets of freedom enjoyed by learners. One learner exercised his freedom to seek clarification of his doubt while a small group of learners explored an idea after the class. The sense of responsibility of teacher came into play as she responded to the query raised by the learner. The learner who raised the query did so rather sheepishly conveying his diffidence but he did muster the courage to present his doubt. The response of the other students was sans any mockery. The non verbal behaviour of the teacher indicated displeasure at the students' question but she provided the needed explanation. In this process two acts of teacher protected respect of the student in the process of seeking clarification: the use of Gujarati word for mirror to enable him to understand and explaining in soft voice so that others don't listen to it. A small group of learners exercised their freedom for inquiry, though for a short while, as they continued the exploration for the path of ray even after the teacher had left the class.

### *Analytic view of event*

The practice of the teacher in the class facilitated students to explore and to inquire. Both these are significant aspects of freedom of learner. The vision of the school 'pursuit of excellence by enhancing the quality of teaching and learning...to bring out the potential of children to the fullest extent possible...' was manifested at the practice level in this teaching learning process.

### **Event 3      Teaching Learning Process in Kala Bhavan (Art Room)**

*The art class named, Kala Bhavan, had open space around it. It had grills on huge windows on all side making it possible to view the outside from all directions. The teacher could see the students of standard IX A were playing outside. This was the first period for art after the Diwali Vacation. Gujarati New Year is celebrated during the Diwali Vacation as it falls on the next day of Diwali.*

*T: Come in children you have played in the recess and lunch period.*

*The students gradually came in and settled in the classroom.*

*T: Good morning. Happy New Year.*

*S: Good morning. Happy belated New Year.*

*There is hushed soft laughter and giggle. Students continue to talk among themselves.*

*T: Listen carefully. Two persons talk doesn't make much sense. So let me talk.*

*Some students entered the class.*

*T: (Looks at them) Why so late? Take your place.*

*One of the students complained, "Sir they are disturbing." The teacher ignored this complaint. He addressed the students, "Listen your subject, for the new project. The subject is preparation for festivals. Please (raises his voice to maintain silence among the students) There are many festivals in Gujarat- Kite flying, Dussera, Garba. Now I don't want (drawing) about the festival. I want about preparation for the festival. Just two three days before festival. Take a subject which appeals to you.*

*The students started discussing among themselves.*

*T: Change your place and take a partner. Don't force anyone to be your partner. He/she should be agreeable to become your partner.*

*The students selected their partners. In this process some of them got up from their place and sat with their partners. Some of the students selected the student next to them as their partner.*

*S1: (indicated to a student who was sitting alone) Sir he is alone.*

*S2: Sir Rinkesh (Looks at Rinkesh who is also alone and smiles.)*

*T: If you have difficulty in getting partner you can do individual work. Work out your ideas on the drawing sheets given to you. It is not your final paper. It is only for discussion and rough work."*

*The students began to discuss among themselves. They were trying to finalize the festival to be chosen as the topic for drawing and the details of what they will draw.*

*A discussion among two partners( P1 and P2) occurred in the following manner. The topic identified for drawing was 'Preparation for Diwali'.*

*P1: (kept the drawing sheet on the table. A rough sketch is drawn on it. ) What should we do?*

*P2: (looked at the rough sketch on the drawing sheet) Let us decorate. This is house. This is staircase. Keep the sofa here. Let us discuss how we will arrange the furniture in the house. (The conversation continues as both the partner view the rough sketch drawn on the paper.)*

*Discussion among two other partners( P3 and P4). These two partners have not yet identified the subject for the drawing.*

*P3: Diwali?*

*P4: Diwali has gone.*

*P3: Then Christmas.*

*P4: How will we do Christmas? It is only November. Christmas will come late.*

*Teacher listens to them and joins them*

*T: But is Christmas a major festival of Gujarat? Think. Try something else. What is Gujarat known for?*

*On one table there are six students among which there are two pairs of partners. Two students are doing individual work.*

*One single student says, "Sir he (indicating to a student from one of the pairs) has stolen my partner."*

*The student who was the partner said, "Sir, he used to argue a lot."*

*Student from the pair: (Indicating to the lone student sitting on their table) Sir, he is alone.*

*The first single student: NO..OOOO...OOOOO.*

*The teacher took out some books on Gujarat. He showed photographs of various festivals to the students.*

*T: See these pictures, see what they are doing. See these kites being made, see this decoration, see the kite thread being made. Now you see all this but don't copy. See and forget and draw from your mind.*

*One pair of students (P1 and P2) were working on Diwali as the subject of their drawing.*

*P1: Sir show some thing on Diwali also.*

*T: See these pictures, the lamps being made, you can show cleaning the house, you can show putting up the lights and bulbs.*

*Two pairs of partners were working on another table ( P4 and P5 and P6 and P7). The pair P4 and P5 were working on the theme of decoration of house for Diwali while the pair P6 and P7 were working on the theme of a boutique for selling dresses for Garba*

*The conversation occurred between the partners P6 and P7. The rough sketch of the boutique was ready.*

*P6: We will make a table in this boutique. (She takes a pencil in her hand and draws it.)*

*P7: This cupboard can have bigger shelves. (She takes the pencil in her hand draws it.)*

*P6: Put some clothes on the table.*

*P7:OK*

*P6: Keep this shoes, mojadis (type of traditional shoes), in the cupboard. We will make the cupboard bigger.*

*P7: Some women working here. (She draws rough sketch and shows the area)*

*The bell rings. The period is over. Teacher informs to submit the drawing paper.*

*P6: Let us decide now only so that next period we can start colouring.*

*P7: Some chairs can be put.*

*T1- This is good. This can be kept in the mathematics laboratory also. Also, the working model (can be kept). Working models can be given five marks (out of five). Others you can be given four. Students have worked hard in Diwali vacation.*

*T2- Nods in agreement.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This class was conducted in the ambience of the art room which was very different from the other classrooms. The students enjoyed the freedom of correcting the teacher when he wished them a happy new year as also enjoyed in mirth at the mistake made by the teacher. The teacher also ensured this freedom by choosing not to comment on the correction made. Two students exercised freedom by asking the teacher to show them some pictures on the topic chosen by them. By organizing the proceeding of the class in the form of pair work the teacher created opportunities for the students to work collaboratively. This required the students to present their views and listen to those of others. Indirectly the teacher created situation for developing tolerance among students and thereby respect for others views and choices.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The approach of the teacher for students was informal and friendly yet he was firm in conveying the expected task and the manner of doing it. The students appeared relaxed and comfortable.

This class was significant for the value of tolerance that it attempted to nurture among the students through pedagogy. The choice of group work, the insistence on discussion and on not forcing anybody to be one's partner facilitated the translation of the vision statement of the Trust 'Let noble thoughts come from all sides'

#### **Event 4      Examination of Computer Projects in the Computer**

##### **Laboratory**

*Students of standard VIII A had prepared power point presentations using flash in the Diwali Vacation. The students had prepared power point presentations on different topics. The teacher was to evaluate these presentations and also select some of them for exhibition during the annual function. The students were seated such that two students shared one computer.*

*The teacher announced, "Now I will start observing the presentations. We can do it in two ways- either you tell me who is completely ready- then we start from that student. Or I will start roll number wise."*

*There was silence. All the students listened but there was no response.*

*The teacher waited for a minute. She then asked, "Is anyone ready?"*

*One student raised hand. The teacher smiled at him. Walking quickly towards him, she said, "O K we start from you. Now all of you come near this computer so that all of you can see the presentation." The teacher and the student whose presentation was being evaluated sat close to the computer while the other students stood around.*

##### **Synoptic view of event**

A consideration for the students' preparedness for evaluation strikes in this class. Instead of imposing her choice of order for the evaluation thereby restricting freedom of learner, the teacher ensured freedom of the students to decide the order for evaluation. Though the students did not immediately respond to the choice offered, one of the students grabbed the opportunity to do so.

##### **Analytic view of event**

The practice of the objectives of school in the everyday life of school is observed. One of the objectives of the school is 'learning will be child-centered and activity based'. In this event the freedom of learner to decide when to be evaluated is upheld.

### **Event 5      *Discussion between two teachers regarding discipline***

*This conversation occurs between a senior teacher with twenty five years of experience and a junior teacher with six years of experience. The issue discussed is a complaint made by the junior teacher to parent of a student.*

*On listening to the junior teacher's act of sending a note to the parent of student, the senior teacher consoles her about the appropriateness of her act. The senior teacher said in tone of approval, "No, no you send a note. His father will realize his mistake. We should do our duty. I always do that. This boy is also making a lot of noise in the class. He is turning around. Once or twice I told him to pay attention and not to disturb. He did not listen. Then I punished him. I told him if you don't want to study it is different, but you must allow others to study. At least this much we can do. We can ensure that others are not disturbed."*

*The junior teacher agreed feeling relieved, "That is true."*

*The senior teacher continued, "The students think we will not do anything. It is not like that. There is this girl in my class. She is a good student. She had not brought her textbook. She gets good marks in exam. She thought I will not say anything to her. Now in English, the students need the textbook. I sent her out of the class. Of course for a short time, then I called her in. Others should also know. Students must know that the teacher will punish if they do wrong. But students realize it later."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

These events indicate the response of the teachers to learners when their authority was challenged. The teacher's authority was challenged in two ways: once by the notion of the learner that good performance will make the teacher overlook her mistake of 'not bringing the textbook' and; secondly by father's attempt to protect the learner for his mistake of not bringing the journal. In both instances, the learner and the parent (father) displayed an absence of sense of responsibility. The teacher's response was the interpretation of her sense of responsibility ( 'if you don't want to study it is different, but you must allow others to study', 'We can ensure that others are not disturbed.', 'you send a note')

### ***Analysis of event***

These responses are worth examining in the context of the profile of the learners which is elite, the profile of the teachers which is consciously from the middle class group of the society and the recruitment policy of teachers which informally emphasized on the middle class of the teachers for the values that they would bring to school. The policy of recruitment of teachers thus stands vindicated. The response of the teacher was premised on their sense of responsibility.

Another facet of sense of responsibility observed was the mentoring of a junior teacher by the senior teacher. The composition of teachers was such that there were more teachers with longer association with the school. The institutional knowledge of managing learners was thus retained in the institution through the act of mentoring. This is significant in relation to a remark that a teacher with ten years of experience in this school made, "Principals may come and principals may go but the work goes on". The senior teachers become the interface between the teachers and the Principal.

**Event 6 A meeting of Director, Vice principal and members (teachers) of the Academic Management Committee for deciding the dates for annual function and the annual exhibition.**

*It was the tradition of the school that along with the annual function which included cultural function, exhibition to display projects prepared by students in various subjects was also arranged. A meeting was convened to decide the date and the duration of exhibition of students' projects at the time of annual function. The participating members in this meeting were twelve teachers who formed the academic management committee of the school, the Vice principal, Coordinator and the Director. The meeting was held in the Director's office who personally ensured that all were comfortably settled.*

*Vice- principal said, "It has been decided that we shall have exhibition and Annual Function on the same day. That is, exhibition will be in the morning and cultural program will be in the evening."*

*The Director observed everybody. He asked, "What do you all feel?"*

*T1: Will parents come two times to School?*

*T2: Generally parents come only once and that too for the Cultural Program. They are interested in the Cultural Program only.*



*T3: It is a working day. How will parents come in the morning?*

*T4: Generally parents come one hour before the program and see the exhibition.*

*T5: Students will have to come twice to school.*

*T6: It will be tiring for the students*

*T7: And also for the students.*

*T2: Some of the students with exhibition may also be in cultural program.*

*T1: We will take care of that.*

*The director listened to all the opinions that were expressed.*

*Director: Now suppose we keep the exhibition just before the cultural program?*

*T1: There will be rush.*

*T2: All parents will come just before the cultural program and just see the exhibition.*

*T3: Let us keep the exhibition on the previous day.*

*T5: Will parents come on two days?*

*T7: Generally only those parents come whose children are participating. There are very few parents (who come) for exhibition.*

*T5: Let us involve more children for the exhibition. So many parents will come.*

*T2: But we have to see the participation in the cultural program also.*

*T8: Where will we keep the exhibition? Let us have it in the laboratory, two rooms adjoining it and the Kala Bhavan like last year.*

*T3: Yes this way our parents will see our laboratories also.*

*T8: Which laboratories – only physics and biology because chemistry laboratory has chemicals, it may be dangerous.*

*Director: The collection in biology laboratory is very rich. Even some colleges may not have it. You must display it.*

*T1: But will parents walk up and down and then go for cultural program?*

*T3: Let us have it at one place.*

*T2,3,5: But the plug points ??*

*There was silence for some time. It appeared all were thinking.*

*T7: Yes we will need the plug points two three days earlier to the function.*

*Director: This year we are introducing computer graphics also. So computers will also be required. The plug points are necessary.*

*T6: During Valedictory Function we have all the plug points there.*

*T3: I think Vivekanad Hall is better. There is a lot of space and projects can be put up three four days before. And it can be kept there for a long time also.*

*Coordinator: Yes, Vivekanad Hall is a better place.*

*T8 said in a low voice: But the laboratory....*

*He then speaks softly to the Vice- Principal sitting next to him. Nobody could listen what he said. The Vice- Principal tilted his head towards the teacher and after he had completed what he was saying he nodded his head.*

*Coordinator : (Observes him). Saab App jyada mat sochiye, sab theek ho jayega. (Do not think and worry too much. Every thing will be all right.)*

*Director: So everyone agrees on Vivekanand Hall.*

*( All teachers nod looking at each other)*

*Director: Now the dates...(Looks at everyone)*

*T4: I think it must be on two days*

*T2: No no it must be on one day only parents don't come to see.*

*Director: So the crowd is a problem. Shall we separate junior section and senior section?*

*T1: NO (with force). There must be only one School function. All parents must see different sections together.*

*(There is silence as no decision on date for exhibition is made. Teachers look at each other. The facial expressions indicate that they are firm on their individual belief. )*

*Director: Ok since we have not reached any decision. Let us think wearing the different Hats suggested by De Bono. The first hat is for getting all facts based on past experiences and practices; the next hat is for the feelings about it that is what you feel; the next hat is for demerits and the next hat is creative solution.*

*(Every body looks at him attentively. They get ready for the exercise.)*

*OK we start from this side. We will collect the data. What are the experiences and the past practices if it is kept on the same day?*

*T1: There will be crowd.*

*T2: It will be rush rush activity.*

*T3: Parents will not come in the morning, they will come in the evening only.*

*T4: Same*

*T5: Same*

*T6, T7, T8, T9 T10, T11, T12 Nod and say same.*

*Director: So we have got the facts, parents will not come and there will be crowd. Now let us get the feelings. Let us start from the other side now.*

*T12: I don't think it will work.*

*T11: It will not work.*

*T10: Parents will not come twice*

*Director: This is a fact, tell your feeling.*

*T10: it will not work*

*Other teachers also communicate the same by nodding their heads.*

*Vice Principal: Head ache will be over in one day.*

*Director : OK now the demerits from this side.*

*T1: Crowded.*

*T2: What is the use if all parents don't come?*

*T3: Tiring.*

*T4: We will have to take care of students from morning till evening.*

*T5: When will inaugurate because the chief guest will come in the evening?*

*Director: We can do it in the morning?*

*T7: But there will be no students.*

*T8: Usually we have seen that the chief guest inaugurates and many parents are inside the exhibition.*

*T4: Yes, students must be there to explain.*

*Director: Let the others speak.*

*Most teachers others nod their heads.*

*Director: Now let us look for a creative solution.*

*(All are quite for some time.)*

*T9: Let us have the exhibition fifteen days before the cultural program.*

*Director: This is a valid suggestion. Delink exhibition from the cultural program. Any other suggestion?*

*There is silence.*

*Director: Now what is the conclusion that we have reached?*

*Again there is silence.*

*The Director looks at everybody and the Vice Principal also looks at every body.*

*Director: OK let us have the exhibition on the previous day evening and the next day the cultural program. The venue will be Vivekanand Hall.*

*Some teachers agreed to the decision and nodded. Some did not. They kept silent.*

*Director: Let us try it out year. If it doesn't work, we can change the practice next year. We will modify it.*

*The teachers appear to relax. They think and nod.*

*Vice principal: So let me repeat the exhibition will on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 and the cultural program will be on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. Exhibition will be in the evening so that working parents and parents coming from outstation can also view it.*

*The teachers listened and nodded.*

*The meeting was over. Gradually the teachers left the Director's Office.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

The challenge in this event was to develop a team of two stakeholders: Vice- principal and teachers based on equality and respect. The meeting was conducted amicably by the Director. The Vice- principal observed keenly the teachers' responses and reactions. The teachers expressed their views freely. Sometimes, emotions appeared to overpower some responses. A relief could be observed on the faces of Vice- principal and Director when the decision was made. Collective decision making provided equal opportunity to all for participation. As the Director used the technique of 'wearing different hats', he systematically created opportunities for all teachers to express their views. He also listened to each view and asked others also to do so thereby demonstrating respect for the experience of each stakeholder. The Director demonstrated respect for the position of the Vice- principal as the leader of the school as the meeting was started by the Vice principal and concluded by him. The senior teachers of this school who attended this meeting formed a strong group in school. The experience and the tacit knowledge of this group was tactfully utilized by the Director by soliciting each one's opinion and experience. All teachers were given equal opportunity to express their views (*'let the others speak'*). In this way the Director also enabled the teachers to enjoy freedom of expression. Respect for the dissidence on the final decision was also observed as the choice of changing the decision was made available for the next year.

### ***Analysis of event***

Three stakeholders were directly involved: the Vice- principal, the teachers and the Director was the representative of the management. At this juncture the school did not have any strong leadership as the post of Principal was vacant, the Vice- principal was acting as the In-charge principal. Also previous to this, the school had a quick succession of Principals. The Director of the school had two fold responsibilities: mentor the Vice- principal and to provide leadership and stability to the school. Also in one of the academic years during the period of quick succession of principals, annual function was not organized. The process of arriving at the consensus for the dates of the annual function involved collaborative decision making between the three

stakeholders- teachers, Vice- principal and the Director who was the representative of the Trust was aimed at providing stability to the school.

### **Event 7**

*Four students of standard XI were given the responsibility of maths quiz for students of standard VI, VII and VIII which involved developing questions and conducting it. These four students worked on this in the computer laboratory as and when they found time. The questions were put up on a power point presentation. The following event occurred on the previous day of the quiz competition.*

*The students were showing the power point presentation to two teachers who were in charge of the maths quiz. Each slide was viewed very critically by both teachers. As one slide was shown both the teachers would read the question, work out the answer, nod if they found the question appropriate following which the next slide would be shown. As each slide was shown the students would observe the teachers very carefully as if trying to guess if the question would be approved or not.*

*One slide had a question – what is the formula for area of a circle?*

*One of the teachers said very excitedly nodding her head vigorously, "The students would not know this."*

*One student (S1) said very confidently, "Madam, they will know. We studied this in standard VIII."*

*The four students looked at each other as if confirming this fact. Then another student (S2) asked to the student standing next to him (S3), "tumne area of circle padha tha eighth me. (did you study area of circle in standard VIII?)" S3 answered quickly, "Yes. Padha tha. ((We) had studied.)" To which S2 said in a tone of complain, "Madam says these students will not be able to do it."*

*S1 asks another student (S4), "Did you know area of circle in VIII?"*

*S1, S2 and S3 look up, tap their fingers with a tone of worry,, "Mam says area of circle nahi ayega (will not know)."*

*Suddenly S1 said in a very confident tone, "Madam they will know. Lets check in the textbook."*

*The issue is left unresolved at this point. Then the discussion turns to the conduct of the quiz. S2 picked up a stop watch to S4 and explained, " See the time given to each team is twenty seconds. So after twenty seconds are over you have to stop and press the buzzer" Observing the working of the stop watch S4 instructed S2, "You ask questions slowly. I have to re- set the clock. It should not be that you keep on asking the questions."*

*S2 and S3 smile and laugh a little.*

*S1- Madam, how many mikes will be there?*

*T- Four mikes.*

*S1- So how will we speak, which mike will we use?*

*T- I have asked for cordless mike. The three teams will have fixed mike. You can use the cordless mike.*

*S2- The fourth team then.....?*

*S3- We will give the cordless mike to the fourth team and we will use the mike of the team which has finished their turn.*

*An expression of understanding what is to be done is observed on the four students' face. They leave the computer laboratory.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

In this event collaboration between the teacher and students for one of the activities of the school was observed. The students appeared very confident, diligent and enthusiastic. Through collaboration equality between the teachers and the students was fostered. Entrusting responsibility on the students indicated a respect for them. Though the teacher had allocated the responsibility to the students she did not absolve herself of the responsibility as she personally checked all the questions that were developed by the students. The students also demonstrated a sense of responsibility as they checked the arrangements that need to be made and the precise allocation of duties for conducting the quiz. The students exercised their freedom as they stood by the choice of the questions that they had made and the clarification needed for conducting of the quiz.

### *Analytic view of event*

This event indicates how teacher created space for creativity and critical thinking within the school. The teacher explained to the researcher, "It is training for students and the work is also done." Such engagement between the teacher and the learners allowed two outcomes of pedagogy critical thinking and creativity. This was in alignment with the one of the objectives of the school: teaching and learning will be geared to develop creativity and creative thinking skills of children.

### **Event 8      Lunch Period in Dining Hall**

*The lunch period in this school is slotted at different times for the primary students and the secondary students. The teachers of the respective classes take lunch with the students.*

*Students of a class sit around two tables. One table could accommodate approximately twenty students. Lunch is served by the canteen attendants who are addressed as 'mama' or 'mamu' (uncle). As one enters the dining hall one hears a low continuous sound of students talking and the din of the plates and utensils being picked up by the canteen attendants and placed for the next group of students. The students are engaged in animated conversation among themselves.*

*In this period, the primary students were taking lunch. The class teacher was sitting with them on the same table. The class teacher occasionally glanced at all the students of her class. As one of the students had taken food, he approached the teacher with his empty plate. The teacher glanced at the plate and nodded after which the student kept the plate aside where used plates had to be placed.*

*A group of five gents teachers were sitting on a table. The Vice-principal joined this group of teachers for lunch. His entry did not make any difference to the students as they continued eating.*

*As the students finished eating they would leave the dining hall to play on the playground adjoining the dining hall.*



### ***Synoptic view of event***

The lunch period exhibited equality being practiced at various levels: all the students had the same food, the principal joined the group of teachers for lunch in the dining hall and the teachers had food with the students. The teacher exercised her freedom to take an informal initiative as well as her sense of responsibility that the food must not be wasted by adopting the practice of student showing her the empty plate so that she could ensure that food is not wasted. Respect for the canteen attendants who served food was observed as they were addressed as respectfully.

### ***Analytic view of event***

This site was a significant site in a non pedagogical context. This site brought together four stakeholders: Vice-principal, teachers, students and the class IV staff. The menu of the lunch was decided collectively by the students, teachers, representative from office and the Vice-principal. The Vice-principal understood this space for forging equality with the other stakeholders in informal situation. The school recognized this space as a very significant tool in formation of memories of institution. A continued association of the former students with the school was strengthened by not changing the 'Friday Menu'.

### ***Event 9            Address to the students who were late in reaching the school***

*The students who were late were made to stand in a line near the entrance of the school building. After noting the names of the late coming students, the teacher in charge of the late coming students asked the Vice- principal to talk to the students after the assembly. The Vice- principal looked at all of them angrily. He asked sharply, "Why are you late? Like this you be a waste. Know your responsibility."*

*The students listened to the Vice- principal. They did not say anything. Some of them looked down. Some just looked blankly nowhere in particular.*

*The Vice- principal continued, "Where is the diary. Write a note in their diary." He then said in a sarcastic tone, "Now the diary also must not have been brought." The students fidgeted. The teacher in*

*charge could not restrain herself. She suddenly blurted with anguish, "Look at your tie. See how dirty it is. And where is the tie pin. You know that it is a part of the school uniform."*

*The Vice- principal said in calm but a stern voice, "Don't think that we are weak. We are kind." Looking at the teacher in charge he said, "If the students have not brought diary let them attend classes from outside (the classroom). These students who are repeatedly late will come to school next day with their parents."*

*The Vice-principal left for his office. Three students stood there. Six students went to their classrooms. The teacher in charge waited for a while before leaving for the staffroom.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

The teacher in charge of the late students appeared very disturbed as she called the Vice- principal. The Vice-principal attended to this meeting as one of his many tasks. He walked quiet calmly to the entrance of building but raised his voice to show his anger only on reaching the spot. Soon after he left the place, his anger had disappeared. The teacher however continued to be disturbed. The students were quiet and did not respond much.

A lack of compliance of the school's rules and regulations like reaching school on time; wearing proper, neat and clean uniform; and bringing the school diary to school was the issue addressed. This was perceived as a lack of sense of responsibility on the part of students. The Vice-principal and the teacher demonstrated their sense of responsibility by questioning these acts of students and by presenting a consequence of these acts as the students would be waste. The students were exhorted to 'know (their) responsibility'. The Vice-principal categorically allayed the base for the disciplinary action as not based on power game between the elite students and teachers from middle class families. He made it clear that the teacher's concern was based on kindness for students. The underlying concern for the students was evident as the teacher in charge explained to the researcher with anguish, "Actually they (students) are stressed and don't know how to come out of it. They have big dreams but they don't know how to achieve. They need help. They are also weak emotionally. But they don't want to approach us. So we have to wait for them either to approach us or to make a mistake so that we can talk to them."

### *Analytic view of event*

This event is significant as it illustrates the different interpretation of sense of responsibility and how it is to be dealt with. For the Vice-principal it was a simple issue of compliance of the rules and regulations of the school and being responsible. The teacher on the other hand viewed it as an enabling support that the students needed. This difference between the two indicates disconnect between the two stakeholders which influences their interpretation of sense of responsibility.

## **5.2.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### *Learners*

The admission policy emphasizing on merit and the high fee structure create an entry for the meritorious students from the elite section of the society. Along with this the free ship offered to the wards of staff (teaching and non teaching) creates ground for socio-economic inequality among learners. The apparent inequality owing to socio-economic discrepancy of learners is handled by the students in their own ways. A former student who did not belong to the elite group of learners and who had studied in the school for fourteen years said, "I have never felt discriminated by students or teachers." Mechanisms for overcoming the apparent inequality on account of the socio-economic background of learners have been developed by the learners. A teacher with thirty years of experience explained, "Generally the teachers' children are hardworking. They automatically get respect because of this. The peon's children also are able to help the other students in case some student has not got something from the 'mess' or like that. They ask their father to help. This creates a 'place' for them." Friendship which is beyond the socio-economic background of the learners also was cited by two teachers of the school. They said, "A peon's son who was a good student was visited by affluent students of the school at the peon's quarter."

Learners enjoyed the freedom of seeking clarification from teachers in the teaching learning process. A student currently studying in class IX said, "We request teacher to explain again when we don't understand." The learners' freedom was reciprocated by a sense of responsibility of teachers as a teacher with thirty years of experience said, "We have to be ready to answer students' question. If they ask us to repeat, we repeat the lesson." On issues of general interest, the students expressed their views freely in the classrooms. The freedom of learners to communicate with the principal and the management was ensured. The third principal (1979-1984) had adopted an open door policy for students and parents thus creating an open access to his office.

A sense of responsibility was demonstrated by learners as they implemented the tasks allotted to them diligently. Though there were some exceptions, a realization of their lack of responsibility was also observed. One of the students did not follow instructions of the teacher to study throughout the year but he apologized to the teacher for this in the investiture ceremony. The teacher to whom he apologized recalled the incident, "There was a boy who was very good in English but he would not study, means he would not take pains to study. He would get marks in sixties but he should have got marks in eighties. I always used to tell him to study. He would never do it. Later when he came back at the time of investiture, he said sorry to me. I asked him why he was saying sorry. He said that madam you asked me to study but I did not study."

### ***Teachers***

Respect for teachers as individuals was demonstrated by the principal in their day to day dealing. In spite of the hierarchy in the organizational positions, the teachers have been treated with respect in the principal's office. A teacher with twenty five years of experience in the school said very proudly, "All the principals have never made us stand anytime. I know principal in other schools make their teachers stand." The researcher observed this practice several times during the period of study in this school. Another way of exhibiting respect for the teachers was the practice of inviting teachers for tea with judges invited for various competitions / activities of the school. During the tenure of one of the principals (1984-1994), the school was well established and the teachers were well settled. He initiated the practice that each teacher had to submit teacher's diary (lesson plan) to him each day. A teacher with

thirty years of experience reflected on the manner in which this initiative was implemented, "He said that this way he would say good morning to you (teachers) every day. I think it was a way of getting to know the teachers and how they talk. I don't think he ever read the diaries. I am not sure." The principal here demonstrated respect for the teacher by acknowledging her/his presence. Respect for teachers was also manifest as the disciplinary issues of teachers were resolved amicably over discussion. A teacher with thirty years of experience said very proudly, "Look at my personal file, it does not have a single memo." Mutual respect among teachers as colleagues permeates the working which is based on discussion. A teacher with twenty five years of experience said, "If a teacher has an idea then she has reasons for it. It is not senior teacher or junior teacher. Each principal has taught us to respect each other."

The teachers experienced equality of treatment as the principals appreciated all the teachers. A teacher with thirty years of experience recalled, "The principals had a pat for everyone." As against this, the third principal (1979-1984) also had a group of teachers who were close to him. One of the teachers with thirty years of experience and about to retire said, "Of course there were favourite (teachers)." It was also subtly felt by the researcher that some teachers had their own clout and voice in the functioning of the school.

Freedom was experienced by teachers at various levels in various forms. The experience of freedom in the organization was explained by two teachers from the junior section, "We have freedom. Look now if we have some guest, we can take them to the dining hall for lunch. We don't have to seek permission." Freedom in the teaching learning process was balanced by a sense of responsibility as explained by a teacher with twenty five years of experience, "There is no interference. Teachers are free to teach the way they want in the classroom. Only we have to inform our co teachers teaching the other sections. Today I was supposed to take a poem but I continued the discussion of the earlier lesson. I did not inform the Principal. No one will ask. But we inform the co teacher."

A sense of responsibility of teachers was experienced differently by different teachers. It was captured in the remark of the teacher with twenty five years of experience, "Over here we do things meticulously. We have learned to work meticulously and

carefully.” Another teacher said, “We all work. Now I won’t like to lose the faith of students. Students also judge (us). They understand the teachers. They know which teacher can solve their problem or difficulty and which teacher will certainly be able to explain this difficult part.” A teacher with ten years of experience said, “Principals may come and principals may go but school runs. We continue to do our work.”

### ***Principal***

Describing the commitment of the principals in general a teacher with thirty years of experience said, “For each principal, the institution was the priority.” The principals demonstrated a sense of responsibility in providing the appropriate direction for development of the school. The first and the second principal (1966-1971, 1971-1979) consolidated the classroom teaching. The third principal (1979-1984) provided exposure to the students and teachers outside the school and earned social prestige for the school. The next principal (1984-1994) consolidated this position.

The principals have earned the respect of teachers, students and parents through their previous experience and commitment to school. The first two principals have earned respect as they were elderly age wise and experienced while the teachers were relatively younger and inexperienced. At that time the school was also relatively new. The next two principals earned respect through their initiatives and efforts in the development of the school. A teacher with thirty years of experience remarked mischievously, “Whenever a new principal was appointed, we would wait and watch. If he was good, he would be automatically respected.” Along with this the principal’s personality and previous experience also added to the respect of the principal. Different ways in which a principal has been described by teachers were ‘he was well-traveled’ ‘he was a thorough gentleman, ‘he was from a renowned public school’. One of the reasons for developing respect for the principal was the informal support extended to the staff- both teaching and non- teaching- by the principal. Various acts for this were giving Diwali greeting cards to teachers addressed to all the family members of the teacher and providing a free meal to the peon’s family from the school mess in case of bereavement in the family,

The principals have displayed freedom in introducing the initiatives during different periods of school.

#### **5.2.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

A particular emphasis on freedom through policy initiatives was not much evident. Freedom however was manifested and experienced in practice. Freedom was observed as freedom of expression by the stakeholders in various situations. In the teaching learning process, the learners asked questions, sought clarification and presented their views. The attempts of learners to exercise freedom ranged from very confident attempts to feeble ones. Yet whenever the learners exercised their freedom of expression, the learners were responded for queries raised and listened to. The teachers also created opportunities for learners to seek clarification ('You ask me.') The teachers had freedom of expressing their views and sharing their experiences/ perspectives at various forums.

Another perception of freedom was that of freedom of functioning without any pressure ('we don't inform the principal.'; 'we don't have to take permission of principal'; 'there is nobody breathing down your neck'; 'we are free'). This freedom enabled the teachers to take informal initiatives ('checking the plate to ensure that students have eaten all that is served.').

##### ***Respect***

The emphasis on respect emanates from the mission of the Trust (Let Noble Thoughts Come from All Sides). The mission statement suggests openness. Tolerance of differences was a manifestation of respect. It was practiced through acts of listening and the tone of conversation both in formal and informal situations in school. Respect for the stakeholders is exhibited in its focus on individuals over the system. It is

perceived as 'personal touch'; 'no /less paper work'; 'oral communication'. Though the individual was considered more important than the system, acknowledgement of organizational hierarchy and lines of authority were maintained ('He may be junior to me but I call him Sir'; 'We always address other teachers as madam though they may be younger to us'.)

Recognition and appreciation communicated an acknowledgement of stakeholder's contribution in the functioning of school. It was seen in the recognition of individuals' suggestions and contributions as practices suggested by them were continued ('hoisting the House flag').

### ***Equality***

The policy of admission of learners and the recruitment policy created conditions of inequality based on socio-economic profiles of the learners and the teachers. The manifestation of equality was the manner of dealing with these differences. The mechanism of 'finding one's place' was adopted by the learners some of which were 'working hard', 'doing well in exams', 'helping the other learners to get an extra help'. From the perspective of management, the mechanisms for ensuring equality were collaborative decision making and consensus building. The group of teachers with 'more voice' was tactfully roped in these. Resolving differences for the institution was a way of working.

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

A sense of responsibility was performing one's task well. The learners completed their assigned tasks (checking what one has missed in the class, doing class work attentively, completing the homework, regulating the entry of students into the auditorium, preparing the questions for quiz). An interpretation of performing one's task was identifying the need and the focus of one's task ('It is for the weaker ones (students) that we have to teach.'). Another understanding of performing one's task was to do one's task in what ever conditions. The conditions could be change in leadership, the change in working style expected or irrespective of students' appreciation or otherwise. An overall sense of responsibility was in considering the institution above all individuals ('after all it is our school'). In this understanding of sense of responsibility, attempts were made to ensure that the school continues to



function efficiently. This was achieved through sharing one's experiences ('I do like this').

### **5.2.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Management based on family based culture where bureaucratization was set aside***

The management of school has the family as the base of functioning. The base of family develops tolerance and respect for the other. The individual is more important than the system and most of the work is done through oral communication. Though it was admitted that as the school grew, there were departments and more paper work, yet the overall working revolves around individuals. This also develops respect for individuals. The family culture is further strengthened as students have a continued association with the school. The children of former students are also admitted to this school and the siblings and relatives of the present students also study in the school.

#### ***Collective decision making and consensus building***

It was a management strategy employed to foster respect, equality and freedom. Within the various committees formed, the teachers had the freedom to decide in concurrence with the other teachers. In case of differences the focus of the institution was kept in the forefront which facilitated resolving and dissolving of differences. Collective decision making also created equality as everyone's views were considered. In view of sub structures that were developed over the years ('some teachers had stronger voice in the school') collective decision making bridged these differences.

#### ***Professional development of teachers***

Professional development of teachers developed equality which was explained as, "All would get a chance." and "No one could boast." A sense of responsibility was developed as teachers gained by varied exposure. There were special support systems developed to help lady teachers for professional development as arranging for their travels.

#### ***Mentoring***

Mentoring formed a part of the professional development of teachers. The senior teachers consciously guided, explained and demonstrated to new teachers/ junior

teachers various aspects/processes to be followed in school. Mentoring facilitated a continuity of traditions of school through sharing of experiences. It was a demonstration of sense of responsibility of senior teachers. Mentoring also targeted the personal grooming of teachers which assumed significance as the school was a public school with learners from elite section of the society. The teachers were consciously recruited from the middle class section of the society. The consequence of mentoring was a development of a sense of responsibility among the teachers.

#### ***Open Communication among stakeholders***

Open communication was employed as a strategy of checks and balances which brought a fine balance between freedom and responsibility. It was a manifestation of the principal's overall sense of responsibility. It was a common knowledge for teachers that the students had open access to principal and management. The parents also had open access to principal. The freedom of students and parents acted as a counter balance for responsibility of teachers. Open communication was very skillfully employed as a strategy for building rapport and demonstrating respect. The erring students were asked to share and inform the mischief that they indulged in honestly and frankly.

### **5.2.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Confidence in school***

The teachers and learners felt pride in belonging to the school. They had trust in the ability of the school to contribute to the development of students. The confidence in school was manifested in continued association with school by former learners who admitting their children to this school.

#### ***Teachers***

The teachers were committed. The general commitment of teachers for the institution was expressed as, "Principals may come and go (and) we continue to do our work." The teachers thus became the backbone of the school's functioning out of personal commitment. They felt a feeling of ownership. The teachers were well-mannered. The tones of conversation were friendly. They felt pride in school. They did their tasks

diligently. The teachers of the school displayed pride in the priority and goals established by the school. One teacher with ten years of experience in the school said, "We do real work. We don't do any show business like XYZ school of the city." An overall pride in school is observed. After reflecting over some problems of the school, one of the teachers with thirty years of experience in the school finally remarked, "*Jo bhi likhna, school ke bare me acchha hee likhana, aakhir hamara school hain* (What ever you write about the school, write good only, after all it is our school.)"

### ***Learners***

The learners displayed confidence in interaction with teachers in the teaching learning process. Conscious of the image of the school in the society, the former learners expressed their solidarity with the school. This was a conversation in the staffroom among two teachers and two former learners who had passed out from standard XII two years ago.

*Two former learners who had passed out from school two years ago. One of them was pursuing a course in fashion designing while the other was studying engineering. The teacher with twenty five years of experience in the school and about to retire in the next year was conversing with them.*

*The teacher exclaimed with happiness, "Good to see you." The former students smiled happily. One of them said, "The school looks the same." The student pursuing fashion designing remarked in a concerned voice, "Madam people don't speak good about the school." The teacher with twenty five years of experience was quiet for a minute. Composing herself she said, "We have just received this award as the best school based on the feedback and voting by students and parents. We didn't even know about it." The student pursuing fashion designing appeared pleased. He said excitedly, "Then we must make maximum publicity for this. Let all know (about it)."*

### **5.2.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of equality, freedom and respect to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through three processes (i) collective decision making and

consensus building, (ii) professional development of teachers (iii) mentoring and (iv) Open communication among stakeholders. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school as in continuing association with it as former students seek prefer this school for their children , pride in school, and ability of the school to develop learners; (ii) learners of this school are described as confident and having solidarity for school; (iii) teachers are observed as competent, with feeling of ownership of school, take pride in school, well-mannered , doing their tasks diligently committed as doing their tasks diligently.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## 5.3 CASE: 3

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### 5.3.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

The Principal agreed quite readily to the researcher's request for conducting research in the school. After reading the formal letter of request carefully, the Principal also demanded an additional letter clearly indicating what exactly the researcher would be doing in the school premise. The Supervisor of the Secondary section whose office was in the main building of the school was given the responsibility of coordinating the process of data collection. The Supervisor appeared a little surprised and unsure of what the researcher would be doing in the school and what was expected of her. After four days of data collection the Principal said in a raised voice to the researcher to wind up data collection soon. The next day she gave the interview quite willingly but after every question she would ask, "Is it enough now?" The presence of researcher in the school received a mixed reaction from the teachers: some were curious while some appeared suspicious. The students considered the researcher to be an inspector.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were the teaching learning process in various classes, science laboratory and on playground, oral examination conducted in classrooms, selection of students for volleyball team, Republic Day Function, felicitation of best student, a rally by students for national integration and a parent-teachers meeting which is called 'open day' where the answer sheets of the examination were shown to the parents and students. In addition to these, the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s, and the Principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were the present Principal who was with the school for twelve years, the Supervisors of the Secondary section and the Higher Secondary section, one teacher who was also a student of the school, two former teachers and two former students. The Supervisor of the Higher Secondary section was a student of this school for four years (1968-1972) and joined the school as teacher from 1980. One teacher had been with the school as a student for three years (1981-83) and was associated with the school as a teacher for fifteen years. One former student who studied in the school during 1940s was interviewed. One teacher

who had been with the school for ten years shared his perspective voluntarily. During the field work, often the office staff and the present Principal stated, "There are no documents now". Archival data for the pre-independent period was not made available to the researcher. The researcher thus has focused on the post- independent period.

### **5.3.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

As informed orally by the office staff of the Trust, the school was established in 1916 by the royal family of Baroda State for the education of girls of the State. The broader leadership and vision of Sayajirao Gaekwad III along with the influence of Maharani Chinnabai who was a modernist, feminist and championed for the education of women impacted the education in the State. Given the context that there were 2,862 educational institutions in the State during the period of 1918-19, the establishment of this school in that context emerged as one of the regular initiatives in the field of education by the royal family of Baroda. After independence of India the State of Baroda merged with the states of India. The Trust was established to manage the school. Registered in 1952, the Trust manages eleven educational institutions in city of which there are seven schools, one hostel and three girls' colleges. The motive of establishment of the school is rooted in sense of responsibility especially for the specific learner group-girls.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department of Gujarat State. It is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is Gujarati. In terms of medium of instruction, the then various educational institutions had English, Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular language as medium of instruction. This school adopted vernacular language of the royal family- Marathi and the local language Gujarati as medium of instruction. Over a period of time, due to the dwindling response of students to Marathi medium, new admissions to Marathi medium were stopped in 1999 and in 2001 the entire Marathi medium section was closed. The staff of the Marathi medium section staff was given the option of joining the Gujarati medium section, some of whom joined. The admission policy is guided by the Education Department. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education

Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees, 40 per month for standard IX, Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary is ensured for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State and thereby the control of the school authority (principal) is relatively lesser. The affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The mission of the school as obtained from the school's website and the document on school profile prepared by the school for submission to the Education Department of the Government was: 'We are committed to develop girl students and their character with excellent efforts from our side and gain complete satisfaction of society. We shall achieve this by effective management, quality facilities and infrastructure and by employing continuous improvement methods. We shall endeavour to always remain ahead by our committed work.'

The objectives/ aims of the school as stated on the school's website were:

- To provide ample opportunity to develop women power in the right direction and provide opportunity in every field through women's education.
- Quality teaching to be imparted to the students.
- All-round development through co-curricular activities along with the school studies.
- Viewing the necessity of scientific knowledge in this computer and space age, giving practical knowledge of science to the students

- Information of environment and its protection through exposure to tours, trips and projects.
- To provide teaching of discipline of manners to the students in order to make them better citizens and good leaders for the future.
- To prepare intelligent engineers and dedicated doctors and contribute to the development of the nation.
- To prepare students for competitive exams and thus prepare them for this age of competitions.

The focus of the mission of the school as per the motive of the establishment is the development of girls. An emphasis on character of girls was observed. The satisfaction of society is equally significant for them.

The school is located in the centre of the city. The school is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The present building of the school was constructed by the Trust. The Higher Secondary section is housed in a new building which stands out as it looks very different from the palatial building of the main school.

It is a granted school. It is also financially supported by the Trust as per need. It does not face financial constraints.

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- To prepare intelligent engineers and dedicated doctors and contribute to the development of the nation.
- To prepare students for competitive exams and thus prepare them for this age of competitions.

The focus of the mission of the school as per the motive of the establishment is the development of girls. An emphasis on character of girls was observed.

Being a grant-in-aid school, the school did not have an independent admission policy and recruitment policy as the policies of the Education Department of State were followed.

The policy decisions of the Trust in addition to these were freeship to poor students given by the Trust and transparency in the appointment of teachers and in the payment of salary. Alongwith this there was an informal policy of placing minimum financial burden of expenses on students for activities of the school. All these policies stemmed from a sense of responsibility of the Trust.

The professional development programs conducted by the Education Department of the State are attended.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners.

As informed by the Office Superintendent on the basis of school records, the area of school premise is 97,497 square feet. The built up area is 19,629 square feet. There is a playground approximately admeasuring a quarter of the football ground. It has one Kho-Kho ground and one Volley ball ground. There is an open space with an open stage with seating capacity of 1500. There is a multi-media room for technology. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. The layout of the building is such that classrooms are located on the four sides with an open courtyard in the centre. The Higher Secondary section is housed in a separate building while the Secondary section is in the main building which has the Principal's office and the school office.

There are three separate laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry and Biology. There is one general science laboratory for Secondary section. There are two computer laboratories with 20 computers in each. As informed by the librarian on the basis of record, the number of books in the library is 25,000 and 10 magazines. The area of classroom is 540 square feet. The students' strength in Secondary section ranges from 52 to 66 and in Higher Secondary section it ranges from 42 to 65. There are adequate benches in the classroom with enough space for the teachers to move in the class. The teacher pupil ratio at the minimum is 1: 52 and at the maximum is 1: 66.

This school is located in the heart of the city. The lake situated on one side provides a contrast to the busy hustle and bustle of the city on the other side of the school. As one enters the school premise the palatial structure of the school building immediately strikes. As a contrast to it, the contemporary structure of the Higher Secondary section stands out as being different. Within the campus is the office of the Trust and the hostel for the students housed in a separate building. The school building gate has drinking water taps just at the entrance. The entry at the school building gate is regulated by a peon cum watchman and/or a lady peon. Standing at the building gate one gets a view of the entire school building and its layout.

### **5.3.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the

present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

### **5.3.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is nearly a century old (1916-2009). It carries with it long established traditions and practices. Owing to its long span of existence, it has been shaped and developed under the leadership of various Principals in the pre and post independent period. Over a period of time a shift in the focus from classroom teaching and discipline to allround development of the students has been observed. The school has had 'low' and 'high' phases in terms of functioning of the school. The present Principal who is in chair since last twelve years (1997 onwards) however stated, "Before I took charge of the school, the situation was not very good. Teachers and students would leave the school within the working hours. However, I took this up as a challenge. Now see the school, how well it functions." The present Supervisor of the Secondary section confirmed with admiration, "See how she (the present Principal) controls the school."

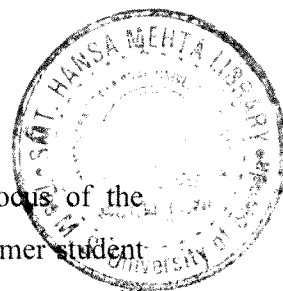
It being a granted school, there were few policy initiatives of the school which could directly impact the Academic Culture. The policies decisions which influenced the nurture of Academic Culture in school were: (i) freeship to poor students given by the Trust; (ii) transparency in the appointment of teachers and in the payment of salary and (iii) the informal policy of placing minimum financial burden of expenses on students for activities of the school. All these initiatives were in view of the socio-economic profile of the learners. The motive for the establishment of the school to cater to girls' education got reinforced through these policy initiatives.

The freeship to poor learners with merit was in the light of the context for the establishment of the school. In order to retain the girl learners in the school, this policy decision worked best with the poor girls. The changing socio-economic background of the learners from middle class to the lower middle class also made this policy decision significant. The teachers supported this policy initiative by personally

paying poor learner's fees who could not be covered under the official policy of freeship. The informal policy of placing minimum financial burden of expenses on learners for activities of the school was complementary to the policy decision on freeship. Another complementary program of the school in this direction was the donation of books, shoes, uniform and school bag after they passed out for those who could not afford it. Both the above policy decisions and the program were measures for creating equality among the learners. It created equal access to school and also equal learning resources.

The policy of transparency in appointment of teachers and in payment of salary was significant to win the commitment of the teachers. It presented a respect for the merit and talent of teacher/principal. The present Principal remarked, "I am appointed on my merit without any malpractice so I also feel that I must work for the school and be loyal to it." Obligation to be loyal and committed to the school was thus ensured through the policy decision of transparency in recruitment and remuneration.

The initiative of the Trust to exercise its freedom in policy was not much visible in programs of professional development. Here the focus of functioning appeared to be guided by what is 'mandatory'. The present Principal shrugged her shoulders and paused for moment before commenting on the Professional Development programs. She stated, "*Dekho teachers ko training programs time waste lagata hai. Lekin government ke jo training hoti hai vo sab attend karte hai. Sab course khatam karne ke peeche padte hai.*" (See the teachers consider training programs a waste of time. They attend the training given by government. All focus on completion of course.)" It appeared that the sense of responsibility of the teachers was restricted to 'completion of course' with a view to ensure success in examination which guided the functioning of teachers. The success of the students in the Class X and Class XII especially in the top rankers in the city and state was a matter of pride for the stakeholders. The present Office Superintendent told the researcher, "*Hamari ladakiya merit list me aati hai*" (Our girls rank in the merit list)". The teachers considered professional development as counter productive to their every day teaching responsibility and a waste of time. Though at the same time they undertook and executed government programs and government nominated activities diligently. The present Supervisor said, "Many projects of the Education Department (of State) are conducted in our school. The students also benefit and teachers also get to learn."



Though classroom teaching and success in examination has been a focus of the school, a concern for the allround development was also observed. A former student (1968-1972) said, “Each and every activity was performed. In NCC, cadets went till Delhi for the Republic Day Function. The teacher in charge of NCC was very nice.” The tenure of the present Principal has been described by the present Supervisor of the Secondary section as, “There is now more focus on co-curricular activities.”

Continuity as a feature of the school emerged. A former student (1968-1972) who is also a present teacher (1980 onwards) remarked that nothing much has changed. Everything that was done earlier was good so it is continued. Some new activities are introduced as per government norms.” However initiatives which marked a departure helped to define the school. The present Principal exercised her freedom to introduce outstation tour for the students though it is one of the regular activities of other schools of the city. This initiative to provide a wider exposure to the learners assumed significance in view of the profile of the learners and a loss of confidence in the school before the tenure of the present Principal. The present Supervisor of the Secondary section attributed the success of this initiative to the Principal’s personality, “*Vo bold hai aur convince karti hai* (She is bold and convinces).” The Principal won the confidence of parents – an important stakeholder in this case through establishing communication with them. She conducted parents meeting, explained to them the arrangements made and the benefits to the students. The success of the initiative is that the outstation tours were continued in the subsequent years.

Initiative with specific reference to the profile of the learners was the introduction of the Home Science stream in school. A former student (1968-1972) said, “It was the only school in the city to offer Home Science stream in school.”

The policy decision to close the Marathi medium section impacted the school in the profile of the learners. With the decision to close Marathi medium section of school, there was an important distinct shift and make up of preference for one particular medium only by the Trust. This policy decision has been viewed differently: one view was the decline in the learners interested in Marathi medium on account of the potential of English medium school post liberalization in 1990s. The migration of Marathi medium learners to English medium schools contributed to a perception of

decline in the performance of the school. Another view presented by a former teacher of the Marathi medium is that it was a strategy to shut down the Marathi medium as it performed better than the Gujarati medium. This subsequently led to the closure of the one section of school which took away a major part of stakeholders of school.

