

# 'The Impact of Sangati on children- A study of Teacher's Perceptions'

Shanthi Kurien  
Amrita Patwardhan

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

**Shanthi Kurien** has done her Masters from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and has worked on non-formal education programmes in rural and urban communities. She has worked with Quantum Market Research, a qualitative market research company for several years and has wide experience with exploratory, diagnostic and behavioural research. She has been a freelance market researcher more recently and has engaged in both market research and social research during this time.

**Amrita Patwardhan** has done her MPhil in Education from Central Institute of Education, Delhi. She has worked with the Jeevanshalas, tribal schools in the Naramada valley, as a teacher educator, taught in the innovative school Aksharnandan, Pune and Nirmala Niketan College, Mumbai. Her research interests include literacy acquisition among children, socialization of children in adverse circumstances and the role of educational innovations. She is currently working with Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai.

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## **SANGATI REPORT**

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## **I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF SANGATI**

The Avehi-Abacus project was initiated in 1990 to develop a supplementary curriculum for school children. The third (and current) phase of the Avehi-Abacus project was launched in 2001, with the introduction of the Sangati series of teaching-learning kits.

The Sangati programme aims primarily at strengthening the quality and content of education imparted to children in the age group nine to fourteen years studying in standards five, six and seven. The project focuses on government schools, where the children come from poor and marginalized families. The aim has been to develop children's skills in thinking, analyzing and making choices, emphasizing values that will help them live and work together in a spirit of understanding and harmony. The program makes teaching and learning an interesting and relevant activity, linking knowledge to everyday life. Group work, discussion and creative expression are an integral part of the methodology. The programme also aims to enable teachers to refresh their teaching skills, encourage multi-disciplinary teaching, and make teaching participatory, enjoyable and qualitatively better. It also seeks to facilitate teachers' self-growth and personality development.

In its current form, the Sangati series comprises of six curricular units designed to supplement the regular social science and general science curriculum running in middle schools. These units are made available in the form of teaching-learning kits, which contain a handbook for teachers, several teaching aids, as well as take-home material for children. There are two kits designed for each class. The *Sangati* kits deal with the following themes:

Class 5: **Kit 1:** Myself, My body, Our needs, **Kit 2:** Our Earth and the Web of life

Class 6: **Kit 3:** How Societies Developed, **Kit 4:** The Way We Live

Class 7: **Kit 5:** Understanding Change, **Kit 6:** Preparing for Our Future

At the time of the study, Kit 5 and 6 were still being developed. Hence, in year 2003-04 while Kit 1 and 2 were implemented in standard V, only a single Kit was being used in standard VI and VII, i.e. Kit 3 in standard VI and Kit 4 in standard VII.

An orientation workshop for teachers is conducted annually before teachers begin using the Sangati kits. The kit material is delivered to the schools before the start of the Sangati sessions. A team of observers visits each class once every fortnight on behalf of the Avehi-Abacus project.

The Sangati programme is now being conducted across two wards, G North and G South in schools run by the Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC). G South comprises of the Mahalakshmi, Worli and Dadar areas where low income

populations live more settled lives in chawls and pukka slums. G North, which includes Dharavi, Matunga and Mahim, has more impoverished and migrant populations.

The Sangati programme today covers a total of 185 schools, 95 in G North and 90 in G South. Approximately 370 middle school teachers, teaching class VI and VII implement the Sangati programme, reaching out to 21,000 students.

## **AIM OF THE STUDY**

The Avehi – Abacus programme has evolved significantly over its 13-year existence. It is now perhaps the only supplementary curricular programme for the social sciences that is being implemented in MMC schools. Starting small in one single school, it has expanded considerably and currently covers two wards. The content and design of the kit has also undergone several changes in the recent past.

Avehi-Abacus felt that it was important at this juncture to take stock and assess the impact of the programme on its current target group and its effectiveness in enriching the regular curriculum. Hence, an independent study was commissioned that aimed at studying a representative sample of teachers and students by using a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. A team of a social researcher and an educationist conducted the study over a period of one year, starting from June 2003-August 2004.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of research were as follows:

- To understand and assess the impact of Sangati on children and teachers
- To understand teachers' perceptions of and attitude to Sangati as a programme to enrich the regular curriculum

The study explored the following information areas:

### **Amongst Teachers:**

- Perceptions of and attitudes to the Sangati programme amongst teachers
- Their levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the curriculum and methodology
- Impact of Sangati on teachers in terms of their role, their information and skills, the teacher-student relationship, their teaching methodology
- Teachers' perceptions of Sangati's impact on children; its influence on their class attendance, interest levels vis-à-vis school and studies, their information and skill levels, their interaction with their classmates and teachers, their confidence levels and self expression
- Reasons for Sangati's appeal to children

### **Amongst Children:**

- The factors contributing to Sangati's appeal to children
- The specific areas of influence; whether it has impacted on attitudes towards school and studies, participation in class, knowledge levels and cognitive and interpersonal skills

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The information for the study was collected through the following methods:

- Questionnaire method: Quantitative questionnaires were administered to teachers to elicit data on the impact of the Sangati programme on children and ascertain changes if any regarding their awareness, attitudes, behaviour and skills. The questionnaires also sought to identify overall satisfaction levels with Sangati and its various components, its perceived impact on teachers themselves and suggestions for improvement. Questionnaires were distributed to the Sangati teachers by Avehi -Abacus supervisors. Teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaires in the presence of the supervisors
- Group discussions: Group discussions were conducted amongst teachers and children to obtain a richer, qualitative understanding of the contribution of the Sangati programme to children, both in terms of the manner in which it has impacted and the factors responsible for this. A deeper understanding of how teachers perceived the programme, its role, relevance and challenges faced while implementing it in the classroom was also gained through group discussions.
- In-Depth interviews: One on one interviews with teachers were set up to explore the unique experiences of individual teachers as well as to evaluate programme positives and negatives in greater detail
- Classroom observations: Classroom observations were conducted to get a hands on feel of classroom dynamics during a Sangati session and a non Sangati class.

**Target Group for Research:** The target group for the purposes of the study was as follows:

**Category: Teachers** of MMC schools in G North and South where Sangati was being taught in standards VI and VII were included in the study since they had first hand experience of the programme.

- Only teachers who had a minimum of one year of prior experience teaching Sangati
- Only teachers of standard VI and VII.



Standard V teachers were not covered by the study since Sangati had been made optional for this class in 2003-2004 and only those who were more positively inclined towards it would have volunteered to teach it.

**Children** of class VI and VII who were exposed to Sangati were also included in the study to explore their experience of the programme and its impact on them

- VI standard children who were currently exposed to Sangati in class VI (1yr +) and had been exposed to Sangati the previous year in class V
- VII standard children who were exposed to Sangati in class VII and who were earlier exposed to it in standard V and VI (2 yrs +)

**Medium of instruction:** Sangati programme is implemented in all eight mediums of instruction in MMC schools including Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and English. The study however focused on teachers and children from Marathi and Hindi medium schools since these were the majority schools in these two wards and in MMC schools in the city. Moreover, specific issues of teachers arising from the language medium were already known to Avehi-Abacus and hence that aspect did not require further probing<sup>1</sup>. Researchers' familiarity and comfort in these two languages and practical difficulties in covering a diverse sample were additional reasons for delimiting the sample to Hindi and Marathi medium schools.

**Wards:** Sangati has been implemented in only two wards **G North and G South**, over the last three years and therefore it was deemed important to cover both these wards in the study. Moreover, there is a distinct difference in the socio economic profiles of the localities served by the MMC schools in these two wards, which it would be necessary to examine.

**Control Group:** A group of Non Sangati teachers were included in the study to gain a brief understanding into teachers' perceptions of their students' skills and abilities in schools, which are not currently implementing the Sangati programme. Teachers of standards VI and VII in MMC schools of F South and Northwards were contacted for this purpose. Both these wards are contiguous with G South and North (the wards under study) and have a fairly similar profile.

Sangati teachers were screened for compliance with selection criteria by the Avehi Abacus supervisors. Teachers for the group discussions and depth

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher handbooks and Sangati kit that is used in the class (flip charts, stories, posters) are available in Marathi and Hindi alone. The teachers are expected to translate the material and communicate it to children. Children's material (handouts, worksheets) are available in all the 8 languages. However, majority of the schools are in Marathi and Hindi. One of the common demands from teachers is to provide teachers' handbook and rest of the kit in all respective regional language. Avehi-Abacus is aware of this need and no further 'study' was required to probe this issue further, since finances and practical problems do not allow preparation of the kit in remaining 6 languages.

interviews were also identified by the supervisors. Children who participated in the group discussions were identified by the teachers.

All group discussions and depth interviews were conducted on the premises of municipal schools in G North and South wards

## **SAMPLE**

### **Quantitative Sample**

***Sangati exposed teachers:*** Total number of valid samples: 90

94 questionnaires were handed over to teachers who complied the sample criteria.

All the questionnaires were filled in and returned. However, four of these were rejected since the respondents were no longer teaching Sangati to standards VI and VII. They had either been transferred out of the ward or were assigned to teaching lower classes.

All teachers complied with the following criteria:

- Teaching in wards G North and South
- Teaching Sangati in standards VI and VII.
- With at least one year of prior experience teaching Sangati
- From Marathi and Hindi medium

It must be noted that only an approximate of one third of all teachers teaching Sangati in the sixth and seventh standards qualified for incorporation in the sample.

***Control group: Teachers un-exposed to Sangati:*** Total sample: 92

- From two adjoining wards, F North and South
- Have never been exposed to Sangati training
- Have never taught Sangati
- Teaching children of class VI and VII
- Marathi and Hindi medium teachers

### **Qualitative Sample**

***Focus Group Discussions amongst Sangati teachers: 5 groups***

- Twenty five teachers
- Two full groups and three mini groups
- Two groups from G North and three from G South
- Mix of teachers teaching Sangati in standards VI and VII
- Have taught Sangati for at least a year and a half
- Four groups amongst Marathi medium teachers and one amongst Hindi medium teachers

The Marathi groups comprised of women teachers except for one group in which there was a male teacher. The Hindi group was an all men's group.

All respondents in the groups had responded to the quantitative questionnaire two months prior to the discussion

***In depth individual interviews with Sangati teachers: 7***

- Two teachers from Hindi medium: both men
- Five teachers from Marathi medium: three women and two men
- Four teachers from 6<sup>th</sup> and three from the 7<sup>th</sup> standard
- Four from G North and three from G South

The qualitative sample comprised of a total of thirty two teachers, i.e. approximately one third of the teachers in the quantitative sample.

***Group discussions with children: 6***

- Fifty-one children
- Approximately eight children in each group
- Three groups amongst standard VI children and three amongst standard VII
- Two from Hindi medium schools and four from Marathi medium schools
- Two from G North and four from G South

***Classroom observations***

- Four observations in schools where the Sangati programme is being run
- Observation of standards VI and VII
- One hour observation of a Sangati session plus observation of a regular class conducted by the same teacher

# **FINDINGS OF RESEARCH**

# **AREA ONE**

## **PROFILE OF THE TEACHERS**

## 1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF TEACHERS

The following section outlines the demographic profile of Sangati exposed teachers who formed the quantitative sample.

**Ward:** The study was conducted amongst ninety teachers in G North and South wards. Of these, approximately one third of the teachers (34%) were from the G North ward and two thirds (66%) from G South.

**Gender:** Two thirds of the sample consisted of women teachers (63%) and about one-third sample of teachers were male (37%).

**Professional Qualifications:** All the respondents were qualified teachers. More than half the teachers (56%) had a D.Ed (Diploma in Education) to their credit. More than one third of the sample had done their B.Ed (Bachelor of Education) (37%) and a very small percentage (6.%) had also done their M.Ed (Master of Education).. The data also suggests that a fairly large number of teachers with a D.ED have upgraded their basic qualification and acquired regular graduate or even post-graduate degrees over time.

**Teaching Experience:** The vast majority of the sample comprised of teachers with a significant number of years of teaching experience at the school level. About half of the teachers (51%), had between eleven to twenty years of teaching experience, while close to half (40%) had more than twenty one years of teaching experience. A little less than 10% of teachers had less then ten years of teaching experience.

**Medium of Instruction:** A large majority of the teachers (81%) were from Marathi medium schools while the remaining (19%) were from Hindi medium schools. While all the Hindi medium teachers in the sample were male, the majority of teachers from Marathi medium schools were women. This reflects the distribution of Marathi vs Hindi medium teachers in these wards.

**Standards Taught:** The sample comprised of teachers teaching Sangati in standard VII and VII. Of these, more than half the teachers (61%) were teaching Sangati to standard VI students while the remaining, (39%), taught it to standard VII students.

**Sangati Experience:** Approximately half the sample consisted of teachers who were teaching Sangati for the second consecutive year (49%). More than one third were teaching Sangati for the third year (38%) and the remaining (13%) had had experience of teaching Sangati in both its current avatar and in the earlier phase of the project.

Some teachers in the sample had been class teacher to the same batch of children across standard five and six and in some cases seven as well. They had thus taken the same batch of children through the different Sangati kits. Some of the teachers had taught the same Sangati kit twice to class five or six .

## **1.2 PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF TEACHERS**

***Attitudes to Education and Teaching:*** The majority of teachers have a more traditional view of education. They see teaching primarily as the bestowal of knowledge to ignorant young minds and the teacher as an authority figure who is expected to whip children into shape.

Only a small segment of teachers have a wider, more liberal view of education and see it as a dynamic interaction between teacher and child that enables the child to think independently and deal with the circumstance of life. These teachers perceive their role to be that of facilitators rather than just transmitters of information.

There is a subliminal perception that municipal schools and their own role as teachers are being increasingly devalued with fewer parents opting to send their children to these schools. Parents who value education choose private schools over public ones and municipal schools end up with the poorest children who do not or cannot appreciate a teacher's worth or efforts. The dwindling class sizes, especially in G South ward are seen as testimony to this phenomenon

***Attitudes to Students:*** Teachers across the board see their students as disadvantaged children and describe them as poor children from slum areas whose parents are largely illiterate and occupied with the business of daily survival. Several children are seen to suffer from nutritional deprivation. Some of them are latchkey kids, since their mothers are also out at work. Some students themselves work to and supplement the family's income.

The majority of teachers experience some resentment at the burden of the responsibility they have to shoulder as a result of the children's circumstances

- "It's difficult enough to teach unruly, disinterested children...in addition we face support from parents"
- "We carry a double burden ....we have to teach and also encourage children to attend the class"

A few empathize with the child's situation and are concerned about his or her struggle to get an education

- "They are left to fend for themselves, with no one to account to for their day's routine or monitor or supervise their education and homework."

- “Oftentimes the home environment is stressful and violent”.

***Attitudes to the Regular School Curriculum:*** The school curriculum is primarily associated with teacher’s work load, the pressure of deadlines and anxiety about its completion.

- “If we do not finish the lessons, we have a sword hanging on our head, how to complete it”
- “We’re worried about completing the syllabus because of the exams...they determine whether the children will go to the next grade

Anything that interferes with its completion is perceived with a jaundiced eye.

Curricular aims tend to be perceived in a limited light by most teachers. They are broadly identified as the communication of new information and reading and writing skills While the majority of teachers express satisfaction with the current curriculum, there is apparent discomfort with it, especially in the area of conceptual and linguistic comprehension.

- “ We have to make students understand the syllabus by teaching them in a very simple language”
- “We have to explain the studies in an easier way so that they understand...when we explain a thing four to five times, then out of ten students about six students understand it”

Only a few teachers are overtly critical of the curriculum and complain that the scope of the syllabus is excessive and its content largely irrelevant in terms of today’s world and challenges.

- “Competition has increased...not only book knowledge but general knowledge should be there”
- “There are more and more children who are educated but they are unable to find employment”

Mass media, especially the television is increasingly being seen as a major influence on the child and a threat to the teacher.

### **1.3 AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS**

Most teachers have low awareness and recall of educational interventions to aid children’s retention in school.

There is erratic mention of feeding programmes, clothes and books for poor students to encourage children to come to school. There is also some mention of co-curricular activities such as P.T., singing and art and dance classes and



“competitions” in elocution, sports etc as being introduced in schools to create some interest in school and encourage children’s talents.

The radio programme for English teaching and the Avehi/Sangati programme are identified by most teachers as specific educational initiatives introduced in MMC schools to supplement the curriculum. There is also some mention of the Pratham project and the Homi Bhaba science programme

Interventions that do not interfere with the teacher’s workload and daily schedule or actively boost the child’s school performance are more welcomed than others.

## **AREA TWO**

# **PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES TO SANGATI**

The following sections present teachers' spontaneous perceptions of the Sangati programme, its origins and comprehension of its purposes and role, its perceived benefits and teachers' interest and involvement with it

## **2.1 NOMENCLATURE AND BACKGROUND**

The Avehi-Abacus programme is referred to as Sangati by the majority of teachers, though a few also refer to it as Avehi. It is identified as a non governmental intervention, which a few teachers spontaneously identify as originating with Avehi. Most teachers are aware that it extends to a couple of wards in Mumbai.

## **2.2 SPONTANEOUS REACTIONS TO SANGATI**

The Sangati programme evokes respect and regard amongst the majority of the teachers. It arouses the admiration and approval of a smaller segment.

It is seen as unique by all teachers because of its innovative approach and methodology particularly the manner in which it communicates important and pertinent messages to the child.

- “It is education through entertainment”
- “It is teaching through play”
- “It is education through experience”

Teachers across groups and depths uniformly endorse the programme as “good”.

