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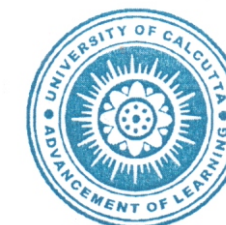
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Research Abstract

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Department of Education

University of Calcutta
Alipur Campus
1, Reformatory Street, Kolkata – 700027

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Editor's Note

Whole hearted greeting to all our readers, contributors, reviewers and others associated with the *Indian Journal of Educational Research*.

The present issue is comprised of twelve articles and four Ph. D. thesis abstracts related to good quality research covering various aspects of education. The topics include diverse issues like special education, philosophy of education, teacher education, and legal education. The articles on school education, higher education, special education, blended learning, education employment, gender issue and education policy have also been included leading to the holistic approach of the journal. Moreover, as a truly research journal, it has delved into matters related to meta analysis, construction of standardized test and other issues. Articles are included in historical, sociological and psychological research. All the papers in the journal are expected to enhance the quality research in education. It is to be noted that our journal can be seen at present in our University website (caluniv.ac.in) through 'Education' Department.

Our whole hearted thanks to the authorities of the University, our colleagues in the department, the contributors, the panel of reviewers and the readers. We are fortunate enough to have a highly esteemed peer reviews committee who, in spite of their very busy schedule, provided thorough and critical inputs for each and every paper. As a big family we all tried our best to enhance and sustain the quality of the journal. In spite of utmost care, some limitations and incompleteness may crop therein. It is all due to our constraints to shoulder the responsibility to the perfection.

With warm regards,

Md. Kutubuddin Halder
Professor, Department of Education,
University of Calcutta

Academic Buoyancy: Resilience to Everyday Academic adversities

Tamisha and Narendra Kumar***

Abstract

Students must deal with setbacks and difficulties in their academic careers while remaining joyful and motivated. Resilience refers to successfully adapting to various situations regardless of the risk that set somebody in a difficult position. Academic resilience is the capacity of the student to overcome chronic adversities which can be viewed as a major assault in the process of education. However, academic resilience doesn't look upon many students who are faced with setbacks and pressures that are mostly a part of their regular academic life. Students' ability to effectively manage failures and the problems that they face in academics that are "typical of the usual course of school life" for example bad marks, conflicting targets, test burdens, and challenging assignments is known as academic buoyancy. Good contacts with institutions and school lifetime are mostly supported by academic resilience and academic buoyancy, as well as students' capacity to "bounce back" once confronted with little as well as large challenges in school life. An asset-based method for learners' reactions to hardships in school life is inherent in the approach to academic buoyancy and academic resilience. In this article, the researcher provided a bit of insight on by what means academic buoyancy differed from academic coping and academic difficulties, a more comprehensive study that includes academic resilience and a wider range of related variables to fully comprehend academic buoyancy and resilience.

Keywords: *Academic buoyancy, Resilience, Academic adversities.*

Introduction:

Students have to deal with setbacks and struggles in their academic life while being happy and motivated. Although so many students perform badly at school

* Research Scholar, Department of Education, Central University of Rajasthan, Bandarsindri, Ajmer, Email Id: tamisha120394@gmail.com

** Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Central University of Rajasthan, Bandarsindri, Ajmer, Email Id: drnarendra09@gmail.com

and it sometimes feels like a continuous cycle of poor performance, a large number of pupils are able to move their life around by getting over the initial obstacles in their academic life (Jimerson et al., 1999). Resilience is a feature that is very important for survival, it is a lot more than coping well in any situation. When a person is resilient it doesn't mean that he/she doesn't feel any distress, being resilient is the process of adapting well when faced with distress, adversity, and trauma. People may be resilient at one point of time in their life and it may not be the case during another scenario. Similarly, a person may be more resilient in some aspects of their life and not others. Resilience is not something that a person is born with, it develops as people grow and gains more knowledge with better self-management skills. Academic resilience does not apply to the many students who endure failures, obstacles, and pressures as part of everyday life at school. It indicates "academic buoyancy", and looks into many learners who must navigate the highs and lows of a regular school lifetime, by way of being opposed to serious and long-lasting adversity pertinent to many outdated conceptions about academic resilience.

"Academic resilience and academic buoyancy necessitate multidimensional ways to conceptualize and measure them in order to adequately separate the elements that are (and are not) constituents, causes, correlates, and related to them" (Martin and Marsh, 2006). Good contacts with institutions and school lifetime are mostly supported by academic resilience and academic buoyancy, as well as students' capacity to "bounce back" once confronted with little as well as large challenges in school life. An asset-based method for learners' reactions to hardships in school life is intrinsic to the method of academic buoyancy and resilience. In accordance with contemporary theories and research in mental health, positive psychology, and well-being, it can be said that children may learn to be more buoyant and stronger in academics by developing positive cognitive, emotional, and behavioral orientations toward their school life (Martin & Marsh, 2008).

Academic buoyancy helps build up individualistic features to deal with everyday setbacks and also helps in shaping resilience to deal with problems. Academic buoyancy deals with setbacks, daily hassles, and academic resilience with the help of confidence, stress management, and composure. Whereas, academic resilience tends to deal with trauma, self-handicap, and mental pressures created due to natural disasters. Students with higher levels of academic buoyancy help in the management and lower academic anxiety, failure avoidance, and lack of control. Students with higher academic buoyancy tend to have to perform better academically. Students with lower levels of academic buoyancy regard setbacks as a risk to self-worth, self-confidence, and determination. However, students

who are academically buoyant tend to take setbacks as a challenge. When the presence of negative setbacks is felt by the students, academic buoyancy helps the students to bounce back from the problem. Students with the help of coping strategies tend to bounce back from setbacks.

Adversities may be internal or external. There can be various challenges that can be a threat to the learning process. There is a significant difference between major adversities and minor adversities. When academic adversity and resilience are internal for learners, they face things such as academic anxiety and are able to regulate it by managing their emotions deep breathing, calming their minds, etc. Academic resilience and academic adversities can be felt externally in the environment by the learner such as not having support from family and teachers.

Academic resilience and academic buoyancy explain the main notion for parents, teachers, schools, and students to comprehend and engage in daily learning. Academic buoyancy and academic resilience can be measured and premeditated on main components. Academic buoyancy and resilience can develop in students the ability to deal with, understand, managing the negative emotions which are experienced due to setbacks and stress.

Academic buoyancy and Academic resilience

Resilience is frequently characterized as the ability to manage, counteract, and reduce risk. In some ways, it means that resilience arises when the danger exists or threatens to occur. As a result, 'risk' and 'protective' elements have emerged as important structures or notions in resilience in theory as well as research. However, it would appear vital to manage school life in a way so that resilience is seldom or never required. It shows that academic buoyancy is required in a person's life to keep the academic life the person normal and on its course and also to cope with adversities before they become serious and become harmful to mental health.

Academic Resilience	Academic Buoyancy
Incapacitating overwhelming anxiety	More typical stress levels and daily pressure
Coping with persistent under-achievement	Individual bad grades and patches of poor performance
Debilitation in the face of chronic failure or anxiety	Threats to confidence as a result of a poor grade
Clinical types of effects such as anxiety and depression	Stress and low level of confidence

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Disaffection from school	Low level of motivation and engagement
Alienation from school or opposition to teacher	Dealing with negative feedback

It is also possible to hypothesize that the strategy which works in the front indicates academic buoyancy with the protection from the back shows academic resilience. Therefore, academic buoyancy might be viewed as the continual aggressive frontline reaction to the hardships that we have to face academically, whereas academic resilience acts as a defense that is activated only when absolutely required.

Excessive emphasis on risk factors may also have an unfavorable impact on programs aiming at improving the academic buoyancy and academic resilience of students. “Experts are unsure if resilience is built by exposing people to hardship in the same way as exposing people to a low-level dosage of a virus inoculates them against future infection” (Olsson et al., 2003). Resilience can be improved by increasing the exposure to protective variables in a person’s life. Perspectives on adversity that are proactive and constructive in nature, on the other hand, are well suited to account for such possibilities. Academic difficulty and setbacks are a continual feature of day-to-day life in schools and other educational contexts and actual statistics clearly confirm this. It is believed that it is critical to analyze and measure academic buoyancy and academic resilience from both viewpoints. It is critical to consider and evaluate academic buoyancy and academic resilience from both viewpoints. This permits researchers to examine the validity of the components of academic buoyancy and academic resilience in connection to correlates, it doesn’t just leave the components without being proved. Furthermore, since it is believed that the concepts that are relevant alter as per result of an amalgamation of the level of students as well as the factors related to the environment, it is feasible to evaluate various changes that occur over the period of time and various factors that are related to it.

In some of the research, it is suggested that students who have a much more positive outlook on life and have higher levels of self-esteem, and are able to face adversities much more effectively, are the traits of their personalities and these traits cannot be developed. So, they should focus more on giving a safe environment to students (DiTullio, 2014). Other researchers have their main focus on designing an operative instructional approach to provide support and mouldable dimensions of self-efficacy, confidence, and control (Martin, 2013). Some others focus on

various factors such as family support, school environment, and cultural background and how the process of academic resilience depends on them (Graves, 2014). At the school level students who are facing much more chronic adversities due to some disabilities or family problems require much more attention. Students who are academically buoyant are more likely to take setbacks as challenges that they have to deal with rather than a threat to them. It is more important for students to deal with the problem.

Person-Focused Approach

When it comes to a person-centered approach, we can define academic buoyancy and resilience in relation to student groups who are regarded as buoyant and resilient, with the goal of discovering variables that influence group association. It has the benefit of allowing one to specifically examine various groups in which people are interested and map descriptive elements onto these central and appropriate groups. It also allows academics to analyze various patterns of academic buoyancy and academic resilience that occur 'naturally' (Masten and Powell, 2003) and allows for a detailed study where the case study is required. It allows for a lot more specific methods to continue the research, such as tracking buoyant and resilient students over a period of time to limit group steadiness and modification. The Academic Buoyancy Scale (Martin and Marsh, 2008) can classify students that deal successfully or ineffectively with academic adversities which occur in the normal course of school life of students. Academic resilience can classify students if they have experienced more acute and/or persistent academic adversity. The person-centered approach can help in developing various strategies which can help in the development of various strategies such as improving planning and management or regulating various emotions. It can help in the improvement of students using various interventions. Latent profile mode and growth development models suggest that in relation to groups that show discrepancy course to appropriate variables can suggest the opportunity of defining academic resilience and academic buoyancy. It is really important to chart the students against various adversities and show that they differentiate between students which respond effectively and who do not respond effectively, as it is known that academic buoyancy and academic resilience entail an effective response to adversity.

Variable-Focused Approach

The variable-focused approach can use statistics. It also is very helpful in searching various links that can make a connection between the predictor and outcomes. It is also a desire to have interventions that can have a variable-focused approach. It

can help in research for conducting a global measure. The variable-focus approach also helps in examining the predictor when we are researching academic resilience and buoyancy. It can also help in identifying various factors which can help in intervention. To moderate the impact of risk variable-focused approaches are used. Predictors and causes are important channels to understand academic buoyancy and academic resilience. To minimize the effect of difficulties variable focused approach is used on positive adaptations.

Educational outcome measures such as enjoying school, participation in class, and psychological outcome measures such as self-esteem were to be foreseen by academic buoyancy. These were recommended to show a range of students' experiences at the institution and that many students have various experiences in school and develop the capacity to deal with adversities and setbacks. The variable-centered approach is also helpful in answering various questions about the policies. The variable-centered approach can help identify various sources of stress and risk of adversity characteristics in students with the help of various tools and tests. Process and product can also be an approach to measuring the significance which can be mapped through the range of possible consequences. Process outcomes include various factors that suggest engagement in school, development of skills, participating in school, attendance, completing their work, and enjoying their school life. Similarly, product outcomes include features such as achievement performance, ranks, and scores that they obtain in their examination.

It is really important to understand the nature of academic buoyancy and academic resilience and we can only get this understanding by knowing what they are and what they are not. Many cognate concepts interconnect academic buoyancy and academic resilience. Understanding these cognate constructs and the change that academic buoyancy and academic resilience provide us with the information and the parameter of buoyancy and resilience to effectively assess convergent and discriminant validity is a good construct validity practice (Martin and Marsh, 2008). It is essential to measure resilience and buoyancy from both approaches as both the person-centered approach and variable-centered approach can help schools and teachers as well as researchers to identify adversities and risks in students, it can provide a lot of information about students to develop academic buoyancy and academic resilience in them.

Interventions

Inspecting academic buoyancy and academic resilience from an important and sheathing pointer standpoint likewise offers a course aimed at intercession, with

important pointers being primary resources for effecting variation in the learner's life and sheathing pointers being the primary way of evaluating the usefulness of the efforts. When it comes to important pointers, "the '5Cs' of academic buoyancy" are potentially relevant areas of intervention: "control, confidence (high self-efficacy), coordination (high planning), composure (low anxiety), and commitment (high perseverance)" (Martin & Marsh, 2006) are the most important pointers is academic buoyancy. It is recognized that the importance of fostering effective teacher-student connections and school participation as aspects to reflect while increasing learners' academic buoyancy (Martin & Marsh, 2008). Schools should aim to accomplish goals such as supporting all the learners on how to become buoyant as well as how to handle failure. Another thing that should be ensured in classrooms is that they should understand students and those who are at risk of major adversities feel supported. Some resources should also be developed for developing buoyancy in students in their academic life.

Conclusion

Even though Martin and Marsh (2006), provided a bit of insight on by what means academic buoyancy differed from academic coping and academic difficulties, a more comprehensive study that includes academic resilience and a wider range of related variables is required to fully comprehend academic buoyancy and resilience. Resilience can be extreme adversity and also there is resilience focused on academics which involves hassles and setbacks. The ability to build skills rather than resilience to deal with academic setbacks is academic buoyancy (Martin, 2013). The academic buoyancy model is given more advantages as academic buoyancy has some specific components and interventions can be targeted to them. Also, it is specifically based on academics as compared to a general model of resilience. Students who are facing difficulties in their daily life can show higher levels of academic buoyancy if they have the support of their school and family (Collie, 2017). The most important role in increasing academic buoyancy and academic resilience is played by support and encouragement.