### 5.3.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school, the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event 1 Parent-Teachers meeting on Open Day**

*It is open day for standard X and XII. The venue for the open day is the building for the higher secondary section. Each class has been allotted a classroom. The class teacher has bundled the answer sheets roll number wise and arranged them on one of the bench near her table. There are four to five students from each class who have the duty of distributing the answer papers to the parents and students, collect it back and rearrange it roll numberwise. As soon as a parent entered the class, the four students would become alert. They asked for the roll number of the student and gave them the answer sheets. The class teacher had a register which had the overall result. Parents were required to sign after they viewed the answer sheets and discussed the result with the class teacher.*

*One parent and a student entered the class. The in-charge students asked, "Do you want to see the answer supplement?"*

*Student- No. My father wants to go.*

*Teacher- Why no? Show him the answer sheets. (Looks at the parent) What does she do at home?*

*Parent- She does lessons at home.*

*T- She may have to spend one more year in this class.*

*S- (very softly) Madam...*

*T- Say again, I have not heard.*

*S- (Looks at the teacher) Madam I have not brought the material you gave for study.*

*T- It is OK. Take other material also. Whatever you want you take from my cupboard,*

*S-(relaxes and smiles ) O K.*

*T- (to parent) See if she practices she will pass. She should take last years' question papers, solve them. Read the question papers, any paper and then solve it.*

\*

*The English Teacher developed extra question papers for English subject for practice in Diwali Vacation. The teacher bore the expenses for it personally.*

*(An incident narrated by a former learner of the school during 1939-1945)*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

The two events indicate the support created by the teacher for the students for facilitating the learner to perform well.

The first event involved three stakeholders: learners, teachers and the parents. In the first event, the apprehensions of learner who could not perform well in the examination was observed. The common goal of the three stakeholders-learner, teacher and the parent is that the learner should perform well in the examination. The inability of the two stakeholders-the learner and the parent- to enable the learner to achieve the desired goal created a situation in which the sense of a responsibility of teacher was addressed. The teacher's response to it was demonstration of sense of responsibility for developing support- a reassurance and the study material- that she could provide as enabling factor to the learner. The commitment of the teacher

stemmed from a sense of responsibility felt by the teacher to improve the performance of the learners.

In the second event, the teacher became an enabling factor by providing the extra question papers in English subject. It was a support provided by the teacher in advance. The acts of the teacher were driven by a sense of responsibility but the teacher also exercised his freedom to take the initiative of providing extra question papers to learners.

### ***Analytic view of event***

In both the events, the issue at stake is the performance of the learner/s and the role of teacher as an enabling factor in it. How does the teacher view her role as an enabling factor? What drives a teacher in the role of an enabling factor?

In the first event the student appeared very scared. A loss of confidence was observed as she spoke in almost inaudible voice. The teacher's voice was very reassuring. The parent's facial expression indicated helplessness. The teacher was able to restore confidence in the learner by creating comfort. A respect for learner was also manifested as the possibility of improvement in performance was shown by teacher. In the second event the former student reflected on the act of her teacher with pride and appreciation.

Not much change was observed in the concerns and initiatives taken by the teachers in 1939-1945 and in 2008-2009. The school functioned much the same way. The profile of the learners in terms of gender and the accompanying challenges to it in the larger context of the community defined the sense of responsibility of teachers in this school. This support becomes significant in view of the inability of the parent to support the learner.

### **Event 2 Teaching Learning Process**

*The teacher declared to the students. Today the science class will be taken in the laboratory. The students smiled with excitement. Many of them got up from their place. The teacher said, "Lets go to the laboratory quickly." Students formed a line to reach the laboratory.*



*After the students had settled, the teacher said, " This is a revision for lesson number 11 for exam and for practical exam. So if we view the instruments, it will help. Please help me to keep the scientific instruments on this table.*

*Three students get up to help the teacher. The instruments are placed on the table.*

*T: (Shows a fuse.) What is this?*

*S1: Plug*

*T: (the facial expression and the tone does not change on listening to the wrong answer. He then shows a plug.) What is this?*

*S2: Plug.*

*T: Yes, so what is this? (Again shows fuse)*

*S1: Fuse.*

*T: O K (Shows a model of generator) How many of you have not seen this before?*

*(five students raise their hands.)*

*T: How many leave should you take? Do I have to sign your leave note only?*

*T: (Shows electric generator) What is this? Which energy is transferred?*

*S4: This is electric motor.*

*T: (Shows an electric motor) what is this?*

*SSS: Electric motor.*

*T: Then, what is this? (Again shows electric generator)*

*SSS: Generator.*

*(The facial expressions of students show that they have understood the difference.)*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in science laboratory which is one of the sites of learning in school.

The teacher demonstrated equality for the learners as he accepted them as they were by being non-judgmental about their performance in the class. He did not admonish them for their failure to give correct answers. In one case when five students indicated that they had not seen the model of generator, he reminded them indirectly about the being regular in the school to improve their performance (*: How many leave should you take? Do I have to sign your leave note only?*). He thus indicated a respect for the learners that their inability to answer was not on account of incompetence but on account of irregularity.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The students appeared excited as they walked to the science laboratory. At the same time, one could sense an absence of boisterousness in the class. The teacher had a friendly but serious approach towards the students. The students appeared relaxed in the class. When the students' answer was incorrect, they would smile sheepishly and look down. A fidget showing discomfort with inability to answer was also observed. Whenever a student answered incorrectly, the teacher would look at the researcher and say, "You know their background. We have to accept it and teach them properly." It was display of the sense of responsibility on the part of the teacher to fulfill the requirements of the teaching.

This teacher was with the Marathi medium section. After its closure, this teacher accepted the offer of joining the Gujarati medium section. He told the researcher, "One had to make this choice for one's livelihood." The teacher however did not allow this to affect his responsibilities as a teacher.

### ***Event 3 Teaching Learning Process***

*Standard VIIIC Topic: Discussion of project work to be done in groups.*

*T: First discuss in the group how you will work on the topic. Leaders will conduct the discussion. After ten minutes, the leaders will present their ideas before the class. Then we will*

react. The theme is 'Best from Waste' If someone wants to change the project, please inform me.

*(Students discuss the project among their group members)*

T: Let the noise be low, I should not hear, you may hear.

*(Discussion among one group—L stands for leader and S stands for students)*

L: We will take thermocol.

S1: Thermocol is not allowed.

S2: Shall we make in cardboard?

S3: We will use match boxes.

S4: And for coolies?

T: Leaders, you can use old calendars, the backside of the calendars, used pages from drawing notebook, these are coloured pages, you can use used match sticks, gift paper wrappings, the cardboard from last year's notebooks. Leaders please write which waste material you are going to use. Others can also write.

T: If any group is ready then please come.

*(Discussion in another group.)*

S1: See we can make dolls.

S2: But these dolls must stand.

S3: These dolls can be passengers.

S4: But the dolls must stand.

S1: Does anyone have cardboards.

S1: Should I make dolls?

L: NO.... OK make later.

S1: O K tell me if you want to make doll, tell me one day in advance.

S3: The queue for inquiry. We can make use of match sticks.

*T: Let us know what project is. It is not to be decorated. Let me give an example.*

*(Teacher draws a bottle and a skull on the blackboard.)*

*T: What does this mean?*

*S7: Wine bottle.*

*S10: Skull*

*T: Ayswaria , what does it mean?*

*A: A wine bottle and a skull, drinking is prohibited.*

*T: (Draws a cross on the wine bottle) We can give this message by drawing a cross.*

*(Students observed carefully.)*

*T: Now I request Sukanya to make presentation for her group.*

*S: We will use cardboard for making clock. For showing digital clock we will use matchsticks. Then we will write ak vadan..  
...(One o'clock)*

*T: So you will show how Sanskrit language is used in daily life.*

*S: Then we will show Ro..... Ro..... (she stammered)*

*T and SS: Roman*

*S: Roman numbers will be shown on the clock.*

*T: Thank you. Now next.*

*S2: Our topic is Rail Sthanak ( Railway Station). We will use cardboard for making tea stall. Match box to make a rail. People will be shown by matchstick.*

*T: Which words will you use to show use of Sanskrit language? Maal vaahak, vatanayam(coolie, Air conditioned).what is the aim of using words in Sanskrit ? The project is in Sanskrit and people will get to know about Sanskrit language.*

*T: Now next, are you ready? (Looks at the next group)*

*Have you heard of Nalanda University? Can we make Takshashila University?How old are these Universities?*

*S1: When Tagore was born.*

*T: Much before Tagore was born. Tagore established Shantiniketan University. These universities are ancient.*

*(The bell rings. The period gets over. Students get up.)*

*T: One minute (Teacher raises hand.) Wait. One point is left. What is the hurry? Please write. Fun and learn. How much time will you take? Will one week be O K?*

*SSS: OK*

*T: Write an appropriate Sanskrit shloka for the theme selected. If you cannot get a shloka then write simple sentence in Sanskrit.*

*The teacher then leaves the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the sites of learning in school. The teacher created freedom in the class for the learners to share ideas among the group of learners as well as in the entire class. He set the rules ('Then we will react'). Within the group most of the students were involved. The teacher did not impose his ideas on students. He asked for the readiness of the group to make the presentation ('If any group is ready then please come'. Now next, are you ready?). He sought the students' concurrence on deciding the deadline for the submission of project (*How much time will you take? Will one week be O K?*). He offered the freedom to change the topic of the project (*If someone wants to change the project, please inform me.*) The class was conducted systematically as the teacher announced the task and gave instructions with clarity. The students were called for presentation systematically (*Now I request Sukanya to make presentation for her group.*)

The teacher corrected the incorrect answer of the student not by declaring that it is wrong but by providing a clue ('*Much before Tagore was born. Tagore established Shantiniketan University. These universities are ancient.*') In this he upheld the freedom of the learners to attempt. The focus of correcting a learner appeared an enabler and not a deterrent. When one student was unable to pronounce 'Roman', the students and the teachers prompted 'Roman' to help her to proceed further.

Though freedom was ensured for the students the teacher balanced it with a sense of responsibility. He cautioned before the group discussion, *"Let the noise be low, I should not hear, you may hear."*

#### ***Analytic view of event***

The present Principal had commented that the teachers considered 'training' as waste of time. This teacher however appeared familiar with the changes in pedagogy as he allotted the task of project in groups following its procedure of discussion in group followed by presentation. The teacher appeared very enthusiastic and had a smiling face. The teacher was teaching Sanskrit but he often used English language in the class. As soon as he entered the class the students appeared relaxed. The students were engaged in discussion and appeared interested in the task given. There was co-operation among the students. The teacher was a facilitator of learning, students were free to choose their topic and discuss.

#### ***Event 4 Republic Day Celebration***

*The flag hoisting ceremony was organized on the playground of the school. On one side was the flag post. On its opposite side was the stage. In between these two, students were standing in class wise lines facing the flag post. Some teachers were standing near the flag post facing the students and some were on the two sides. Patriotic songs were played on the music system.*

*The Principal arrived with the Chief Guest who was also the Trustee of the school. The Principal asked the students to sit down as it was fifteen minutes before the flag hoisting. The students gestured with surprise, "hey". The Principal and the Chief Guest sat on the stage and were conversing with each other. At the stipulated time the PT teacher commanded the students to get up and face the flag post. The Principal with the chief guest walked to the flag post. The P T Teacher signaled to one of the students who invited the chief guest formally to hoist the flag. The student commanded the students to stand in attention. The PT teacher was alert. She handed the rope to the chief guest and gestured that it has to be pulled. He pulled the rope and the flag unfurled. The PT Teacher looked at the flag anxiously till it unfurled. Then she relaxed. The students and*

*the teachers saluted the flag and sang the national anthem. After this the Principal led the chief guest to the stage. The students were then asked to turn towards the stage.*

*The Principal glanced at the students. She said, "The last rows can come to the front as they are in the sun." The students from the last rows came forward. The teachers were standing. They appeared unsure and hesitated to sit. The Principal gestured to them to come forward to the stage and sit on the durries spread on it. Gradually all the teachers sat on the stage on the durries—gents teacher on one side and lady teachers on the other. The Chief Guest and the Principal occupied the chairs in the centre.*

*Prizes for the top rankers of each class from the previous year were distributed. One prize for the best student (standard XII) was also given on the basis of conduct and excellence in academics. The photographer comes late. The principal immediately asked the student who was given the prize for the best student to receive the prize again so that a photograph could be taken. The announcer asked the student to give her views on receiving the award. (The student did not know about it. She prepared a few points and gave the speech.) As she gave the speech she was smiling and sometimes pausing to think. The speech was given very confidently and in a natural manner.*

*The student's speech:*

*"Respected chief guest, principal, teachers and friends. Our parents had a contribution in developing us. Nowadays both the parents are working so the main influence on us is of the teachers and school. I will like to return to school even after I leave it. The thoughts written on the walls of school will always inspire me. I have learnt a lot in school and I love school."*

*The Republic Day function was over. The students got up. As the students were getting up, the principal immediately leaned forward and said, "Do not dust your skirts, we all are sitting here." By this time the students had got up and some of them, especially those from the last few rows, dusted their skirts.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event- 'Republic Day Celebration' is one of the regular activities of school. In fulfilling her role as the head of the institution as she demonstrated care and concern for the other two stakeholders: students and teachers, the Principal's acts manifested a sense of responsibility. In view of the fact that the Chief Guest had arrived to the venue before the scheduled time, she gave due consideration to the fatigue of the students and thereby respect for the students. She asked them to sit down. She also asked some students to shift to a shady place. She exhibited respect for the teachers who hesitated and continued to stand after the flag hoisting by inviting them to sit on the durries on the stage.

The event also was a platform for recognition at individual level and at institutional level. The various prizes for the rankers of each class were recognition of the students' performance. The speech of thanks by the winner of the 'Best Student Award' was confirmation of the school's efforts and contribution to the life of learners.

### ***Analytic view of event***

Four stakeholders of the school: Trustee, Principal, teachers and students were on the same platform. Simplicity marked the function as the flag hoisting was conducted without much fan fare. One experienced an exemplary sense of ordinariness in this event. The student's speech was not a 'prepared text' but almost a spontaneous expression of the student's perception of the contribution of school in her life. In this speech teachers as role model and school's contribution in the contemporary setting have been acknowledgement and articulated. The student demonstrated respect for teachers through the speech.

### ***Event 5 Discussion among teachers***

*It was two days before the Republic Day. The PT Teacher and another teacher were practicing putting up the national flag for the flag hoisting ceremony for the Republic Day function. The PT teacher, who was in charge of this duty, had retired. The teacher, who was taking Physical Education for XI and XII, is given the charge of PT from VIII onwards. One peon is also standing there. The PT Teacher appears nervous and*



*fidgets. The rope attached to the flag is pulled, the flag goes up and unfurls. Both the teachers watch this process very attentively.*

*T1- See this rope connects to the saffron section. The other rope leads to the green section.*

*The peon- Yes*

*(The PT teacher observes carefully.)*

*T1- I think, we can mark the rope.*

*PT Teacher- (expressions show relief) Yes, then there will be no mistake.*

*(T 1 marks the rope leading to the saffron section with red. The P T teacher again observes it carefully.)*

*PT- Then mark the rope leading to green section with blue colour.*

*(The teacher marks with blue colour. Once again the flag is tied is folded and unfurled. The flag unfurls properly. Both the teachers and the peon view it carefully and give a sigh of relief.)*

*PT- Now we will put it up on Monday before 9.15 am so that there is no mistake. (she looks at the teacher and the peon.) Please come at 9 am so that we can do it properly.*

*(Both nod their heads. The peon collects the flag and the rope. The two teachers walk back to the school building.)*

\*

*The teachers are preparing the overall result of prelims of standard X in the library.*

*T1- Those who have passed in science have failed in other subjects.*

*T2-How many have failed in your class? Thirty one in my class (have failed).*

*T3- Come, I will call out the names from the list you write the marks.*

*T1- Let me write pass fail first (against their names).*

*T2- I still have to correct two bundles of standard VIII.*

*T3- Bring it tomorrow.*

*T1- Finally the count is thirty three.*

*T2- So two more have been added to the list.*

*T1- Yes.*

*T2-But they will do well.*

*T3- Many don't take prelims seriously. It is good. They will*

*come to know their weakness.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

These two events indicate discussion among teachers. In the first event one teacher learns about the technicalities of flag hoisting from her colleagues. In the second event the teachers discuss the completion of their task and also the performance of the students.

A sense of responsibility drives the action of teachers in the first event where sharing of expertise in one area (here preparation for flag hoisting) is shared. The teacher seeking help is prompted by a sense of responsibility to enable her to perform the allotted task properly. In the second event it was a friendly conversation among the teachers to check on the status of completion of task.

### ***Analytic view of event***

In the first event the P T Teacher appeared flustered and nervous. The other two teachers sometimes smiled at her nervousness at the same time they appreciated her concern. They were composed. In the second event the discussion on the performance of the students was significant in view of the emphasis laid on results of the public examination of class X and XII in the school. The teachers' interactions were marked by cordiality and collegiality. The common objective in both the

interactions was performing their task well. Their sense of responsibility got pivoted in this objective.

### **5.3.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Learners***

An adherence to the admission policy of Education Department of State did not create ground for inequality among the students. Differences among the students on account of the two medium of instruction existed but these also became in consequential once one medium was shut down. The learner group belonged to middle class and lower middle class section of the society so the inequality based on socio-economic background was not experienced.

Equality of treatment is experienced by the learners which one of the students of standard XII studying in the school stated as, “Teachers are helpful. They explain nicely, they give more attention to the low scorers. The low scorers are also happy in the school as they understand what is taught and are able to do better. All are equal in a class.” The teachers are perceived as being helpful to the low scores also. The teachers’ acts are driven by a sense of responsibility to become enabling factors for the low scores but the learner perceives it as equality. Thus, an overall perception about the teachers is that of equality as experienced by the learners. The experience of equality in terms of potential is described by a former student (1981-83) as ‘complex *nahi hota tha* (We did not feel a complex). Even if one student is dull she did not feel inferior. Even talented student did not feel superior.” She reflected further, “We had good friend circle. Three students of standard X from our class came in merit list of Board. So we were influenced by them. We felt like working like them.”

A formal structure of a ‘Suggestion Box’ was created in the school which the learners used to exercise their freedom to communicate their dissatisfaction about a teacher, a

need for study leave and a change in uniform etc.. These suggestions were attended to by the Principal in the assembly. This practice however was discontinued a year before (2007-08). Instead another structure of a student council is created which is provided a direct access to the Principal. Learners enjoyed freedom of presenting their choice of learning task to the teacher. Students of standard X told the teacher who engaged their class on proxy arrangement, “We want time to study for exam. Let us study. Do not revise anything.”

The friendly approach of the teachers to students described by a former students (1981-83) as ‘*ghul mil jaate the*’ facilitated freedom of students to share their personal problems like father being jobless, or their stay away from parent’s place at a relative’s place for the purpose of education. The students requested teachers for support in their studies in the form of ‘material’ which was procured for them in 1980s also and was observed by the researcher during the field work.

### ***Teachers***

The teachers appeared to be in awe of the present Principal. They perceived freedom for themselves as ‘non interference from Supervisor or the Principal in the activity given to them. The researcher witnessed this in practice during field work when the teacher in charge of the special presentation on ‘de addiction’ discharged her responsibilities. Even the task of welcoming the guest was given to the teacher in charge. Freedom to take initiatives was facilitated by the Principals. A present teacher said, “The Principals generally doesn’t refuse any initiative.”

A sense of responsibility of teachers is recalled by two former students (1981-83) and (1968-72) who were the present teachers also, “Teachers used to teach well. Explanation was good.” The responsibility of the teachers is described by a former student (1968-72) especially of Vice-principal during her association as a student. The Vice-principal knew all students by name. She described the PT Teacher as ‘very alert’ and ‘taking keen interest in students’. She corrected the students’ posture not only during the P T periods but also during the entire day.

The sense of responsibility of the teachers is in general described by two teachers who with the school for twenty five years and fifteen years as, “We are not like other schools, we do our work properly.”

Acknowledgement of one’s talent /merit was respect for teachers as reflected in recruitment process. It was consciously nurtured through policy of avoidance of malpractice in recruitment process. In the everyday life respect for the teachers is explained as ‘not insulting’. A teacher who is with the school since ten years said, “The Principal counsels the teacher personally in her office.” A strategy adopted by the Principal to enforce punctuality was to keep the muster in her office and not to look at the teacher when she signed. Respect was seen as creating comfort as seen in the Principal’s gesture of noticing teachers’ hesitation and asking them to occupy their place on the carpet on stage.

A sense of responsibility of the teachers was to work beyond the stipulated duty hours when needed. It was explained as ‘*jab school ka kaam hota hai tab ham sab jut jaate hai*’ (When it concerns work of school, we all attend to it together)’. We have never counted hours. We have waited after school hours to allow each and every student to get chance for dissection.”

### ***Principal***

The Principals of this school have been driven by a sense of responsibility which is described as being ‘strict’ and ‘devoted’. Identification of an appropriate direction for development of the school was prompted by a sense of responsibility of the Principal. The present Principal identified the direction as focusing on all round development and creating a greater visibility for the school in the Education Department. She offered the facility of using the school for pilot projects of the Education Department.

The present Principal described her freedom as the faith of the Trust which she has secured through her commitment. She elaborates it as, “The Trustees say if she has done it then it must be right.”

The Principals have earned respect from teachers for various qualities like ‘how the school is controlled by them’ and ‘how they guided and mentored the teachers’. One Principal was respected for her ‘*vadilpan* (guidance as an elderly person)’, another for

love and affection for the students. The present Principal is respected for her qualities of 'boldness'.

#### **5.3.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### **Freedom**

Policy initiatives for freedom were not much evident but freedom was experienced in the everyday life of school. Freedom was experienced as freedom of sharing problems by students to teachers / Vice-principal. It was facilitated by the friendly approach of the teachers and a general awareness about the school's motive. Students exercised freedom in demanding support from school –material and of school space for study. Structures for exercising freedom were created like the 'suggestion box' and the Student Council. Teachers created opportunities for exercise of freedom in sharing their views/ideas among themselves through mechanism of group discussion and presentation in the class ('you discuss', 'you may react'). Teachers experienced freedom to take initiatives which were generally not refused by the Principal. Freedom in the discharge of duty was experienced as 'non-interference'. Freedom was also perceived as faith of the Trust.

##### **Respect**

Respect did not emerge as a striking feature of Academic Culture of this school.

Respect as acknowledgement of school's contribution in the learner's life was perceived. Respect was recognition of the students' success at the public examination

which was a significant achievement of the school. Communication with the learners irrespective of their potential and performance conveyed respect for them as persons. This was achieved through the tone used in talking to them and to their parents.

### **Equality**

The one gender learner profile ruled out inequality between learners based on gender. At the policy level the policy of freeship to students was an attempt to create equal opportunity for learners. Subsequent to that equality of treatment was based on the convergence of goals of the three major stakeholders in school- the learner, the teacher and the principal. All three aimed at 'performance' of the students. In this the 'high scorer and the low scorer' were considered equal. The teacher's attention to all students and their support to the students in need of help on account of various reasons led to equality among the students.

### **A Sense of Responsibility**

It is a mission driven school given the gender specific stakeholder. This mission is formed by explicit commitment to education of girls. Care became a broader expression of a sense of responsibility. Care was understood as support systems to enable the learners seek education. The support systems were introduction of curriculum (Home Science) enabling them for their perceived role in society. Academic support systems were created by offering school space for study and provision of material for study.

A sense of responsibility was also 'functioning properly' wherein the point of comparison was 'other schools' which apparently were not functioning properly. The sense of responsibility with respect to the proper functioning of the school then was defined with respect to the non functional schools. Performing one's task well was '*acche se padhana* (to teach well)', '*guide karna* (to guide) ', 'to provide study material' 'to provide space for study in school' and to 'work beyond stipulated working hours'. In view of the gender specific stakeholder (learners), gents teachers interpreted sense of responsibility as 'not scolding harshly' and not 'touching them'.

### 5.3.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE

#### *Fully functional school with no special pulls or push*

This school is an ordinary school for the common people as it was one of the several initiatives in the field of education. The distinctness that it has is owing to its gender specific learner group. Its functioning is based on following what is mandatory by government and generally what is executed in different schools. Its notion of being fully functional thus is in comparison to other schools.

#### *Alignment of vision, mission, policy and initiatives*

The distinctness of this school lay in its gender specific learner group. The vulnerability of this group was dealt by creating support systems in school. At policy level the freeship to students was to ensure continuation of learners in school. These were supported by informal initiatives also at individual level. The Academic support systems were the introduction of 'course' conducive to the perceived role of learners in society and extending space of the school to compensate for its lack at home. Leadership provided by all the principal.

### 5.3.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE

#### *Confidence in school*

It has been described as 'education *accha tha*'. The place is considered a safe place for the learners. At present the school has not been able to overcome the lure of the English medium schools which has taken away a significant group of students.

#### *Teachers*

Teachers demonstrate commitment in providing appropriate guidance and support to the students. A change is observed in the teachers in terms of 'dedication'. One teacher said, "They (former teachers) were better than us."

#### *Learners*

A change in the learners from being '(*sankochi*) hesitant' has occurred. They are described as confident in contrast to being hesitant. They approached their teachers for guidance. The researcher however observed a combination of hesitant and



confident students. The performance of the learners in the public examination of class X and XII was a motivating factor.

### **5.3.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of sense of responsibility to a large extent accompanied by freedom to some extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through three processes (i) fully functional school with no special pulls or push factors (ii) alignment of vision, mission, policy and initiatives. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school as a safe place with good education but unable to overcome the challenge of English medium schools; (ii) learners of this school are described as confident as not being hesitant, the high performance in Board examination was another attribute of the learners; (iii) teachers are observed as committed as seen in the guidance given to students though a change in this was observed by the teachers themselves.

Thus the analysis of the events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of the school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## 5.4 CASE: 4

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### 5.4.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

On approaching the principal for the permission to conduct research in the school, the principal immediately demanded a formal letter for permission. After reading the letter carefully, she confirmed the duration of the researcher's stay in the school with the exact dates. One of the responses of the principal to the researcher was, "Oh! You will see the classroom teaching also. O K." The researcher was asked to begin data collection from the next day. The Coordinators of the school were informed by the principal. A circular regarding the researcher's presence in the school with a request to cooperate with the researcher was displayed on the common notice board of the school. The process of acquiring permission occurred in a businesslike brisk manner. During the period of data collection some teachers would exclaim, "Oh! You are the researcher, we saw the circular on the notice board." The Coordinators facilitated the process of data collection as they informed the researcher about an event or an activity that would be organized on a particular day. Facility of lunch in the school's dining hall was provided to the researcher.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were teaching learning processes in various classes, in laboratory, on playground, the morning assembly, prize distribution ceremony, a teachers' meeting, rehearsal for the prize distribution ceremony, recess and lunch period in the dining hall. The principal informants were a former principal who was associated with the school for ten years, a former Coordinator who was associated with the school as a teacher and later as a Coordinator for twenty five years, a former teacher with twenty five years of experience in the school and the present Coordinator whose total association starting with her appointment as a teacher with the school has been for thirty years. In addition to these informants four teachers voluntarily shared their experiences. There were also conversations with students and teachers on various sites of the school. Sometimes, a caution was exercised by the informants ('What will you write?') while some informants were very reflective as they shared their perspective and experience.

### **5.4.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

The school was started as an expression of its founder's belief in learner centered education. The founder of the school, who was trained under Madam Maria Montessori, was the wife of an eminent industrialist and philanthropist of Vadodara city. Thereby indirectly the school also presented the face of the social responsibility of the industrial sector. The school started with five students among whom some were children from the founder's family. The formal year of establishment of the school as per school records is 1967. A Trust to manage the school was also formed in which the core power remained with the family members of the founder. Over a period of time, eminent academicians, industrialists and philanthropists were also inducted in the Board of the Trust. After managing this school for approximately thirty five years, the Trust forayed into larger area of education with the establishment of schools affiliated to Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar; International Baccalaureate, Geneva; College of Education and a University. The Trust also has been entrusted with the management of Tribal school by the government of Gujarat. In such diversified foray of the Trust into the field of education, this school forms the core institution from which the Trust draws experience and expertise. All the other institutions managed by it are of distinct from the other and of stand alone type. Though the Trust is financially stable and supports its various institutions, its aim is to make each institution financially self sufficient.

This school is a non-grant-in-aid school meeting expenses from fees. It is affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi. This choice of affiliating to CBSE was deliberate as Vadodara city then had very few schools affiliated to CBSE. The medium of instruction of this school is English. The yearly fee is Rupees 40,305 for standard VI to X, Rupees 43,915 for standard XI and XII Arts and Commerce stream with Computer Science, and Rupees 42,915 for Arts and Commerce stream, Rupees 44,795 for standard XI and XII Science stream (Physics, Chemistry and Computer Science) and Rupees 43,075 for Science Stream (Physics, Chemistry and Biology). The high fee structure, English as medium of instruction and affiliation to CBSE defines the learner profile which comes from the cosmopolitan population of the city and comprises children of elite section of society, children of employees of Defense Services and of Central government.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision statement of the school displayed prominently on school diary, the notebooks of students and the school office foyer is 'Fostering The Spirit of Excellence' The vision of the school noted from school diary was, "XYZ embodies the indomitable spirit of an education system that renews and revitalizes itself constantly in response to the changing needs of every new age. XYZ endeavours to provide a learning environment that will build, nurture and develop the trinity of faculties in every student, by creating varied opportunities for her/his growth." The mission statement also noted from the school diary was, "Through education, shared experience and community service, XYZ enables those who enter its portals to become responsible global citizens, politically and environmentally aware, committed to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and co-operation, through action and personal examples." Equality is reflected in the concern for all round development of all learners (develop trinity of faculties in every student) in the vision statement. The mission statement also indicates creation of varied opportunities for development of students which underlies recognition of freedom of learners through the choices offered to them. A reflection of a sense of responsibility for the larger society is also observed in the mission statement as developing responsible citizens for the society is also endeavoured in the school.

The key policy decisions that nurtured the Academic Culture of this school were the admission policy, the policy of freeship to wards of teachers on the basis of teacher's performance, the recruitment of teachers and performance based increment and promotion. In all these policy decisions, merit and performance of the stakeholders: learners and teachers play the role of equalizer. The high fee structure however may be a prohibitory factor in creating equal opportunity for all meritorious students of all sections of society. For ensuring entry for only meritorious students to school to maintain quality, admission process is made rigorous for the learner as well as the parents. Performance of parents in group-discussion and a write up in the entrance examination for admission was added to the merit of the learner to decide the final ranking for admission. The Coordinator of the Higher Secondary School remarked, "We get the best of the students". The next challenge is to recruit equally meritorious teachers for the 'best of the students'. Key policy decision with respect to teachers was recruitment of meritorious teachers who are able to meet the standards of

excellence followed and set in the school. The recruitment process follows a rigorous process of more than one demonstration lesson by the prospective candidate and an assessment of the candidate's competence by a panel of senior teachers and coordinators, principal and then the final interview by the panel of Trustees.

The rigorous recruitment policy is followed by professional development programs which are organized by the school for its teachers and also teachers of the other schools of the city. Teachers are delegated for attending professional development programs as per the focus of the programs. Professional development programs catering to the needs of all the teachers such as on Life Skills and Stress Management are also organized in the school. An initiative of awarding Best Teacher Award was instituted to recognize the merit and talent of the teachers which was later discontinued.

The wide range of programs in the form of clubs offered to learners (vocal music, instrumental music, dance, aerobic, quizzer's club, general knowledge club, book worms club, maths club, personality development) created opportunities for learners with different interests to develop their talents for fostering the spirit of excellence. Inter House competitions are also organized throughout the year. The House with the highest marks is declared as the 'Best House' on Sports Day. The Annual Concert is the cultural program in which almost all the students participate.

Recognition of parents as significant stakeholders is observed as orientation for the parents about school practices is provided in the primary section. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is an elected body which represents the parents' voice to the school management. An annual general body meeting of the PTA is conducted which is attended by the parents, teachers and the members of the Trust. The PTA has also constituted prizes for the students. A former coordinator remarked that generally supportive parents were entrusted the responsibility of officials of PTA for harmonious relationship between school and PTA.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ration and the availability of the learning/infrastructure resources to all learners. As informed by the manager of the school administration on the basis of the school records the total area of the school premises is 1,49,000 square feet and the built up area is 1,48,000 square feet. There

two basket ball courts, two volley ball courts, one football ground which is shared with a sister institution of the Trust, a lawn tennis court on shared basis and a quadrangle measuring 4000 square feet for skating and which can also be used as open space for assembly and activities. There are two auditoriums with seating capacity of 250 in each. There are two open stages of which one has the seating capacity of 800 and the other of 3000. There three laboratories for Physics, Chemistry and Biology subjects and one for Mathematics. In addition to the classrooms, there are resource rooms where subject specific learning resources are placed and displayed. These resource rooms are for social studies, performing arts room, percussion instruments room, keyboard instruments room, fashion studies room, technology aided learning room, counseling room, meditation room and infirmary. There are three computer laboratories with 35 computers in each. There are two libraries: one for junior section (Standard I to VI) and the other for the senior section (Standard VII to XII). Total number of books in both the libraries is 16,000 and journal and magazines are 40. The Dining Hall has the seating capacity of 800. The area of a classroom is 450 square feet. Students' strength in each class ranges from 40 to 45. The teacher-pupil ratio at the minimum is 1: 40 and at the maximum is 1: 45.

As one enters the school premises, the security personnel at the school gate regulate the entry. There is a well maintained garden with a sculpture of a huge bird on one side and the basketball courts on the other side. The school office is very well maintained with a corporate office feel. The building for the primary section is painted in bright colours like yellow, green and blue. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. Curtains are provided in classrooms on need basis for protection from heat and harsh light of the sun. There are separate buildings for Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary section though each is connected with the other. The layout of the school and infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.4.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents

of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.4.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. The school is forty-two years old (1967-2009). Three distinct phases in the school's development can be observed. One is that of recognition as a well-known school of the city in which the school was known by the name of the principal (1967-1986); secondly, a period of weak leadership (1986 – 1995) and lastly the period of rebuilding of the past glory and more recognition (1995 – 2006). At present the school functions under the leadership of the principal who is in her office since last three years. The present principal's association with the school as a teacher and as a Coordinator has been for twenty five years. Two principals of this school have been awarded 'The Best Teacher Award' by CBSE.

The emphasis on excellence, on renewal and revitalization in the vision statements reverberates in the everyday life of the school. There is a constant echoing of the intent of 'doing the best' and 'being the best' among the three stakeholders: learners, teachers and the principal. Simultaneously there is a catchphrase among the teachers, 'every year there is something new' and/or 'we have to do something new'. The attempt to do 'something new' fosters freedom as the teacher is challenged to innovate. This freedom is exercised by the teachers in designing curricular as well as co curricular learning experiences. This freedom was facilitated by the provision of an extra allowance of Rupees 75 during the first phase of school (1967-1995). Several of such initiatives are developing textbooks and developing worksheets. During the period of study, the researcher observed a teacher conducting an online aptitude test for maths for standard-X. This test had been developed by her while the support for the software was provided by the teacher teaching computer science. A former teacher (1979-2006) informed, "I developed the idea of maths laboratory even before (in the early 1980s) CBSE had made it mandatory."

The founder's belief in learner centered education assumed the form of an informal policy of providing freedom to learners. Freedom in the form of choices was seen in the wide range of clubs/activities offered to the students. The practice of restricting the entry of each student to three events only created equal opportunity for participation for learners. The informal policy decision to restrict teacher-pupil-ratio in various clubs to 1: 20 created congenial learning conditions.

Students were awarded for excellence in various fields with awards like 'Best Sports Person' and 'Best Student'. Along with these awards which recognized individual excellence, recognition of performance of learners in various areas like hundred percent attendance, excellence in one particular subject, or a group of subjects created a broad base of appreciation of learners. Freedom of learners in a way of excelling in areas of their interest and choice was offered.

The informal policy of ensuring freedom for students impacted the everyday life in school. The researcher observed that the students interacted freely with the teachers in the teaching-learning situations on various sites of the school. They did not appear inhibited. A former teacher narrated an incident to demonstrate the freedom of students as experienced in the first phase of school's development (1967-1986), "A learner had freedom to tell the teachers that s/he would not like to attend the class. S/he was permitted to be in the library." In the present freedom of students was endorsed by the almost all the teachers on various occasions in school as they told the researcher, "You know our students, they can ask anything." The impact of the students' freedom on the teachers was a sense of responsibility. The same group of teachers said, "We have to be prepared well, the students can ask anything."

The emphasis on excellence for teachers was pursued through the program of 'Best Teacher Award'. An attempt was made to make this program broad-based to recognize performance of more than one teacher in an academic year. This created equal opportunity for more teachers to compete for this award. However, this program was discontinued; reasons cited for its discontinuation were difficulty in identifying teachers for the award in the successive years as well as an attempt to avoid ill feelings among the teachers. Linking performance of the teachers to the freeship to be given to the teacher's wards, appointment of Coordinators based not on seniority in terms of experience in the school but on performance underlie the



emphasis on merit. These policies aligned well with the vision statement, “Fostering the Spirit of Excellence.” In all these policies the merit and performance of teachers play the role of an equalizer.

A sense of responsibility is observed in the practice of maintaining log book for each class which is a record depicting what was transacted in each class. The teacher enters details of the subject and topic taught and the number of students present in the class in that particular period. The responsibility for maintaining it is entrusted to the class monitor. The researcher observed that the class monitors completed this task with due diligence as they promptly presented the log paper to the teacher and at times followed the teacher out of the class also if a teacher forgot to make the entry. A practice of ‘checks and balances’ is adopted by Coordinators as they confirm with students to check if the course is completed before the test/ examination. A teacher commented on this practice, “We all are aware of this and we don’t mind.”

#### **5.4.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school, the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

##### ***Event 1      Teaching Learning Process***

*It was std. X(c). In Social Science subject under the section Political Science the topic taken up was ‘ Power Sharing’ by S.S. teacher.*

*The students were at different places in the classroom talking animatedly. All the students stand as soon as the teacher entered the class. Some students who were away from their place went back to their place. They continued to talk as they moved to their place. One or two students rushed back to their place.*

*Looking at the students the teacher smiled and said, "I feel like a cat. As soon as a cat arrives the mice start running."*

*It appeared that many students did not listen to the teacher's statement. Those who heard her laughed gently.*

*The teacher announced in a serious tone, "You will have block tests. These are formative assessment. There is a circular form CBSE. Now there is equal weightage to all four components of SS-History, Geography, Political Science and Economics. So when you come back there will be a slight change in timetable, there will be one long and one short period.*

*Today, we shall study Political Science. What has been the theme of study last year?*

*SSS- Democracy.*

*T- "Yes in tenth (standard) also the theme will be continued." She then wrote the topic 'Power Sharing' on the blackboard. The teacher continued, "Now there are general elections. We are in the process of election. You are witnessing canvassing, allegations. How is power shared in government? Any idea?*

*The teacher looked at all the students.*

*S1- Different people have different powers.*

*T-(with a smile) Can you be more specific?*

*S2- CM, PM, Governor, President.*

*T- What is the difference between these four?*

*S3- CM and governor in state and PM and President in country.*

*T- So can we now give names to it- central government, state government and local government the municipal corporation?*

*The students were silent.*

*The teacher looked at all the students, paused and then asked, "Can Baroda Municipal Corporation decide on signing of nuclear deal?"*

*The students answered loudly in a chorus, "No".*

*The teacher continued to pose questions.*

*T- Can Baroda Municipal Corporation decide on building of roads?*

*One student(S5) said promptly, "Yes"*

*T- Can Baroda Municipal Corporation decide on strategy of police force in state?*

*Two students (S6, S7) answered together, " No"*

*T- Can central government decide on nuclear deal?*

*There was almost a chorus, " Yes"*

*T- Can central government decide building of roads in Baroda?*

*The students again answered very confidently in a chorus, "No"*

*T- So these are different functions, these are distributed between three levels-central, state and local. This is one kind of power sharing. It is federalism which we will study in the next chapter. Now, what are various organs of government?*

*The students listened carefully.*

*S5- Legislative, Executive and Judiciary.*

*The teacher gestured that it was correct. She asked, "Some laws are made, who takes care of it?"*

*S8- Legislative.*

*Nodding her head she asked the next question, "Now it has to be implemented....."*

*S10- Executive*

*T- Now there is another group which takes care of the defaulters which has to be punished, laws are to be obeyed and understood. This is the judiciary. So these are three basic organs of government. Any government in the world has these three organs.*

*T- Now I am executive, I find difficulty in enforcing law, implementing law then can I change the laws?*

*SSS- NO*

*T- Who will do it?*

*There is no response. The students look at the teacher.*

*T- Legislature. When laws are not followed, can a court be set up on road to punish (the defaulter.)*

*SSS- NO*

*T- So who will look into it? The judiciary. This is another kind of power sharing.*

*S10- Madam who are the people in legislature and who are the ones in executive?*

*T- There are elections for Corporation, for state, for central government.*

*S10-so which is in executive?*

*T- (gestures to indicate wait and listen) Whichever party wins, they form the government and so executive. Executive has to be from legislature.*

*S10- Lok Sabha has an opposition also.*

*The teacher looked at the student who mentioned about the opposition. She said with a smile, "Those who can't form government they are in opposition. It is mandatory that the executive be from legislature. If someone is not then s/he has to be elected within six months. Army, police become part of executive. Have you heard of special representation given to Lok Sabha?"*

*Some students look at the teacher. Two students answer in a slightly low unsure voice, "yes"*

*The teacher gives a reassuring smile, " Yes, do we have (it) at all levels in Lok Sabha?"*

*SSS- No*

*T- There is a bill for it. Women's Representation Bill. 33% for women in Lok Sabha is pending. The NDA and the UPA government sat on it. because it will create problem for them. Can you think of any such group which is given representation?*

*(The teacher pauses) The backward group, SC/ST, the Anglo Indian group.*

*Now can you of find a commonality in these groups?*

*One student (S4) gets up, These groups are suppressed."*

*The teacher gestured that it was correct. She continued, "These are the disadvantaged but Anlgo Indian are not disadvantaged but a minority group. For some reason there will be groups in society which need special kind of help. Politicians have made farce of the situation but this special attention/representation is needed if true democracy is to be practiced.*

*So this is yet another type of power sharing. We will be looking at different types of power sharing."*

*The students listen to the teacher attentively.*

*T- This chapter gives you two case studies. One is from Belgium and the other from Sri Lanka. Where is Belgium?*

*A student (S5) faltered as he answered, " Brussels....Broosles."*

*On listening to the two pronunciations there was a sudden uproar in class and laughter.*

*The teacher immediately raised her voice, "It is a proper noun. Where is Belgium? It is in Europe. In Belgium, the Dutch are in majority, and the French and Germans are in minority. There is a problem. French are in minority but are economically powerful. They are business men. Population wise the Dutch are in majority. We think Democracy means rule of majority but actually it doesn't mean so. It means carrying on with all."*

*The teacher looked at all the students. They were listening attentively. The teacher continued, "Read about it. We will continue in the next class."*

*Just then the bell rang. The students closed their books they began talking to each other. The teacher too left the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. This class demonstrates freedom as understood by the students in this school and the response of the teacher to the students' freedom. In the absence of teacher, the students enjoyed the freedom to move away from their seating places. The presence of

teacher in the class prompted them to demonstrate their sense of responsibility by getting ready for the class as they moved to their seating place. The teacher acknowledged the freedom of students as she did not reprimand them for moving away from their seating place. Instead she handled the situation with humour comparing the situation to 'a cat and mice'. In doing this she demonstrated a respect for students' need to relax and do things of their own in the absence of a teacher. One student exercised freedom of seeking clarification. (*"So madam who are the people in legislature and who are the ones in executive?" ; "so which is in executive?"*) On one occasion when the student was not able to pronounce 'Brussels', the response of the other students was laughter indicating a lack of respect for the student. Laughing at other's mistake was quite a common response of students observed by the researcher. The teacher restored the respect of the student by a very emphatic statement in a raised voice "It is a proper noun" indicating that the error of pronunciation can be overlooked. However, it can be noted that all the students were attentive, respectfully, freely questioning and discussing.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The first impression of the students of this class was that they were boisterous and restless. At the same time they were totally relaxed and appeared casual in their approach to teacher and their classmates. The teacher was very confident and showed affection for the students through her friendly approach and smile.

Understanding the learner profile, following the informal policy of freedom of learners and adopting an appropriate strategy was the sense of responsibility demonstrated by the teacher. The strategy of questioning adopted by the teacher skillfully ensured active involvement of the students in teaching learning process. The teacher explained to the researcher after the class, "Students know most of the things; we have to make lessons interesting to get their attention."

### ***Event 2      Teachers' Meeting for Identifying Student for an Award***

*There is a meeting among the class teachers of different sections for selecting one student from different sections of a standard for 'Star Pupil Award'. Class teachers have already given marks to the students as per the marking scheme developed. The teachers are to decide on one student from the marks that have been given and their personal observations.*

*T1- Let us first identify those students who have got the highest marks.*

*T2- Let us consider the students who have scored more than seventy marks.*

*(T1 views the list.)*

*T1- See we have Moksha with eighty marks, Vatsal with eighty four and Nirva with*

*eighty.*

*T3- Moksha is a little withdrawn, introvert.*

*T2- Yes but she is very helpful.*

*T1- Vatsal is interactive. He is all rounder. Balance of sports and academics.*

*T2- Nirva is good in academics but co curricular .....*

*T3- She is good in co curricular activities also.*

*T1- Now we have to decide. All three get eighty, eighty four and eighty marks.*

*T2- Marks can be subjective also.*

*T1- No the proforma is objective and we all sit in the same staffroom, we have discussed*

*and then marks are given thoughtfully.*

*T3- Moksha was recognized last year so Vatsal needs recognition.*

*T1- So justification?*

*T2- Actually all three are good.*

*(All the three teachers nod yes and there is silence for sometime.)*

*T2- So what do we do?*

*T3- Vatsal's reading is good. His perception is very sharp. He is cool in class.*

*T1- So Vatsal ....*

*T2- Actually Nirva is also a nice child but her academics is little low.*

*T1- But it is overall.*

*T1- So it is Vatsal.*

*T2 and T3- OK*

*T2- (Says thoughtfully) If a child is good then s/he must get (the award). It is true that others must get chance why should a good child be left out if s/he is getting the award the second time ? How will the good child know why s/he is left out? This is also another side of the issue.*

*Other teachers listen. But there is no change in the decision. Gradually all teachers leave the venue.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event indicates collective decision making process among teachers in finalizing award for 'star pupil'. The issues that were at play were - equal opportunity for all learners for recognition /award. The discussion got pivoted on fairness and equality of opportunities for the learners (*Moksha was recognized last year so Vatsal needs recognition*). The teachers displayed a sense of responsibility in critically evaluating the candidature of each student. When there was a deadlock, the discussion was started by an open question (*T2- So what to do?*) The teachers also enjoyed the freedom to exercise their choice in the decision as they freely expressed their opinion on the candidature of various students. One teacher exercised her freedom to voice dissent in the form of a reflection (*Teacher 2- If a child is good then s/he must get (the award). It is true that others must get chance why should a good child be left out if s/he is getting the award the second time ? How will the good child know why s/he is left out? This is also another side of the issue*). This reflection was listened to but no further action was taken in terms of revision of the decision. At this point the limit of the freedom enjoyed by teachers is also observed. The teachers did not suggest a change in the system of award or an alternative to it. The final decision emerged with consensus.



### *Analytic view of event*

The discussion was charged with emotion. One teacher (T1) appeared quite dominating with a loud voice. The teacher voicing dissent was very subdued but she put forth her perspective. The strategic decision of the Principal and the Co-ordinators of the school of not participating in this discussion was significant to ensure freedom for the teachers. It was also an act of sense of responsibility as the finalization of the candidate for the award would be judged by the teachers who observe them from close quarters. The emphasis was on excellence of learners which was in consonance with the school's emphasis on excellence evident in the mission statement ('Fostering The Spirit Of Excellence'). It is pertinent to contrast this event with the practice of giving 'Best Teacher Award' which was discontinued.

### **Event 3 Conversation Among Learners in the Absence of Teacher**

*The students of standard X are sitting in small groups of five to six students waiting for their turn to appear for the diagnostic test in mathematics. Each group is discussing some issue. This was the period of elections when election campaigns were in progress.*

*There are six girls sitting in a circle. At first they were playfully throwing their compass to a student who would catch it. They would laugh and giggle as it would be caught or dropped. Suddenly the game is stopped and students begin to discuss.*

*S1- Hey did you see Salman Khan? He was campaigning for the congress in the city.*

*S2- NOoo. How is he?*

*S1- I could see only the face and there were so many people around him.*

*S2- I like Rahul Gandhi. He is so cute.*

*S3- Do you like Congress?*

*S4- No I don't like Congress, See how much work Narendra Modi has done for our state.*

*S3- Congress is nice but I like it without the Gandhis.*

*S2- But Sonia Gandhi has done so much for our country.*

*S1- Yes but after all she is a foreigner.*

*S3- It is like going back to the British time, the foreigners rule us and tell us what to do. The congress is puppet in Sonia Gandhi's hand.*

*S5- But Sonia Gandhi is nice also. She doesn't get into petty comments like Advani does.*

*Just then the teacher called out to this group to come to the computer laboratory. The Students got up to go to the computer laboratory.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred on an open space near the computer laboratory which in this case becomes a site of free exchange of views among the learners in the absence of teacher. This interaction among the students indicates what engages the students' attention in their conversations. The discussion indicated the freedom that the students exercised in expressing their opinion. The students demonstrated a sense of responsibility and respect for others by listening to the views of others. On disagreeing with a particular view, there was no attempt to forcibly impose one's view on the contrary a counter view would be presented responsibly.

### ***Analytic view of event***

This event provides a view of the students of this school. The students did not appear unduly stressed or worried about the mathematics aptitude test that they were to take. Secondly what engaged their attention in free time would inform about what they had gained from the curricular and co curricular activities of the school. The policy of freedom of learners tacitly allowed the learners to express their views freely among themselves. The students had nothing in particular to do as they waited their turn. After engaging in the 'game' of catching the compass box, there was an exchange of views on topics of general interest and happening. The students also appeared aware of the current happening in the larger society and connect it with the lessons in history.

#### **Event 4**

#### **Planning for Internal Tests for Standard X And XII by Teachers**

*There is a meeting of the teachers teaching standard X and XII to decide the pattern of tests to be conducted in the year. The Higher Secondary Section In-charge enters library. Four teachers are already in the library. Five more join within two minutes. The teachers settle on the sofa sets placed in a circular way so as to face each other. After a minute the, Higher Secondary Section In- charge addresses the teachers, “ The class teachers are to announce project work so that it can be completed in May. The Annual Calendar for this year is like this, I will read out the important dates. Diwali vacation is from 12 October to 25 October; funfair is on 10 October, Sports day is on 20 November, First prelims for X,XI and XII are from 27 November to 7 December. Post Prelims are from 5 January to 15 January. Today’s discussion will revolve round these dates.*

*We need to finish the course before the concert (Annual Function). Now the Sports Week is the time in which the course is to be finished. We need to discuss the points- should we take 50 marks one exam or 20 marks three block tests.*

*We may assume that after 9<sup>th</sup> October, there will be no study/teaching. We have to finish the course before 5 December. It’s a race against time. I am already feeling tensed.”*

*She smiles, pauses and looks at everyone.*

*All the teachers assembled there listen. They are silent for sometime and appear to be thinking.*

*The Higher Secondary Section In-charge said as if explaining, “ See children and parents can decide anything but we have to see all factors. We will deal with cheating. (Students and parents) are least bothered about being absent. This is the attitude problem so we have to deal with it. Marks for tests in XII are not counted so (they) are not worried. For X they are serious as it is counted.”*

*T2- See Principal madam has told that we will do as is planned, but need to correct students’ attitude also. (She repeats) We are here to correct students’ attitude also. We do our work.*

*Two teachers discuss amongst themselves in low voice.*

*The Higher Secondary Section In-charge, "Speak loudly so that we all know."*

*T4- Can one event be not shifted to January. Teaching is more important than co curricular activities. It is like CBSE, diluting syllabus and we are diluting the studies.*

*T5- (Spoke in an agitated tone) What I say is (that) the problem is there only. Teaching time is less in Semester I and II. The shortened period also gives less time (to teach). We draw a diagram and the period is over. These activities are important but we need to teach also.*

*T4- (in a firm voice) Get the 50 marks test and over with it. We can do it but we need to be convinced about it and believe in it so we can convince parents and students about it.*

*T2- But the weak children find 20 marks test easy. The test should be over from 7.35am to 8.35 am. The next class begins at 8.40 am.*

*The Higher Secondary Section In-charge looked at everyone keenly.*

*She said – So now think and tell. Individually count number of periods, count concert days, I assure you can depend on it. On Funfair also on previous day and on the day of Funfair classes will be taken. The Sports Day is held earlier because the intention is that after January, there should be no event.. So twenty twenty marks two tests. How many for 50? Please raise your hands.*

*The Higher Secondary In-charge counted the raised hand. She gestured, "I will inform the Principal." The meeting got over. The teachers left.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event was a collective decision making process to chalk out a plan of action for completion of course and the pattern of internal tests in the context of the various co-curricular activities planned. The tone of the meeting was set by focusing the teachers' attention on an important aspect of their responsibility – correcting the

attitude of the students. A tacit consideration of lack of responsibility of other stakeholders- parents and learners and thereby the responsibility of the teachers was observed. The teachers defined their sense of responsibility and interpretation of the role of teachers irrespective of the responsibility or its absence displayed the learners and the parents as they decided how they will deal with parents and learners ('We do our work').