Some teachers are attracted and impressed by the wealth of new and interesting “knowledge” that Sangati presents. They also admire the manner in which Sangati succeeds in transforming arcane, complex or pedantic information into understandable events, ideas and processes

- “Deep information regarding evolution of human beings and the creation of the earth has been given in a very nice way”
- “Science and geography are made easier by doing Sangati...children can get a clear picture of what the lesson in history is trying to say”

Many teachers' positive responses to the programme are based on children's enthusiastic reception of it and its impact on their personalities.

- “Children enjoy the class and the lessons and pay full attention. There is always something new in it.”
- “The response from the kids is very nice; it really interests the kids...they begin to speak up and answer questions”

Some teachers are appreciative of the way in which the programme helps children develop a new awareness and response to what is going on around them

- “ It creates awareness about social structures, injustices against women and in what way this is being done”
- “Like ‘Ramu ki Roti’, each and every lesson in Sangati is connected with our daily life”
- “It makes children think in the right way, about what is right and wrong...it gives us and children knowledge of how to improve society”

Sangati teaching material impacts strongly and provokes high admiration amongst teachers.

- “ It has good pictures and articles which children enjoy”
- “Children feel that the new files and projects, flip charts and books are very nice”

They are acknowledged as the chief ingredients of the programme’s appeal for children

Despite the appeal of the kit and its contents, children’s enjoyment of it and what they learn from it, only some teachers view the programme with complete satisfaction. Several have mixed feeling about it, their perceptions of the programme being coloured with the burden of the existing workload and the additional pressure Sangati puts on them

## **2.3 PERCEIVED ROLE OF SANGATI**

Teachers do not appear to have a very clear understanding of Sangati’s role in schools and are reluctant to discuss it .

Only a few identify it as an intervention that supplements and enriches the current curriculum.

- “It goes parallel to the syllabus”
- “It is a step by step study that with the help of stories has a long-lasting impact on kids”

Some teachers see it as a means of providing children with a holistic understanding of the world and making history and geography, science and societal issues meaningful in an integrated framework

- “It is a complete study”
- “It informs children about life in the olden days and also connects them to current affairs, the situation around us with moral education as well”

- “Their motive is to start everything from me and then reach the universe ... how we are dependent on each other, how one thing is related to another...”
- “Sangati’s main aim is to form a link between the school part and knowledge about the outside world

The majority of teachers do not appear to have actively considered why they teach the programme. A few see its main purpose as extending children’s knowledge by providing them with additional information

- “There are many things that they might not come to know from their parents
- “It gives extra knowledge

A few others interpret the name Sangati more literally and see the programme primarily as a means of helping children have fun and learn how to work together.

- “It teaches children that alone you cannot do anything. Together, you can do something”

Several teachers focus purely on implementing the programme and are not specifically concerned about its goals. In this context they see themselves as overburdened functionaries of an indifferent system that expects them to implement instructions without considering their concerns and limitations.

## **2.4 LEVELS OF INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT WITH SANGATI**

Despite endorsing the programme and children’s positive response to it, teachers’ levels of interest and involvement with the implementation of the programme vary sharply.

There are some teachers who see Sangati as an unwelcome imposition and a burden which they would rather try to avoid. They actively begrudge the extra effort, time and preparedness the programme demands of them.

- “Madams come to observe how we teach...that is one tension”
- “We’re overworked...there is hardly time to complete the regular curriculum and then to add to this there is this new programme ...”
- “Its an extra thing laid up on teachers”

Several teachers are more accepting of the programme but give it lower priority vis-à-vis the regular curriculum. They tend to treat it with less seriousness than other class subjects since it is not an official part of the timetable but something they have the freedom to “adjust”. It is also treated more lightly because of its

informal style and lack of official evaluation which teachers are not accustomed to.

- “Teachers also like it but there is insufficient time to handle both Sangati and the regular curriculum”
- “We are short of time ... we have to take extra classes for scholarship exams and also teach this”

The perception of a time crunch is exacerbated because teachers also have to readjust their teaching schedules to accommodate programmes instituted by the ward office or state government. Since these have official sanction they are given higher priority than Sangati, which is then relegated to third place.

- “We have to attend seminars, training programmes... There is no other teacher to take charge of the class so there is complete chaos which I have to sort out next day and try to make up the regular syllabus”

Moreover, most interventions of the past have never run for more than a few months or years and thus there is an underlying feeling that Sangati too may be another such ad hoc programme, which will be withdrawn. Thus teachers subliminally feel discouraged from investing more time and effort into the programme.

- “Every teacher has this attitude that these organizations come, do some research to start the programme and without doing anything just go away”

Commitment to programme implementation is displayed by a smaller segment of dedicated teachers who believe that Sangati offers them the opportunity to provide children with what they are currently lacking, especially sound values and healthy attitudes and aspirations

- “ Teachers can give children maximum education through this programme”
- “The values taught by teachers such as effort, dedication, hard work, responsibility and goal orientation are reflected in Sangati”

## **2.5. PERSONA OF SANGATI AND THE REGULAR CURRICULUM**

Teachers were asked to imagine and describe how Sangati and the regular curriculum would be if both were to come alive, in terms of physical traits, character traits and personality dimensions. The objective of the exercise was to determine the persona that both programmes have in the teacher’s mind and how they relate to each at a subliminal plane.



## Personification

<b>Sangati</b>	<b>Regular Curriculum</b>
<p><i>Some teachers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a woman between 25 and 45 years</li> <li>• well-educated, MA</li> <li>• bright, confident</li> <li>• in depth knowledge</li> <li>• new ideas, egalitarian</li> <li>• wants to bring about a change</li> <li>• experimentative</li> <li>• understanding, helpful</li> <li>• joyful, happy</li> <li>• adventurous</li> <li>• may have studied history or children's education</li> <li>• loves reading, telling stories, traveling, art</li> <li>• great friends with her students</li> <li>• acceptable relations with her peers</li> </ul> <p><i>Some teachers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a small child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• male or older lady in her 50's</li> <li>• graduate</li> <li>• staid, blunt,</li> <li>• can be stubborn</li> <li>• bossy</li> <li>• bit of a tyrant; overly demanding</li> <li>• generation gap between her and students</li> <li>• does a lot of reading and writing, not into games or play</li> <li>• obsessed with exams</li> </ul>

**Persona of Sangati:** The personification exercise indicates that for Sangati has an extremely compelling persona in the minds of a fairly large segment of teachers. It is seen as dynamic, vibrant and inspiring. It is also multifaceted with dimensions of expertise and academia coexisting with empathy and joie de vivre. It has a strong child orientation and has high potential. The persona could be highly aspirational to the involved teacher. However, it's progressive content and innovative teaching style may seem a subliminal threat by the average teacher who feels she cannot keep pace with Sangati's vision.

For some teachers Sangati has a child like persona. It is seen as endearing with a spontaneity and freshness that only children possess. However, like a child it may not be taken very seriously.



**Persona of the regular curriculum:** The persona of the regular curriculum is far more dull. It exists in a completely different world from the child. It is extremely academic and authoritative and has a narrow focus. However, it has the weight of authority behind it and the means to enforce it.

### Associations

Teachers were also asked to associate Sangati with any person or object that best represents it in order to understand the image of the programme in teachers' mind vis-a-vis the regular curriculum.

<b>Sangati</b>	<b>Regular Curriculum</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>entertainer</b></li><li>• <b>magician</b></li><li>• <b>internet</b></li><li>• <b>TV</b></li></ul>	<b>radio</b>

**Image of Sangati:** The exercise reaffirms our view that Sangati stands for different things amongst different segments of teachers. The association with the entertainer reinforces the perception that the programme is considered just fun and games that keep children occupied and happy which is the view of a fairly large segment.

The association with the magician suggests that while children are entertained there is also acknowledgement of a process of transformation that it achieves amongst the more discerning teacher.

The association with the TV highlights the audio-visual focus of Sangati, its riveting appeal and the mix of entertainment and information it provides.

Some teachers perceive Sangati as the latest in educational innovations as the Internet is in communication technology. Moreover, it opens up the world to the child allowing him to explore exciting new areas of information that have hitherto been shut to him.

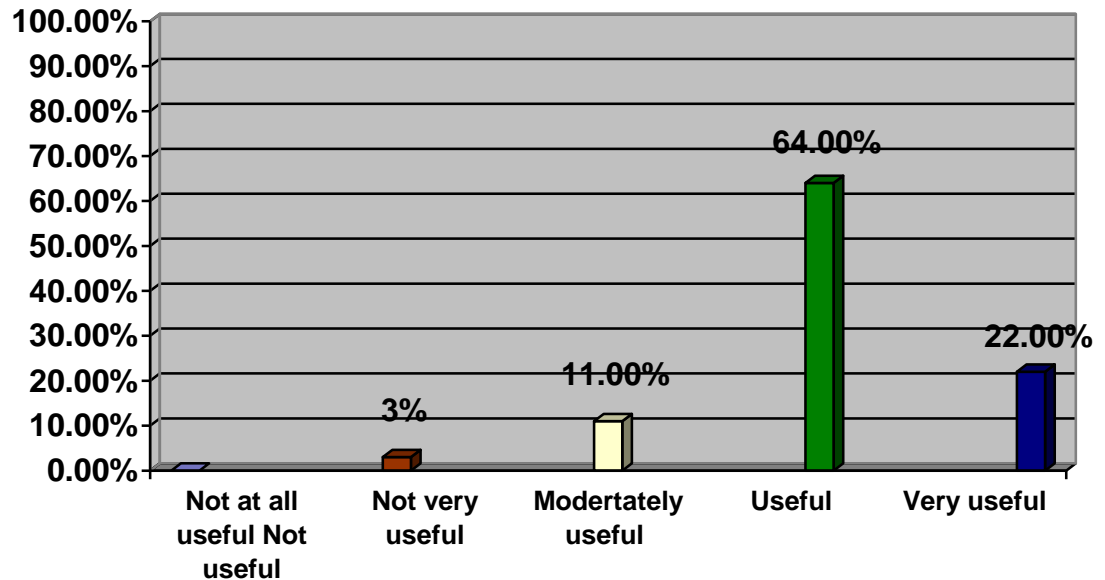
**Image of the regular curriculum:** The regular curriculum by contrast is associated with the radio, which was considered the only source of information and very popular once. However, like the radio today (not FM), the regular curriculum is no longer as appealing today and seen as rather outdated.

**AREA THREE**

**SATISFACTION WITH  
SANGATI**

### 3.1 PERCEIVED USEFULNESS OF SANGATI

Teachers in the quantitative sample were asked to rate Sangati on a five- point scale to gauge its perceived utility.



The very large majority of teachers acknowledge that the Sangati programme has been of use to them. About one fourth of the teachers (22%) believe that the Sangati programme was extremely useful. Two third of the sample (63%) acknowledge its usefulness and only a nominal minority (3%) declared its lack of utility. A small percentage of teachers (11%) believed the programme was moderately useful.

The qualitative data strongly supports these findings. To gauge whether Sangati is considered important to teachers, the latter were given a hypothetical situation in which Sangati was banned from schools and were asked how they would react to such a ban. .

The overwhelming majority of teachers expressed the view that the programme should not be stopped

Several teachers react with high emotional intensity

- “ Instead of stopping this subject it should be included in the main syllabus because students really benefit from it...it shouldn't be treated as an extra subject”
- “It is practical and relevant to today's circumstances...today's children definitely benefit from it”

- “This project should not be stopped...it should be made a compulsory subject in every school”
- “Actually it should be taught from the first standard to the seventh”
- “It will be missed by teachers...and students...and those children who create mischief they will think up ways to create more mischief” of a variety of programme features that are useful

The programme is chiefly seen as being useful to the child. Children’s tangible response to the programme enhances perceptions of its relevance. Teachers repeatedly cite children’s delight in the programme and new self-confidence as indicators of its effectiveness

Some teachers also admit that the programme is useful to them. While new information is seen as the chief thing they have gained, the play way method and participatory approach adopted by Sangati are also acknowledged as new learnings for teachers

Only a few teachers who grudge the extra work and time involved claim it is not very useful

### 3.2 SPONTANEOUS ASPECTS OF APPEAL

What part of Sangati programme did you find most satisfactory?

Aspects liked	Total frequencies	Valid %
Teaching-learning	75	40.9%
Activities and methods	38	20.7%
Design and content	35	19.1%
Impact on children	20	10.9%
Impact on teachers	10	5.4%
Others	4	2.1%
Invalid responses	1	5 %
Total number of responses	183	100 %

To ascertain what it was about Sangati that was a source of satisfaction, teachers who had acknowledged Sangati’s usefulness (97%) in the qualitative sample were asked to identify aspects of the programme which appealed greatly to them at a spontaneous level. Their responses were then classified to obtain an understanding of the broad aspects of the programme that appealed to them and the range of factors that contribute to these aspects.

An analysis of teachers' responses to this open-ended question reveals that **Sangati teaching - learning material** receives most frequent mention (41%) as a cause of satisfaction and appeal. More than half the responses refer specifically to **flip charts** and rest mainly refer to teaching material in general

A fifth of the responses (20%) identify **Sangati activities** that stimulate children's interest and involvement as an aspect of appeal. Games, stories and other playway and participatory activities are mentioned in this regard.

Almost another fifth of responses (19%) refer to the **information and knowledge** provided by Sangati as contributing to the programme's attractiveness. The variety of relevant topics, wide ranging and new information given to children, discussion of contemporary issues and world events were mentioned as aspects of satisfaction..

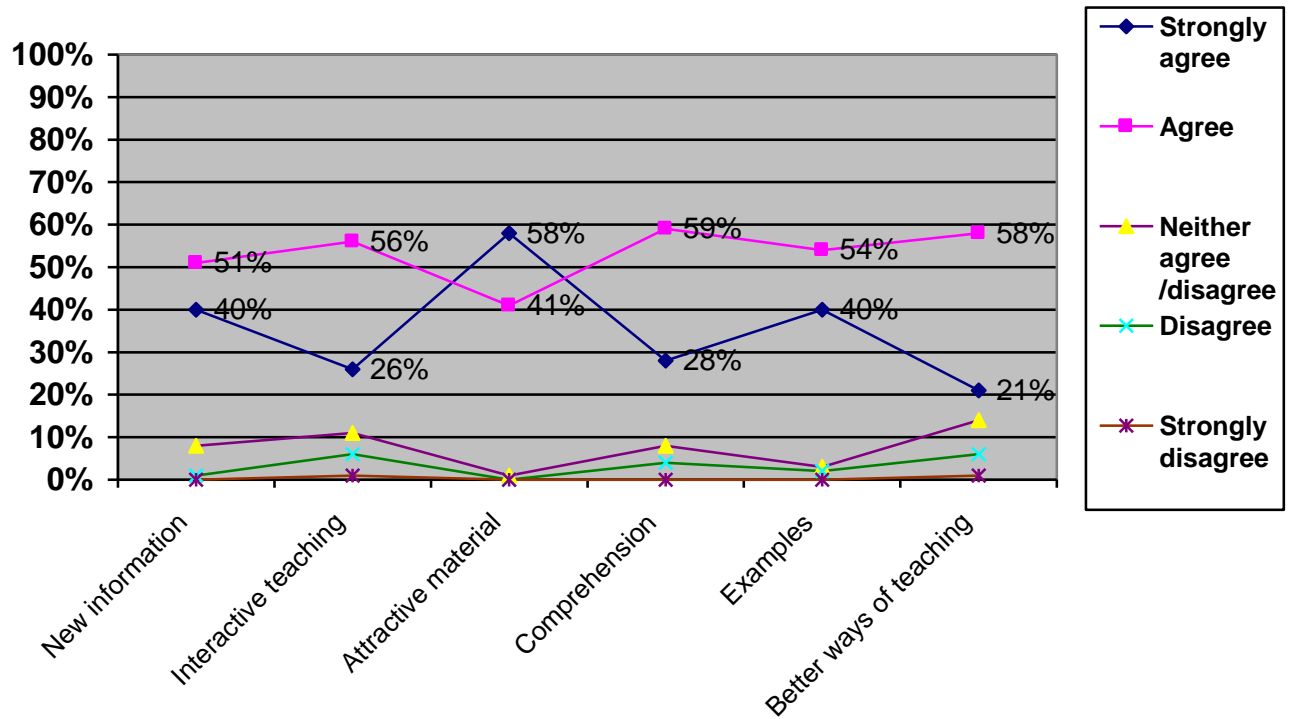
Sangati's impact **on children** is mentioned by a few teachers (11%) as a cause for appreciation of the programme. The manner in which Sangati sustains children's interest levels, encourages self-expression and a sense of social responsibility are identified in this regard

There is little mention of Sangati's impact on teachers at a spontaneous level as a reason for satisfaction with the programme.

### **3.3 KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SANGATI'S USEFULNESS**

Respondents in the quantitative sample were given a list of statements which teachers have expressed in the past regarding Sangati's usefulness and were asked to record on a five point scale the extent to which they identified with each statement. Each statement encapsulates a key value associated with Sangati.

Factors contributing to usefulness



Factors contributing to usefulness

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / Can't say
1. Sangati gives a lot of new information to children that the school syllabus does not cover.	40.2%	50.6%	7.8%	1.1%	0	0
2. Sangati makes teaching-learning more interactive.	26.1%	55.7%	11.4%	5.7%	1.1%	0
3. Sangati material is attractive and child friendly.	58%	40.9%	1.1%	0	0	0
4. The manner in which Sangati handles a topic makes it easy for children to understand difficult issues.	28.4%	59.1%	6.7%	4.4%	0	1.1%
5. Sangati uses lots of examples from children's day-to-day lives to which they can easily relate.	39.8%	53.4%	3.4%	2.3%	0%	1.1%
6. Sangati has introduced me to new and better ways of teaching children.	20.5%	58%	14.4%	5.7%	1.1%	0

The findings reveal that most teachers strongly endorse each of the value statements and identify them as having contributed to Sangati's usefulness and effectiveness.

