UNIT 7 METHODS OF STUDYING CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Structure

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Objectives

7.3 Researching Classroom for Understanding Children

7.4 Meaning and Process of Classroom Research
   7.4.1 Action Research
   7.4.2 Case Study

7.5 Tools of Research
   7.5.1 Observation
   7.5.2 Self Reports
   7.5.3 Interaction with Children
   7.5.4 Children’s Diaries
   7.5.5 Cumulative Record
   7.5.6 Anecdotal Record
   7.5.7 Reflective Journals

7.6 Common Problems in Classroom and Implications for Research

7.7 Let Us Sum Up

7.8 Unit- End Exercises

7.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.10 References and Suggested Readings

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding Units, you have studied how children go through different developmental stages on the way to becoming adults. In this process, children face a lot of problems related with development and express behavioural problems in the classroom. As teachers or prospective teachers, you must be empowered as a problem solver to understand and solve the developmental needs of children. Classroom research is a small scale research that is conducted in the classroom in order to understand children and solve classroom problems. As teachers or prospective teachers, you might have conducted research in your classroom in order to understand what problems children are facing academically, behaviourally and emotionally. Consequently, the teacher can modify her/his method of teaching or her/his behaviour as per the needs of children accordingly. You may have noted students’ problems related with understanding content, adjusting with teachers and peers and sometimes complying with rules and regulations of the school. These factors lead to the necessity of classroom research.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of classroom research;
differentiate between action research and case study;

- describe the tools of classroom research
- analyze common problems in the classroom;
- identify and apply the various tools for conducting classroom research.

7.3 RESEARCHING CLASSROOM FOR UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN

Read the following case:

**Case1**: Reshmi has recently been appointed as a teacher in Class VIII in a government school located in a rural area. On the very first day she has noted that Navin behaves differently from other children. His favourite subject is Social Studies and sometimes Reshmi gets obscure facts from him. In other subjects, he scored low grade though his ability level is high, while in group activity, Navin goes around the entire group and talks with his friends. In spite of the continuous effort put in by Reshmi to remind him of classroom rules, Navin behaves in the same way.

You might have faced such problems in your classroom. What is the problem with Navin? Why is it difficult to keep Navin engaged in group activity? What would you do if you were Navin’s teacher? The answer to these questions lies in the need of teachers understanding their children. How could we understand our children? What are the ways that could be adopted to know the children? These are the questions that research assists you to answer.

As teachers, we might conduct research to find out what is going on in our classrooms, and to establish ways of remedying problems. This convinces us of the necessity to explain what things happen and why, and seek ways to understand the child. The teacher’s role here moves further to that of inquiring or finding out what one doesn’t know.

7.4 MEANING AND PROCESS OF CLASSROOM RESEARCH

Generally, we may define research as a systematic process of making an inquiry about an issue that may lead to new findings, solve problems or develop new theories. It is called systematic because it follows a method which can be justified, validated and repeated. It is called inquiry because it begins with a main problem. You may agree that the goal of classroom research is to improve teachers’ own understanding about themselves and their children. The classroom research is not generalizable to wider contexts. The focus is on the practical significance of findings, rather than on statistical or theoretical significance. Classroom research is the formal study of teaching, learning and how children behave in a classroom. It attempts to answer the fundamental questions:

- How well are students learning?
- How do children behave?
- How effectively are teachers teaching?

When we examine the characteristics of classroom research, the following points could be noted down:
1) **Learner-centered:** Classroom research focuses on the felt needs of the learners to facilitate learning.

2) **Teacher-directed:** Teacher makes the decisions regarding the research according to the needs of students’ classroom learning.

3) **Collaborative:** All stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents and community may participate in the research.

4) **Context-specific:** The teacher of a particular discipline may conduct a study with a particular group of students which is unique and the situations may be different in another classroom.

5) **Scholarly:** The teacher conducts the research in a systematic way after reviewing related literature in consultation with experts giving adequate attention to policies and ethics.

6) **Practical and relevant:** As the problem selected is based on the felt need of the teacher, the findings of the study will be relevant and useful for the teacher and her/his student.

7) **Continual:** Classroom research cannot remain in isolation. It may lead to further investigations.