The Principal by her absence in the meeting and the Higher Secondary Section In-charge by seeking the opinion of the teachers displayed a sense of responsibility by not imposing their decision on the teachers. The concerned teachers thus had the freedom to decide the pattern of internal tests. The teachers exercised freedom to express their perspectives ( '*Get the 50 marks test and get over with it.*' , '*But the weak children find the 20 marks test easy*' , '*the shortened time gives less time to teach*' , '*Can one event be shifted to January*' , '*teaching is more important than co-curricular activities*'). The freedom was limited as the request to shift one of the events to the Second Semester was not possible.

Equality among teachers was observed as the opinions of all the concerned teachers were taken. When two teachers discussed the issue between themselves, it was evident that they were not confident of exercising their freedom of expressing their view. The Higher Secondary Section In-charge facilitated their freedom by asking them to speak loudly so that all could hear. In this way a due consideration to the problems of the teachers was given. A collective decision was allowed to emerge.

#### ***Analytic view of event***

The manner of conducting the meeting by the Higher Secondary In-charge was very cordial. She kept smiling. She gave enough time to the teachers to respond. The teachers participating in the meeting appeared very mature and composed. Though the tone was raised on one occasion when one teacher (T4) said ( '*It is like CBSE, diluting syllabus and we are diluting the studies.*' ).

The Higher Secondary Section In-charge was an interface between the Principal and the teachers. This school had adopted decentralized management by appointing Section In-charge teacher. The genesis of the issue was the concern for excellence as

also indicated in the mission statement of school (Fostering the Spirit of Excellence) and the responsibility and interpretation of the role of teachers.

### ***Event 5 Rehearsal for the Prize Distribution Ceremony***

*The practice for Prize Distribution Ceremony for standard VII to IX was conducted on the assembly ground.*

*The students who are the prize winners were made to sit in different lines facing the side where there was a make shift stage. A teacher was waiting with a mike for the students to settle. The Activity in- charge was standing there looking at the students, the teacher with the mike and two other teachers who had a list of prize winners with them.*

*The Activity In- charge teacher said, "Settle down fast. Listen carefully to your name as it is called out. Get up, walk straight to*

*this stage, shake hands with the chief guest, take the prize, bow and leave from the other side."*

*The students listened carefully; the other teachers standing there also listened. The teacher with mike referred her list and was about to begin. The Section In-charge walked to the venue. She also viewed the arrangements. She said, "Let there be a chief guest and a prize." She then gave one of her files to be used as a prize. One of the teachers was made the Chief Guest. The teacher with the mike announced a name. That student got up, walked to the stage with hands at the back, received the prize, took a bow and left. As the name of a student was announced, the teachers in charge of the prizes also referred their list. As each name was announced she nodded her head as if to confirm that the names were read in the same order as they appeared in her list also. The Activity In-charge moved a little away to view the entire practice session. The teacher who was acting as the Chief Guest said, "I think they should walk straight and not with their hands at the back when they come to receive the prize." The Activity In- charge gestured that she agreed to this suggestion. She walked to the students and instructed, "Now you walk with hands straight and not at back. OK" She turned back for the next name to be announced. As the name was called out, the student walked with hands at the back. The Activity In-charge walked close to that student and said,, "Hands straight, not at the back." The student*

*immediately put his hands straight. After this the next name was called out. The student walked with her hands straight.*

*The teacher who was acting as the Chief Guest shook hands with each student, observed him/her carefully, smiled at him/her and would nod her head to suggest that the prize was received well.*

*One teacher moved near a student. She said, "How is your name to be pronounced? The student says, " Priyanka Dhmadhere". The teacher repeated the name. That student listened and nodded her head. The same teacher went informed the correct pronunciation of the student's name to the teacher who was calling out the students. After this the teacher who was announcing said, "The list of prize winners of proficiency certificates is displayed on notice board in front of the Physics and Biology laboratory. Please check the spellings of your name so that there is no mistake in certificate."*

*The Activity In- charge says, "When the students are given prize for group activity they must stand quickly in a line in this way. Wait for the certificate and photograph, take a bow together and move out quickly." The students listened carefully.*

*The teacher announced the names of students of one group. The Activity In- charge stood near the place they were to assemble. She said, "Boys on the upper side and girls on this lower side." One of the students said, "Madam Vedant is absent." The Activity In-charge said, "OK keep some space for Vedant. Now do all of you know your place. Come quickly, stand in this order take the prize, take a bow and move out quickly." The students did accordingly and moved away.*

*As the students whose names were being called out practiced the receiving of prizes, the other students chatted amongst themselves. Some of the students also turned back to make a small group facing each other.*

*After all the names were announced, the teacher said, "Now go back to your classes." Gradually the students moved to their respective classroom. The teachers also left.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

In this event practice for the Prize Distribution Ceremony occurred. The pivot of this event was a sense of responsibility to ensure that all concerned stakeholders: teachers and learners know their responsibilities well.

A sense of responsibility of the teachers was demonstrated as all teachers carefully discharge their allotted task. On the announcement of the name of prize winner (student) the teacher in charge of the prizes confirmed with the name announced. A sense of responsibility was seen as the teacher asked the students to check their names and the spellings displayed on the list on bulletin board to avoid spelling errors in certificate. The students exhibited a sense of responsibility as they followed the instructions given by the teachers. The teachers exercised freedom of suggesting a change. Respect for the expertise of a colleague was observed as the suggestion given by the Section In-charge and the teacher acting as the Chief Guest were accepted ( *'Let there be a Chief Guest' , 'I think they should walk straight and not with their hands at the back when they come to receive the prize.'*) The collaboration among teachers thus was evident as their suggestions were deliberated and changes made. There was respect for the students as one of the teachers confirmed the pronunciation of the name of a student. This teacher informed the researcher, "It is better to confirm. We also confirm the names of students and the prize in each class before the practice."

### ***Analytic view of event***

All the teachers were alert. They were very attentive and involved in the practice. They moved in brisk steps as they went about their task. The students were equally attentive.

The Prize Distribution Ceremony was significant in two ways: one it facilitated a smooth functioning of the function (Prize Distribution Ceremony) and secondly it indirectly led to the overall personality development of the students as attention to the students' conduct in public functions was attended to.



The vision statement 'Fostering the Spirit of Excellence' permeated all aspect of school and developed a sense of responsibility in organizing any activity/event of the school. In this case attention to details and practice to make the event of Prize Distribution a well organized one was evident. This sense of responsibility of attention to details and meticulousness featured almost all activities of the school: Inter house competitions, the Annual Concert, and Annual Sports Day and Valedictory Function. This emphasis on excellence was reflected in the statement made by an Art teacher who had visited a function of another school of the city on the previous day, "*apne school ka function dekhane ke baad doosre school ke function me maja nahi aata, vaha sab kuch tha per coordination nahi tha* (After viewing our school's function we do not enjoy other school's function. There everything was good but there was no coordination.)"

#### **Event 6 Dealing with Students who are late to school**

*It is 7.30 a m. Students are rushing to the school. One watchman asks the other, "Shall I close the gate?" The other watchman replied, "Close at 7.35 a m. This is the instruction we have got". The watchman closes the gate at 7.35 a m. There are three girls and three boys of standard XII with their two wheelers standing outside the gate. They wait for some time. The watchman says, "Go home, we have been instructed that those who come after 7.35 a m, should not be allowed in school." All the students listen but do not move out. The expression on the face of the boys does not change. They appear to be thinking. One of them says, "OK let us go home." The other two boys listen but do not respond to it. The girls begin to talk among themselves. One of the girls says, "What shall we tell our parents? I don't want to go home." Another girl says, "We will tell, we played 'thappo' with the school gate, we reach the school, touched the school gate and returned home." Other girls listen but do not say anything. One of the boys tells the watchman, "Ask principal madam, we will not be late again." The watchman rings principal's office. He informs the students, "Principal Madam has said that the gates will close at 7.35 a m so all of you go home."*

*After five minutes, one student of the Primary section comes. The watchman smiles at him, "Why are you late?" The student says, "I was practicing football." The watchman consults the other watchman, "Do you really think that this little one must be playing football?" Both the watchmen smile and open the gate. At that time, the girls waiting out say, "Please allow us to go" The watchman gestures 'no'. After five*

*minutes, the boys look at each other and drive away on their two wheelers. The watchman tells the girls, "These boys have gone home, you also go." One of the girls requests the watchman to ring home from the public telephone put up there. She calls her parents, "Send vehicle to pick us up. We are not allowed inside the school as we are late."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred outside the school gate dealing with the students who were late. The decision of not allowing the students who were late was based on a sense of responsibility to make them sincere. In making a request to the Principal to permit them to attend school one of the students (a boy) exercised his freedom to find a way out. In not heeding the 'request' of the students conveyed through the watchman, the Principal demonstrated her sense of responsibility. The response of the girls and the boys was different. The girls' sense of responsibility was driven by 'what to tell parents'. The boys on the other hand went away quietly. The facial expressions of the boys did not indicate any remorse. Their act of leaving on their two-wheelers was also done in a practical way. The students were humble, respect the school rules/ politely and went back.

### ***Analytic view of event***

This event is significant as it required collaboration among the different stakeholders: Trust, Principal, students and parents. This was an initiative of school taken in the year of this study for developing a sense of responsibility in students for reaching school on time. The Higher Secondary In-charge explained this initiative, "It was decided by the Trust that the gates will be closed at 7. 35 a m and SMS will be sent to parents of those students who have not reached the school by this time." Reflecting on the initiative, she continued, "It is important that message also should be given to parents and these children have so many stories to tell if they are late- the van driver didn't come, the roads are dug up. I got up late. It is very difficult to accept the reason that a Higher Secondary student gets up late."

In this initiative, the parents also assumed an important supportive role as this initiative needed partnership between the school and parents for developing a sense of responsibility among students.

#### **5.4.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

##### ***Learners***

The learners are aware that they are ensured freedom. Freedom has been experienced in various ways during various phases of school's development. The freedom enjoyed by the learners has overcome the authoritarian relationship between the teacher and the students in its earlier phase (1967-1986). In this regard, a former Coordinator recalled an incident that she had herself witnessed, "Two learners with their arms across the shoulder of their teacher walked the corridor merrily solving problems in mathematics." Thus the learners have experienced freedom of not restricting the teaching learning process to classrooms. In the second phase of school's development (1986-1995) the freedom of students has been described as 'we are the masters' by a former principal. In the present, teachers appreciate when students exercise the freedom of seeking clarification for their doubts during the teaching learning process. The teacher teaching mathematics remarked beaming with pride and happiness, "Today I felt satisfied that after taking the maths class in IX B. They were asking so many questions. They wanted to know reasons. I felt very happy and satisfied in the class. They were not at all exam and marks oriented. I hope they stay like this for the entire year."

A sense of responsibility of students has been a contested zone in the school. A former teacher informed, "Then (1967-1986) excellent students helped the poor performers. It was a part of teaching learning process." An absence of a balance between freedom and sense of responsibility was observed as one teacher informed the Secondary Section In charge, "This teacher was practicing for announcement for the prize distribution day. We did not make proxy (arrangement). You know our children. They break each others' bones (if left un attended.) Should we make proxy

or any other arrangement?” A lack of sense of responsibility has been described by the teachers especially in the secondary and higher secondary section as ‘attitude *aa jata hai* (develop attitude )’, ‘outspoken’, ‘ *badtamiz* (ill-mannered)’, ‘*sochate hee nahi hai* (lack of sensitivity)’.

The notion of respect was interpreted differently by the teachers and the learners. The teachers considered respect as manifested in the acts of learners such as wishing teachers and acknowledgement of teachers’ presence. A present teacher remarked, “The learners wish you when (in the academic year) you teach them. The next year they don’t even acknowledge your presence. Learners have no respect (for teachers).” Absence of such demonstrative acts of respect by learners was equated with absence of respect for teachers. A teacher with twenty nine years of experience in the school reflected, “Nowadays the sensitivity in the students is lost, some are sensitive but majority are not.”

As against this, it appeared that for learners the respect was task related. A student who had studied in the school for eight years and presently was student of standard IX said, “We listen carefully to those teachers who teach well.” Another teacher initiated a different strategy to overcome this interpretation of respect by students. At the end of the class she said, “Now let’s wish each other.” The teacher and the students both stood up and wished each other. The contestations in the notion of respect arose due to different interpretation by teachers and learners.

Equality does not strike as an experience in the school.

### ***Teachers***

The teachers’ functioning is guided by a sense of responsibility as being the best and responding to the best student. Freedom for teacher manifests in this endeavour of being responsible. A former principal shared her strategy of fostering freedom of teachers, “I told them (teachers) all success is yours and all failure is mine.”

The manifestation of a sense of responsibility when dealing with students was explained by the Coordinator for the Higher Secondary section, “The section in charge explained to the researcher, “The students of standard XII requested to allow them to play. I allowed them. I allow them their requests whenever possible. I have done (like this) from last year. I found that it has helped them to be stable and

controlled. Then it is easy for me to negotiate with them. What do I negotiate with them- 'study'? But then it is easy for me to tell them to study as I had given them time to play.”

The teachers' understanding of a sense of responsibility was enhancing their competence. The Coordinator of the Secondary section, who has been with the school for thirty years, described the competence of the teachers, “Our teachers are abreast of the latest trends in education.” She further stated that they implemented rigorously the recommendations of CBSE. Another teacher said, “We learn a lot.” The teacher continuously devised strategies to handle the students who developed 'attitude' and to guide them on the correct path. The teacher teaching maths had designed an aptitude test for checking the understanding level of students of standard X. She commented with anguish on the result, “See the marks the students have scored? The students think a lot about themselves; they join tuition classes and think that they know so much. Now see these marks. If they know so much it should reflect in their marks also.”

Equality at policy level is differentiation based on performance which supersedes seniority in the school. This applies during pay revision and promotion.

Equality of teachers is maintained as symbolic acknowledgement of all teachers is provided a due recognition in the valedictory function in which all the teachers from Primary to Higher Secondary Section participate to bless the outgoing batch of standard XII students. Another way of creating a team spirit was the emphasis on using 'we' rather than 'I' in conversations.

### ***Principal***

The first principal created freedom for himself spatially by not being bound by the physical space of office. He was remembered as 'sitting under the mango tree' to supervise the functioning of the school. The dynamics of the first principal's relationship with the founder trustee were based on mutual respect and a common belief in learner centered approach to education. Based on this mutual respect, the first principal enjoyed freedom to shape the school. Freedom of principal was directly linked with performance. During the period of weak leadership, the freedom of principal got compromised. The next principal (1995-2006) described her attempt for

freedom as, “Freedom has to be taken. Nobody gives freedom.” The path followed for acquiring freedom was demonstration of a sense of responsibility (‘created log books to monitor what is transacted in classrooms’, ‘interacting with parents on the basis of the recordings in the log book’, ‘taking bold decision of declaring a student failed when the attendance requirement was not met with’ ‘standing by her bold decision under all circumstances’, ‘teaching in standard XII’).

#### **5.4.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

The foundation of school was based on the founder Trustee’s belief in the freedom of learners. Recognition of freedom of learners was widely prevalent. This was frequently quoted as ‘*yahan ke bacche* (children of this school)’ suggesting that these children enjoy freedom. Freedom was created for learners through the choices (variety of clubs, site of learning, the learning activity) offered to them. In the teaching learning situation the learners had freedom to ‘add points’ and ‘seek clarification (*kuch bhi pooch sakte hain*)’. In addition to this, the learners also interpreted their freedom as ‘doing what interests them’ which included engaging in ‘talk’ among themselves even in teaching learning situations. There was restlessness among students in the classrooms.

Freedom for teachers and principals was pivoted on the freedom of learners. The teachers and principals had the freedom to design ways of ensuring freedom of learners in their pursuit of knowledge.

## ***Respect***

Respect emerged as a weak and contested constituent of Academic Culture in this school. Some of the attributes of a 'good student' considered were 'respect school property' and 'show respect towards teachers and management staff'. Showing respect towards teachers and management staff was interpreted by teachers as wishing them and acknowledging their presence. The students on the other hand wished and acknowledged the presence of those teachers who taught them in a particular academic year. Tolerance of others was weak ('there would be sudden bursts of laughter when a student made mistake'). The teachers' response to this was firm.

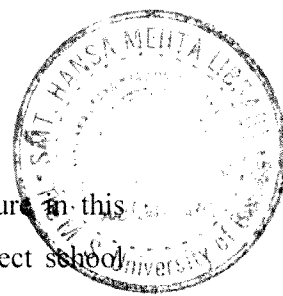
## ***Equality***

Equality was focused in the vision statement, '...develop trinity of faculties in every student.' The concern for equality was implemented through the broad base of prizes for recognition of the excellence of students from hundred percent attendance to excellence in a variety of subjects.

The discrimination among teachers was based on merit and performance thereby it went beyond the socio-economic identity of the teachers. Equality between the principal and the teachers created as the management was decentralized by appointing teachers as section in-charge. Among teachers it was created through collaborative decision for some aspects of school functioning (identifying student for Best Student Award and planning for syllabus completion for standard X and XII). The spatial arrangement of small staffrooms spread at different locations of the school also did not allow for a common platform for all the teachers to meet at one place. A teacher said, "We have asked for a common staffroom where we can all meet but we also understand the constraint of space." Equal access to information then is created through the common notice boards placed at the corridor and written on the black board in the staffroom.

## ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

In the fostering of freedom, a sense of responsibility was also envisaged. For learners, the choices of opting out of an activity were followed by being engaged in another fruitful activity. A lack of sense of responsibility perceived among the learners was expressed as 'attitude' of the students which was described as '*chad jaate hain*



(develop attitude)'. The teachers perceived a sense of responsibility as responding to learners' freedom. This was explained as 'being ready', 'being update', 'being prepared' and 'taking/making classes interesting'. Pursuing excellence was also a manifestation of a sense of responsibility which was seen in 'practice and aiming for excellence', 'meticulous preparation' 'attention to details' and 'rigorous implementation of CBSE norms and guidelines (*hum to sab kuch acche se karate hain, kai school me ye sab naam ke liye hota hain.*)'. Not believing in punishments, the teachers had designed various means of fostering a sense of responsibility such as 'meditation' and 'introspection of one's acts.' One teacher said, "These (practices) may take time, but they have their effect (on the students)."

### **5.4.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Policy decision***

The founder's belief in freedom for learners became an informal policy of the school. It influenced the pattern of interaction between students and teachers. It also became the basis for designing programs for the students. The success of the founder's belief and the informal policy of students' freedom also depended upon the leadership provided by the principal of the school. During the period of weak leadership in the school, the founder took upon herself the responsibility of mentoring one of the teachers in the philosophy and practices of learner centered approach to education. This teacher later assumed leadership of school as a Coordinator of the junior section, later of senior section and subsequently provided leadership as a principal to one of the schools managed by the Trust.

#### ***A well-crafted vision and mission***

The vision and mission which emphasized excellence permeated the functioning of the school. Excellence was translated as 'the best'. The vision and mission nurtured freedom and a sense of responsibility. It recognized the freedom of all individuals to excel in the areas of their interest. It was also the sense of responsibility of learners to excel, of the teachers to help the learners to excel and of the principal to provide leadership to excel. The stakeholders: principal, teacher and students demonstrated a clear understanding of the value of excellence that is acceptable in school- excellence



was to be practiced and to be demonstrated. The freedom obtained from the vision and mission to excel and the sense of responsibility to excel superseded tolerance. Tolerance as respect for the other took a backseat. The policies regarding admission of students, recruitment of teachers, and promotion of teachers were geared to achieving the vision and mission. It became a guiding force for designing programs for the school.

#### ***Professional development of teachers***

This involved allowing teachers the freedom to innovate. Initially it was guiding teachers to be ready to respond to the students' freedom.

A more organized professional development approach was introduced in the third phase of development in the school wherein the principal mentored the teachers, demonstrated by modeling and provided wider exposure to other schools and its practices.

### **5.4.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Confidence in school***

There is a confidence in the ability to nurture merit/talent in school. It is performance oriented exhibiting creative restlessness. The school appeared buzzing with activities as if always on the move. There was a feel of something happening every second.

#### ***Learners***

The learners are very confident. Their confidence is also described sometimes as being bold and outspoken. They are not passive listeners. They are competent and enabled with the ability to perform well in new situations. A parent remarked, "My daughter is all that she is due to the school. The school has given good exposure." A former student (1998-2008) who studied in the school for ten years explained the reason for confidence of students of this school, "We have seen many activities, we may not have participated in all but we know about it." The students adapt easily and generally perform well in institutions of higher education.

### *Teachers*

Teachers have high self esteem and a sense of belongingness to the institution. They feel proud of the social recognition that they obtain as teachers of this school. The teachers have a high level of competence. Their commitment is manifested in their preparation for teaching learning, in doing the tasks with due diligence and the attention to details that they exhibit. The researcher observed that the teachers were constantly on the move. Their walk within the school premises was very brisk almost as if they were running.

A high degree of commitment is observed in principal. The constant challenge is to search for newer areas for excellence. It is captured in the present principal's words, "There is so much to do."

### **5.4.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of freedom to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through three processes: (i) policy decision , (ii) A well crafted-vision and mission and (iii)mentoring and professional development. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school which is observed in ability to nurture merit/talent in school; (ii)learners of this school are described as very confident, outspoken and bold with ability to perform well in different situations; (iii) teachers are observed as competent with high self esteem and committed. Their task is characterized by due attention to details and meticulousness. They do their task with due diligence.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## 5.5 CASE: 5

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### 5.5.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

The Principal's response to the researcher's request for data collection was a smile of welcome. She said, "(You are going to) Study the school. I am happy that my school is being studied. What would you like to study?" After the researcher had explained, she gave the permission to begin data collection from that day itself. She informed to the Coordinators of the school, "She is conducting research for her Ph. D. So help her with whatever she wants to know about school." The Coordinators appeared to be familiar with research in general as one of the Coordinators herself was pursuing doctoral study. About five teachers from this school had conducted research as a part of part time professional courses in Educational Management. The entry into this school as a field of study thus was very smooth. The acceptance of the presence of researcher was also very professional.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Some events which were scheduled beyond these seven working days were also observed as the Principal informed about these to the researcher. Various events observed in the school were the teaching learning processes in various classes, playground, the morning assembly, lunch period in the dining hall, library period, an Inter House Elocution Competition, classwise parent-teacher meeting, funfair, a principal-teachers meeting, a teachers' meeting for selection of textbooks and annual syllabus planning. In addition to these, the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s, and the principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were the present Principal of the school, the Coordinator (Activities), two teachers and three former students. The present Principal who had joined this school after seven years of its establishment developed it to the present state of recognition. The two teachers were with the school from the first years of school's establishment. These two teachers were suggested by the Principal as they 'would know about the school from the very beginning'. The Coordinator (Activities) who had been with the school for six years shared her perspective voluntarily. In the course of the interview with her she was joined by two other teachers also on their

own volition. Three former students who visited the school during the period of the present study were interviewed. One of them said, "Oh! our interview. We will be happy to tell about our school." There were also conversations with teachers, students and parents on various sites of the school. A keenness to share their perspectives was observed in all the informants. The researcher was granted the Lunch facility at the Dining Hall. The researcher experienced openness in the school as the various stakeholders interacted with her.

### **5.5.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

The school was established in the year 1991 by a Trust which was established in 1952. The Trust was established by philanthropists and educationist of Vadodara with the motive of providing quality education in Vadodara (then Baroda) and Gujarat. It managed schools in Vadodara city and outside it. As these schools got established, its management was handed over to other organizations. Though some schools incurred losses, the Trust continued to manage those schools as its motive was service to community. At the time of the study it managed only the school under study.

This school is for the common people of the society. Though a very specific motive for its establishment could not be found, it was stated by the present Principal that it must have been to offer an opportunity of good education in consonance with the vision of the Trust. There is another school in the city by a very similar name. Initially this school was affiliated to Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. In response to the need of more CBSE affiliated schools in the city (there were four Kendriya Vidyalayas and two private schools affiliated to CBSE with a high fee structure), especially for education of children of individuals with transferable jobs, the school was affiliated to CBSE in the year 1994.

The Trust which was guided by the motive of service- a sense of responsibility to the larger society- was familiar with the world of school education. The founder trustees had also founded another Trust later (1965) and were actively involved in the management of other schools of the city. The core power was retained by the family members of one of the founder trustees. At the time of the present study, the position of chairperson of the Trust was maintained by the wife of one of the founder Trustee.

The core power was handed over to her daughter who was actively engaged in the management of the school.

This school is a non grant-in-aid school. The income is generated from fees. The school is financially supported by the Trust. It does not face financial constraints. The medium of instruction is English. The annual fee charged is different for various classes. It is Rupees 17,485 for standard I to VI, Rupees 18,205 for standard VII to X, Rupees 21,165 for standard XI to XII (Science stream) and Rupees 19,155 for standard XI to XII (Commerce stream). The fee structure defines the learner profile which is largely from the higher middle income group of society seeking education in an English medium school offering CBSE syllabus.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision and mission of the school were orally informed by the Principal as well as noted from the school diary and the school's website. The mission of the school is stated as: 'The institution is committed to the values of truth, honesty, integrity, mutual respect and brotherhood. The school values the cultural heritage and traditions of our motherland, India. In order to bring out the unique qualities of each child, we provide a varied range of experiences from social to technological, from age old to contemporary. The qualities of the head, heart and hand are inculcated in them, which would carry them through lives. In this dynamic, technologically revolutionalised and globalised world, each individual will have to find a definite place as a wholesome personality.' The mission of the school is stated as: 'We have a strong base of academics with excellent and expert educators at the helm of affairs. We see ourselves as a premier institution for quality education and moulding the students to develop an overall personality. We shall strive to create in students a quest for knowledge and excellence and instill in them the right personal, social, national and inter-national values.'

The vision and mission of the school indicated a base of the values of truth, honesty, integrity, mutual respect and brotherhood for the children. A special recognition of the cultural heritage of the country is given. The value of mutual respect gets further reflected in the acknowledgement of differences among individuals ('unique qualities', 'each individual will find a definite place'). Equality is observed as the

differences are acknowledged and catered to through a wide range of experiences. The wide range of experiences also offered freedom of choices.

The mission statement clearly indicated twin focus: academics and development of overall personality. A teacher of the school with ten years of experience stated, "Parents are aware of our focus on academics. Those who prefer academics admit their children to our school." The mission of the school thus had been internalized and disseminated to the various stakeholders.

The recruitment policy of teachers was stringent and solely based on merit of the teachers. The recruitment process comprised a content test, informal interaction, demonstration lesson and interview. The admission policy was based on the entrance examination thereby it focused on merit of the learner. The policy regarding freeship was aimed at promotion of merit irrespective of socio economic status of the learner. The condition of completion of five years of service was to ensure a continuous association of the learner with the school for longer period. Teacher's wards and/or office staff wards were provided the facility of freeship except for the lunch fee.

Professional development programs for the teachers had empowered the teachers. The present Principal organized several In- house workshops like setting the question paper, making lesson plans and continuous comprehensive evaluation. In addition to these, gradually the teachers attended various professional development programs organized by other schools and/ or organizations.

A sense of responsibility was manifest in the administration of school which was guided by the policy of transparency. Transparency in salary payment of teachers and in appointment developed respect and faith of teachers in the principal and school. The Principal informed, "Transparency in all dealings included ploughing back the income from school for strengthening infrastructure facilities for the school."

Three programs for learners were aimed at developing the values focused in the vision and mission of the school. The program of inviting senior citizens from an old age home from the city in the school funfair was aimed at developing sensitivity for the community and thereby a sense of responsibility in a broader sense. An initiative to develop sense of responsibility in students was that students of standard VI are entrusted with the responsibility of value education for students of standard I.

Awareness about environment was developed through a sustained program on environment conservation (distribution of paper bags, tree planting, as vermicompost in school campus). A program on classical dance or music called *Vasant Utsav* which is open for the community was organized annually. This program also reflected the focus on cultural heritage of our country emphasized in the vision and mission. The underlying value in all these programs is sense of responsibility.

Equal opportunity for all learners was ensured at the Inter House competitions by making participation of all the students of a class compulsory at the class level. The best entries then were selected for the Inter House competitions. In the intra school competitions/exhibitions all entries/models were displayed. This created an equal opportunity for all the learners. The focus of the school on academics as stated in the mission of the school was reflected in the programs for the learners as a week long library week is celebrated in the school.

The policy programs were guided by the values focused in the vision and mission of the school. The emphasis of the school on academics was known to all the stakeholders: principal, teachers, learners and parents.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a platform for channelizing parents' voice in the school. The interaction with parents was organized in two ways: classwise parent-teachers meeting and an annual general meeting of PTA.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners.

As informed by the Manager (Administration) on the basis of the school records, the total area of the school premises is 11,460 square meters. The built up area is 7,794.36 square meters. The playground admeasures approximately three quarters of a football ground. This playground has one volleyball court. There is one basketball court. An open stage with the seating capacity of 2,000 is at one end of the playground. Along with this there is one indoor auditorium with the seating capacity of 200. The pre-primary building is separate and well-contained. The building for Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary sections is one with well demarcated sections.

There are three laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, one for Bio-technology and a Maths laboratory. There are two computer laboratories with 22 computers in each. Two learners work on a computer simultaneously. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records, the library has 13,000 books and 25 journals and magazines. There is an art room called *Abhivyakti*. A dining hall with the seating capacity of 500 is located between the pre-primary building and the main school building. The area of a classroom in the Secondary and Higher Secondary section is 400 square feet. The students' strength in the Secondary and Higher Secondary section ranges from 31 to 43 per class and in the Higher Secondary section it ranges from 10 to 34 per class. The classrooms have adequate benches for all learners and space for the teacher to move in the class. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil ratio in a class is 1: 10 and at the maximum level is 1:43.

As one enters the premise of the school campus the security service personnel regulates the entry of visitors. The school entrance is at the back of the open stage. One immediately views the playground on one side and the pre-primary building on the other side. The school office is at the very entrance to the school building. The classrooms open in the corridor from both sides. The windows at the back of the classrooms provide natural light. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.5.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this, an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.



### 5.5.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is eighteen years old (1991-2009). It has been administered by three principals from 1991 to 1998. The present Principal is with the school since 1998. The present Principal recalled, "When I took charge it was just like any other school and was a small school." One of the teachers who had been with the school since the first year of its establishment described the development of the school, "Till the present Principal joined, the school was an ordinary school. Nothing much was known about it. Today the school is known by the present Principal's name. She has developed it to its present status."

The influence of the Principal's personality, her way of working and her qualities has impacted the everyday life of the school through the various initiatives launched. The Principal is described by the teachers as 'very simple' and 'does not give much importance to show off'. In order to nurture a sense of equality irrespective of learners' socio economic status, a material display of possessions is not encouraged. An initiative in this direction was a ban on wristwatches for students. Coordinator (Activities) stated very proudly, "Our students are not allowed to wear wristwatches to school." A student of standard VIII who was with the school for five years explained, "The Principal has explained to us. Some have expensive watches and some do not have so we are not allowed to wear watches. They (those who do not have expensive watches) may feel bad about it."

The program of inviting senior citizens from an old age home from the city in the school funfair stood out in developing students as socially sensitive individuals. This program was a demonstration of the interpretation of a sense of responsibility. The Principal remarked very casually on this program, "Oh we have been doing this since so many years." Students of standard XI were entrusted with this responsibility under the guidance of a teacher. The researcher observed this during the period of study.

*The Funfair was not yet formally inaugurated. The students and the teachers were setting up their stalls. Around twenty chairs were kept near the entrance on one side. The school had arranged a vehicle to bring the senior citizens from an old age home of the city to the Funfair. Two students escorted the senior citizens to the chairs. The senior citizens remained*

*seated there till the formal inauguration of the Funfair was conducted. The students in- charge of the senior citizens took them on round of the Funfair.*

The Principal informed that the senior citizens were given two free coupons for eatables and two free coupons for games. The student stall owners honored these free coupons though it reduced their profit by that amount. That was the contribution made by the student stall owners for social responsibility. One of the students escorting the senior citizens explained to the researcher, “They are like our grandparents. We tell them to try out the eatables but they are more interested in playing games.”

The recruitment of the teachers followed a rigorous process with ‘content test’ as one of the components. An informal conversation by the senior teachers with the candidates was a component which was aimed at judging the suitability of the candidate to gel well with the Academic Culture of the school as well as to provide a point of familiarity to the selected candidates. The rigorous process of recruitment aligned with the focus of the school on academics. The involvement of the senior teachers in the recruitment process ensured a sense of responsibility among them and a sense of ownership. A senior teacher of English said, “Later I see that the teachers form a good team.”

The competence of the teachers was further strengthened by sustained professional development programs. The change in affiliation from Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Board to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) was followed by visits of the teachers to CBSE schools to understand the functioning of these schools. The present Principal initiated mentoring of the teachers herself as she brought knowledge base to the school from her prior assignment as an Education Officer with a Trust managing many schools. The focus of mentoring at first was the regular activities like making lesson plan, making questions papers, and the implementation of continuous comprehensive evaluation. Subsequently, workshops were organized on general issues on education and specific ones related to school subjects. The Principal herself is associated as resource person with professional development activities organized by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). A firm believer in professional development of teachers, the present Principal exclaimed, “See XYZ school of our city, they don’t send teachers for workshop. They give the excuse that

the school's functioning is disturbed. If my teacher is invited I will make adjustment and make her free." Thus the program of sustained professional development kept the teachers abreast the current trends in education.

Transparency in functioning is reflected in a conscious avoidance of 'groupism'. The Principal intended to develop mutual respect among the teachers as colleagues. The Principal kept a keen watch on how the team of teachers worked. If a particular teacher was getting dominated she would change the seating arrangement in staffroom. This is perceived by the teachers also. A teacher who had been with the school for sixteen years said, "There is no politics. The Principal does not entertain any politics. The teachers here do not back bite." Another teacher said, "A little bit (back biting) is there after all it is human tendency but largely not."

The functioning is based on collective decision making. It was explained as 'democratic approach of the principal'. The subjectwise departments enjoyed the freedom to take decisions regarding their subjects. The selection of textbooks was entrusted to the subject teachers. The researcher witnessed a meeting of the subject teachers for deciding textbooks. The teachers were given freedom to select the textbooks and the responsibility to justify their choice. The Principal said, "You (teachers) are free to make the choice, keep the same textbooks or change but give reasons for both."

#### **5.5.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

## **Event 1    Principal- Teachers Meeting For Finalization Of Annual Plan For**

### **Academic Year**

*Principal conducted a meeting with the teachers to discuss the draft of the annual calendar prepared for the next academic year. This meeting was conducted in one of the classrooms. The principal sat on the teacher's table while the teachers were seated on the students' benches. All the teachers (approximately 35) were present. The annual plan was made by two teachers. Copies of plan were distributed to teachers on shared basis-one among three teachers. A copy of the calendar was also given to verify the dates stated in the annual plan of school. The Principal read out the dates and the events stated.*

*The Principal then stated, "This is not the final annual calendar. You may react to it. You don't have to agree with it. You may agree or disagree. Now it is open for discussion."*

*There was silence for about a minute. All the teachers were reading the annual plan.*

*A teacher (T1) raised a query, "The first test is during Navratri."*

*The Principal answered immediately, "We never give holidays for Navratri. It is only the last three four days that are given as holidays. By that time the exam will get over."*

*The teacher (T1) did not appear convinced. She said in a slightly raised voice, "Yes but the exam will be going on during the Navratri."*

*The Principal appeared to have understood the teacher's point. She said, "O K so you want exams to be over before Navratri begins."*

*The teacher (T1) relaxed. She said, "Yes... So we will begin exams on 12<sup>th</sup> September. Then 19<sup>th</sup> September onwards we can take as holiday."*

*The Principal viewed the calendar and nodded her head in agreement. She then looked at all the teachers, "Any other issues?"*

*A teacher (T2) stood up viewing the copy of the calendar, "Here it is written Unit Test. But now there is no unit test, it is only tutorial."*

*The Principal checked with her copy of the calendar. She said, "O K so unit test is removed, we get so many more teaching periods also then."*

*Just then another teacher (T3) commented, "Madam the time period between third test and finals is very short."*

*The Principal listened to her attentively. She asked, "O K so what do you propose?"*

*The teacher (T3) suggested, "We can have the first test in August then in December."*

*The Principal looked at all the teachers, "Teachers of IX to XII react."*

*One of the teachers teaching IX to XII (T5) responded immediately, "Yes it is better to have it there in August. So, first term exam on 17<sup>th</sup> August for IX to XII."*

*All the teachers began to discuss among themselves. The sound of murmur rose. The Principal observed this and paused for a while to allow them to discuss. As the murmur subsided, the Principal addressed all, "All other classes V to VIII, the half yearly will be on 12<sup>th</sup> September. Do all of you agree?"*

*The teachers replied in a chorus, "Yes"*

*The Principal then asked, "Any thing else? (She paused for sometime then continued) I propose let us have an exhibition during this period after the test in August/September. Either we hold exhibition or we hold one act play. How many of you favour one act play?"*

*Seven to eight teachers raised their hands.*

*The Principal smiled, "Mathematics teachers look unhappy."*

*A small group of teachers said in a chorus, "NOoooooo."*

*The Principal then addressed all, "How many of you want one act play?"*

*Many teachers raised their hands.*

*The Principal then said in a concluding tone, "O K so if majority agrees to it then plan out. So we finalize the annual plan with the changes discussed."*

*The meeting concluded with this statement. The Principal left the classroom and the teachers began to talk among themselves. Some of the teachers also left the classroom.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event indicates the attempt of Principal to develop a sense of responsibility for the implementation of the annual calendar in the best possible way by developing a sense of ownership for it. With this the issue of teachers' freedom also came into play. This incident illustrates how the Principal facilitated the nurture of the sense of responsibility among the teachers as also safeguarded their freedom to voice their concerns.

At first the Principal demonstrated her sense of responsibility by providing adequate support for a meaningful participation by providing copies of the tentative annual calendar prepared. Through this act, the Principal created a platform for teachers to exercise their freedom to voice their agreements/disagreements/concerns. The opening statement of the meeting by Principal that it was not the final calendar was significant in ensuring the freedom of the teachers.

The teachers exercised their freedom by giving various suggestion (*'Madam the time period between the third test and finals is very short', 'But now there is not Unit Test it is only tutorial.'*). The Principal listened to the suggestions given by teachers attentively. At one time, when the murmur among the teachers was heard indicating that they were discussing some point, the Principal allowed them to discuss before proceeding further. The Principal created various opportunities for teachers at various points to exercise their freedom to suggest ( *'Any other issue?', 'So what do you propose?'*). The principal demonstrated her sense of responsibility by not getting influenced by any one particular teacher or group but asked for a concurrence from many (*'Maths teachers look unhappy', 'How many of you one act play?', 'So if majority agrees to it then plan out.'* ).

### ***Analytic view of event***

A striking feature of this meeting was cordiality. The meeting was conducted in a relaxed manner. The teachers were involved in the proceedings. The Principal's approach to seek suggestions indicated a genuine interest in seeking teachers' suggestions.

This was an exercise in collaborative decision making between two stakeholders-Principal and teachers. The issue was the finalization of Annual Plan which provided the framework for functioning for the academic year. This Principal had involved herself in almost every aspect of the functioning of school and mentored the teachers. This event indicates that the teachers were empowered to take decisions about the annual plan. The seriousness and commitment of the teachers in discussion was observed.

### ***Event 2      Discussion between Teacher and Students about Teaching Learning Process***

*It was standard XI of Commerce Stream. In the subject Business Organization the topic taken was 'Co operative Society'.*

*The summer vacation was scheduled from two day later. Out of the total strength of fourteen students, there were only three students in the class: one girl and two boys. The teacher sat on one of the benches close to the students. She observed the number of students in the class. She declared, "Now let me begin with new chapter."*

*One of the students immediately said, "No madam, they (the students who were absent) will miss."*

*The teacher answered in a firm voice, "I will start because so many are absent and you are present. So you need to be knowing more than them. There must be justice to you because you have come. Then there is vacation to enjoy."*

*The student who had requested the teacher for 'no teaching' looked down. The teacher then wrote the topic on the blackboard, 'Co operative Society'. The students took out the textbooks from their bag.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites for learning. The two stakeholders-teacher and learners -were engaged in a conversation to decide what should transpire in a classroom which is one of the sites of learning in school. The issue was absence of many learners. The student exercised his freedom to suggest to the teacher that she should not begin with a new chapter. It was not very clear whether the student was genuinely concerned about the students who were absent or he himself did not want to study. The teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility by deciding to teach. In this decision she also displayed respect for the commitment of those learners who were present. The student who had suggested to teacher for not teaching demonstrated a sense of responsibility at the end as he took out the textbook from his bag.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The tone of conversation between the teacher and the students was friendly. The teacher appeared firm.

This incident indicated how learners can exercise control over the everyday events of school. They exercised their freedom to attend or not to attend the school. But this freedom became a manifestation of a lack of sense of responsibility. The teacher's freedom to decide to teach was based on her interpretation of a sense of responsibility.

### ***Event 3 Teaching Learning Process***

*It was standard VIII A. The subject was science and the topic was 'Plant Cell'*

*The teacher had drawn the diagram of a plant cell and an animal cell on blackboard. She had explained the structure of plant cell and animal cell.*

*The teacher announced, "We will see the plant cell and the animal cell under microscope in the laboratory in the next period. When we want to see plant cell then we stain it with Sefranine and animal cell with Methylorgange. Next period, that means when we meet we will go to lab. I will show you onion cell. I will show you (the cells) with stain and without stain.*



*One of the students had an inquiring look on his face. Standing up he asked, "Madam can we use Sefranine stain on animal cell?"*

*The teacher observed the student carefully. She said, "It will not take the stain."*

*The student insisted, "No madam, just to try."*

*The teacher once again looked at the student. She said in a composed manner, "Yes, you can (try)."*

\*

*It was standard VIIIIC. The subject was Mathematics and the topic was 'Area of cuboid'*

*The concept and formula for area of cuboid had been already explained in the previous period. In this period, the teacher asked the students to solve the following sum:*

*'Parikshit makes a cuboid of plasticine of sides 5 cm, 2 cm and 5 cm. How many cuboids will he need to form a cube?'*

*The students were reading this sum from their textbook. After five minutes, the teacher asked, "How many of you have understood ? I am not going to do it. You think. There is no much masala (the word 'masala' suggested complication in this context). It is simple. We have solved such sums earlier. You can solve in rough first, no problem."*

*The students began to solve the sum. Teacher waited. Occasionally she looked at the students.*

*It appeared that the students were working on the sum as all were either reading the textbook or writing something in their notebook. After five minutes, when no one responded, the teacher provided a hint, "Is this question application of cube?"*

*All the students appeared relieved. They said in a chorus, "Yes"*

*The teacher once again looked at all the students, "I can still see some blank faces. Come on children, how to do (solve the sum)? How many of you have solved?" The teacher smiled.*

*Two students raised their hands.*

*The teacher asked one of these two students (S1), "What does the statement mean?"*

*S1- First statement is easy.*

*T- Second statement is important.*

*S2- Madam, we have to find density of cuboid?*

*T- Density...(The teacher appeared to think.) OK indirectly he means volume. How many of you have understood?*

*One student who had solved the sum raised his hand.*

*The teacher said looking at the student who had raised his hand, "Saumya, you explain."*

*Saumya took his notebook in his hand. He explained from it, "The height and sides of the cuboid are 2,5,5. To make a cube, the length, breadth and height of the solid figure should be equal. So assume the length and breadth be 10 cm so there should be 5 boxes, one vertically over the other. So there would be total 20 boxes. And as Parikshit has made one box, he had to make nineteen boxes more.*

*The teacher was listening to the student's explanation with attention. At the end she smiled, "Yes that is a practical way of solving. Now explain again or if you have any other way?"*

*There is no response. Some students still appeared very confused and some students had blank faces.*

*The teacher asked, "Do you want more time? How many of you want my help or who wants direct help?"*

*One of the students (S3) said in a diffident voice, "Madam I have solved but the answer is not correct."*

*The teacher checked his sum. She asked, "Do you have to find volume of cuboid...Why, think?"*

*The Teacher then turned to the other student who had solved the sum, "Vihang, you tell"*

*Vihang stood up confidently, "Volume of cuboid equals to 2 into 5 into 5 that is equal to 50 cm cube which is not a perfect cube. Suppose we multiply x to make it perfect cube then x into 50 equals to perfect cube. 50 equals to two into five square. Therefore x equals to two square into five. This is equal to 20.*

*So in all 20 cuboids of the same sides are needed to form a cube. So, Parikshit needs 19 cuboids as he has already made one."*

*All the students listened. Some showed expression of having understood. Some still had blank expression.*

*The teacher declared, "Now this hint is clear. Solve the sum. Attempt. You will be able to do it."*

*The students begin to work. The bell rings. The teacher said, "Complete it as homework." She then left the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

The two events occurred in classroom which is a major site of learning in school.

In the first event the learner exercised his freedom to satisfy his curiosity despite the fact that the teacher had already explained the process of observing the plant and animal cell under microscope. The teacher displayed a sense of responsibility as she permitted the learner to do so without any opposition. In this way the willingness of the teacher to allow the learner to pursue one's curiosity despite knowing the outcome suggested a deeper understanding by the teacher of role of freedom in learning process.

In the second event, the teacher wanted the learners to think independently. At the same time, she was aware that all learners did not have equal capacity to think independently to workout the solution to the problem. In her attempt to make the student exercise independent thinking she demonstrated a sense of responsibility by enabling the learners by providing scaffolds like, 'Is this question application of cube?'; 'What does the statement mean?'; 'Density...ok indirectly he means volume'. The learners displayed a sense of responsibility in attempting to solve the problem though the success of each student was different.

The teacher demonstrated respect for the two students who had solved the sum by using two different approaches as she accepted both the answers and approaches.

The teacher thus encouraged diversity of approaches in pursuit of inquiry giving the learners freedom to explore. At the same time she showed the need to respect these different approaches of inquiry.

#### ***Analytic view of event***

A common characteristic of both the teachers in the two events was patience. In the first event, the teacher did not get irritated. In the second event the teacher was determined that the learners would find solution to the problem on their own. In the first event, it was only one student who wanted to inquire voluntarily while in the second event the teacher made all the students engage in the process of inquiry.

These two events indicate the role of pedagogy adopted which would ensure freedom of learners. Various facets of freedom of learners in the teaching learning process are manifested in these events. Also the mechanism adopted by the teacher to nurture the freedom of learners in the teaching learning process is observed. The role of teachers in this becomes very significant. The professional development programs undertaken in the school facilitated the teachers to allow learners to pursue inquiry and thus freedom.

#### ***Event 4 Teaching Learning Process***

*It was standard IX B, the subject was English and the name of the lesson was 'Dead Man's Path'.*

*There were two continuous periods of English. The teacher has instructed students to perform role play in small groups. The topic for the role play is based on the story from the text. The students have to enact a meeting between school inspector, Obi (a character), teacher and villager. After the meeting one of the students is to read the report of the meeting.*

*The students are instructed that one group would perform and the other groups will have to give feedback to the group. The teacher is standing at the back to view the role play.*

*One group comes forward to perform. Other groups observe carefully. One of the other groups is still discussing something among themselves. The murmur rises.*

*T- see, you have to listen and observe them. I see that you are not interested.*

*By this time the group's performance is over. Other groups clap.*

*T- (addressed the group which had performed) You need to be audible, so that you can attract everyone's attention.*

*The teacher looks sternly at the group which was murmuring. That group quickly stopped talking.*

*The next group comes forward to perform. The teacher goes close to that group and gestures to be loud. Then she returns to her place the back of the classroom. After the enactment is over the group stands there.*

*T- Good performance but you need to remember to be louder. Now which group ? You volunteer or I will tell.*

*One of the groups volunteers. The students of this group get up.*

*T- Wait till Sushant's group is quiet.*

*After two minutes the groups begins to enact.*

*The group performed the act.*

*The teacher looked at the group.*

*T- Good, are you not reading report?*

*S10- Rutviz is there. Four students enacted and the fifth one read the report.*

*T- (Looks the students of the group which performed) what is your opinion ?*

*S8- I fumbled. We had given short dialogues to him and we gave report to Rutviz.*

*T- Each one had a role to play according to their capacity.*

*S14 (From audience)- They didn't tell about the background of the meeting. Also there were grammatical errors.*

*T- Rutviz was not very clear so many times we could not understand it. You must read it in emphatic manner. You read it as if you are not interested in it. Now a round of applause for everyone. Next time, I will give less time, you all know what are the characteristics of a skit, you will do well.*

*The report of the meeting is to be written. Just then the bell rings. The students look at the teacher. Understanding the situation, the teacher says, "OK do it as homework." There is an instant feeling of relief among the students. The teacher leaves the class with a smile.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. The teacher created equal opportunities for all learners to participate in the teaching learning process as each member of the group had to perform. Equal participation by all students was emphasized as the teacher appreciated distribution of work in the performance of one of the groups (*'Each one had a role to play according to their capacity'*). The excitement of the students sometimes became an obstacle in demonstrating a responsible behaviour of listening to the performance of the groups which were performing. The teacher addressed the sense of responsibility of the students as she instructed students to pay attention to the other group's performance (*'See, you have to listen and observe them. I see that you are not interested.'*). The student also displayed a sense of responsibility by paying attention to the performance of the other group. One of the students displayed a sense of responsibility seen in the self-assessment of the performance by the group (*'I fumbled'*). The students exercised freedom to give feedback to those students who had performed (*'They didn't tell about the background of the meeting. Also there were grammatical errors'*). Freedom was at play as the teacher offered the choice for the next turn for performance (*'You volunteer or I will tell'*). At the end respect for the effort put in by all the students was demonstrated as the teacher asked for a round of applause for everyone.

### ***Analytic view of event***

As the researcher entered this classroom, the first impression was of a chaos as the teacher was standing at the back of the class, some students were standing near the blackboard while others were talking animatedly among themselves. The teacher appeared cool and composed. When the teacher left the class, she explained to the researcher, "We cannot avoid noise in activities and students enjoy". The students appeared to have enjoyed the activity. They were totally involved.

In this teaching learning situation, collaboration at different levels was observed demonstrating equality and respect for the other stakeholders. The students and teacher collaborated in the teaching learning process thereby forging partnership between the teacher and students based on equality. The students collaborated with each member of the group to perform the act. In the evaluation of the performance, the feedback was given collaboratively by the students and teachers. The professional development of teachers facilitated the practice of such methods of teaching in the class.

