

# Learning as I Go Along...

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My first posting was at Government Girls High School, Kaghan. Soon after I was posted to Garhee Habib Ullah. Here I had to teach Math to classes ninth and tenth, when I myself had only studied Math till class tenth. How did I cope? I poured over the books late into the night to gain mastery over the concepts that I had to teach the next morning. In the morning when I faced my students I was able to satisfy them. I was more patient with their difficulties because I myself had found it all so difficult until the night before!

I was posted to a new school in Hamaira where I stayed for the next twelve years as the in-charge and the Math teacher for classes 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and the English teacher for class eighth. With the permission of the Education Office we started classes for class ninth too. The class ninth girls used to have their classes in the courtyard outside as there was no room available for this new class. I was teaching them English and Math while the rest of the teachers had taken up other subjects.

At this point the school in-charge was a lady who had grown irritable due to arthritic pains. She had some reservations about allowing the class ninth girls to attend our school. She would say that they are not our responsibility. With great difficulty I had these girls enrolled in the Government Girls High School, Sajkut. While the girls were enrolled in that school I still assumed the responsibility to help them prepare for their exams. Even in the winter break I would go by myself and tutor these girls for their class ninth exams.

The Sajkut principal too had enrolled these girls very reluctantly. But all of that changed when their result came out. The group of ninth graders showed a 100% result!

After that the Sajkut principal was herself sending messages for the girls to rejoin her school in class tenth.

I still remember Zahida who had failed the class sixth exam. She came with her mother, promising to try harder and begging to be promoted to the next class just this once. I took the decision to let her go forward against the advice of my colleagues. Sure enough, Zahida improved her performance in Math and got the confidence to do well in other subjects too.

Just as the system had trusted my ability and given me tasks that I was not really qualified for, in the hope that I would rise to the challenge, I too like to place my trust in my students *before* they produce results. I know that they will do the best that they can, just as I did years ago when I was appointed to teach Math to class ninth and tenth.

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