Generally in classrooms, we use two types of classroom research. They are:

i) Action Research

ii) Case Study

### 7.4.1 Action Research

It was Kurt Lewin who first used the term ‘*Action Research*’ in 1946 in his paper “Action Research and Minority Problems.” You may be familiar with other terms such as participatory research, collaborative inquiry, emancipatory research, action learning, and contextual action research which are other names of action research. Action research is an example of “learning by doing” - a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if they are not satisfied, try again. It gives teachers the opportunity to investigate teaching and learning in their own classrooms. We can say that action research is a process of systematic reflection, enquiry and action carried out by individuals about their own professional practice.

You know that action research has many uses in the classroom as given below:

a) **Teaching methods:** Trying out an innovative method.

b) **Learning strategies:** Teacher may understand the learning strategy of students and modify the method of teaching accordingly.

c) **Evaluative procedures:** Trying open book test.

d) **Attitudes and values:** Life skills education through drama or role plays.

e) **Continuing professional development of teachers:** Improving teaching skills, developing new methods of learning, increasing powers of analysis, for heightening self-fulfillment.

f) **Management and control:** The gradual introduction of the techniques of behaviour modification for classroom management.
g) Administration: Improving community participation through different techniques.

Let us discuss about the steps of action research with an example. Read the following case:

**Case 2**: Anita a teacher in class IX finds that her students are not able to write answers to indirect questions properly and they lack thinking skills. She wants to adopt a teaching strategy that helps to develop thinking skills among children. An action research with this focus might develop in the following way:

**Step 1: Identifying the problem**

Anita observes that majority of children are not able to attempt indirect questions in a proper way. She has found out the problem while asking indirect questions in classroom as well as while evaluating answer scripts. Identifying the problem as lack of thinking skills, Anita decides to develop thinking skills among children.

**Step 2: Devise a plan**

On the next day Anita wants to teach a topic ‘Gender Inequality in Education’. Instead of directly explaining about gender inequality in education, she begins the class by writing the following statistics* on the board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of person</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural-Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Anita: Look at this table. What trends can you see? You can see the gender-wise literacy level of persons (per 1000 persons) of age 7 years and above for the rural and urban areas in India during 2011-12. Now, I want you to think about three questions. First, what can you find out while comparing the male and female literacy level? Second, what are the reasons for the low literacy level of females? Third, what could be some of the school-based reasons for this disparity?

**Step 3: Selecting a Course of Action**

Anita divides the class into three groups. By doing this, she makes the children engage in group work. Each group starts working on the given issue.

**Step 4: Data Collection**

During this step of the action research process, Anita observes each group. She notes down the contribution of each student in her diary and also observes some students not participating in the group. It is important to provide specific sources of information if the children needed.

**Step 5: Analysis**

During this phase, the responses of various groups are examined. She noticed that for question no. 2, all groups have agreed upon the point that girls have to attend to
the domestic chores and hence they drop out of school. While some groups noted other reasons as:

- Inaccessibility of schools
- Responsibility to take care of siblings
- Lack of separate toilets for girls in schools
- Education not considered necessary

Anita concludes this phase of the activity by writing on the board those explanations for which the most evidential support has been found.

**Step 6: Organizing data and writing**

Anita then decides to organize and write up the results of her attempt in developing thinking skills among children. She shares her experience with colleagues and decides to publish a paper based on this research.

**Step 7: Incorporating the results**

Anita decides to change her teaching methods in classroom from lecture method to inquiry strategy where there is possibility to increase the thinking skills of students. She also encourages children who are reluctant to speak in the classroom. She thus incorporates the results of the research into classroom practice. In this way, this action research helps Anita to enhance her understanding of children in her classroom.

**Step 8: Review**

After implementing the changes in teaching styles, the next stage is to review. The questions that arise here include: How successful is my new teaching style? Is it necessary to incorporate other techniques to enhance the thinking skills of children? From this research can I explore new areas for investigation?

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Notes: (a)** Write your answer in the space given below.

(b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

i) Describe the steps of action research on a topic of your choice for your class.

..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

7.4.2 Case Study

Case study is an in-depth study of a single person, group, event or community. It is a method through which a very complex issue or field of research is studied initially. A case study consists of reliable data gathered from a variety of sources using different tools and techniques. Like the case history prepared for each patient in the hospital, all pertinent information regarding the child is collected from various sources such as health record, family background details, academic aspects, interests, attitudes and aptitudes. The teacher or guidance counsellor selects methods of data collection according to the situation. The information gathered covers the present status, past
experiences and environmental factors about the child. Though the teacher or guidance worker may not have any control over events, analysis of various factors helps us get a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case. It also provides a chronological sequence of events relevant to the case.