#### ***Event 5 Interaction of learners with non-teaching staff***

*It was standard VIII A. The teacher was teaching in the class.*

*A lady peon entered the class with a notice. The students looked at her and each other. Some of them stand up slowly. Gradually all got up in an unsure manner. The lady peon also looked at them. Then they all stood up quickly.*

*The students wished the lady peon in a chorus, "Good morning Savitaben". Savitaben was the name of the lady peon.*

*Savitaben, the lady peon, smiled broadly, raised her hand to acknowledge the greeting and said good morning in a low voice. She gestured to them to sit down. The teacher meanwhile read the notice brought by her.*

\*

*It was lunch period. The students were taking lunch in the dining hall. A group of eight boys was sitting around a table. One girl student passed by. At the time one of the attendants who was carrying a serving utensil with daal also passed by. The attendant, on seeing the girl student stopped. A little of the daal spilt on the girl's shirt.*

*The girl got angry. She said, "Dekh kar nahi chal sakte kya? (Can't you see as you walk?)"*

*The boys who were sitting around the table giggled very softly as the girl spoke angrily to the attendant. The attendant smiled sheepishly and moved away.*

*The girl got angrier. She said, "Abhi ye saaf karke do? (Now clean it). The attendant pretended not to have heard it. He smiled sheepishly. He continued to serve the boys. Then he*

*moved to the next table. The girl waited for sometime and then went out to the water taps point outside the dining hall.*

*One of the boys smiled and said, "Itni der me to saaf karke aa jaati" (She could have cleaned it herself by this time.) The other boys looked up, smiled and continued to eat.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

These two events indicate responses of learners to the members of school who facilitate the functioning of school from the periphery- the class IV staff. In doing so the issue of respect comes into play.

In the first event, the learners' response to the presence of the lady peon in the class was almost similar to their response to a teacher. They demonstrated respect for the lady peon by wishing her. The respect was further reflected in the manner in which she was addressed. They addressed her by her name and not by her post (peon).

In the second event, the context of the situation was different in terms of absence of teacher and the accident of spilling of *daal* on the learner's uniform. The response of the student indicated an absence of respect for others in the language and the tone used by the student. The comment of the other student who witnessed this addressed the sense of responsibility of the student (*itni der me to saaf karke aa jaati*).

### ***Analytic view of event***

In the first event the students were hesitant at first but finally they wished the lady peon. In the second event the learner responded with irritation though the context of the situation was not favourable for the student. The other students watching the event did not intervene and chose the role of spectator.

Both these events assume significance in the context of the emphasis of the school on developing respect in the form of social sensitivity in learners. A specific program in this direction is the invitation to senior citizens from an old age home in city for the funfair. In these incidents the challenge to percolate the spirit of a school wide program in the everyday events in school is observed.



## **Event 6      *Dealing with erring students***

*Two PT teachers were standing, occasionally talking to each other and generally viewing the students who were playing on the playground. The Co-ordinator of the Primary section joined them. Two boy, students of standard X B, approached the PT Teacher.*

*PT teacher (1)- What happened?*

*Student1 said casually- I forgot the belt.*

*Co-ordinator- It is only lack of organization and management. No one will rely on you.*

*PT Teacher (1) said with a smile- Or get a note from parent that the belt is lost.*

*Coordinator said very firmly- No no they have not forgotten, they got up late.*

*The students smiled. It appeared that the Coordinator's had guessed the truth.*

*The Coordinator looked at them- aisa hee hua na? (Did it happen so?) How you don't forget to watch the IPL match?*

*The students smiled now sheepishly.*

*The Coordinator continued but now in a tone of explaining- Organize your bag, shoes, uniform the day before. We will believe you but who will believe you at office when you grow up? No one will trust you.*

*(The students listened. They stopped smiling.)*

*The Co-ordinator of Primary section left.*

*PT teacher( 1) turned to the students – Get your diary.*

*(The students go to their class to get the diary.)*

\*

*A new teacher for teaching engineering drawing for XI and XII had come for demonstration lesson. He is an elderly person and very thin. As the researcher is about to enter the class, the principal said, "There is nothing". The researcher said, "OK". Then after a minute the principal explained to the researcher, "The new teacher is taking his class. I knew our children may*

*make fun of him as he is very thin and elderly. So I specially went to introduce him. I told the students that I have also been a student and I have also pulled my teacher's legs. Did they also do it? The students smiled at me. Then I said that in this age students are argumentative. Did they argue with their mothers? The students smiled. Then I said that they need not answer me as their smiles had given the answer. Then I said that they were in standard XII. A lot of time has been lost in the absence of teacher for engineering drawing so they need to pay attention to what is taught by the new teacher."*

*After this the principal left. She asked the coordinator of the primary section to sit in the class for some time.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

These two events indicate how erring students are handled on various sites of school. The first event occurred on a playground while the second occurred in a classroom.

In the first event, the PT teacher and the Co-ordinator of the Primary section displayed diametrically opposite attitudes to correcting students though the issue was the same: compliance of rules and regulations. The PT Teacher displayed an absence of a sense of responsibility as he showed the easy way out (*'Or get a note from parents that the belt is lost.'*). The Co-ordinator of the Primary section displayed sense of responsibility by stating the reality (*'No no they have not forgotten they got up late'*). The sense of responsibility of the learners was addressed by the Co-ordinator by linking it to their future adult roles (*'It is only lack of organization and management. No one will rely on you'*). The students displayed respect for the Co-ordinator as they stopped smiling. The PT teacher regained his sense of responsibility as he asked the student to get the diary in which he would have written the note to parents.

In the second event, it was the Principal herself who handled the situation with sensitivity. Aware that the physical appearance of the teacher would be the target of ridicule by students, she maintained respect for the teacher by focusing the students' attention on learning. She clearly addressed the sense of responsibility of students (*'I have been a student and I have also pulled my teacher's legs. Did they also do it?'*).

She focused on the gain for the students by being responsible (*'A lot of time has been lost in the absence of teacher for engineering drawing.'*).

### ***Analysis of event***

The Co-ordinator was smiling all the time as she conversed with the erring students. The PT teachers however appeared apologetic as they were caught doing the incorrect thing. The Principal appeared a little worried about the students' response to the teacher. Even after she had come out of the classroom she stood there for a while. She was hesitant to allow the researcher to visit the site.

The two incidents deal with the efforts for inculcation of self-discipline. In both the cases the approach adopted was friendly. There was no direct rebuke or scolding. The learners were addressed as sensible individuals. In both it was clearly indicated that the eventual gainer would be the learners.

### ***Event 7 Interaction Among Students In The Absence Of Teacher***

*It was standard IX C. There was no teacher in the class. It was the*

*last day of the school before the summer vacation. The task for the day was decoration of the class. Last two periods were allotted for the task.*

*The students were doing their own work. Some of them are talking and some are laughing.*

*A teacher who was teaching in the next class entered the class angrily.*

*She looked with surprise, "There is no teacher." Then she said in a firm tone, "You are making so much noise. You are disturbing my class."*

*The students became quiet for some time. One student approached the researcher.*

*S1 - Are you from some organization?*

*S2 - Are you observing the students or the teachers?*

*Just then another student (S3) suggested, "Come let us put the poster.*

*S1 said in a casual tone," But it is to be done in the last two periods."*

*S2 persisted, "The time will not be enough then. "*

*The monitor began to check if homework was done in Maths.*

*S2- Today is the last day. No homework.*

*Ignoring the comment, the monitor moved from bench to bench to check.*

*S4- I have not done, I will give in the last period. (She looks at another student) Khushboo, tere kaaran sab mare (Because of you all are in trouble, Khushboo)*

*Khushboo- (shrugged her shoulders) I thought all would have done the homework. Do it.*

*S5- (Asked the researcher) Shall we go to library?*

*S8- (addressed the researcher) madam they think they are superior because they read a lot. They are book worms.*

*The students sitting around student 8 laughed.*

*S9- Shall we go to get the gum?*

*S10- Why do two (students) want to go? Gum is not so heavy.*

*Just then the teacher arrived in the class. All students immediately settled in their place.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom. This event illustrates how freedom is exercised by the students in the absence of teacher and how sense of responsibility is interpreted. The students displayed an absence of sense of responsibility as they disturbed the other class. The teacher who scolded the students displayed a sense of responsibility as directing them to be engaged with some work. A respect for the teacher could be observed as the students became quiet for some time. They exercised their freedom to interact with the researcher to know more about her. Gradually a sense of

responsibility appeared to prevail as one group of students came up with suggestions to be engaged in some fruitful work and utilize time appropriately. The students exercised freedom to suggest various activities that they could do (*'Come let us put the poster', monitor checking if the homework is done, 'Shall we go to library?'*). Another group of students displayed an absence of sense of responsibility as they appeared not interested in doing any work (*'It has to be done in the last two periods'*) or finding excuse (*'Today is the last day so no homework'*) or engaging in blame game (*'Khushboo, tere karan sab mare'*). The arrival of their teacher in the class made them display a responsible behaviour as they all immediately settled in their place.

#### ***Analytic view of event***

The overall mood of the class was to enjoy and not to do anything serious. The fact of it being the last working day before the summer vacation could have been one of the reasons for it. The students were not conscious of the presence of the researcher. A clear leadership among the students did not appear as a final resolution for being responsible- how the time is to be used- could not be arrived at.

### **5.5.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Learners***

The learners enjoyed freedom at various levels in the school. After the focus on academics had strengthened, the Principal sought students' views on what could be the next phase of development for the school. The students' view that sports need to be given attention in school was attended to by the Principal. A formal structure for voice of students existed in the form of a suggestion box placed right in front of the Principal's office. Its existence was described variously by the learners as 'it is somewhere near the office', 'it is there', 'we use it sometimes', 'we don't know what happens to the suggestions', 'our work is to suggest, there work is to do'. A teacher with sixteen years in this school observed, "I don't know about suggestion box. Something must be put in but I don't know. She (principal) knows. In this respect one

of the teachers said, “Actually, a suggestion box is not needed. The system is so open, that students can tell anything to the Principal. The primary students as such are not at all afraid of the Principal.” A very regular use of the suggestion box thus was not observed.

The learners also employed freedom in the pursuit of inquiry in the teaching learning process. Informing a choice of activity was regularly practiced by the students. The learners of standard IX A informed, “We tell a teacher to explain again if we don’t understand.” Students of XI requested the proxy teacher, “We are doing our work, please do not teach in this period.”

The emphasis on self discipline and a disbelief in imposed discipline was communicated to the students in open forum of the common assembly. In the attempt to organize the students in proper lines for the common assembly of the school on the playground of the school, the Principal announced, “Priscila madam said we should have marshal rule. Should we have? No, I think we can be self disciplined. You talk softly (and) walk softly.” The students’ responsibility through an involvement in the decoration of the classroom and its maintenance was observed. The researcher observed that all the students had planned the way the classroom would be decorated on the last working day of the school.

Equality of opportunity was experienced by the learners. One of the former students said, “Within school we get equal opportunity to participate but when it comes to inter school competitions I think selections are sometimes directly made. It is OK. Sometimes, the time is also not enough.”

### ***Teachers***

Freedom of teachers was noticed by the teachers. A new teacher who had joined the school in the year of this study said, “We are free to do any activity in class, a skit, or a debate.” Another teacher said, “We have the freedom to decide about a presentation to be shown to the students. We decide among the teachers. We just inform the Principal about it so that she knows what is happening.” Decisions regarding the activity to represent school’s contribution in exhibition are left to the teachers of a particular subject department. The final selection follows a democratic process with

discussion among teachers, between teachers and principal and finally the best idea is selected.

The empowerment in the teachers and the democratic approach of the Principal has motivated the teachers to enjoy freedom to suggest new ideas/ to explore various ideas. The direction of the ideas from top to bottom to bottom to top changed just after two years of the present Principal's leadership. The freedom given to the teachers however is tempered by a sense of responsibility of the Principal. The Coordinator (Activities) explained, "I thought the students learn only civics as a lesson so they must have more exposure. Last year when a team of teachers and headmaster from Sweden visited our school, I felt from the discussion with the Sweden visitors that children in Sweden are aware of politics but in India politics is considered a corrupt profession. So I thought of a topic for 'Big Fight' for students of standard XI and XII which would prepare them for political life after school. The topic I suggested was 'Joining Politics Should Be Encouraged From School'. The Principal endorsed the theme but asked me to change the focus of the topic as it could be misinterpreted. The changed topic was 'Creating Political Awareness should be encouraged in School'." The researcher had witnessed the 'Big Fight'. The Coordinator (Activities) observed at the end of the event, "It was not a very successful event but slowly it will pick up."

Senior teachers assumed the responsibility of guiding new teachers. A teacher who is with the school for ten years and who is head of the department of English subject explained, "I observe new teachers. When I saw one teacher struggling with the lesson plan, I showed her my lesson plan. She got the hint. She then prepared her lesson plans systematically." A new teacher who had joined this school in the year of study confirmed, "Old teachers guide us, there is co operation among teachers." A sense of responsibility is also explained as, "Any good teacher is willing to do (what is suggested by principal). If the Principal has vision and she tells you to do a task, it will be with a reason. If as a grown up (person) you are able to understand this, then you will do it. (You) Try (it) out, if you succeed you will do again. Of course the ratio –proportion of success will differ with each person. "

Equality experienced by teachers is explained by a teacher who has been with this school for sixteen years as 'you will get scolding if you are wrong and appreciation if you have done right'. Another explanation was, "The Principal has no favourites. Internally she may have some favourites, but it is not visible and difficult to guess." A teacher stated, "There are no inner circles and outer circles (of teachers)."

### ***Principal***

The Principal's freedom has been earned through her commitment to the school and through proven performance. It is described as faith of the Trustee. The Principal explained that earlier her functioning was within the rules and regulations. Now her freedom is reflected in the choice of place for her work. She can work even from home if required for a particular task. The Principal said, "The Trustee now never asks as to why I am working from home for a particular task."

The Principal's sense of responsibility was observed as 'making everything organized', and 'writing comments on the lesson plans'. The responsibility of teaching was taken seriously by the Principal. She taught a subject in standard XII and prepared assignments for practice.

It was also observed that the Principal was deeply involved in every small aspect of the school's activity in the first few years. That was an interpretation of sense of responsibility of the Principal. The Principal explained that this was due to her personal interest even in the cultural activities and secondly also because of the absence of empowerment of the teachers through professional development.

The Principal had gained respect on account her knowledge base, for her vision, for her clarity and for her democratic approach. Describing further the knowledge base, a teacher who had worked under three Principals of the school said, "This Principal knows the rules and regulations, curricular knowledge and also personnel management."



#### **5.5.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

Freedom is experienced as autonomy at various levels. For the Principal it was having earned the trust of the Trustee. It is explained as ‘She will not question unnecessarily’. The teachers described it as ‘we can decide the activity’, ‘we don’t have to inform every small thing to principal except the major issues like mass bunking or a child to be sent home’, ‘self initiated tracking of various external competitions/activities for school’, ‘no interference from the principal’.

Freedom is observed as freedom of expression. It is described as a change in the ‘flow of ideas’ which earlier was from top to bottom, then it changed to bottom to top and then both ways. The freedom of expression for teachers was in formal settings like a meeting as well as in informal conversation among colleagues as well as with the Principal. Freedom of expression for students was in the form of ‘seeking opinions’ and facilitating ‘expression of opinions’.

Freedom of inquiry and of choices was another aspect of freedom observed.

Freedom for teachers was facilitated by empowering them through professional development. The design of the teaching learning process facilitated freedom of the learners.

##### ***Respect***

Mutual respect among the teachers was manifest as co operation among colleagues. It is also explained as ‘no competition’ but as ‘sharing’. Recognition and appreciation of

effort was a form of respect. Respect was indicated through acceptance as a part of the group (students) 'Over sixteen years, I have not seen a new comer who has not been accepted as a part of the group.' It is initiated by the class teachers as, "Who will help (the new student)?" Respect for all was also seen in 'no groupism'. Respect was also observed in the tone of interaction. The conversations among the students, among the teacher and students and among the teacher and principal were friendly and relaxed.

### ***Equality***

Equality was fostered by discouraging display of material wealth. The teachers and students explained it as 'ban on wearing wristwatches by students.' The school's emphasis on equality was facilitated through communication to all the stakeholders.

Equal opportunity was created through compulsory participation of students at class levels. Equality was explained as 'allotting task according to capacity'.

Equality was seen as 'no groupism', 'openness', 'no hush hush going on', 'no inner circle and outer circle' and 'transparency'. "No groupism" was further qualified as 'a little bit which has developed of late' and 'a little bit of back biting, after all we are human.'

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

Responsibility as self discipline was emphasized. It was explained as 'absence of marshal law' and 'you must get organized'. Responsibility is interpreted as social sensitivity.

Making a good team of teachers was understood as a sense of responsibility by the senior teachers. A sense of responsibility was also seen as support for new teachers. The support was through help in lesson plans, by explaining the way of working in this school and by just standing near the entrance of a Higher Secondary class when a new teacher finds it difficult to handle.

Minute attention to every detail by the principal was a manifestation of sense of responsibility. It was described as 'signing each and every report card', 'going through each and every lesson plan', 'going through the notebooks corrected by the teachers'.

Involvement of the Principal in the school was another manifestation of responsibility.

The notion of discipline for students was ‘not very strict’ and ‘not very rigid’. Yet the students did not appear to have imbibed fully the idea of self discipline as the idea of a ‘spy monitor’. The Principal also reminded the teachers not to bang the duster for maintaining discipline.

Remaining focused on the task and utilizing the instructional time was a way of responsibility.

### **5.5.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Leadership: An interventionist approach of the Principal***

The influence of one principal-the present Principal was overpowering in this school. The Principal of this school adopted the interventionist approach to nurture Academic Culture. She involved herself in each and every aspect of the functioning of the school. She planned and organized the functioning. She identified a direction for the school. In doing so she set example for others to follow. Her personality also defined what was valued in this school: simplicity and de-emphasis on flash and show off. These became the core values which nurtured equality and respect.

#### ***Professional Development of Teachers***

Professional development of teachers played an instrumental role in reorganizing the smooth functioning of this school. Professional development empowered teachers to exercise freedom and fulfill their duties with a sense of responsibility.

### **5.5.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Confidence in school***

The school is known for its clear focus on academics. A teacher who had joined this school in the year of this present study reflected on this school as, “It is a simple school, not much flash and show, as a typical school and down to earth.”

### ***Teachers***

A teacher who had joined this school in the year of this present study reflected on this school as, 'the colleagues are cooperative'. The teachers exhibited due diligence in doing their tasks. Commitment to the school through continued association was seen in teachers. The teachers obtained an identity for themselves by being teachers of this school. One of the teachers with sixteen years in the school said, "I have got offers from other schools but I will not leave. I am known as a teacher of this school." The teachers are described as motivated and involved.

### ***Learners***

The learners were not inclined to exhibit their material wealth. A parent who had admitted her daughter to this school from another school of the city described the difference that this school made to her daughter, "My daughter feels comfortable here. There is no unnecessary competition." Another teacher whose children also studied in this school said, "Children are comfortable and happy here because there is less competition in material things." They were serious students who did their tasks diligently which a teacher described as, "students are serious, they pay attention in the class, do their work neatly though mistakes are there". They were well-mannered as seen in their tones of conversation.

## **5.5.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. It is difficult to identify pre dominance of any single constituent. However the events and their analysis indicate the presence of freedom to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through two processes: (i) leadership with an interventionist approach and (ii) professional development of teachers. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school as a simple, typical and down to earth school with a clear focus on academics; (ii) learners of this school are described as comfortable and happy on account of less competition on material wealth display, well-mannered and serious students who do their tasks diligently; (iii)

teachers are observed as committed, cooperative colleagues, doing their tasks with due diligence and willing to continue working with this school.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## 5.6 CASE: 6

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### 5.6.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

The Principal's response to researcher's request for permission for conducting research in his school was smile of pride and also curiosity. Permission was granted readily after reading the formal letter of permission. The Principal appeared familiar with the research in general. He himself coordinated the researcher's observation by inquiring what would she like to observe on a particular day. The teachers did not appear to have been informed about the presence of researcher so sometimes they appeared a little apprehensive about the researcher's presence. On one occasion when one of the teachers saw the researcher in a classroom, she asked, "Have you taken the permission of Principal?" However, after two days the researcher's presence was accepted. The entry into this school as a field of study was smooth.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were teaching learning processes in various classes and on playground, the two assemblies (at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day), a flag hoisting ceremony organized on month end, conduct of examination, students preparing for examination before the exam, teachers working in staffroom and preparation for a program '*Hindi Rashtriya Ekata Saptah* (Hindi National Unity Week) '. The principal informants were the present Principal, a former Principal (the second Principal), a teacher with thirty five years of experience in the school, a teacher with seventeen years of experience in the school and a former student. There were conversations with the present teachers and students on various sites of the school. In addition to this the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring in school. The present Principal was approached as he had been associated with the school for almost thirty years in different positions: as a laboratory assistant, as a teacher and then as a Principal. The present Principal recommended the second principal as, "She will be able to tell about the school in a much better way. I am her student and follower." The second Principal was associated with the school as Vice-principal and Principal for twenty four years and post retirement for twenty years. She was very reflective in her interview. The other

informants showed willingness to share their perspectives. The present Principal told them, “Tell her (researcher) how we work here.” The former student said with pleasure, “Oh it’s my school, I will definitely talk about it.” The researcher felt the teachers’ apprehension but both the Principals were quite relaxed during the interview. The Principal graciously offered the researcher to sit in his office. Tea and snacks were offered by the Principal to the researcher in his office.

### 5.6.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL

The roots of this school lay in nationalist thought believing that character development would lead to responsible citizenship and civil society. Freedom of nation just a decade before the establishment of this school provided the context for this. Dissatisfaction with the then schools led some freedom fighters, social workers and political national leaders from Gujarat to establish a school which would not be just one of the many schools in Gujarat; which would be different from the run of the mill schools engaged in providing ordinary education and; which would not educate children only for livelihood. With the aim of establishing such a school, these leaders established the Trust in 1960. This school was established in the same year (1960) five months after the establishment of the Trust to realize the vision of the Trustees to develop school which was value oriented, and which promoted nationalist and patriotic values.

The Trust was established with the sole purpose of managing the school as envisioned by the Trustees. A common thread among the trustees was their belief in the philosophy of Gandhi and the objective of educating children for nation building. A former Prime Minister of India who was present during the inauguration of school described the genesis of school as *samaj ma bhaat paade tevi praanvaan sanstha* ( a vibrant institution which would create a difference in society). The school was named after a national leader. The second Principal reflected, “The Trustees desired that the children of school should remain in the beneficial influence of memory of national leaders.” Nation building, character development and education with a difference are the key driving forces of this school.

The vision of the school, as orally informed by the present principal was “to develop students with character, morals, dignity of labour and simple living. It was not only to

provide society and the nation with only highly educated young people but to provide the people who serve the nation and always take pride to be an Indian. It was to provide quality education to students of all the communities and sections of society. It was to provide education in such way that the students can build career, their future and also feel pride for their institution. It followed philosophy of Gandhi. The society gets many professionals like doctors and engineers but it did not get citizens with character and morals. There fore the school emphasized more on character.”

The vision and mission of school indicated an emphasis on character development, nurture of values and a strong focus on developing society and nation through the education of children. A conscious de-emphasis on education for earning livelihood was observed. There was no mention of potential of learners and differentiation on its basis. It indicated a preference for Gandhian philosophy as the founder trustees of the Trust also were staunch Gandhian. An emphasis on equality was observed as it envisioned providing quality education to students of all communities and sections of society.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department It is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is Gujarati. It is an aided school hence the expenses for salary are borne by the Education Department of State. The admission policy is guided by the Education Department. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees 40 per month for standard IX, Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by the Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary is ensured for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State thereby the control of the school authority (principal) is relatively lesser. The affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined. In addition to the rules and regulations of



Education Department of the State, the School's policy of the Khadi as compulsory uniform of students and teachers is a part of the admission and recruitment policy.

Key policy decisions were wearing Khadi for uniform by all: principal, teachers, students and the class IV staff. The second Principal informed that an informal policy regarding the appointment of the principal is that the prospective candidate should be able to maintain the 'character' of the school. External candidates therefore are not given preference.

Cleaning of the classrooms by students and of the school building once in a month on rotation were programs initiated for inculcating a dignity for labour. Specific programs for inculcating values for nation building and character building were Gyan Saptah, Hoisting of national flag every month, *Hindi ekta Saptah* for national integration, and *Kavyotsav* (a festival of poetry recitation by eminent poets).

The introduction of semester system in school in the 1960s was an initiative for being different. The examination pattern of this school comprising three unit tests (written) and one unit test (oral) was a unique feature of this school. Both these initiatives were for developing a school which was different from other schools and which led to an overall development of the students.

A formal Parent Teachers Association did not exist but parents as a stakeholder were considered significant by the Principal. Whenever major decisions which were different from the other schools of the city were to be taken ('to continue regular working of school during the *Navnirman Andolan* 1975'), the parents were taken in confidence. The second Principal said that a need for a formal Parent Teacher Association was not felt as informal interactions with parents were maintained in class wise meetings arranged with parents.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners. At first the school began functioning in the centre of city in a rented building. The location of the school was identified on the basis of availability of a building. The furniture also was arranged on rental basis. The second premise of the school was constructed in 1969 with loan of Rupees four lakhs borrowed from Sayaji Diamond Jubilee Trust which was repaid with difficulties

within a period of fifteen years. The present school building was at that time on the outskirts of the city. The residential area around the school building gradually developed. At the time of the present study school functioned in both premises such that some sections of each standard were housed in the rented building and some in the present premise. The distance between the two premises of the school is six kilometers.

As informed by the Office Superintendent on the basis of school records the area of school premise is 6487 square meters from which the built up area is 2307 square meters and vacant space is 4180 square meters. The area of a classroom is 414 square feet. In addition to the classrooms there is one art room, one craft room, one audio visual room, one vocational workshop room, one girls' room, one boys room and one music room. There are three laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry, Biology. There is one general science laboratory for Secondary section. There are two computer laboratories with 16 computers in each. The number of books in library is 4194 and the journal and magazines subscribed to are 12. The play ground admeasures 4180 square meters. There is one hall with seating capacity of 900. The students' strength per class in the Secondary section is 52 to 77 and in the Higher Secondary section is 49 to 77. The teacher pupil ratio at the minimum is 1: 49 and at the maximum is 1: 77.

The present Principal commented on the size of the classrooms and students' strength, "Why should I not admit the truth, some times the classrooms do get overcrowded." In spite of the financial constraints faced by the Trust, the founder trustee ensured that the teachers were given salary on the first day of each month. The next priority was to arrange the required furniture, teaching aids and books. The founder trustee along with one more teacher did not take salary because of financial constraints but emphasized on high principles and standards of educational practices in school. It was informed with pride by the second Principal, the school was known as the school without fans but our library and laboratory were rich with books and equipments.

As one enters the two premises of the school, each premise presents two different physical ambiances. However a striking feature of both the premise is the presence of older women in white Khadi saree in the school. Physically, the older premise is in the midst of the city located on the main road in a busy commercial centre. The

structure of the building is wooden with the old style of architecture. The new premise by contrast presents a picture of a contemporary school building built with cement. The school building has three sections: on one side is the pre-primary and primary section and on the other side is the Secondary and Higher Secondary section. The Principal's office, administrative office and the staffroom is in the centre. The open space in the ground floor area under the central part of the building is used for assembly and functions. The location of the Principal's office provides a direct view of the school gate. Parking area for cycles and two wheelers of students is clearly demarcated along the boundary wall.

The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge. In the context of this school it would be appropriate to mention that the Trustees had 'capital of ideas and values' as against 'capital of funds'.

### **5.6.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.6.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. The school is forty nine years old (1960 – 2009). It has been administered by three principals in the span of forty nine years. The first principal was also the founder trustee. In his strong and stable leadership of two decades (1960-1980) the school was shaped from its inception to reality. The second principal who was Vice-principal under the first Principal from 1965 to 1980 was in chair as Principal for almost a decade (1980-1989). The third principal who joined this school as laboratory attendant in 1977 assumed leadership of the school in 1989. The present Principal described the first two Principals as 'staunch Gandhian'

Continuity and stability are striking features of leadership of this school. In addition to the long tenures of Principals, the first two principals were engaged with the school post retirement also. The second Principal actively participated in the management of school as administrator of primary section and helped the principal of the secondary section, if needed. She shared the office of the principal of the secondary school. One senior teacher, who is also a staunch Gandhian, was in charge of the unit housed in the rented building after her retirement. A telephonic contact was still maintained between the present Principal and the first Principal. Informal regular visits by the second and the third Principal were made to the first Principal who resided in the same city.

The policy decision to make Khadi compulsory as uniform for all the members of the school: students, teachers, principal and administrative staff was influenced by the Principal's and Trustee's belief in the Gandhian philosophy. The present Principal explained that the root of this decision was in the revival of Khadi which was forgotten after independence. This policy decision impacted the everyday life of school. During the visit to the school, the word 'Khadi' was the first descriptor of the school used by various stakeholders- students, teachers and Principal. The use of Khadi played the symbolic role of an equalizer among the students, teachers, principal and the administrative staff. It presented a principle of equality as no one was exempted from this. Societal distinctions were consciously nullified as all wore Khadi to school. It thus created equality among all these four without any distinction/s made on the basis of their socio-economic status in society. The use of Khadi for uniform was also closely linked to the philosophy of the founders of the school who also were national freedom fighters. Use of Khadi by all members of the school is a conscious step towards translating the vision of the school to prepare children to contribute to society and national development. The present principal explained that Khadi was presented not as a cloth or a material but as a thought and a value by itself. Thus Khadi was symbolically used in school for nurturing equality and as a reminder to students and teachers about their obligation to society and nation. A sense of responsibility was displayed when the principal made special arrangement to make Khadi available for learners, teachers and class IV staff of the school.

The process of implementation of policy decision of Khadi provided the stakeholders freedom to accept it gradually by not thrusting the decision on them. The process of

making Khadi compulsory was a gradual process initiated at first for the teachers on voluntary basis. After the teachers had accepted and adopted it, it was made compulsory for them and introduced on voluntary basis for the students. Khadi was made compulsory five years after the establishment of school in 1965. Khadi was to be worn on all days of the school even on the days of picnic. The only instance when this policy was relaxed was an outstation tour for more than one day. The present Principal informed that the practical difficulty that Khadi did not dry fast and hence could be inconvenient was considered for this relaxation. The present Principal further informed that the school bought Khadi in large quantities when special discount was offered each year for sale to students, teachers, principal and administrative staff for making uniform. This way the Khadi was made available at lower prices.

The admission policy did not restrict admission to any section or community of society. Being a grant-in-aid school, the school did not have any freedom in framing this policy. There is preference to the students from the primary section of the school. Admission in various classes in between the various standards was based on an entrance examination and the merit which is decided on the performance of the learner in the previous three years. Equality in terms of not restricting admission to any section or community of society was observed. At the same time, the entrance examination restricted access to the school only for the meritorious learners.

The recruitment of teachers followed strictly the government norms. The only addition to those norms was a compulsion that the teachers would have to wear Khadi in school. A former Principal informed that most of the newly recruited teachers usually told them that they knew about it and that they were willing to join the school despite that condition.

In view of establishing a school which was different from the run of the mill schools, various programs for students were introduced in this school. The programs can be clearly classified into two categories: (i) programs for creating awareness about responsibility to society, to nation and contribution to nation building and (ii) programs for character development. These two categories correspond to the vision and mission of the school. The programs in the first category were Hindi *Rashtriya Ekata Saptah* and flag hoisting once a month. *Hindi Rashtriya Ekta Saptah* (National Hindi Unity Week) was celebrated in memory of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who

unified India. National integration presupposes equality among all citizens and a respect for the others. The founder trustees of the school believed in the role of education to develop the value of national integration. The value of integrated India was nurtured by emphasizing on Hindi language. It was explained by the present Principal that being a national language Hindi was considered as a unifying force in India. After 1978, in view of developing patriotic value in learners, flag hoisting on the last Saturday of each month was organized. Flag hoisting thus did not get reduced to a symbolic activity of paying respect to the National Flag twice in year- on Independence Day and on Republic Day. By practicing it every month, it became a part of the routine of the learners and a constant reminder for the respect for national flag. These programs were interpretation of school's sense of responsibility in developing responsibility among students for society and nation.

In the category of character development the programs that stand out were: *Gyan Satra*, cleaning of classroom on rotation basis by students, common assembly twice a day and *Kavoyotsav*. *Gyan Satra* (Knowledge week) is a unique program of school. Scholars of Sanskrit, Veda, Purana, Shrimad Bhagwat, Ramayan and Mahabharat delivered lectures for students. The aim of this activity was character development and inculcation of values through a reference to the Indian culture and philosophy. This activity was conducted separately for primary students and the secondary students. The present Principal said, "Though a Swamiji is invited to speak, the talks are secular with an emphasis on moral and value development." Thus though the program of *Gyan Saptah* apparently appeared to be following Hindu religion, the content of the program was secular. A respect for all religions and by implication for all students is observed in *Gyna Saptah*. The Scholars/ Swamiji engaged the students' attention for hours by presenting the knowledge as stories and incidents. A former student during the period 1972-78 recalled, Though there was one way communication by the scholar invited in this program, it was interesting. Another reason for enjoying this program was that regular studies were suspended during this period." He further said that this program by itself did not make much difference on value inculcation as the regular routine of the school itself was value laden.

The classrooms were cleaned by students by rotation to instill the value of equality among all learners irrespective of their socio economic status in the society. This

activity also nurtured respect for manual labour in accordance with Gandhian philosophy.

A common assembly was held twice a day: once at the beginning of the day and then at the end of the day. Prayers are offered at both times of the day in most of the schools, but this school practiced the common assembly at both the times. While observing the common assembly at the end of the day, one of the teachers smilingly commented, "The children get a little restless as they are in a hurry to go home."

An exposure to aesthetics is presented through the program *Kavyotsav* (Festival of poetry). The poets of Gujarati literature recite their poems in front of students. Students of standard X to XII who have been selected in the poetry recitation competition in school also present their poems before the invited poets. A sense of responsibility is demonstrated as a wider exposure to resource persons from society are engaged to develop learners. The learners experienced a semblance of equality as they obtained a platform to participate with resource persons. The practice however was marked by inequality as the participation was restricted to a few students.

The initiative of Semester system also contributed to the character development of students. The structuring of the school's annual calendar was an initiative to develop this school as a different from the run of the mill schools of the city. The annual calendar comprised four units (semester) each one followed by a test demanded learners to be regular in school and study. This structuring of the school's annual calendar thus also created a sense of responsibility among the learners. One of the students of standard VIII said, "*Shishta automatic che* (Discipline is automatic)". A teacher with the school for thirty five years said, "Where is the time for students and teachers for indiscipline, they are always busy."

From the four unit tests planned in a year, oral examination as one unit test was conducted for all the students. The weightage of this oral examination was equivalent to one unit test. The present principal explained that not all students could express themselves well in writing but they knew the concepts. In the oral test, their understanding of concepts was tested without the fear of making mistakes of language. This initiative had been sanctioned by the now Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board. The present principal informed that the said Board granted permission only to such initiatives which were more advanced than the

generally accepted practices of other schools. This was an initiative of the school which was aimed at addressing the diverse learning styles of learners. The freedom to be examined orally along with the three other written examinations was granted to the learner in a limited manner. One of the students appearing for the oral unit test stated, “ I like this exam as there is no fear of making spelling mistakes (*jodni ni bhoolo*).” An added advantage of the oral examination was developing fearlessness of expression before an audience as the students got accustomed to oral expression.

Continuity of tradition was observed in the continuation of programs introduced in the school. Another form of continuity of tradition was retaining the teachers and principals in the school on post retirement engagement with the school. This post retirement engagement was rendered with a sense of responsibility on voluntary basis. Given the distinct vision of the school with its emphasis on the Gandhian philosophy, the post retirement engagement facilitated knowledge management in school. The knowledge management helped in retaining the spirit of the programs in alignment with the vision and mission of the school.

The policies and programs of the school were guided by a sense of responsibility as interpreted by the school to develop learners with character, national values and patriotism. The policy regarding Khadi as a uniform was symbolic of equality in school. Though the government policies with respect to admission of students and recruitment of teachers were followed, the school employed its freedom to integrate its policy on Khadi. The school also used its freedom to innovate and improve the evaluation system in school by inclusion of oral test within the framework of government directives. A significant feature of the programs of the school was an overall continuity in programs. The programs have been conducted ever since its foundation. Small changes in the component of the programs like recitation of *Geeta shloka* and reading of some information in assembly were introduced in the second premise. The program of Kavyotsav was introduced later in 1975. This continuity had facilitated a sustained effort to develop learner as per the vision of the school. The continuity of programs also facilitated nurture of Academic Culture.

It can be noted here that a sense of responsibility to the society and nation as interpreted by school emerged as the premise for school’s Academic Culture.



### 5.6.3.2 EVENTS OCCURRING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event I Teaching Learning Process**

*VIII E Subject Gujarati Topic Revision*

*It was standard VIII E, the subject was Gujarati. The teacher was conducting revision.*

*As the teacher entered the class, the students smiled. Observing the students the teacher said, "The oral exam is very near. Let us practice to recite the poems. First, one student will recite poem. Others will listen carefully." He indicated to one student to recite the poem.*

*The student began to recite the poem but paused after reciting four lines. Immediately, other students raised their hands. They look expectantly at the teacher. The teacher looked at the student who was reciting the poem and had paused. That student began to recite the poem from where he had stopped.*

*When the student completed recitation of the poem, the teacher asked him a question, "Who is the poet?" The teacher then addressed all the students, "The poet's introduction will be asked." The other students noted this information.*

*The student however was silent. After waiting for approximately a minute, another student raised his hand. The teacher gestured to him to answer. That student gave the answer.*

*The teacher then looked at the student who could not answer, "I will ask again."*

*Then the teacher asked another student to recite another poem. After reciting two stanzas, he asked him to stop. He asked another student to continue the recitation. This process was continued till all the poems in the course were recited. Then the*

same poems were recited in this way again by different students. As one student recited the poem, other students would refer the same poem in their textbook. Many students would also recite the poems in soft tone.

The teacher then declared, " Now let us see sandhi and samaas. He gestured to a student to come near the blackboard. He continued, " Write Vruddhavastha."

The student wrote the word vruddhavastha on black board. Then he wrote vurddha + avastha. All the students watched him carefully as he wrote on the blackboard. After finishing the student looked at the teacher.

Viewing the writing on the blackboard, he asked, " The rule of sandhi ?

The student hesitated. Then the teacher said, " Write A + AA Write this sandhi on black board.

Some students raised their hands excitedly. Teacher looked at all of them. He indicated to one student to write.

The student wrote on blackboard.  $A + AA = AA$ . Vrudha + avastha = vrudhavastha.

The teacher viewed what the student had written. He nodded his head. The student observed the teacher's face and went back to his place with a smile. The teacher then called another student to write vishvaadhar.

Thinking for a second as if trying to recollect the spelling, he wrote on the blackboard vishva + aadhaar = vishvaadhaar.

The teacher looked at the answer and nodded his head.

The teacher then turned the pages of a textbook. He said, " Now  $AA + A$  vidya + abhyas + vidyabhyas."

Some students immediately referred the textbook.

The teacher then observed all the students. He said smilingly, " Students at the back are firm as if they are fixed. Will (their) hands be raised?"

One student from the back volunteers to write the word given by the teacher- chinta + aatur = chintaatoor.

*The teacher observed the spelling and commented in a normal tone, "The word is correct but the spelling is not correct."*

*Another student quietly walked towards the blackboard and corrected the spelling to chintatur*

*The teacher observed the corrected spelling and then looked at the student who had made the spelling mistake. He gestured with a nod as if to ask have you understood? The student nodded his head to say yes.*

*The teacher then declared, "Ok now let us practice making exclamatory sentences from interrogative sentences."*

*He gestured to a student to come near the blackboard. He then spoke aloud a sentence, "kamlesh aje tane phone karshe? (Will Kamlesh make a phone call today to you?)"*

*The student listened to the sentence carefully. He then wrote the answer on the blackboard confidently, "Kamlesh aje tane phone karshe!" After writing he looked at the teacher calmly as if he knew that the answer is correct.*

*The teacher then addressed all the students, "Now all of you speak. You have to make negative sentence. 'Sankala ne laadu bhavche.'"*

*The students replied in a chorus, "Sankala ne laadu bhavta nathi."*

*The teacher spoke the other sentence, "Jhootu bholavathi su faaydo? (What is the use of speaking untruth?)"*

*The answer was a chorus from the students, "Jhootu bholavathi kai faaydo nathi. (There is no use in speaking untruth.)"*

*The teacher smiled a smile of satisfaction. He asked all the students, "Now how many of you do not know the first poem."*

*Seven to eight students raised their hand.*

*The teacher said in a very calm voice, "So these students will go home late today. We will stay back after school." Those students looked down. The other students smiled at them.*

*The teacher paused for some time. Then he said in a serious tone, "How many of you have brought a letter from parents"*

*that all poems have been learnt by you and that the student reads Gujarati for half an hour?"*

*The students giggled. They looked at their class mates. The teacher did not pursue this matter further. He took up the revision again, " Now write five examples of each type of sandhi. Those who get less marks in grammar will get 'prasadi'."*

*As soon as the teacher said the word 'prasadi' all the students chorused with him 'prasadi' and laughed with understanding.*

*One of the students explained to the researcher, "'prasadi' means beating."*

*Just then the bell rang. The teacher folded the book he had brought to class and turned to leave the class. The students gradually began to talk among themselves.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is a major site of learning in school. It was a class before the oral unit test in which the teacher revised and prepared the students for the ensuing examination. Steps taken to ensure students' success in examination were revising, involving parents and 'prasadi'. The teacher's sense of responsibility was reflected in the attention paid to details ('spelling is wrong', 'it will be asked'). He indicated that the parents were also his partners in this responsibility ('How many of you have brought a letter from parents that all poems have been learnt by you and that the student reads Gujarati for half an hour?') The teacher also accepted that the students' success in the examination was a shared responsibility of teacher and student as he said, "We will stay back after school." An equal opportunity for all students to participate in the revision was observed as the teacher asked different students to attempt the questions asked. He also made a comment, "Students at the back are firm as if they are fixed. Will the hands be raised?"

The students displayed responsibility as they were attentive and participated in the revision being done. The students also viewed success in examination as important as their response to the word 'prasadi' which suggested beating was of smile of amusement.

Overall a key feature of this class was a sense of responsibility.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The teacher was very observant. As he looked at the students' face to decide whom to give the chance to answer, it appeared he tried to identify those students who would not have prepared. When the students answered correctly, his face showed satisfaction though he was not very expressive in appreciating the students' attempt. The students also appeared eager to answer the questions. They exhibited sincerity as they closely observed other student's attempt. Sometimes they recited the poem softly along with the student who was asked to recite by the teacher.

This event is significant given the focus on examination in this school. An innovative examination pattern with oral test as one of the tests was the school's way of being different. The school had also earned a reputation as a 'strict' school. 'Punishment' and 'beating' which appeared to be the accepted form of 'discipline' were one of the reasons for this perception about the school.

### ***Event 2      Teaching Learning Process***

*It was standard IX D. The subject was science and the topic was 'Heredity'*

*As the teacher entered the class, the students stood up to wish him. The teacher acknowledged the students' greeting with a smile. He wrote the date and subject science on the blackboard. Looking at all the students, he said, "Let us understand heredity and evolution."*

*He looked at all the students and paused. Then he continued, "A peacock is born from a peacock's eggs while a sparrow from a sparrow's egg. Children born of Australian parents and West Indian parents look different. Tall parents have tall children. Look at me, (he smiled) my parents were short so I am 'bataku' (short).*

*The students laughed with mirth. Two students uttered the word 'bataku' softly. The teacher paused for a while.*

*The teacher said, "So this is because of heredity."*

*The students leaned forward. They became quiet and attentive. The teacher said, "In TV serials you must have seen DNA tests are conducted."*

*Some students sitting at the back leaned forward. One or two students who were reading the lesson from the textbook looked up.*

*The teacher then wrote the word chromosome on the blackboard. Two three students opened the textbook to check the name of the chapter.*

*The teacher gestured to a student, "Come here draw the diagram of chromosomes on blackboard."*

*The student gestured, "me?"*

*The teacher said, "Yes you."*

*The student hesitated.*

*The teacher then walked towards the student. He said in a low voice, "Please come, you know how I draw"*

*The student bent his head and smiled.*

*The student came forward and drew the diagram. Other students observed him. Some students open the page of the textbook where the diagram of chromosome was given. They observed the diagram drawn in the textbook and the one drawn by the student on the blackboard.*

*Just then the bell rang. The teacher said, "Draw the diagram of chromosome as homework."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. The teacher provided examples to explain the topic. At first, the teacher chose to give his personal example of being short instead of identifying any other learner from the class who was short. In this act, he demonstrated a sense of responsibility as he consciously avoided labeling of learners. The response of the learners to the teacher's address to himself as *bataku* (short) was a spontaneous laughter. Had the teacher given the example of a short student from the class, the other learners would

have followed suit and/or the learner could have become a point of ridicule in the class.

By soliciting the help of the learner to draw the diagram, the teacher also communicated that the learner and the teacher could be partners in the teaching learning process. The learner who was invited to draw was provided with a sense of security to attempt. The teacher admitted that he could not draw well and thus the attempt of the learner would be certainly better than his attempt. Thus, the teacher created for learners an equal and fair opportunity for participation in the teaching learning process.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The teacher's approach was friendly. The students were relaxed in his class. The teacher's friendly approach was exhibited in the manner in which the engagement between him and the learners progressed. He created opportunities for defining roles of teacher and learner in the teaching learning process. In this process issues of a sense of responsibility and equality come into play. It was the friendly approach of the teacher which provided the confidence to the student to attempt the task (draw the diagram on the blackboard). Another feature of this class was the spontaneous laughter of the students which stood out as a contrast to the reputation of the school as a school with 'strict discipline'.

### ***Event 3      Dealing with agencies external to school-government officials***

*The former Principal recalled, "There was a son a government official. He failed. It was directed that re exam of those who had failed is to be compulsorily taken. We conducted the re exam. That child failed again. Now there was pressure to promote that child. I did not succumb to that pressure. I was threatened that the grant would be cut. Now this is a financial matter. So I consulted, Ramlal Parikh, (the then) Vice chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapeeth who was also one of the Trustees. He asked me what I wanted to do. I told that promotion could not be given but there is a threat of grant cut. He assured me to do what I considered as right and not to worry about the grant cut. I went ahead with the decision. After this we went to the High Court and won the case. I got the grant back. With this our school has got the reputation of being 'strict' and 'stubborn'."*

\*

*The former Principal informed, "During Navnirman movement when schools were not working due to the state wide agitation, a relaxation was granted by government that exam could be scheduled later. But our students appeared in the scheduled regular exams and got regular promotion to the next class. The schools which were on strike at that time went for re-exam, I did not submit to this idea."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

The freedom that the Principal of the school ensured for herself in negotiating with the external agencies is observed. The freedom had to be safeguarded from two stakeholders- the District Education Officer and the Trustee. The faith of the Trustee in the motive and abilities of the Principal demonstrated respect for her. This respect reposed her freedom based on which she retained her freedom from the pressures of District Education Officer. In the exercise of freedom, the Principal also demonstrated a sense of responsibility by consulting the Trustee as finance of the school was at stake.

In the second event, the Principal exercised her freedom and demonstrated a sense of responsibility by choosing to follow the regular schedule of examination of her school though a relaxation was granted by the external controlling agency- the District Education Office.

In both the events the Principal retained her freedom for decision making from external regulatory bodies which control school.

### ***Analytic of event***

The former Principal narrated these events with great pride. She closed her eyes as she recalled the details. These events are closely linked to the motive of establishment of this school. The school was established with the motive of creating a difference in the society, an emphasis on nationalist and patriotic values and to develop future citizens to contribute to the national development. There was a clear emphasis on being different from the run of the mill schools. The freedom exercised by the Principal in dealing with the pressure of external agencies and follow what it believed



in was pivoted in this emphasis. The outcome of the freedom exercised by the Principal was the school's identity as 'strict' and 'stubborn'.

***Event 4 Dealing with erring students: students who were late for the unit test***

*It was the first unit test. Two tests were scheduled in a day. Two learners of standard VII were standing outside the school gate as they were late for the school.*

*Researcher: Why are you standing here?*

*Learner 1: We were late by five minutes so we were not allowed to enter the school?*

*Researcher: So why were you late?*

*Learner 1: The chain of my bicycle came off.*

*Researcher: So?*

*Learner 1: I will fail. I told my parents. They asked me to wait and appear in the second test.*

*Learner 2: I shall be failing for the first time in life (jindagi ma pahli vaar fail thais)*

*Researcher: So what will you do now?*

*Learner 1: Wait for the second test what else.*

\*

*The former principal who was working as the present administrator for the primary section conversed with a parent on the telephone: "Let her (the learner) cry. Why was she late for the exam? It is good that she is crying. At least she has not become 'naffat' (shameless). This is a good sign. Regularity and punctuality is very important for life."*

***Synoptic view of event***

An involvement of three stakeholders: learners, Principal and the parents is observed in these events. These two events indicate the case of not adhering to the school's established rules. These rules were not bent even in special circumstances like the

examination day. On the contrary the justification given by the former Principal who was also the present Administrator was based on her sense of responsibility and a respect for adherence to the rules and regulations. The learners responded to it with a sense of regret which indicated their sense of responsibility. The two responses of parents were based on their sense of responsibility. The suggestion of parent to accept the rule was a respect for the rules and regulations of the school. The other response of parent suggesting bending of the rules as it affected the learner was a sense of responsibility for their child as interpreted by them.

This was how the principal exhibited a sense of responsibility as interpreted by the school in the development of learners.

### *Analytic view of event*

In the first event the two students appeared helpless. One of them had tears in his eyes. He was not able to compose himself for quite some time. He spoke with remorse when he told that the chain of his cycle came off. The other learner appeared composed though the sense of regret was observed on his face. 'Failing in exam' was a consequence both dreaded. The school had developed its independent examination system. It was one its programs in its endeavour to be different from other schools. Failing in exam therefore was undesirable consequence which both the learners dreaded.

In the second event, the appearing in examination was given second priority over the qualities of punctuality and regularity. Examination was seen as a conduit for developing the qualities of punctuality and regularity. The rules were made for the benefit of the learners in the development of their overall personality which therefore needed to be followed.

The former Principal and the Administrator admitted that the school had a reputation for being strict and also the fact that the stakeholders-learners and parents- chose the school with awareness about its reputation and identity. She demonstrated a sense of responsibility in translating the motive of the school (to create a school with a difference in the society) in the everyday life of school. The characteristic qualities of the students of this school indicated were punctuality and regularity.

## **Event 5 Interaction Between Parents And Principal**

*Parents were called to the Principal's office to explain the absence of the students. The school had holidays on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Some students had remained absent on the 16<sup>th</sup>. It was informed by the Principal that those students who were absent on 16<sup>th</sup> will not be allowed to appear in the examination scheduled in the next week.*

*This meeting was to seek explanation for this absence without prior permission. A queue of parents whose children were absent was formed outside the Principal's office.*

*One parent entered the principal's office.*

*Parent- Sir I had to get the spectacles for my daughter made.*

*Principal- (In a raised voice) Why at four o'clock?*

*The parent showed receipt of the spectacles made to the principal.*

*(As the voices of parent and the principal are raised, the student gets terrified. She gestures to her father to let it be.)*

*Parent- So will you allow her to give exam?*

*Principal- This is the last time. OK*

*Parent- OK*

*The Principal wrote the name of the student and the standard on a small piece of paper to be shown to the teacher. The parent left the office with the student.*

*The second parent entered the office.*

*Parent- My son had mouth ulcers.*

*Principal-(in a stern voice) If you have mouth ulcers then you know that you should not eat hot and spicy food. Why should he not come to school? If he has come today then he could have come on that day also.*

*The parent said nothing. He waited for the Principal to give permission to his child to appear in the examination. The principal again wrote the name of the student and standard on a small piece of paper to be given to the teacher. The parent and the student left the principal's office.*

*The third parent entered the office.*

*Parent- (speaks in an apologetic voice.) We had gone out of station for a wedding in the family. The girl got tired by the travel and so got fever.*

*Principal- (Sternly) Why didn't you inform me?*

*(Parent is silent.)*

*Parent – (tried to explain) I leave home early as I have to reach office by seven in the morning.*

*Principal-(sternly) What do you do when you do not go to office? Don't you call up and inform?*

*Parent- Yes*

*Principal- Then shouldn't you do the same to school? Have you not read the prabodhini (School diary).*

*(The parent is silent.)*

*Principal- OK (Writes the name of the student and the standard on a small piece of paper and gives it to the student.)*

*(The parent and the student leave the office.)*

*Then three parents try to enter the office together.*

*Principal- This school is for common children and not VIP children like you. Have you not read the school rules? If you don't like the school then leave the school.*

*One of the three parents said, "Sir my son was not absent. He had malaria."*

*The Principal asked his name and standard and wrote that on a small piece of paper to be given to the teacher.*

*Principal- The teacher will take the exam first so that you can take the child home.*

*The parent smiled and left the office.*

### *Synoptic view of event*

This event involving the Principal and the parents: two stakeholders of school occurred in the Principal's office which is one of the sites in school for the management of the school. Uninformed absence of students was not taken lightly. The sense of responsibility of the parents was being addressed. The Principal's sense of responsibility was the guiding force of this discussion.