**Sangati material** which is attractive and child friendly is identified by virtually all teachers (99%) as the single most important contributor to Sangati's effectiveness. More than half the teachers (58%) in the entire sample strongly affirm the Sangati kit's role in the programme.

The vast majority of teachers also positively endorse aspects of Sangati that make it **relevant** to the child, provide her with **additional information** and help her **understand better**

- Examples that relate to children's every day life experiences (93% agreement)
- Lots of new information, which expose children to things beyond the regular curriculum. (91% agreement)
- The manner in which difficult concepts are made easy so that children understand basic concepts (87%)

Close to half the sample (40%) teachers are highly approving of the additional information and examples that relate to everyday experiences that Sangati provides to the child

It is worth noting that all the value statements that are accorded very high agreement by teachers are related to Sangati's contribution to the child. Moreover, all these statements relate to the tangible features of the Sangati kit per se and their role in helping children learn.

The aspect of teaching-learning being made more interactive by Sangati (82%) has slightly less agreement amongst teachers as has the view that teachers have learnt new and better ways of teaching (78%). This may be because the area of **teaching** is largely dependent on the teacher's willingness to internalize and adopt new teaching methodology.

### **3.4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SANGATI KIT AND ITS APPEAL**

Teachers were asked to evaluate various aspects of the Sangati kit to arrive at an understanding of their relative appeal and usefulness to the teacher.

**Rating of the Sangati kit in terms of the following aspects:**

	Area	Very Good	Good	Moderate	Not good	Not at all good	Don't know / Can't Say
1	Choice of topics	31%	50%	18%	1%	0	0
2	New information	40%	47%	13%	0	0	0
3	Way the information is communicated	35%	49%	16%	0	0	0
4	Teacher friendliness of the manual	40%	42%	16%	1%	0	0
5	Teaching aids (flip charts, cards, stories, maps, timeline)	<b>71%</b>	27%	2%	0	0	0
6	Suggested class and home activities	37%	46%	15%	2%	0	0
7	Children's material (Handouts, worksheets)	59%	34%	6%	0	1%	0
8	Appropriateness for children's age	<b>17%</b>	46%	<b>36%</b>	1%	0	0
9	Relevance to everyday life	26%	42%	<b>29%</b>	0	1%	2%
10	The manner in which the training was imparted	34%	43%	20%	2%	0	0

:

The findings reveal that the material developed for teachers and children are seen as being most appealing useful. Of the two sets of material, the **compendium of teaching aids**, (flip-charts, flash cards, stories, maps, time-line etc) provided to teachers are appreciated by the overwhelming majority (98%) with over two thirds of the entire sample (70%) according the teaching aids high approval.

An overwhelming majority of teachers (93%) also appreciate the **children's material** (handouts/take home sheets, worksheets) with 59% of the total sample registering high approval.

**Content and design related aspects** of the curriculum also receive teacher's approval. These include the following:

- New information per se (87% teachers)
- The manner in which the information is communicated (84%)
- Classroom and home activities (83%)
- The teacher friendliness of the manual (82%)



- The choice of topics (81%)

Of these, both the area of new information and the teacher friendliness of the manual garner high appreciation amongst the total sample (40% teachers for each)

The teacher training workshops that are organized by Avehi-Abacus are also positively received by a fair number of teachers (77%). It may be that the aspects of Sangati which teachers deal with on a regular basis round the year are accorded higher scores for the immediate and direct way in which they help teach Sangati sessions than an annual event where teachers are the participants. .

Teachers are not as satisfied with the kit's relevance to everyday life (68% teachers in agreement) though affirming that Sangati provides lots of examples from daily life (see section 3.2). There is even less affirmation of the appropriateness of the kit for middle school children. These concerns also crop up during group discussions and depth interviews and are examined in more detail in section

### **3.5 PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TO KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SANGATI KIT**

Teachers' reactions to the components of the Sangati kit, especially the material for teachers and children and take home materials, were explored briefly in the groups and depth interviews to ascertain areas of concern or dissatisfaction pertaining to them and perceived solutions.

The qualitative data strongly reinforce and provide further insight regarding the quantitative findings.

#### **Teachers' Material**

Across groups and depths, teachers refer to the superb teaching materials that are part of the Sangati kit. They express high satisfaction with them and have little to complain about. The flip charts in particular are singled out for praise. The handbook and other materials such as posters, charts, maps and photographs also merit some mention.

*Flip Charts:* The flip charts are acknowledged as appealing greatly to children. They love the stories they contain and the colourful illustrations. Teachers like them since they explain things simply and clearly. They are seen to be extremely effective even amongst children who are not academically inclined and who would typically be uninterested in what the teacher had to say

- “The charts make things so clear that the children understand it very nicely”

- “ We do not have to struggle a lot to explain them”

Moreover, the flip charts are seen to stimulate curiosity. They encourage the child to ask questions of the teacher and promote discussion.

Children are so attracted by the flip charts that they are always seeking opportunities to read them and require no coaxing to do so. They thus enable children to practice their reading skills, discover the joy of reading and develop the self-confidence to interact with an audience.

- “Even if I am not in class, the children take them out and look at them.”
- “They always come forward and ask if they can read them out to the class”

***The Teacher’s Manual:*** The handbook also evokes positive endorsement and like other Sangati material is seen to be easy to use, attractive and easy to understand by the teacher.

- “It has very simple words and can be understood by anyone”
- “The stories, games and activities are very good”

The more discerning teacher acknowledges how valuable a resource it is since it tells them not just what to teach but how to teach

- “ We cannot do without it since it tells us what is needed, which flip charts are to be used and what materials are needed”

***Games/Play Activities:*** Teachers frequently make mention of the games and group activities children enjoy in the Sangati sessions and which help to differentiate Sangati from regular curriculum. The more discerning teacher notes that they facilitate learning in a group and working as a team. Despite their perceived impact and importance, there is low top of mind or even probed recall of individual games/activities except for a few like the balloon game.

### **Children’s Material**

All teachers appreciate the Sangati material prepared for the children

***Files:*** Particular mention is made of the files that are given to the children at the beginning of the year. Teachers approve of the concept and express how well it is received by the children. Children across the board treasure their files and maintain them carefully. They make sure to bring it to school whenever they have a Sangati session, with their worksheets neatly filed and their homework up to date. Teachers mention that children preserve their files well into the second and even third year of Sangati and often go through them.

- “ The children keep them because they have written in it and they are a record of their individual effort...and their drawings and pictures are in it”
- “Children cherish their files...they say they’ll read it when they are grown up and compare their handwriting then and now”

**Worksheets:** The work sheets are positively received and are seen as an unusual learning resource. The more discerning teacher sees them as facilitating self-expression and stimulating the imagination and truly admires and appreciates their students' individual efforts. Other teachers treat them somewhat lightly since they are perceived to be “very easy”, involve a lot of drawing and colouring and do not at all conform to their idea of study and revision material.

**Questionnaires:** All teachers are appreciative of the various questionnaires that children have to fill in. They are seen to encourage self-confidence, curiosity and ‘self learning’. Several teachers mention questionnaires, which seek to obtain information about the child herself, the family and neighbours

- “They ask the neighbour about their work, whether there is a union, the motive behind forming the union, whether they are members”

**Leaflets:** The take home pamphlets are also identified as relevant learning material. They are seen to provide not just children but their parents and siblings with an opportunity to know a little more about the world. Specific recall of the individual leaflets however is low. The pamphlets on health which discuss various remedies, cleanliness and public hygiene are mentioned as also the letter from a soldier in the world war highlighting the horror of war.

## **Training**

The majority of teachers feel that the three-day training programme is adequate both in terms of time duration and content. The Hindi medium teachers appreciate the use of Hindi during the training.

There is a perception amongst more involved teachers that the training is inadequate to come to grips with the contents of the kits.

There is some concern expressed by some teachers about the neglect of students during the training workshops since these take place during term time and classes are left unsupervised since substitute teachers are difficult to find.

# **AREA FOUR**

## **CONCERNS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SANGATI PROGRAMME**

## 4.1 CAUSES FOR DISSATISFACTION WITH SANGATI

Only a miniscule minority of teachers (3%) felt that Sangati was ‘not very useful’ and were asked to state reasons for the same.

Teachers responses reveal that Sangati is not felt to be useful because of its perceived **disconnect with the regular, prescribed curriculum** and hence its inability to be helpful to children in the future. In addition, the **load of the regular school curriculum** is seen as very heavy and any additional responsibilities and curriculum to be transacted in the classroom are seen as an additional burden. Perceived lack of continuity in the Sangati curriculum with the regular syllabus is also made mention of.

It appears that these teachers gauge ‘**usefulness**’ or its absence largely in the **context of examinations and their perceived workload.**

Lack of connectedness with the regular curriculum, children’s difficulty in understanding the curriculum, the excessive scope / size of Sangati, and inadequate time to do justice to the curriculum are reiterated by a tenth of the total sample who chose to respond to a question in the quantitative questionnaire regarding what they did not like about Sangati.

## 4.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

This section deals with a number of concerns that are raised in the quantitative findings and mentioned more vehemently by teachers , including the more committed ones, in the group discussions and depth interviews as areas that need to be looked into and addressed

***Concerns regarding the lessons:*** There are some concerns regarding **relevance, comprehension and age-appropriateness** of a few lessons:

Themes or issues, which are new or have a different perspective from the majority stand point (and the teacher’s own!) or which don’t appeal to her may be dismissed as irrelevant.

- “ Children don’t want to hear about wars, their causes and consequences...they dislike the comparisons of wars then and now...they say that they used to happen before and they still happen now...children don’t feel the need to know this”

However, the same lesson may be found to have high relevance by a teacher who is actively enquiring and has a social orientation

- “ The world war, the establishment of the UN etc are covered deeply in Sangati...they talk about the after effects of the war and how the need for such an organization was felt and what it did to

prevent such events in future...regular syllabus just says the UN was formed after the war, was attended by so and so heads of state...it is just information from the exam point of view...but not beneficial to students”

A close scrutiny of teacher’s responses along with the findings of the observations of Sangati classes and discussions with the children indicate that there is no clear consensus on which lessons are particularly irrelevant. Moreover, the manner in which a lesson is received by the teacher and delivered to the class may be attributed to the individual teacher’s mindset and value system than to its appropriateness for the child.

The charge of difficulty in comprehension is leveled by some teachers with regard to lessons that deal with abstract concepts as opposed to tangible realities.

- “Topics related to the body are easily grasped...but world wars and U.N and other high level topics are not easily understood”

Our observation of Sangati classes and discussions with children would lead us to conclude that in some of these cases teachers themselves have not grasped the idea clearly and are unable therefore to communicate these concepts adequately. In other cases, they are unable to frame the kinds of questions that would enable them to gauge children’s comprehension of that lesson. In yet other cases we have seen that while children comprehend the ‘difficult’ lesson, the absorption and internalization of the message and the ability to articulate it may take longer.

The charge of age appropriateness is typically leveled at lessons that deal with facts, which traditionally are not discussed with the very young

- “ There are some words in the context of the body which are not used in our regular curriculum and there are pictures shown which in high school and college is called sex education”

Several teachers mention that girls and boys are taught this lesson in separate batches since the ‘girls feel embarrassed and awkward’. In a few cases, the male class teacher has asked a female colleague to take the session for his girl students.

However, more enlightened teachers are able to appreciate the importance of such sessions since the regular curriculum and parents would not discuss them.

- “In the fifth and sixth standards we teach the parts of the body but it is also important to inform the kids about sex education, teach them about the changes that take place, the differences between boys and girls”
- The kids are inquisitive about their body changes too...which their own parents cannot talk about or do not explain to ...they should get the right information through the right person and not through the wrong way”.

It must also be pointed out that there is a dangerous tendency amongst teachers to modify lessons that they feel are not appropriate, by either subtracting significant portions from the lesson or adding their own perspective to it. In either case this results in some distortion of the main message.

- “I tell them we shouldn’t fight or advocate war...but if the enemy from the other country does not follow this same idea, he could be dangerous for us, so we should make war for the sake of establishing peace...we have to be strong enough to fight the war or resist the war”

**Concerns regarding the Curriculum:** Concerns are also raised about the **relevance of the curriculum**. The fifth standard Sangati curriculum, which focuses on the child herself, is seen as highly relevant to this segment of children since it is straightforward, personalized, and employs fun activities and games.

The sixth standard curriculum is seen as ‘heavier’ since it is more information oriented and less ‘fun’ than fifth standard Sangati since it deals with history which children are seen to dislike

Concern about seventh standard Sangati is less to do with the actual curriculum and more to do with the perceived pressures on the teacher and students since there is extra preparation activity for the seventh standard scholarship exams held that year.

**Concerns regarding the Programme:** It is important to note that some of these concerns are linked to the **late start of the programme** which results in reduced time in which to teach the entire Sangati curriculum and pressure to teach Sangati at term end when typically preparation for exams take priority.

Also, teachers feel that there is **discontinuity in the curriculum** since the lessons in class subjects and Sangati topics do not run in tandem (as they would expect) because of the late start of Sangati. This may partly influence the perception that there is a **lack of connectedness** between Sangati and the regular curriculum. The more discerning and involved teacher, while approving of Sangati also desires to see a more direct and immediate impact on her students’ overall curricular performance and in specific subjects given her involvement with the programme and its perception as a curricular intervention.

There are strong concerns expressed about the **quantum of information** offered by the two kits. Several teachers feel that they are unable to do justice to both books.

- “Both books have lots of sessions and we have to cover them all...and then there are exams in February which we cannot ignore”

- “Give a single book instead of two”

Apart from this, there is a feeling that some topics go into excessive detail or are too complicated for the children to understand and that lesson plans are too crowded and cannot be completed in the time allotted.

- “ The teacher will like the programme but if she sits down to take the class she will face some difficulties and will take a long time”
- “To complete one flip chart it takes half an hour at least”

These concerns would need to be further explored before a conclusion can be arrived at regarding their seriousness.

#### **4.3 SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SANGATI PROGRAMME**

Teachers were asked to suggest way in which the Sangati programme can made more effective. About three fourth (76%) of the teachers gave suggestions while one-fourth teachers chose not to respond to this question.

Three kinds of concerns run through the bulk of responses:

- **Vastness of the curriculum:** more than half these teachers perceive the need to reduce the length of the curriculum and reduce the number of kits in each standard
- **Time concerns:** almost half the teachers express the need to have more time allocated for the programme. This must be seen in the context of the size of Sangati, no clear time slot for it in the timetable. The need to commence the programme in the beginning of the year, without delays is thus felt necessary
- **Administrative concerns:** Related to this is the concern that Sangati be included in the regular timetable and officials take an active interest in it

The other suggestions are varied ranging from a stronger linkage between Sangati and the regular curriculum to increasing the duration of teacher training, and adding more activities.



## **AREA FIVE**

# **IMPACT OF SANGATI ON CHILDREN**

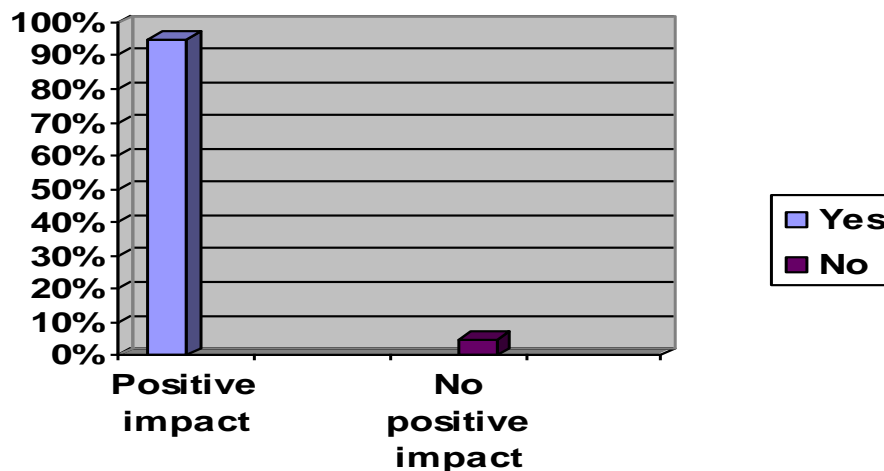
One of the main objectives of the study was to understand the extent to which Sangati had impacted the child and the manner in which it had done so. This section focuses on teacher's perceptions regarding the impact of Sangati on children, examines the perceived level of change, the various dimensions of impact, the degree of perceived influence and the manner in which this is expressed.

## 5.1 PERCEIVED IMPACT ON CHILDREN

### Has Sangati made a positive change in children?

Teachers were asked whether they had noticed any positive changes in children who have gone through the Sangati programme

An overwhelming majority of the teachers in the quantitative sample (95%) believed that Sangati has made an impact and brought about a positive change in children. Only a nominal few held an opinion to the contrary.



## 5.2 THE MANNER IN WHICH SANGATI HAS POSITIVELY IMPACTED CHILDREN

Teachers' spontaneous perceptions of the skills, traits and attitudes, which had been positively influenced by Sangati were garnered through an open ended question in the quantitative questionnaire as well as in group discussions and in depth interviews.

Given below are the key areas in which children have been positively influenced by Sangati, which come up for spontaneous mention by teachers.