The following are the procedures that can be followed while conducting a case study of a child:

a) **Justification for studying the child**: The purpose of the case study should be clear. It could be for assisting a child in overcoming difficulties or for showcasing exemplar performance for others to emulate.

b) **Identification of the child** through factual information such as name, class, age, address.

c) **Family background**: Parents’ educational and occupational details, parenting style, aspirations regarding the child and other relevant information such as relationships among the members of the family.

d) **Health record**: Record of illness, height, weight, nutritional status, any physical disability and other details such as gait or speech defects.

e) **Educational data**: Academic performance in class tests, annual exams, participation in class discussions and co-scholastic activities and home work are some of the examples.

f) **Psychological and social data**: Through observation, unstructured and semi structured interviews we could infer the intelligence and social behaviour of a child. Psychological test reports such as intelligence test reports, sociometry and aptitude test reports could also be used.

g) **Determine the status** of the phenomena under observation.

h) Determination of the probable **antecedent of the case**.

i) **Suggest measures** to all stakeholders.

j) **Prepare a report**

The **case study report** usually has certain elements such as introduction, overview/analysis, status reports, case problems and appendices. The following table gives a brief description of each element.

**Table 7.2: Elements of a Case Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>The justification or rationale should be given in the introduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overview/Analysis</td>
<td>After collecting all the information listed above such as family background, educational data, psychological and sociological data, analysis of all the details helps us establish linkages and identify the key factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Status Reports</td>
<td>The status report describes the child’s condition clearly indicating present situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Suggestions for remediation</td>
<td>Suggestions for students, teachers, parents, and peers are given and follow up schedule also to be included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Appendices</td>
<td>The case study may include as many appendices as required. Observations, anecdotes, diaries, writings, records of conversations, mark lists, psychological test reports, sociograms can be incorporated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggestions for conducting a good case study**

The following suggestions can be followed while conducting a good case study:

a) Select a child from your own class
b) Seek permission for conducting the case study from the parents and class teacher
c) Build rapport with the child
d) Collect information from many sources
e) Suggest remedial measures after discussing with your mentor in the school

**Situations when case study needs to be prepared**

a) Exceptionally high achievement or creativity
b) Exceptionally high talent in art, or sports
c) Children with disabilities: physical, sensorial, autistic and learning
d) Children with behavioural problems: truancy, aggressive, stealing, substance abuse
e) Children with adjustment problems
f) Children from difficult home environments

An example of a case study is given below:

**Case 3:** In class VIII C of a public school, Radha, a biology teacher found that one of her students was creating disturbance in her class. He was Dhaj who could not sit quietly; he would always be looking here and there. Whenever Radha asked him a question he could not answer. He could not concentrate in the class. When Radha asked about Dhaj to his class teacher, she also agreed with Radha’s observations. The child was having problems in attending the class and Radha decided to probe further through a case study. After seeking the class teacher’s permission, Radha contacted his parents and with their consent, she started collecting all the details about the child from other teachers, his classmates and his parents to find out the reason for his behaviour in order to suggest remedial measures. He belonged to an upper middle class family. The scholastic data was also collected.

**Status Reports**

Dhaj was doing well in Physical education and was very poor in all other subjects. He was interested only in games. He had problems in paying attention to reading and writing. He had average intelligence, He was hyperactive and impulsive. He was uncooperative with the peers.
Case Problems

After analyzing all the information, Radha could understand that the child had a learning disability. He also had an inferiority complex as he was always compared to his brother who was a high achiever. Parents never encouraged him. He was often ridiculed. His teacher started to pay individual attention to Dhaj and give him opportunity to express his ideas thereby bringing Dhaj into the active learning process.

Activity 1

Based on your classroom experience, prepare a case study related with the behavioural problem of a child.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

7.5 TOOLS OF RESEARCH

Action Research is more of a holistic approach to problem-solving, rather than a single method for collecting and analyzing data. Thus, it allows for several different research tools to be used while the project is conducted. These various methods, which are generally common to the classroom research paradigm, include: Observation, Self-Reports, Interaction with Children, Children's Diaries, Cumulative Record, Anecdotal Record and Reflective Journals.