### *Analytic view of event*

The Principal's approach in addressing parents was very authoritarian. He spoke in very high tone almost as if he was scolding. The consequence of which was that in one case the student got terrified. At times it appeared as an interaction between a Principal and a student ('What do you do when you do not go to office? Don't you call up and inform?'). The parents in general appeared scared. At the same time, the relaxation shown for the student who was suffering from malaria indicated a softer aspect of Principal's view of rules and regulation. Along with a sense of responsibility of Principal, equality for students was affirmed ('This is a school for common children and not VIP children.')

This was a case of reaffirmation of school's policy for parents. The school valued its annual calendar. The rules and regulation were communicated to the parents and students in advance. The design of the school's annual calendar was also one of its attempts to make this school as a different school. 'Not following rules and regulation' was taken very seriously. The Principal and by implication the school appeared to have pride in its policies and the reputation it had earned of being 'strict' and 'stubborn'. The Principal said without any qualm, "If you don't like the school leave the school." The vision of the school that it will be a school with a difference had thus impacted the everyday life of the school.

### 5.6.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE

#### *Learners*

Learners experienced equality of treatment in the school irrespective of their talent and potential. A student who had sought admission to this school in 2007-2008 said, “*Mere purane school me jo accha rank late hai un per hee dhyan dete the teachers. Yahan per sabhi per dhyan dete hai. Yaha teachers acchha padhate hai* (In my previous school those who secured good rank were given attention by teachers. Here all are paid attention to).” The admission policy regulated by the Education Department of the State created equal opportunities for children of all sections and community of society to study in the school. Organizational hierarchy did not influence the treatment of students. The present Principal said, “My son and the son of one of the class IV staff sat on the same bench.”

With the passage of time, a change in the freedom of expression enjoyed by the learners is observed. A former student (1972-79) recalled, “We could not speak to the teachers or principal freely.” He narrated a conversation he had with the second principal approximately twenty years after he had left the school, “I met the second Principal of the school in a market. I told her dusters were used to beat us, she said why didn’t you tell [me. I said how could I tell then *hamari himmat hee nahi hoti thee* (we didn’t have the courage), But now I am telling.” As against this the researcher witnessed a conversation between the students and principal in which the students protested against a teacher. In order to punish the students as they were talking in the class declared that she would not distribute question paper and answer sheet to the students. The students immediately rushed to the Principal’s office to protest against this. The Principal instructed the teacher to distribute the question papers and answer sheets as this would not be appropriate as per rules.

Freedom restricted in choice of subjects (type) and the school’s interpretation

Learners felt that it is their sense of responsibility to study well as the teachers taught very well. To fail in examination was almost like a crime. One of the students who

was not allowed to appear for the unit test as he was late to the school said, “I have never failed. Now I will fail”.

### ***Teachers***

Teachers enjoyed freedom with respect to choice of teaching method/s. A teacher who was with the school as a teacher for twenty five years (1967-1987) and was retained as administrator for the first premise of the school since 1987 onwards stated, “There is no restriction on method but syllabus must be complete.” A teacher with thirty five years in the school recalled that the first principal ensured total freedom for the teachers with the only condition ‘teach the students in the best possible way’. The first Principal facilitated the teachers’ freedom by a sense of responsibility. The same teacher continued, “He (the first Principal) never refused any help for equipment or books.”

The structuring of the semester system has induced a sense of responsibility. A senior teacher who has been with the school for a teacher thirty five years (1975 onwards) said, “No one has to impose discipline. It comes naturally. Actually no one has any time. All activities and tests are well planned which have to be completed within the given time. There is a unit test, a common question paper and answers sheets are assessed by teachers of the other unit.”

Freedom of expression among teachers was not much observed by the researcher. Most of the time teachers were engaged in some activities. There was silence in the staffroom. Casual conversations among the teachers were observed very rarely.

A teacher with the school since 1992 remarked on the discipline of the school, “Others feel (that) there is strict discipline in our school but it is not so. Other schools don’t have discipline. *Yahan discipline apne aap hee aa jaataa hai* (here discipline gets inculcated on its own).”

### ***Principal***

An explicit respect for the position of principal and the persona of the Principal was manifest. The present Principal’s tone of conversation with the second former Principal was always very polite. A continued association with the first Principal was explained as respect for the Principal. The present Principal said, “We have high

respect for the first Principal. We visit him very regularly. We also talk to him on telephone almost everyday.”

The first Principal demonstrated sense of responsibility by laying foundation of best practices by personal example. Being a geography teacher, he used slide projector even in the 1960s. His physical presence in the school from morning till evening as the school functioned in two shifts set example for the teachers and learners. A teacher with thirty five years of experience in the school said, “ *Unko kuch kahana nahi padta tha, sab unko dekh kar sab seekh jaate the aur vaise hee karte the* (He did not have to tell anything. All would learn by observing him and would emulate him.)”

A significant incident informing the dynamics of the relationship between the Trust and the principal was evident when the second principal sought permission of the Trustee other than the founder trustee to stick to her decision of not promoting a student who had failed. The Trustee had asked the second principal to do what she thought was right. The trustee thereby ensured freedom for the principal.

#### **5.6.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

A key feature of freedom in this school is the sense of responsibility driving it. The genesis of the school lay in freedom exercised by the Trustees in envisioning a school which was different from the run of the mill schools. This freedom however was balanced by a sense of responsibility towards society and nation building.



Implementation of the freedom exercised by the founder Principal was expressed in the design of the programs ('semester system', 'the inclusion of oral test as one of the unit test'). At policy level, introduction of the policy on Khadi on voluntary basis initially ensured freedom of choice.

The Principals enjoyed freedom of decision making in the effort to be true to the vision, mission and policies of school. In this, freedom was in the form of 'no interference' from the Trustees to manage the school ('you take the decision if you think it is right', 'now you develop the school'). In the everyday life freedom for teachers meant 'choice of teaching method' with the condition that 'syllabus is completed'. An absence of freedom of expression is explained by learners as '*himmat hi nahi hoti thee*'. One of the reasons for the less prevalence of freedom of expression could be reverence for the retired teachers/principals who are engaged with the school in its everyday functioning. In the teaching learning process frequent clarification of doubts/queries by learners was not much observed.

### ***Respect***

Respect was observed as recognition and pride in the unique identity that the school has earned for itself. Respect in this school was reverence. It was expressed in the lower tones of voice while speaking to the persons in authority. It also was overlooking the error of the superior ('what can I do she (the second Principal) has made this time table for supervision, we can correct it now.'). Respect was continuation of association with the founder Principal by 'keeping him informed'. Acknowledgement of expertise of the colleague was respect demonstrated by teachers. In dealing with students, the teachers demonstrated respect by protecting students from ridicule.

### ***Equality***

Admission policy and policy of recruitment eliminated the conditions of inequality based on socio-economic profiles of the learners and teachers. Though the Principal repeatedly emphasized equality for learners ('We don't restrict admission on basis of caste and community'), it was not very pertinent as the grant-in-aid status of the school encompassed it. However, a very clear message was given to the parents that no distinction will be made on the basis of social status of the parents ('This school is

for common children and not VIP children like you.’). A visible symbol of equality was Khadi as it cut across organizational hierarchy. Equality was practiced by involvement of all in the activities of the school (cleaning of classrooms on rotation basis, ‘The students at the back are firm as if they are fixed. Will the hands be raised?’).

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

The key driver of this school was a sense of responsibility to the larger society (‘making a difference in society’). The guiding philosophy was a de emphasis on education for livelihood and an emphasis on character development. The pathway for development of character of students was believed to be through discipline which facilitated inculcation of qualities like punctuality and regularity. It was seen as not being shameless (*‘naffat’*) Discipline thus became a byword for sense of responsibility in this school. The notion of discipline was interpreted variedly. For students it was: not cheating in examination, regularity and punctuality, doing one’s work on time and not telling lies. For teachers it was: teaching well in the class so that all learners understand, beating a learner if the learner had erred. It was following rules and regulation for both the students and teachers. The word used commonly for beating was *‘prasadi’*. Discipline was also described as ‘strict discipline’. In this description it was described in comparison to its absence in other schools.

The inculcation of discipline was brought by the annual plan based on the semester system. It was done through optimum utilization of time (‘no time to waste’, ‘busy all the time’, ‘completing tasks on time’). Special emphasis on nurturing a sense of responsibility was not made. It was described as ‘inculcated naturally’ and ‘inculcated automatically’. It was explained that emulation of Principal by teachers and by students led to nurture of discipline. A sense of responsibility was doing the best in the interest of the students though it may demand compromising freedom of choice of the students in selection of subjects (‘restricting the choice of typing in standard X examination’). The post retirement engagement with the school was considered as a voluntary service to the institution (*‘Seva Bhaav’*)

### **5.6.5. PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Distinct vision for Idea of citizenship and alignment of policies and programs to it***

This school was driven by its philosophy, vision and mission. Given the roots of the school in the nationalist thought sense of responsibility was the driving force in this school. A distinct narrative emerges which focuses on discipline as core value to propel character development leading to responsible citizenship and civil society. The idea of citizenship as interpreted by the school's vision was nation building.

The mechanisms to achieve these objectives manifest in its policies and program. Certain innovative restructuring of academic calendar of the school, the examination pattern, the policy of Khadi, the programs focusing on character development ( *Gyan Saptah* ), a strict emphasis on following its rules and regulation were adopted to achieve the vision and mission of the school. In doing this the Academic Culture of the school pivoted on a sense of responsibility was nurtured.

#### ***Knowledge management: retention of personnel in post retirement engagement in the school***

Another significant nurturant was knowledge management practices to capture the tacit knowledge. The internalization of the vision, mission and philosophy of the school and continuation of the policies and programs of the school were facilitated by the knowledge management practices. One of the knowledge management practices was post retirement engagement with the school. The school had retained the services of one former principal, one supervisor and one teacher in the formal administrative structure of the school. The former Principal and the former Supervisor worked as administrator of the primary section. Another retired teacher helped in the office work. The fact that all these former associates of the school were elderly (above the age of seventy) provided them a moral advantage and influence to enculture the new entrants to the school to the Academic Culture of the school. Their presence and engagement with the functioning of the school helped to counteract the contextual factors of the changing society which intruded into the existing Academic Culture of the school through the learners and the teachers.

### ***Continuity of tradition facilitated familiarity, faith and association***

The relationship between the Trust and the three principals was marked by familiarity based on long association and faith in each other. In the period of forty nine years, the school has been managed by only three principals. Two former principals continued their association with the school through post retirement posts as the Director of school and as Administrator of primary section. This helped in the continuity of tradition. It was observed by the researcher during the study that the conversation between the present principal and the second principal was marked by respect for each other and for the first principal. Familiarity and faith in the school's vision was an informal policy for the appointment of Principals. The continuation of the policies, programs of the school and thereby the nurture of Academic Culture of the school was could be traced in the appointment of the principals as leaders of the school who were familiar with the school's vision and culture.

## **5.6.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### ***Confidence in school***

The school had recognition as school providing 'good education'. The school had achieved a unique identity. It was associated with two words Khadi and strict discipline. Parents described the school as a school in which '*acchi padhai hoti hai* (teaching learning is good)'. A confidence in the school finds expressed in the choice of this school for study. A student who had sought admission to this school in 2007-2008 said, "*Maine is school ke bare me suna thaa. Yahan padhai our discipline accha hai. Mera padosi yaha thaa uske percentage acche aate the. Yaha teachers acchha padhate hai.* (I had heard about this school. Here study and discipline is good. My neighbour was here. He secured good percentage. Here teachers teach well.) "

### ***Learners***

The learners of this school are described as punctual and well disciplined. They are confident and do not have stage fright. A teacher with thirty years of experience in the school said confidently about students of this school, "When students of our school appear in Board examination they don't cheat even if the supervisor allows. (This is)

because they are given the value of not cheating.” The qualities of punctuality, discipline and regularity were inculcated in the teachers also who were forced to do what they were expected to do within the stipulated time.

### ***Teachers***

The teachers worked with due diligence. They completed their tasks with due attention to details.

## **5.6. 7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of sense of responsibility to a large extent along with freedom and respect to some extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through three processes: Distinct vision for Idea of citizenship and alignment of policies and programs to it, Knowledge management: retention of personnel in post retirement engagement in the school, and Continuity of tradition facilitated familiarity, faith and association. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) confidence in school as it provides good education and discipline; (ii) learners of this school are described as confident with no stage fright, with attributes of punctuality, regularity, honest (not cheating) and disciplined; (iii) teachers are observed as competent who do their task with due diligence and attention to details.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## **5.7 CASE:7**

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### **5.7.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY**

On reading the formal letter of permission to conduct research in the school, the Principal made inquiries about the nature of study. The Principal appeared familiar with research in general. He confirmed firmly with the researcher about the confidentiality of data ('This data will not be shared with anyone else except with your guide.') The permission to collect data was granted from the next day. A formal announcement about the presence of researcher in the school was made in the assembly in which the researcher was welcomed to the school. The Principal said, "We have a researcher who is doing Ph.D. She is going to be in our school for some time. Let us welcome her to our school." The Supervisor was asked to coordinate the data collection process. The researcher was made comfortable by offering a place in staffroom. One of the senior teachers personally ensured that the researcher was served tea and snacks along with the teachers in the recess. The researcher's presence was accepted very cordially.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were teaching learning process in the classrooms and library, morning assembly, cleaning of classrooms by the students, a teacher-principal meeting conducted on the month end, an Inter House Kho-Kho match, a friendly volleyball match between the teachers, a medical check up of students, a meeting of the Student Council with the Supervisor and senior teachers of the school. In addition to these the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, teacher/s, Supervisor and the Principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were three teachers all of whom had more than twenty five years of association with the school and a former student. A general consensus emerged in the staffroom through informal discussion about the teacher who would be able to 'tell about the school'. She was with the school as a student for three years. Her subsequent association with the school as a teacher was for twenty four years. Another teacher

who was trained under the first Principal and was with the school for thirty three years. A teacher with twenty eight years of experience in the school was reluctant to share his perspective as he said, “*Jab senior log school ke baare me bata rahe hain to main kya batau* (When senior persons are telling about the school then what else can I say?)” Finally he agreed to share his perspective. One former student who had passed standard XII in 2008 and who visited the school during the period of study was interviewed. In addition to these the present Principal was interviewed. There were also conversations with the teachers, students, supervisor and Principal during the period of study. On one occasion three informants collectively recalled the experiences in the school. Overall the researcher experienced openness in sharing perspective on the school.

### **5.7.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

The initiative to set up the school was taken by the Trust for the education of children of area on the outskirts of city. The residents of this area were mainly poor villagers most of whom belonged to the *Bharwad* community (community of shepherds). The other residents were farmers. This area then had almost no educational facilities and the school closest to this area was about six kilometers away. This school, which was established almost after a decade of the establishment of the Trust (1959-1972), was the second school of the Trust. Funded and managed by the family members of an Industrial House of the city, the Trust was financially stable and had gained expertise in the management of school. This school started as a kindergarten school in one room on the outskirts of Vadodara city in the year 1972. It was shifted to the present premises in 1975. The Higher Secondary section started in 1982. The location and purpose of establishment of this school and the experience of the first school of the Trust guided the functioning of this school. The idea was to replicate the first successful model in a different milieu.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department of Gujarat State. It is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is Gujarati. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees, 40 per month for standard IX,

Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State thereby the control of the school authority (principal) is relatively lesser. The affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision of the school, as informed orally by the Principal and the Supervisor of the school, is stated as 'To provide quality education to children'. The mission of the school is stated as: 'to develop children as responsible and excellent citizens of the country; and to develop students to contribute to the development of society'. The objectives of the school are: 'organize curricular and co curricular activities for the all round development of students and to follow latest trends and use of technology in education'.

The vision of the school to provide quality education to children assumes significance in view of the location of school and the two stakeholders: learners and parents. The interpretation of quality education and the initiatives to realize the vision were defined by the social milieu of the school. A sense of responsibility of the Trust observed in the motive for establishment of the school is reflected in the mission of the school 'to develop children as responsible and excellent citizens of the country; and to develop students to contribute to the development of society'.

Key policy decisions with respect to teachers were avoidance of malpractice in the recruitment process and not to compromise on the remuneration of teachers. Sustained professional development program for the teachers in the form of annual seminars was compulsory for all the teachers. Creating an equal opportunity for development of learners, *Baal Sabha* was a program which offered platform to all the learners to perform on the stage provided an equal platform to all for all round development.



Cleaning of classroom by the learners was a signature program of this school based on equality as the duty of cleaning the classrooms was allotted by rotation on the basis of roll numbers.

The assembly program which was of thirty five minutes for all days of the week was planned to provide enrichment in various subjects and having discussion. On general knowledge Monday, discussion on current topic, on Tuesday, singing of poems, on Wednesday, Quiz on science, on Friday, *Baal Sabha* and on Saturdays, Cultural programs Project displays were held annually every year. All Wednesday are the 'English Speaking Day' on which the students and teachers conversed in English. Another special feature is the Presentation of review of a book in the month end staff meeting by teachers. It is a part of the professional development programs.

A formal platform of Parent - Teacher Association (PTA) was active and vibrant. Parents as significant stakeholders were catered through *Vaali Pravas* (Parent Teacher tour).

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners.

As informed by the Office Superintendent (on the basis of school records), the area of school premise is 11,919.27 square meters. The built up area is 2,805. 27 square meters and of the open space is 2,467 square meters. There is a playground admeasuring 5000 square feet. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. There is a small patch of garden within the school building which adds to the ambience of the school. An assembly hall with a stage has seating capacity of 300. It is used for various activities in addition to the morning assembly.

There are three separate laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry and Biology. There is one general science laboratory for Secondary section. There is one computer laboratory which has 50 computers. As informed by the librarian on the basis of record, the number of books in the library is 7,000 and 19 magazines. The area of classroom is 400 square feet. The students' strength in Secondary and Higher Secondary section ranges from 60 to 65. There are adequate

benches in the classroom with enough space for the teachers to move in the class. The teacher pupil ratio at the minimum is 1: 60 and at the maximum is 1: 65.

As one enters the premise on the left hand side is the playground and on the right hand side is the school building. The school building is located in a residential area. On one side of the road is this school and on the other side of the road is the Primary unit and the English medium unit. The English medium unit is an independent entity managed by the same Trust. The playground has a few shady trees. A teacher with the experience of twenty four years in the school informed with pride, "*Yahan kuch nahi thaa. Playground fill karke banaya. Ye ped first Principal ne lagwaye the* (There was nothing here. The playground is created by refilling. These trees have been planted by the first Principal.)." The first impression one gathers of the school premise is a small simple functional structure.

The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.7.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.7.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is thirty seven years old (1972-2009). It has been administered by six Principals. Each Principal gave a definite direction to the school at various stages. The dynamic leadership of the first Principal shaped the school and brought it renown. The school came to be known by the name of the first Principal. After a short spell of two In-charge Principals who were the teachers of the

school (1986-1987, 1987-1990), the leadership of the school was in strong hands (1990-1995, 1995-2004). The challenge for the Principals after the first principal's tenure was to maintain the status and recognition achieved by the school under her leadership. The present Principal is in office from 2004. He is an external to the Trust and school as he was a principal of one of the schools of the city. Though he is experienced, the senior teachers and Supervisor of the school commented in various ways that 'he was settling down in his office', 'his previous school was very different from this school' and that 'they had to help him to settle'. One of the senior teachers however said, "Wait and watch. He is new." The dynamics of the relationship of teachers who were secured due to the grant-in-aid status of the school and the new Principal became evident. The response of the present Principal to this dynamic between teachers and Principal was taking recourse to collective decision making demanding respect for each other and equal participation by him in the activities of the school. The researcher witnessed one such act of the Principal whereby he presented a review of book in the month end meeting under the initiative of 'Book review' launched by him.

The status of school as an aided school and as a second school managed by the Trust did not leave much choice to develop independent policy or program. The policies and programs of the first school were replicated with regard to policy decisions about admission and recruitment of teachers. Decisions regarding these were taken in accordance with the government directives. Most of the students were admitted to secondary section from the primary section of the same school. Admission test based on observation of students was taken in the kindergarten section. However, the focus in the first ten years of the school was to attract students to enroll in the school.

Given the local milieu and the purpose of establishment of the school, the second Principal exercised her freedom and demonstrated a sense of responsibility towards the community surrounding the school. For this the second principal organized programs to gain the confidence of the community. She visited villages around the school and participated in the gram panchayat meetings along with the team of teachers. Growing vegetables in the school premises was initiated to enable the learners to develop familiarity with the school as they were already familiar with farming.

The vision of the school to provide quality education envisaged continuation of various co-curricular activities for the all round development of students practiced in the first school of the Trust. *Baal Sabha* was one such program in this direction in which learners from each class participated. The present Principal said, "Each child will have to come on the stage at least once." To cater to the talent of different learners a wide range of activities were conducted to offer the students freedom of choice. The range of activities conducted under *Baal Sabha* were instrumental music, dance, drawing, debate, handicraft display, creating best from waste, patriotic song competition, quiz, *antakshari*. Providing equal opportunity for all the students was also catered through the activity of display all projects prepared by students without restricting the display to a few selected ones. The programs for learners were based on a sense of responsibility for the learners as they were designed to provide a wide exposure and compensate for the exposure they lacked at home. In order to prepare the learners for entrance examinations for admission to higher education after Class XII, a program of mock Gujarat Common Assessment Test (GujCAT) was introduced. The programs of the school catered to twin objectives: it took care of the overall personality development by the weekly programs in assembly and; the requirements of the post school education through preparation for admission tests for professional courses. The influence of these programs was expressed by a student of class XII (2008-2009) who had studied in the school from kindergarten as 'confidence' in learners. He said, "We are not expected to only study but also participate in all the activities of school." One student from the school qualified in the IITJEE examination in 2009 which according to a teacher of the school was rare for a student from Gujarati medium school. At the same time, another teacher of the school cautioned against taking all the credit for it as the learners took support for preparation from other professional agencies also.

A significant program of the school in view of it being a Gujarati medium school is the English speaking day celebrated on every Wednesday under which all the learners, teachers, Principal and the office staff converse in English. Supplementing the home environment with enrichment program was thus an expression of a sense of responsibility. This program helped to bridge the gap that learners of vernacular medium faced in Higher Education and also to develop overall confidence. However, the researcher did not observe a rigorous observation of English speaking. A teacher

who was with the school for twenty four years commented on this lacunae with a smile of indulgence, “*Vo koshish karate hain kabhi kabhi English me nahi bhi bolte hai* (They try but sometimes they do not speak in English).”

The policy decisions of the Trust which impacted the working of teachers were: total transparency in the recruitment of teachers with no scope of any malpractice and prohibition of personal tuitions by teachers in 1996-97. While demonstrating a respect for the merit of the teachers, the first policy provided a moral upper hand to the Trust and Principal over the teachers. This policy demanded a sense of responsibility from the teachers in terms of their commitment to school. The policy on prohibition of personal tuitions by teachers was taken at the behest of the Education Department of the State to the Trusts of schools. The second policy was rigorously implemented as one of the teachers alleged to taking tuitions was asked to resign in 2002. The teachers appointed subsequent to the policy decision on tuitions, accepted appointment after knowing the full implications of the decision. Both these policy decisions provided tools to the management to demand commitment from teachers to school and learners thereby a sense of responsibility. Two teachers who had completed twenty four years of service in the school said, “As no ‘donation’ is taken for recruitment, so we don’t feel that we have to recover (the money). That feeling is not there. We feel relaxed (*nishchint*) and consider the school as our own.”

Being an aided school, the professional development initiatives by the Education Department of Government were attended by the teachers. In addition to this, the special initiative for the three day residential yearly professional development program termed as seminar in the school was rigorously implemented. By making it compulsory for all the teachers, it created equal opportunity for professional development for teachers. The residential nature of the program combined knowledge with recreation and also ensured full attention of the teachers. One of the senior teachers remarked the significance of this program, “As such we know many things but here there is a revision of the role of a teacher. We start fresh.”

Mentoring by Principals and teachers was a part of everyday life in school. In addition to these formal programs for professional development, mentoring by various principals prepared the teachers for their job. A sense of responsibility was observed as the Principals identified the specific needs of the teachers and the needs of the

school at a particular stage. The first principal trained teachers in almost all aspect of a teacher's role in school (teaching, scripting programs for radio, dealing with children) the fourth principal trained teachers for improvement in Class X and XII results, the fifth principal trained teachers for the Higher Secondary Section. Mentoring of new teachers by senior teachers continued as a part of everyday life. A teacher who had joined the school in the year of the study said, "I took riddles from geometry in the class. The students did not understand. I was tensed. I didn't know what to do. Then I asked the senior teacher of maths. He explained to me. I gave the same explanation in the class. Now I have made a strategy to ask first if there is any difficulty."

The tradition of developing and maintaining a rapport with the parents is continued. While the first Principal's focus was on winning the confidence of the community in the school, the present Principal has forged a collaborative partnership with the parents through the *Vaali Pravas* (Parent's Tour) in developing the school. He said, "The *Vaali Mandal* (Parent Organization/PTA) organizes a trip to some institution. Both (parent and teachers) see what an institution should be like."

An expression of school's care and concern for the students is observed in the visit by Principal and teachers to the residence of the students appearing for standard X and XII examination. The team of teachers visiting the student/s offers a rose flower and good wishes to the student. Only a glass of water is accepted at the students' residence.

### **5.7.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

**Event 1      Felicitation Of The School's Cricket Team In The Morning Assembly**

*Felicitation of the school's cricket team that had won a match in an inter school competition in morning assembly.*

*The senior teacher in charge of the announcements in assembly called the cricket team to the front. The team reaches. Three students get up, look here and there unsure and are about to sit. The teacher observes this and says, "You also come; extras also have to come to the front. They are also a part of the team." As he says this the students who were extras in the team joined the team. The senior teacher continues the announcement, "The extras actually play a very important role. They are waiting when they will get a chance to play. When they are not playing they encourage the team. Now would the team like to share their experiences with all the students?" The captain of the cricket team speaks, "We played the match, and we scored runs. We won the match." All students and teachers clapped. The senior teacher asked, "Does any other player want to share their experience. The captain has spoken but others can also speak. It is possible that the captain can play the best but he may not be a good speaker. So anyone else from the team can also speak." He pauses for sometime and looks at the team. No one volunteers then he asks the team to go back to their place.*

***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in the public sphere of the school-the assembly. The felicitation of the victorious team in the assembly was a celebration of the learners' achievement. In this act respect for the students got demonstrated by recognition and appreciation of their achievement. The teacher metes equal treatment to all learners by recognizing the contribution of the players and the 'extras'. Freedom was created for the learners as they were invited to share their experiences with all the students (*Now would the team like to share their experiences with all the students?*) Equal opportunity for the learners was created as players other than the captain of the team were also offered the opportunity to share their views. The learners (other players) of the team however did not utilize this freedom. Appreciation of different talents of students (*It is possible*

*that the captain can play the best but he may not be a good speaker.')* was a manifestation of equal treatment to different students with different talents.

### ***Analysis of event***

The victorious team appeared excited but they exhibited a restrained behaviour. The teacher was very observant and alert as he quickly noticed the hesitation of the 'extras' to come to the front.

The location of this event had the potential to communicate to students what was valued in school- appreciation and acknowledgement of all and of different talents. The emphasis on recognition of different talents of the players was significant in view of the program of *Baal Sabha* of school. The program of *Baal Sabha* was organized in school for all round development of learners.

### ***Event 2 Meeting of Student Council, Supervisor and Senior Teachers***

*The context of the meeting was to address the grievance voiced by the student leaders of the four Houses on the issue of points awarded to each House. The students of the school were divided in four Houses. Each House was awarded points for team games and each house was declared overall winner based on the points earned by it. For individual events, the individual students got point and these points were not added to the House points. The student (one boy and one girl) who was awarded the highest number of points individually was declared as Veer Balak and Veer Balika. There was a conflict between the House leaders and the teachers on this issue. The student leaders of each house and student leaders of the standing committee (a committee similar to a students' council) represented the students. The supervisor, one senior teacher and the PT Teacher represented the Teachers.*

*Supervisor- " I am not clear about your presentation. Please explain to me."*

*Student leader 1- "Shanti and Sfurti House has good players so their house wins the matches. In my house there are no good players so we have very little chance of winning the team games."*



*Student leader 2- (Pointing to student leader 1) Some houses have taken players from the other house. This is not correct.*

*Supervisor- "Please do not cross each others' points directly. Explain to me the points."*

*Student leader 1- "I am not saying this because the other houses have won. In my house only I am a good player others are not. We want the points of Veer Balak and Veer Balika to be added to the house points."*

*Supervisor- "All the members of the House do not participate in individual events so how can the points be credited to the entire house?"*

*Student leader 3- "Whichever house wins, all houses must have equal players."*

*Supervisor- "Generally we have become career oriented and lose interest in co curricular activities. Study, tuition is OK but still school is important for personality development. So you must also encourage students to take part in sports activities."*

*Now give your demand in writing as I cannot take decision alone. I, this teacher, PT teacher and principal will take decision after discussion."*

*(Students listen and nod their head.)*

*You also make a list of the students in your house and hand over the list to the house in charge teacher. The house in charge teacher also does not know the names of all the students.*

*Now do you wish to say anything else?"*

*Student leader 1- "It is not about equal number of students but that the quality of students should be equal."*

*Student leader 2- "The attendance should be taken house wise in class. So that everyone knows who is in which house."*

*Supervisor- " I want to remove all limitations and problems of house system. For this I have made a detailed study also. The attendance cannot be taken house wise because we have some technical problem. The information for board forms is taken from attendance register so it cannot be changed."*

*(Student leaders listen. They show agreement with these points by saying yes and nodding their head.)*

*Senior Teacher- How many of you say that points of individual event should be added to the house points.*

*(Three four student leaders raise their hands.)*

*OK now how many feel that it should not be counted?*

*(Three four student leaders raise their hands.)*

*Supervisor- OK. Now I want to tell you about my expectations. I do not see student leaders in the corridors in the recess and before the school begins. Teachers have to take responsibility of maintaining discipline.*

*(Student leaders bow their heads.)*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

In this event a confrontation between the two stakeholders-learners and teachers is depicted. In this confrontation freedom for learners was created by the Supervisor (*I am not clear about your presentation. Please explain to me.*, *Now do you wish to say anything else.*). The students exercised their freedom fearlessly. The grievance was based on a demand for equal opportunity for 'Houses' in terms of distribution of equally talented players (*It is not about equal number of students but that the quality of students should be equal*, *Whichever House wins, all Houses must have equal players*). In exercising freedom the student also exhibited a sense of responsibility (*I am not saying this because other 'Houses' have won*). The Supervisor and the two teachers listened to the students' grievance patiently thereby ensured the students' freedom. At no point of time did they thrust their point of view on learners. The Supervisor exhibited a sense of responsibility as he reminded the student leaders about the absence of their responsibility (*Now I want to tell you about my expectations. I do not see student leaders in the corridors in the recess and before the school begins. Teachers have to take responsibility of maintaining discipline.*) The Supervisor demonstrated a sense of responsibility as he showed a willingness to make improvement in the House System and in declaring the final decision would be taken collectively by the Principal and the teachers.

### ***Analytic view of event***

A striking feature of this event was that though it was a confrontation the proceeding of the meeting was peaceful. The students were agitated but their tone of interaction with the Supervisor and the teachers was calm and composed. The Supervisor and the teachers listened to the students in non threatening manner. The facial expression on their face did not exhibit any anger or unpleasantness.

This event indicates a systemic mechanism to deal with the issue of students' grievances. It was the case of recognition of learners' freedom and to demonstrate that it is valued. That the meeting between the student council and the teachers was arranged was a message to all the stakeholders in school that it recognized the freedom of the learners.

In a subsequent interaction with the Principal on various aspects of school, it was informed to the researcher that views of teachers on the students' representation was taken after which the Principal took the decision that the system of points to be awarded to each House would be reconsidered from the next academic year.

### ***Event 3 Teachers-Principal Meeting***

*The seating arrangement of the teachers doesn't change for the meeting. The Principal occupied a seat in the centre from where he could view all teachers.*

*The Principal said, "As I was talking to Principal of another school I got the suggestion that students of standard X can use their time well after the exam. They can visit Inox, Alembic Pharmacy for community service or for a help in their professional preparation. We have one hundred and fifty students so we can have ten teams of fifteen students. We can present various options to them for choosing the place for visit. I hope Jagdish bhai, Deepak bhai will take up the project. We have school buses which will drop the students to different destinations and bring them back."*

*The Principal continued his address, "The next point is the examination. Supervisor sir will tell you about the exams and the date for correction of answer sheets. There is not much change in that."*

*A senior teacher sitting next to him prompts, "Vaali mandal pravas(tour by parents association) The Principal bends his head to listen and nods.*

*He then continues, "The charge for teachers will be only fifty percent but it is not extendable to the family members. If all of you join me for the tour, I will like it. Please write the date 18<sup>th</sup> as the date for the tour so that you can plan in advance.*

*Now if you have anything to say. Examination in charge will you speak about the examination duty.*

*The teacher in charge of examination says, "Be strict so that your impression is set on the first day itself and then the students don't trouble you. The roll numbers of the present and left roll numbers is mentioned on the blackboard. In this way the planning is done but if you have any suggestions to improve the system you are welcome."*

*One teacher gives a suggestion, "Let there be reliever for the morning session as it is for three hours."*

*This suggestion is heard and explained that owing to the number of teachers and number of classrooms and the duration of the examination the best arrangement possible is made.*

*The examination in charge then again asks the teachers, "If you have any other suggestion we are ready to accept."*

*Teacher says, "Take care of Raju bhai."*

*Rajubhai, "It is not personal but for anyone."*

*Principal , "If there is any physical problem a chair will be placed in the classroom. Get it your self or get it form the peon."*

*Principal, " Let me give a suggestion. Let students sit for full duration. Later in exams they are not allowed to reenter the exam hall if they remember any point. In this way students also learn to sit for the entire duration of the exam period."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event-‘month-end staff meeting’ in which the teachers and the Principals came together occurred in staffroom.

The Principal attended to the prompt given by one of the senior teachers about the *Vaali Pravas* thereby acknowledged the freedom of the teacher to contribute to the meeting. The use of the term ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ communicated a team of Principal and teachers thereby the Principal created equality between him and the teachers. The language used (*I hope....., Let me give a suggestion, If all of you join me for the tour I will like it*’) by the Principal communicated respect for the teachers. By creating space for the teacher in charge of the examination to share information about the examination arrangements, the Principal demonstrated respect for the teacher as a colleague. Respect for the colleagues on account of physical problems was demonstrated.

This meeting also created space for exercise of freedom of teachers. Suggestions were sought by the examination In-charge teachers and attended to. Open suggestions were also sought by the Principal (*‘Now if you have anything to say’*). The Principal’s freedom to take the initiative of arranging visits to various organizations was also seen.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The staff meeting was conducted in a cordial manner which was ensured through the tone of communication and the language used. The teachers and the Principal appeared at ease. There was no hesitation on the part of the teachers to participate in the meeting. Emphasis on organizational hierarchy was not much observed as even the seating arrangements were not changed. The pivot of the meeting was mutual respect among teachers and between the Principal and the teachers as members of a team.

#### **Event 4      Teaching Learning Process**

*It was standard VIII. The subject was science and the topic was 'Focal Length'*

*It was revision class as the mid term exam was commencing in the next week.*

*After discussing the definition of Focal Length, the teacher asked one of the students to draw a figure on the blackboard to indicate the position of image.*

*The student drew the figure on the blackboard in an incorrect manner. As the student was drawing the figure, the other students began to giggle and laugh in a low voice. The student who was drawing the figure paused for a while. The teacher was standing at the back of the class. He told the student with no change in the tone, "Continue to draw." The teacher then addressed the other students in the same tone, "He is drawing such a straight line without a scale." The student completed the figure. The teacher viewed it and then addressed the other students, "Would anyone like to correct it?" One student volunteers. After he completed the figure, the teacher said, "This is the right figure."*

#### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. The teacher displayed a sense of responsibility in the manner he handled the response of the students at the mistake committed by the student in drawing the figure. The other students' response of 'giggles and laughter' at the incorrect figure drawn indicated an absence of respect in students. It was a form of ridicule. When the teacher observed that the student had paused it appeared that he (student) was affected by the ridicule. The teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility by restoring respect of the learner by appreciating his skill of drawing a straight line without using a scale. By allowing the student to draw the figure though it was incorrect the teacher ensured freedom of the student to attempt. The teacher's response on the incorrect figure drawn was not to make any comment on it but to offer the opportunity to other students to correct it ('Would anyone like to correct it?'). The teacher's response was premised on his sense of responsibility of presenting the correct figure before the

learners. His responsibility was not to label the task done by the first learner as correct or incorrect. By not addressing the question (*Would anyone like to correct it?* ) the teacher created equal opportunity in the class for the other students to attempt.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The teacher was smiling and composed. He spoke in firm tones. The students appeared excited but later on became subdued.

One of the striking features of this school observed by the reseracher is the mutual respect among the learners and the teachers as manifested in their tones of conversation. This event stands out to indicate how respect for the learner as a person irrespective of his capabilities is maintained. In this way the teacher-students interaction which was pivoted on respect becomes significant in contributing to the nurture of respect in this school.

### ***Event 5      Interaction among students facilitated by the student leader***

*It was informed by the P T Teacher that interschool volley ball match had been announced by an external agency for which a school team will be sent for participation. This discussion occurred among the school leader and the learners on deciding the players for the team for inter school tournament of volley ball.*

*The school leader(SL) and the five girls discuss who would be in the team.*

*S L- We need six players. We have four so who is joining us?*

*One student indicated to one of the students standing there.*

*SL- O K now who has a good service? See it should go low and far and not very high.*

*S3- Mine is good.*

*S5- I can do it.*

*SL- O K other wise the other team hits the ball. See the service must be good. Now who is playing?*

*(All are silent.)*

*S4- She is playing but she is short.*

*SL- Some players will be on the side... extras.*

*S2- Who will play?*

*SL- those who can play well.*

*All are silent and thinking.*

*S1- This.....*

*SL- Those who cannot play well should tell themselves. They will be extras.*

*All listen and look at each other.*

*SL- We should not tell who will be extra, it is insult. They themselves will step aside.*

*S5- (Nods )I will .....(She steps aside.)*

*S3- I have to take my mother's permission.*

*SSSS- But this tournament is within the school hours.*

*S3- I have to ask my mother's permission but I don't have phone.*

*SL- Come I will give you mine.*

*The student called and informed that her mother had refused her permission to play the match.*

*S2- Her mother has refused she says study time is spoilt.*

*SL-You could have asked your mother to talk to principal sir*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in one of the corridors of school just near the playground involving the students and the student leader. The student leader was fulfilling her responsibility of selecting players for the school's volley ball team. The approach adopted by the student leader was democratic as she did not declare the team players on her own. In this she created equal opportunity for all to be selected. She allowed the group of players to decide by consensus. In doing this she fulfilled her responsibility by providing direction for taking the decision for identifying the players ('who has good service', *some players will be on the side....extras*). In this process,



respect for each student was based on the skills and competence of the player. The students demonstrated a sense of responsibility as they volunteered either to step out of the team or to be included in the team based on their skills. One of the students desired to seek permission of her parent which became her sense of responsibility before deciding to participate in the tournament. The student leader's suggestion that the parent could have talked to the Principal was premised on her sense of responsibility to make a good team for the school.

### ***Analytic view of event***

A tension between the players was felt by the researcher sometimes. The tension however did not lead to conflicts. The various students were thoughtful. The gestures of the learners and especially the student leader exhibited sensitivity to the other person. This event indicates the involvement of the students in the activities of the school. The cordiality with which the selection process was conducted was in concurrence with the general way of functioning in this school.

### **Event 6 Participation Of Principal In The Initiative Launched By Him**

*One of the activity in the month end meeting was presentation of the book review.*

*"Now, the book review. It is my turn to present a book review this month. I read the book-'Angadno pag'(Angad's feet) by Hareesh bhai Dholakia. It takes a very short time to read this book. The theme of the book appears that it is meant for us. It is about two types of teachers- those who are ambitious but not capable and those who are capable but not ambitious. The experiences of two teachers who fall into these two categories are described. There is an attempt to balance a competent, calm and composed teacher with an ambitious but not very capable teacher.*

*After presenting the book review the principal said, "Let me confess. I became active for this book review only around twentieth of this month. It is a nice book which will fill our lives with colours on the eve of the New Year.*

*Now whose is the next turn? Let us decide or you decide and let me know."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event indicates participation of the Principal and the teachers in an activity for enrichment. The message of equality- of being one among them- was given by the Principal as he also contributed his share by presenting a book review. In this he also demonstrated a sense of responsibility. He admitted his weakness openly (*Let me confess, I became active for this book review only around twentieth of this month.*). In this humility he tacitly communicated respect for the teachers. Freedom for teachers was ensured as the Principal did not impose decision on teachers (*Now whose is the next turn? Let us decide or you decide and let me know*)

### ***Analytic view of event***

This event indicates the strategy adopted by Principal to establish himself in the school. What is the base of leadership that the Principal chooses from freedom, respect, equality and a sense of responsibility? The school was already well established. This Principal was associated with the school for only four years. The response of the teachers to this Principal was, 'He is new...let him settle.' This school also had teachers who were trained under the dynamic leadership of the first Principal. Being an aided school, the teachers were protected by government rules and regulation. Given the context, the Principal exercised freedom and also chose to deal with the teachers on the basis of equality.

## **5.7.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### **Learners**

The learners experienced freedom in the school as they had opportunities to make choices. They had the freedom to suggest to teachers to conduct a particular activity in the *Baal Sabha*. This freedom is balanced by a sense of responsibility as a teacher with the school for twenty four years explained, "The only condition given to the students is they should suggest about an activity one week in advance so that the required preparation can be made."

The freedom of learners to suggest an activity beyond the teaching learning process was also ensured as the Principal acceded to their request for a friendly volley ball match between the teachers. The Principal explained the influence of nurturing the freedom of students as, “When we do something different from the routine we enjoy, see the students, how happy and enthusiastic they appeared.”

The learners exercised their freedom to voice their protests and disagreements to the teachers.

### **Teachers**

Freedom in designing an instructional activity is enjoyed by the teachers. This was explained by one of the teachers as, “If we feel a particular person should be invited for a talk we can do so. The only condition is that it should be useful for the students.”

Respect of an individual teacher is sensitively addressed. The tone of conversation among teachers is polite. When a teacher had failed in completing his task, another teacher underplayed his failure.

*The P T Teacher’s planning for the Sports Day was not successful as one of the matches could not be played. This match was scheduled on a different day. After the match the result of the all the events House wise was prepared by a senior teacher. The following conversation occurred between the senior teacher and the P T Teacher. The senior teacher said in a normal tone, “See the result house wise is ready. Now it can be announced in the assembly. Please take the result.”*

*The P T teacher said in a hesitating and low voice, “Even if you announce it is OK.”*

*The senior teacher continued in the normal tone, “You announce it as you have planned and organized and implemented everything.”*

*The P T Teacher appeared ashamed. He said in a low voice indicating regret “Planning.....”*

*The senior teacher said in a comforting but a firm voice, “No no you only announce. Planning is always flexible. We plan so that it can be changed. So you announce.”*

*The PT Teacher relaxed and smiled. He took the result.*

By providing an opportunity to declare the result of Sports Day House wise to the P T Teacher, the senior teacher demonstrated respect for the overall efforts made by the concerned teacher for the Sports Day. The present Principal explained that all teachers are aware and sensitive to the respect of an individual. It is said as, “*Maan Bhang na thaay* (Respect is not ruptured)”.

The composition of teachers in terms of their service conditions creates inequality. The practice of appointment of teachers under *Vidya Sahayak* scheme by the Education Department of the State creates inequality in terms of remuneration. This does not lead to major issues as the teachers appointed under this scheme are aware that the school has no role in it.

Teachers explained their role as ‘apna kaam karma hai’ (Do our work).

### ***Principal***

The freedom of Principals in this school is based on the dynamics of secured service conditions of teachers under the grant-in-aid status of the school and the rapport with the Trust. In this context, the Principals of this school have ensured freedom based on their commitment, performance and the rapport between the two. The first Principal had two distinct advantages: one was of familiarity with the Trust as she had worked as a teacher in the first school of the Trust and the second was her multi talented personality (she was trained Bharat Natyam dancer, she could script programs for radio, she drove the school bus when needed). The first Principal exercised her freedom in taking initiatives for winning the confidence of the community in the school, mentoring the teachers and organizing activities for students’ overall development.

The freedom for the Principal’s position has been perceived with limitations. One of the teachers appointed as an In-charge Principal resumed his position as a teacher in the school. One of the teachers explained it as, “*Kuch restrictions to hote hain, nahi accha laga hoga to chhod diya*. (There are some restrictions, when not found suitable he must have left.)” Another Principal was ‘asked to leave’ by the Trust reasons for which could not be obtained as evidence by the researcher. One of the senior teachers however casually remarked, “*Jo Principal teachers ke close hota hai vo Trust ko*

*accha nahi lagata* (The Principal who is close to teachers is not liked by the Trust)."

The present Principal explained his strategy for his freedom, "I presented my plan and vision for the school to the management (Trust). There was a discussion. Once it was agreed, I now have freedom to implement it in this school."

The present Principal's respect was based on his administrative skills and a conscious avoidance of 'loose talk'. He said, "I always speak with rationale, taking full brief and evidence. All the teachers by now know that I make responsible statements." He retained his respect by adopting the strategy of keeping personal relations intact even if differences in workplace appeared. He explained, "Even if I have to scold or argue with a teacher, I will not forget to wish him/her on their birthday. I keep the issues and persons different."

#### **5.7.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

Freedom in the teaching learning situation was observed in designing the curricular and co-curricular activities. It was seen as 'inviting a guest speaker of one's choice'.

Freedom was seen as freedom to protest and to demonstrate disagreement by students. The protests could be about a program decided by the school for the students or about a decision made by the school. The protest could also be about behaviour of a teacher or 'unsatisfactory way' of teaching. Freedom for students was ensured by listening.

Freedom was seen as freedom of expression. It was created by such acts as 'seeking suggestions', or statements 'any one would like to say anything'. Freedom was ensured by attending to the suggestions sought.

### ***Respect***

Respect was communicated through the tone of speaking of Principal, teachers and students. Various ways of expressing it was '*Shanti thee keh je* (speak in a composed manner)', If all of you join me for the tour I will like it,

Respect was observed as being sensitive to an individual's limitations. It was described as '*maan bhang na thay*'.

Respect was also seen as 'fear'. It was said that the sight of the first Principal's purse seen in the office was enough to set things right. Her physical presence was not needed.

Respect was felt as acknowledging the presence of teachers even by the former students outside school. It was described as 'don't turn away face'. Respect was an acknowledgement of the skills of a person, making way for it. Respect was absence of ridicule.

### ***Equality***

Equality was observed as 'all getting their turn'. This was ensured by a system of rotation. Equality was perceived by students as equal distribution of talent among the four Houses of school. Equality was representation of gents and lady teachers in the academic committee assisting the Principal. Equality was participation in an activity initiated irrespective of one's organizational position. Equality was not declaring the team in advance.

Equality appeared to be the basis of leadership chosen by the present Principal.

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

The expression of sense of responsibility was '*apna kaam karna hai*' (do our work). It was settling differences through discussion. It was seen as avoidance of 'loose talk' and making responsible statements. Winning the confidence of the community in the school was an expression of a sense of responsibility. A sense of responsibility was

following the rules and regulations. It was seen as utilizing time fruitfully. The idea of utilizing time fruitfully differed: for some it was utilizing the waiting time during a medical check-up for completing the homework and for others it was utilizing the time to prepare for the tests in the tuition class.

It was seen as explaining the importance of an activity organized for the students. It was avoidance of punishment. It was also seen as strictness.

A sense of responsibility was to understand the limitations of a system and attempting to improve it. It was seen as knowing the limitations of an organization, its rules and regulations.

### **5.7.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Response to the local milieu in the implementation of a tried and tested model***

The Academic Culture of this school was informed by the dynamics of the milieu on one hand and the process of replication of a previous successful model. The establishment of school in an area where the demographics were dominated by a specific section of society characteristically brought out the role of milieu. This school thus illustrates the defining role that the milieu plays in the making of Academic Culture.

Despite implementation of tested and successful blue print, this school experienced a series of challenges for nurturing its Academic Culture. These challenges were made of the pressing differences between the school and the nomadic shepherd community with respect to the institutions of learning, processes of learning, pursuits of learning and their perceived role in this. However, the leadership of the school successfully responded to these challenges through a strategy of engaging with the stakeholder and offering them a sense of comfort in making the school's public realm a familiar and conducive place of learning.

Subsequently the make up of the milieu changed which facilitated the leadership of the school to carry on with the tested blue print of Academic Culture in the first school of the Trust.

### ***Mentoring and Professional Development***

In the initial phase of the school during the tenure of the first Principal, the teachers were young and inexperienced. The first Principal mentored the teachers to meet the challenges of this new school as well as rise to the standards set by the first school of the Trust. Mentoring also included leading by examples. The teachers followed the traditions laid by the first Principal. The subsequent teachers followed the traditions set by the teachers trained under the first Principal. The compulsory nature of professional development program of the Trust contributed in the continuous upgrading of the skills of the teachers.

## **5.7.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### ***Confidence in the school***

The school has won the confidence of the two stakeholders: parents and learners. The Supervisor of the school explained this confidence, “When so many Gujarati medium schools are closing, our school still faces the pressure for admission. This tells about the confidence of parents and students in our school.” The present Principal said, “When we present any problem point / issue before the *Vaali Mandal* ( Parent Organization / PTA) we do not meet with any opposition.”

The learners have confidence in the ability of the school to prepare them well for examinations and for their overall development. A student who had taken admission in the school in the year of study compared his previous school and this school, “*Yahan padhai acchi hoti hai. Bahut saari pravrutti bhi hoti hai. Bahut seekhane ko milta hai.* (Here the teaching learning is good. Many activities are also conducted. Get to learn many things.)” The confidence of students was described by a teacher as ‘fully confident’. The term ‘fully confident’ included ‘take up any challenge’ because of different types of activities conducted in school.

### ***Learners***

The students described themselves as ‘confident’. The researcher observed the confidence with which they exercised their freedom to voice protest. The teachers



described the students as 'disciplined'. The researcher observed that the rules and regulations of the school in the everyday life of the school were followed. Instances of teachers making extra efforts to make the students attentive or instruct them to do a particular activity were not observed. The success of students in the public examination of standard X and XII was quoted repeatedly by the present Principal and two teachers. At the same time, two other teachers cautioned against taking the entire credit for this. One of them said, "If the seed bed is fertile the crop will be good, why should the farmer take the credit." A teacher with twenty four years in the school described a specific quality of the students of this school as 'well-mannered'. She said, "Even ex students who are out of the school are well-mannered." The students were described as 'mischievous,' as they were adolescents', but not as 'undisciplined'.