**Interest and involvement in Sangati sessions**

- o Interest
- o Attentiveness
- o Participation in activities
- o Completion and interest in doing homework

**Self-expression and Self confidence**

- o Speak up in class
- o Express opinions
- o Ask questions
- o Respond to questions  
participate in class discussion

**Thinking skills**

- o Stimulated to think
- o Make connections
- o Logical thinking
- o Imagination

**General knowledge**

- o New information
- o Wide ranging information
- o Contemporary issues
- o Global issues
- o History

**Inquisitiveness**

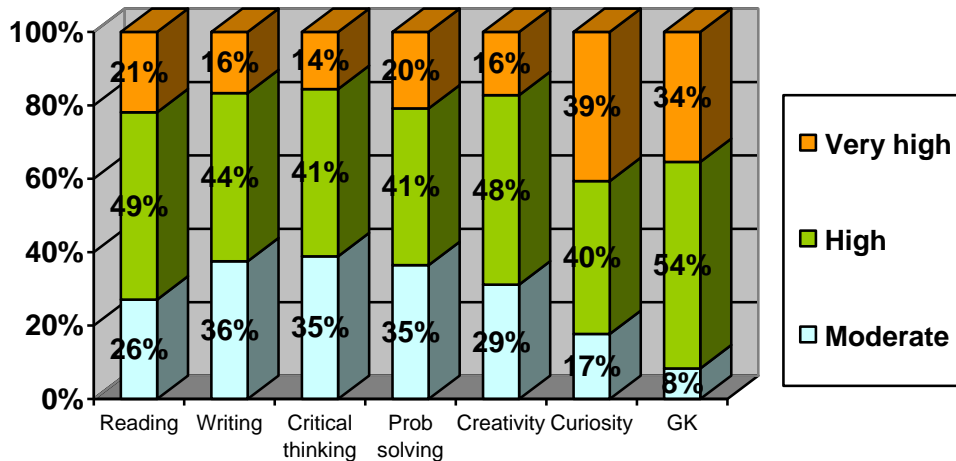
- o Curiosity
- o Wanting to know why

Interest and involvement in Sangati sessions and self-expression and self confidence dominate the teacher’s mind as the discernable results of the Sangati programme. General knowledge, thinking-skills and inquisitive are also fairly top of mind when teachers consider the positive effects of the programme’s impact.

It must be noted that teacher’s are unwilling to accord Sangati with full credit for these changes. Their own role as teachers and their involvement with their students through the school year, the child’s environment and media influences are all seen to play differing roles in contributing to these changes.

## 5.2 PERCEIVED IMPACT ON ACADEMIC AND COGNITIVE SKILLS

**To what extent has Sangati made an impact on children’s academic and cognitive skills?**



### Perceived impact of Sangati on enhancing academic and cognitive skills in children:

Teachers were provided with a list of academic and cognitive skills and were asked to identify the extent to which they felt Sangati had influenced these areas. The academic skills to be rated comprised of reading and writing skills. The cognitive skills in the list covered critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, curiosity and general knowledge.

General knowledge receives the highest rating amongst all the skills mentioned. The majority of teachers (88%) felt that Sangati had made a discernable impact on

children's general knowledge with 34% of the total sample acknowledging a very high impact.

A fairly large percentage of teachers (79%) also identified curiosity as an area in which Sangati had made an impact with 39% of all teachers observing a very high impact.

While more than half the sample perceive Sangati to have made an impact on the rest of the skill areas, there is a significant proportion of teachers that perceive Sangati's impact on children in these areas as only moderate. Of these skills, reading interestingly receives mention (70%) as having impacted on children because of Sangati.

The following section seeks to explore this aspect in greater detail in the light of the qualitative data. It also seeks to understand the manner in which Sangati is perceived to have impacted these skills.

### **General Knowledge**

There is strong concurrence between quantitative and qualitative data regarding Sangati's impact on children's general knowledge. The majority of teachers acknowledge that Sangati has made a strong impact in the area of general knowledge due to a variety of reasons.

The Sangati programme is seen to provide children with a lot of interesting information that they have not been previously exposed to, either in their regular curriculum or in their home environment. It includes new facts, concepts, alternative perspectives, values and discussions on contemporary issues, as well as presenting a new understanding of the individual, societies and countries, the distant past and its links with the present and the future. Further, this information is very visible in the form of attention arresting teaching aids and stories. Both these aspects of Sangati strengthen the perception amongst many teachers that that the focus of Sangati is information and knowledge.

Further, Sangati communicates information in such simple, everyday language that children find it extremely easy to understand and grasp it. Teachers underscore the fact that even complex concepts are described in a manner that children can comprehend and absorb. Moreover, Sangati information is packaged in such a novel manner, using story formats, flip charts and a variety of activities that appeal to children and sustain their interest in the topic being discussed. Thus teachers' feel that that the design of Sangati contributes to quick absorption and internalization of new information.

The perception that Sangati has helped to enhance children's knowledge levels is also fostered by children's feedback during and outside the Sangati session. The tangible enthusiasm of children for the Sangati class, their perceived enjoyment of the sessions, their eagerness to respond to teachers' questions and to share their own opinions and personal information related to the topic being discussed all suggest that the knowledge provided is being received and internalized.

The more involved teacher offers concrete examples of the manner in which Sangati has helped to expand children's understanding and knowledge base, especially in the area of concepts and new perspectives

It must be noted, however, that when the vast majority of teachers are asked to identify children's core learnings in the area of general knowledge, there is low recall of specifics that have impacted. When there is recall, it is largely in the area of factual information and limited to a few themes such as physical changes in puberty, evolution theory, the human suffering caused by war, the value of food, and the negative impact of technology on the environment

### **Inquisitiveness**

The qualitative data corroborates quantitative findings regarding the role of Sangati in impacting this area.

Children are seen to exhibit a high degree of curiosity during Sangati sessions. Apart from the bright students, even children who are less involved with what is happening in class become animated and involved when this session is on. They ask a lot of questions of the teacher, which is atypical of the average student in a regular class..

Everything about Sangati is novel and evokes great curiosity. Thus, they ask inquisitive questions about the Sangati agenda for the day, what the teacher is going to teach, the materials she plans to use and the take home material and worksheets they are going to get.

Sangati content gives children an entry into a fascinating world, which provokes exploration. History comes alive to them and children are intrigued by the lives and lifestyles of past civilizations. The various linkages and juxtapositions Sangati makes invites questions as children re-evaluate what they currently know and are accustomed to.

The latitude that Sangati provides children to express themselves in the classroom is seen to encourage curiosity. Children know they are free to ask any question and will not be shut up by the teacher or laughed at by peers.

The interviews that children undertake amongst family, friends and neighbours are seen by teachers as an important means of provoking and fostering curiosity and developing investigative skills

Only the more discerning teacher is able to appreciate the manner in which Sangati helps children and explore the reasons why certain situations develop and what may have triggered different events

- “Yes, many of them are more curious and they ask many questions and many types of questions”.
- “(During a discussion on India’s glorious past) ... They ask, then why did a small country like Japan become prosperous and rich than us? For which I explain that the people over there are not lazy like us.”

### **Reading Skills**

Teachers’ perception that Sangati has a high impact on children’s reading skills would need to be looked at in the context of the Sangati’s objectives and the qualitative data.

The Sangati programme does not focus on building children’s reading skills. Compared to subjects in the regular curriculum that demand heavy dependence on the use of these skills, Sangati relies on story-telling, listening, discussions and an activity based approach in the classroom with only a small component using reading skills.

However, it appears that the teaching aids, especially the attractively illustrated flipcharts serve as an enticement to children to read stories on their own. Children eagerly seek opportunities to go through them, volunteering to read the flip charts aloud in front of the assembled class or perusing them when their teacher is out of the class or her back is turned. Again, the pamphlets, which form part of the children’s material, are eagerly received, read even before the session is over. The worksheets are also seen to involve some reading as is the Sangati world map which is a source of great interest and invites repeated scanning.

Such enthusiasm for reading Sangati materials needs also to be viewed in the context of children’s typical apathy with regard to reading textbooks belonging to the regular curriculum. Sangati appears to create an interest in reading and encourages children to use their reading skills. It helps to counter children’s current perceptions of reading and reading material by introducing children to material that captures their interest and attention, and is easy to understand and relate to.

- “ Reading ability has increased. Once we do detailed reading, we show them the flip charts and also give them small parts to read, which they read. Even in the other subjects, we tell them to read. Because of Sangati, kids have started showing interest in reading. They gain confidence also. We tell them to do story presentation in the class as well”.
- “Yes, they become more capable for reading because when we give any information – letter or books, they read with more interest...”

One of the reasons why general knowledge, curiosity and reading skills are mentioned by the majority of teachers as having been strongly influenced by Sangati is because these are areas where the effect of Sangati is highly visible and immediately discernable to even the most uninvolved teacher. Teachers see and hear children talking about what they are learning, asking questions about it and reading the flip charts during the Sangati session.

The other areas discussed below are less discernable to the average teacher. This may be because they do not have any immediate tangible expression. Also, in some cases the dimension is interpreted in a narrow light.

### **Creativity**

It appears that most teachers understand the term creativity in the narrow artistic sense, in terms of drawing and colouring work and craft. While there is some mention of imagination in the open ended response in the quantitative questionnaire and the more involved teacher articulate several examples of divergent thinking during group discussions and interviews these evidently are associated with thinking skills which feature fairly high in terms of Sangati’s perceived impact.

Sangati is seen to provide some scope for children to be creative in the artistic sense in their worksheets. Teachers appreciate the manner in which children are encouraged to be creative in the area of art and craft and express their individuality and ideas through these media. They mention how children appear to be more involved in attempting Sangati art and craftwork than during classes set aside for this purpose. Children are also seen to cherish the products of their creativity in their files and enjoy showing them off to family and friends and revisiting them.

### **Writing Skills**

As with reading skills, writing skills are not a key area of Sangati’s focus.



However, teachers believe that Sangati helps to foster some interest in writing amongst children. The qualitative data provides some interesting insights regarding this perception.

The regular curriculum offers little or no opportunity to the child to put down in writing what she knows and thinks and feels. Writing work is associated almost solely with copying and reproduction work, whether it be classwork, homework or during exams. It is based solely on what the teacher has written or what the textbook mentions and is not strongly associated with comprehension of the material.

Sangati worksheets and questionnaires offer children a chance to communicate in writing what they have discovered and learnt about their world and their emotions and opinions.

The more discerning teacher mentions the time and effort children take to write out their own responses in neat handwriting, their pride in these small examples of individual achievement. There is also a feeling that children experience a freedom in writing that they have never experienced before since responses don't have to adhere to any previously decided upon answer and there is no value judgment attached to them.

- “Writing has improved due to Sangati. They are more capable of writing on any subject. They can understand what they are writing and their self-confidence increases. They can make sentences”

### **Problem Solving**

Problem solving tends to be interpreted rather narrowly by teachers as arriving at a solution to specific problems and in this context is not regarded as a major area on which Sangati focuses.

However, there is a feeling that Sangati activities, especially groupwork encourage children to embark on a process of thinking through things and decision-making which could help in problem solving. In this context, teachers mention how Sangati gives children an opportunity to think, share different points of view, explore options, weigh the pros and cons and draw their own conclusions.

The more discerning teacher perceives that these exercises would help children in learning how to make choices and take independent decisions in future.

### **Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is accorded the lowest rating amongst the various academic and cognitive skills perceived to be influenced by Sangati. However, thinking skills feature fairly high in teachers' spontaneous responses in both open-ended responses in the quantitative questionnaire and in the group discussions and depth interviews. As the open ended responses suggest, a variety of dimensions are referred to and associated with thinking skills. The term "critical thinking may on the other hand be seen in a more narrow framework of logic and analysis.

Sangati is seen to encourage children to exert their minds over a question or issue. The open-ended questions that are at the end of each lesson facilitate such enquiry. The children's interest in exercising their minds is evinced by the rush to answer by students, including those who are considered dull, supports this perception.

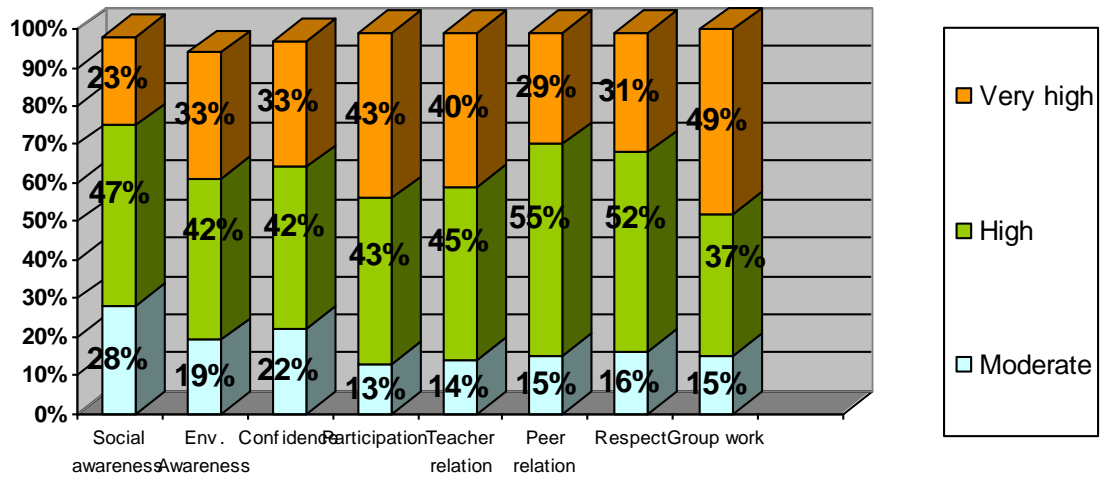
The participatory approach and discussion method are also seen to stimulate thinking. Teachers repeatedly refer to the kinds of questions asked or comments children make in relation to new facts or perspectives they have received through Sangati. The more involved teacher is truly amazed by the variety of views and opinions students can come up with regarding a single situation or scenario posed by the teacher. In fact, this exposure to their students' thinking capacity even causes some revision of teachers' impressions regarding the children in their class.

The more discerning teacher also mentions that children during a Sangati session learn to process information, compare and contrast and link seemingly disconnected information. The lessons in Sangati which seek to expose children to difference and similarities and the connections between events and occurrences are identified by these teachers as encouraging this aspect.

- "They discuss about war and today's situation. They discussed about war between Iraq and America. They discussed that it was harmful. We can make peace by discussion. They don't want war. All these religious fights should be stopped, because all this is nonsense. They express their point of view. All students have different views, but the common point is that they do not want war"

### 5.3. PERCEIVED IMPACT ON PSYCHOSOCIAL SKILLS

To what extent has Sangati impacted children’s psychosocial development?



A review of the quantitative data indicates that all teachers perceive Sangati as having impacted all areas of psychosocial skills.

Children’s ability to work in a group is seen by the majority of teachers (86%) as having being impacted by Sangati with 49% of all teachers affirming a very high impact in this area. Similarly, Sangati is seen by a majority (86%) to have made an impact on children with regard to their participation in class with 43% of teacher perceiving very high impact and the other 43% perceiving high impact.

Sangati’s impact on the relationship of the child with the teacher is high (85% teachers), with 40% of all teachers declaring a very high impact. In the case of relationships with peers (84% teachers ) and respect for others (83% teachers ), the proportion of teachers who perceive a very high impact is not a very significant figure. .

While Sangati is seen to have made a positive impact in the area of self-confidence, environmental awareness (75% teachers each) and to a slightly lesser extent, awareness of social issues, (70% teachers), there are a significant proportion who do not see much evidence for Sangati ‘s impact.

#### Class participation

Class participation receives high mention in the probed quantitative responses. However, this aspect is not spontaneously identified as an area which has been impacted by Sangati in open-ended responses, either in the quantitative or qualitative data.

It appears that class participation in itself is not strongly perceived by teachers as a desirable end benefit at the spontaneous level. While teachers mention that there is increased participation by children in class activities during Sangati sessions, they are more enthused by the perceived development of desirable traits that trigger class participation, namely enhanced self-confidence and the ability to express oneself. It may be that teachers are more alert to these traits that have direct implications for the child in terms of character building, future goals and aspirations and career options.

Class participation is chiefly seen to be manifested in children's interest in Sangati proceedings, the attention they pay to the teacher during the lesson, their eagerness to cooperate with the teacher's directives and their overall keenness to be part of the activities. Their enthusiasm to form and work together in groups or come forward to represent their group also impinge on teachers' perceptions of enhanced participation.

The child's willingness to ask or respond to direct questions posed by the teacher, comment on a situation pertaining to the discussion even if not directly questioned, or the matter or volunteering to read aloud also contribute to teacher's perceptions of increased participation.

Sangati methodology in particular is seen to foster class participation. Working in small groups as a team enables children to get more comfortable with their peers and participate with confidence without fear of being laughed at. Moreover, the sharing of personal information with their teacher and classmates provides children with a feeling of acceptance and hence encourages a greater willingness to participate.

A few teachers refer to the open-ended questions and discussions which Sangati encourages, which entertain all kinds of responses equally, as contributing to a child's readiness to participate without any fear of rejection or diminishment of self-esteem.

- "In Sangati, there is no right or wrong answer. Moreover, in the regular curriculum, we have yardsticks, and if the student's answer falls short of the yardstick, then that is a wrong answer. In Sangati, students write answers on what they have heard and read and express themselves freely. They can furnish their views through these means".

### **Ability to work in groups**

Sangati's impact in encouraging children to work harmoniously in groups receives very high mention in both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Teachers perceive a considerable transformation in this area of children's behaviour. Several teachers mention that children enjoy working in groups and have begun to see value in cooperation.

The group work method and activities that form part of Sangati sessions are identified as the key agent in facilitating teamwork and team spirit. Children take the task at hand seriously, assume greater responsibility and begin to realize the need to work unitedly and peaceably.

The small group encourages children to learn from each other and make their mistakes in a non-threatening environment. The more discerning teacher also notes that the more inhibited child is encouraged to come out of her shell in a small group which is more accepting of her.