7.5.1 Observation

Observation is a method of measuring children's behaviours directly by watching the classroom events or behaviours. It is the process of gathering firsthand information by observing children in their natural settings. Generally, the data that is collected from this procedure focuses on the frequency with which specific behaviours or types of behaviour occur in the classroom and measure their duration. Classroom observation is widely used as a method for classroom research as well as for classroom performance appraisal.

Observation as a research technique or method implies several features:

(a) the collection of evidence,
(b) the examination or analysis of the evidence, and
(c) the formation of significant judgments based on the evidence and the subsequent implications, such as changes and improvements, to accepted practices these judgments may entail.

Types of Observation

There are varied types of observation that can be used in a classroom. Generally we may divide observation into three types- i) controlled, ii) natural and iii) participant observation.

Controlled observation: In this type of observation, you may plan in advance where the observation will be done, the time and the groups of participants on whom it has to be done. You can use a standardized procedure to observe the participants. Observed behaviour is systematically classified into distinct categories.
To measure the intensity of behaviour, scale can be used and to describe the characteristics, coding can be done using letters or numbers. Coding of the categories on the schedule is done to quantify the collected data into statistics. For example, if you wish to observe the behaviour patterns of boys and girls in the playground, you might note that the boys engage more in risky behaviour involving physical movements as compared to girls. To look for the cause, you would have to make certain observations and do categorization. Due to more number of boys in the playground, it may be observed that boys are engaged in risky behaviour. It may be observed that in reality only two or three risk taking individuals are present and the others are simply following suit. In addition to making a count of number of boys, you have to record the number of individuals doing the activities. In this example, you would record the individual’s behaviour along with the count of number of incidents.

**Natural observation:** In this type of observation, you may use a systematic set of rules for recording and classifying events. It is perceived to be as objective as possible with least intervention of the observer in the process. The result is expressed in quantitative terms. For example, you want to study the risk taking behaviours in adolescents when placed in settings such as mountaineering, rock climbing, bungee jumping, and river rafting. You would then observe the adolescents and record the incidences involving risk taking behaviour in each setting.

**Participant observation:** In this type of observation, there exists a direct relationship between the observer and the participant. A variety of tools such as, checklists, rating scales, field notes and audio-visual recordings can be used for this type of observation. For example, you wish to study the interest in subjects among the secondary school students. For this, you would observe the class and make note of the children who were actively involved in the class of a particular subject. On the basis of the academic performance of children, you would get an insight into the choices of your children and try to adopt strategies in teaching to attract them to other subjects as well and improve their overall performance.

### Check Your Progress 2

**Notes:**
(a) Write your answer in the space given below.

(b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

i) Suppose you want to observe students’ participation in classroom learning. On what basis would you observe them? Frame criteria for observing students’ participation in the classroom.

..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

### 7.5.2 Self Reports

Another method to collect data is self-report, in which you respond to questions about yourselves regarding a wide variety of issues such as personality traits, moods, thoughts, attitudes, preferences, and behaviours. A self report is any method which involves asking a participant about their feelings, attitudes, beliefs and so on. In fact, much of social science knowledge and theory are based largely on self-report data. Self-report research requires the collection of standardized, quantifiable information from all members of the population or sample. In order to obtain comparable data
from all research participants, the same questions must be asked. Self-report approaches require individuals to respond to a series of statements or questions about themselves. For example, a survey about local schools might ask respondents questions such as “Do you believe the cost of education in our community is too high?” Respondents would self-report their views by marking “yes,” “uncertain,” or “no.”

The most common forms of self-report are questionnaires and interview.

**Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are a type of self-report which consists of a set of questions usually in a highly structured written form. It is used when factual information from a respondent is needed. A number of questions in the questionnaire are given to the examinee and s/he answers these questions according to her/his own will. In the next paragraph we will discuss about the various types of questionnaire.

**Types of questionnaire**

**Close ended questionnaire:** This type of questionnaire consists of questions which have fixed number of response options. Respondents are asked to check the options that are best suited to them. Responses in such questionnaires may be in the form of Yes/No, Agree/Disagree etc. Example: “Cricket is a game that can be played by anyone” Agree/Disagree.

On the other hand, they do not enable respondents to add any remarks, qualifications and explanations to the categories.