Certain attributes of the students of this school described by the teachers were honesty, cleanliness, and regularity. All these attributes relate to aspects of personality. One of the teachers with the school for twenty four years said, "I agree genes and family background is important but we also provide the environment." The teachers however were very cautious in taking entire credit for the academic achievements and professional achievement of the students.

### ***Teachers***

The teachers also described themselves as 'confident'. The present Supervisor explained the confidence, "We are trained by the first Principal. *Sanskar hue hain* (Traditions have been passed on). We feel that any situation in teaching profession can be handled by us now." The teachers feel they have developed especially due to the emphasis on the professional development. They are well aware of new trends (in education). They are do their tasks with due diligence.

### **5.7.7 SUMMING UP**

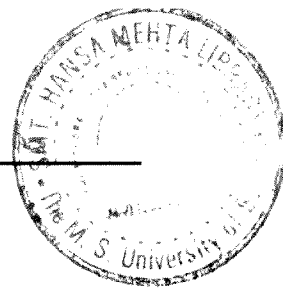
The above analysis can summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. It is difficult to identify pre dominance of any single constituent. However the events and their analysis indicate the presence of

mutual respect equality and freedom. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through two processes: (i) response to the local milieu in the implementation of a tried and tested model and (ii) mentoring and professional development. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school which is observed in pressure for admission, no opposition from parents, learners confidence on opportunities to learn from curricular and co curricular activities, and ability to take up any challenge; (ii) learners of this school are described as confident, disciplined and well-mannered with certain attributes as honesty(not cheating), cleanliness and regularity and (iii) teachers are observed as confident with ability to handle any situation in teaching profession, knowing new trends in education and doing their task with due diligence.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## 5.8 CASE: 8

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### 5.8.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY

The Principal responded reflectively to the researcher's request for permission to conduct study on the school. After reading the formal letter of permission, she inquired about the details that the researcher would like to know about the school. The permission was granted readily. The information about the presence of the researcher in the school was not known to many teachers on the first two days. Gradually they all came to know about it as the Coordinator explained about it to them. In these two days, the presence of the researcher did create some discomfort for the teachers. The Coordinator (Academics) informally told the researcher, "It is so difficult to explain to the teachers that the you (researcher) are observing the school for your study and not to make any judgment on them." The students were curious about the notes the researcher made while some considered the researcher as a school inspector. Whenever the researcher was near a group of students, they would be quiet for a minute but soon would continue with what they were doing. Overall the researcher was able to establish a comfortable rapport with the students earlier than the teachers.

The researcher was in the school for a period of approximately three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events occurring on different sites of school observed were various classes, a library period, morning assembly, lunch period in the dining hall, an inter house competition for poem recitation, a teachers' meeting, interaction between the parents and principal, celebration of Guru Purnima, preparation for Valedictory Function for the outgoing students of standard XII and a group photograph being taken for school's prospectus. The researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s, and the Principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The principal informants were the Principal of the school and a teacher with ten years of experience in the school. The Principal had been associated with the Trust managing the school for over thirty years as a teacher and as a Coordinator of the first school managed by it. She was the Principal of this school from the second year of its establishment. The school had been developed under her leadership. The teacher was with the school from the first

year of its establishment. There were conversations with many students and teachers on various occasions during the field study when the students shared their experiences and explained activities occurring in the school. The Principal was very reflective during the interview. The teacher appeared to be tensed sometimes. The students and teachers during the casual conversations were very relaxed.

### **5.8.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

This school was established in the year 2000 in response to the demand that parents made to the Trust. The demand was for a school which combined the benefits of the culture and philosophy of Trust and also the benefits of affiliation to State Board especially in view of admission to Higher Education. This was in reaction to the provision of more number of seats for students from State Board affiliated school in comparison to those from the CBSE affiliated schools in Gujarat State. The first school managed by the Trust was affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The Trust had thirty five years of experience in the management of school (1965-2000). Thus the establishment of this school came with the responsibility of continuity of tradition as well as the risk of a constant comparison. The continuity of tradition and the responsibility of the Trust got demonstrated as the name of the Trust was also made a part of the name of the school. The core power remained with the family members of the founder trustee. Over a period of time, eminent academicians, industrialists and philanthropists were also inducted in the Board of the Trust. After managing the first school for approximately thirty five years and establishment of this school, the Trust forayed into larger area of education with the establishment of schools affiliated to Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar; International Baccalaureate, Geneva; College of Education and a University. The Trust also has been entrusted with the management of Tribal school by the government of Gujarat. Though the Trust is financially stable and supports its various institutions, its aim is to make each institution financially self sufficient.

This school is a non grant-in-aid school. In addition to meeting the expenses from the fees, the Trust also financially supports the school. The Trust is rich and financially stable. The school is affiliated to Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is English. The tuition fee charged per annum varies for different classes. It is Rupees 3,360 for standard IV to VII, Rupees 3,960 for standard VIII to X, Rupees 5,020 for standard XI (science stream), Rupees 4,910 for standard XI (commerce stream), Rupees 5,350 for standard XII (science stream) and Rupees 5,220 for standard XII (commerce stream). The non grant-in-aid status implies that the control of Education Department of State on school is comparatively lesser than in grant-in-aid schools. The Principal and the Trust thus have more authority and thereby freedom in the management of school.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of the school. The vision and mission of the school as noted from the school diary is presented. The vision statement was 'Transforming Potentiality into Reality'. The vision was elaborated as, 'A seed that sprouts and grows into a tree, reflects a child nourished and guided to acquire wisdom and knowledge and achieve a holistic reality. New Perspectives enhance the child's vision and the world is illuminated with the wonder of self discovery.' The mission statement was stated as, 'To empower our students to be compassionate, responsive to our culture and heritage, academically excelling holistic persons, with a scientific temper in an environment of sharing and caring.' It was further elaborated as: "We believe that every child is a unique person; that his/her community; nation and world needs what he/she has to give; that each one is entrusted with a job to do-one that has been given to no one else; that whoever and wherever he is, he will have an opportunity to help the world he lives in; that the basic approach is summed up in the words: 'be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good' ." The vision and mission of the school emphasize on the uniqueness of individual child and the responsibility to facilitate development of unique potential of every individual child. In this, a respect for all individuals is reflected. A particular emphasis on developing students to be 'responsive to our culture and heritage' stands out. The Principal explained, "I wanted a focus on Indian culture in our school."

The admission policy was based on an entrance test to ensure merit was aimed at maintaining quality in education. In the larger context, the admission policy on merit through entrance test indicated a denial of equality of access to learners to the school in terms of potential of a learner. School wide programs like 'Drop Everything And Read', Higher Order Thinking Skills', 'Life Skill Programs', 'Excellence and Remedial Classes' and 'Creative Writing' were specially designed for learners. The compulsory nature of these programs created equal opportunities for all learners. Equal opportunity for all the learners was also adhered to in the design of the annual concert which ensured participation of all the students.

The recruitment policy for teachers was rigorous for ensuring quality in the intake of teachers. The process of recruitment involved an evaluation of the prospective teacher's competence in the classroom teaching through observation of demonstration lesson by senior teachers and Coordinator. An assessment of the overall personality of the prospective teacher was also made through interview by the Principal and later by the Trust. The process aimed at ascertaining whether the new teacher would 'fit into their school'. Sustained in-house professional development programs for the teacher were organized. The space for these programs was carved out from the school's time table on second and fourth Saturday of each month. These professional development programs catered to all the teachers thereby equal opportunity for professional development of all teachers was created. Recognition of teachers was based on a 'Teacher Plus' program which was based on rating performance of a group of teachers as against that of an individual teacher.

Incentives to teachers and office staff to be committed to the school were offered which emphasized on the performance and merit. The two policies in this regard were: free ship to wards of teachers and office staff based on performance of the teachers and the office staff. The second policy was additional increment in salary and promotion based on the basis of performance of teachers. In both these cases, the performance was evaluated by the principal and management.

A Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was active in its involvement with the school. Parent-teacher meetings were organized class wise on a regular basis. A general body meeting was conducted every year.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the lay out of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners. As informed by the office superintendent on the basis of the school records, the total area of the school premises is 7,434 square meters plus 74,000 square feet and the built up area is 7434 square meters. The playground admeasures 74,000 square feet. There is one basketball court, one volley ball court and one football ground. There is an open stage with the seating capacity of 2,000. One indoor auditorium has the seating capacity of 1200 and another auditorium with the seating capacity of 400.

There are three laboratories for Higher Secondary section: physics, chemistry and biology. There are two computer laboratories with 25 computers in each. Two learners work on a computer simultaneously. There is a well-equipped language laboratory. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records, the library has 8,256 books and 50 journals and magazines. Subject specific rooms with learning resources are developed. These are language room, science room, social studies room and maths room. In addition to these there is art room and music room. The area of a classroom in the Secondary and Higher Secondary section is 695 square feet. The students' strength in the secondary and Higher Secondary section ranges from 36 to 43 per class and in the Higher Secondary section from 18 to 54 per class. The classrooms have adequate benches for all learners and space for the teacher to move in the class. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil ratio in a class is 1: 18 and at the maximum level is 1:54.

As one enters the premise of the school campus the security service personnel regulates the entry of visitors. The school office is located near the entrance to the school building. Inside the building, the corridors opening in the open space provide ventilation and natural light. The classrooms are well lighted and well ventilated. The layout of the school building and location of the various classrooms changes on need basis and additional classrooms are constructed whenever required. The students and the teachers of the school exclaimed with a smile, "We don't know if the location of various rooms will be the same next year too." The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.8.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.8.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is nine years old (2000-2009). In the first year (2000-2001) the school functioned under the leadership of an In-charge Principal. The leadership was entrusted to the present Principal from the year 2001. The present Principal reflected, “The first In-charge Principal did not have full powers and was also told (by the Trust) that she was ‘one among the teachers’. This was not an appropriate decision for developing the school.” The first In-charge Principal was retained in the school as Coordinator. The present Principal has been awarded the ‘Best Teacher Award’ by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

The three cornerstone policy decisions in this school were: (i) the admission policy related to the learner; (ii) the recruitment policy for teachers; and (iii) the policy for performance based incentives to teachers and office staff. These incentives were free ship to wards of teachers and office staff and additional increment in salary and promotion.

The policy for admission was based on entrance examination to ensure intake of quality learners only partially. The first school indirectly served as a reference point for quality intake in terms of giving admission to learners with merit. The stand on the admission policy was diluted a little as the principal in the year 2009-10 relaxed the score on parent’s educational qualification and /or proficiency in English language. A learner’s score in the entrance test was the sole criteria for admission for the learners who had scored well in the entrance test. The admission policy thus did not meet its objective of attracting ‘the best of the learners’. Though the admission policy and fee structure created unequal opportunity for learners the omission of parents’ score diluted this inequality. The response to the situation of not attracting the ‘best of the



learners' was supplementing the learners' quality through sustained efforts in school in the way of various enrichment programs (excellence classes, remedial classes, Higher Order Thinking Skills,). The premise of the enrichment programs stemmed from the vision and mission of the school which emphasized the unique potential of every individual thereby respect for all individual learners.

The enrichment programs reemphasized a sense of responsibility observed in the vision and mission. The Principal articulated it as 'school has to provide for all possible support to a learner'. These enrichment programs were designed for all the learners to raise the performance level of the students in the competitive examination/s. The basis of these programs was equality as these were compulsory for all the learners. The design of these programs also evolved as per the need. Initially these programs focused only on testing. When only testing did not yield the desired raise in the performance of learners, teaching also was included as a part of these programs. Performance of the learners in an examination by an external agency vindicated the implementation of the enrichment programs as the average score of the learners of this school was higher than the national average score.

Another category of the enrichment programs for learners was to provide more exposure to the learners. The programs under this category included a school wide reading program (Drop Every Thing and Read), Creative writing and Life Skills. The compulsory nature of these programs led to an apparent loss of freedom of learners in terms of choices but it created equal opportunity for all learners for an overall development. These programs were linked to the vision of the school-Transform Potentiality into Reality. The design of the Annual Function known as Annual Concert was based on equality. It ensured participation for all students by involving students in various aspects such as singing, dancing and power point presentation. The practice for this was conducted class wise wherein equal time was provided to all. The researcher witnessed the practice session during the period of study.

The foundation for the policies for recruitment of teachers and incentives for teachers was to strengthen the quality of teacher. The imperatives of the teacher/s to partake the benefits of these policies were different from that of the principal and the Trust. Some prospective candidates avoided joining this school as there was 'more work'.

Equality laid the foundation for strengthening the competence of teachers by empowering. The approach chosen was mainly team based but with a leeway for individually paced development. A sustained professional development program spread through the year was organized for all the teachers. To maintain continuity in these efforts a specific day of the month was allotted for it and specific focus was identified, for instance, teaching of languages was a focus in one of the years (2008-2009).

Equality was in focus in the conscious avoidance of 'Best Teacher Award' to avoid emphasis on individual teachers. Instead a 'Teacher Plus' program based on rating teachers' performance in a group was adopted. It was expected that the teachers in a group would collaborate and mentor the members to collectively raise the performance of the group of teachers. It had to be abandoned as the software for ranking developed snag. Along with this, facilitation for development of teachers at individual pace was practiced through the practice of identifying key areas of performance by each teacher. The initiative for professional development of teachers and the team based focus as against an individual teacher was significant in view of the fact that the school was nine years old and was in the process of establishing itself. These programs coupled with attention to personality grooming by the principal enabled the teachers to gain confidence and respect from the teachers of the first school.

The policies and programs of the school were guided by the emphasis on quality and merit of the stakeholders-learners and teachers- as was the case in the first school of Trust. The policy expectations did not fully lead to the translation of its expectations in reality. The response of the principal was to supplement and strengthen the stakeholders-learners and teachers.

The Principal used the freedom of taking initiatives to inculcate a sense of responsibility in learners. She initiated the practice of '*Durry Shiksha* (Carpet Punishment)' in which the defaulting learners were not permitted to attend the regular classes. Instead they were made to sit on the *durry* (carpet) to complete their work. The researcher witnessed one *Durry Shiksha* during the study.

*A durry was spread near the entrance of the school building adjoining the school's office and close to the principal's office. Three students of*

*standard X were sitting on it with their bags. The students kept their head bent. They were writing in their notebooks. The teachers passing by would glance at them and proceed. One of the teachers teaching these students told the researcher, "They have been absent for so many days and have not done their homework. They don't take homework seriously. Now they will complete the work here."*

Another initiative for fostering a sense of responsibility among learners was narrated by the Principal, "Once there was cheating in examination. A student had brought small chits. I told the teachers not to disturb the child. Let him complete the paper. After this call parents and inform them. Then I told the student who had cheated to analyze the chapter which was in course and to teach it to the class. I and the subject teacher evaluated the teaching. That is the marks obtained by the student in exam in that subject. The reaction of the students to cheating now is, '*Arey (cheat) mat karnaa padhaanaa padegaa*'. (Do not cheat, or else you will have to teach.). "

The Principal provided direction for the functioning of the PTA in the initial period to develop it as a responsible stakeholder of the school. The Principal informed, "In the first few years the questions raised by the parents would concern issues like the food served in lunch period or about some teaching learning activities conducted. I explained to the PTA that such issues, though of importance, were more appropriate for interactions with the Coordinators or the concerned class teacher/s. The PTA needed to concern itself with broader issues about the long term development of the school."

Being a new school, mentoring was integral to the functioning of school. The Principal assumed the responsibility of mentoring the group of teachers who joined the school in the first year of school. A teacher who was one of the teachers of this group recalled, "We were seven talented teachers. But we ran in seven different directions. The Principal reined us and gave us a direction." The Principal's sense of responsibility was distributed subsequently through the creation of organizational positions for mentors. Also in creating these organizational positions, the Principal exercised her freedom.

### 5.8.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event 1      Teaching Learning Process in a classroom**

*It was standard VIII C. The subject was English. The topic for discussion was vocabulary related to job and interview.*

*There were two teachers in the class: the regular English teacher (T1) and the language laboratory teacher (T2). A worksheet on vocabulary was distributed to the students.*

*The regular English teacher instructed the students, "Read the worksheet carefully. Complete the worksheet."*

*The students began to do the assigned task. After approximately ten minutes, the language laboratory teacher said, "Now let us check the answers." The process of checking the answer continued. The following interaction occurred after five statements were checked.*

*T2- The next question. (She reads the next question which is as follows:*

*There are usually only two---- for president of the United States.*

*There were many qualified----- for the position.*

*There were thirty three---- who came for the interview.*

*T1-What is the answer?*

*S1- Representatives*

*S2- Candidates*

*T1- Candidates is correct.*

*The student who had answered representative asked eagerly, "Madam, representatives???"*

*Just then another student (S3) answered, "Contestants"*

*Both the teachers were silent for a minute. Then they consulted each other. What they discussed could not be heard.*

*Turning towards the students the language laboratory teacher announced in a calm voice, "We will get back to you with the correct answer."*

*Student 1 and 3 indicated satisfaction at the teacher's answer.*

*The English teacher then went near the student who gave the answer as 'representative'. S1 said, "Why representatives doesn't fit?" Two more students (S4 and S5) also joined the discussion, "Why is representative wrong?"*

*The English teacher explained, "See representative is something like your class has a representative."*

*Just then the language laboratory teacher declared, "We will give you three more sentences in which the word representative fits. So you will understand."*

*Just then the bell rang. The period was over. The students broke into an animated discussion among themselves.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. The team of two teachers presented collaboration among the teachers in which each one of them played a supportive role. Both of them consulted each other to confirm the correct answer. They thereby demonstrated respect for the colleague's expertise. The consultation among the teachers also displayed a sense of responsibility as they avoided giving an incorrect explanation.

The learners exercised their freedom to know why a particular answer was not correct ('*why representative is doesn't fit?*'). The sense of responsibility of teachers was observed when each one of them gave a supportive reason-while one of them further clarified the meaning of the word 'representative' by associating the word with a class representative. The other teacher strengthened this by stating that more examples would be given in the next class to clarify the appropriateness of the word 'representative'.

It could be observed that the learners' freedom to seek more clarification on the appropriateness of the word 'representative' was upheld by the team of teachers through their response.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The students were relaxed. They appeared eager to solve the worksheet. They exhibited confidence in approaching the teacher to seek clarification. A striking feature of this event was a team of teachers teaching in this class. Though there were two teachers in the class, none of them tried to dominate the class. This class was for 'excellence' wherein special emphasis on enriching the vocabulary of the students was made. This class demonstrates the initiative of the school to provide supplementary programs to the students.

### ***Event 2 Teaching Learning Process in an Enrichment Program of the School***

*It was standard IX A. The subject was Life skill which was transacted in all classes from I to XII in the last period on every Thursday. The class teachers are in charge of this period.*

*T- In the last class we discussed about decision making skill. Today we shall discuss about discipline. I have been telling you so many things. Now you will tell me your views. How is discipline to be maintained in class, school and any premise of school?*

*In which areas of school are you supposed to maintain silence?*

*T- Tell me you are 38 so we can come up with 38 ways of (maintaining) discipline. I am only one.*

*S3- In my previous school, there was a system of chart in which good behaviour and bad behaviour is written against each name.*

*T- Beta (Son) there is a discipline card in this school. Many of you don't give importance to it. Half of you don't carry it to school. How many of you have brought the discipline card?*

*(All do not raise hand but more than half the students raise their hand.)*

*T- See. Why do you need somebody to monitor you? It is O K for smaller classes but now what to do? Why the thinking is*

*missing- that we cannot think of what is good for us. This is the difference between human beings and animals.*

*S4- Madam, a secret monitor should be made so that others don't know and teacher knows.*

*T- Nice idea but again monitoring comes. You don't have secret monitor but still I come to know who is doing what. Now next year you will be in X Board (so) you need self discipline. If you are self disciplined then there will be no stress. It should be from within. Now you are 14/15 years of age. We have to think of becoming a better person. You yourself will feel happy from within. You may feel happy for a minute (if you are not caught by the teacher) but later you may know that you did not do right. You need to listen to your conscience. The person benefiting from your good behaviour is you yourself.*

*The bell rang. The period got over. The students were listening with rapt attention. Gradually they started packing their bags. The teacher also left the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning. The teacher set the tone of the discussion in the classroom based on freedom (*"I have been telling so many things, now you will tell me your views."*) The learners exercised their freedom fearlessly by giving their opinions. The learner's freedom to express their ideas on discipline was safe guarded as these were heard by the teacher. Overall, the two stakeholders, learners and teacher, were engaged in a collaborative effort to arrive at the commonly acceptable notion of discipline. Through this collaboration a partnership between the teacher and the students was developed based on equality and respect for each other. By this process the learners' participation in processes of class as well as of school was ensured. The teacher did impose her ideas thereby limiting the freedom of students. She negated the suggestion given for appointing a 'monitor'. The intention of teacher in negating the suggestion was guided by her sense of responsibility to direct the students' attention to self-discipline.

### *Analytic view of event*

This was the last period for the day. The teacher appeared tired but her involvement in the discussion did not reflect any tiredness. The students were attentive and appeared reflective. They appeared interested in the discussion.

Introduction of Life Skill as a subject in the school was an initiative illustrative of the freedom that the principal exercised in introducing various programs in the school. It is pertinent to place this initiative in the context that the Principal had identified a focus on self-discipline as a key feature of this school.

### **Event 3      Discussion between the Principal and the Trustee**

*This telephonic conversation between the Principal and the Trustee occurred in the Principal's office. The Coordinator of the school was also present. The Principal had called parents of students failing in prelims and practice examination of X and XII. The Hall Ticket was withheld till such time that the learners showed improvement in the practice examination. One such learner was refused the Hall Ticket. The parent left the Principal's office in anger. After approximately ten minutes there was a phone call by a Trustee of the school. The Principal appeared to have anticipated the call. She spoke in composed tone, "I am fine sir thank you. Yes, the parent was told that if the student does well in the practice exam then he will be given the Hall Ticket. The students have been informed about it from time to time. The parents have been called for the meeting but they don't pay attention. What should I do with such students? At this rate they are not going to pass. The Gujarat government has also given the permission that those students who have passed XI with Science can appear for XII Commerce. I have told the parents that give this child Commerce stream but they want their child to study Science. The child is not able to manage it. But the parents don't think about it. It is better that the students remain absent and appear for the supplementary exam in July. With these types of scores the child will certainly fail. With that what is the child going to do?"*

*The Principal then smiled and looked at the Coordinator who was present in her office,, "That parent who had given the threat of approaching the DEO has now gone to the Trustee. Now let us see what else he will do?"*



### *Analysis of event*

This event occurred in the Principal's office which is a significant site from the perspective of management of school. In this event the freedom of three stakeholders- the principal, the learners and parents was contested. The concern was performance of the learner in the Board Examination. This was interpreted by the three stakeholders in their own contexts. The parent intended his ward to exercise the freedom to attempt the examination. The learner's freedom of making a choice between Science stream and Commerce stream was not safeguarded by the parent as could be inferred from the Principal's statement to the Trustee, "I have told the parents that give this child Commerce stream but they want their child to study Science." Here again the freedom of learner and also of parent to allow him/her to attempt to study a particular course is suggested.

The Principal indicated that the parent did not demonstrate the desired sense of responsibility for the ward in terms of preparation. The Principal's intention was that the learner should not fail in the examination as poor performance would not enable the learner to seek admission to the desired course of higher education.

The Principal retained her freedom from the Trustee. The Principal's perspective on the decision about permitting the learner to appear in the examination was premised on her interpretation of sense of responsibility towards the learner. On the basis of the Principal's response that the parent had been informed of the ward's progress and the other alternatives, the Trustee appeared to have confirmed if the Principal had fulfilled her responsibility towards the learner.

### *Analytic view of event*

The Principal was very alert as she talked to the Trustee on telephone. Sometimes her voice was raised. The Principal's response in terms of the satisfied smile at the end of the telephonic conversation indicated the confidence that she had convinced the Trustee and her freedom was intact. The Principal's freedom was based on the trust she had won on the basis of her proven performance in the first school of the Trust and in this school.

#### **Event 4    Inter house competition on recitation of poems in Hindi titled Kavi Sammelan**

*The school followed 'House System' in which all the students were divided into the four 'Houses'. The competitions were organized between the four "Houses". Each 'House' was represented by a contestant.*

*It was an Inter- house competition for recitation of poems in Hindi for standard VII to IX in the auditorium. Four students from standard VII to IX from the four Houses were the participants. The participant students were seated on the stage. It was a 'sit down' arrangement for the participant poets. A banner 'Kavi Sammelan' was put up on the stage. There were four potted plants placed on the stage. The audiences, comprising the other students of the four classes, were seated on the chairs. Two teachers were seated among the students. One of the teachers was taking round to monitor the students. Gradually the noise level of the students began to rise. A table with white table cloth was kept in front just near the stage for the judges. The judges were two teachers from the same school.*

*The teacher in charge of this activity took mike and began to count in descending order: 15, 14, 13, 12.....1. Gradually the noise level lowered. A student was in charge of the announcements to be made. He began the announcements, "I welcome Neelam madam and Naina madam who are the judges for today's competition. Now we begin with the Kavi Sammelan. I call upon the first contestant."*

*The first contestant came to the mike. As he began to recite the poem, his voice could not be heard. The music teacher got up and adjusted the mike so that his voice could be heard clearly. After the recitation was over the audience clapped. All the students did not clap. The announcer then called for the next contestant. The music teacher re- arranged the mike stand in such a way that the contestant was visible to the audience.*

*In the audience, one student was reading a story book. Another student was writing in a notebook. The other students would look up to see what is happening on the stage and talk among themselves. Two P T teachers entered the auditorium. They took a view of what is happening. Two teachers walked up and down and would glance at the students with the intention of checking what they were doing and whether they were listening*

to the recitation of poems or not. The announcer would announce the name of the contestant; the contestant would come to the mike and recite the poem. The audience would clap sometimes and would not clap sometimes.

One of the contestants was to recite the poem titled, 'KOOT PRASHNA' by Surendra Pal. She began the recitation. After reciting four lines, she paused, she closed her eyes, bowed her head. Then she covered her eyes with palm of her hands and shook her head. After one minute, one of the judges said, "Vaibhavi, cool down. Vaibhavi read from the paper, it is all right." The student referred a paper and began with the recitation. After a few lines, she appeared confident and later on recited the rest of the poem without referring the paper.

After this the other contestants were called to recite the poems. One of the teachers sent a boy to stand near the entrance. After some time another boy joined him. At the end of the program there were eight boys standing near the entrance. They would look down, sometimes they would look up to see the stage. Their faces showed expression of feeling ashamed sometimes. But whenever any of the contestants recited humorous lines, they would also laugh.

The announcer announced that the competition had ended and requested the judges to declare the result. The music teacher asked the boys standing near the entrance to stand on the stage. He spoke on the mike, "These are some new poets. They are going to recite poems composed by them. The title of the poems would be declared by them only." The boys sheepishly climbed on the stage. One or two boys would come back and the teacher would push the boy to the stage. All the boys stood on the stage. They looked down. The teachers looked at their face and gestured them to recite a poem. After one minute, the judges got up to declare the result. The in charge teacher asked the boys to move to the back side of the stage. The judge took the mike, "The Kavi Sammelan was very nice. Most of the students selected poems of the contemporary poets. Most of the poems were humorous. But we need to remember that when a humorous poem is recited then there must be a smile on your face. Instead of smile there was tension seen on the face. And the students sitting on this side, what is the problem in clapping? You need a lot of courage to stand on the stage. Also, in a Kavi Sammelan, the poets must also listen to the poems of other poets. You were all busy revising your poems."

*The judge then demonstrated recitation of a humorous poem herself. After this the next judge declared the result. The winners stood up. All students clapped. The bell rang. The teacher in charge asked all students to be seated at their place. She then asked everyone to close their eyes, join the hands and say the prayer. After the prayer the doors at the two entrances were opened. The students left the auditorium.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event in which more students of more than one class were present occurred in the school's auditorium. It was a co curricular activity.

In the collective gathering the sense of responsibility demonstrated by the student appeared mixed. Though overall there was no disturbance, very attentive listening to the recitation of poems was not observed. In this some students exercised their freedom of reading a book or writing in notebook. The teacher also exercised her freedom in allowing these acts as long as the others were not disturbed.

The teacher demonstrated a sense of responsibility by adjusting and readjusting the mike so that the student could perform well. A sense of responsibility was manifested in the different ways of maintaining discipline: the teacher counted numbers in descending order to seek attention to the program, the truant students were asked to recite poems and teachers walked up and down the auditorium to keep a watch on the students. One teacher exercised freedom for corrective measure for indiscipline by asking the truant students to recite a poem.

The teacher who was the judge demonstrated respect for the student who had forgotten the some lines of the poem she was supposed to recite. Though the aim was competition, the teacher who acted as the judges did not allow the spirit of competition to create an overpowering influence on the contestant. The teacher who was the judge comforted the student and guided her (*Vaibhavi, cool down. Vaibhavi read from the paper, it is all right.*).

The teachers who were the judges displayed sense of responsibility by providing guidance in general about recitation of poems and participation in a 'Kavisammelan'.

### *Analytic view of event*

The competition was scheduled on the last two periods of the day. The arrangements for the competition were meticulous as it created the appropriate background for the recitation of poems. The students were largely not much interested in listening to the poems being recited though whenever there was an effective voice modulation by the participating student, they would listen to it attentively. Some students found their own ways (reading book, writing in notebook) of keeping themselves engaged. The teachers did remind these students to listen to the recitation of the poems, they also ignored these acts so long as the students did not disturb the others.

The different approaches that the teachers employed to maintain discipline in the auditorium were in line with the general focus of the school on developing self discipline. In aligning their approach to the accepted approach of the school the teachers demonstrated a sense of responsibility.

### **5.8.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### **Learners**

The learners experienced freedom in the teaching learning process as opportunities were deliberately created for their participation. Peer evaluation of a story written by the students illustrates the freedom enjoyed by them.

*The students had written a story in small groups. Each group was asked to present the story. The other groups were given the task of evaluating the story presented. One student from a group read the story aloud. The teacher asked the students, "Any comments?"*

*The students waited for a minute.*

*One student (S1) said, "The end is abrupt."*

*Another student (S2) said, "You told that he is ambassador of India representing France. How can it be?"*

*A student of the group which had developed the story (S3) replied immediately, "It is possible."*

*S2 defended his objection, "If he is an ambassador of India then how can he represent France?"*

*The teacher intervened, "O K we will settle this later. Any other point?"*

*S5 said in a tone of complaint, "Madam this is a story taken from the Discovery Channel."*

*All the students of the group which wrote the story said in a chorus, "NOOOO. We made it ourselves."*

*The teacher raised her voice, "OK I will check this part. Now we proceed to the other group."*

In this interaction, the teacher created opportunities for learners to express their opinion. The other learners and the teacher facilitated this freedom by listening. The learners perceived freedom for them beyond the teaching learning process. They made use of the 'Suggestion Box' placed for students to express their views on any aspect of the school. The Coordinator (Activities) said in a dismissive tone, "Most of the suggestions are like that only. Nothing to be taken seriously. Yes, whenever there is a serious matter, we do take note." Freedom of learners was handled with a perspective to develop a sense of responsibility in them. The Coordinator (Activities) narrated an incident:

*Students of standard XI gave a letter- a lamba letter(long letter)-complaining about menu (food items for the lunch). They felt that we were serving only rice most of the time. Even the idlis were considered as rice by them. We told them, 'You may decide the menu.' They said, 'O K we will decide the menu.' We said, 'Very fine. These constraints are to be followed when the menu is to be made. The food is to be prepared for 2500 students. The food for pre primary students is not to be spicy. The food for primary section is to be less spicy. Food for secondary section is to be ok.'*

*Then the students came up with a menu which was very similar to our menu."*

The learners experienced an acknowledgement of their talent in the school even after they completed their schooling. A former student who had passed out from school in

2007-2008 collaborated with three teachers for directing students for compeering in the Annual Day Function. The researcher witnessed this event.

*Four students of standard XI who were the sutradhar (compere) for the programme. There were three teachers who were in charge of this group.*

*The four students perform. All the three teachers and the ex student observes them.*

*Ex student- Madam, they must learn their part. Without that they can't get the expression.*

*T1 and T2- Yes. (Both look at the four students.)*

*Four students- We are learning.*

*S1- I am trying to get the pronunciation right.*

*Ex student- The entry is important because 'follow light' will follow you.*

*S1- Then how will I exit?*

*Ex student- Exit is simple.*

*T1- Because by the time the 'follow light' will be on the other person.*

*Ex student- You should practice on stage. It gives a feel. See the best time is after five in the evening. By that time other groups have left for home so you can practice.*

*T1- Yes that is important.*

*Ex student- See another time is morning seven, seven to eight the stage is available.*

*T1- So we will come tomorrow.*

*S2- See I won the bet.*

*T1- If you are appreciated it is your reward.*

*Ex student- Today when I come to school, I am recognized. That is my award. Now only six days are left. Practice, work hard and get involved. You will enjoy. You have to be yourself on the stage—yourself.*

*(All the four students look attentively.)*

*First thing, give time, get ready with script.*

*(The student, once again, practice their dialogues”*

The collaboration between the teachers and former student indicated a respect for the talent of students, here the former student.

Learners experienced equality as support to succeed in the form of remedial classes was provided to all the students and was accepted by them. This interaction illustrates this point.

*At the end of the class, the teacher asked without any tone of ridicule, “Now who all find word forms difficult? One is Kashyap, another..... ? She observed all the students.*

*The students answered in a chorus, “ Rishabh.”*

*Rishabh looked at the teacher unhesitatingly and nodded his head.*

*The teacher told him in the same tone, “OK we will discuss it in the remedial class.”*

*The other students continued to do their work.*

The Coordinator said, “The general attitude towards the remedial classes is positive. When these classes are held after the school hours it is disliked.”

### **Teachers**

The teachers have experienced freedom in school only after three years from the school’s establishment. The principal said, “In the first three years I kept the school under control.” In its task of continuing the same culture and philosophy of the first school, the teachers were duplicating the work that was done in the first school of the Trust. It was explained by a teacher who was with the school from the first year, “We would get the notebooks of the students (of the first school) so that the same exercise could be given to the students in our school. We had to follow the same planning.” In this exercise, the teachers also felt a loss of respect (‘We were looked down upon’). Relatively, the teachers experience freedom but it is bound by a fear of the Principal. The Coordinator shared, “One of the teachers rushed to me saying that she had not taken the topic she was to take in ‘excellence class’ but completed the topic left unfinished as she was on leave. What would she (researcher) think about me? I told



her that she can decide what (topic) to take, it is O K.” Another teacher gave her opinion, “The Principal wants to know what we would be doing, she is right, she is answerable to parents.” In this case the freedom of teachers gets bound by the sense of responsibility of Principal. New teachers feel the freedom restricted as they have to follow the common lesson plans prepared collaboratively by teachers. In this the experienced teachers are able to find a leeway (‘of course I change examples depending upon what is happening’). The fear and discomfort of the teachers is handled in a responsible way. The following conversation which occurred between the Co-ordinator and a new teacher near the Co-ordinator’s office demonstrates it.

*The school followed the system of discussion on key performance area as a part of the performance appraisal of teachers. It was conducted by the Co-ordinator (Academic) at the first level. One of the teachers had missed the appointment with the Co-ordinator for this.*

*Co-ordinator spoke in a tone of concern, “Why didn’t you come for discussion of key performance area?”*

*The teacher was silent for a while. She appeared a little tense. After fidgeting she said, “Actually I have misplaced it. I can’t find it.”*

*The Co-ordinator smiled with assurance, “But at least you must tell me and at least come to meet me.”*

*The teacher looked at her and said, “OK.” She still looked a little unsure.*

*Co-ordinator continued in the tone of concern, “See you come whether you have the (form of) key performance area with you or not. When will you come? Tomorrow (at) eight?”*

*The teacher said in a low tone, “Yes”*

*Co-ordinator once again smiled, “I shall wait for you.”*

The Co-ordinator told the researcher reflectively with a smile of understanding, “*Dekho darte hain* (See they are scared), at least (they should) inform. But I can understand.”

### ***Principal***

The Principal seized freedom for herself in developing the school. The freedom was envisaged as, ‘moving away from the shadows of the first school of the Trust’. Her

stand on the freedom was vindicated when the Trustee said, “Good that we removed you from the shadows of the ‘first school’ ”. The freedom that the Principal obtained was based on the familiarity that she has with the Trust for approximately twenty five years, her proven performance in the first school of the Trust and the fact that she had been mentored by the founder Trustee. The dynamics of freedom between the principal and the Trustee were based on faith which was reaffirmed through clarifications.

The principal interpreted a sense of responsibility as empowering the teachers through professional development. She also interpreted it as inculcating a high sense of self-discipline among the students.

#### **5.8.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

Freedom in this school was observed as establishing an identity of its own. This was expressed as ‘moving away from the shadow of the first school’ and ‘deciding a direction for the school’. The path to this broader freedom restricted the freedom of the teachers as ‘they needed to be prepared for it.’ Freedom was manifest as freedom of expression. A formal structure for expression of freedom in the form of a suggestion box existed. Opportunities for freedom of expression were created in the teaching-learning situations for learners and in formal meetings of teachers and the Coordinators. The students raised questions and sought clarification of doubts. However, with respect to the teachers, a general feeling that ‘Principal knows

whatever happens in any corner of the school' was observed as 'monitoring' and sometimes as restriction on general freedom of expression. It was also a tool to inculcate a sense of responsibility. A perception that freedom is curtailed was subtly felt as the teachers were required to execute the common lesson plan for all sections of a particular standard. However, experience and familiarity with the school practices offered a leeway to the teachers to exercise freedom within the restrictions of a collective endeavour.

### ***Respect***

Respect was manifest as acknowledgement of expertise. The Principal was respected as she was very 'innovative' and had 'lots of ideas'. A former student was involved in the school function on account of his 'talent'. He explained it as 'recognition' which was equivalent to 'award' for him.

Respect was seen as acceptance and recognition. A lack of acceptance and recognition as teachers in the first few years of the school was perceived as 'we were looked down upon'. It meant a loss of identity for them. Professional development which led to gain in competence led to respect which was stated as 'teachers of this school'. This respect led to restoration of one's identity.

Acknowledgement of fatigue and discomfort of the students was also observed as respect for human limitations. It manifest as acknowledgement of the acts of students - 'thank you for wearing blazers in this hot weather'. Similarly after a rigorous practice of a dance for the Annual Function the teacher said, "Rest now you must be tired."

### ***Equality***

The genesis of equality was recognition of uniqueness of each individual and a recognition of potentiality in all individuals. An overall study of the policies and programs of the school revealed that the foci of these are to provide an equal opportunity for development to the learners and the teachers. The admission policy restricted the entry of all types of learners to school but after gaining the entry, the opportunities for further learning were equal for all. With respect to teachers, the sustained professional development programs, the team versus the individual effort at improvement and the conscious avoidance of 'Best Teacher Award' indicated an

emphasis on teams, groups and learning for all teachers. Another facet of equality was participation of all students instead of a few. It was described as ‘hundred percent participation’.

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

Sense of responsibility was a conscious focus on self discipline of students. It was seen as a contrast to the imbalance between freedom and a sense of responsibility among the students in the first school of the Trust. A sense of responsibility was manifest as ‘*tod fod nahi hoti hai* (not being destructive of the school property)’. It was facilitating student to ‘focus on studying’. ‘Following rules, regulation and traditions of school’ was also a facet of sense of responsibility. It was ‘performing one’s task well’ and ‘being answerable for one’s actions.’

Providing direction to stakeholder in the interest of school was a sense of responsibility. It assumed importance as the school was newly established. Sense of responsibility was also ‘giving corrective measures’ in contrast to ‘punishments’. A larger sense of responsibility was observed in the enrichment/supplementary programs that the school designed for facilitating students’ learning.

## **5.8.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### ***Identification of the direction for developing school***

In the context of the school, finding direction for developing the school was a vital issue as it faced the challenge of continuing the tradition of the Trust/the first school of the Trust as well as carve a distinct identity for itself. The premise for identification of the direction was ensuring freedom for itself. This process demanded a strong leadership which in this school was found in the Principal. The Principal’s familiarity with the Trust and the faith of the Trust in the Principal’s commitment facilitated the process of identifying the direction for the school. In ensuring freedom for the school, the Principal took decision to centralize management initially and then gradually decentralize it.

### ***Supplementary Enrichment Programs for All***

The supplementary enrichment programs were developed for all learners and all teachers. It was in response to the practical reality with respect to learners and teachers. When the policy of admission did not enable the school to get meritorious students then the school made efforts to support them through school based supplementary enrichment programs. The fact of teachers being inexperienced and new to the culture and philosophy of the Trust necessitated the supplementary enrichment program for the professional development of all the teachers. In the design of the supplementary enrichment program for teachers a team based approach as against an individual oriented approach was adopted.

## **5.8.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

### ***Confidence in the school***

Within a short period of just a decade (2000-2009), the school is gradually marching ahead towards the objective with which it was established. The confidence of the stakeholders: learners and parents that it is an alternative to the first school of the Trust is gradually increasing. The increase in the students' strength within the last five years illustrates this. The principal explained that the parents now have faith in the school. A parent of a student of standard XII (2008-9) said, "The school takes care. They do everything properly. *Agar kuch poochana ho to bataate bhi hain* (If we have some thing to ask, they tell).

### ***Learners***

The attribute of learners as self-disciplined is qualified by the Principal. She said proudly, "At least they (students) are better than the students of the first school. I have not come across incidents of indiscipline, breaking of fans and tube lights. Yes there was one student whom we could not help to improve, I feel sad about it. He had come from another school."

### *Teachers*

The teachers describe themselves as 'confident' and 'competent'. A teacher with the school from the first year of its establishment described the group of teachers in the first year, "We were seven teachers, all of us were talented, but we would run in seven different directions. The principal gave us direction." Today we are respected as teachers of this school.

The principal enjoyed the confidence of the Trustees. She explained it as, "Whatever I propose they approve. I give both positive and negative feedback to the Trustees. I never take small problems to the executive committee of the Trust.

### **5.8.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of freedom and sense of responsibility to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through three processes: (i) identification of the direction for developing school; (ii) Supplementary enrichment programs for all. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school which is observed as school takes care; (ii) learners of this school are described as self-disciplined in comparison to students of the first school and not engaged in destructive activities; (iii) teachers are observed as competent and confident. They are respected as teachers of this school.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## **5.9: CASE: 9**

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### **5.9.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY**

Brushing aside the formal letter of permission, the Principal said, “Oh that is not required”. A keen interest in the researcher’s study of this school was displayed by the Principal (“When will you begin the study of my school?”, said the Principal). He had been introduced to the researcher by the Principal of the Gujarati medium unit. Between this introduction to the Principal and the time when the process of data collection began, this school saw a change in the leadership. The Principal introduced the researcher to the then Supervisor who was to assume the office of Principal. This Supervisor who later became the Principal during the period of study coordinated the process of data collection. The entry of researcher into this school was very smooth.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. One event, which was scheduled beyond the working hours of the school, was also observed. Various events observed were teaching learning process in classroom, playground, a general meeting of the Trustee, Principal and the teachers before the re opening of the school after the summer vacation, students and teachers availing the facility of the canteen, the transition between the morning shift of Gujarati medium and afternoon shift of this school, discussion between the Principal, Supervisor and Teacher about Sports Day preparation and a class conducted in the Maths laboratory. The researcher also listened to various interactions among the learners on the corridor and among the teachers in the staffroom. The principal informants were the present Principal, present and former teachers and present and former students. The present Principal associated with the school for twenty five years shared her experiences. One former teacher who was associated for twenty six years in this school shared her perspective very reflectively. The Supervisor of the Pre-primary section who was with the school for twenty five years was recommended by the present Principal. One former student who had studied in the school for four years and later was associated with as a teacher-educator

was interviewed. One former student who had visited the school for admission of his daughter in the school also shared his perspective.

### **5.9.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

The school was established in the 1980. The school is located in the premise of the first school managed by the Trust. After the first school established by the Trust had stabilized, the intention of the Trust was to provide opportunity to the children of the unprivileged background in general and Alavi Community in particular to education in English medium. Alavi community is a small section of Muslim community. Boys of this community are not highly educated. This intention, as explained by the present Supervisor of the Pre-primary section of the school, was to open a different world of opportunity for these children.

The motive for the establishment of the school, the location of the school and the legacy of the first school managed by the Trust provided an overarching framework for the nurture of the Academic Culture in this school. The only difference between this school and the first school was the medium of instruction.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department. It is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is Gujarati. The admission policy is guided by the Education Department. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees, 40 per month for standard IX, Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The school also has some sections of standard XI which are non-granted by the Education Department of State. The fee charged for this section is Rupees 250 per month. The implication of a non-granted section is that the Education Department permits the school to run the section but the salary of the appointed for this section is not borne by the Education Department of State. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary is ensured for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State thereby the control of the school authority (Principal) is relatively lesser. The affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and



Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision of the school as stated in the school diary was: 'The hour of dawn, every day at our ...school is one of the most happy and fulfilling scenes. Hundred of boys and girls in colourful uniforms, their faces bright and radiating confidence and running towards their class rooms is an awesome sight. Many of these children will be eminent Judge, Doctors, Sportspersons, Computer specialists, Teachers, Engineers and Architects in days to come. The seeds for outstanding performance were sown way back when our school made a humble beginning 56 years ago and today many .... are well placed professionals. What we have is not school children, we have a whole lot of future in our hands. We have a promise to keep- to ensure that the future of these promising buds is nurtured and helped to blossom. This promise is the spirit of our mission which runs like a perennial mountain stream.'

The mission of the school is stated as: 'We aspire to lift the all round standards from a conventional institution to a centre which pursues excellence globally. We shall achieve this by providing excellent teaching strategies, benchmarking with the best institutions in the country and abroad, incorporating the best practices and at the same time keeping in focus our cultural, ethical, social and human values in the forefront. We strive to be an institution that nurtures the body, mind and soul by unlocking creativity, widening, the intellectual horizon and host of extra-curricular activities. A place which builds a healthy winning attitude and multi skills once again with focus on empathy, tolerance and love for fellow beings.

The learning system will be fine-tuned to meet the challenges of the future, involving information technology and other modern tools of the communication era. Besides academic excellence we shall inculcate as a way of life healthy habits like life skills, leadership qualities, discipline and a sense of commitment as that tomorrow these ... can this country a better place to live. This will always remain a kaizen exercise. A journey of never ending continuous improvement. Environment protection is priority

for us, so is our responsibility towards the community in which we live, work and learn.

We value the dedication and commitment of both the teaching and non teaching staff for their contribution in our rapid progress.

We aim to achieve our mission with the active participation of Parents-Teachers-Students- the State- the Management and the Community.'

Under the objective of school at first the school statement is presented as : '... school is an institution where secularism is manifested in egalitarian means of educational excellence. In a pluralistic society, the primary onus of an educational institution is to ensure propagation and understanding of secularism in children.

Objectives of social equality and development through educational empowerment are deeply rooted in our philosophy. Embedded in our philosophy are values of honesty, and integrity, quality of life, commitment and belief in what we do, service, humility, sharing, teamwork and tolerance. These are the forces that drive us in our endeavour to provide value based education that facilitates all round development and broadening the minds of our children.

School objective is to INSPIRE

Instill secular attitude and behaviour

Nurture faith through prayers and mediation

Strive for academic excellence

Provide a wholesome and sage environment

Integrate academic and interrelated curricula

Reach for the goal of unity in diversity

Enforce discipline.

The school shares the same vision, mission and objectives as its first school. The focus is on developing learners for their future roles. A world wide view encompassing global standards is observed. The key points emerging from the vision,

mission, objectives is significance of all stakeholders, community's role, equality, secularism which become the anchors for the Academic Culture in school.

It being a grant-in-aid school, the school does not have much freedom in framing policies regarding admission of students, fee structure, recruitment and remuneration of teachers. Beyond these government directed policies, the school has created a space for itself by introducing the policy of free education to wards of teachers and free ship/concession in fee to those learners who have lost the primary bread winner in their family. The policy of medical insurance for the students before the Education Department of State launched it for Secondary section was also an initiative of the school. The Trust continued the policy by extending it to the Primary section.

Major programs of the school were the Marshal System in which student leaders were entrusted the responsibility of maintaining discipline in school. A former teacher who was with the school for twenty four years described this program as a unique program of the school initiated for inculcation of self discipline. Professional development of teachers was attended to especially in view of the technology gadgets and equipments provided in the school by various agencies (JIL, Smart Class, NIIT for Maths Laboratory). A program titled 'Edusport' was soon to be launched which was a curriculum based on sports. The present Principal explained that it focused on mental and physical health and the course would be designed as per the child's needs. Before the initiative of Eco Club by the Education Department of State, the first Principal introduced 'Nature Club' in 1988-89. 'Best Teacher Award' and Thanks giving ceremony were organized in appreciation of teachers' contribution to school.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners.

As informed by the Principal and the Clerk in the Office on the basis of school records, the total area of the school premises is 6530 square meters and the built up area is 6138 square meters. There is a playground admeasuring 70,000 square feet. A hall with the seating capacity of 600 is available. The school owns equipments for light and sound system for putting up stage on the playground for annual functions. A conference room is specially developed for meetings. Facility of a canteen was initiated in the year of this study. The school has clearly demarcated section for Pre-

primary section. The Primary, Secondary and Higher sections are in the same building.

There are three separate laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. There is one general science laboratory for Secondary section. Two subject specific laboratories, a well developed language laboratory and a maths laboratory are highlight of the infrastructure/learning facilities made available to the students. The maths laboratory has been developed by NIIT. There are four computer laboratories with twenty computers in each laboratory. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records there are 7,200 books and 10 magazines. In addition to the classrooms, there are three music rooms each admeasuring 500 square feet, one meditation room, one prayer room, one counseling room and one medical room. The area of a classroom is 47 square meters. The students' strength in Secondary section ranges from 51 to 69 and in Higher Secondary section from 75 to 97. The classrooms have adequate benches. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil-ratio is 1: 51 and at the maximum level 1: 97. The classrooms have adequate benches, are well lighted and well ventilated. The classrooms open on the corridor which faces the open space. Each classroom has interactive board with internet facility. This infrastructure and learning resources are shared with the Gujarati medium section managed by the same Trust which runs in the morning shift.

As one enters the premise of the school, the security personnel regulates the entry. One observes the students of the Gujarati medium school managed by the same school leaving the school premises as the students for this school enter. One gets a view of the school building from the gate. On the right side is a old building which is not in use. On the other side is the playground. There is a large hut like structure and a small garden. The footpath to the school is well laid. The parking of teachers' and students' vehicles is near and around the old building. The school is located on a busy road with traffic of heavy vehicles. The researcher witnessed the P T teacher, some gents teacher and the security personnel regulate the traffic when a group of students were to move out of the school. On the back side of the school building is a cemetery. Among the students and teachers, the presence of some lady teachers who wore *burqa*, girl students who covered their head with scarf, boy students who wore skull cap and the class IV staff who wear skull cap immediately strikes attention.

The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.9.3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.9.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is twenty nine years old (1980-2009). It has been administered by the dynamic leadership of the third Principal of the Gujarati Medium Unit till the school functioned as Primary school. With the opening of the Secondary section, the first Principal provided leadership till 2002. The first Principal benefited by his close association and familiarity with him as a close relative and as a teacher under him. He was succeeded by a teacher for two years (2002-2004) and subsequently by an external candidate as a principal (2004-2008). The school faced transition of leadership during the field work when a teacher assumed charge as a Principal.