It must be pointed out, however, that this ability to work in a group is more or less restricted to Sangati sessions. It appears that the Sangati teaching-learning environment, the role assigned to the teacher and the child, the theme to be discussed and the materials made available all play a role in facilitating working together as a team.

### **Self Expression and Self Confidence**

Children's enhanced self-confidence in expressing themselves is identified spontaneously by teachers as an area that has been strongly impacted by Sangati in both the qualitative data and open-ended question in the questionnaire. Moreover, the specific probes (see section 8.2) on this dimension in the quantitative study also reveal high perceived impact. There also appears to be a felt need for improvement amongst teachers in municipal schools in the self-confidence levels of children, as revealed by the findings amongst the control group.

Teachers identify a variety of ways in which children manifest their newfound self-confidence. The most visible expressions of self-confidence are in the manner in which children respond and react to the teacher during a Sangati session. Their very willingness to raise their hands in class and be noticed by the teacher and the student body are seen as a result of a newfound confidence in themselves and their opinions. The fact that even the most timid or passive child in class is willing to stand up and express herself, whether by responding to a question or sharing a personal experience is seen to affirm the impact Sangati has made on the child. Again, in a context wherein children have traditionally only answered questions, the fact that a child is bold enough to ask a question without fear of ridicule from the class or the teacher is highly appreciated and seen as a strong indicator of Sangati's achievement.

Teachers repeatedly mention that children seem to have been released from fear and experience a new freedom in expressing their thoughts and ideas.

Sangati design and methodology are seen to have made a major contribution in encouraging the development of self-confidence in children. The more discerning teacher also perceives specific lessons as contributing to this area

There is repeated mention of the question and answer sessions and especially the open ended nature of the questions that are non-judgmental and allow the child to delve into her own knowledge base and share her own thoughts and ideas. Some teachers also identify the interview method as encouraging children to interact with older, authority figures in the family with a definite agenda and gain self-confidence in the process. The information sharing post the interviews are also seen to help confidence building as children learn to communicate what they know with assurance and some authority.

The more involved teacher also identifies the interviews, question and answer sessions and fifth standard sessions on the self as helping to build up self esteem as children learn more about themselves, value themselves and grow more comfortable with whom they are, through them. The more discerning teacher also identifies groupwork processes as encouraging the development of self-confidence as children feel freer to make mistakes in a non-threatening small group environment.

Several teachers believe that the new self confidence displayed during Sangati class spills over into other areas of the child's life. It is primarily manifested in the manner in which the child interacts with authority figures, older acquaintances and strangers both in the school and in the home and community. There is less fear with regard to engaging with these individuals and less hesitancy in responding to them and expressing their own views in public. Attitudes such as these, some teachers feel, would help the child in future. A few teachers believe that there is also less fear manifested in the child's interactions with the teacher and peers in non-Sangati classes.

- “In Sangati questions there is no scope for answering incorrectly so children express themselves freely”
- “There is lots of scope to answer independently, to articulate independent opinions”
- “In a small group one who is weak is always lifted up...shyness goes away and they learn to express themselves boldly”

### **Relationship with teachers**

According to the probed responses in the quantitative study, teachers perceive that Sangati has impacted children's relationship with their teachers very positively.

On the basis of the open ended responses, the qualitative data and the observation studies it may be suggested that the majority of teachers are not actively seeking change in this area and hence do not strongly register it at the spontaneous level. However, when probed on this area, they acknowledge that there are desirable

changes in the student-teacher dynamic. The data also suggests that teachers recognize these changes as being largely restricted to the Sangati class per se.

Several teachers mention that Sangati helps children perceive them as friends, rather than authority figures. In the non threatening, non judgmental Sangati atmosphere, children feel encouraged to articulate their queries, comments and opinions without fear of penalization, rejection or insult. Again, the appealing flipcharts, worksheets and activities initiated by the teacher also serve to endear the child to her. The child tends to be more attentive to the teacher, responds more readily to her instructions and is generally more cooperative. She is also more appreciative of the teacher's efforts.

The more discerning teacher acknowledges that Sangati is chiefly instrumental in according her this new role of facilitator. She also admits the role of Sangati group work and homework in enabling her to be more empathetic about the child's circumstances

The majority of teachers do not see much change in the overall teacher-student dynamic during the school day. Several, while stating that it would be beneficial if a Sangati-type change is brought about, are fairly accepting of the status quo. The more conservative teacher believes that any change is undesirable since it will upset the status quo. Only the more involved teacher feels that improved student teacher relationships are of vital importance.

These committed teachers claim that they have achieved a more positive relationship with their students, but feel their own efforts, smaller class sizes or teaching the same group of children for the duration of middle school are largely responsible for these changes. Only a few of these teachers feel they have come to know their students a little better through Sangati sessions.

- “Now since they have written everything in the form regarding their family background, they now think that our teacher and whole class knows my background and what I do like distributing newspapers in the morning and so even if they are late, now they explain the genuine reasons.

### **Relationship with peers**

The quantitative probed responses indicate that the majority of teachers rate Sangati as having contributed to improved relationships between children in the classroom.

The qualitative data and open-ended responses in the questionnaire provide some insights with regard to this. While most teachers are not actively seized by this aspect, they recognize its merit and are willing to recognize the role that Sangati

has played in enabling children to view their classmates more positively and highlighting the value of unity

Teacher's point to the role of teamwork, in particular, in bringing together children and facilitating positive interaction between them. There is some mention of the sessions on "Me and my body" which discuss similarities and differences as having helped children become more accepting of themselves and other children. The interviews and activities that encourage children to share information about themselves, their families, their interests and personal likes and dislikes are also seen to foster a better understanding of each other. However, these changes seem to be mainly observable in the Sangati sessions, especially during group-work activities, which actively encourage and support such interactions.

Only a few committed teachers feel there has been a rub off of these relationships in the regular classroom and mention that children are more willing to consider another's viewpoint and there is greater interaction with classmates they otherwise would have little to do with. They also mention that their students are more understanding and sympathetic of children who are different from them, especially those who are less academically inclined or more impoverished. Sangati materials and activities help to strengthen the hands of committed teachers who seek to bring about changes in interpersonal relationships.

### **Respect for others**

This aspect also receives high mention in teachers' probed responses.

It may be suggested that most teachers recognize Sangati's value orientation and concern for justice and equality. However, as with the other dimensions of interpersonal relationships, this is not a perceived concern area for most teachers nor an area which they spontaneously observe Sangati to have impacted at a behavioural level

Thus, only a few committed teachers with a strong value orientation spontaneously recall Sangati's acknowledgement of and concern for minority groups, the marginalized and the underdog.

They see Sangati as having enlarged children's understanding of those living around them, whether a labourer or a grandparent or a mother who is at home and value their contribution. There is some mention of 'Ramu ki Roti' in this regard and also the interviews, which give children a first hand opportunity to understand the other.

Sangati is also mentioned as discussing respect for others in the context of caste and religions but these teachers themselves do not appear to acknowledge that there are issues of disrespect and conflict in this regard..



### **Awareness of environmental issues**

There is slightly lower agreement amongst teachers regarding the extent to which Sangati has impacted on children's environmental awareness. The qualitative data and the open ended responses in the questionnaire suggest that this is not a high concern area for teachers and hence, even if there has been an impact, it is not strongly registered by teachers.

While Sangati is acknowledged as discussing environmental issues, the majority of teachers do not perceive any value addition in Sangati information. There is a perception that the Sangati areas of information overlap much of the environmental education that teachers cover in the general science and language textbooks. In this context teachers claim that they have successfully made children aware of issues such as conservation of water and energy resources, importance of trees etc. and know what to do.

Some teachers point out that Sangati sessions have influenced children's attitudes and behaviour regarding civic/public hygiene and avoidance of practices such as throwing rubbish on the road. Passing mention is made of Sangati pamphlets on health and hygiene.

Teachers with a strong information and value orientation mention the new perspective that Sangati has provided students with on the negative consequences of technology on the environment.

### **Awareness of social issues**

There is greater disagreement amongst teachers of Sangati's impact on children's social awareness than with regard to environmental awareness. The qualitative data bears this out and further identifies this area as being of even lower concern to teachers than environmental issues.

Thus, there is hardly any spontaneous recall by teachers of social issues dealt with by Sangati. When this aspect is probed, teachers affirm that Sangati deals with social issues but are reluctant to discuss the matter further. It may be that teachers have not grasped these issues in their entirety or do not subscribe to Sangati's stand on these issues or do not believe that they should be discussed with children.

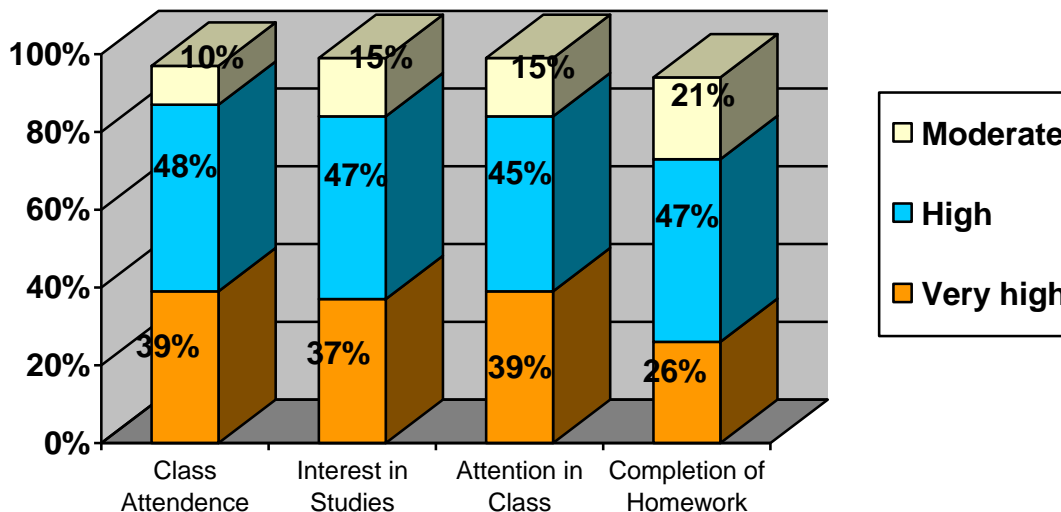
The only issue that is mentioned by some teachers is that of war and peace wherein the horror of war and the abuse of technology for inhuman ends appear to have impacted both the teacher and the student.

Treatment of women and caste barriers are mentioned but viewed as issues that are no longer of contemporary concern

## 5.4. PERCEIVED IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL AND LEARNING

In what way has Sangati impacted children's attitudes to school and learning?

Sangati's impact on fostering positive attitudes to school and learning among children:



As with the other categories, teachers respond positively to Sangati's impact on attitudes to school and learning. A large majority of teachers perceive that Sangati has positively impacted children's attendance (87% teachers), children's interest in studies and attention in the class. A significant proportion of teachers confirm very high impact of Sangati on children in each of these areas with 39% teachers attributing very high impact to children's attendance of classes and paying attention in class. Sangati is also seen by 37% teachers to have made a very high impact on interest in class.

The area of homework is seen to be less highly impacted with a significant proportion of teachers perceiving a more moderate impact.

### Attendance

The quantitative rating reveals that attendance in class has received high mention by teachers. However, when examined in the light of both qualitative data and

quantitative data (in section 5.6) it suggests that the impact of Sangati in this area is not as high as suggested. This area would need to be evaluated on more precise measures based on class attendance registers, spot checks by observers on Sangati and other days to get a more accurate picture of attendance.

Teachers across groups and depth interviews express high satisfaction with class attendance and mention extremely high attendance in classes. This may be because teachers perceive attendance more from the viewpoint of quality of attendance rather than quantity of attendance. There is reluctant admission of absenteeism only on repeated probing. Teachers of smaller classes (with less than thirty students) mention a maximum of two absentees a day. Teachers of larger classes with 30 to 50 plus students admit to a slightly higher number of absentees i.e. two to four a day. There is also reference to children who may absent themselves in the latter part of the day after the day's attendance is taken. The causes of absenteeism are typically rational such as sickness, or critical chores. However there is mention on further probing, amongst teachers of larger classes, of a few children who are generally more irregular than the others and the qualification that "the regular ones come regularly"

In such a scenario, teachers may perceive a visible increase in attendance when regular absentees show up on Sangati days. There is mention by some committed teachers of larger classes to this effect who also attribute this behaviour partially to the attraction that Sangati holds.

However, teachers of smaller classes who believe they hold the reins of their class tightly are reluctant to give Sangati high credit for impacting attendance as are the uninvolved teacher who feel deny any impact of Sangati on attendance. The more uninvolved teacher attributes absenteeism to factors beyond their control such as domestic chores, care of siblings and financial pressures and denies that Sangati has a role in improving the situation.

- "Not much difference has come in attendance. The difference is 2-4%"
- "Yes, the attendance of students has improved. It is possible because students love the stories in Sangati and make it a point to attend it. I have observed that initially there used to be less attendance. Sangati is now kept on Saturdays they feel tempted to listen to stories".

### **Interest in Studies and Attention in class**

Both these aspects merit high mention by teachers in the quantitative exercise. Interest in studies finds validation in the qualitative data and open-ended responses in the questionnaire and tends to be linked with attention in class in both these sources. It must be pointed out that teachers are chiefly referring to the Sangati class when they discuss both these aspects.

Teachers across groups and depth interviews describe how much children enjoy Sangati and how interested and involved they are in the sessions. Sangati material, namely flip charts, stories, games and other activities and worksheets are identified as the key triggers to the development of children's interest. Sangati methodology, especially the open-ended questions and groupwork also merit mention in this context. A few teachers also identify the design of the lesson plan with its various components as sustaining interest in the sessions.

Interest in Sangati manifests itself in greater attentiveness and responsiveness to what the teacher is saying. A few observation studies in a Sangati and non-Sangati class and a role-play on this theme indicate that the majority of the class including back-benchers pay attention to the teacher in a Sangati class. While backbenchers' attention may wander periodically it is refocused whenever another Sangati activity is introduced into the session. This may be contrasted with children's behaviour in a non-Sangati class where only the first one or two rows pay attention to what the teacher is saying and shoot up their hands when a question is asked. Most of the others occupy themselves with some scribbling, put their heads down or gaze blankly at the walls. The backbenchers distance themselves completely from the proceedings in the front and shove, prod or punch each other, flip pellets and rockets and try and distract the others. The teacher mechanically calls them to attention and then continues her recital.

Many more children interact with the teacher in a Sangati class as compared to a non Sangati class including the mischief makers and the otherwise passive ones. Interest in this context is mainly demonstrated in their responsiveness to the teacher and the content of the lesson. In the classes we observed there was high eagerness to answer questions, with children drawing closer and crowding round the teacher when a teaching aid was displayed. Interest is also displayed in the comments to the teacher and the shared asides to classmates regarding the lesson as also children's eager willingness to participate in a role-play, form groups and come up to the front.

Interest in Sangati is also associated with children's keenness to obtain their worksheets, display their homework to their friends and their teacher. It is also seen to be manifested in their using other class periods to fill in their worksheets!

Apart from interest in Sangati activities per se, the more involved teacher also mentions children's curiosity in specific themes that engage their Interest, the connections they make between the themes being taught and something they had read, heard or seen earlier.

The involved teacher also cites a few instances where children have displayed more interest in a non-Sangati lesson because prior to this, Sangati has provided them with some interesting insights regarding an event or a clearer understanding of a concept dealt with in this lesson.

- “If you explain them in a story they started taking interest in that subject. Which map is given in fact in the books is it is very easy to understand. Now they have wide knowledge about different countries like America, Russia”.
- “There is marginal increase in attraction and affection towards schools due to Sangati.”
- “They used to get bored earlier, but after listening to Nanaji’s stories they started showing interest in history and geography”

### **Completion of homework**

Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that there is relative agreement amongst teachers that Sangati has impacted children’s desire to do their homework. It must be reiterated in this context that teachers identify homework as Sangati homework.

Completion of Sangati homework is not top of mind for teachers. However, on probing, teachers express their appreciation for the homework provided along with the Sangati kit. Children are described as actually enjoying doing their Sangati homework unlike homework linked to other subjects.

The homework is adjudged by teachers to be eminently “easy” since it is geared to children’s interests and capabilities.

Teacher’s associate homework mainly with Sangati material rather than homework themes, namely the file, interview guides and worksheets. There is lower mention of the leaflets that are handed out to children. They mention that children accept their assignments enthusiastically and approach the task eagerly, often on the same day and even sometimes during non-Sangati periods. Unlike other subjects, Sangati homework is always completed in time and displayed proudly to friends and the teacher.

The design and content of Sangati homework have resulted to some extent in parental awareness of the Sangati programme. The Sangati file looks impressive and is seen to attract attention and discussion about its purpose. Moreover, homework themes are familiar enough for parents to engage with their children and help them with it. Some teachers actively encourage children to take the help of family members to answer questions about family backgrounds etc.

There is some mention of parents engaging with teachers regarding their children’s homework at the beginning of the year when the files are first brought home.