**Open ended questionnaire:** Open questions are those questions which invite the respondent to provide their own answers and provide qualitative data. This type of questionnaire consists of those questions which require free responses on the part of the respondents. The maximum word limit may be given here. For example: ‘Give the two causes of degradation of quality in education.’ Open-ended questions are useful if the possible answers are unknown or the questionnaire is exploratory. They also enable respondents to answer as much as they wish, and are particularly suitable for investigating complex issues, to which simple answers cannot be provided. Although these types of questions are more difficult to analyse they can produce more in-depth responses relating to what the participant actually thinks rather than being restricted by categories.

**Interview**

You know that interview is a face to face conversation between two people—the interviewer and the interviewee. Interviews can be structured whereby there is a predetermined set of questions or unstructured whereby no questions are decided in advance.

There are various types of interview. Next we discuss about the three types of interview—i) structured interview, ii) semi-structured interview and iii) unstructured interview.

**Structured interview:** In this, the interviewer has to strictly follow the schedule and ask them questions in the order provided. The responses given by the interviewee do not affect the nature of the questions to be asked by the interviewers.
**Characteristics of the Structured Interview**

- The interviewer asks each respondent the same series of questions.
- The questions are created prior to the interview.
- More closed-ended questions are included often.
- As the same questions are repeated there is consistency from interview to interview.
- The interviewer never provides his or her opinion in the interview.

**Semi-structured interview:** A semi-structured interview is a type where the interviewer has a list of topics on which conversation has to be made. Interviewer asks the questions and on basis of the answer provided, can change or move away from the list. The aim is to follow the order but depending on the responses the course of action can change.

**Characteristics of Semi-structured interviews**

- The interview is conducted with a list of questions as in the case of structured interview but the interviewer may add or omit questions as per the situations.
- There is more demand on the interviewer to act according to the situation

**Unstructured Interview**

Unstructured interviewing is recommended only when the researcher has developed enough experience and in-depth understanding about his or her topic of interest to have a clear agenda for the discussion and is open to revision by respondents.

**Characteristics of Unstructured Interviews**

- The interview will have the appearance of a conversation as the interviewer may build rapport by asking simpler questions and then proceed according to the agenda.
- The interviewer may guide the discussion according to the objective.
- In this type of interview open-ended questions are asked and the interviewer may have little control over informants’ responses.

**Advantages of Self-Report**

The strengths of self-report methods are:

1) The respondents describe their own experiences.
2) Researcher can collect data from large sample at low cost.
3) Researcher can cover large number of variables.

**Disadvantages of Self-Report**

The disadvantages of self-report methods are:

1) Participants may not cooperate and may mislead.
2) Participants may not be honest.
3) Questions may not be understood correctly due to language problem.
4) Response rate of mailed questionnaires are very low.
5) Questions may guide the respondent to give a particular reply.
Check Your Progress 3

Notes: (a) Write your answer in the space given below.

(b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

i) Differentiate between questionnaire and interview.
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

Activity: 2 Have you ever faced any interview – for studies or for a job? In which category of interview does it come and why? Give reasons.
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

7.5.3 Interaction with Children

When we look at what teachers actually do each day that makes a difference in children’s lives, there is clear evidence that it is the daily interactions that teachers have with children that are most important. It can occur between the teacher and learners, and/or between learners themselves, either collectively or individually. You know that in a classroom, interaction takes place between teacher and learner as well as learner and learner. Learners will get more knowledge from the lessons when they actively participate in their learning or the teacher participates them in learning activities. These forms are called teacher-learner interaction.

Effective teacher-student interaction creates:

Emotional support: Understanding children in difficulties and assuring them support

Classroom organization: Involving students who appear to be isolated in class activities.

Instructional support: Providing remedial classes or arranging peer tutoring.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes: (a) Write your answer in the space given below.

(b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

i) Observe a classroom interaction. Describe what you observe. In which category of effective teacher-student interaction does it come, and why?
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

7.5.4 Children’s Diaries

Children can be encouraged to write about their daily life and experiences for personal recollection. These diaries are very personal though some may publish them later. In whatever form, the notion of a diary is an increasingly relevant way to capture the
practices and experiences of everyday life.

These diaries have many advantages over other data collections methods. They are:

1) more accurate details are provided;
2) more information is obtained; and
3) They supplement information collected through other methods of obtaining information.

Within the autobiographical tradition, diaries are one of the ‘documents of life’, that is a self-revealing record that intentionally or unintentionally yields information regarding the structure, dynamics and functioning of the author’s mental life.