A key feature of the policies and programs of this school was that these were identical to those of the first school of the Trust. The policies and programs addressed the progressive agenda set by the Trust as well as the closer understanding of the stakeholders and their unprivileged background. The policy of financial aid to the learners from the family in which the primary earning member was deceased was tuned to the mission of education of children from humble background. Policies to provide aid to teachers in the form of free education to the teachers' wards with the minimum service of three years and financial help in case of severe illness aided in better utilization of human resource.

Recognition of the teachers' contribution to the school was at first manifested through the Best Teacher Award. In order to make this award objective and unbiased, the Principal informed the teachers about the criteria for deciding the award. Since the last four years from the year of the present study this program was discontinued in favour of a 'Thanksgiving Ceremony' in which the teachers and the other staff were appreciated for their efforts. The abolition of the 'Best Teacher Award' in favour of 'Thanksgiving Ceremony' also indicated a shift towards team approach as opposed to recognition of individuals. Two contradictory views on objectivity in the process of 'Best Teacher Award' emerged as the present teacher said that justice was done as the awards were given by rotation to teachers of different subjects. At the same time, a former teacher commented that given the human nature of the principals, subjectivity in judgment for the 'Best Teacher Award' could not be ruled out. Inclusion of the former teachers in this ceremony ensured continuity of association who had contributed in the development of school. On the nature of association with the former teachers on the occasion of this ceremony, a former teacher remarked with frustration that they just called to say 'thanks'.

A concern for the safety of the learners was exhibited in their policy for medical insurance of the learners in which the premium was borne by the Trust. The progressive vision of the Trust was observed this policy decision was taken in 2000. The state government implemented this policy for the secondary school from the year 2005-2006. The Trust continued to pay the premium for the medical insurance of learners from the pre primary and primary section of the school.

A two pronged strategy to develop self discipline and an emphasis on the personal hygiene was aimed at through the program of Marshall System which was led by Marshal Teachers to guide its functioning. A group of learners were marshals (leaders) to maintain discipline in the school. Leadership skills were developed in the learners as they managed the school functions. This program gained the identity of signature program of the school in the city. The Supervisor of the pre-primary section recalled the rigour they had practiced as Marshal Teachers as they were allotted this duty for the entire year. This program lost its rigour as one of the later principals distributed the duties of the Marshal teachers by rotation leading to loss of larger accountability.

The Trust has adopted the policy of providing the maximum exposure to the learners by providing state of art infrastructure facilities in school. The present Principal expressed lack of trust in the learners' ability to gain by the infrastructure and learning resources provided to them. She said, "We have told the Trustee that he should open a different school where the children will be from different background and so he will gain by the investment." Lack utility of this heavy investment was also pointed out by a former teacher who was with the school for twenty six years, "Since last five years there is a focus on infrastructure. Investment on teachers' salary is necessary. Standard of teachers is low, so education standard is falling." The Trustee however continued his stand that the learners from the unprivileged background should not be deprived from any exposure to the latest equipments in education.

The policy of providing infrastructure facilities, especially in technology, necessitated a need for professional development of teachers to enable them to use it. The rise in the capability to use technology however was not observed by the researcher among all the teachers in equal measure. The Supervisor of the Primary section said, "Some are trained well in technology. We are trained but we don't know much. So we gradually learn from them." Despite the installation of interactive boards in each classroom a major change in the teaching learning processes on account of the easy access to technology in the form of interactive boards in each class was also not observed to a great extent.

The policies and programs of the school appeared aligned to the vision mission and objectives of the school and also the background of the learners. That religion was not an issue in the school was repeatedly informed to the researcher. It was also confirmed by former learners of the school. However, Hindu prayer as a regular component in assembly was introduced only after 1990. The policy of equipping the school with the infrastructure facilities especially technology did not succeed to a great extent in initiating a change in teaching learning processes in school.

The model and program of modernization through the introduction of English as a medium of instruction offered not many surprises. The leadership did not encounter challenges undermining their plans, vision and mission. The policies and programs were replicated from the first school.

A sense of responsibility that the Trust felt for the education of the children of the unprivileged background and the Alavi community emerged as the defining feature of the Academic Culture of the school.

### 5.9.3.2 EVENTS OCCURING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event 1      Teaching learning process**

*It was standard VIII the subject was science and the topic was Virus and Bacteria.*

*The assembly is over and attendance is taken. The teacher gestured to one of the students to make the interactive board ready for use. That student got up confidently, shifted the chalk board and switched on the power supply to the interactive board. Other students observed him as he did so. The teacher opened website on viruses. Students became very quiet and watch the websites that the teacher opened on the interactive board. The teacher then opened a powerpoint presentation on virus and bacteria.*

*Facing students, she told them, "Now we have already studied about the virus and bacteria. So observe carefully what I show you. Keep your notebooks and pens ready. Write down what I ask you to note."*

*One by one the teacher shows different images, diagrams of various types of viruses and bacteria. Some students immediately want to note down.*

*Noticing this, the teacher said, "Do not write all this. I have discussed all this and notes are also given. Now write only when I tell you to."*



*Teacher continues to show the different diagrams. Teacher adds her comments as the different diagrams and figures are flashed.*

*T- Now see the shape and structure, we have already discussed it and you have drawn it. Now observe this.*

*(The figure shown shows an increase in the number of bacteria.)*

*T- What do you mean by this?*

*S1-Madam, they are reproducing very fast.*

*T- Very good.*

*(Other figures are shown.)*

*T- Did you see this? (Figure of protozoa is shown)*

*Many students- Yes ( In a hushed tone as they continue to watch.)*

*T- O K (then she shows the figure of virus.)*

*(Students watch carefully and with full attention.)*

*T- Now see this carefully. (A bacteria and virus are shown.) See we have written a short note on this. Virus can enter bacteria- see the size difference.*

*(Other figures are shown.)*

*T- What is this? What does this look like?*

*S2- Madam this looks ... madam jab vo ghoomata hai tab vo acupressure ke liye use karte hain uske jaise lagata hain. (Madam when this rotates, it looks like that which we use for accupressure.)*

*T- Yes (smiles)*

*(The next slide on interactive board shows some points written.)*

*T- Read this carefully.*

*(Students read)*

*The next slide shows "Discovered by Dimitri Ivanovski in Tobacco plant"*

*T- Now write this. This is not in our text.*

*(Students note it)*

*T- Done. Who will pronounce it?*

*Students try to pronounce it but are unable to do so. Teacher listens to the different attempts and smiles.*

*S3- Madam I can pronounce the first name.*

*S567- Yes Madam, the first name is easy the second name is difficult.*

*T- Now find out, it is given in dictionary.*

*(The next slide shows the definition of virology.)*

*T- Write this.*

*The next slide shows 'influenza'.*

*T- Influenza hota hai na? (You get influenza.) Abbas check the dictionary.*

*(Student checks with the dictionary. He reads the meaning from the dictionary. Other students listen and laugh.)*

*T- It is similar to cold and cough.*

*(Next slide shown is on types of viruses.)*

*T- Have we studied this?*

*SSS- Yes*

*SSS- No*

*T- (smiles) check, check your notebook.*

*S- (Checks with his notebook) Yes*

*T- Observe carefully. Do not talk.*

*(The slide shows—"Bacteriophage") See this we have not done.*

*SSS—Done.*

*S8- Madam, One question.*

*T- Yes*

*S8- Madam we have learnt that DNA and RNA is not present together but in this slide it is written that DNA and RNA may be present.*

*T- May be present. (She stresses on the word may). That is why it is written may be present.*

*S8- nods and sits down.*

*( Next slide had some text written but the font size was very small.)*

*T- Can you see from the last bench?*

*SSS- Yes*

*(The teacher changes that slide and moves to the next one. The next slide shows movement of amoeba.)*

*SS- Madam this looks like the movement of a snake.*

*T- Now see this, what is the amoeba doing?*

*SS- Eating.*

*T- See how it engulfs.*

*S7- Madam what is engulf?*

*T- (Explains by gesture of hand) engulf. See the excretion now. See this picture it is directly from the microscope.*

*(Students observe the figures attentively.)*

*T- Now what is this?*

*(All students observe carefully but cannot guess.)*

*T- (looks at everybody) I will give hint. Check your notes.*

*Students check their notes and immediately give the answer*

*SSS- paramecium*

*T- Read the notes also given along with the diagram.*

*The period is almost coming to an end. The teacher closes the interactive board.*

*Students immediately say- Madam course ??*

*Teacher instructs some students to come forward and change their place. This was done as she had said that places of students will be changed at the end of the class.*

*T- Now open the textbook. Question number four, part three. I want you to form answer and come ready on Wednesday. Also write down the definitions of the following terms.*

*S8- Madam full form?*

*T- No definition.*

*The bell rings. Teacher leaves the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom: one of the major sites of learning in a school. The classroom was well equipped with tools of modern technology for use in teaching learning process. The learners in the class displayed different types of capabilities. On the one hand one learner displayed ease with technology. On the other hand another learner faced the problem of inadequate proficiency in English-the medium of instruction in the school. This interfered with his ability to answer the question asked by the teacher. The teacher did not put up the barrier of language for the learner as he switched from using English language to Hindi language. The discretion exercised by the teacher in this interaction safeguarded the learner's freedom to participate in the teaching learning process in the class. The teacher's response to the situation was an enabling factor for the learner. In addition to the freedom enjoyed to overcome the barrier of language, the learners exercised freedom to seek clarification ('what is engulf?', 'madam full form?', 'Madam we have learnt that DNA and RNA is not present together but in this slide it is written that DNA and RNA may be present.') The teacher attended to all these queries raised by the students.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The teacher did not appear domineering. The students appeared at ease. Her smiling face was devoid of any mockery or ridicule. When the students asked questions, her manner of responding to their questions provided an assurance to the students that it was all right not to know. It was this approach of the teacher that facilitated the students to exercise their freedom to seek clarification and the freedom to attempt.

This approach demonstrated her sense of responsibility in enabling the learners to participate in the teaching learning process.

This event assumes significance in view of the motive for establishment of the school and the policy of providing latest technology learning resources for the students. The school was established to provide opportunity to the children of unprivileged background in general and Alavi Community in particular to education in English Medium. In this context, the issue of freedom of learner and sense of responsibility of teacher gets into play. The ease and confidence with which one student handled the interactive board indicates that the policy of providing exposure to the best learning resources especially in technology had achieved its objective.

## ***Event 2 Teaching Learning Process***

*It was standard IX B. The period scheduled was of social science but as the teacher was absent, the proxy teacher teaching science was allotted the period.*

*As the teacher entered the class, the students looked at her with surprise. A soft 'hey' sound was also heard.*

*The teacher did not bother about it. She said, "Listen everybody. This is proxy period for me. I know this is your social science period and your science period is in the eighth period. But at that time you will be tired. So let us take the science period now.*

*The students said in a chorus, "Yes madam". They gladly opened their textbook and notebooks.*

*As students were taking out the notebooks and textbooks, teacher took a round to check if home work was done or not. The students began to talk. The teacher quickly took round of the class. The students would keep the notebook open on the desk, the teacher would see, nod and move to the next student.*

*The teacher then stood near the blackboard. She declared, "Now let us do more numericals. Don't copy from the textbook. Do it yourself."*

*The students repeated the sentence 'Do it yourself' after the teacher. The expression on their face indicated 'it was a challenge'.*

*The teacher dictated the numerical. The students became silent. They noted the numerical.*

*After the numerical was dictated, the teacher explained, "So in this numerical you will find (that) force and mass is given, then you can work out.... understand?"*

*The students nodded their head. Some students were unsure. After waiting for a minute they also began to work. The teacher took a round, occasionally peeped in to the notebook to see what the students were doing. She stopped near a student.*

*The teacher asked in a voice audible only to that student, "Show what you have done? ..... Now double the amount... Do it."*

*The student's facial expression indicated that he understood. He smiled and began to solve the sum.*

*Just then a knock on the window near the door is heard. All students and teacher looked up. The teacher opened the door. The teacher who was absent had come. She gestured if she can take the class. The science teacher who was on proxy duty nodded her head in agreement.)*

*The teacher who was on proxy duty told students, "So we will continue in the eighth period." The proxy teacher left the class.*

*Teacher teaching social science enters the class. The students quickly closed their notebooks.*

*The teacher wrote on blackboard –1945.*

*The observed the students and asked, " Now tell me what can you tell me about 1945 in world history?"*

*Two students answered quickly.*

*S1- " World War II ended."*

*S2- UN was established.*

*The teacher wrote these points on the blackboard.*

*The teacher once again looked at all the students, "OK what else can you tell? Most of the countries which had dictatorship.... What happened?"*

*The immediate response to this question was a chorus, "Democracy was established."*

*The teacher smiled, "OK. Which Peace keeping organization was established?"*

*A student (S3) answered in an unsure voice, "League of Nations."*

*The teacher nodded her head, "OK. Why?"*

*The student who had given this answer kept quiet.*

*Another student (S4) raised his hand excitedly.*

*The teacher noticed him, "Yes"*

*The student (S4) answered but his answer could not be heard by all, "To keep friendly relations between the countries."*

*The teacher repeated the answer, "To keep friendly relations between the countries."*

*The teacher paused. She quickly took a view of all the students, "If you were to visit UN where will you go?"*

*Two students (S6,S7) promptly answered, "New York."*

*The teacher looked at them, "Yes, which country?"*

*From them S7 answered quickly, "USA"*

*The teacher then asked, "If two countries are fighting how is the problem to be solved?"*

*A chorus answer, "peaceful negotiation" was given almost in a whisper as if the students were not sure but they looked at the teacher as if waiting to watch her response.*

*The teacher reminded, "Put your hands up always. What does peaceful negotiation mean?"*

*The students were silent but they continued to look at the teacher.*

*The teacher sensed that the students did not know the answer. She said, "Friendly talk." The students' facial expression showed that they understood as they relaxed. The teacher continued, "Take the case of India and Pakistan. What is going on?"*

*A student (S9) said quickly, "War"*

*The teacher had a quizzical expression on her face, She asked, "Is it?" A murmur is heard in the class as the students began to discuss among themselves. The teacher said a little sternly, "Please put your hand up so that I can understand."*

*After a minute another student (S10) answered a little feebly, "Terrorist attack."*

*The teacher now smiled, "Anything else?"*

*A student (S11) stands up, "India demanded to handover some terrorists."*

*The student sitting next to him (S13) nudged S11 and said loudly, "Take action against terrorists."*

*The teacher smiled, "Do you watch TV?" She continued to smile and nodded her head to indicate that she knew all the students watched TV. The teacher continued, "If Pakistan doesn't do what we (do) tell, what other option do we have?"*

*There is an immediate chorus, "We go to world court."*

*The teacher now looked satisfied with the answer, "Very Good. The World Court can take a long time, Kashmir case is still on. So as members of UN what can be done?"*

*Without waiting for an answer the teacher wrote on blackboard—'Eco blockade. She explained, "No country will have trade and diplomatic relations with Pakistan. This can bring Pakistan to negotiating table."*

*The students listened in rapt attention. The teacher paused before she asked the next question, "Has UN succeeded in its efforts. If you say Yes, tell me why and If you say no then tell me why?"*

*A student (S2) gave an answer in a low voice. Many students could not hear. The teacher walked a few step towards the student answering. The teacher repeated the answer given, "He*



*says that no major wars are fought. Now we can have difference of opinion. We can correct the answers."*

*Two students answered in a soft voice as if they were unsure,*

*"Some wars were fought."*

*The teacher commented, "Some wars were fought. So we can say that by and large UN is successful."*

*The teacher observed a student was putting his head down on the desk. Looking at the student who was putting his head down, the teacher asked, "Have you heard of Cold War?"*

*The student replied yes but his facial expression showed that he had not.*

*The teacher's expression also did not change. She nodded. But after this the student did not put his head down.*

*Just then the bell rang. The teacher said, "We will continue tomorrow." The students began to talk among themselves. Some words heard from their talk were 'war', 'court'. It appeared that they continued to discuss the topic among themselves.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom – a major site of learning in a school. In this class, a change of teachers within the same period was observed. Though the class was started by the teacher given the proxy duty, the teacher who was late to school showed responsibility by taking the class. The students quickly adjusted to the change in subject within the same period.

The teacher who had been given proxy duty dispensed her duty with responsibility. A sense of responsibility of the teacher was observed in various acts 'by declaring that it was proxy period', 'by deciding to take a difficult subject in the first period', 'by checking the homework done by the students' 'by guiding the student (*Show what you have done? ..... Now double the amount... Do it*). Equality of treatment was observed

as she took round to see each and every student's notebook. The students' sense of responsibility was observed as all the students had done the homework.

The other teacher demonstrated her responsibility by taking the class though proxy arrangement had been made. This teacher created equal opportunity for students to participate by not posing questions to anyone in particular. The answers given by different students reaffirmed her mechanism of creating equality. Though on some occasions answers were given in chorus, she accepted the answer. The teacher's response to the student's act of putting his head down demonstrated her sensitivity to the student as she did not openly question him about it. At the same time, she also did not inquire the reason for doing so.

The second teacher created freedom to attempt and freedom to give opinions for students to participate in the teaching learning process. She posed questions. She facilitated the freedom to attempt by providing clue. She reminded the students that freedom is to be used with responsibility (*Has UN succeeded in its efforts. If you say Yes, tell me why and If you say no then tell me why?*) At the same time she assured them to use their freedom without the fear of being right or wrong. (*Now we can have difference of opinion. We can correct the answers*)

The students seized the freedom. The strategy that the students employed when not certain of the 'answer' was 'lowering the voice'. The change to a loud voice conveyed their confidence about the correctness of the answer. The teacher exhibited responsibility when she wrote a new/difficult term on blackboard (Eco blockade).

### ***Analytic view of event***

Both the teachers appeared calm in the class. Both had a non-threatening manner of talking to the students. The students were challenged by both the teachers. The response of the students exhibited a mixture of confidence and diffidence. There was a nervous anticipation of the next question that would be asked in the discussion conducted by the second teacher. A correct answer given was a sense of achievement for them especially in view of the unprivileged background of the students. It was reflected in the expression of satisfaction on their face and on the face of teacher.

This event also indicated the generational gap in teachers. The teacher who was on proxy duty was a new teacher with two years of experience in this school. The second

teacher was in this school for twenty five years. The generational gap in the teachers did not create an impact on students while among the stakeholders it created certain identity signifiers which demonstrated the preference to teachers of the former period in comparison to the present time. The present Supervisor of the pre-primary section who has been with the school as a teacher for twenty years and as a Supervisor of the pre-primary section for four years said, "Now teachers are like IT professionals. They come to do the work and go. There is no commitment." This appeared to be true as the teacher who was on proxy duty shared with the researcher during the field work, "I may not continue for a long time, I may leave next year or at the most a year after that."

### **Event 3 Dealing With Erring Learners**

*A former student who had admitted his child to the school recalled an incident of his student days,*

*"It is very important for us (the Muslims) to pray on Friday especially during the month of Ramzan. Since it was a working day with no special leave for offering namaz, I gathered a few students to offer namaz outside the school during school working hours. When the principal got to know about it, he scolded me and also explained to me that offering namaz is as important as doing one's duty. He disapproved of my action. He said that he too was a Muslim but he did not abandon his duty in school to offer namaz. I did not like it then. But I think he was right in his own way."*

#### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event indicates aberration by one stakeholder- learners to the accepted rules and regulations of the school. How the stakeholders-here learner, teacher and principal-configure their roles, exercise their freedom and what becomes the premise of their responsibilities is observed.

In this event the learners could not comprehend the distance to be maintained between the personal beliefs and its expression in the school- a public space. The Principal who had disapproved of the learner's action also followed the same religious beliefs. His explanation to the learners dealt with separation of the personal beliefs and its expression in the public space. The contestation here was freedom in public space and

respect for others. Though the learner was not able to do it, the Principal clarified the school's stand on it.

#### ***Analytic view of event***

The first event had an indelible impression on the former student as it was the first memory of the school that he shared with the researcher. He smiled mischievously when he told of his act. At times, his facial expression appeared to communicate disbelief that he could have done such an act. He became very thoughtful when he presented his views on the action of Principal. His tone was full of respect as he narrated the response of the Principal.

This event indicates the practice of mission, vision and objectives of school in the everyday life of school. In this event, the action of the learner and the group which offered *namaz* were guided by their religious beliefs. Though the school had adopted a secular outlook in its vision, mission and objectives, the Trustees of the school were Muslim. The motive of establishment of school was to address the needs of the children of the Alavi community though the school was open to all sections of the society. Subsequently, the learner's act of admitting his child to the same school reaffirmed that as an adult he approved of the Principal's sense of responsibility pivoted on the mission, vision and objectives of the school. His act as a parent- a significant stakeholder now indicated his confidence in the school.

#### **Event 4 Discussion Among The Teachers In The Staffroom**

*There were about ten teachers in the staffroom. There were about ten minutes before the assembly. The teachers were getting ready for the day.*

*A teacher (T1) who was in charge of the collecting donation for flag-day gave army flags to a teacher (T2). He said, "Take these flags for your class."*

*The second teacher(T2) said in a dismissive tone, "I am not going to ask for donation."*

*The first teacher (T1) persuaded, "At least your ask students."*

*The second teacher (T2) shook her head vigorously, "I cannot force students to bring donation. Why don't you come to my class and ask students to collect donation."*

*The first teacher (T1) appeared a little helpless. He was silent for a minute or so. Another teacher gestured to him to give him flags for her class. He gave her the flags. A feeling of discomfort could be felt in the class. Other teachers listening to this conversation pretended to their work.*

*The Supervisor observed this conversation silently. She offered a suggestion, "We must explain to the students. See commandos save our lives. They all have seen it on the TV. They will certainly understand."*

*The Supervisor looked at other teachers in the staff room as if to gauge how many agreed with her.*

*Another teacher (T3) said, "Yes they will understand. We must explain what happened in Mumbai."*

*A teacher sitting next to T3 joined her, "We can explain about terrorist and how army helped."*

*By this time, the teacher who had refused to take the flags for collecting donation appeared not to be listening to them. She then left the staffroom.*

\*

*In the staffroom, three senior teachers (T1,T2, T3) and four young teachers are sitting. Each one was doing their own work. The following conversation occurs among them.*

*T1 was correcting notebooks of students. She looked up, "This teacher carries mobile to the class. I told her so many times now she doesn't take."*

*T2 who was reading a textbook spoke with irritation, "Yes I heard her mobile ringing in the staff room which means she does not take it to the classroom."*

*T3 who joined the conversation appeared was laughed a little, "This generation cannot do without mobiles. I am still not used to it."*

*T2 became agitated, "These young teachers don't understand. If we tell them not to do a particular thing, they don't understand. Then it will become a rule that mobiles are not allowed in school. Rules are made like this only."*

*The bell for the next period rang. All the teachers got up to leave the staff room.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

In the first event the refusal of the one of the teachers to ask for donation from learners was an exercise in asserting her freedom to refuse a duty which was beyond the teaching and learning activities of the school. In the second event, a clash between two sets of teachers on the basis of association with the school was observed. The clash occurred because of the change in the larger context. A sense of responsibility in the group of teachers with longer association with school was observed as they mentored the new teachers into the culture of the school. This group of teachers possessed an understanding of the functioning of the school. They expected a respect for their understanding. Their ultimate objective was to safe guard the freedom of the teachers from restrictive rules and regulations.

### ***Analytic view of event***

In the first event, there was a stunned silence as soon as the teacher refused the duty. The teacher who was in-charge of the collection of donation was taken back. He just looked blankly at the teacher who had refused. He also glanced at the Supervisor but the Supervisor did not respond immediately. She too appeared to be shocked. The teacher who had refused the duty of collecting donations appeared very firm on her belief. She did not even look up to listen to what the other teachers were saying. Though the Supervisor took sometime to understand the situation she did not act in an authoritarian manner. In a voice which was comforting she presented the different ways in which the donation could be collected. The other teachers created a support for the teacher for executing the task she was unwilling to do. There was no criticism for her refusal. The teachers respected the personal beliefs of the teacher at the same time demonstrated a sense of responsibility by enabling her to execute the task given to her. Though the teacher was not willing to do the 'task' of collecting donation for

the army day, this task was very significant for the school. The Principal of the school on another occasion had shown the certificate awarded by the District Collector to the school for the highest donation collected for the army.

The second event was about sharing views among the teachers as colleagues. It appeared to an exercise in 'unburdening'. The senior teachers appeared to share a comfort among themselves as they freely expressed their views. This event illustrates the process of accommodation among the teachers. Between the same categories of stakeholder, the period of association with the school creates two clear cut categories of senior teachers and new teachers. The senior teachers thus become the interface of the principal/ management for the new teachers. The attempt of the teachers with longer association with school becomes significant as the change in the teachers on account of new appointments was very frequent in the last five years (from the year of the present study).

The senior teachers positioned their sense of responsibility in their understanding of functioning of school and the expectations of management.

#### **Event 5 Discussion Among Teacher, Supervisor And Principal About Sports Day**

*The Supervisor of the school who has been with the school for more than twenty five years has been promoted as the Principal just two days before. She is in the Principal's (P) office. A Supervisor who has been with the school for about twenty years is also in the office. The Sports Day was scheduled in the next week.*

*The Principal inquired with a worried look, "What else is to be done?"*

*The Supervisor checked a paper on which she had jotted down a few points, "I think everything is done. The practice for 'March Past' has not yet begun. I saw the Gujarati medium practicing.*

*The Principal said, "Let us ask the PT teacher."*

*The Supervisor said with exasperation, "I asked. He said that the selection trials of standard I and II are not yet over. He will start the 'March Past' from tomorrow.*

*The Principal appeared worried. She said, "O K" She called for the peon and instructed, "PT teacher ko bulao. Unko kahane jo kaam kar rahe hain vo karke aana (Call the P T teacher. Ask him to come after he finished whatever he is doing.)"*

*At that time, the dance teacher entered her office.*

*The dance teacher informed as soon as he entered, "Madam I have prepared a program for the sports day. There are twenty students. The program will look nice if they have costumes."*

*The Principal said in a calm voice, "What is the program?"*

*"It is a dance", said the dance teacher.*

*The Principal said casually, "Ask them to wear their own jewellery. They all must be having Garba dresses and Garba Jewellery."*

*The dance teacher persisted, " The costume required is different. Can we borrow it from the costume wala."*

*The Principal looked at the teacher to ask in a serious voice, " How much will it cost?"*

*The dance teacher said excitedly, "Hundred rupees per student. So we can pay fifty rupees and students will contribute fifty rupees. So this way school will have to pay thousand rupees."*

*The Principal appeared convinced, "It looks OK."*

*The Supervisor was very pleased. She immediately prompted, "Lets take the permission of Trustee. Do you have his number?"*

*The Principal searched for his number in her cell phone.*

*The Principal called up the Trustee to inform him about the expense. At the end of the conversation she smiled and nodded her head. Looking at the dance teacher she said, "He agreed. He never refuses. Last time also we had hired a vehicle and then there was a problem so we had to cancel the visit. But the vehicle had already reached and we were to pay around two thousand rupees. We asked the trustee. He agreed. He never says no."*



### *Synoptic view of event*

This event occurred in the Principal's office which is a significant site in school from the perspective of management of school. The discussion among the Principal, Supervisor and teachers was to check the preparation for Sports Day. The Supervisor demonstrated a sense of responsibility by reporting the status of work done. The Principal's response to the Supervisor's report was premised on her respect for the P T Teacher and a sense of responsibility to check with the concerned teacher. Her instruction to the peon to inform P T Teacher to complete the task at hand and then come to her office indicated respect for the teacher. The dance teacher's exercised her freedom to suggest the need for costume which was ensured by the Principal's response.

### *Analytic view of event*

The Principal appeared calm as well as a little nervous. This event indicates the response of the Principal who had assumed the office just two days ago. The Principal did not appear authoritarian.

The Principal was familiar with the school as she had been associated with this school as teacher for twenty five years. This Principal had worked under the leadership of the first Principal of this school and also was influenced by the third Principal of the Gujarati medium school. Her interaction with the PT teacher, dance teacher and the Supervisor who were her colleagues appeared not to have been affected by the new position. There was cordiality in the interactions. The strategy adopted by the Principal was playing a supporting role to the teachers who were contributing to the preparation for the Sports Day. In doing this, she demonstrated respect for them by acknowledging their expertise. However, there was an emphasis on getting the work done. The Principal shared with the researcher her interpretation of doing justice to her role as a principal, "We should be just. *Chala nahi lene ka. Galti hui to galti* (should not overlook. If a mistake is committed then it is committed). The school should run smoothly. *Kisi ko bhi problem na ho* (No one should face problem.)." The Principal was driven by a sense of responsibility.

The policy of the Trustee to provide exposure and facilities to students from unprivileged background was observed in practice.

**Event 6     A Meeting Of The Trustee, Principals And Teachers On The Eve Of  
The Reopening Of The School After The Summer Vacation**

*A meeting of the teachers was called by the Trustee one day before the commencement of the new academic year. It was scheduled in the evening at five and was followed by dinner. The meeting was attended by the Trustee, the Principal, Supervisor and the teachers. A presentation by an expert invited by the Trustee was also on agenda. This meeting was attended by the teaching and non teaching staff of both the schools runs by the Trust-English medium and Gujarati medium.*

*The teachers began to gradually walk in to the hall. Some were standing in small groups while some were sitting. An excitement could be felt as the teachers were meeting after the summer vacation. One person (attendant) made the arrangements for the LCD, laptop and mike. As the Supervisors and Principals entered, some teachers got up.*

*The Trustee entered with a guest. The murmur heard in the hall stopped. Everyone's attention became focused on the Trustee and the guest. The Principal of the Gujarati medium school gestured to the Principal of the English medium school to come to the dais. The Trustee walked on the stage to see the arrangements made on the stage. Just then the Principal of the Gujarati medium gestured to two teachers to come to the dais for the prayer. It started with a prayer from Islam and a prayer in Sanskrit. There was silence as the prayers were rendered. As soon as the prayer was over, the Trustee reached the podium to begin his address.*

*He said, "Please observe one minute silence. Pray for your near and dear ones and then for the health of school in your own language."*

*There is silence. All present had closed their eyes.*

*The Trustee said, " Next shake hands with those sitting next to you, in front of you and behind you."*

*One could hear gentle laughter. Many present smiled.*

*The Trustee continued, "Let this happiness remain with the school throughout the academic year." There were smiles on the face of those present.*

*The Trustee looked around. He said, "Next, those who are new please introduce yourself."*

*There were around ten new teachers who introduced themselves one by one. From these two teachers, two were alumni of this school.*

*The said, "I heartily welcome the new comers. I will speak less today and this gentleman who is a management guru will speak to you. Before that let me congratulate you for results, the good result and not so good result. Analyze the result. The teaching has to be learner based. Be alert from standard I to V on continuous comprehensive evaluation. Some changes are made in promotion form V to VIII. You have to be careful."*

*The Trustee paused. The teachers and the Principals were listening.*

*The Trustee continued, "One thing is very important for Gujarati medium. Change is important. Change is everywhere. Think of new methods of teaching. We will try to train you through workshops and seminar. The onus of change is on you."*

*The Trustee paused once again for a while. He said, "There will be two appraisals of staff: one internal and two external. It will start from this year. Next, I want punctuality. If we are not then you can't expect students (to be punctual). Even today I wanted to start at five sharp but it started late. Try to minimize gap between two periods form one class to another. Teaching profession is a noble profession. Let that nobility remain with us. Let us get the strength to do this."*

*The Trustee paused. He looked at all the teachers and then the guest who was sitting on the dais. He gestured to him to take over. Before the guest began his presentation, the Trustee said, "He is going to tell us some new, something about how to raise the aspirations of the students."*

*The next part of the meeting was the presentation made by the guest on raising aspirations and helping the students to realize their aspirations.*

### *Synoptic view of event*

In this event the Trustee, the Principals and the teachers were on one platform. The Trustee's address is driven by a sense of responsibility. It served the purpose of sharing the expectations of the Trustee from the Principal and teachers before the commencement of the new academic year. The attention of the Trustee was at two levels: at a broader level in which he talked about general expectations (need for change, nobility of teaching profession) and at very specific level which dealt with the everyday life in school (minimizing wastage of time between two classes, being punctual, continuous comprehensive evaluation). New initiatives (appraisal system of teachers, changes in the promotion rules) were also informed. There was also a stock checking of the previous year ('... let me congratulate you for results, the good result and not so good result. Analyze the result.'). Equal access to information was created as the teacher declared the initiatives well in advance to all the teachers and Principals.

The Trustee made an attempt to make the school a 'happy place' (*Let this happiness remain with the school throughout the academic year*). The strategy employed to create an ownership among teachers for the school was to make a teacher a happy person. He demonstrated respect for the teacher by explicitly showing care and concern for the family of teachers (*Pray for your near and dear ones and then for the health of school in your own language.*) In this He allowed the teachers freedom to pray in their own language.

### *Analytic view of event*

Though a formal occasion, an informal way of conducting the meeting was evident. A strict protocol was not observed as arrangements for prayer were made on the spot, the Trustee himself took a view of the arrangements made and began his address as soon as the prayer was over. The teachers who had gathered there appeared to be in awe of the Trustee. The Trustee was soft spoken.

The active participation of the Trustee in this meeting assumes significance as the active role of this Trustee in the everyday life of the school was repeatedly contrasted with the not so active role of the former Trustee. It is pertinent to note that a transition of leadership in this school had occurred. The school did not have a stable leadership

after 2002. A perceptible focus of the Trustee on provision of infrastructure facilities was commented upon by the teachers. In this event, the focus of the Trustee appeared to be on the programs to be initiated in the school.

### **5.9.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Learners***

The learners experienced freedom of approaching teachers. A former student said, “The relations with teachers were friendly. We could enter the staffroom, ask teacher our difficulties. The teachers also took interest in solving our difficulties.”

The admission policy did not create any ground for inequality. The demographic of the learners’ profile which saw two clear divisions of Hindus and Muslims did not lead to inequality. The students’ experience of equality irrespective of their religious identity was variously described by students (‘There was no discrimination’ , ‘We could relate to all’ ‘We never felt so’). A former teacher who was with the school for twenty six years described the relations between students as ‘positive’.

A sense of responsibility among learners was inculcated through attention to personal upkeep and deportment. One the first day of the school, a teacher presented a series of instructions about the personal upkeep in standard VIII.

*The teacher entered the class. She observed all the students. She declared, “I am your class teacher.” She instructed in a strict voice, “Take out handkerchief, clean your shoes. You must polish the shoes at home from tomorrow.” One student cleaned his shoes with his handkerchief. The teacher continued in the same tone, “ Girls, no pony tails, only plaits and oil your hair. If not done at home, then also do it. Rest of the things can come later, first good dressing. Boys, nothing to be worn on hand. **Dhyan rakhana** (remember) white uniform on Wednesday. Girls, no dangles or big jewellery (to be worn). I will never excuse you, I will send you out, beat you.” The students listened with rapt attention. Occasionally they checked their own uniform.*

*After this she observed the uniform worn by the students by taking a round. She stopped by a student and looking at his shoes said, " Nice, you cleaned the shoes." The student appeared happy. Other students turned to look at him. A student sitting on the other side quietly cleaned his shoes with his handkerchief. The teacher then addressed the entire class, "From tomorrow clean the shoes at home. We are coming to school and not **kabadikhana** (a place where old, broken things are kept). So we should be neat and clean."*

The teacher clearly demarcated what is acceptable in school and what is not in terms of personal upkeep. The learners had no freedom to deviate from the expectations regarding the personal upkeep. In fact, the deviation would be viewed very harshly by the teacher as she said, "(I will )beat you." 'Beating' was an experience shared commonly by the learners as a mechanism for inculcating sense of responsibility. A former student who was with the school for four years said, "Teachers and even Principal would beat. But it was taken in a very positive sense. It was for making us better. Even parents would not complain about it."

A cognizance of the different abilities of the students was consciously cultivated. The present Principal who has been a teacher with the school for over twenty years said, "I don't label any child as 'stupid' or 'idiot'. One former teacher was an excellent teacher but when the children would not do what was expected she would get angry and call children by 'names'. Once I told her as a friend, "Why call somebody stupid?" She took it seriously and changed. Now as a Principal I can tell this to all teachers officially. We have seen children who are below average also shine and do well. So each child has his own time. Our duty is to expose them to the best." A former student recalled, "One of my teachers identified my talent in writing Hindi poetry. He gave me extra books and made me write poems."

A change in the discipline of the students was a concern shared by the teacher/s and former student. A former teacher, who was with the school for twenty six years, remarked unhappily, "Discipline (of students) *bigad gaya hai*". A former student who was with the school said, "Now I cannot believe that it is the same school. There is so much indiscipline. The language that the students use....I think the major reason is the students' strength."

## **Teachers**

The teachers experienced equality irrespective of their religious identity. A teacher with thirty years of experience in the school said, “See here the Hindu teachers and the Muslim teachers sit together and eat together. This thought of difference amongst us never crosses our mind (*dimag me hee nahi aata hai*).”

The present Principal recalled her experience as a teacher, “All Principals showed faith on us and gave us freedom.” The Principal did not interfere in subject teaching and content. He was confident (that we will do the best) which boosted our confidence. The second Principal gave us ‘space’ to ‘try out’ any new method.

The teachers have experienced a sense of responsibility by confessing the ‘mistake’ made by them to the Principal. The present Principal recalled, “He (first Principal) was approachable so we felt like confessing and we felt better by confessing. Once I gave a question in test which was out of course. The test was on the next day. I realized it at home. I informed to Sir (Principal). On the day of the test, the students were asked to wait outside school for sometime, an alternative question was written on blackboard and then the test was conducted.” A former teacher who was with the school for twenty six years said, “Teacher’s working was very particular. Teachers used to be honest in their job-teaching, exam and result. Principal was happy with our working.”

Not encouraging ‘back biting’ was a strategy used by the first Principal to create equality among the teachers. A teacher with twenty five years of experience in the school stated, “He did not listen to any teacher who told something about the others. He in fact protected the other teacher. He gave equal importance to all. His behaviour with all teachers was such that all are equal.” The description of the ‘behaviour’ could not be articulated by this teacher.

The teachers who have been with the school for a longer period of time (twenty to twenty five years) demonstrated a sense of responsibility by guiding the new teachers to the ‘ways of this school’. In doing this a sense of responsibility among the new teachers was being addressed. The present Principal said, “When new teachers joined the staff. Their ways of working were different. Some said that when they were not told why they should do. Then for sometimes we would wait and observe but slowly

we would say that when Principal trusts us we should also do our work. Slowly the teachers also started working the way we worked. Then we used to tell them to do the work in this way. They also would listen as everyone likes to work in good atmosphere.”

A teacher with the school for twenty five years and presently the Supervisor of the Pre- primary section said, “During the riot in the eighties, we decided to counsel the students. But we also observed from the facial expressions that some of them were not listening to our explanation. They would carry on the arguments and fights in the bus outside the school. But we did not do this type of counseling in the riots of 2000.” The sense of responsibility of teachers as stakeholders went beyond the school as they counseled the learners, the other stakeholders, for events occurring in the community. The attempt was to counteract the influence of the other stakeholders-the community at large. The acts of counseling by teachers were in consonance with the vision, mission and objectives of the school. The limitation of the teachers’ counseling was apparent as some learners continued the arguments beyond the physical confines of the school. The initiative taken by teachers to counsel learners during riots was not taken in the subsequent riots of 2000 though the leadership during both incidents was provided by the same principal. The limitation of school as a public institution to counter the community became apparent.

The teachers did not work under undue pressure during the tenure of the first Principal as he did not allowed teachers to exercise their freedom in ‘doing justice to teaching’. The present Principal recalled her experience as a teacher, “He (the first Principal) told us, syllabus must be completed (you may) leave a chapter if necessary but do well and take it up later.” She reflected, “So teachers felt that he has trusted and given us freedom we also should do our work properly.”

Freedom of teachers was facilitated by the first Principal by being ‘approachable’ and by listening. The Supervisor of the pre-primary section recalled, “There was no animosity for Principal. He gave freedom. We could say we won’t be able to do.” This freedom was tempered with a sense of responsibility as she continued, “When he (Principal) said it has to be done, we did it. His chair demanded it.”



### ***Principal***

The dynamics of the relationship between the Trustee and the Principal defined the experience of freedom, respect, equality and a sense of responsibility of Principals. The various Principals of this school have experienced freedom

The Principal of this school struck a balance between freedom and a sense of responsibility. He continued to manage the English medium school as per the system established by the third Principal of the Gujarati medium school but changed those systems which demanded unnecessary repetitive work. He initiated 'Committee system' for allocation of duty to teachers.

The Principal demonstrated sense of responsibility by checking the planning made by teachers, checked the question papers and the marking scheme. In addition to the administrative responsibilities of being a Principal, he shouldered the responsibility of being a teacher with equal enthusiasm and dedication. A former student who studied for four years in this school said with pride, "The Principal was an excellent maths teacher. He took difficult portion of maths in different classes. He would especially teach theorems. We didn't have to learn it by heart then. He would also teach us simple tricks in maths to make it easy. He also took maths in standard XII."

### **5.9.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

### ***Freedom***

Freedom in this was manifested as overcoming the barrier of language to participate in teaching learning process. This becomes a pertinent aspect of learners freedom in view of the profile of the learner and the motive of establishment of the school. Participation in teaching learning process by seeking clarifications.

The teachers enjoyed freedom as non interference of Principal in teaching, attempting a new method of teaching, refusing a duty which was beyond rules and regulations. Another facet of freedom of teachers was to pray in their own language. The principal created freedom for teachers by ensuring open access for them as also in modifying the procedures as of functioning as per the need.

### ***Respect***

Respect emerged as tolerance in this school. 'not labeling a child' A regular feature of learner-teacher interaction/s appeared to be making the learners conscious about the lack of 'appropriate family support' or 'lack of abilities'.

### ***Equality***

Equality was a striking feature of this. The equality was driven by vision and mission. Though formal policy measures to promote equality were not prominent, the informal policy of appointing a principal based on merit and not the religious identity were very strong.

### ***A Sense Of Responsibility***

The genesis of this school was based on a sense of responsibility to the community.

A sense of responsibility is performing one's task well. It is described as 'students cooperated with teachers and teachers satisfied students to the maximum'.

Various facets of discipline are observed from good to bad.

In doing so, she differentiates between the space of school and space of home. An awareness of the lack of support from family for the personal upkeep is tacitly indicated by the teacher.

### **5.9.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### ***Leadership***

The leadership was service oriented which aligned with the motive of establishment of the school. Though the school started with the motive of service to a specific community, it was extended to other communities also. Service motive was implemented by supplementing the exposure poor environment of the learners with programs of the school (Marshal System, Emphasis on personal hygiene and deportment). A synergy between the leadership of school and community underwent different tensions. At one point the leadership played the role of overcoming the societal barriers while in one case the socio-political contexts proved to be more powerful.

#### ***Maintaining of standards***

This school had the precedent of the Gujarati medium school which had reached a particular level of excellence and acceptance. The challenge for this school was maintenance of standards. The continuation of policies and programs of the first school of the Trust facilitated the achievement of the motive of establishment of this school. The shift in the policy which focused on the infrastructure investment did not facilitate the maintenance of standards already achieved.

#### ***Management practices and strategic communication with stakeholders***

Management of a school deals with developing strategic communication with stakeholders. An active involvement of the Trust in the micro management of the school led to various perceptions about the school. A shift was observed in the management practices adopted with the change in the leadership of the Trust. There has been a marked change in the perception of the school that it serves interests of a segment of community.

#### ***Medium of instruction***

The contestation between vernacular and English language manifest not in choices but the contestations is about a more compelling sociological factor- aspiration. The aspiration factor was addressed by English language as the language of opportunity. Language as the medium of instruction thus played a key role in defining the learner

profile as it attracted a particular set of learners who were different from the learners of the Gujarati medium.

#### **5.9.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

##### ***Confidence in the school***

The confidence of the parents is described in two words, 'standard' and 'discipline' is good. It was described as 'the parents were satisfied and happy' and 'they did not protest about teacher's strictness.' The school did not require special efforts for promotion for admissions.

A shift in the confidence in the school is observed approximately during the last five years from the year of this study. The alumni of the school had two opposing views on admission of their ward to this school. One former student said, "I am proud to be a product of this school. I would like my daughter to study in this school." Another alumni in the same year said, "I have gained and learnt a lot as a student of this school but I would not like to send my son to this school in its present status."

##### ***Learners***

Well turned out, well mannered and neat and clean are the three adjectives employed to the students of this school. The students have been described as 'positive' which was further described as 'happy', 'interested in studies', 'enthusiastic' and 'active'. After leaving the school, the students of this school respect others and do their work properly. A faith in the students of this school is expressed, "A student of this school will never misbehave in public place." Former students feel proud of being students of this school. A change in this is observed in the students during the period of study.

##### ***Teachers***

Teachers were described as committed, hardworking, identifying the talent of students and guiding them in curricular and other aspects. The teachers had won the trust of students as the students also sought guidance from teachers in their personal life. Teacher-student relations were described as 'very good'. There was 'cooperation' between them. The teachers said, "The students respected and trusted teachers." A

change in this description of teacher-student relation was mentioned but not described. The researcher observed cordial relations between the teacher and the students.

### **5.9.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. The events and their analysis indicate the presence of freedom, sense of responsibility and respect to a large extent. The process of nurturing Academic Culture was accomplished through four processes: (i) leadership, (ii) maintaining of standard, (iii) management practices and strategic communication with stakeholders, and (iv) medium of instruction. The influence of Academic Culture in this school is observed in three ways: (i) Confidence in school which is observed as 'standard' and 'discipline'. Parents are satisfied and happy and they don't protest against the strictness of teachers. A change in this is observed in the present (ii) learners of this school are described as well turned out, well mannered, neat and clean, interested in studies, enthusiastic, active and happy. They respected and trusted teachers. They were proud of being student of this school. At present a change in this is observed. (iii) teachers are observed as committed, hardworking, guiding and helping students in curricular and personal life. They had won the trust of the students. A cooperation between students and teachers was developed. At present a change in this is observed.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.

## **5.10 CASE: 10**

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### **5.10.1 ACCESSING THE SITE OF STUDY**

The Principal accepted with the researcher's request for conducting research in a composed manner. The formal letter of permission was read carefully by him and the Supervisor of the Primary section of the school. The researcher was introduced to one of the teachers who was asked to coordinate data collection. The teacher inquired, "What would you like to do?" She escorted the researcher to the classrooms to inform the teachers about the presence of the researcher. This teacher also was curious if the English medium unit would also be studied. She said, "After you study English medium (unit) you tell me about it. You know the comparison." The Principal introduced the researcher formally to all the teachers in the staff meeting which was organized during the visit of the researcher to the school for data collection. The researcher was asked to be in the staffroom whenever she was free. The teachers in the staffroom were curious about the researcher's presence and the research she was conducting. They also felt pride that their school was being studied. The entry into this school as a field of study was easy. The researcher experience comfort as she was accepted in the school.

The researcher was in the school for approximately a period of three and half hours daily for seven working days. Various events observed in the school were the teaching learning process in various classrooms, on playground and in laboratory, teachers-principal meeting conducted at the end of the month, a combined mass drill period, checking students' uniform by the Student Council and parent-teachers meeting. In addition to these the researcher also listened to various interactions occurring among the learner/s, the teacher/s, Supervisor and the Principal in corridors, in staffroom and on the playground. The Principal informants were the present Principal, the Supervisor of the Primary section, two teachers and two former students. The present Principal had experience of twenty nine years in the school of which the last four years were as In-charge Principal of the school. The Supervisor of the Primary section was with the school for twenty five years. Of the two teachers one teacher was with

the school for the eight years and the other was with the school for ten years. The former students had studied in the school for ten years and had passed standard XII from the school in 2008. In addition to these informants, three teachers voluntarily shared their experiences. There were also conversations with students, teachers and Principal on various sites of the school.

### **5.10.2 SETTING AND MILIEU OF THE SCHOOL**

Recorded and commonly held versions indicate the beginning of this school in 1964. It was also informed by a former teacher that the school might have started functioning at a small level even before this. The vision and mission statement indicate completion of 56 years of establishment. It started as a pre primary school with addition of higher classes each year successively. The school shifted to its present premise in 1971. The school was established with the motive of education of the children of humble background in general and of Alavi community in particular. Alavi community is a section of small section of Muslim community. Boys of this community are not highly educated. It is financially also supported by the Trust. The Trust is financially very stable. The school thus does not face financial constraints. The motive for the establishment of the school demonstrates a sense of responsibility as interpreted by the school.

This school is a grant-in-aid school taking grant from Education Department. It is affiliated to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar. The medium of instruction is Gujarati. The admission policy is guided by the Education Department. The tuition fee charged is minimum and approved by the Education Department of the State. It is Rupees 35 per month for standard VIII, Rupees, 40 per month for standard IX, Rupees 45 per month for standard X, Rupees 50 per month for standard XI and Rupees 55 per month for standard XII. The paying capacity of parent/s does not become a criterion for seeking admission to this school. The salary is borne by Education Department thus indicating a job security in terms of regular disbursement of salary is ensured for the teachers. The teachers also are governed by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the State thereby the control of the school authority (principal) is relatively lesser. The motive of establishment of this school, the affiliation to the Gujarat Higher Secondary and

Secondary Education Board, Gandhinagar and Gujarati as the medium of instruction implies that the learners of the cosmopolitan population of the city and those whose parents have a transferable job across the country do not seek admission to this school. The learner group thus becomes clearly defined with a strong presence of Muslim students.

The vision, mission, policies and programs of the school provide an understanding of the management of school. The vision of the school as stated in the school diary is: 'The hour of dawn, every day at our ...school is one of the most happy and fulfilling scenes. Hundred of boys and girls in colourful uniforms, their faces bright and radiating confidence and running towards their class rooms is an awesome sight. Many of these children will be eminent Judge, Doctors, Sportspersons, Computer specialists, Teachers, Engineers and Architects in days to come. The seeds for outstanding performance were sown way back when our school made a humble beginning 56 years ago and today many .... are well placed professionals. What we have is not school children, we have a whole lot of future in our hands.

We have a promise to keep- to ensure that the future of these promising buds is nurtured and helped to blossom.

This promise is the spirit of our mission which runs like a perennial mountain stream.'

The mission of the school is stated as: 'We aspire to lift the all round standards from a conventional institution to a centre which pursues excellence globally. We shall achieve this by providing excellent teaching strategies, benchmarking with the best institutions in the country and abroad, incorporating the best practices and at the same time keeping in focus our cultural, ethical, social and human values in the forefront.

We strive to be an institution that nurtures the body, mind and soul by unlocking creativity, widening, the intellectual horizon and host of extra-curricular activities; a place which builds a healthy winning attitude and multi skills once again with focus on empathy, tolerance and love for fellow beings.

The learning system will be fine-tuned to meet the challenges of the future, involving information technology and other modern tools of the communication era. Besides academic excellence we shall inculcate as a way of life healthy habits like life skills; leadership qualities, discipline and a sense of commitment as that tomorrow these ...



can this country a better place to live. This will always remain a kaizen exercise; a journey of never ending continuous improvement. Environment protection is priority for us, so is our responsibility towards the community in which we live, work and learn.

We value the dedication and commitment of both the teaching and non teaching staff for their contribution in our rapid progress.

We aim to achieve our mission with the active participation of Parents-Teachers-Students- the State- the Management and the Community.'

Under the objective of school at first the school statement is presented as : '... school is an institution where secularism is manifested in egalitarian means of educational excellence. In a pluralistic society, the primary onus of an educational institution is to ensure propagation and understanding of secularism in children.'

Objectives of social equality and development through educational empowerment are deeply rooted in our philosophy. Embedded in our philosophy are values of honesty, and integrity, quality of life, commitment and belief in what we do, service, humility, sharing, teamwork and tolerance. These are the forces that drive us in our endeavour to provide value based education that facilitates all round development and broadening the minds of our children.

