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# Reflection on school visit

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# REFLECTION ON SCHOOL VISITS

By Qamar Safdar

During our ADISM course 1997-98 conducted by Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development, we were encouraged to visit each others schools and to learn from one another's experiences.

I wondered how I will take out time from our already busy schedule and the utility of these visits. Nevertheless, as it was part of our ADISM course a group of our headteachers planned a scheduled visit to the Sultan Mohammed Shah Aga Khan School located in the IED campus.

After the initial introductions and rounds we were also shown their Resource Room headed by a Resource in Charge. What impressed me was their various folders of different subjects exhibited on the table which had a copy of the present lesson's detailed plans and activities. This was a combined effort of all the teachers who had distributed the lessons of that particular subject and jointly planned. Moreover, there was a lesson bank wherein you could locate previous years lesson plans and teachers could access and improve. So it was not a labour lost but retrieved and improved!

They also had subject 'cartons' with interesting cut out articles from children's Dawn and other dailies on topics pertaining to that subject with interesting related activities on the back side of the article. For example if a social studies teacher was absent any other replaced teacher given her period had only to collect the required number of articles

on the specific subject, distribute and inform the students to read and complete the related activities. We were lucky to see this activity in session and what amazed me was the total involvement of the class. There was no discipline problem. They also had rich reserves of test banks. Once again the teacher has enough reference to study the existing test papers and if possible improve on them.

When I returned to my school. I had an informal talk with my staff and asked them to go and observe the Resource Room and let me know how they feel about it. I got back a very enthusiastic staff, clamouring for their own resource room. They likewise worked in teams and covered most of the lessons, carefully cataloguing them. No doubt it was time consuming but dedication and team work paid dividends. The only problem we faced was trying to get an all time Resource in Charge. The Board after observing an Active Resource Room agreed to employ a Resource in Charge who would be knowledgeable in most of the subjects .

It is definitely THANKS to ADISM and these proposed visits that Al-Murtaza school can now boast of a Resource Room in each branch for its relevance with the classroom problems and its usefulness in improving teachers professional competence. It has led to better relaxed teachers who in turn are relaxed with the students. The learning is more meaningful and stress free. ■

## REGISTRATION FORM

Interested headteachers who are willing to join SHADE and contribute towards effective school management practices should fill in these forms which are available with Irfan Mevawalla (Ext. 324) at The Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) 1-5/B-VII, Federal 'B' Area, Karimabad, P.O. Box-13688, Karachi-75950, Pakistan. Tel: 6347611

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