Sample Student Diary

Diary of Aruna,
Xth class student

Monday

Class test today! I got up late. I forgot to keep the alarm. My bus will reach by 8.30am. Took a quick bath changed to uniform and ran to the bus stop with the bag. I did not have any breakfast and did not look at my pet cat. Anyway, I reached school on time. I got anxious about the examination that has to do today. Last class test was not bad at all. But I am panic when I attempt essay questions whether I will get time to complete the answers. Teachers said with practice I will be able to do. I have decided to practice writing answers to essay questions within the allotted time at home.

Activity 3: What would you infer from her dairy? Interpret it.

......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................

7.5.5  Cumulative Record

A cumulative record is a systematic account of information about a student. It is an evaluation tool which presents a comprehensive record of the achievement of each student in different aspects such as physical, academic, moral, social and health aspects. The information written in the cumulative record cards is collected from different sources over a period of time. It is a record of child indicating growth and development while in school in all aspects from beginning to the end of his school life. The Secondary Education Commission emphasized the importance of cumulative record card in the following words:

“Neither the external examination nor the internal examination, singly or together, can give a complete and correct picture of pupil’s all-round progress at any particular stage of his education, yet it is important for us to assess this, in order to determine his future course of study or future vocation. For this purpose, a proper system of school records should be maintained for every pupil indicating the work done by him in the school from day-to-day, from month-to-month, from term-to-term, and from year-to-year. Such school records will present a clear and continuous statement of the attainments of the child in different intellectual pursuits throughout successive stages of his education.”

Need of the Cumulative Record

The cumulative record of a child is needed for the following important points.
Growing Up : Infancy to Adulthood

- To give a complete picture of a child’s all-round progress in different areas i.e. physical, academic, moral, social and health.
- To assess the child’s potentialities, interests, aptitude and talents.
- To provide proper guidance and counselling taking into consideration, the child’s scholastic and co-scholastic achievements.
- To help parents and teachers in the placement of the child after the completion of study.
- To help in identifying abnormal behaviour of children and those who are weak in studies.
- To help in solving the problems of the child.

Content of a Cumulative Record Card (CRC)

The cumulative record card records the following information regarding different aspects of children’s development:

**Personal data** - Personal data gives introductory information about a child like her/his name, sex, date of birth, age, permanent address, parents’ name and family background.

**Academic data** - It deals with the information about the previous schools attended, present class, roll number, examinations appeared, results, division and percentage of marks.

**Health data** - It reveals information regarding height, weight, blood pressure, communicable diseases if any, treatments given, food habits, exercise, parental disease if any.

**Co-curricular activities data** - The child’s participation in different co-curricular activities, leadership qualities, certificates awarded, prizes and medals received are recorded in it.

**Personality characteristics** - This reveals the psychological aspects like intellectual ability, self-confidence, emotional stability, leadership qualities, tolerance, and sense of responsibility etc.

**Record of counselling and guidance** - Any problems found with the child, date of interview, reasons discovered, remedial measures taken, follow up programmes etc. are mentioned.

**General over all Remarks** - General remarks by the class teacher and Headmaster on the performance and talents of the child.

**Activity 4**
Prepare a child’s cumulative record card on the basis of contents of CRC given above.

......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................

7.5.6 Anecdotal Record

An anecdotal record is the observed behaviour of the child. It is a record of some significant episode in the life of a child that sheds light on the conduct, thinking, skills and capabilities revealing significant features and characteristics about his/her personality (CCE, CBSE).
Teacher-generated anecdotal records provide an insider’s perspective of the child’s educational experience. Anecdotal record includes the description of the performance, events or activities going on in the school hours or may be from the bus stop, in the assembly, classroom, playground, pair/group activity, laboratory, dining hall or performance that a learner has completed - anything, anytime, anywhere. You may use anecdotal record for the following purposes.

- To get a longitudinal qualitative picture of the behavioural changes in the life of each child.
- To know the physical, social, economic, aesthetic and cognitive development of a child.
- To assess children in the classroom as well as outside classroom activities.
- To record documents of a child’s growth and trends.
- To identify the child’s attitude, current skill level, interests and skills.
- To record qualitative information like details about a child’s specific behaviour or the conversation between two children.
- To write valid and reliable observation - positive as well as negative, for instance, participation in group, fights, quarrels, failure to attempt or complete assignments etc. related with a child.