School objective is to INSPIRE

Instill secular attitude and behaviour

Nurture faith through prayers and mediation

Strive for academic excellence

Provide a wholesome and sage environment

Integrate academic and interrelated curricula

Reach for the goal of unity in diversity

Enforce discipline.

The vision, mission and objectives of the school are very comprehensive and elaborately delineated. The focus is on overall development of learners for their future roles. A world wide view encompassing global standards is observed. The key points emerging from the vision, mission, objectives is significance of all stakeholders and community's role. A very specific emphasis is observed on secularism and equality. Given the composition of the Trust and the specific target group of community for which it was initially established the emphasis on secularism assumes significance.

Being a grant-in-aid school, the school does not have much freedom in framing policies regarding admission of students, fee structure, recruitment and remuneration of teachers. Beyond these government directed policies, the school has created a space for itself by introducing the policy of free education to wards of teachers and free ship/concession in fee to those learners who have lost the primary bread winner in their family. The policy of medical insurance for the students before the Education Department of State launched it for Secondary section was also an initiative of the school. The Trust continued the policy by extending it to the Primary section.

Significant programs of the school were the Marshal System comprising student leaders to maintain discipline in school. The present Principal described as an initiative to inculcate self-discipline among the students. Professional development of teachers was attended to especially in view of the technology gadgets and equipments provided in the school.

The spatial dynamics are defined in terms of the total school space, the classroom space, the layout of the school, the teacher-pupil ratio and the availability of learning/infrastructure resources to all learners.

As informed by the Principal and the Clerk in the Office on the basis of school records, the total area of the school premises is 6530 square meters and the built up area is 6138 square meters. There is a playground admeasuring 70,000 square feet. A hall with the seating capacity of 600 is available. The school owns equipments for light and sound system for putting up stage on the playground for annual functions. A conference room is specially developed for meetings. Facility of a canteen was initiated in the year of this study. The school has clearly demarcated section for Pre-primary section. The Primary, Secondary and Higher sections are in the same building.

There are three separate laboratories for Higher Secondary section: Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. There is one general science laboratory for Secondary section. Two subject specific laboratories, a well developed language laboratory and a maths laboratory are highlight of the infrastructure/learning facilities made available to the students. The maths laboratory has been developed by NIIT. There are four computer laboratories with twenty computers in each laboratory. As informed by the librarian on the basis of school records there are 7,200 books and 10 magazines. In addition to the classrooms, there are three music rooms each admeasuring 500 square feet, one meditation room, one prayer room, one counseling room and one medical room. The area of a classroom is 47 square meters. The students' strength in Secondary section ranges from 73 to 82 and in Higher Secondary section from 75 to 116. The classrooms have adequate benches. At the minimum level, the teacher pupil-ratio is 1: 73 and at the maximum level 1: 116. One former teacher who had joined another school of the city remarked, "The students' strength in Higher Secondary section is too much, it sometimes becomes difficult to control (them)." The classrooms have adequate benches, are well lighted and well ventilated. The classrooms open on the corridor which faces the open space. Each classroom has an interactive board with internet facility. This infrastructure and learning resources are shared with the English medium section managed by the same Trust which runs in the afternoon shift.

As one enters the premise of the school, the security personnel regulates the entry. One gets a view of the school building from the gate. On the right side is an old building which is not in use. On the other side is the playground. There is a large hut like structure and a small garden. The footpath to the school is well laid. The parking of teachers' and students' vehicles is near and around the old building. The school is located on a busy road with traffic of heavy vehicles. The researcher witnessed the P T teacher, some gents teacher and the security personnel regulate the traffic when a group of students were to move out of the school. On the back side of the school building is a cemetery. Among the students and teachers, the presence of some lady teachers who wore *burqa*, girl students who covered their head with scarf, boy students who wore skull cap and the class IV staff who wear skull cap immediately strikes attention.

The layout of the school and the infrastructure facility allowed for the functionality of the school providing adequate support for the stakeholders in the pursuit of knowledge.

### **5.10. 3 MAKING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SCHOOL**

The making of everyday life in school is presented from three perspectives: policy, programs and past initiatives; events occurring on various sites of school in the present; and everyday experience of stakeholders in reference to the four constituents of academic culture. Subsequent to this an overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of academic culture in this school is synthesized.

#### **5.10.3.1 POLICY, PROGRAMS AND PAST INITIATIVES**

Policy, programs and initiatives have to be understood through contextual reading of the development of school. This school is forty five years old (1964-2009). It has been developed under the dynamic and stable leadership of its third Principal for a quarter century (1972-1997). One the teachers, who was with the school for thirty years but teaching in the English Medium unit during the present study said with pride that the name of this Principal and school had become synonymous ('XYZ was the school and the school was XYZ'). The Supervisor of the Primary section said, "The first two Principals during 1965-1997 were great teachers but the third Principal was a great leader." After the tenure of the third Principal, there was absence of stability in leadership as there were four Principals in the period of eight years (1997-2005). The present Principal is in office since 2005. He has been a teacher with the school since 1980 and had been influenced by the leadership of the third Principal.

Continuity of programs with all its rigour was facilitated by the stability in the leadership of the third Principal. A significant program initiated as a sense of responsibility was the Marshal System. It gained recognition as the signature program of the school. It was a two pronged strategy to develop self discipline and an emphasis on the personal hygiene aimed at through the program of Marshal System which was led by Marshal Teachers to guide its functioning. A group of learners called marshals (leaders) were entrusted with the responsibility to maintain discipline in the school.

The emphasis on personal hygiene and appropriate turnout was perhaps the culmination of the third Principal's personal attention to cleanliness and personal hygiene of the students. The present Supervisor recalled with pride and admiration the simple acts of the third Principal, "*Vo bacche ko nahalate bhi the, kapade gande ho to dho kar batate the ki kapadade saaf kaise karte hai.* (He bathed the children, washed the clothes himself to demonstrate how clothes are to be cleaned.)" This principal also kept the school open in the evening for student to study was present in school during these time. Leadership skills were developed in the learners as they managed the school functions. This program gained the identity of signature program of the school in the city. Over a period of time the rigour of this program appeared to have been lost. A teacher who had joined the school two years before the present study observed, "It (the Marshal System) is very strict in Primary section. It is not very strict in the Secondary section."

A concern for the safety of the learners was a facet of a sense of responsibility exhibited in the policy for medical insurance of the learners in which the premium was borne by the Trust. The progressive vision of the Trust was observed as this policy decision was taken in 2000. The state government implemented this policy for the secondary school from the year 2005-2006. The Trust continued to pay the premium for the medical insurance of learners from the pre primary and primary section of the school.

The policy and programs addressed the progressive agenda set by the Trust as well as a closer understanding of the stakeholders and their humble background. The policy of financial aid to the learners from the family in which the primary earning member is deceased is tuned to the mission of education of children from humble background. Policies to provide aid to teachers in the form of free education to the teachers' wards with the minimum service of three years and financial help in case of severe illness aided in better utilization of human resource.

Recognition of the teachers' contribution to the school was at first manifested through the 'Best Teachers' Award'. This program was a sense of responsibility of the Trust and the Principal to recognize the contribution of a teacher in the making of the school. In order to make this award objective and unbiased, the third Principal informed the teachers about the criteria for deciding the award. Since the last four

years from the year of the present study this program was discontinued in favour of a 'Thanksgiving Ceremony' in which the teachers and the other staff are appreciated for their efforts. This change created a broad base enabling the practice of equality as all the teachers were appreciated for their efforts. The involvement of the Trustee in this program is acknowledged as one of the teachers said, "*Vo to class IV staff ko gale lagate hai. Hum sab ko accha lagata hai.* (He hugs the class IV staff. We feel good.)" Inclusion of the former teachers in this ceremony ensured continuity of association who had contributed in the development of school. On the nature of association with the former teachers on the occasion of this ceremony, a former teacher remarked with frustration, "*Bus bula kar thanks keh dete hai* (they just called to say thanks)".

The Trust has adopted the policy of providing the maximum exposure to the learners by providing state of art infrastructure facilities in school. At the time of the present study, lawn was being developed. The supervisor of the primary section stated that the Trustee was informed that the desired result from the heavy investments on infrastructure facility would not be obtained as the nature of learners of the school do not have the potential to gain by it ('*Bacche sab bigaad denge*'). Yet the Trustee continued his stand that the learners from the humble background should not be deprived from any exposure to the latest equipments in education.

The policy of providing infrastructure facilities to provide a cutting edge to the school was significant. Way back in 1980 also the school had installed technology gadgets in school. The present Principal recalled that his demonstration lesson as a part of the selection procedure for this school for the post of teacher had been observed by the Principal on the 'talk back system' sitting in his office.

A need for professional development of teachers to enable them to use technology in the teaching learning process necessitated a need for professional development. The rise in the capability to use technology however was not observed by the researcher among all the teachers in equal measure. One teacher said, "See they (indicating to two teachers) have been trained, we do not know much but we learn from them gradually." Despite the installation of interactive boards in each classroom a major change in the teaching learning processes on account of the easy access to technology in each class was sparing and in frequent. The objective of providing the technology

to create familiarity with it and not to develop a feeling of being excluded from the latest in education was fulfilled as some students deftly assisted the teachers in its use.

The policies and programs of the school appeared aligned to the vision mission and objectives of the school and also the background of the learners. That religion was not an issue in the school was repeatedly informed to the researcher. It was also confirmed by former learners of the school. However, Hindu prayer as a regular component in assembly was introduced only after 1990. The policy of equipping the school with the infrastructure facilities especially technology was partially successful.

### **5.10.3.2 EVENTS OCCURRING ON VARIOUS SITES OF SCHOOL**

Out of over two dozen events observed on various sites of school the following events which are representative of this school are presented. The presentation of events is followed by a synoptic view and an analytic view of each event. The synoptic view provides an overview of the event and exhibits the manifestation of the constituents of Academic Culture. The analytic view presents the analysis of the event and its significance.

#### **Event 1 Teaching Learning Process**

*It was standard VIII C, the subject was Science and the topic was 'Refraction of light through prism'.*

*The students had already conducted practical in the laboratory on the previous day.*

*As the teacher entered the classroom, the students got busy taking out the projects to be submitted to the teacher. Observing this, the teacher said, "Projects will be collected in the seventh period." A sigh of disappointment could be heard, "hu!" Some students slouched their shoulders.*

*The teacher looked around the class. The students were talking among themselves. The teacher said aloud, "Where is the chalk?"*

*There is no response to this question. The students also looked around. The teacher said, "One of you get a chalk."*

*One student got up enthusiastically to get the chalk.*

*Teacher wrote the topic on blackboard- 'Refraction of Light Through Prism'. She drew a figure of a prism.*

*As the teacher was doing this, the students calmed down. They opened the textbook and notebook.*

*The teacher addressed the class, "Now prism. You have seen prism yesterday."*

*The students replied excitedly in chorus, "Yes."*

*Teacher, "Now what is the shape of prism?"*

*The students again answered in a chorus, "Triangle".*

*The teacher instructed, "First the instruments. Which instruments did we use in the practical?"*

*A chorus answer was heard, "Prism, drawing board, pins, paper."*

*The Teacher listened. She looked around the class. She pointed to a student sitting at the back. "Don't look out of the window." Then she looked at all the students, "Now the ray which falls on side of the prism, what do we call it?... aapaat kiran"*

*She drew the ray along with the figure of prism already drawn on the blackboard. The students observed it. Some students checked the diagram given in the textbook.*

*The teacher again looked at the students, "What do we call the pins placed on the ray?"*

*She drew the pins on the ray.... P1 and P2.*

*She continued to explain, "Then what happened to the rays inside the prism. .. it bends. Then what happens when it comes out from the other side.... Nirgamit kiran So which pins now, P3 and P4 (She indicated the position of the pins on the blackboard.) Can we make this an angle?"*

*The student answered in a chorus but in a subdued voice, "Yes"*

*The nodded her head, "What can it be called? .... Delta." She wrote it on blackboard.*

*The teacher turned around, cast a glance around the class then turned towards the blackboard, "Now let us see the direction of*



*the ray. How is it? It bends towards the base of prism. And then when it comes out it bends towards base more. So this is the judgment. After process comes judgment. Now write. Write this in journal. Have you all written practical number 12 ? Now write this , it is number 13."*

*A student (S1) asked in a concerned voice, "So when do we give the project?"*

*The teacher appeared a little irritated, "What did I announce? Collect in seventh period. Monitor will correct. Who is the monitor?"*

*Some students pointed towards the monitor. The teacher looked at the monitor student.*

*Just then the P T teacher entered the class. He stood near the entrance and announced, "29<sup>th</sup> Saturday, sports selection. No one should be absent. Girls wear slacks." He left immediately. The students were attentively listening to the announcement.*

*The teacher had stopped for a while. As soon as the P T Teacher left she continued to explain. She dictated the definition of prism. As she was dictating she would occasionally look at the students. She observed some students who were not writing.*

*The teacher said in an irritated voice, "Why are you looking at others? You do your work."*

*She continued to dictate. Again a murmur was heard. The teacher asked the two students who were talking, "Why do you speak in between?"*

*The teacher then addressed the entire class, "Have you seen rainbow?"*

*There was an excitement among the students. They answered in a chorus, "yes"*

*The teacher smiled, "When?"*

*A student (S3) said, "Rainy season."*

*The teacher persisted, "When... what time of the day?"*

*A chorus was heard, "morning in east and evening in west."*

*The teacher smiled, "Why is it like this?"*

*A student (S4) explained stood up, "Light of sun passes through raindrops."*

*The teacher nodded her head and repeated what the student said adding a point on her own, "Light of sun passes through raindrops. Sun is at our back and rainbow is in front of us."*

*The teacher suddenly moved to one side of the class. She stood near a student.*

*The teacher asked in a stern voice, "What are you doing? Should it be done now?" She took away student's notebook from his hand and kept it aside. That student looked at the teacher and then looked down.*

*The teacher continued the explanation on bending of rays, the rays which bend the most and the colour of the rays. She explained the spectrum of colours.*

*She then announced, "Now the next point but it is under the spectrum only."*

*A student peeped into the notebook of another student sitting next to him.*

*The teacher again asked him in an irritated voice, "Why can't you understand when I speak?"*

*The student looked at the teacher and sheepishly nodded his head to indicate that he understands.*

*The teacher appeared not to be convinced. She asked, "Then why do you look into neighbour's notebook?" She then said in a loud voice, "Now the next point. Make it a new point."*

*Just then the bell rang to indicate that the period was over.*

*The teacher appeared disappointed, "Oh the bell has rung but write down this point."*

*As the teacher dictated, she moved from one side of the class to another. As soon as she completed the point she left the class.*

### ***Synoptic view of the event***

This event depicts a teaching learning situation in one of the sites of school-a classroom. The emphasis was on 'what is to be done by the students and what is not to

be done by students'. A sense of responsibility appeared to be driving the actions of the two teachers: Science teacher and P T teacher.

The teacher teaching Science was driven by a sense of responsibility. She provided instructions to the students about how the practical is to be written ('Now the next point but it is under the spectrum only.', 'Now the next point. Make it a new point.', ). She was alert in the class to ensure the attention of all the students ('Why are you looking at others? You do your work.', 'Why do you speak in between?' 'Don't look out of the window', 'What are you doing? Should it be done now?'). A lack of 'responsible behaviour' of the student irritated the teacher ('Why can't you understand when I speak?'). The teacher appeared to be overwhelmed by her sense of responsibility to complete the task to such an extent that she could not attend to the enthusiasm of the students about submission of science project. The students displayed their sense of responsibility by complying with the instructions of the teacher. The teacher's behaviour also indicated an absence of sensitivity and thereby respect for the student who peeped into the notebook of other student as if not understanding a teacher's instruction was a fault of student. One of the students did exercise his freedom to inquire again when the science project would be collected by the teacher in spite of the announcement made by the teacher that it would be collected in the seventh period.

The entry and the exit of the P T Teacher in the class were sudden. The announcement made by the P T Teacher was prompted by a sense of responsibility to remind the students about the 'selections to be made'. A reminder to the girl students 'about wearing slacks' was significant as it would facilitate participation by them in sports activities.

### *Analytic view of event*

The teacher appeared to be in a hurry. At times, her gestures and tone communicated frustration. The students appeared to adjust to what the teacher asked them to do. A disappointment was clearly visible on their faces as the teacher did not respond to their enthusiasm for the science projects to be submitted.

This event illustrates how the teachers negotiate time to fulfill the entrusted responsibilities to them. The teacher teaching science continued teaching even after

the period had ended. The P T Teacher reminded the students about the Sports Day intruding into the time slot of the teacher teaching science. In the larger context of the humble background of the students, the emphasis of the teachers of the school is to supplement the lack of support at home thereby the teacher's activities are 'instruction' oriented.

## **Event 2      *Teaching Learning Process in Maths laboratory***

*The maths laboratory was established by NIIT in the school. The software used in it was in English. The maths laboratory was being used for students for the first time.*

*Two teachers (T1 and T2) teaching mathematics were trying out a mathematical figure on their laptop.*

*They ascertained the correctness of the figure together.*

*One of the teachers (T1) went to the maths laboratory. The other teacher (T2) went to standard X to instruct the students to gather at the maths laboratory. Students shouted with excitement. They all reached the laboratory were excitedly beaming with smiles.*

*The arrangement in the maths laboratory was such that there were eight round tables with one computer on each table. Four students could be seated around one table. The students settle on these tables.*

*T1 instructed the students to start the computer. He announced the user ID and the password. He then took a quick round to ensure that all computers had started.*

*The teacher demonstrated the figure for construction to be drawn. He said aloud the steps as he worked on the construction of the figure. All the students viewed the working as it was displayed on the screen through the LCD Projector. The students observed the projection on screen and simultaneously worked on their computer. The teacher paused after two instructions to observe the students. When he observed that some students were struggling and were not able to follow the steps, he quickly got up, reached that table and showed the step. The students who were sitting on that table relaxed and smiled.*

*The teacher asked looking at all the students, "Have you all drawn the figure."*

*The students said yes in a soft voice and looked expectantly at the teacher's face. The teacher said, "Now you can draw any other figure."*

*As the students started the work in their group the teacher took a round. He stopped at all the tables for a minute to check what the students were doing.*

*The following is the description of the interaction among the students in one small group.*

*This group decided to draw a circle. There were four students in this group. One student started with the steps instructed by the teacher. He took the 'mouse' in his hand. The other students keenly observed what appeared on the monitor of computer. Two students checked the figure with the one which was projected. The student who had 'mouse' in his hand was not able to draw. The fourth student who was patiently observing this student said with exasperation,, "nahi ave.(it will not be done this way.)".*

*Another student took the 'mouse' in his hand and said, "Let me try." As he was attempting to draw, the other three students observed the figure appearing on the computer monitor very carefully. He was not able to draw the circle. He smiled and moved away. Another student who was sitting next to him, tried. He also was not able to draw the figure. Finally the first student attempted again. He was able to draw the figure correctly. When the circle was done properly, all of them smiled.*

*After a while the teacher addressed the students*

*T1- Now let us try another figure. See the instructions. Let us revise a little English so that we can use the computer properly. If you want to measure that is 'maapvu' then click on measure, if you want to construct that is 'doravu' then click on construct. Ray means kiran and segment means rekhakhand, line means rekha.*

*Students listened carefully. They then constructed another figure of their own choice.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred on one of the learning sites of the school-the Maths Laboratory. In utilizing the learning resources, the teachers also exhibited responsibility as they first checked the process of drawing the figure before conducting the class, demonstrated the use of various tools on the computer to draw geometrical figures and attended to students by taking round. The teacher checked if all computers were working properly. He also quickly attended to those students who were unable to follow the steps. The learners were ensured freedom to explore and utilize the learning resources provided for them. The learners on their part created equal opportunity for each member of the group to attempt to draw the geometrical figure, though each member was not successful in drawing the figure.

In view of the medium of instruction which was the local language (Gujarati), English language posed a special barrier. The teacher displayed a sense of responsibility by suitably adapting the learning resource for the benefit of the learners by revising the Gujarati equivalents of the terms that appear in English on the computer screen ('Ray means kiran and segment means rekhakhand, line means rekha'). By showing sensitivity to the language barrier that the learners faced in using the Maths laboratory the teacher demonstrated respect for them.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The teacher was calm and composed. He was very alert as he observed the students at work. The students appeared excited. Some times they also appeared a little in awe of the maths laboratory and the equipments on display there.

This site and event is significant in view of the motive of establishment of school. The school was established with the motive of education of the children with unprivileged background in general and of Alavi community in particular. This site was significant as a manifestation of a sense of responsibility of the Trustee's to provide best resources in technology to facilitate teaching learning process.

The teacher's sense of responsibility facilitated the realization of the Trust's motive of providing the best of technology and learning resources to students.

### Event 3 Dealing With Erring Learners

*The venue is school premises just outside the school building.*

*The students were arriving. The school was yet to begin.*

*Students were entering the school premises. They walked in two lanes on two sides of the road which is inside the school premises. In the two lanes, at a distance of about twenty five meters (approximately) students were standing. These students were called marshals.*

*The marshal students look at every student to check whether the student is wearing proper uniform, displayed the identity card, the nails and the hair are cut.*

*Marshal student stopped a student and gestured to him to take out the identity card from the pocket and display it properly. The student did so accordingly. Some other students passed by. Marshal student stopped another one and asked him to button his shirt properly. To another student he asked to tie the shoe lace properly. The marshal student appeared to be from standard VII or VIII.*

*The school uniform on Wednesday is white. Some students were in regular uniform which is worn on the other working days of the school. These students appeared to be students of standard X,XI and were much taller and bigger than the marshal students. The Marshal Students stopped them.*

*Marshal Student spoke in a calm tone, "You are supposed to wear white uniform today."*

*The group of students looked at each other and stood at the place where other students who defaulted on one or the other account were standing.*

*They following discussion occurred among them.*

*S1 appeared as if asking him to stand aside was unjust. He explained to his friends, "Oh but I had gone to play for athletics so white T- shirt has got spoilt."*

*S2 said in a matter of fact tone, "So you tell him."*

*S1 looked up but didn't say anything.*

*S3 joined the discussion with a suggestion, "But you could have worn the white trousers."*

*S1 looked up, "The T- shirt and the trousers both are spoilt."*

*S5 who had not participated in this discussion appeared worried. He took out a form for registration of school's cricket team for inter school cricket tournament.. All students gathered around him and read the form.*

*He said in a worried tone, "We need the captain's signature. Today is the last day."*

*Then the head marshal boy walks in. The group of boys called him.*

*S4- See this is the form, you get the captain's signature. Tell sir.*

*Head Marshal read the form, listened to them and took the form from them. The group of boys continued to talk about various issues.*

*As this conversation was going on the assembly began. The marshal boy, who had asked these boys to stand aside as they were not wearing proper uniform, comes from behind and says very softly: "Sorry but prayer has started." After this he gestures them to be quiet.*

*The group of boys became quiet.*

*The prayer is over.*

*Head marshal boy- But the fees is six hundred rupees.*

*S2- Yes . So all will contribute fifty rupees each.*

*Head marshal boy- OK*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred on the playground just before the assembly. The student leaders who were a part of the Marshal System discharged their responsibility of checking uniform and punctuality in reaching school on time as a part of the school responsibility for the personal hygiene and deportment of the learners.



The defaulting learners demonstrated a sense of responsibility by not opposing the student leader's instruction to stand aside though they did not wear white uniform scheduled for the day with legitimate reason. Also they did not oppose when the student leader asked them to stop discussion as the prayer had started. The defaulting students indicated thus respect for the student leader. The defaulting student however did not exercise his freedom to inform the legitimate reason for not wearing the uniform. The student leader also fulfilled his responsibility fearlessly. The defaulting students also followed the system established in the school to get their work done. In all these actions the students indicated a sense of responsibility as they followed the rules and regulations established in the school.

#### ***Analytic view of event***

The student leader was calm and composed. He spoke less and gestured to the defaulting students to stand aside. The student leader who appeared smaller than the defaulting students did not indicate any fear of the older students. The defaulting students appeared to be bothered more by how the registration form for school's cricket team could be filled without delay.

It was the Marshal System, a key program of the school started by the one of the eminent Principals of the school for maintaining discipline, observed in practice. This event is significant as it indicates the continuation a program in spite of change in leadership. The researcher observed that it was implemented seriously. Yet a view given by one of the present teachers was that the program had lost its rigour.

#### **Event 4 Teaching Learning Process For Topics On General Awareness**

*It was standard VIII B, the subject was General Health awareness*

*The school had appointed a teacher for taking care of medical needs of the students. The government of Gujarat had started the scheme of 'Nirogi Baalak' ( Healthy Child). Under this scheme the teacher discussed general health awareness.*

*The period scheduled is for Gujarati subject but the teacher is asked to take these special classes in all the standards. She explained this to the Gujarati teacher who leaves the class.*

*During this interaction, the students get back to talking among themselves.*

*The teacher looked at everyone, "Is it a garden? I have told you, if you don't want to attend this lecture you may go to library. It is not a compulsory lecture."*

*The students kept quiet.*

*The teacher wrote on black board 'Water Purification and Chlorination' She explained about the scheme of 'Nirogi Baalak' by government. Students listened attentively.*

*The teacher then said, "Now all of you know about composition of water. Do you know?"*

*Only one student raised his hand.*

*The teacher exclaimed, "Only one student has raised hand. Why not others?"*

*The student who had raised his hand answered the question.*

*The teacher said, "Even if you know one or two components, it is o k. so now chlorination of water."*

*She explained chlorination of water- hypo and hyper. She stated that it should neither be less or more and that it should be balanced.*

*The teacher then inquired, "Are you interested?"*

*One student (S1 )complained indicating to a student sitting on his side, " Madam he whistles (indicates to a student on his side)."*

*The teacher ignored the complaint.*

*Another student (S2) said aloud, "We heard."*

*The teacher appeared a little angry. She said aloud, "It is not compulsory class, so if you are not interested you can go out."*

*She then turned to look at the blackboard and again faced the students. She inquired, " Are you understanding?"*

*The students answered in a chorus, " yes"*

*The teacher relaxed. She said, " If you don't understand raise your finger."*

*She explained about chlorine and why it is added to water in monsoon.*

*She asked, "Have you noticed that water tastes different in monsoon?"*

*Again the answer was given in chorus, "yes"*

*The teacher explained, "This is because government only chlorinates water so that all get pure water. We must know which water is good for drinking. There is a process for doing it."*

*After explaining the process she asked, "We need to make a chart for this. Who will make?"*

*Only four to five students raise their hands.*

*The teacher raised her voice to express surprise, "Why? In other sections I had problem of selecting. Now those who don't raise hand will make the chart."*

*The students giggled. Those who had not raised hands started looking here and there. Some also hid themselves. Teacher identified a few of those who had not raised hand and those who were trying to hide. She asked them to make the chart.*

*The instructed those students, "Meet me in your free period and I will explain. You don't have to decorate too much."*

*She took a test tube and a glass of water. She declared that two three drops were to be added to the water which will change the colour of the water. Then the changed colour of the water is to be checked against the chart given. If the code of the colour is between a particular number then only it is to be considered potable or else it is not to be used for drinking.*

*AS the teacher demonstrated all students tried to stand to have a look at what she was doing.*

*The teacher said, "I will show every one. Sit down."*

*Some students sat down while others continued to stand.*

*Laughter is heard from one corner of the class.*

*The teacher again looked irritated, "Why did you laugh? Which comments did you pass? If you tell the truth I will not punish. Tell the truth."*

*She went near to the students who had laughed. One student told her something very softly.*

*The asked the same student, "Is it about drainage?"*

*The teacher then walked towards the blackboard. She declared, " I will pass this test tube and the card. Check the colour of the water in the test tube against the colour given in the card."*

*She gave it to the students on the first bench and asked them to pass it. Two students sitting on one bench viewed it together and passed it one to the others. As this process was going on, the teacher conversed with the other students.*

*The teacher looked at another student, "Has he improved? Does he break equipments?"*

*Many students turned back to look at the student teacher was talking about and smiled. That particular student also smiled but he looked down.*

*The teacher said in a very affectionate tone, "All students are good only but sometimes they become bad."*

*The teacher then indicated to one student, "Will you do work?"*

*The student said quickly, "No"*

*All the students laughed loudly.*

*The teacher waited for a minute for the laughter to subside. She clarified, "Don't worry. You just have to check teeth and nails." After this she addressed the entire class, "Clap for him, he is brave boy of the class." Looking at that student she told him, "Meet me if you have difficulty."*

*She then addressed the entire class, "Now we are not taking marshals and monitors. They as such have a lot of work."*

*The teacher observed all the student to identify the leaders for checking nails and teeth of students. As she identified she also checked the nails and teeth of that student.*

*At the end she gave instructions to the identified student leaders, "Leaders don't have to be partial. Leaders also must be well disciplined. Come to school in a presentable form from tomorrow."*

*Girls, wear only black bands on hair, delicate earrings and oil your hair. You all should look presentable. See this student (indicated to a student) so pale, your face must glow, take healthy food. Ride cycle."*

*After this she looked at a short small student and said very affectionately "Tanny" (little one) start eating well."*

*By this time all students had viewed the test tube and checked its colour against the card given. Teacher sought opinion of students row wise about the potability of that water. After listening to everyone's answer she gave the final answer that it is just potable.*

*The bell rang and the period got over. As the teacher left the class she instructed, "Leaders meet me."*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in a classroom which is one of the major sites of learning in school. The fact of it being a class on general subject set the tone of the class. The teacher appeared to offer various choices to the students to enable them to use their freedom but she did not intend to offer the freedom of choice in reality. She offered the choice to the students ('I have told you, if you don't want to attend this lecture you may go to library. It is not a compulsory lecture.'). She offered the choice to a student to be the leader ('Will you do work?'). In the first case no student exercised their freedom of choice as they also understood that it was not really given to them. In the second case, one student exercised his freedom by refusing to become the leader but the teacher did not accept the choice made thereby denying him the freedom. Instead, the teacher created a support for the student by asking other students to appreciate him ('Clap for him, he is brave boy of the class') and to support him in case of difficulty ('Meet me if you have difficulty'). The teacher was so driven by her sense of responsibility to complete the teaching task in the given time that she ignored the distracting activities (whistling) of the students. The students did not display responsibility in general in responding to the teacher except when they had to observe the water in the test tube.

Equality of treatment to all the students was evident ('I will show every one. Sit down.'). Equal opportunity was given to all the students to view the water in the test

tube and check it against the card. During this activity the teacher did not hurry the students. Attention to individual students was exhibited as the teacher inquired about the progress and improvement made by the students. In this, a respect for the students as individuals who can improve was visible ('All students are good only but sometimes they become bad.').

The teacher demonstrated responsibility as she utilized the time fruitfully. She conversed with the students and identified leaders during the time the other students were observing the water in test tube. In identifying the leaders, she was conscious of her responsibility as she checked the eligibility of the leaders by checking their nails and hair. The leaders also were reminded of their sense of responsibility through her instructions (*'Leaders don't have to be partial. Leaders also must be well disciplined.'*)

#### ***Analytic view of event***

In this event, the school's response to implement government's initiatives (*'nirogi balak'*) within the school's stipulated time for functioning is observed. The strategy used by the school was to introduce the 'extra activity' within the regular timetable thus stealing on the other teacher's/subject's time. The sense of responsibility in general thus gets questioned. The challenge for the teacher was to create and sustain interest of the students in an activity which was not related to the examination. The teacher appeared to have understood the fact that students do not take her subject seriously. The students also appeared to take it lightly by being in a jovial mood as they enjoyed and laughed. The teacher's approach appeared at first unfriendly but subsequently she was able to strike a rapport with the students. The teacher's tone alternated between a sharp tone and an affectionate tone. The status of being a grant-in-aid school did not create enough freedom for the Principal to accept or reject the implementation of its schemes through the school.

This event indicates school's response to the initiatives of the government and how they impact the everyday life in school.

#### **Event 5 Parent- teacher Meeting**

*Parent-teacher meeting is held for each standard in the respective classrooms. This particular parent-teacher meeting was for students of standard X in the classroom.*

*There were three teachers teaching standard X (T1, T2, and T3). After some time, two more teachers joined (T4 and T5). Gradually parents and students arrived. Teachers welcomed them with smile and gestured them to sit on the benches. The teachers one by one addressed the parents and the students.*

*T1 said in a tone of complaint, "I have informed that I will take extra classes but so many students didn't come."*

*T2 declared, "Solve the papers and give me for correction."*

*T3 appeared angry, "School takes care but you should come."*

*Taking cue from the complains being presented by the teacher, T1 said in a serious tone, "Don't think that if forms are filled you are free not to come to school."*

*T3 joined in between, "Do you know the timetable?"*

*Just then another parent entered the class.*

*T2 spotted a student sitting at the back. He said, "See this child was not coming. Now we told him to come to school, he comes regularly and he has gained."*

*All present looked at the student. The student felt embarrassed but nods his head in agreement.)*

*T1 got excited. He said, "We took the students to the laboratory. Each student smelled and touched the different chemicals. Ask him (indicates to a student)."*

*The student (S1) nodded his head vigorously, "Yes"*

*T2 looked at the student, "So it was useful to come to school"*

*Another student (S2) replied, "Yes"*

*The parents of S2 also chorused, "Yes"*

*At this point some other students and their parents entered the class.*

*T2 spotted them. Looking at them he said with a smile, "Please come, welcome"*

*T3 then announced, "Monday is a holiday because of the picnic. Come regularly from Tuesday. Attendance till March is required."*

*One parent who was quietly listening said, " Please ensure that the students feel that time is not wasted."*

*Immediately T3 informed, "We combine classes now. So all subjects are taken up."*

*Another parent (P 2) inquired, " What about extra classes?"*

*T3 changed the topic. He asked, " O K let us know why (you) don't come to school? Is it because of tuitions? If yes, then those marks must be reflected in your result."*

*T2 got up and addresses the group of parents and students, "- Now there will be checking of attendance. If it is less your forms will be cancelled. We teach, we solve all problems/ sums on blackboard. (You)Ask students. Then also if they don't study , we feel bad. Our trustee asked for an analysis of result. It is done subject wise. (The analysis of the result is read out.)Now students don't come to school because of tuitions."*

*T1 joined this teacher, "We want quality results and quantity results also. There should be many students in 70% and above category. So now we will call all the students to school compulsorily. If students don't come then the responsibility is not ours. 80% attendance till 15<sup>th</sup> February is needed."*

*T2 said with a smile, " Only physical attendance is not important. Mentally also you should be here. If you are not then it is of no use. Many times students say- this is taught in tuition. But we do it again. I checked if students have copied correctly. Many had not. If you have gone for tuition, then the result must show (that). It doesn't so we feel bad about it."*

*Three to four students laughed sheepishly. Other students were silent.*

*T1 stated, "Now if you agree we will conduct one to five periods only. One to four main subjects and fifth period for computer. So those who don't have computer subject can go home."*

*The students listened attentively. They nod to indicate that they liked the plan.*

*T2 looked at the parents, "Now we don't want the parents to feel that time is wasted in school. The result of the test is 41%, but we want to make it 100%."*



*T3 spoke very enthusiastically, " We want to get good marks so forget everything and start studying from Tuesday. So now there will be tests after the content is over."*

*After some time the principal arrived. Students and parents got up. Principal gestured to them to be seated. He read a circular received from Board about the strict instructions about attendance. He stressed on the point that if adequate attendance was not found then the forms may be cancelled.*

*The Principal then asked politely, " Now do you have anything to say?"*

*The teacher (T2) informed the Principal, "We have told them and explained about five periods."*

*The Principal smiled. He again addressed the parents,, "From our side we will plan in such a way that periods for main subjects are held. The time of your children is not wasted. I will take care of this. Management also asks if give so many facilities then also why the result is not good."*

*The Principal left.*

*There was silence for about a minute.*

*T2 inquired, " If you have anything to say."*

*Without waiting for answer, T3 said, " We have to work together. Only two months are left. Work day and night. Our life will be made. Prelims are in January from second onwards, post prelims will be in February. The exam will be as per Board pattern."*

*T2 and T3 asked other teachers (T4, T5) present if they would like to say anything.*

*T4 said, " Generally it is believed that Gujarati is not important. But it is not so. One of last year's student got 85 in Gujarati so his overall percentage went up to 90. Pay attention to small aspects of letter writing as there are marks for the format. You may not get time at home but if you attend my class you will get practice. Extra classes are also conducted on Saturday and Sunday. Write answer papers and I will correct them. Have trust in me, don't worry. You will do well in exams. I always say don't waste money for Gujarati tuitions. You don't have to pay donation for college admissions if you get good*

*marks. Parents please pay attention to the group your child is in. If you get good marks your future is made, I will feel good, our institution feels good.*

*Everyone laughed.*

*The meeting ended.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event of parent-teacher meeting was an exercise in ensuring the collaboration of the various stakeholders-principal, teachers, students, parents and management in realization of the common objective, that is, the improved performance of the students at the Board examination. The basis of this meeting was a sense of responsibility. It was well communicated by the teacher's statement, "If you get good marks your future is made, I will feel good, our institution feels good." A collaboration between the school and the parents was emphasized ('We have to work together').

It started with a demonstration of a sense of responsibility of teacher/s through a series of complains ('I have informed that I will take extra classes but so many students didn't come'. 'School takes care but you should come'). The students' lack of responsibility was focus of complains as observed in their absence in school and their performance in the examination just conducted. The teachers demonstrated their sense of responsibility by offering support to the students ('Solve the papers and give me for correction').

Equality was evident as the emphasis was on improved performance of all ('The result of the test is forty one percent, but we want to make it hundred percent', 'We want quality results and quantity results also. There should be many students in 70% and above category.') The Principal's statement "Management also asks if give so many facilities then also why the result is not good" was indicative of a measure of accountability for the investment made for providing 'best learning resources' for the students.

### ***Analytic view of event***

The meeting did not have a formal beginning. Two teachers appeared very excited but the Principal was calm and composed. The parents were welcomed with respect. They

listened attentively to the teachers and the Principal. The student alternatively listened to the teachers and sometimes looked down.

This event indicates challenges that the school faces with respect to its policies and the challenge of alternative institutions in society. The Trustee's focus on providing the best for the students from the unprivileged background has been reiterated by teachers and Principal. It was a sense of responsibility in alignment with the motive of establishment of the school. A key point that emerged was the limitation of infrastructure and facilities on learners' performance.

Another challenge that the school faced was overcoming the alternative of tuition classes which the students chose in option to attending school regularly. The Principal and the teachers positioned their responsibility on the enforcement of rules and regulations ('Don't think that if forms are filled you are free not to come to school', 'if adequate attendance was not found then the forms may be cancelled.'). Another strategy was to demonstrate the benefits of attending school ('See this child was not coming. Now we told him to come to school, he comes regularly and he has gained.', 'If you have gone for tuition, then the result must show (that). It doesn't so we feel bad about it.').

#### **Event 6 Discussion among teachers in the staffroom**

*The Marshal Students had the duty to check students for proper uniform, well trimmed nail, well-cut hair and oiled hair. If any aberration is found it was to be reported to the teacher in charge of marshal duty.*

*A student who had not applied oil to his hair was asked by the marshal student to report to a teacher in the staffroom. After the given by the marshal student, the teacher asked to the erring student, "Why have you not applied oil to hair?"*

*The student said in a low voice, "Sir my grandma has expired so applying oil to hair is not to be done."*

*The teacher said with a serious face, "O K". He then looked at the other teachers sitting in the staffroom to seek confirmation for the judgment given by him. They all nod in agreement. The student left the staff room.*

*Another teacher (T2) waited for the student to leave the staffroom. He said, "These are emotional and sensitive issues so we should not interfere."*

*A teacher (T3) said in a sarcastic tone, "There are some girls who also say that hair should not be oiled. They get pimples."*

*A teacher who was listening to the conversation said, "Oh It may be so."*

*Another teacher (T7) immediately commented, "We all have grown up applying oil to hair."*

*All teachers present there laughed spontaneously.*

*A teacher (T8) was silent for a long time, she suggested, "There may be some proportion to how much oil is to be applied."*

*The other teachers nodded.*

*Another teacher (T4) appeared agitated. She said, "Actually we do not follow rigorously the rules. Otherwise ask them to bring doctor's certificate (for not applying oil to hair)."*

*A teacher (T5) quickly responded, "One of the students had brought."*

*After this the issue was not further discussed. All the teachers present there continued to do their other work.*

### ***Synoptic view of event***

This event occurred in staffroom which is one of the sites for interaction among the teachers. This event demonstrated the responsibility of the Marshal student who brought the student who had not oiled his hair to the notice of the teachers. The defaulting student exercised his freedom by informing the teacher the reason for 'not oiling hair'. The teacher demonstrated respect for the student owing to the socio-cultural tradition followed in his family (the social custom of not oiling hair on the demise of a member of family).

Subsequent to this the discussion among the teachers demonstrated the freedom that the teachers enjoyed in expressing their views fearlessly on the school program and the school's stand on issues related to rules and regulations. There was no consensus

on the issue though the teacher manifested a sense of responsibility by ensuring an implicit concurrence of other teachers on her decision. Though the other teachers appeared to have different opinion on the issue they demonstrated a sense of responsibility by not opposing the teacher's decision in front of the student.

#### *Analytic view of event*

This event indicates the response of the teachers in the execution of their responsibilities, in this case the implementation of the Marshal system. The teachers were charged with emotion. The various responses to the question ranged from irritation, anger to an understanding of the situation. The discussion did not reach a conclusion but was abandoned. This discussion among teachers is significant in view of the emphasis on personal hygiene and grooming of students as they were from unprivileged background. The third Principal emphasized it as a sense of responsibility for providing the adequate support in view of the unprivileged background of the students.

### **5.10.3.3 EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN REFERENCE TO THE FOUR CONSITUTENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE**

#### *Learners*

The admission policy does not lead to inequality among the students as the school does not mention any specific criteria for admission. The headgear indicating the religious identity of the learners in addition to the regular school uniform apparently may indicate a distinction created among the students but the learners do not experience it. A student of standard VIII belonging to the Hindu religion said, "We never think about it." A teacher who was with the school for about twenty five years said with a shrug of shoulder, "That is not a point in this school. All students are equal." The distinctions based on religion have been developed as mechanism for broadening one's horizons. Two students one of whom had offered Arabic and the other Sanskrit as optional language shared their perspectives. One student said, "I can read Arabic, Urdu and Sanskrit." The second student said, "Sanskrit is very difficult." The first student said, "You need to memorize many things in Sanskrit."

The exercise of freedom by learners in the teaching learning process was not much observed by the researcher.

'Keeping the hair well cut, nails trimmed and a clean uniform' was the description of being disciplined. 'Getting beaten' was understood as a way of becoming disciplined. A former teacher described the students' lack of responsibility (of Higher Secondary section) as 'being not interested in studies' the reason attributed for which was the students' strength in the class.

### **Teachers**

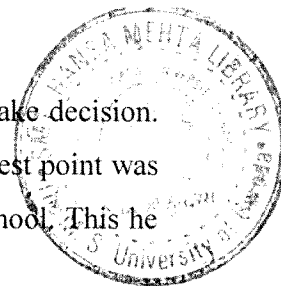
Freedom is experienced by the teacher in taking initiatives and overcoming the administrative procedures. A maths teacher who had been trained to use the Maths laboratory saw the present Principal passing by the staffroom. He told him, "Students would be taken to the Maths Laboratory today. The principal nodded his head in agreement. The teacher then informed to the researcher, "We are going to use the maths laboratory for the first time today. But I did not take the permission of the Principal for it. I have just informed him." The teacher enjoyed the freedom to use the teaching learning resources available in the school. The principal did not create bureaucratic barriers in the use of the maths laboratory which facilitated the teacher to use it as per need of the class.

The government policy on recruitment and remuneration create inequality among teachers. The salary of a fixed amount per month under the *Vidya Sahayak* scheme of government creates a group of teachers who feel they get less than their due in comparison to those teachers who get the full salary are developed. A teacher of the Higher Secondary Section said in anguish, "What will a teacher do in this salary?"

Equality was experienced by teachers through acceptance of all. One teacher who had joined the school a year before this study was conducted explained, "I am new but I don't feel that I am new." A teacher with ten years of experience in the school explained the approach of old teachers to new teachers, "*Hum group me le lete hain* (We take in our group)" Another teacher with ten years of experience in the school described it as 'No groupism'.

The teachers felt secured in the school on account of the equality experienced by them. A teacher with thirty years of experience in the school stated, "During riots,

schools had to close. The third Principal would call senior teachers to take decision. He used to send the Hindu teachers first from a different route. His greatest point was that he never let the idea of the Hindu Muslim differences enter the school. This he did by listening to all.”



A sense of responsibility among teachers was explained as ‘good-coordination in subject teachers’ by a new teacher who had joined this school a year before the present study was conducted. He shared his experience, “I am new. When I joined, only two chapters were done. Eleven were to be completed before the test. It was not possible. So other science teachers on their own distributed chapters among themselves. These were taught in the proxy period, drawing period and P T period.” A change in the sense of responsibility was observed from the tenure of the third principal to the present time. Comparing the two different periods, the present Principal reflected, “During the Navnirman movement when the schools were forcibly closed, teachers from this school taught the learners after school working hours and did not sign the muster to avoid being labeled as boycotting the Navnirman movement. Subsequent to it the turn over of the teachers is more. The same kind of devotion is not possible now.”

### ***Principal***

The dynamics of the relationship between the Trustee and the Principal defined the experience of freedom, respect, equality and a sense of responsibility of Principals. Active involvement of the Trustee in the day to day functioning of the school was almost nil during the tenure of the third Principal. The third Principal enjoyed the confidence of the Trustees who did not visit the school very often. Their relationship has been described as ‘no interference’. A teacher with twenty five years of experience in the school said with a smile, “We thought the Principal and the Trustee were the same.” After 2001, the active involvement of the Trustee and his physical presence in the school premise has changed the dynamics. This active involvement could be due to the instable leadership after the tenure of third Principal. The present Principal explained his position as, “I have slowly gained the trust of the Trustee. Now I attend many meetings as his representative.” A former teacher also remarked that over the last three years, Trustee’s respect for the Principal has visibly increased (*respect nazar aata hai*).

The third Principal's approach to work was driven by a sense of responsibility. In the early years of the school he himself used to bathe the children attending the school and wash their clothes to demonstrate how the clothes have to be washed. Demonstration and presenting himself as a model was a way of developing a sense of responsibility among teachers. He has been described as 'hard working', 'would work day and night'. The third Principal has even taught the teachers how to keep a duster. The dedication of the third Principal has been described by the present Supervisor as reported by the third Principal, "I have three children, two daughters and one school."

#### **5.10.4 AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANIFESTATION OF CONSTITUENTS OF ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THIS SCHOOL**

The three perspectives employed to understand the Academic culture in this school: the matrix of policy, program, past initiatives; events observed on various sites of school in the everyday life; and the constituents of Academic Culture as experienced by the stakeholders collectively leads to the overall understanding of the manifestation of constituents of Academic Culture in school. This overall understanding is presented herewith.

##### ***Freedom***

Freedom was 'non interference' from the Trustee in the discharge of responsibility of the Principal. Freedom facilitated taking initiatives by the Principal. A restriction of this freedom was seen as the 'active involvement' of the Trustee in the day to day functioning and the location of office of the Trustee in the school building. It was open access to the Trustee. Freedom however was created by the Principal for the teachers in the use of learning resources. In this case it was observed as, absence of bureaucratic barriers in the use of learning resources.

Communication facilitated freedom. It was through 'listening' to the teachers by the Trustee. It was listening to both parties (teachers) in case of conflicting.



### ***Respect***

Respect was acceptance of teacher's word. Respect was acknowledgement of teacher's presence. Respect was tolerance of learners and teachers of different religious identities. Respect was recognition of efforts.

### ***Equality***

Equality was practiced by offering choices of subjects pertinent to one's religious identity (Arabic and Sanskrit). Factors that led to absence of equality were unequal remuneration for teachers. Offering opportunity to each and every student was practice of equality in the teaching learning process. Some times, students' strength created a lack of opportunity for participation in the teaching learning process.

### ***A Sense of Responsibility***

A sense of responsibility has been the key constituent of Academic Culture in this school. Service to community was the sense of responsibility as observed in the motive for establishment of the school. In view of the family background and the socio-economic profile of the students, enrichment and support from the school was a sense of responsibility. It was practiced by 'keeping the school open for evening studies'. At the policy level the focus on providing 'best learning resources' and latest technology for the students to provide them the exposure of the present world was sense of responsibility. The notion of not being excluded ('not left behind') was the pivot of this sense of responsibility.

Personal hygiene and deportment was another aspect of responsibility which was attempted through 'bathing the children', 'demonstrating the washing of the clothes of students'. It was 'training and guiding the teachers'. It was also observed in the form of various 'dos' and 'don'ts' often presented to the students. The intensity of the sense of responsibility was dependent on the service conditions: the salary and the students' strength. Responsibility was protection of the different stakeholders from the adverse influences of the society. It was undertaken through 'protection of the teachers and students through safe exit from the school during communal disturbances'.

### 5.10.5 PROCESS OF NURTURING ACADEMIC CULTURE

#### *Leadership: service driven*

The motive of establishment of this school necessitated a leadership which was service driven. This was reflected in the personal devotion of the Principal and his extended working hours which were beyond the regular service conditions. The Principal also demonstrated by personal example.

#### *Alignment of vision, policy, programs and practices*

The emphasis on secularism prompted practices which developed synergy with community. The motive of establishment of school for the service to the community led to the launch of programs which would supplement the exposure poor environment of the learners. It also included extending the use of school's public space for learners to use for study if they lacked adequate space at home.

Though most of the policies and programs were aligned to the vision, the policy of investment in the infrastructure facilities did not appear to achieve its objective fully.

### 5.10.6 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE

#### *Confidence in the school*

The two distinct phases of this school led to two different perception of confidence in school. Under the leadership of the third Principal, it was considered a 'safe place' where 'students were taken care of'. There was confidence in the actions of the Principal and the teachers even if it was 'beating'. During approximately the last five years from the year of this present study a decline in this confidence was felt by the researcher. In sharing perspective of this school, the stakeholders mainly focused on the school under leadership of third Principal. It was also subtly suggested as '*ab aisa nahi hota*' though the rush for admission is has not been affected by this changed perception.

A change that occurred after the change in this leadership did not succeed in maintaining the same confidence. The need to catch up with the contemporary demand was caught by the present Trustee, "*One thing is very important for Gujarati*

*medium. Change is important. Change is everywhere. Think of new methods of teaching. We will try to train you through workshops and seminar. The onus of change is on you."*

The researcher subtly felt that a perception that the school catered to a specific community was also observed.

### ***Learners***

The students are described as well turned out ('neat and clean', 'smart'). They are described as having 'good manners'. These attributes of the students were considered very significant in view of their exposure poor environment at home. The students 'respect' teachers and elders.

A change in this description of the students approximately during the last five years was described as 'A school known for discipline was indisciplined'. It was explained as '*ab bacche respect nahi karte*(Now students don't respect)', '*padhai me interest nahi hai*(not interested in studies)' '*unki bhasha badal gai hai* (their language has changed)'.

### ***Teachers***

The teachers were described as 'very competent', 'devoted' and 'hard working' during the phase of the third Principal. With the retirement of the teachers from this phase and the change in leadership, the school had new group of teachers. Rapid change in the teachers led to instability whereby the teachers' affiliation to the school and the students could not be developed.

## **5.10.7 SUMMING UP**

The above analysis can be summed up as follows. There is manifestation of all the four constituents of Academic Culture. However the events and their analysis indicate a dominant presence of sense of responsibility. The process of nurturing Academic Culture that emerged was: (i) leadership which was service driven and (ii) Alignment of vision, mission, policy, programs and practices. The influence of the Academic culture was observed as confidence in school. The confidence however had declined. The second influence on the learners was described as well-turnout and well-

mannered students. The teachers of this school were competent and hardworking but a change in this is observed over the past five years.

Thus the analysis of events facilitated an understanding of the key characteristics of this school and the prevalent Academic Culture.