- “Those who used to now finish their homework, or did less have started doing to as their interest has increased. So they feel that they should complete their work. Also the parents also take care about it”

## 5.5 PERCEIVED IMPACT ON SELF-CONFIDENCE, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND TEACHER-CHILDREN RELATIONSHIPS

**What is the impact of Sangati on Self-confidence, Class participation and Student –teacher relationships?**

<b>Areas / skills impacted by Sangati</b>	<b>% of teachers who “disagree” / “strongly agree”</b>
<b>Self Confidence (average score: 85%)</b>	
Children ask more questions in the class	88%
Children answer more questions in the class	84%
Children express their personal opinion in the class more often	83%
<b>Class Participation (average score: 90%)</b>	
Children now work more harmoniously in groups.	92%
Children volunteer for class activities more eagerly	89%
Children are more willing to share their possessions with their peers in the class	88%
<b>Teacher-Children Relationships (average score: 84%)</b>	
Children speak to teachers more freely	90%
Children are less fearful of teachers	86%
Children approach teachers more frequently to clarify doubts and problems	76%

Avehi-Abacus wished to assess the validity of feedback they had received from regarding Sangati’s impact on key aspects of children’s behaviour, namely self confidence, class participation and teacher-children relationships. This feedback was posed to teachers in the form of statements that they were asked to agree or disagree with.

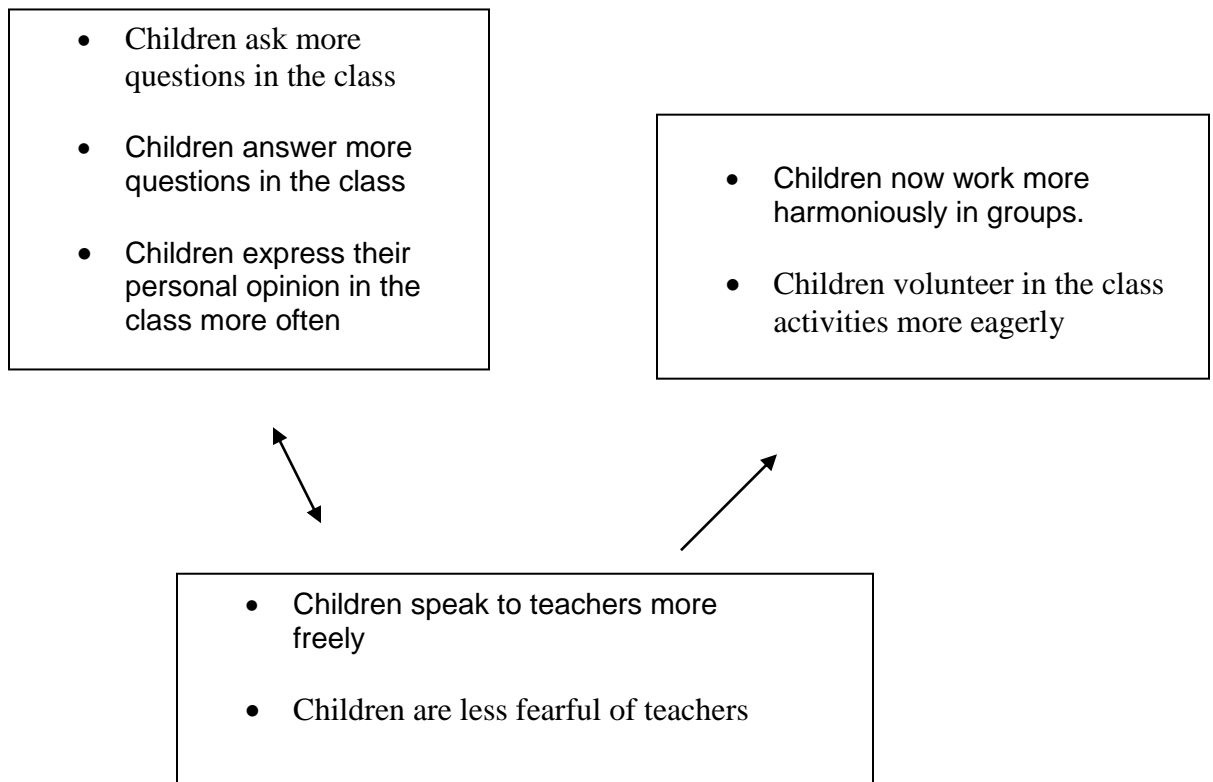
A comparison of the aggregate scores of each cluster of behavioral statements reinforces our findings that Sangati has had a major impact on class participation,

self-confidence and relationship with teachers (in that order) in the context of the sessions.

Each of the behavioural statements receives high validation from teachers and bears out our findings in this regard in section ...of the report. The statement that reports that “children approach teachers more frequently to clarify doubts and problems” which receives slightly lower validation is also in sync with our findings on teacher-student relationships.

A review of the behavioural patterns in the light of the qualitative data also reveal the close interrelationship between them

**Classroom processes facilitated / triggered by Sangati: Emerging from qualitative data**







## 5.6. COMPARITIVE IMPACT OF SANGATI VS THE REGULAR CURRICULUM

**What is the comparative impact of Sangati on children vis-a-vis the regular curriculum?**

<b>Comparative impact of Sangati vis-à-vis regular curriculum</b>	<b>% of teachers who agree / strongly agree</b>
<b>Attitude to School and Studies</b>	
Children's interest levels in Sangati class are higher than in other classes	83%
Children are more prompt and diligent in doing Sangati homework than homework of other subjects	76%
Children remember more of what they have learnt in Sangati than what they have learnt in other subjects.	75%
Children exposed to Sangati come to school more regularly than others	69%
Attendance in the class on Sangati days is higher than on other days	67%
Through Sangati home-work, parents are more aware and interested in what happens in the school.	56%

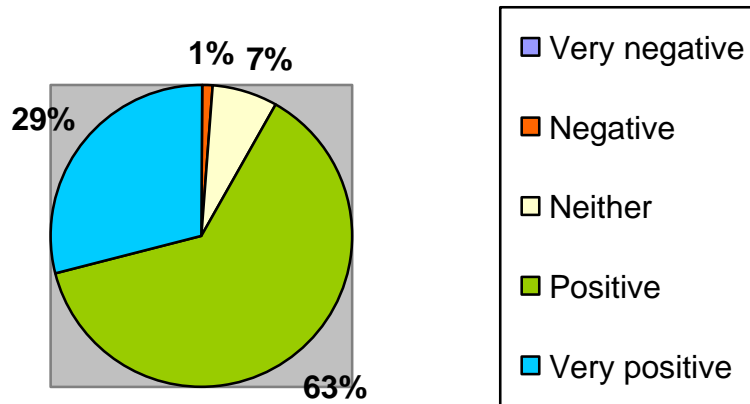
A comparative evaluation of Sangati and the regular curriculum on the dimension of "Attitude to school and studies" indicates that there is highest concurrence amongst teachers regarding Sangati sessions being of higher interest to students than regular curriculum sessions. There is greatest disagreement with regard to Sangati homework having helped to involve parents in school and the child's studies. However, there is fairly high agreement over children attempting and completing Sangati homework vis-a- vis non Sangati homework. Teachers are also in higher agreement regarding children's greater recall of Sangati topics versus topics in other subjects. Teachers' reactions to the statements on attendance be it higher regularity of Sangati exposed children in coming to school or higher attendance on Sangati class days indicates that there is uncertainty about Sangati's impact on this area or hesitation in admitting it.

## **AREA SIX**

### **IMPACT OF SANGATI ON THE TEACHER**

## 6.1 PERCEIVED NATURE OF IMPACT

Teachers were asked to indicate the manner in which Sangati had impacted on them on a five point scale ranging from very positive impact to very negative



Almost a third of the teachers (29%) felt that Sangati had a very positive impact on them as teachers and persons while a little more than two thirds (63%) acknowledged that it had a positive impact on them. Apart from one teacher who stated that Sangati had a negative impact on him, the remaining minority felt Sangati had not made any real impact on them.

The qualitative data indicates that most teachers do not consciously view Sangati as a means of enhancing their own understanding, skills and abilities. Moreover, they are reluctant to admit that it has made a difference to their quality of teaching or feel that they are already doing a good job. The question regarding impact thus creates high discomfort in their minds and many are reluctant to consider it. Others deflect the question and reiterate how appealing the programme is for children. Still others are defensive and state that they have always known about the various things that Sangati promotes but are constrained by time and the demands of the regular curricular to implement them. Others are willing to confess to learnings in the area of new information and knowledge since this does not directly impinge on or affect their self-image as teachers as would other areas.

Only the more discerning teachers are pleasantly surprised and appreciative of the new learnings that Sangati have enabled them to receive. Even in these cases, teachers primarily identify exposure to new information and knowledge as the chief area of Sangati's influence on them. Some teachers mention using Sangati materials in non-

Sangati classes. A few teachers refer to a better understanding of children and still fewer to using Sangati materials and methods in non-Sangati classes.

## 6.2 TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE MANNER IN WHICH SANGATI IMPACTS THEM

Teachers were asked to respond to specific statements pertaining to Sangati's impact on their interactions with children, teaching methodology and knowledge base in order to ascertain the specific ways in which they have most benefited from the programme.

### Impact on the teacher

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ Can't say
1	I know the names of more of the children in my class than I would otherwise	17%	29%	33%	15%	5%	1%
2	I know more about the children in my class and their individual abilities because of Sangati	20%	56%	13%	9%	2%	0
3	I have a more friendly relationship with the children in my class	24%	43%	21%	10%	2%	0
4	I have learnt new and more interesting ways of teaching children because of Sangati	26%	51%	18%	5%	0	0
5	I have begun to use the Sangati teaching methods in my other (non Sangati) classes	34%	48%	10%	8%	0	0
6	I have begun to use more teaching aids in my other (non Sangati ) classes	19%	52%	18%	10%	1%	6
7	Sangati has helped me see that all the school subjects I teach are interrelated	25%	48%	21%	6%	1%	0
8	Sangati has made me more aware of social issues	22%	52%	19%	7%	0	0

Sangati is seen by the majority of teachers to have made a strong impact in the area of teaching methods. Many teachers (82%) mention that they use Sangati teaching methods in non-Sangati classes. A fairly large percentage (77%) feel that they have been introduced to new and interesting ways of teaching. A fairly large proportion (71%) admit to the use of teaching aids in non Sangati classes.

Teachers also perceive that Sangati has made an impact on them in the area of knowledge and understanding of issues. A fairly large segment of teachers

(77%), believe Sangati has helped them in understanding the interconnectedness of the subjects they teach. A similar proportion mentions that Sangati has increased their knowledge of environmental and social issues (78% and 74% teachers respectively).

In the area of teachers' relationships with their students, Sangati is acknowledged, by a fairly large proportion of teachers (76%) as helping teachers understand their students and their personal concerns. However, slightly fewer teachers (67%) feel they have a friendlier relationship with their students as a result of the programme with a significant proportion who are not in agreement with this view. Again Sangati is not seen to have contributed strongly to remembering the names of students in their class by more than half the teachers. Only 46% feel it has helped in recall of their names. This latter finding must be viewed both in the context of small class sizes where teachers know each child by name and the fact that while children find teachers more approachable as a result of Sangati, teachers do not necessarily have a friendlier relationship with their students because of Sangati.

### Impact on teachers: Response to statements

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ Can't say
1	I know the names of more of the children in my class than I would otherwise	17%	29%	33%	15%	5%	1%
2	I know more about the children in my class and their individual abilities because of Sangati	20%	56%	13%	9%	2%	0
3	I have a more friendly relationship with the children in my class	24%	43%	21%	10%	2%	0
4	I have learnt new and more interesting ways of teaching children because of Sangati	26%	51%	18%	5%	0	0
5	I have begun to use the Sangati teaching methods in my other (non Sangati) classes	34%	48%	10%	8%	0	0
6	I have begun to use more teaching aids in my other (non Sangati ) classes	19%	52%	18%	10%	1%	0
7	Sangati has helped me see that all the school subjects I teach are interrelated	25%	48%	21%	6%	0	0
8	Sangati has made me more aware of social issues	22%	52%	19%	7%	0	0
9	Sangati has made me more conscious of environmental issues	28%	50%	19%	2%	1%	0

### 6.3 OTHER WAYS IN WHICH SANGATI HAS IMPACTED TEACHERS

To identify the range of attitudes and behaviours that Sangati had influenced amongst teachers, the latter were asked to mention other ways, if any, in which Sangati has influenced them, apart from those mentioned in the preceding section (section 5.2)

The majority of the sample (72%) chose to share their views in this regard. However, it must be mentioned that several of the responses reiterate the aspects mentioned in section 5.2. Moreover, a significant number of responses to this question (19%) were coded as 'invalid' since they refer to impact of Sangati on children, without any reference to the teacher. The group discussions as well as depth interviews suggest that teachers perceive Sangati to be a programme for children and have a greater desire to and comfort in talking about the programme's impact on children. They are also visibly more uncomfortable

discussing and acknowledging the impact of Sangati on themselves. These invalid responses regarding children appear to reflect this.

Hence, the focus of this section will be chiefly on the range of attitudes and behaviours that have been influenced by Sangati rather than the frequency of their mention in the findings.

A variety of responses refer to Sangati's impact on teaching. Adoption of Sangati approaches that make teaching more lively and effective and help children understand difficult concepts, the use of the discussion method, use of the question and answer method, use of more teaching-learning material, chart making are mentioned in this regard.

There are also responses indicating Sangati's encouragement of teachers to improve their minds and skills. Honing analytical skills, stimulating the intellect and extra reading and enhancement of map reading skills are mentioned in this context along with extra reading and chart making.

There is also mention of Sangati's contribution in helping to foster a better understanding of and relationship with students and play a more active role in their development.

There are a few responses that refer to Sangati's contribution in facilitating better understanding and empathy regarding social issues and stimulating concern about resolving these issues.

Provision of new information to teachers is reiterated.

## 6.4 AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE AREAS WHICH HAVE IMPACTED THE TEACHER

**Knowledge:** Teachers willingly accede to Sangati's impact on their knowledge levels. Several confess that it is impossible to keep up with changes that are happening on a daily basis especially due to their workloads and appreciate the collation of the latest information by a team of experts that bring them up to date and authority figures in their social circles. In this context it may be said that several of the teachers interviewed lived in the distant suburbs and spent several hours commuting each day.

Interestingly, the knowledge and understanding that the teacher identifies as new to the child is also acknowledged as new information for the teacher herself. Overall, spontaneous recall of particular themes and information bytes are low. Those that have recurring mention are mentioned below:

- Me and My Body: changes that take place during puberty
- Health and Hygiene: simple first aid for injuries, home remedies, ayurvedic remedies, personal hygiene post puberty
- Family: different types of family; polyandry, acceptance of different family types
- Theory of evolution
- History: history of conquest and colonization (Japan. South East Asia)
- Geography: awareness of countries of the world, origins of tomato, potato and soya bean
- Human rights: basic rights and duties, need to fight for rights

When teachers refer to new knowledge they have received, they refer not just to new facts, new insights and perspectives but also the manner in which this is communicated. Thus teachers confess that they have benefited not only from precise and lucid information about a subject, but also the visual aids, which convey this.

**Teaching Methodology:** Most teachers are willing to acknowledge the usefulness of Sangati methodology. A few claim to have been making and using teaching aids and the question answer methods as a matter of routine though others confess that creating their own materials and devising activities on the lines of Sangati is difficult given the teacher's circumstances, pressure of the work load and her time constraints.

Some teachers state that Sangati has encouraged them to incorporate its methodology in non-Sangati classes. A review of quantitative and qualitative data and class observations indicate that this is chiefly in the area of asking children



more questions in these classes and borrowing Sangati material such as charts and the map to enhance their teaching of a non Sangati class.

Only a few more involved teachers who can appreciate the Sangati philosophy and participatory approach mention giving children more personalized attention, adopting Sangati teaching methods such as groupwork and engaging children in discussion with open ended questions. There is nominal mention of demonstrating experiments described in the manual.

- “We do discussions with kids in a playful manner”
- Sangati has different kinds and ways of asking questions and getting answers
- “We get knowledge and new ideas and ways of teaching like giving full attention to each and every student, how to develop their personality, how to understand them”

**Teacher –Student Relationships:** At the spontaneous level, most teachers deny any need for a change in teacher student relationships and are even offended by the implication that change is desirable. This may be partially attributed to the fact that most teachers have accepted the current relationship as a given and do not desire a change in the status quo. Many say they already have a good relationship with their students and cite long years of interaction with the same class.

Only a few teachers spontaneously admit to the fact that Sangati has helped improve their relationships with their students. These are typically the more involved teachers who are more sensitive about human relationships. They mention that Sangati has helped them understand their students better, empathize with their situations and concerns and take a more active interest in helping their students overcome their problems.

Most teachers who refer to improved teacher student relationships on probing appear to be referring mainly to the changed perceptions that the child has of the teacher due to Sangati than major changes in the teacher’s attitude to the child. The teacher’s persona undergoes some change due to the new role Sangati bestows on her. Sangati sessions, the play activities, projects and group work help children see a more attractive side of the teacher. She is considered more approachable and less intimidating and children are more willing to interact with her and share information with her. There is some spill over of this perception to the rest of the school day.

However, there is also some slight softening apparent on the part of the teacher due to the Sangati process, She is more tolerant and accommodating of behaviour that previously would have evoked penalization and is a little more inclined to consider

the child's viewpoint. This is not strongly discernable behaviour but would need to be verified through quantitative measures.

## **AREA SEVEN**

# **CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SANGATI**

## 7.1 PROFILE OF CHILDREN

The children we met in the groups were hand picked by their teachers and identified by them as the most articulate and self confident of their class and also described as good in studies.

It must be pointed out at the start that these children largely represented the top end of their class, academically, socially and economically. They appeared to come from more settled backgrounds with at least one family member in regular employment. Most of them had non-working mothers. Only a nominal few studied as well as held down part time jobs. Several hailed from families where there was at least one parent or sibling who'd done the tenth standard. In some instances, children talked of educated mothers.

***Differences by Gender:*** Overall the girls appeared to be more focused than the boys, more disciplined about their study and homework schedules and more involved with learning. They also appeared to be more articulate than the boys.

***Differences by Mind Set:*** Children in the group varied in their attitudes and interactions during the group discussions, which broadly indicate the different attitudinal profiles in the class. The star performers of the class who also did well academically were extremely interested and involved and participated enthusiastically in whatever the activity we offered. They brimmed over with self-confidence and vied with each other in expressing their views. They had a far larger knowledge base than the others, were very alert and sharp and had an opinion on most issues.

The more happy-go-lucky child was eager to be part of the proceedings but was less driven in obtaining appreciation and attention of the group moderators. They were eager to respond when asked a question but did not always volunteer an opinion. While levels of concentration were high at the start of the group, attention dwindled unless they were actively drawn into an individual or group activity. They would then withdraw and engage in some disruptive activity with another like-minded soul.

The more inhibited tended to stay passive for most of the duration of the group. They were extremely hesitant to talk and appeared scared of the possible reaction of the moderators or their peers. They were extremely reluctant to hazard an opinion and were unsure how to go about an exercise independently. They would try to ease out of the group situation when attention was focused away from them or withdraw into some solitary activity

***Differences between Standard Six and Seven children:*** There appears to be a significant difference between class six and class seven students in terms of the way they absorb and process information and their analytic and communication skills.

The standard seven child appears to be far more analytical than the standard six child. The latter is more literal in recalling situations and events.

## **7.2 PERCEPTIONS OF THE SANGATI PROGRAMME**

Mention of the Sangati programme evokes an enthusiastic response. Children display palpable excitement as they talk about it. It is as a source of great delight.

Discussion of Sangati prompts spontaneous and repeated mention of all the enjoyable activities they have experienced through it. The programme is intrinsically linked in children's minds with stories, games, pictures, drawing, history and new information. In addition, children tend to associate it with the activities they engaged in the previous year. Thus, standard six children associate it with songs and poems, drawings and play activities. Standard seven children associate it with happenings in today's society, discoveries, inventions, the countries of the world and gender issues.

Children reiterate that they like it very much.

## **7.3 DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME**

Some children mention Sangati in the context of the school programme. However, it is seen to be different from anything that the children have been exposed to before and hence many children do not strongly associate it with school and studies.

Sangati is distinguished from the regular programme in the minds of children chiefly due to its play component, that is, the stories, games, colouring and craft.

It is also seen to be different because of the sheer novelty of the various activities. The child is very conscious of the fact that each story, game, song or piece of artwork is something unique, which she has never engaged in before.

Even the information and educational component is seen to be different from that offered by regular subjects. The information that Sangati offers is interesting and exciting and children are able to enter into the worlds it paints for them

- "They tell us about olden days, what clothes they wore...the jewellery"
- "We learn about folk dances and music, how people live in different countries"

The more perceptive child also distinguishes between Sangati and the regular curriculum in terms of comprehension. The child articulates that everything in Sangati that is read aloud to the child or read by the child is understood by her.

Other aspects which characterize Sangati in the child's mind is the absence of exams, text books and exercise books which are hated and dreaded features of the regular curriculum.

There is some perception amongst the more discerning seventh standard child that Sangati is not as important as the regular curriculum. The absence of a definitive slot in the timetable, the fact that it is squeezed into the last slot of the day and the fact that it is not given much importance by the Sangati teacher contribute to this perception. The fact that it does not feature in any record of the child's performance also influences this perception.

#### **7.4 RECALL OF SANGATI CONTENT**

Children have low recall of Sangati content at a spontaneous level, except for a few star performers. As mentioned earlier, children tend to talk of Sangati "stories", "games", "drawings" and "information" but do not refer to any particular one unless specifically probed about ones they remember and like.

Post probing, there is increased recall. A review of the Sangati items which have high recall suggests that activities that offer a tactile stimulus and engage two to three senses, impact and involve students to a greater extent

The following fifth standard material has very high recall across 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> standards

- Undri-Sundri story and poem
- Balloon game
- Dinosaur picture

Drawings of faces of friends, pictures of gods and goddesses done in the sixth standard also have high recall across groups

There is also fairly high recall of Maya's story by seventh standard students

There is extremely erratic recall of some of the following activities

- Stories: of a blind girl, lady and a fish, elephant story, Sarvaana Samaan Hakk Pahijey, Shanti ki Bhet, Dost Rangavane
- Game: Fire on the mountain, spider's web, give and take
- Information: discovery of fire, wheel, train

#### **7.4 MANNER IN WHICH CHILDREN RELATE TO SANGATI**

Some projective techniques were used to better understand the way in which children relate to Sangati and why they feel it is important to them. Children, especially of the sixth standard find it difficult to articulate reasons why they feel Sangati is important to them. And tend to point to the joy of the experience. A few seventh standard children are better able to do so

***Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP):*** Children were asked to describe how their senses would react if they came alive and could speak about Sangati in order to understand how Sangati impacted children at a sensorial level,

<b><i>Eyes</i></b>	: it will say “what beautiful pictures” : “you can see the expressions on their faces” : “even those who don’t understand well will do so because of the way they are depicted, the way they act”
<b><i>Nose</i></b>	: “smells very sweet” : “what beautiful stories, pictures , poetry”
<b><i>Ears</i></b>	: they will say “we have gathered such vast knowledge”
<b><i>Hands</i></b>	: “we can play....make so many things”
<b><i>Heart</i></b>	: “we get such good impulses...how can I help others”
<b><i>Mind</i></b>	: “I’ve begun to think about so many others”
<b><i>Mouth</i></b>	: “this is our favourite subject”

***Ban:*** As with adults children were asked how they would react if there were a ban on Sangati to understand their emotional involvement with the programme.

The exercise reveals the intense involvement children have with the programme. Children across groups react to the perceived threat with high emotion. They all express the need to demonstrate their concern regarding a step as drastic as this

- “We will speak to the principal of the school”
- “We will go on strike”
- “We will proposition the government”
- “ We will bring this matter to the notice of the newspapers”

## **7.5 CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SANGATI'S IMPACT ON THEM**

### **7.5.1 Impact on academic, cognitive and psycho-social skills and attitudes to school and learning**

Children were given a number of value statements relating to Sangati's impact on specific academic, psycho-social and cognitive skills and attitudes to school and learning and asked to state if they were true or false and the reasons for their answer. This enabled us to gain a fuller understanding of Sangati's impact in these areas.

#### ***Reading skills improve due to Sangati: True***

Sangati material is so attractive that it encourages reading

- “We improve our speed of reading”
- “We read with interest so it improves our reading”
- “The leaflets are funny...the stories are so interesting we feel like reading them ”
- “We read what is in our files...we read them again and again ... and tell our our family members about it”

#### ***Writing skills improve due to Sangati : True***

Opportunities for self-expression encourage the desire to write and write well

- “We are made to write stories so our writing improves”
- “We are told to write in a nice handwriting and time is given to us...in other periods we write anyhow because nobody pays attention”
- “We have to write in our own words...we have to write very slowly and carefully what our thoughts are ...that is why it improves...in other classes we write very fast because teacher is in a hurry and tells us to write fast”

#### ***There is no connection between what is taught in Sangati and what happens in everyday life: False***

There is a feeling that Sangati is relevant but children find it difficult to articulate examples of this aspect

- “It tells us about women's lives...the problems illiterate women have to face”
- “There are stories which are connected to our life, like Maya's story... it can happen to us too”



***Sangati helps to develop a child's self-confidence : True***

Children respond very positively to this statement and verbalize the manner in which Sangati has impacted this area and how Sangati and the Sangati teacher encourage this

- “When teacher asks us questions we answer very fast...(without hesitation)”
- “We reply with confidence because they don't give us marks and we can talk frankly about what we feel”
- “Teacher will not shout at us even if we are wrong”
- “Everybody answers...teacher says even if we are wrong we must answer...everybody puts up their hands”
- “You may not see the confidence in class but outside you will definitely see it “
- “The boy who has done Sangati will talk with confidence and in a better manner than the boy who has not done it...he will misbehave”

***Children pay more attention in Sangati period compared to other periods: True***

Children's reactions to this statement reinforce the fact that children pay more attention when their interest is captured and they comprehend what is happening in the class

- “Yes, because of the stories and pictures and information...it has songs and jokes”
- “We pay attention in other classes too as Sangati teaches us about other subjects”
- “In other subjects we only have to read the lesson but in Sangati there are stories and pictures so we understand better”

***There is greater cooperation amongst students because of Sangati: True***

Children acknowledge this value and link it with Sangati but are unable to articulate how it is affected

- “We are taught to be united since Sangati means always united”
- “Yes, we cooperate and share with each other”

***Children are fearful of teachers in Sangati class: False***

Children's responses highlight that fear of failure and difficulties in comprehension contribute to fear of the teacher in non-Sangati classes. Moreover, it suggests that basic attitudes to children have not strongly impacted the teacher despite Sangati methodology

- “We are scared in other periods but in Sangati teacher explains so well”

- “We are not afraid ...teachers explain so well about everything so we are not afraid”
- “Sangati gives us space to speak”
- “But if we don’t pay attention we get a slap”

***On Sangati days attendance is low: False***

The findings reinforce teacher’s perceptions that Sangati aids attendance

- “There is full attendance on Sangati days...otherwise, one or two students are absent”
- “Children like Sangati
- “It is 100% on Sangati days...everybody is present on that day”
- “Children who don’t like to study don’t come to school” (Dharavi)

***Children always do their Sangati homework: True***

There is high interest in homework. The responses indicate how ease of comprehension and relevance of the homework to everyday life can help change children’s attitudes to homework

- “We like it best... as it is explained so well.....it is easy to do...we finish it in the school itself”
- “We enjoy doing it since we can take suggestions from our parents or any other elder...”
- “We enjoy the drawing...we have to draw a picture and fill in the colours”
- “It is very interesting ...we show our file to everyone...our parents praise us”

**7.5.2 Impact on Health and Hygiene**

**A few statements regarding hygiene and health awareness were also discussed with children**

***Children do not come neatly dressed to Sangati class: False***

Children’s reactions indicate that Sangati reinforces the need to be hygienic and links it with better health

- “We are clean and disciplined”
- “In Sangati they teach us to be neat all the time...if we remain clean we will not fall sick, but will be healthy”
- “We must cover our mouths when we cough...not tie wet hair”

- Sangati children will be neat and clean unlike other children”

***Your younger sister/brother gets loose motions...what will you do?***

The responses suggest that some basic health measures have been internalized.

- “We will give a tablet or a home remedy”
- “Will give him curd and banana or limejuice”

**7.5.3 Impact on Social Awareness and Concern**

A number of scenarios on issues discussed in Sangati were presented to children and their responses elicited to understand Sangati’s impact in this area. It also provided an opportunity to observe Sangati’s impact on self-expression, confidence, thinking skills and problem solving

Children from the Marathi medium schools seemed to be more comfortable expressing their opinions than children in Hindi medium schools.

***Scenario 1: Uncle has a daughter in the seventh standard ...a marriage as been arranged for her***

- “Girls have a right to education”
- “She will want to study , work and then marry”
- “She should explain to her father”
- “Elders should be asked to intervene”
- “You cannot have child marriage...it is against the law”
- “She is underage...she should refuse”
- “We can explain this to the boy’s parents”
- “And to her parents ...it’s a crime”
- ”She should talk to her friends ...ask them to help her”
- “Though we are small we have full right to speak up”

***Scenario 2: Grandmother says girls and boys should not play together***

- “Boys and girls are equal so why not”
- “We will say they are like are sister/brothers so there’s nothing wrong”
- “If we were brother –sister would you stop us from playing”
- “It is allowed in our school”
- “But our teacher says we should not touch girls...keep a safe distance between”
- “She says we should not hit girls”
- “We can hide and play”
- “But people will say the girl is bad

***Scenario 3: Grandmother says girls should stay at home***

- “Girls also have a right to education”
- “Girls and boys are equal”
- “She will be able to take up some job if she is educated and then widowed”
- “The girl should be given the right to choose if she wants to study”
- “The household will prosper only if the woman is educated...else she will be easily cheated”
- “In Sangati they tell us about a women’s lives...how they are ill treated...they earn less for the same amount of work...women have more responsibility and the men have the money”

***Scenario 4: Mother says that both boys and girls must help in housework***

- “This is important “
- “Helping is important
- “She looks after all of us”
- “She feels happy if we help her”
- “And boys are the one to support her in her old age”

***Scenario 5: Grandfather says you can you can play with your friend but not at home”***

- “You should not differentiate or see a person’s religion”
- “He is also a human being”
- “Our national anthem says we are all brothers and sisters”
- “We’re all human...our blood is the same...so why differentiate”
- “We all look the same...only our thoughts are different”
- “We are all one we must stay as one”

***Scenario 6: Two people from different religion have a fight ...what should we do?***

- “We should respect all religions”
- “If we fight there will be problems in our country and family”
- “If we make friends with Pakistanis it will help us”
- “There is only one God...only language and clothes are different”
- “We will explain that fighting will not solve any problem...our country is backward because people spend their time fighting over religion. Hindus and Muslims cannot live together because of these fights”

The responses clearly reveal that children have been impacted by Sangati’s contribution in the area of gender, caste and religious differences to varying degrees. Sangati has offered them another perspective with which to approach life and the issues that crop up on a daily basis

## **AREA EIGHT**

### **RESPONSES OF THE NON-SANGATI TEACHERS**

The primary focus of the study, as elaborated in the earlier sections was to understand the perceived impact of Sangati on children and teachers. In addition to this, some information was also collected from teachers who had not been exposed to Sangati, by administering a questionnaire to teachers from an adjoining ward. A questionnaire was given to 92 teachers teaching in middle school in two wards of Mumbai i.e. F North and South. The purpose was to get some sense of teachers' perceptions regarding the following:

- Children's academic/cognitive, psycho social abilities and interest in school
- Teacher's suggestions for improving the above mentioned areas, especially attendance, interest, confidence levels and teacher-student relation
- Gauge teachers' awareness and perceptions regarding intervention programmes in municipal schools.

## **8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

Out of the 92 teachers, two third were from F North ward (67%) and the remaining from F South. Further, two third teachers (also 67%) were teaching in Marathi medium schools while the remaining taught in Hindi medium schools. Almost equal proportions of teachers taught standard six and seven

## **8.2 PERCEPTIONS REGARDING STUDENT'S SKILLS**

These teachers were asked to assess need gaps in their student's skills and abilities in the areas of academic, cognitive, psycho-social skills and in terms of their levels of interest in studies and learning, which were also examined in the study with Sangati teachers. This was done to ascertain areas of need as perceived by the non-Sangati teacher and gauge Sangati's potential from this perspective. Teachers were asked to rate the perceived need for improvement in each of these areas on a five point scale ranging from no need for improvement to very high need for improvement

The **academic and cognitive skills** included reading, writing, problem solving, critical thinking, curiosity, creativity, and general knowledge. While a full one third of teachers did not perceive a need in reading, writing, problem solving, critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity, another third of teachers perceived a definite need for improvement in all these areas. In the case of general knowledge more than a third (40%) of the sample acknowledge a need for improvement among their students, while a smaller proportion of teachers in the control group (15%) felt there was no real problem in this area.

Academic and cognitive skills are the main parameters for evaluation of a child in the typical school set up. In this context, it may be suggested that there is a significant proportion of the teaching population, which is dissatisfied with children's performance in these areas. It may be further suggested that there is a felt need amongst the former for a curricular intervention that would help improve children's academic skills and abilities.

In the area of **psycho-social skills**, the dimensions included awareness of social issues, environmental issues, self confidence, class participation, the relationship with teachers, with peers, respect for others and ability to work in groups. In this area, teachers seem to distinguish sharply between areas of perceived need and areas which are not perceived as parameters for evaluation of the child in a school set up. Awareness of social and environmental issues and self confidence are acknowledged as areas which need improvement by more than a third of teachers. This may be because the former two areas find some place in the regular curriculum. It may also be because they are associated with 'general knowledge' which is also on the list of desired needs. It may be suggested that self-confidence is also considered as a need area today since there is such high value put on image and personality in the world of work.

Aspects which are not strongly perceived as need areas by the majority of teachers are class participation, ability to work in a group, relationships with teachers and peers and respect for others. Interestingly, the majority of teachers, about three fourths of the sample, state a low need for an improved relationship with the teacher. Relationships with peers and respect for others are considered low need areas by a little less than two thirds of the sample. In contrast, class participation and ability to work in a group, while seen as low need areas by just a little more than a half of teachers also see a third of the sample perceiving them as moderate need areas amongst children.. All these aspects are acknowledged as need areas by only around 10% to 15% of the sample

It may be suggested that these areas are not consciously perceived by teachers as important aspects of a child's abilities and traits, except by the more discerning and evolved teacher. These areas are not evaluated nor even dealt with during the course of the school year except by a extremely small minority which constitutes a tenth or so of teachers.

The third category, **interest in school and studies**, deals with the child's attendance in class, her interest in studies, her attentiveness in class and her completion of homework. More than two thirds of teachers are satisfied with the child's attendance in the class, with more than two thirds of the sample stating a low need for this behaviour. However, completion of homework and attention in the class are identified by about 20% of the sample as need areas, though about 40% do not perceive any need for improvement in these areas. Only when it comes to children's interest in studies do more than one third of teachers express the need for improvement while a little over a fifth do not feel much need for improvement.



It would be useful to review the needs that emerge from this data in the light of Sangati's impact on the same skill sets.

**Academic and Cognitive Skills:** Sangati appears to address all the teacher's perceived needs in this category. It appears to be most successful in fulfilling teachers' needs for an improvement in children's general knowledge, which is also expressed as a need by several teachers

Skills and Abilities	% of perceived need	
	<i>Non Sangati teachers:</i>	<i>Sangati exposed teachers</i>
Reading	32%	70%
Writing	40%	60%
Critical Thinking	36%	55%
Problem Solving	28%	61%
Creativity	38%	64%
Curiosity	35%	79%
General Knowledge	40%	88%

**Psycho-Socio Skills:** There is relatively lower importance attached to psycho- socio skills in the process of schooling, especially in the area of group interactions and dynamics and in the area of relationships. These skills are instinctively given lower status by teachers and since they are neither addressed, nor tested, they are by and large ignored, both in the classroom and at a conscious level, by the teacher. However, as apparent from the response of teachers exposed to Sangati, when a supplementary curricular programme like Sangati addresses these subliminal concerns in a creative and substantial manner, teachers recognize both their impact and importance in the classroom context and may even react more enthusiastically than with need states that had been previously identified as necessary and important.

Skills and Abilities	% of perceived need	
	<i>Non Sangati teachers:</i>	<i>Sangati exposed teachers</i>
Awareness of social issues	36%	70%
Environmental Issues	41%	75%
Self Confidence	35%	75%
Class Participation	11%	86%
Relationship with teachers	11%	85%
Relationship with peers	14%	84%
Respect for others	17%	83%
Ability to work in a group	10%	86%

<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<b>% of perceived need</b>	<b>% of perceived impact</b>
	<i>Non Sangati teachers:</i>	<i>Sangati exposed teachers</i>
Class attendance	12%	87%
Interest in studies	34%	84%
Attention in Class	20	84%
Completion of Homework	24%	73%

***Interest in Studies*** At a conscious level, teachers are largely concerned with children's low interest in studies and perceive a need for improvement in this area. Significantly Sangati is seen to address this very satisfactorily. The other aspects of this category of skills and abilities are not such concern areas, especially class attendance. However, the manner in which children have responded in these areas after Sangati's introduction results in higher appreciation of the need and of Sangati's role.

## 8.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING CHILDREN’S ATTENDANCE, CONFIDENCE LEVELS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEACHER

### 8.3.1 Suggestions for improving attendance

The control group was asked to identify ways in which children’s attendance could be improved. More than one third of teachers (36%) felt that there should be more contact and awareness building among the parents. Another one third of teachers (33%) felt that if teaching could be made more interesting and an activity based approach in teaching was used along with good educational material it would have a positive impact on improving children’s attendance. A smaller percentage of responses suggested providing nutritious meals, communicating the importance of education, and strict implementation of rules / discipline as possible ways of improving attendance.

#### *Suggestions for improving attendance*

	<b>Code description</b>	<b>Total frequencies</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
1	parent contact/ awareness for understanding and solving problems	49	36.3%
2	strict implementation of rules/ discipline	5	3.7%
3	being flexible/accommodating about school timing	3	2.2%
4	making learning more interesting / effective teaching	21	15.5%
5	employing fun based/play-way method / variety of methods	21	15.5%
6	nutritious meal	10	7.4%
7	invalid response	4	3%
8	other	8	6%
9	Inculcate importance of education / importance of attendance	10	7.4%
10	using educational material	3	2.2%
11	teachers should be regular	1	.7%
	<b>Total number of responses</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 8.3.2 Suggestion to improve interest of students

With respect to improving **students’ interest in school and studies**, the large majority of responses expressed the need to improve the quality of teaching in terms of teaching methodology, using new and attractive educational material in the classroom and using activity based, child centered teaching-learning methods in the classroom. Supporting and encouraging children and not punishing them, using competition, providing individual guidance to students, revision and drill to ensure mastery over learning, inculcating habit of self study, accepting differences in children’s abilities were some of the other suggestions provided. Most of them also indirectly relate to making classroom more encouraging, enjoyable and active place for learning. Thus, teachers seem to have

perceived a significant connection between improving teaching methods and classroom ethos and children's interest levels in the school / studies.

### **Suggestion to improve interest of students**

	<b>Code description</b>	<b>Total frequencies</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
1	encourage and enthuse children (supportive) / don't punish	12	8.1%
2	improving teaching methodology	19	13%
3	using competition to improve participation and interest	1	.7%
4	individual guidance to students (for studies, planning etc)	7	4.8%
5	using new, attractive educational material	33	22.5%
6	supplementary, extra reading	7	4.8%
7	activity based, child centered education	47	32%
8	revision, drill for better mastery over learning	1	.7%
9	acceptance of differences in children's pace and ability	2	1.4%
10	moral education / stressing importance of education	5	3.4%
11	other	9	6.1%
12	invalid	0	
13	self study	4	2.8%
	<b>Total number of responses</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **8.3.3 Suggestions to improve confidence of students**

When asked to suggest ways to **improve student's level of confidence**, more than one fourth responses expressed the need to provide more opportunity for children to come forward in the class, express themselves in the class, actively participate in class, including encouraging them to freely express themselves in the classroom. 15% of responses suggested that children needed encouragement, praise and positive feedback for their efforts and another 15% suggested that children needed scope to master their learning, achieve better performance, which would make them more confident. Organising competitions, creating interest in studies with the use of child- centred teaching-learning, building closer relation with children and giving them more time and improving teaching were some of the other suggestions.

### Suggestions to improve confidence of students

	Code description	Total frequencies	Valid %
1	encouraging revision, to ensure mastery over subject matter /encourage for better performance	19	13.3%
2	provide opportunity to come forward and participate in the class/confidence building	35	24.5%
3	inspire through stories (role models, leaders, ideals) / songs	8	5.6%
4	encouraging children to express themselves freely/ respond to questions	5	3.5%
5	appreciate and praise of children's efforts (positive feedback)	22	15.4%
6	organizing competition	17	11.9%
7	other	8	5.6%
8	invalid	2	1.3%
9	child centered / activity based / create interest	13	9%
10	nurture social consciousness / latent skills	3	2.1%
11	use educational material	0	
12	closer relation with children / give lots of time	6	4.1%
13	improve teaching	4	2.8%
	<b>Total number of responses</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 8.3.4 Suggestion to improve teacher-student relation

Finally, when teachers were asked to suggest ways to **improve teacher-student relationship**, almost two third responses suggested that teacher should build better communication with children, understand and solve their personal problems, show greater care and concern about children and give more time with them. Improving teaching methods and using activity based approach, encouraging respect among students, inspiring them through stories of great men / moral education, and use of considered praise were some of the other suggestions that comprised the remaining one third responses to this question.

### Suggestion to improve teacher-student relation

	Code description	Total frequencies	Valid %
1	understanding and resolving personal problems / better communication	35	26.7%
2	greater care and concern about children/ better relation / more time	45	34.4%
3	considered praise and encouragement	3	2.3%
4	encouraging respect/discipline amongst children	10	15.5%
5	stories of great men (moral education)	10	7.6%
6	improving teaching methods / child centered methods/ activity based	12	9.2%
7	others	10	7.6%
8	invalid	6	4.6%
	<b>Total number of responses</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100%</b>

When teachers not exposed to Sangati were asked to suggest ways in which attendance, interest, confidence levels and relation with teachers can be improved, majority of spontaneous responses revealed the need for making teaching-learning more interactive, activity based, child-centred. This need for improving the teaching methodology, teaching learning material and the classroom ambiance cuts across the concerns / suggestions for four broad areas. Need to build more friendly relations with children, understanding their problems, encouraging them to express themselves / participate in the class as well as connecting with their parents were some of the other key suggestions given by the teachers.

Thus, the data suggests that the probed responses reveal a certain amount of complacency on part of the teachers regarding children's skills and abilities. This data by and large does not clearly articulate areas, which require focused inputs. Large portions of the teachers do not take a stand and choose the safer option of rating skills as 'moderate'. However, the open ended questions expressed a need to change the current design of MMC classrooms in terms of more interactive, activity based teaching-learning, greater participation and better communication / relations among students and teachers. Need for change in the curriculum is not articulated. This is in keeping with teachers perceiving textbooks and curriculum as a "given".

**CONCLUSIONS  
AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

## CONCLUSIONS

The study was conducted to determine Sangati's perceived impact on children and teachers in 2003-04, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. An intensive and extensive study with a representative sample of 90 teachers from two wards of MMC, where the programme is implemented revealed several important insights regarding Sangati's relevance and appeal amongst teachers and its perceived impact on children, as well as teachers' concerns regarding the programme. This section attempts to summarise some of the key findings and draws conclusions that flow from the analysis presented in the earlier sections.

***Overall perceptions of Sangati and its usefulness:*** Sangati programme stood out as a systematic, relevant and a unique curricular intervention that was implemented in the MMC schools. Almost all the teachers (97%) felt that the Sangati programme was useful, in varying degrees. About one fourth of the teachers found it 'very useful', while two third rated it as 'useful'. A minuscule minority (3%) found the programme to be 'not very useful'. Perceptions of usefulness are largely linked with the programmes's high appeal and visible impact on children.

***Areas of high appeal:*** There was a very high level of appeal regarding the Sangati kit, and its attractive teaching-learning material, especially the flip charts among teachers and children. Ready-made, well-designed and produced teaching aids and a manual that clearly articulated how sessions should be conducted, was highly appreciated by the teachers.

Closely linked with the physical kit consisting of variety of the teaching learning material was the **methodology** of the programme that facilitated participation, involvement and skill development among children. This aspect was also acknowledged and appreciated by teachers. The **content** of Sangati i.e. specific lessons evoked a relatively mixed response from the teachers. While teachers were positive about the new and interesting information that Sangati communicated to the children, about one third of the teachers feel that the content was not very age-appropriate and relevant to children's everyday life. Thus, there is scope for communicating the relevance of the material to teachers, as well as modifying the content, in light of teacher's feedback. On the whole, the Sangati kit, its design, quality and presentation, was one of the central reasons for the high level of satisfaction about the Sangati programme for most of the teachers.

***Aims and objectives of Sangati:*** Teachers who understood the objectives of Sangati and were highly committed to the programme were a smaller portion of the of the teacher universe. These teachers perceived Sangati not just as a programme that provided new information through attractive flip charts, but as a curricular programme that addressed key lacunas in the existing curriculum through building attitudes, perspectives, social and cognitive skills among the children.



For the larger portion of the teachers, who also acknowledge the usefulness of the programme in terms of its impact on children, the understanding of the programme and its overall objectives is rather limited. They saw some utility in the programme in terms of the new and interesting information; however, the programme remained largely extraneous to the regular curriculum in their view.

***Perceived impact on children:*** Almost all the teachers (95%) believed that Sangati has had a positive impact on children. Some of the areas where high impact was reported were, increase in interest and involvement in the class (mostly Sangati class), increase in self-expression, confidence, curiosity, general knowledge, thinking skills and ability to work in a group. This is extremely heartening. Sangati is also perceived to have made discernable impact with regard to increasing children's interest in reading-writing, problem solving, social / environmental consciousness and completion of homework. It must be reiterated that the study probed and recorded teacher's perceptions regarding impact of Sangati on children.

***The extent of spill-over effect of Sangati:*** The perceived impact of Sangati on children was chiefly a function of the kit consisting of the curricular content, design and methodology that facilitated children's participation and involvement in the programme and ignited their desire to explore, question and understand a variety of perspectives. Since the impact was closely linked with the Sangati curriculum and methodology, the transfer of skills / impacts outside the Sangati class were more limited. While this is a matter of concern, lack of transfer needs to be understood in the context in which the Sangati programme is implemented.

The limited nature of recognition given to the programme, insufficient time accorded to it and low internalisation of its methodology, slow down the pace of transfer of skills/impact. In two wards in MMC where Sangati programme is being implemented for two clock hours per week, remaining teaching thus continues in the traditional manner. Without significant changes in the highly rigid content, their transaction and the evaluation system, the spill over effect of Sangati on regular curriculum / teaching methodology is likely to remain rather limited at this stage.

Moreover if cues can be taken from the Sangati model and regular curriculum be designed and delivered differently, the potential for engaging children and facilitating their skills and capacities is promising.

***Perceived impact on teachers:*** The teachers perceived Sangati to be a programme that is meant for children. When specifically probed, they did report high impact of Sangati on themselves as teachers. Some of the key areas where impact was reported was in introducing teachers to new methods, information and to a certain extend attitudes and perspectives. However, on the whole, teachers were neither keen, nor comfortable talking about Sangati's impact on themselves. This was partly because the programme was perceived as an intervention that is meant *for* children. Further, teachers felt the need to state that they were already doing / everything possible to serve their children, hence

Sangati had not introduced them to anything that was significantly novel. Further, teachers perhaps have not reflected on this area in the past.

It appeared that a smaller portion of the teachers had internalized some of the features of the Sangati methodology and approach. A larger portion of teachers had however, not grasped the Sangati approach adequately. This coupled with the rigidity and demand of the regular curriculum resulted in fairly limited impact of Sangati on the teachers themselves. This is an area that needs to be addressed in future.

***Concerns about Sangati:*** The relatively high sense of satisfaction and appeal of Sangati was also coloured with a number of concerns that the teachers articulated. Teachers were aware that the Sangati programme was being implemented by an educational organization in select wards. Teachers felt that Sangati was a useful programme for children and due to all the fun, games and stories, they enjoyed it thoroughly. However, from the point of view of the teacher, Sangati was an additional burden on the already overloaded teacher. In this context, demands that Sangati made on teachers in terms of preparation, implementation of sessions and training were seen as an extra load that they have to bear.

Some teachers perceive that the Sangati curriculum allows them and the children to understand inter-linkages among different subjects, grasp concepts that tend to be illusive / difficult to comprehend and hence build a base for a better conceptual understanding of other subjects. Other teachers, who did not understand and appreciate these contributions, felt that Sangati ran parallel to the regular curriculum, in an un-connected manner. Children loved the sessions, but the programme was not seen to visibly enrich the regular curriculum in any significant degree. In turn, its utility was not adequately established.

***Children's reactions to Sangati:*** Children's reactions to the programme are highly positive and extremely encouraging. The findings reinforce that Sangati has a strong impact on interest and involvement in the class, increase in self-expression, confidence, curiosity, general knowledge, thinking skills and ability to work in a group. They also indicate that it has impacted on children's interest in reading and their understanding of social issues. However, transfer of these impacts need to be sustained and encouraged by the school system for lasting changes in the long term

## RECOMMENDATIONS

***The Kit, Material and the content:*** Teachers reported a very high level of satisfaction regarding all aspects of the Sangati kit, especially the teaching learning material and the methodology. There is some scope to enhance the appropriateness of the content for children in terms of concepts and areas that are covered. Moreover, there is significant scope for communicating the aims and objectives of Sangati to teachers themselves, as they have not fully grasped the content, especially in terms of the perspective that Sangati communicates.

***Vastness of the kit/ length:*** In the context of the already vast regular curriculum, teachers felt that Sangati curriculum was also very vast and it was difficult to do justice to all the sessions in the stipulated time frame. Ensuring that the programme commences at the beginning of the academic year is necessary so as to give adequate time to teachers. However, teachers already perceived the load to be heavy, even when there was a single kit in class VI and VII in the year 2003-04. Hence, the size of the curriculum and its manageability needs to be reassessed.

***Teacher Training:*** The three-day teacher training was perceived as adequate by most teachers. However, it is necessary that training be strengthened in various ways. The following suggestions may be should be considered:

- a. Advance training for older teachers – teachers who have already taught Sangati and have attended the training before, can be called for an advance training that focuses on building perspectives, encourages teachers to reflect on their thinking, understanding select areas in greater depth, in order to increase comfort levels and understanding interconnections.
- b. Systematic assessment of the design and content of the training can be planned with external inputs to identify areas that can be strengthened further for optimum and efficient use of the available time.
- c. There is a need to assist teachers to grasp not just the new information but perspectives and wider logic behind choosing, presenting, designing specific lessons. If the time available during the training is inadequate, additional avenues need to be explored for strengthening teacher's understanding of the content and perspective. This in term may require building capacities of the supervisors, organizing short training / meetings during the year among other measures.

***Evaluation:*** Serious thought needs to be given for introducing some form of evaluation / assessment at the end of the year. This need not be in the form of the traditional examination that depends solely on content recall, but the purpose would be to assess the level of understanding among children. Formal assessment would also provide feedback in terms of concepts / topics that were effectively communicated and those that require further work. Further, it may serve as an impetus for teachers to complete curriculum, by enhancing the level of seriousness associated with the curriculum.

***Need for impact assessment studies:*** The current study was about the perceptual impact of Sangati on children. This did not assess the actual impact on any of the areas. It would be worthwhile to plan an impact assessment study on chosen, more tangible areas to understand and assess its impact. We are aware that this is a difficult task and capturing impact on abilities, skills and attitudes that are not tangible, would not be easy. However, it would be important to give thought to this. Some of the areas that can be assessed through a well-planned study are the level of Sangati's impact on attendance, general knowledge, level of participation in the class, and inter-personal skills.

***Longer cycle for implementation:*** Sangati introduces teachers and children to views, material, perspectives that are radically different than what they are exposed to. The programme needs to be implemented with adequate support and facilitation for a longer cycle to establish its utility and desirability. We strongly suggest that programme should not be left to voluntary participation of the teachers after two years of implementation.

***Inclusion of Sangati in the formal timetable:*** It is highly desirable for the programme to be introduced across the MMC schools in a gradual manner. Clear time-slots need to be assigned to the programme and with mechanisms that provide necessary support for its successful implementation.

***Additional material for children:*** Children cherish the take-home sheets, Sangati files and worksheets that are designed for them. It would be worthwhile to consider if additional take home material can be designed for children along with a provision for a library. If stories from the flip charts can be made available to children in the form of books in a circulating library, access, understanding and retention of the content is likely to increase considerably.