When taking anecdotal records the following points have to be kept in mind:

- Record the date, child’s name and time of observation.
- Note only what you see and hear.
- Avoid using judgmental words.
- Analyze the information you collected for strengths and needs.
- Relate your interpretation to other knowledge you have of the child.
- Use the information for instructional planning.

Below you can see a sample anecdotal record

**Name:** Rohan Sharma  **Class:** 9th  **Section:** ‘B’  **Roll No.:** 24

**Month:** October

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Occasions &amp; Date</th>
<th>Situation observed by the teacher</th>
<th>Teacher’s suggestion/comments &amp; Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | Assembly Hall    | 1) Rohan gave his friend Rajat write up for the speech and helped him learn it.  
     | 20/10/2015       | 2) He has helped his friend Rajat to speak in the assembly. It shows his strong social skill as well as language skill. | Rohan is intelligent and cooperative. |
| 2.   | Language Classroom | 1) He has displayed excellent communication skill in English language speaking class.  
     |                  | 2) His vocabulary and choice of words are excellent | Rohan should take part in debate. He needs to improve his facial expressions while speaking. He is a confident student. |
Activity 5

Observe any child in the assembly/playground/classroom. Write her/his anecdotal record of that day based on the sample form.

......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................

7.5.7 Reflective Journals

Reflective journals are notebooks which are filed, containing children’s writing about their school activities and reflecting on their own thoughts. The act of reflecting on thoughts, ideas, feelings, and their own learning encourages the development of meta-cognitive skills by helping children self-evaluate and sort what they know from what they do not know. It is a piece of writing which allows children to record thoughts and insights about their own learning experience. It encourages children to review and consolidate learning, to evaluate performance, to plan future learning based on past learning experience. In such a way, children become capable to take charge of their own learning, and eventually to develop into independent lifelong learners. The process of examining one’s own thoughts and feelings is particularly helpful for children who are learning new concepts or beginning to grapple with complex issues that go beyond right and wrong answers. Reflective journals are records maintained by children in which they write their experiences regarding some activities in the school or in their surroundings. The teachers ask them to note down whatever they found to be different or what made them think and ponder about certain learning experiences. They are advised by the teachers to make a noting in the file which they are free to pick up to write their experiences and keep adding their views as and when required. Journals can also be subject specific where children can point out their hard spots and seek answer from friends and teachers. A child’s writing style for journals and logs can be informal and sometimes inappropriate. However, to help children learn more about a particular subject or content, you can require children to write more formal entries using correct terminology, facts, and with connections to course content. A reflective journal is a tool that allows children to reflect on and write about progress in their learning. They can identify and reflect on successes and challenges. You can gain information on what children think and feel in a non-threatening way. An example of a Reflective Learning Journal is given below:

Writing your Reflective Learning Journal

In your B.Ed. programme, you have to do observation of schools for 4 weeks. You have to observe the functioning of the school, duties performed by teachers, role of students and their activities in school, and also observe the classrooms. After 4 weeks you have to give a report of your observations. For this, you could practise journal writing. In each journal entry, you might therefore want to write down your reaction, comment, personal feelings, and suggestion to improve teaching-learning activities. For example, you can start by thinking:

- What’s my opinion about the school?
- Does the school reflect an inclusive nature?
- How is the leadership style of the head of the school?
• What are the duties I have to perform besides those in the classroom?
• What approach I have to adopt in my class?
• How can I relate the teaching–learning activities of the school to what I have learnt in the course?

**Notes:**
• Guided questions provided should be in open-ended structure thereby giving chance for in-depth thinking.
• Only provide a few guided questions so that quality reflection of children’s learning is possible.

**How could it be used?**
• For children’s reflection during a unit, topic or project.
• As a quick and simple tool for children’s self-assessment at the end of a class.
• To enable children to identify and reflect on their success and challenges.
• As a communication tool for children and teachers.
• As a process to refocus on children’s learning.

**Importance of using it**
• It is a simple process
• It promotes students’ higher order thinking and enables them to reflect on what has been achieved during a lesson and where future efforts and support should be focused in the next session.
• It helps children to self-assess and to set goals for their future learning.
• It engages many of the children in their learning and gives them a sense of ownership and control.
• It promotes literacy, especially if used in learning areas such as Mathematics, Arts, Science, ICT and Interpersonal development.

**Activity 6**
Prepare questions for writing reflective journal by your language students.
..............................................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................................

**7.6 COMMON PROBLEMS IN CLASSROOM AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH**

Children may face various problems in school, classroom, playground or at home. These problems may be behavioural, academic or emotional. As a teacher you can solve these problems by conducting classroom research. Some of the common problems and their implications are as follows:
Physical and Sexual Maturation

Adolescents face many kinds of problems related to their studies, their bodily and physical changes and, developmental stages which they are going through. Sexual maturation is another development faced by the adolescents. During this age attraction towards opposite sex becomes a strange experience which they feel difficult to discuss.

Implication: Children should be made aware of changes and problems of adolescence. The school should conduct adolescence education programmes. Parents should discuss sex and problems related to sexual maturity with their children. Parents should provide them awareness that sex is not a sin, but it should be in accordance with social norms and social acceptance.

Lack of career guidance

Lack of career guidance is another problem faced by children. Choice of subjects and related career is not easy to decide at secondary and senior secondary levels. They experience huge confusion as they have little knowledge of the career opportunities and the world of work.

Implication: The teachers, parents and school counsellor should work in cohesion and provide opportunities for children to acquire knowledge about various careers, requirements of those careers and the world of work. These adolescents need to be counselled about their interests, abilities and aptitudes and, helped to make a foolproof plan for their future.

Adolescence Confusion

Adolescents usually feel confused about their situations – be it in school, at home or among peers. If the individual is not able to score well in spite of working hard, s/he gets confused whether it is because s/he did not study properly or whether it was because s/he did not present the answers properly in the answer books. Consequently, they feel scared while communicating to their parents about their academic results and grades. They start doubting their self-worth.

Implication: The adolescents need to be guided by their teachers. The teachers should build up confidence in their children. S/he should communicate strategies of learning and develop skill of presenting their knowledge on paper accurately and effectively. The teacher should also develop strategies of coping with stress so that children can learn and live in a stress-free environment.

Problems related to learning level

Many children seem to have problems with working for an extended period of time on a particular task. They may have poor academic performance in one or more academic or subject areas. They are not concerned about better performance in learning and these students usually lack proper span of attention and concentration.

Implication: The teacher should try to involve all children in all types of learning. S/he should provide guidance to children whenever they need. S/he should recognize the cause of child’s low achievement. After knowing the problem that a child is facing, the teacher should deal with her/him accordingly.

Problems with peers

Some children may hit, kick, get into fights or verbally threaten or insult others and are often unnaturally aggressive towards their peers. Some children with behavioural problems are inclined to physically or verbally assault others. They may take risks in the classroom, behaving against the rules to show their peers that their performance is outstanding and thereby seeking to be the center of attraction in the classroom.
Implication: You should initiate group activities in the classroom and focus on collaborative and interactive learning with peers. You should act as a facilitator of not only learning but also encourage cooperation among students.

Check Your Progress 5

Notes: (a) Write your answer in the space given below.

(b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

i) Write down any two common problems that you have observed in your classroom. How do you handle these problems?

..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

7.7 LET US SUM UP

Classroom research is the formal study of teaching and learning. Classroom research is a research that is conducted in the classroom in order to understand children and solve classroom problems. A teacher conducts research in the classroom in order to understand what problems children are facing academically, behaviourally and emotionally. It attempts to answer two fundamental questions: (i) How well are students learning? (ii) How effectively are teachers teaching? Action research is “learning the solution of the problem by doing.” A group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again. The action research process embarks on finding a problem and then formulating possible actions for the problem, applying an action, and finally evaluating the outcome of the action. Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single person, group, event or community. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Action research and case study as methods of research allow several different research tools to be used such as observation, self-reports, interaction with children, children’s diaries, cumulative record, anecdotal record and reflective journals. They use triangulation of the data as well. Children may face various problems in school, classroom, and playground or at home. These problems may be behavioural, academic or emotional. A teacher and school personnel can solve these problems by conducting classroom research.

7.8 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1) What do you understand by the term ‘classroom research’? Define the process of action research?

2) Discuss case study as a method of research. Write down its strengths and weaknesses also.

3) What are the various tools that are used in classroom research? Write in detail.

4) Conduct a survey to study the educational and familial problems of IX class students.

7.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. i) Refer section 7.4.1

2. i) Write your own answer.
3. i) Questionnaires are a type of self-report method which consist of a set of questions usually in a highly structured written form whereas interview is a face to face conversation between two people - the interviewer and the interviewee.

4. i) Write your own observation.

5. i) Refer section 7.6

7.10 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS