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A Spatial Perspective On The Educational Scenario Of Scheduled Caste Females In West Bengal

Tushar Kanti Ghara and Somnath Majhi***

Abstract

Education is one of the most important instruments to uplift the socio-economic condition. The Scheduled Caste (SC) population was debarred from various forms of education over the centuries and Scheduled Caste females are the worst sufferer. After the independence of India, there has been a remarkable increase in the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste female but the percentage of females with higher educational level has not increased at that rate. This study is mainly focused to analyze the inter-district variation of literacy rate, educational attainment, gross enrolment ratio and dropout rate of Scheduled Caste females in West Bengal based on secondary data. The enrolment rate at school education up to secondary level is decent but after that sharp decline is observed. The dropout rate also increased with the higher educational level.

Keywords: *Dalit, Dropout, Educational Level, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Literacy Rate, Welfare Schemes.*

Introduction

Education is the most crucial tool for empowering people and the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can be empowered to lift themselves from the existing levels of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities (Das and Halder, 2018). Education plays a vital role to change the standard of living of the poorest of the poor. Unless these underprivileged sections of society receive the minimum education, they cannot exercise the civil, political, economic and social freedom as enshrined in the constitution of India (Chandidas, 1969). The overall educational scenario of the Scheduled Caste of West Bengal is very poor. Throughout history, the Scheduled

* Joint Director of Public Instruction and State Nodal Officer, AISHE-WB, Bikash Bhavan, Salt Lake, Kolkata 70009 Email - tkghara@gmail.com

** Research Scholar, Department of Geography, University of Calcutta, Kolkata-700029-
Email: simplysom09@gmail.com

Caste population, especially the Scheduled Caste female, remained well behind the other communities in terms of literacy rate, enrolment rate and educational attainment (Bhimali, 2007). During both pre-British and early British rule, no attempt was made to educate the Dalits because, as with Brahmani policy, education was confined to the higher castes (Paik, 2016). The lack of awareness and abject poverty is a major impediment to the upliftment of the educational development of the Scheduled Caste female. Apart from that traditionally, a boy's education has been seen as an investment, increasing the earnings and social status of the family while different standards apply to girls. The benefits of a girl's education are generally seen as going to the family she marries, thus providing little incentive to invest scarce resources both human and monetary in such activity (Desai, 2021). Now, with time Scheduled Caste parents understand the importance of education and they are sending their children to school and colleges for higher education but still, now the rate of enrolment in higher education is deplorable. In this context there is need to explore the educational status of the Scheduled Caste female in the state.

Study Area: The fourth populated state of India, West Bengal is located in the eastern part and shares borders with neighboring countries Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan and with an area of 88752 km². The Latitudinal and Longitudinal extensions of the state are 21° 38' N to 27° 10' N and 88° 50' E to 91° 50' E. The total population of West Bengal is 91,276,115 of which 21,463,270 belong to Scheduled Caste according to the 2011 Census. The total Scheduled Caste female population in the state is 10,459,966 out of which 8,330,813 (79.64%) are rural and 2,129,153 (20.36%) are urban. West Bengal comprises 10.66 percent Scheduled Caste population with respect to the total Scheduled Caste population of India. The concentration of the Scheduled Caste population is much higher than India's average. 23.5 percent population of the state belongs to this Scheduled Caste community.

Objectives: The major objectives of this study are

1. To analyze the status of literacy rate and educational level of Scheduled Caste female in West Bengal.
2. To examine the enrolment and dropout status of Scheduled Caste female at school and higher education in West Bengal.
3. To analyze the correlation among literacy rate, educational level, enrolment and dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at school and higher education.

Materials and Methods: This study is mainly based on secondary data. The data on literacy rate and educational level has been collected and calculated from the Census of India, 2011. The data regarding school enrolment and dropout has been collected from the District Information of School Education (DISE) report 2016-17. The enrolment data on higher education has been collected from the Higher Education Department of the Government of West Bengal and the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report, 2018-19. Slide up estimated population has been used to calculate the midyear estimated population in the district at various educational levels (Ghara, 2016). Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) has been calculated by using the formula $GER^t = Ea^t * 100 / Pa^t$, Where GER^t = Gross Enrolment Ratio in year t, Ea^t = Enrolment at educational level (Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary, Undergraduate, postgraduate, higher education, etc), Pa^t = Population of age group corresponding to the level of education in year t (6-10 for primary, 11-13 for upper primary, 14-15 for secondary, 16-17 for higher secondary, 18-23 for higher education, 18-21 for undergraduate, 21-23 for postgraduate). A higher gross enrolment ratio value indicates higher participation and a lower value indicates lower participation in the educational process.

Discussion and Analysis:

(A) Literacy Rate of Scheduled Caste Female: The literacy rate of Scheduled Caste female was only 4.61% in 1961 whereas the female literacy rate was 16.98% in West Bengal in 1961. The literacy rate of Scheduled Caste females (61.23%) is still well behind the female literacy rate (71.16%) of the state in 2011. Figure 1 depicts that there is a huge inter-district variation of Scheduled Caste female literacy. The literacy rate of Scheduled Caste female is observed very low i.e. below 55% in the districts of Puruliya, Bankura, Birbhum, Maldah, Uttar Dinajpur and Bardhaman in 2011. On the contrary that Kolkata, North Twenty-Four Parganas and Purba Medinipur has literacy rate above 70%. The Scheduled Caste literacy rate varies between 55%-70% in the districts of Murshidabad, Dakshin Dinajpur, Paschim Medinipur, Hugli, Darjiling, Haora, Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar, Nadia and South Twenty-Four Parganas.

The inter-district disparity of literacy is also seen among the rural and urban Scheduled Caste female (Fig. 2 & Fig. 3). The literacy rate of rural Scheduled Caste female is below 55% in Puruliya, Bankura, Birbhum, Maldah, Bardhaman, Uttar Dinajpur and Murshidabad. North Twenty-Four Parganas and Purba Medinipur has over 70% literacy rate in this regard. The literacy rate of rural Scheduled Caste females of the remaining districts varies between 55%-70%.

A Spatial Perspective On The Educational Scenario Of Scheduled Caste Females

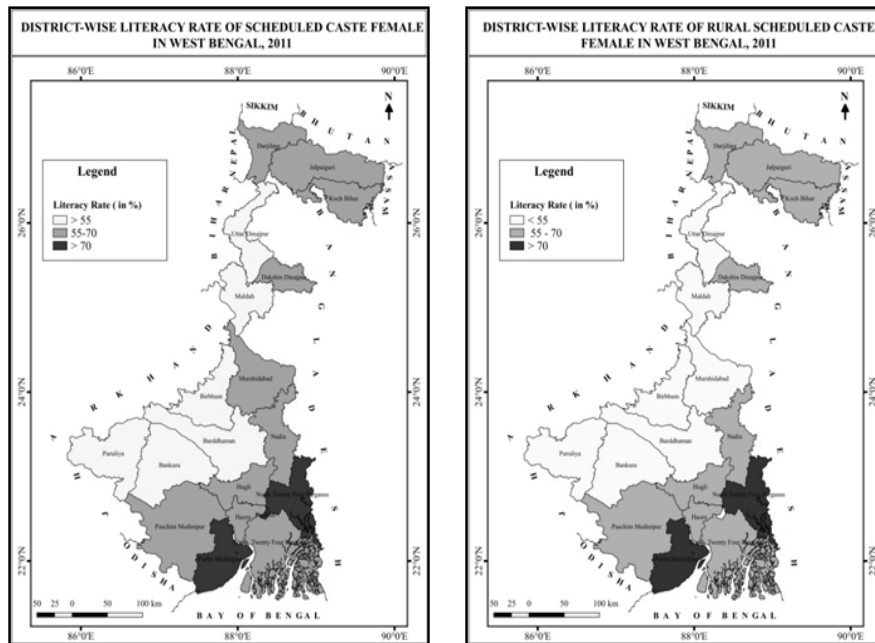


Fig: 1 Source: Census of India, 2011 Fig: 2 Source: Census of India, 2011

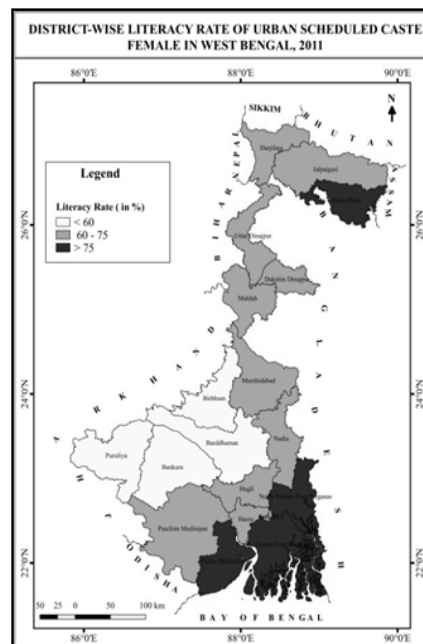


Fig: 3 Source: Census of India, 2011

The Scheduled Caste female who reside in the urban area in the district has comparatively higher literacy rate than rural area. Though, the literacy rate of

urban Scheduled Caste females of Puruliya, Bankura, Birbhum and Bardhaman is low (below 60%) in comparison to the districts like South Twenty-Four Parganas, Purba Medinipur, Koch Bihar and North Twenty-Four Parganas where the females of Scheduled Caste are literate above 75%.

(B) Educational Level of Scheduled Caste Female :

(i) Up to Primary Level: The percentage of Scheduled Caste female literate with educational level up to primary education is observed very high (above 70%) in Bankura, Birbhum, Paschim Medinipur, Bardhaman, Puruliya and Hugli (Fig. 4). Literate population with educational level up to primary is seen comparatively low (below 60%) in Kolkata and North Twenty-Four Parganas. The percentage of Scheduled Caste female literate up to the primary level in the remaining district is observed between 60%- 70%.

Among the rural Scheduled Caste female, the percentage of the literate population with educational levels up to primary is very high (above 75%) in Bankura, Birbhum and Bardhaman. Figure 5 demonstrates that this percentage is seen low (below 65%) in the districts of Kolkata, Koch Bihar, Darjiling, Nadia, Jalpaiguri and North Twenty-Four Parganas.

The percentage of urban Scheduled Caste female literate up to the primary level in Bankura and Puruliya is observed very high (above 65%) in comparison to Maldah, North Twenty-Four Parganas, Darjiling, South Twenty-Four Parganas, Kolkata and Koch Bihar where this percentage is below 55 (Fig. 6).

(ii) Upper Primary to Higher Secondary Level: The data of the percentage of the population with the educational level of upper primary, secondary and higher secondary has been added together to represent the educational level from upper primary to higher secondary level. It is found in fig. 7 that the educational level from upper primary to higher secondary among the Scheduled Caste female in Bankura and Birbhum is only below 25%. In contrary to that this percentage is observed above 35 in the districts of Kolkata, North Twenty-Four Parganas and Darjiling. Paschim Medinipur, Bardhaman, Hugli, Haora, Murshidabad, Purba Medinipur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah, South Twenty-Four Parganas, Uttar Dinajpur, Koch Bihar, Nadia and Jalpaiguri. The percentage of rural Scheduled Caste female with educational levels upper primary to higher secondary level is found very low (below 25%) in districts of Hugli, Haora, Bardhaman, Birbhum, Bankura and Kolkata.

A Spatial Perspective On The Educational Scenario Of Scheduled Caste Females

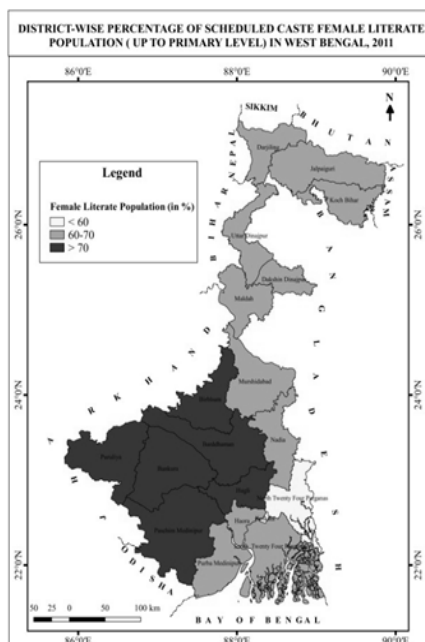


Fig: 4 Source: Census of India, 2011

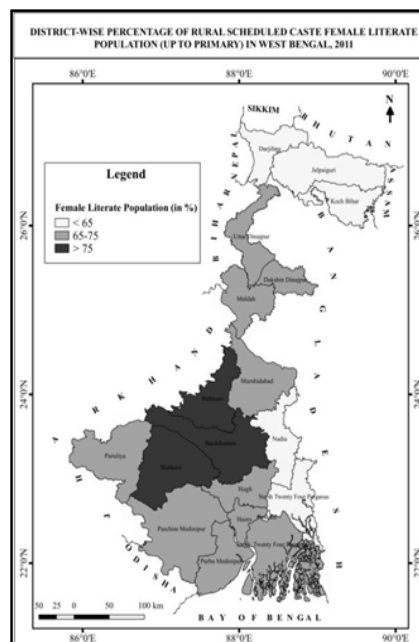


Fig: 5 Source: Census of India, 2011

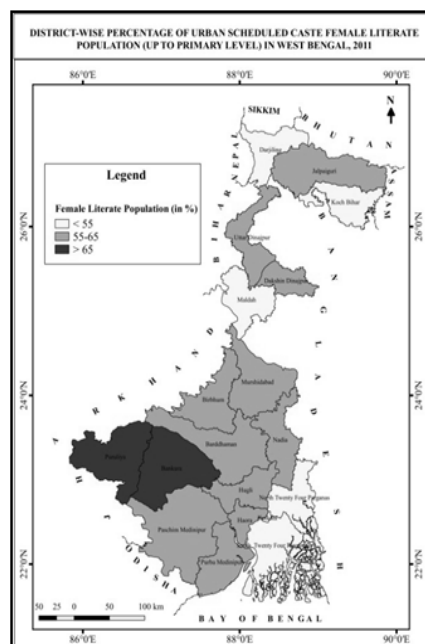


Fig: 6 Source: Census of India, 2011

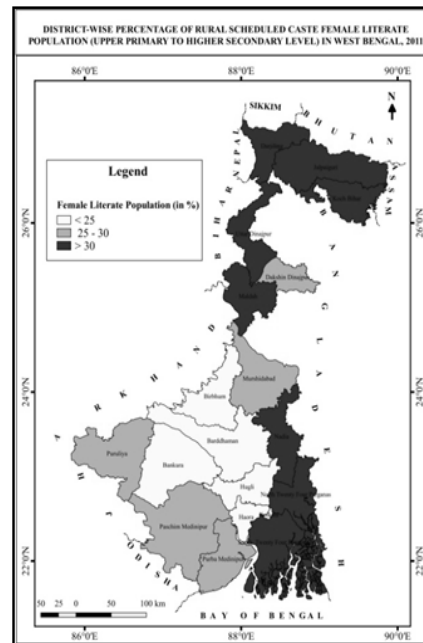
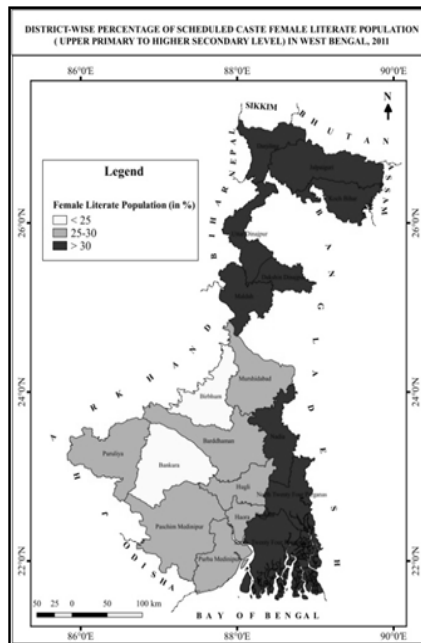


Fig: 7 Source: Census of India, 2011 Fig: 8 Source: Census of India, 2011

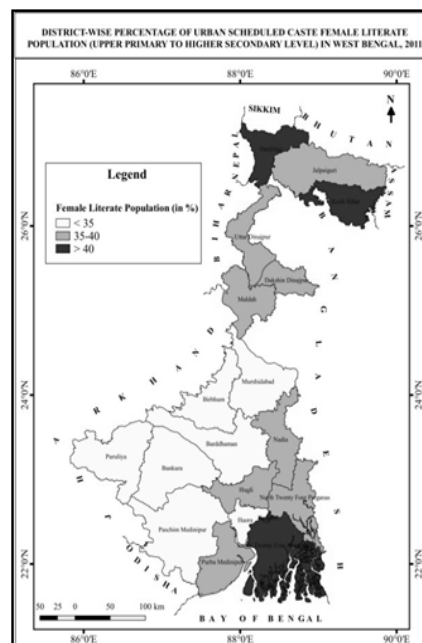


Fig: 9 Source: Census of India, 2011

Nadia, North Twenty-Four Parganas, Darjiling and Jalpaiguri has over 35% literate rural Scheduled Caste female population with educational level upper primary to higher secondary level. This percentage varies between 25%-35% in the remaining parts of the state (Fig. 8).

The scenario of Scheduled Caste females in the urban area with educational levels upper primary to higher secondary is slightly different which fig. 9 clearly demonstrates. The percentage of urban Scheduled Caste female with educational levels upper primary to higher secondary is found below 30% in Bankura district whereas this percentage is observed above 40% in Koch Bihar, Kolkata, South Twenty-Four Parganas and Darjiling.

(iii) Graduate and Above: Fig.10 portrays an interesting picture. It is noted that those districts which showed a higher percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level up to primary level is in the list of the lower percentage of the population with educational level graduate and above and vice versa. Less than 2% population is educated with graduate and above among the Scheduled Caste female in the district of Paschim Medinipur, Birbhum, Bankura, Puruliya, Dakshin Dinajpur, Uttar Dinajpur, Bardhaman, Murshidabad, Purba Medinipur, Koch Bihar, Maldah, Jalpaiguri and Hugli. Only Kolkata and North Twenty-Four Parganas have more than 4% Scheduled Caste females with educational level graduate and above. The percentage of female population with graduates and above ranges between 2%-4% in Haora, Darjiling, Nadia and South Twenty-Four Parganas.

The percentage of graduates and above among the rural Scheduled Caste female is very low (below 1%) in Birbhum, Bardhaman, Dakshin Dinajpur, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura, Puruliya whereas fig. 11 illustrates this percentage is above 2% in the districts of North and South Twenty-Four Parganas.

Contrary to the rural area, the percentage with graduates and above is observed high among the Scheduled Caste females who reside in the urban areas of the districts in West Bengal. The percentage of urban Scheduled Caste female educated with graduate and above is observed very high (above 7%) in the districts Kolkata, Koch Bihar and North Twenty-Four in comparison to the districts like Puruliya, Haora, Bardhaman, Bankura, Jalpaiguri, Birbhum and Murshidabad where this percentage declined to below 4% (Fig. 12).

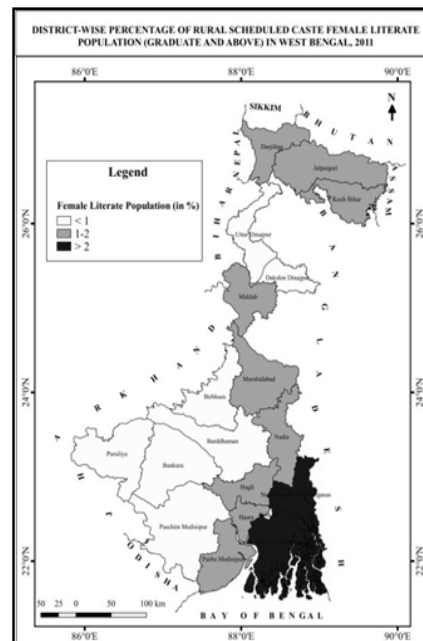
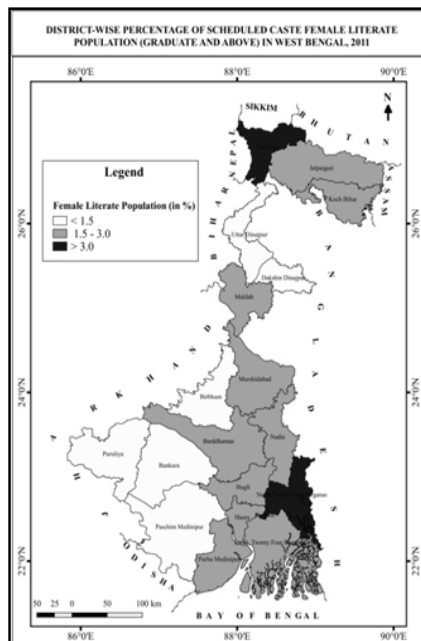


Fig: 10 Source: Census of India, 2011 Fig: 11 Source: Census of India, 2011

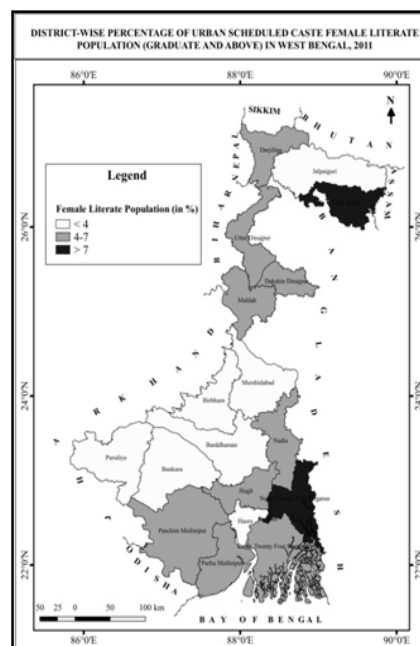


Fig: 12 Source: Census of India, 2011

It is clear from the analysis of the educational level data of Scheduled Caste female that the percentage of the population with lower educational levels is found very high and the percentage of the population with higher educational levels like graduate and above is seen very low in the truly rural tract districts like Bankura, Puruliya, Birbhum, Murshidabad due to low infrastructural facilities. It is also interesting to note that the literacy rate of these districts is also low. In contrary to that the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with lower educational level is found very low and the percentage of the population with higher educational levels is seen very high in the districts like Kolkata and its surrounding districts like North and South Twenty-Four Parganas, Howrah. The linkage of these districts with Kolkata where the concentration of higher education institutions made it more accessible to the females to take higher education. Apart from that the urban centers provide various types of job opportunities to the higher-educated females which also motivates them in continuing higher education.

(C) Enrolment Status of Scheduled Caste Female:

(i) School Education :

Primary Level: Figure 13 shows that there is a spatial variation of the gross enrolment ratio at the primary level in the districts of West Bengal during 2016-17. The district of West Bengal has been divided into three categories. North Twenty-four Parganas and Jalpaiguri has gross enrolment ratio of below 90. The gross enrolment ratio at the primary level is observed very high in the district of Paschim Medinipur, Maldah, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur and Kolkata. Remaining districts like Darjiling, Koch Bihar, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Puruliya, Bankura, Hugli, Haora, Nadia and South Twenty-Four Parganas have moderate gross enrolment ratio at the primary level i.e. 90-110.

Upper Primary Level: The gross enrolment ratio at the upper primary level is not satisfactory in the district Jalpaiguri, Murshidabad and Birbhum. All these districts have gross enrolment ratio below 90. The participation of Scheduled Caste female at the upper primary level is very high in the district of Kolkata, Maldah, Koch Bihar, Paschim Medinipur and Bardhaman. Moderate gross enrolment ratio is observed in the district Bankura, Puruliya, Haora, Hugli, Purba Medinipur, North and South Twenty-Four Parganas, Nadia, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur and Darjiling (Fig. 14).

Secondary Level: The gross enrolment ratio at the secondary level is very high in the district Kolkata and Koch Bihar (Fig. 15). The enrolment of Scheduled Caste female at the secondary

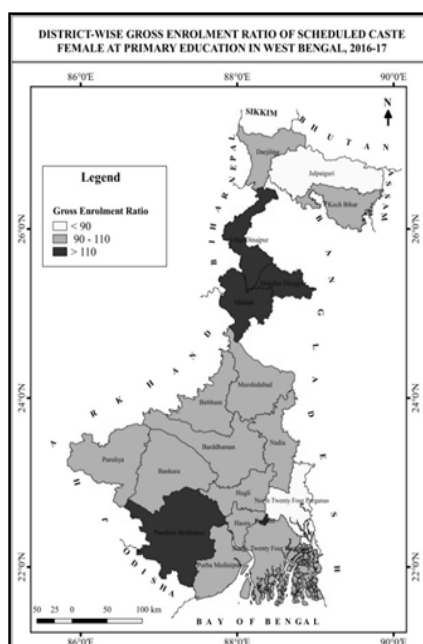


Fig: 13 Source: DISE, 2016-17

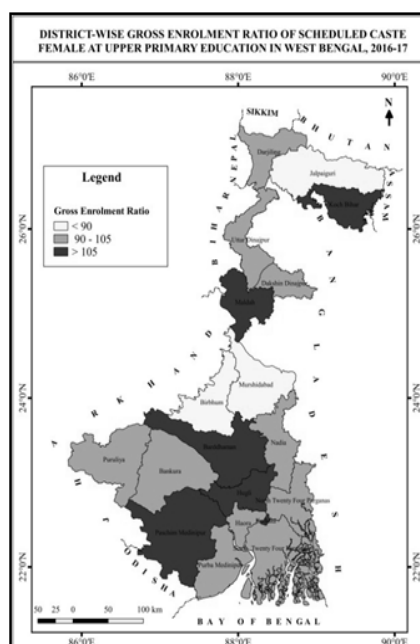


Fig: 14 Source: DISE, 2017

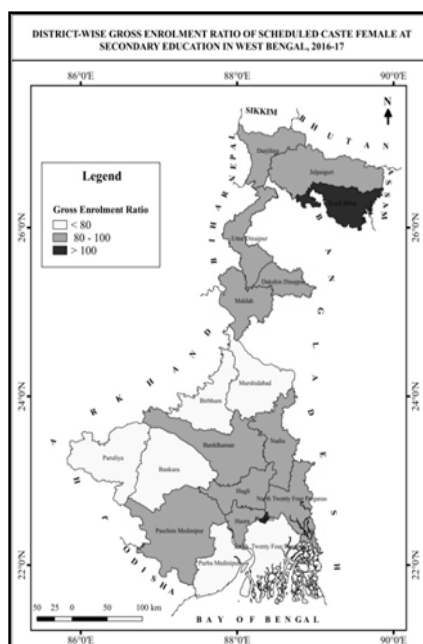


Fig: 15 Source: DISE, 2016-17

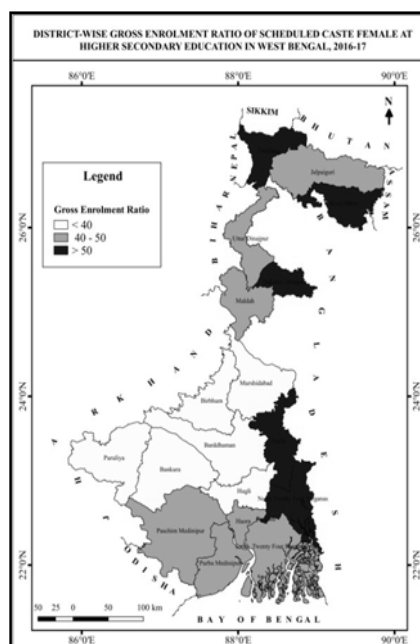


Fig: 16 Source: DISE, 2016-17

level is very low in the district South Twenty-Four Parganas, Purba Medinipur, Bankura, Puruliya, Birbhum and Murshidabad. Nadia, South Twenty-Four Parganas,

Hugli, Haora, Bardhaman, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah Darjiling, Jalpaiguri shows moderate enrolment of Scheduled Caste female in this level.

Higher Secondary Level: Nadia, North Twenty-Four Pargans, Kolkata, Dakshin Dinajpur Darjiling and Koch Bihar has Gross Enrolment Ratio of 50 of Scheduled Caste female at the higher secondary level. Figure 16 clearly depicts that the scenario of enrolment at the higher secondary level is very deplorable for the district Birbhum, Murshidabad, Bankura, Puruliya, Hugli and Bardhaman as these districts register gross enrolment ratio of less than 40.

It is observed that the Gross Enrolment Ratio of Scheduled Caste female is very decent in almost all the districts at the primary and upper primary levels. The sharp decline of this ratio is observed at the secondary level in the rural district of West Bengal like Birbhum, Bankura and Puruliya. The figure of gross enrolment ratio at the higher secondary level is very pathetic in almost all the districts except Kolkata. The sharp decline in the enrolment ratio from secondary to higher secondary clearly indicates that there is a huge dropout of students especially in the district which is rural in nature. It is also noted that early marriage is still prevalent among the Scheduled Caste, especially in rural areas. The status of the educational level of the Scheduled Caste female of these districts supports this statement as the percentage of the population with higher educational levels is low and vice versa. The gross enrolment ratio of Kolkata and its surrounding district is high as these districts have good educational facilities.

(ii) Higher Education:

Undergraduate Level: The participation of Scheduled Caste females at the undergraduate level varies throughout the district in West Bengal. The gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste female at higher secondary was 45.18 but the gross enrolment ratio at the undergraduate level is only 24.82 in 2018-19. It is clear that the remaining pupil drops out of the educational scenario. The gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste females is observed below 20 in the districts of Bankura, Birbhum, Paschim Medinipur, Bardhaman, South 24 Parganas and Murshidabad. The gross enrolment ratio is above 30 in the district of North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Darjiling and Kolkata (Fig. 17)

Postgraduate Level: The gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste females is deplorable at the postgraduate level. Jalpaiguri, Hugli, Bankura, Dakshin Dinajpur, Howrah, Murshidabad,

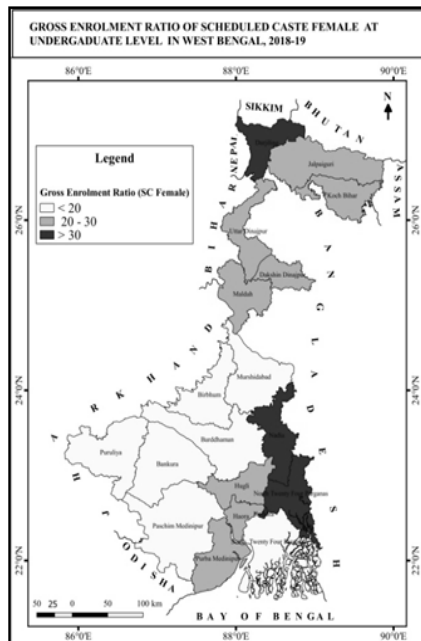
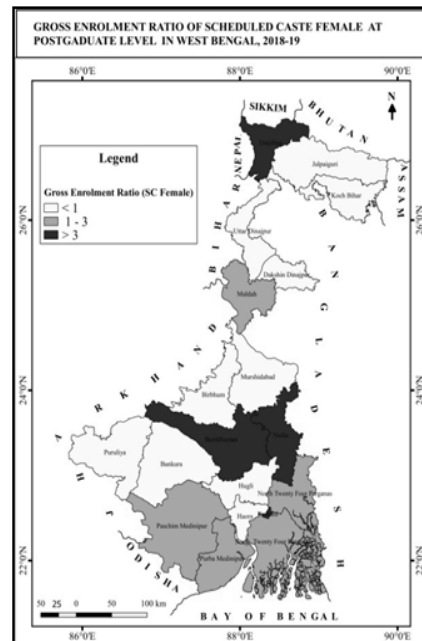


Fig: 17 Source: Dept. of Higher Education, GoWB



18 Source: Dept. of Higher Education, GoWB

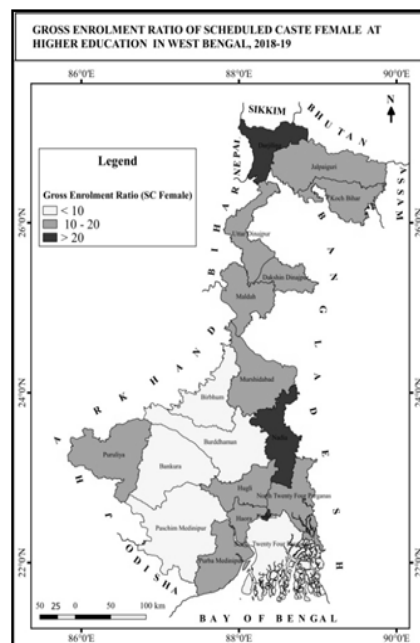


Fig: 19 Source: Dept. of Higher Education, GoWB

A Spatial Perspective On The Educational Scenario Of Scheduled Caste Females

Purulia, Birbhum, Koch Bihar and Uttar Dinajpur has gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste female less than 1 at postgraduate level (fig.18). The gross enrolment ratio is observed above 3 in the district Bardhaman, Darjiling, Nadia and Kolkata.

Higher Education: The gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste females at higher education in West Bengal (14.25) is far lower in comparison to the Scheduled Caste female of India (23.3) in 2018-19. The gross enrolment ratio is below 10 in the district of Bankura, Birbhum, Paschim Medinipur, Bardhaman and South 24 Parganas (fig.19). The gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste females is seen above 20 in Nadia, Darjiling and Kolkata.

It is observed that the Gross Enrolment Ratio of Scheduled Caste females remains low in Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum, and Murshidabad. The literacy rate of Scheduled Caste females in these districts is below 60% and the over 65% literate population among Scheduled Caste has educational level up to primary level. So, it can be said that the awareness and inspiration for continuing higher education are still missing among the Scheduled Caste population in these districts. On the contrary that Kolkata, Nadia and Bardhaman has various reputed higher educational institutions which attract the Scheduled Caste female of surrounding districts for enrolling in higher education. The introduction of the Kanyashree Prakalpa at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels has made a significant change in the enrolment scenario of Scheduled Caste females.

(D) Dropout Rate of Scheduled Caste Female: The average annual dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female is below 5% in the district of Kolkata, Bankura and Hugli at the primary level. It is above 10% in South Twenty-Four Parganas and Darjiling. The dropout rate of the remaining district varies between 5%-10% at the primary level (Fig.20).

At the upper primary level, the dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female is low i.e. below 5% in Kolkata, Koch Bihar and Bankura. It is observed from fig. 21 that dropout rate is above 10% in Puruliya, Maldah, Darjiling, Paschim Medinipur, Birbhum, South 24 Parganas and Murshidabad. Moderate dropout rate i.e. 5%-10% at the upper primary level is observed in the remaining districts of the state.

The overall dropout rate in secondary education is seen very high throughout the district of West Bengal among the Scheduled Caste female. A 15%-30% dropout rate is observed in Kolkata, North Twenty-Four Parganas, Nadia, Darjiling,

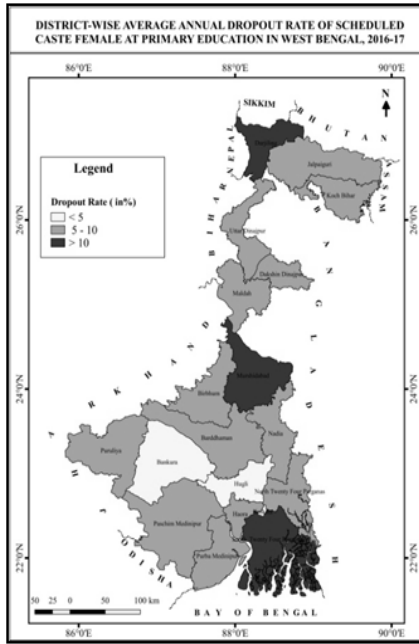


Fig: 20 Source: DISE, 2016-17

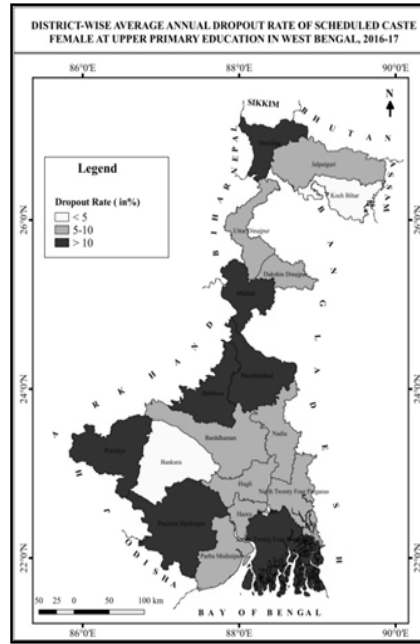


Fig: 21 Source: DISE, 2016-17

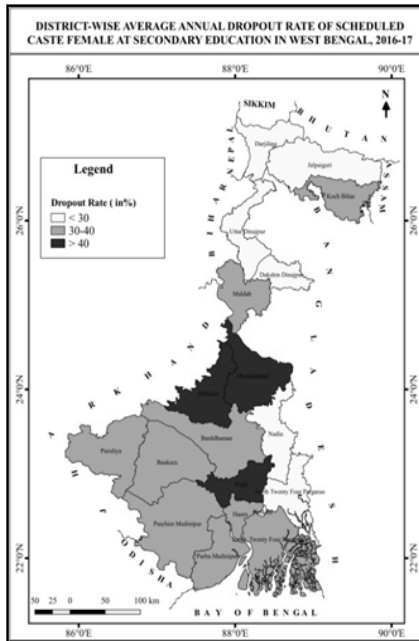


Fig: 22 Source: DISE, 2016-17

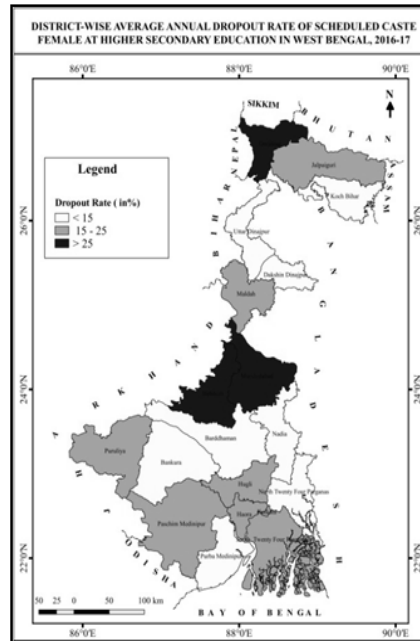


Fig: 23 Source: DISE, 2016-17

Uttar Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, and Dakshin Dinajpur. Hugli, Murshidabad and Birbhum comprise high dropout rates i.e. above 40% at the secondary level (Fig. 22). The dropout rate in the remaining district ranges between 30%-40%.

A Spatial Perspective On The Educational Scenario Of Scheduled Caste Females

The dropout rate is 5%-15% in North Twenty-Four Parganas, Bardhaman, Uttar Dinajpur, Nadia, Dakshin Dinajpur, Bankura, Purba Medinipur, Koch Bihar at the higher secondary level.

Figure 23 also demonstrates that the dropout rate is above 25% at higher secondary education in Birbhum, Darjiling and Murshidabad. The remaining district has dropout rate of 15%-25%.

It is observed from the above analysis that the dropout rate is increasing with higher educational levels. It is also noted that the dropout at the secondary and higher secondary level is observed higher in the districts like Birbhum and Murshidabad. The percentage of literacy among females and the percentage of the population with higher educational levels are observed very low. Apart from that Illiteracy, poverty, inadequate earnings and poor living conditions of parents force them to withdraw and also put them into various low-paid jobs to contribute to the family income (Mahalanabis and Acharya, 2021).

Relation of Scheduled Caste Female Literacy Rate with Enrolment and Dropout Rate:

Literacy rate and enrolment rate are correlated. The relation is more relatable with the female literacy and female enrolment rate. Normally an educated female is aware of the various positive impact of education. If a mother is literate, she tries to educate her children. As a result, the enrolment rate also increases. It is found from the data analysis that the correlation value between Scheduled Caste literacy with the enrolment of Scheduled Caste female in primary education is -0.160, but it is 0.297 for upper primary, 0.516 for secondary and 0.318 for higher secondary. There is a positive correlation also exists between the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste female and their enrolment at higher education. The correlation value at undergraduate is 0.388, at post graduate 0.336 and 0.370 at higher education. The district with higher Scheduled Caste female literacy has higher Scheduled Caste female enrolment at upper primary, secondary and higher secondary levels.

Normally literacy rate is inversely related to the dropout rate. If the literacy rate is higher dropout will be lower because a literate person is conscious of the ill effect of dropout. The data analysis shows the correlation value between Scheduled Caste female literacy and dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at the primary level is -0.006, it is -0.086 at the upper primary, -0.450 at secondary and 0.030 at higher secondary level. The district with higher Scheduled Caste female literacy rate has lower dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at the primary, upper primary and secondary levels.

Relation of Educational Level of Scheduled Caste Female with Enrolment and Dropout Rate:

A person aged 7 years and above who can both read and write with understanding in any language is taken as literate. The educational level defines the highest level of education a person has completed (District Census Handbook Birbhum, 2011). Literacy rates always do not reveal the real scenario of educational status. The percentage of the population with educational level will provide the actual scenario. It is true that the person with higher educational level has more opportunities to avail high paid and skillful jobs and is expected to be more conscious about their children's education than the person with lower educational level (Ghara & Majhi, 2020). The data analysis shows that the correlation value between the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level up to primary level and gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste female at the primary level is -0.020, it is -0.497 at upper primary, -0.738 at secondary, -0.890 at the higher secondary level, -0.720 at undergraduate, -0.658 at post graduate and -0.592 at higher education. The district with higher percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational levels up to primary levels has lower percentage of enrolment rate at various educational levels in school education and higher education. The correlation is very strong at secondary, higher secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. As most of the Scheduled Caste females have lower educational levels as a result they do not conscious and serious about their children's enrolment and fail to motivate their children to pursue higher education.

The data analysis shows that the correlation value between the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level up to the primary level and dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at the primary level is 0.034, it 0.229 at upper primary, 0.795 at secondary, 0.092 at the higher secondary level. It can be said that the district has higher percentage of Scheduled Caste female dropout rate where the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level up to primary level is higher.

The percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level graduate and above is positively correlated with the enrolment rate of Scheduled Caste females at school and higher education but negatively correlated with the dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at school education. The data analysis shows that the correlation value between the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level graduate and above and gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste female at the primary level is -0.029, it is 0.765 at upper primary, 0.794 at secondary, 0.891 at higher secondary, 0.904 at undergraduate, 0.880 at postgraduate and

0.896 at higher education. It can be said that the district which has higher percentage of Scheduled Caste female with the educational level of graduate and above has a higher gross enrolment ratio of Scheduled Caste female at various educational levels at school educational level and higher educational levels.

The correlation value between the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level graduate and above and the dropout rate of Scheduled Caste female at primary level is -0.276, it is -0.250 at upper primary, -0.682 at secondary, -0.064 at the higher secondary level. The dropout of that district is lower at various educational levels at school education of Scheduled Caste female where the percentage of Scheduled Caste female with educational level graduate and above is high.

Government Initiatives for the Educational Development:

The government of India has taken up various extensive welfare schemes for the development of these deprived people with the collaboration of the different state governments. Out of the various welfare schemes, educational schemes have got prime importance (Kannapam, 2008). From the first five-year plan to the present, the allotment and the beneficiaries have increased day by day. Different new schemes have been introduced; various schemes have been merged with the growing demand of the needs. The educational schemes come into very effective for these economically poor students during their course of study. Apart from this, various educational programmes like SarvaSikshaAviyanat the elementary level, Rashtriya Madhyamik SikshaAviyan for Secondary, Saakshar Bharat for adult education level has been introduced to enhance literacy. Though these programmes are for all, many schools have been opened in the remote Scheduled Caste concentrated habitation under these programmes. Various programmes and educational welfare schemes have been taken by the both Central and State Government to increase the literacy rate and enrolment rate and to curb the dropout rate of Scheduled Caste students like Special Educational Development Programme for Scheduled Caste Girls belonging to Very Low Literacy Level, National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education (NSIGSE), Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya, Pre-Matric Scholarship for the Students Studying in Class IX-X, Pre-Matric Scholarship for the Children of Scavengers, Post-Matric Scholarship, Upgradation of Merit, Free Coaching for Scheduled Caste Students, Baba Jagjiban Ram ChatraAwas Yojana(BJRCY), National Fellowship Scheme, Top-class Education for Scheduled Caste, National Overseas Scholarship, Sikhashree, Hostel Grants for the Students Residing in the School Attached Hostels, Ashram Hostel, Merit Scholarship Scheme for Students Reading in Class V-X and IX-XII.

Suggestive Measures for the Educational Development:

After the independence of India, the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste females has increased tremendously through the various efforts of the Central and State Government. More Scheduled Caste women-centric provisions are needed, as the provision of educational scholarships, vocational training, loans, credit, and child care for scheduled group women would improve their ability to participate in the economy, and enhance their status relative to men (Dunn, 2016). National Literacy Mission has played important role in increasing the literacy rate through the adult literacy center. More mass literacy centers should be open in every district so that Scheduled Caste females can take part in the educational process. It is observed that the Mass literacy center is present at every Panchayat, but they are not functioning properly. The concerned department should take initiative to activate the dormant mass literacy center to literate the illiterate.

The huge inter-district disparity in the educational level of Scheduled Caste female exists between rural and urban. There is a tendency for early marriage among the Scheduled Caste female as a result most of them discontinued higher education. There should be more Open University Centres in every district and proper intimation is needed. There are only 23 Chatri Awas under Babu Jagjiban Ram Chatra/Chatri Awas Yojana in West Bengal where a total of 2158 Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe students can reside. There are only 1985 seats available for Scheduled Caste students under Ashram hostels which is insufficient. Hostels provide a good ambiance to the Scheduled Caste students for study (Chatterjee, 2011). It is suggested that both the Central and State Government should set up more girls' hostels in the Scheduled Caste concentrated districts. Apart from that teachers of schools/colleges and the local authority must have to take an active role to grow awareness about various welfare schemes among Scheduled Caste parents. As social discrimination is deeply rooted within the cultural set up of our Indian society, certain exogenous forces alone can never do away with this, until and unless the urge evolves spontaneously from within the society itself (Dasgupta & Shivaramakrishnan, 2013)

Conclusion:

Scheduled Caste female is well behind the general population in aspects of education. Apart from that there is a huge spatial variation that exists throughout the districts of West Bengal in terms of Scheduled Caste literacy, percentage of the population with higher educational levels, enrolment rate and dropout rate. It is interesting to note that in every parameter, Kolkata and its surrounding districts have shown a decent scenario due to the higher infrastructural facilities whereas the truly rural district like Birbhum, Murshidabad, Bankura, Puruliya, Maldah is

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still well behind in terms of every aspect of educational status of Scheduled caste female. So, the government should focus on setting up and improvement of educational and communication facilities in the remotest part of the state so that all the left-out pupils can participate in the educational process. It is true that after the independence Central and State Government has taken various efforts to uplift the socio-economic status of Scheduled Caste female but still there is much scope for further improvement.

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Barriers and Remedies of Blended Learning in the Indian Higher Education System

Nasrin and Faiyaz Ahammad***

Abstract

The 11th Five Year Plan for higher education in India aims to significantly increase intake capacity from 13% to 20%. (2007-2012). Learners from various origins and their varying requirements, limited class time, adaptable material, and creative ICT use are all potential obstacles for knowledge-based societies. Blended Learning, a hybrid approach to education, shows promise as a solution to these problems. Because it can pick the most appropriate media for every given task, it is versatile and effective. It will increase the number of students enrolled and decrease the price of running the school. With the advent of blended learning, the focus of education has shifted from lecturing to learning. In this model, students work in groups with teachers and peers to independently investigate, build, practise, and verify their knowledge. Thus, the emphasis in the classroom changes from a primarily presentational format (i.e., lecturing and information transmission) to a primarily active learning one (i.e., discussion and debate). Due to the blended nature of the method, educators are free to employ a wide range of strategies, as students engage in both online and traditional learning environments. Case studies, tutorials, self-testing exercises, simulations, and other forms of online work can be presented via computer-based technology in place of certain lecture or lab material. Traditional Indian schooling is slowly changing. Therefore, a blended learning method in higher education may be used to incorporate both traditional learning and innovative constructivist-based teaching approaches. However, the difficulty is in making the mixture efficient as well as effective. This research makes an effort to investigate the difficulties presented by modern technology, as well as potential solutions, in the interest of improving the efficacy of blended learning in Indian universities.

Key Words: *Blended Learning, Higher Education.*

* Professor and Former Chairperson, Department of Education, Aligarh Muslim University.

** Assistant Professor, Education College, Basantapur, Murshidabad, West Bengal.

Introduction

The rapid development of technology in all areas of life has unquestionably altered the nature of education in the modern world. This research defines “blended” or “hybrid” learning as the intentional integration of both traditional classroom instruction and digital resources. Blended learning, as described by several academics, refers to the use of both online and in-person learning experiences (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). According to studies, the hybrid model is rapidly gaining traction among universities all around the world, with many of them deciding to implement it for their own courses (Abraham, 2007; Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008; Dickfos et al, 2014; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Blended or hybrid education also goes by the name “flexible learning” (or “Flexi-class”) (Staker & Horn, 2012). Blended learning is an efficient mixture of online and mobile learning with more conventional classroom settings made possible by the proliferation of these technologies in recent years (Porumbet al, 2013). It’s important to distinguish blended learning from online and distance education. The former describes a course in which students receive a package containing textbooks and tasks, which they are then responsible for reading and completing independently, while the latter describes a course that takes place entirely online. Blended learning blends the best features of both traditional classroom instruction and online study to provide an engaging and powerful educational setting for students.

Higher education in India possesses a significant amount of untapped potential with regard to the development of a knowledge-based information society that is able to reap the benefits of technological advances made in the twenty-first century. The issues of financing and management, including access, equity, and relevance; reorienting programmes to focus an emphasis on values and ethics; and the standard of higher education; and the rising use of information and communication technology are all areas of concern for the system at present. One major challenge is that we want to increase our intake capacity from 13 percent to 20 percent, which is below the global average of 23 percent. We need to significantly increase access to both public and private higher education institutions if we are to meet this goal.

General education has its flaws in India and elsewhere in the world, such as a high dropout rate and a shortage of resources like books, teachers, and classrooms (UNESCO, 2002). A number of factors, such as but not limited to: digital divides; low literacy; lack of resources (especially in developing countries); shifting (increasing) student enrolment numbers; global technological advancements; and competition between and among higher education institutions and the emerging providers of higher education, can all influence change contexts. (Middlehurst, 2003).

Worldwide, the use of ICT in universities has skyrocketed as students and faculty put more faith in the efficacy of modern technologies. However, the rising use of ICT at universities needs to be seen from the perspective of broader economic, social, and political shifts impacting India and other emerging nations.

Importance of blended learning

Blended learning has been shown to be a realistic and effective way to provide high-quality, up-to-date, on-demand learning solutions in higher education, further education, or professional education, even when budgets for education are getting smaller. (Thorne, 2003; Valk, Seene & Pilt, 2001). (Thorne, 2003; Valk, Seene&Pilt, 2001). Therefore, Blended Learning looks to be the most acceptable approach for a developing country like India to boost higher education enrolment within the constraints of shrinking budget allocation and existing infrastructure. It is ingrained in the larger social framework and moves forward in a cooperative setting, all of which are in keeping with our culture and ethos. In addition, our educational planners hope for a gradual and long-lasting shift that leaves our conventional value system untouched. Blended learning mixes internet with face-to-face learning. Blended learning aims to maximise both efficiency and effectiveness by mixing different types of course delivery. Blended learning is a word used to describe a strategy that employs many modes of delivery, such as electronic portfolio support systems (EPSS), online courses, and knowledge management strategies. Also known as “hybrid learning,” this approach combines traditional classroom lectures with online tutorials and independent study at the student’s own pace. Students now have more ways than ever to engage with one another, their teachers, and course materials both inside and outside of the classroom thanks to the proliferation of digital tools. The goal of blended learning is to combine the best parts of in-class teaching with the best parts of online learning so that students can learn in active, self-directed ways and have more freedom (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002). (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002). This conception of blended learning is commonly referred to as a hybrid model in the field of higher education. The idea of hybridization, or the combination of two distinct elements to form a new whole, is central to the blended learning paradigm that promotes student engagement and reduces time spent in class. Blended learning successfully combines traditionally separated modes of instruction online and in-person instruction into a single cohesive whole (McCray, 2000). The combination of these two factors has the potential to create a classroom setting that is optimal for student learning.

According to Larkin, “the fundamental premise is that face-to-face oral communication and online written communication are optimally merged such that

the strengths of each are blended into a unique learning experience commensurate with the environment and intended educational objective” (2010). Blended learning is effective when it successfully combines the advantages of online and face-to-face instruction without appearing to be a disjointed hodgepodge of unrelated methods. It is essential that the two approaches work in tandem to provide the best possible administrative, educational, and technical outcomes.

An increasing body of evidence points to blended learning’s potential benefits. The dropout rate and student participation in class are two examples. Many students at today’s universities are pursuing the “three-legged stool” of family, career, and further education. Many students have a hard time making it to school, so lowering the number of mandatory face-to-face hours can be helpful. To attract and keep these students, universities and professors are exploring new strategies. Having the course materials available online gives students more freedom to study at their own pace. Blended courses can save time for busy students since they eliminate the need to commute and find parking. Having course materials available online allows students greater freedom and mobility. As a result of the increasing number of older, working students, blended courses are increasingly popular as a means to better accommodate their needs. Many students now prefer blended courses over traditional in-person classes because of the reduced time and location requirements.

The Ohio State University conducted a survey of 201 students from three different institutions to learn about their experiences taking classes anywhere along the spectrum from face-to-face to online. Students ranked the course’s understandable structure as the most important factor in their overall satisfaction with it. This included the course’s well-defined goals, assignments, and deadlines as well as its emphasis on student participation and discussion (Stein, 2004).

The online component of the blended courses was lauded by students as a great boon since it gave them the flexibility to complete some course work when it was convenient for them, which was especially helpful for the many students in the classes who also had to work. Many, however, also stressed the importance of the in-person interaction, saying that it aided them not only academically but also in forming professional connections and a solid feeling of community.

Experience has shown, however, that blended learning solutions don’t always live up to the potential of the method or produce the results that were hoped for because administrators, teachers, and students don’t have the right technical, methodological, or organisational knowledge and skills (McLaughlin, & Mitra, 2001; Dirckinck-Holmfeld 2002).

Barriers of blended learning faced by Indian higher education system

Developing countries, and India in particular, are experiencing rapid socioeconomic and technological changes, which has prompted a clear call for higher education institutions to carefully examine their educational practices from a new perspective in preparation for the challenges that lie ahead in knowledge-based societies. There is a growing demand for “client” responsive and flexible courses, and there is a push to use information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and administration. Additionally, there is a large population of learners with a wide range of different backgrounds, needs, motivations, abilities, learning preferences, time availability, and course content requirements.

Academic leaders in higher education need to rethink institutional structures, operational tactics, and regulations suitable for the ongoing digital age in order to meet these difficulties. Practitioners should reject “one size fits all” solutions to problems because technology is embedded in society and depends on its context.

“The rapid breakthroughs in new information and communication technologies will further change the way knowledge is developed, acquired and delivered. It is also important to note that the new technologies offer opportunities to innovate on course content and teaching methods and to widen access to higher learning”, UNESCO (1998). In order for higher education institutions to reap the benefits of information and communication technology (ICT) in the classroom, educators and researchers must take risks with the new tools at their disposal. The IITs and IISC, Bangalore have created 135 videos and 125 web-based courses in the fields of technology, engineering, and the sciences, marking a significant step forward in the use of ICT in education. These materials will be easily accessible, but there will be no in-person instruction to supplement them. Moreover, certification will be made available. However, higher technical education devoid of value inculcation and social context risks being a monster without horns in a culture that has already been smitten. Barriers of blended learning faced by Indian higher education system are:

- **Managing instructional complexity:** In blended learning the instructor has a wider choice of delivery mediums to combine. With wider choice also comes greater complexity and pressure on the instructor and designer. This is due to the variety of combinations of technology and possibly the lack of patterns to follow for that particular mix. These issues need to be addressed and taken into account during the design.
- **In the Planning Stage:** Questions arise when attempting to design a blended learning course that makes the most of both in-person and digital components. If you had to define blended learning, how would you describe

it? Is there a recommended ratio of time spent in each learning style for a given course? We suggest that the in-person and online parts of a blended course shouldn't be seen as distinct entities by either students or teachers (Sloan, C). Blending or harmonising the divide between teaching and learning from an instructional design perspective is a challenging task, one that is exacerbated by the emergence of novel students (Microsoft Corporation. Higher Education Leaders Symposium).

- Managing roles and responsibilities: In blended learning, there is not just one person responsible for teaching the course material, as in a typical classroom setting. The success of a class and the elimination of possible conflict and learner misunderstanding can both be improved by defining the duties of the instructor and the assistant.
- Creating a seamless learning experience: The effectiveness of a mixed learning environment depends on effective communication between teachers throughout the course of its design. It is important that teachers and aides keep in touch with one another during the entire course, not just before it begins. As individual components of the blend are developed, they must all satisfy the requirements set forth by the preceding learning objects.
- Meeting expectations. In order to realistically perceive the benefits offered by the training or course, it is essential to properly manage the expectations of both the instructors and the students.
- Controlling costs: Personalization, real-time communication, and other advanced functions contribute to large costs, although the cost reductions of ICT introduction in blended learning still remain in principle. Courseware creation, additional capital and ongoing equipment costs, resource provisioning expenses, infrastructure upkeep, user assistance, adoption, access, security, replacement, and institutional overheads are all possible additional expenses. Organizational structure and internal partnerships that encourage cooperation can help cut down on these expenses. When teachers, students, and all pool their electronic resources, everyone saves money. Additionally, this strategy will prove to be cost-effective when early expenditures are made.

Below is an outline of the barriers that have been recognised from the perspectives of students, teachers, and administration:

Student-identified challenges: Blended learning presents a number of obstacles for students, the most significant of which are an expectation of less work than in

a regular course, a lack of skills in time management, a lack of self-responsibility for learning, and the inability to use technology effectively.

- ***Expectations of less work:*** Students who are new to blended learning often assume that the reduced number of required in-person sessions will also reduce the amount of work required of them. Many of these students also view their time online as “work,” regardless of whether or not it is the same amount of time they would have spent in a regular classroom setting.
- ***Lack of time management skills:*** When students are obliged to perform online activities in between in-person classes, time management can become an especially difficult challenge for them to overcome in the context of a blended learning environment.
- ***Self-Responsibility for learning:*** In a more conventional style of education, students are accustomed to taking on a more passive role as learners. These kids may have a tough time grasping the fundamental concept of taking responsibility for one’s own educational pursuits. At first, individuals might not be adequately prepared for the active learning role that they are expected to play in a blended class.
- ***Knowhow to use technology:*** Students who wish to enrol in a course that utilises blended learning should have a basic understanding of technology in order to make effective use of the online components of the course, as well as communicate effectively with the teaching staff in order to have their assignments graded and problems addressed. However, the majority of students have trouble connecting to the internet, making it difficult for them to download large files, finish their online coursework, or research topics of interest.

Faculty-identified issues

Blended learning presents a number of difficulties for faculty, including (a) the time commitment, (b) the lack of support for course development, (c) the difficulty in obtaining new teaching and technical skills, and (d) the risk considerations connected with this sort of course (Voos, 2003; Dziuban & Moskal, 2001; Garnham & Kaleta, 2002).

- ***Time commitment:*** When compared to the more traditional method of learning in a classroom setting, the process of planning and delivering a blended learning course takes a significant amount of time. The additional time commitment that is required for participation in a blended course is seen by teachers as the most significant challenge (Dziuban & Moskal,

2001). According to Johnson (2002), the amount of time necessary to plan and develop a blended course with a large enrolment takes anywhere from two to three times as much time as is required to develop a comparable course using a traditional format.

- ***The lack of support for course development:*** Faculty members who wish to instruct blended learning courses should have a solid understanding of new and developing technologies, both in terms of the design of such courses and the delivery of media. In order to provide students with a positive blended learning experience that is fruitful, there must be faculty support for the redesign of courses as well as the acquisition of new teaching and technological skills. Faculty members need to be provided with support for the course redesign. Assisting the instructor in determining which course goals are best suited to be met through online learning activities, which are best suited to be accomplished in the traditional classroom setting, and how to effectively integrate these two distinct learning settings are included (Dziuban et al., 2004). The faculty members responded that they needed to acquire new teaching abilities such as how to develop online learning communities, how to facilitate online discussion forums, as well as how to address and manage students' online learning challenges (Aycock et al., 2002).
- ***The difficulty in obtaining new teaching and technical skills:*** The instructors need to get "hands-on" experience with a variety of different programmes and technologies in order to get past their own anxieties and objections.
- ***The risk considerations connected with this sort of course:*** Fear of losing control of the course, lower student evaluations, and apprehension about how this type of learning model fits into the university's teaching, research, and service culture are other important risk concerns highlighted by faculty who have taught blended courses (Dziuban & Moskal, 2001; Voos, 2003).

Administration-related barriers

The following administrative concerns are of utmost importance and must be addressed competently for blended learning to be successful:

- ***Alignment with institutional goals and priorities:*** In order for blended learning to be successfully implemented, an institution's goals and priorities must be in line with those of the programme, according to Twigg (1999). This will allow for the greatest possible improvement in the quality of the

learning experience provided to students at the lowest possible cost. This indicates that there must be a strong commitment from the university to completely include computing into campus life. Barone (2001) noted that for this to happen, leadership within the institution must take the initiative by allocating resources wisely and making any required changes to the institution's policies.

- ***Resistance to Organizational change:*** Organizational change is met with widespread resistance in higher education, and this issue has been studied extensively (Twigg, 1999; Barone, 2001). Changes in the curriculum, course structures, timetables, and new tactics are essential to the success of blended learning, but they can be thwarted by institutional bureaucracy and inertia.
- ***Lack of experience with collaboration and partnerships:*** A significant hurdle to a blended learning endeavour can be a lack of expertise with cooperation and partnerships, as well as the absence of a collaborative organisational structure and internal relationships (Dziuban et al., 2004). The effectiveness of a mixed-learning approach requires deliberative decision making and widespread dissemination of information (Barone, 2001). To be successful, relationships among students, teachers, IT professionals, educators, and administrators are crucial (Twigg, 1999).

Strategies to Overcome the Barriers of Blended Learning in Indian Higher Education System

The abundance of high-tech resources supporting e-learning and the challenges of using them in practise have only served to further prove the necessity of rethinking the status quo, and information-transfer pedagogy (Xenos et al., 2002; Hiltz and Turoff, 2002). Many academics have argued that the emphasis of this change should be on knowledge building, which will complement rather than supplant the current paradigm of information flow (Warschauer, 2003; Etheris and Tan, 2004). The knowledge creation paradigm relies heavily on social learning; this is achieved through the use of various collaboration technologies and, most importantly, improved presence, which facilitates active cooperation among human peers. Humans learn best in groups, where they may discuss and carry out activities toward a shared objective. In this setting, education is not a solitary pursuit (Hung and Nichani, 2001).

The term “blended” or “enhanced” learning refers to a hybrid approach to education in which online resources are used to supplement more traditional teaching strategies. This change in emphasis from teacher-cantered to student-cantered pedagogies, combined with new technologies (such as the rapid spread of the

internet, the world wide web, and personal computers), and new theories of learning (constructivism), is enabling entirely new models of teaching and learning, and is therefore large enough to be described as a paradigm shift.

Blended learning is an approach to education that takes advantage of both the proven effectiveness and social benefits of traditional classroom settings, as well as the expanded active learning opportunities afforded by today's modern internet platforms. The implementation of blended learning should be viewed as a fundamental rethink of the educational model, having the following characteristics:

- (i) A transition away from teacher-centered instruction toward student-centered instruction, in which students become more engaged in their own learning and connect with one another (even during face-to-face contact sessions).
- (ii) An increase in the amount of interaction that takes place between students and teachers as well as among students themselves, as well as between students and outside resources.
- (iii) Integrated formative and summative assessment mechanisms for both students and teachers.

Rogers' concept of the facilitative teacher, in which the classroom setting is given more weight than direct instruction, is compatible with these findings. To make this method work, both students and teachers will need to rethink their approaches to education.

This methodology demonstrates a variety of strategies, and the efficiency and efficacy of this strategy are dependent on method selection. There are numerous approaches to overcoming the challenges of blended learning.

- ***Live Classroom Method (Traditional):*** In a live classroom, both teachers and students are physically present at the same time and place. Complex, wide-ranging, programmatic, or brand-new content often forms the basis of these courses, as do those that call for instructors or facilitators to present materials or lead discussions in person, as well as those that emphasise the importance of fostering a shared culture among participants or bringing diverse individuals together to tackle business problems. When learning a skill that requires lots of practise interacting with others face-to-face or lots of practise with a complex physical skill, and when the learner has a work or family responsibilities that allow for extended absences from daily activities, this approach might be useful. Group discussion of a subject's relative importance is essential to understanding.

- ***Virtual Classroom Method:*** Teachers and students in a virtual classroom can be physically located everywhere at the same time, and lessons can be recorded and viewed at a later time. Conventionally, these gatherings are held via online conferencing software. Unless it's extremely complicated or controversial, the material covered can be equivalent to what would be covered in a real classroom. A content delivery window of less than two hours is feasible.
- ***Live Demo or Practice (labs) Method:*** When there is an abundance of both live product and teachers, and when team-based practise is essential to mastering complex hardware, this strategy is employed.
- ***Broadcast (TV or Streaming Video) Method:*** This strategy allows for the quick dissemination of information to a geographically distributed group. An investment in high-quality broadcast recording will pay dividends for the business. When Content needs to be made rapidly, but won't be changed much, this approach is employed.
- ***Interactive Chat Session Method:*** In cases when Learners have varying requirements that cannot be satisfied through "one-size-fits-all" training and where Expert resources are available for individualised instruction and guidance, this approach may be useful.
- ***Online Information via Web site Method:*** When a large number of people over a long period of time need access to fundamental ideas, policies, processes, and information, this Approach should be adopted.
- ***Online Instructional Materials Method:*** This approach is helpful for students who are spread out geographically yet nonetheless need to quickly master a new skill. In order for students to be able to learn at their own pace, instructors must provide them with the means to do so, including the means to access and practise with relevant content. The content may be connected to many academic tools.
- ***Online Reference Materials Method:*** This approach is worth thinking about when a large number of students are spread out throughout a large geographical area, but all of them need to learn quickly and have a lot of leeway in their schedules. In order for students to be able to learn at their own pace, instructors must provide them with the means to do so, including the means to access and practise with relevant content. The content may be connected to many academic tools.

- **Offline Instructional Materials Method:** When there is a relatively small group of students, this approach can be used to efficiently disseminate information. Content can be used for a lengthy period of time. The company's fundamental ideas, rules, and procedures rarely change and do not require extensive dissemination.
- **Electronic Performance Support system (EPSS) Method:** The Learner gains from on-the-job access to context-sensitive support while the Content helps users acquire software application abilities. When used in the context of theme networks or communities, EPSS can facilitate the creation and dissemination of shared knowledge. In addition, EPSS can help build the necessary infrastructure for establishing and sustaining blended learning programmes.
- **Threaded Discussion Method:** This approach works well for students whose requirements in relation to the material are too varied for a cookie-cutter approach to teaching. The group has access to a wealth of available expert resources for the exchange and discussion of knowledge. It is important for students to be able to join a conversation at any point in time and still understand what has been said previously.
- **Product Simulation Practice (Virtual lab) Method:** Take into consideration employing this strategy in situations in which learners do not have easy access to live systems and there is a bigger demand for trained users than there are systems available for training.
- **Live Practice Method:** This strategy is useful for a relatively small learner group that is geographically centred. It gives one the opportunity to engage in repetitive practice. It inspires people to work together in order to utilise and acquire new abilities.
- **Simulation-Based Practice Method:** If you need to make sure you understand everything before putting it into practice, this technique might be for you.
- **Written Tests Method:** The purpose of this technique is to evaluate learning and memory. Examining how well one performs in a given case study might be a useful sign of future success in that position.
- **Performance Tests Method:** In this approach, trained Observers are used to monitor output and provide feedback. It's put to use when the learnt behaviour or skill must be physically performed.

- **Books Method:** Books are cheap, consistent, and pleasingly palpable; they are also small, lightweight, and easy to move. Everyone feels at ease because they know their way around. Synergy and enhanced efficiency can be achieved by combining the best features of different approaches. The learning environment, target skills, and usefulness of the scenario should all inform the choice of media.

Conclusion

With well-planned educational experiences, blended learning can be an effective method. Blended learning has problems, but it could have a good effect on Indian higher education by providing the foundation for a transformative paradigm that holds expectations for students, teachers, and administrators. Academic staff and students alike appear to have enthusiastically embraced and praised this innovative method. The finest results are achieved when people work together toward a common goal, encourage one another, recognise success, and learn from one another as they work. To fully reap the benefits and overcome the problems connected with blended learning in higher education institutions, it is imperative that top management display transformative leadership (Garrison, 2004). A leader needs to have vision, interpersonal skills, and guts, all of which are interconnected. Positive realignment of higher education is possible when these facilitative leadership features are combined with blended learning. Blended learning can only succeed if everyone involved has the same long-term goals for the organisation.

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Caste, Class and Gender in Educational Access and School Participation: Empirical Evidences from Six States in India

*Madhumita Bandyopadhyay**

Introduction

The role of education in human as well as societal development is widely acknowledged across the world. However, a growing body of literature has focused on the learning opportunities available in different countries and it has been observed that there is a continuing imbalance in educational participation of male and female in many countries. Considerable number of research reports, policy papers, documents of international as well as national organizations have included concept of gender as part of their analysis. For example, all the EFA documents have used gender related terms quite frequently. It has also been observed that, in most cases women and girls are in disadvantaged position due to existing societal rules resulting in their low status with subordinate role in a male dominated society governed by patriarchy. Women are mainly expected to remain confined to domestic spheres, responsible for household activities which are not regarded as economically valuable and meaningful contribution to societal development. This eventually has drastic impact on educational participation of girls and women since their education is neglected since childhood which in turn affects other aspects of their lives. Most often, it is experienced that, the girls remain more in disadvantaged position as compared to boys when the poor parents from marginalized section make choices in regards of their children's education. With emergence of any kind of adverse situation either the girls are withdrawn from school or they are not provided with adequate educational facilities to

* Professor, Department of SNFE, NIEPA, New Delhi.

improve their learning level.¹ This has placed them at the risk of facing further indifference, injustice, poverty and deprivation in future. Thus lack of education, underdevelopment and poverty continue in vicious circle unless appropriate policy interventions are not introduced.

Many studies already have attempted to describe socio- economic conditions like poverty, employment, political participation etc. from gender perspectives. Major focus of these researches is to identify appropriate strategies and mechanisms to promote gender equity that requires advancement of men and women both, removal of obstacles to their active participation in all spheres of public and private life. While in recent years some progress is observed, women in many traditional societies, mostly in developing countries are still commonly excluded from full participation in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. All these have close association with the access of women to educational facilities, the level of education they attain, the type of educational institution they attend and the outcome as well as use of the education that they get from those institutions. Often it is found that, the girls are allowed to attain the education of low quality. In such situation, though apparently, their numerical strength is increased in educational institutions, in reality inequality still remains with its adverse impact on educational situation.² In view of immense impact of socio-economic and political situation on

¹ The disparities between girls' and boys' enrollment rates are often concentrated within vulnerable population groups and can occur within these groups even in countries that do not have gender gaps in overall enrollment. Children from socially or economically disadvantaged groups are more likely to experience gender based disadvantage as well.—
——Gender does not affect participation in a uniform way but depends on local circumstances. Economic and social disadvantage appears to disproportionately affect girls' participation in education. The growth in inequalities in society is, therefore, likely to lead to an increasing gender inequity in education systems.———The three strongest factors placing boys and girls at risk of non-enrollment and non participation in school are poverty, rural living, and minority status. “(Silova and Magno, 2005, 435). Silova and Magno, 2005, “Gender Equity Unmasked: Democracy, Gender and Education in Central / Southeastern Europe and Former Soviet Union” in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 48, No. 4. pp. 417-442.

² Braslavsky has expressed her concern about the methods used to measure gender equity. She states, “The way in which we measure gender equality is crucially important in ensuring that this process of reorientation is effective. Enrolment rates and parity indices tell us how many boys and girls are in school- at best. They do not tell us anything about the ‘(e)quality’ of what they learn. Qualitative indicators are thus essential to measuring the extent to which education actively promotes societal equality, rather than replicating existing differentiation” *Prospects*, 34(1), 2004. p.1.

education of children, it is necessary to relate gender equity in education within societal context. It is largely experienced that, discrimination against girls and women is pervasive across the society. Gender inequity cuts across race, class, caste, income groups, ethnic groups, religious groups and so on.

Education policy in India has special emphasis on promoting equality and equity that has also been one of the Constitutional Commitments. It is widely acknowledged that education is essentially a social good and it is the key to human development. It is the prime responsibility of government to provide education to all citizens irrespective of their sex, class, caste and economic status. Denial of access to education is considered as denial of human rights as education helps everyone to assert their other rights and to lead a meaningful life. While many international forum, government documents and recent researches indicate the impressive growth of schooling provisions and school participation of children, more in-depth analysis is required to assess what is the nature and extent of impact of these developments on improving access to and participation of children in elementary education across the country. While doing so, the paper will deal with some critical questions i.e. are more children irrespective of their caste, class and gender accessing and completing the elementary education cycle and moving to secondary schools? Who are the children being excluded and what factors seem to facilitate them for overcoming their exclusion and addressing their fundamental rights?

The paper is based on the secondary data as well as an empirical study conducted in six different states. The empirical data have been collected through two rounds school surveys. In addition interviews of school administrators, head teachers and teachers have also been taken to collect information related to participation of children in elementary grades in 23 sample schools. Child wise data have been collected from all elementary grades and competency tests were collected for few selected grades. These data have been analysed to answer those questions mentioned above. Apart from empirical data, content analysis of various documents has also been done to examine different policies and schemes that are pertaining to universal access and participation as envisaged by the RTE Act, 2009. Thus, using qualitative as well as quantitative data, this paper attempts to provide an insight into the process of educational exclusion from social, economic and gender perspectives as in India more girls than boys particularly from socially disadvantaged and economically deprived groups face the threat and challenges of exclusion from educational system. The paper will also make an attempt to explore the strategies and actions required to promote an inclusive education system.

It has been noted by many scholars that inequality in education exists in various forms. The children face varied types of inequality and J Coleman (1990, 25) has explained variety of concepts of equality. In his opinion, inequality can be defined in terms of differences of the community's inputs to the school, racial composition of school, various intangible characteristics of the school, consequences of schools for individuals with equal backgrounds and abilities and also those with unequal backgrounds and abilities. He stressed that, "Educational equality is reached only when the results of schooling (achievement and attitudes) are the same for racial and religious minorities as for the dominant group" (p: 25). Moreover, inequality is experienced within school as well as outside school. The following section throws some lights on different researches that have already been conducted in this area of gender equity in education in Indian context which interplay with other social characteristics like caste, class and so on.

Gender and Social Hierarchy in School Education in Indian Context: An Overview of Literature

It is widely known that the root cause of gender inequality in Indian society lies in its patriarchy system which is an oppressive and unjust social system that enforces gender roles putting women in subservient position and disadvantaged situation in the society on one hand and causing continuation of male dominance over women on the other. The education system of this country has also been influenced by this gender biasness prevailing in society. It is therefore, the country is striving for achieving gender equity in and through education which has been a long standing goal of the education policy in India (GoI, NPE, 1986). Indian Constitution has envisaged an egalitarian society and made provisions for protecting the interests of disadvantaged groups including women. Following the spirit of the Constitution, the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and its Plan of Action, 1992 explicitly recognised the positive role of education in reducing gender gap and promoting the rights of disadvantaged groups and minorities.

Many studies have shown that extreme poverty and lack of education are also important reasons for women's low status in our society. Strong preference for son over daughters is a common phenomenon in India leading to discrimination of girls and denial of their rights to access to various facilities and resources within home and outside. Educating girl child is still not seen as a worthwhile investment due to various reasons (Bandyopadhyay, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). Many parents send their girls to government schools to avail free education whereas they are ready to pay for educating boys in private schools and also for private tuition. In a recent study, Govinda and Bandyopadhyay (2011a) have explained how the nexus

of poverty, location, social inequity and gender discrimination significantly influence patterns of exclusion from educational opportunities and for girls it becomes a situation of double or multiple disadvantages (Bandyopadhyay, 2017d). Gender inequality is also reflected in India's poor ranking in various global gender indices. For example, India's ranking is 127 out of 152 countries in the List of UNDP's Gender Inequality Index- 2014 and according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index- 2014 our country ranks at 114 in the list of 142 countries of the world. Despite substantial progress as mentioned in several government reports and research studies, bridging the gender gap in educational access and participation has always been a challenging task for Indian education system as the gender gap continues to be substantial even after 70 years of independence. While 35 percent of women still remain illiterate as per the recent census, 2011, a large number of girls particularly from different disadvantaged groups still remain out of school (Bandyopadhyay, 2017d).

The Indian Constitution guarantees equality and social justice in all walks of life including education. Universalisation of elementary education (UEE) has been a constitutional commitment and since independence, it has always been part of Five Year Plans including ongoing 12th Plan. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986), with its Programme of Action (1992) have also strong focus on UEE as well as promotion of gender and social equity in education. Based on recommendations of NPE 1986 and its POA, 1992, various Centrally Sponsored Schemes were initiated to promote primary education. Government of India has already implemented implementing countrywide programme for UEE- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which has currently merged into Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to provide education from early childhood to higher secondary education. Meanwhile, the Right to Education Act, 2009 has made education up to the grade VIII as fundamental right for children of 6-14 years age-group from the year of 2010 by enforcing 86th Amendment of the Indian Constitution which has boosted the ongoing efforts for achieving UEE.

The demand for elementary education and schooling has considerably increased with an increase in female literacy, which was much lower in earlier decades, leading to an upsurge in enrolment of boys as well as girls (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2011a). To address this demand, government is not only providing schools and teachers but also extending incentives that can help poor children particularly girls to continue their education. These include free textbooks, scholarships for girls, back-to-school camps and bridging courses as per the need of specific area, community or situation faced by hardest to reach groups. Special

schemes like mid day meal, residential schools of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya etc have also been provided. Special attention has also been paid to open schools in un-served habitations where distance from schools prevented children's access to and participation in school. In addition, multiple strategies have also helped improve the accessibility and participation of girls in schooling at primary and secondary levels. For example maa beti mela, Meena manch, recruitment of female teachers, national programmes to increase demand for schooling among rural and disadvantaged girls have increased possibilities for girls to attend schools. It is expected that, these efforts may put an end to the vicious circle of illiteracy of parents and non-enrolment of children and the intergenerational transmission of illiteracy and poverty (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2011a) which is essential for reaping demographic dividend as mentioned before.

Present Status of Schooling

It has been already mentioned that, though, education is a basic right for all boys and girls, yet customs and social norms which consider women and girls as subordinate and inferior to men often interplay with poverty, caste, location, ethnicity, age etc. to influence access and attendance of learners in educational institution. It has been experienced that problem of gender disparity and discrimination begins with access to schooling. Many studies have indicated that despite substantial progress as mentioned in several government reports and research studies in recent years, bridging the gender and social gap in educational access and participation has always been a challenging task for the country as the gender gap continues to be substantial even after 70 years of independence. While 35 percent of women still remain illiterate as per the recent census, 2011, a large number of girls particularly from different disadvantaged groups still remain out of school (Bandyopadhyay, 2017d) as mentioned by different reports. While, the literacy rate of female is 63.46, it is 82.14 for males according to Census 2011. There are also large state wise variations with female literacy rates highest in Kerala at 91.98 and lowest in Rajasthan at 52.66.

So, achieving gender parity and equality in accessing education is an important national objective. The gender disparities increase gradually with increase of level of education. Literacy and elementary education are interrelated to each other and both have considerable impact on national development. Achieving gender parity in literacy rate is quite crucial for promoting gender equity in school education as it not only increases demand for education but also generates awareness about value of education for girls. It is noticeable that, along with a steady improvement

in literacy rate, India has also experienced substantial improvement in schooling of children.

As per the recent data, the number of total schools has grown rapidly from 1535610 to 1551000 at the school level (primary to higher secondary education) during 2016 to 2018 though, in recent years, a decline has been found in total number of schools i.e. 1507708 in 2019-20. However, number of teachers and enrolment has increased since 2016-17 at the national level. As per UDISE+ 2019-20, altogether, 9687577 teachers were found engaged in different types of schools across the country imparting education to total 250971683 students. As per 75th NSSO data (GoI, 2019), 11 percent males and 16.6 percent females had not stepped into the country's education system at all, while another 42.1 percent were found to have been enrolled at some time but currently not attending any educational institutions. In rural areas, the percentages of never enrolled in age group 3-35 years were approximately double (15.7 percent) than that of their urban counterparts (8.3 percent). However, the percentage of persons in the same age-group who are currently attending schools is 43.9 percent with 41.2 percent females and 46.2 percent males and majority of them are found enrolled in primary schools (38.1 percent) followed by upper primary schools (20.6 percent). It is interesting to find out that in rural areas though, very slight but, the proportion of girls currently attending in such primary and upper primary schools is higher than boys. Educational attainment at the household level increased substantially between 2015-16 and 2017-18. According to another household level survey, NFHS 4, the percentage of females and males with no schooling decreased from 42 percent of females and 22 percent of males to 31 percent of females and 15 percent of males" (NFHS-4, GOI, 2017, 19). This suggests that the improvement in educational level is attributed to expansion of schooling facilities during last two decades and increasing years of schooling of people particularly of mothers have created demand for primary education of all children and it has been more influential on girls' education. It is noteworthy that, despite above improvement in enrolment and lowering down the proportion of out of school children, the participation of girls has continuously been lower than boys at every level of school education and it has also shown gradual declining trend from lower to higher level (Table 1).

Table 1: Gender Wise Enrolment at Different School Levels

	2019-20			2018-19			2017-18		
	Girls	Boys	Total (n=100)	Girls	Boys	Total (n=100)	Girls	Boys	Total (n=100)
Primary Level	48.02	51.98	121686703	48.01	51.99	120230170	48.04	51.96	122378400
Upper Primary Level	48.47	51.53	64873387	48.40	51.60	64267026	48.47	51.53	65448222
Elementary Level	48.47	51.53	64873387	48.40	51.60	64267026	48.47	51.53	65448222
Secondary Level	47.82	52.18	38464433	47.81	52.19	38334571	47.58	52.42	38480023
Higher Secondary Level	48.62	51.38	25947160	48.32	51.68	25506817	47.77	52.23	24682548
Total	48.17	51.83	250971683	48.11	51.89	248338584	48.06	51.94	250989193

Source: UDISE+: 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is one of the important indicators to measure to what extent girls are being able to take opportunity of expansion of schooling facilities. It measures the relative participation of male and female students in education at different levels. As shown in the figure below, along with enrolment, the GPI at the upper primary level has shown gradual improvement over the years but the GER at the primary level has increased initially but declined marginally after remaining stagnant for a few years. GPIs have also been calculated as the ratios of Gross Attendance Ratios and Net Attendance Ratios as per the data available in NSSO. As per NSSO report 71, GPI based on GAR is marginally less than 1 mostly in rural areas, pointing towards relatively less female participation. The recent most National and Family Health Survey (4th Round) (GoI, 2017) has also shown that although, gender gap has reduced in case of education of 6-10 years old, this gap is still quite significant for children who are 11-14 years old. NFHS- 4 (2017,19) has also informed that, “Overall, 69 percent of females and 85 percent of males age six and over have ever attended school” which means 31 percent of females and 15 percent of males have never attended school. As revealed in Table 2, out of total enrolment, majority of students are from OBC category followed by general category students in both levels of elementary education and the proportion of SC and ST declines slightly at the upper primary levels. There is a considerable gender gap persisting among all social categories including general category. The situation is much better in case of children from

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Muslim minority background who accounts for around 15 percent to total enrolment (Table 3) at the elementary level. It is heartening to see that the girls have outnumbered boys at the upper primary level.

Table 2: Percentage of Enrolment Category wise All India (2019-20)

Social Category	Primary (I-V)				Upper Primary (IV-VIII)			
	Girls	Boys	Total	Percent to Total (All Enrolment)	Girls	Boys	Total	Percent to Total (All Enrolment)
General	47.10	52.90	31007247	25.48	47.63	52.37	16903244	26.06
OBC	48.23	51.77	54295867	44.62	48.77	51.23	29258709	45.10
SC	48.50	51.50	23581709	19.38	48.78	51.22	12160911	18.75
ST	48.49	51.51	12801880	10.52	48.76	51.24	6550523	10.10
All	48.02	51.98	121686703		48.47	51.53	64873387	

Source: UDISE+: 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Table 3: Percentage of Muslim Minority by stage of School Education in 2019-20

Muslim Minority	Girls	Boys	Total (n=100)	Percent to Total Enrolment	Total Enrolment
Primary Level (I-V)	48.87	51.13	18721016	15.38	121686703
Upper Primary Level (VI-VIII)	50.83	49.17	8995675	13.87	64873387
Elementary Level (VI-VIII)	49.50	50.50	27716691	14.86	186560090

Source: UDISE+: 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

It has already been discussed that more girls than boys attend government schools whereas more boys than girls attend private unaided schools. According to the UDISE, there has been a slight increase in number of government as well as private unaided schools at the elementary level from 2018-19 to 2019-20. While, the numbers of government elementary schools were found 1006374 during 2019-20, the numbers of private unaided elementary schools were 310348 at the same period of time. However, the number of government aided schools has declined from during the same period of time. Although, the overall number of government schools are high as compared to private unaided schools, but, the fact remain same that more boys are attending private schools than girls. While, 51.1 percent girls were found in government elementary schools during 2019-20, their proportion

was around 44 percent in private unaided schools. The trend is just opposite in case of boys' enrolment which was found 56.4 percent in private unaided schools and less than 50 percent in government schools. Even, the boys' enrolment was also found high in government aided schools just like private unaided schools. It is needless to say that, many of these private unaided schools charge high fees and most parents prefer to send their sons rather than daughters lowering their proportion in such schools.

Table 4: Gross and Net Attendance Rate at Different School Levels (3 to 35 years)

Levels of Education	Gross Attendance Rate			Net Attendance Rate		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary level	101.9	100.4	101.2	86.8	85.1	86.1
Upper primary/ middle level	94.7	94.1	94.4	72.5	71.8	72.2
Primary and upper primary/middle level	99.3	98.0	94.4	89.9	87.9	89.0
Secondary level	87.4	85.1	86.4	57.9	57.3	57.6
Higher secondary level	70.3	65.9	68.3	43.9	42.7	43.4

Source: NSSO 75th Round, 2019

As, it has been mentioned earlier, poverty has serious consequences on educational attainment, the variation can be found in current attendance and enrolment status of persons across the quintile class of UMPCE, separately for rural and urban areas. The proportion of currently not attending population in the age group of 5-29 year is higher in case of bottom quintile class than the highest one both in rural and urban areas. While in rural areas the percentage of such people is 45.5 percent for bottom quintile class for urban areas it increased to 48 percent. This proportion declines to 38 percent for top quintile class both in urban as well as in rural areas. The situation of class and gender wise attendance becomes more prominent in terms of GAR and NAR for each quintile class of UMPCE. It is clearly visible that there has been considerable gender gap between rural and urban areas. While, the GAR at the primary stage for rural and urban males both is 102 and 91 at the upper primary level in rural areas 93 in urban areas. Similar declining trend is noticed in case of GAR of females in rural and urban areas as well. The declining trend is also visible from higher to bottom quintile level particularly in case of upper primary levels. In case of rural females, the GAR at the primary level is

declining from 106 in case of top quintile class to 96 in case of bottom quintile class, in case of upper primary levels the GAR declines from 88 to 79 only. In spite of improvements in enrolment rates as discussed above, fewer girls remain in school and complete their schooling across the country. Many of them learn inadequately leading to their dropout as well. The following section will throw some lights on these aspects.

According to Table 4, the GAR at primary level is 101.2, while it is 94.4 at upper primary level. However, attendance rate is found slightly lower among girls than boys at both levels. Similar trend in gender-wise attendance rate is found at secondary and higher secondary level. NER is quite low in comparison to GAR at all levels. While, it is around 86.1 at primary and 72.2 at upper primary level, at secondary and higher secondary levels, it is found only 57.6 and 43.4 only.

Gender Gap in Learning, Dropout and Transition

In addition to children who never-enrol or drop out, there are also children who continue to study in school, but remain at the risk of dropping out because of learning level. Some of these children lose interest in education as they can't cope with their inability to learn adequately. It is because of this, in addition to access and attendance, as per the direction of NPE, 1986, it is also important to see whether children are adequately learning or not and whether, they are transiting to the next level.

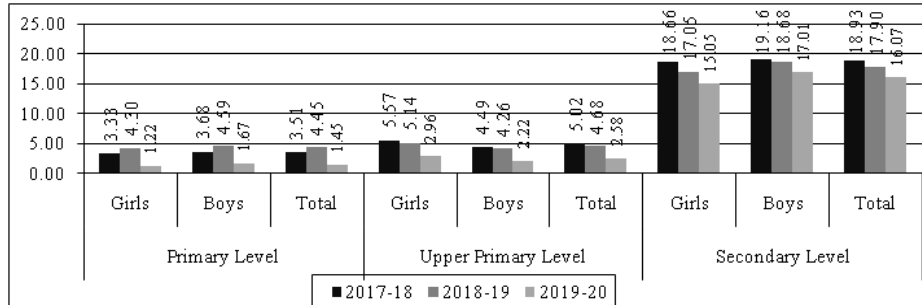
Learning Status

It is to be noted that girls have shown better learning outcome than their male counterpart. According to the U-DISE data, while, more than 98 percent boys and girls could pass grade V and Grade VIII in 2015-16, only 62 percent boys and 63 percent girls could pass grade V with more than 60 percent marks. This proportion declined to 56 percent and 57 percent respectively in case of grade VIII students.

Dropout Rate

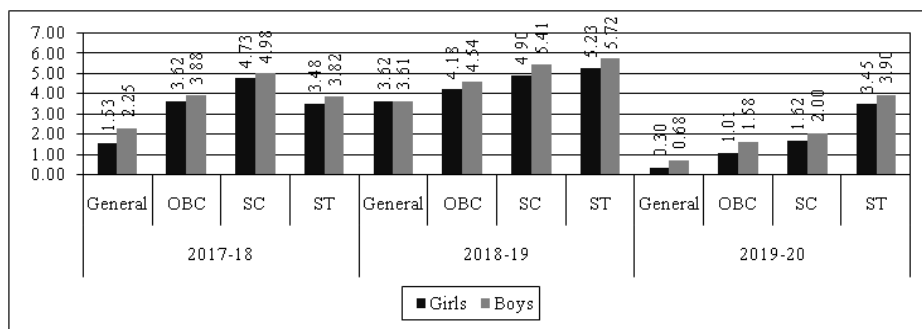
Apart from learning outcome, one of the major indicators of assessing gender inequality in education is to see whether girls and boys are equally being able to continue their schooling or not. The recent DISE data shows that the annual average dropout rate of girls (Figure 1) has been higher than boys at the upper primary level and it is also to be noted that dropout rates for boys and girls both have declined substantially during last three years at the secondary level.

Figure 1: Gender Wise Annual Average Dropout Rate



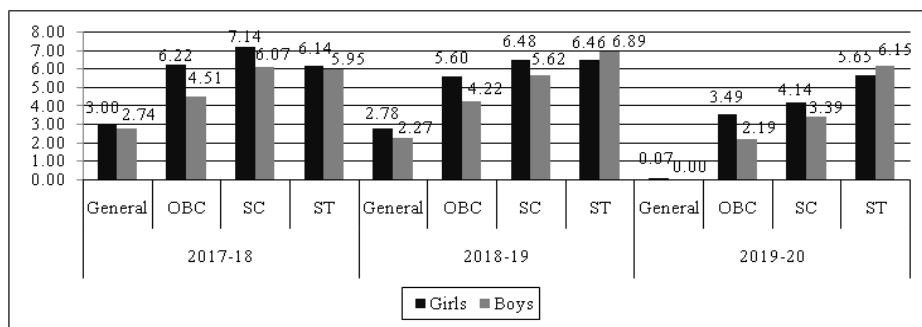
Source: UDISE+: 2017-18 – 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Figure 2 (a): Caste and Gender Wise Dropout Rate (Primary Level)



Source: UDISE+: 2017-18 – 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Figure 2 (b): Caste and Gender Wise Dropout Rate (Upper Primary Level)



Source: UDISE+: 2017-18 – 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Table 5: Annual Dropout Rate by Social Category and Gender wise

Year	Social Category	Primary Level			Upper Primary Level			Secondary Level		
		Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
2018-19	General	3.62	3.61	3.61	2.78	2.27	2.51	13.03	13.37	13.21
	OBC	4.18	4.54	4.37	5.60	4.22	4.89	17.38	19.26	18.38
	SC	4.90	5.41	5.16	6.48	5.62	6.04	18.97	21.32	20.20
	ST	5.23	5.72	5.48	6.46	6.89	6.69	23.38	26.40	24.93
	Total	4.30	4.59	4.45	5.14	4.26	4.68	17.05	18.68	17.90
2019-20	General	0.30	0.68	0.50	0.07	0.00	0.00	10.25	11.58	10.94
	OBC	1.01	1.58	1.30	3.49	2.19	2.82	15.43	17.46	16.49
	SC	1.62	2.00	1.82	4.14	3.39	3.75	17.39	19.81	18.64
	ST	3.45	3.90	3.69	5.65	6.15	5.90	22.49	25.51	24.03
	Total	1.22	1.67	1.45	2.96	2.22	2.58	15.05	17.01	16.07

Source: UDISE+: 2018-19 & 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Transition Rate

Another major problem has been non-completion of education of many students despite completion of elementary level but non-transition from elementary to higher level. More girls than boys are denied the opportunity of continuing their education beyond elementary level due to various reasons. It has been found that the transition rate has increased for both girls as well as for boys from different social categories in two last years at all levels (Table 6 & 7). It is also to be noted that, the transition rate for both gender increased equally at primary upper primary level and secondary to hr. secondary level. However, in case of upper primary to secondary level, the transition rate was higher among boys than girls. Overall, the transition rate was found quite high at primary upper primary level and upper primary to secondary level i.e. around 92 per cent, while, it was around 72 per cent at secondary to hr. secondary level (Table 6). Similar trend was found in transition rate by social category however, it is high among children from general category at all levels of education.

Table 6: Transition Rate by Gender

Year	Gender	Primary to Upper Primary Level	Upper Primary to Secondary Level	Secondary to Hr. Secondary Level
2018-19	Boys	89.00	88.80	66.90
	Girls	90.40	88.10	68.80
	Total	89.70	88.40	67.80
2019-20	Boys	92.52	92.86	70.20
	Girls	93.09	89.92	73.09
	Total	92.80	91.40	71.60

Source: UDISE+: 2018-19 & 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Table 7: Transition Rate by Gender and Social Category Wise

		Primary to Upper Primary			Elementary To Secondary			Secondary to Higher Secondary		
		Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
2018-19	General	94.35	93.91	94.12	93.88	95.45	94.70	79.17	78.23	78.67
	SC	89.10	88.02	88.54	85.74	88.37	87.08	66.33	63.01	64.60
	ST	91.20	90.37	90.77	87.41	87.62	87.52	63.38	62.05	62.70
	OBC	89.60	89.12	89.35	86.71	90.91	88.86	67.81	64.10	65.85
2019-20	General	96.53	95.89	96.19	95.34	96.69	96.04	81.86	79.92	80.84
	SC	91.02	90.28	90.64	87.47	90.30	88.92	69.76	66.55	68.11
	ST	92.77	92.02	92.38	87.42	87.55	87.49	63.60	61.97	62.78
	OBC	92.18	91.67	91.92	88.41	92.84	90.69	71.12	67.45	69.20

Source: UDISE+: 2018-19 & 2019-20, Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE

Gender Equity in School Participation: Findings of Empirical Study

The concept of school participation of children not only depends on their access to schools but also includes several other aspects i.e. their enrolment, attendance, retention, grade Progression, learning Outcome and completion of Education and Transition to next level of school education. The present status of school participation has already been discussed in the previous section pointing out the existing gender gaps in these different aspects. In addition, many of the earlier researches have already revealed that the gender and social background play an important role in

schooling of children and also in the process of exclusion from educational system. Referring the empirical data from Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, Bandyopadhyay (2018, 164) has mentioned that the ‘the socially disadvantaged children particularly girls remain educationally disadvantaged as compared to other children in advanced areas as well. For achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education and also for overcoming all kinds of exclusion in school education, these children need immediate attention of policy-makers and service providers at the local as well as higher levels.’ This section will be dealing with all these aspects with help of evidences and data collected from 23 schools from six states under study (Bandyopadhyay, 2019). These States are Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Odisha, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. These schools have been selected for this study using the technique of purposive sampling. Many schools were found devoid of essential facilities and in some schools are found with facilities though were not in usable condition. It is because of this. Unequal schooling facilities have been observed across the study area.

Sample Schools

GPS, Taradevi were selected from Kasumpti Block and GMS Mayfield was selected from Shimla-4 block of Shimla District while GPS Moginand-1 was selected from Surla block of Sirmour District of Himachal Pradesh. Four schools were selected from Bawani Khera block of Bhiwani District of Haryana. These are- GPS, Alakhpura, GSSS, Alakhpura, and GPS, Uditpadapur and GPS, Kungar Kheri. In Karnataka, GHPS, Chattobanahalli was selected from Davangere and UGHPS, Mitlakatte was selected from Harihara block of Davangere district while GHPS, Hosabijjanabellu and GHPS, Shidlekona were selected from Sira block of Tumkur district. In Mizoram, GPS, Bawngkawn-II and GMS, Bawngkawn-II were selected from Bawngkawn block and Chhinlung Academy was selected from Chanmari block of Aizawl district and GPS, Roseland and GMS, Roseland were selected from Champhai block of Mizoram. In Madhya Pradesh, from district Betul four focus schools were selected. GPS, Shantipur-2, GMS Shantipur-2 and GMS, Khadara were selected from Ghoradongri block. GPS, Kharimal was selected from Amla block. In Odisha, Belagachhia UPS and Naranapur Centre UPS were selected from Baranga block while Jamudihi Proj. UPS was selected from Dompara block of Cuttack District.

For this section of this paper, the data have been collected for each student who was in the school rosters in 2016 and 2018. Information sought from class-teacher about students’ details in relation to absenteeism, learning level, performance, transition, pre-school education, difficulties in school access, subjects etc.

Status of Student Participation in Sample Area

It is understandable that the children's participation depends on the kind of school they access to as it has been argued that the proportion of boys is much higher in private unaided fee paying schools where as the government schools are equally attended by girls as well as boys. The gender disparity can be noticed comparing different government schools as it has been found despite higher number of girls, many schools are not equipped with the gender friendly environment as raised by many researchers as mentioned earlier. while, in Shimla of Himachal Pradesh majority of schools were found with smaller size but the school in Sirmour district was found with bigger size of enrolment. It may be because the habitations in mountainous area of Shimla are much smaller in size than the habitations which are located in plain area of the same state. From the following Table 8 it is noticeable that during 1st round survey (baseline) in 2016 there were 2791 students in 23 Government schools selected for study. The number of students increased very marginally in these schools during the 2nd round survey in 2018 (Endline) but this increase was very uneven across the states for example: while the total enrolment has shown abrupt decline in Himachal Pradesh and Haryana from baseline to end line, the Mizoram has shown steady increase in enrolment. Other states like Odisha and Madhya Pradesh have shown marginal increase in enrolment but Karnataka has experienced marginal decline in total enrolment during the same period of time.

Table 8: Total Enrolment in Sample Schools

States	Baseline (2016)	percent	End line (2018)	percent	Difference
Himachal Pradesh	326	11.68	280	10.04	-46
Haryana	453	16.23	425	15.23	-28
Karnataka	365	13.08	361	12.94	-4
Mizoram	882	31.60	951	34.09	69
Madhya Pradesh	433	15.51	439	15.73	6
Odisha	332	11.90	334	11.97	2
All States	2791		2790		-1

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Girls' Participation in Schools

The discussion on learner's profile remains incomplete without looking into the aspect of proportion of girls in schools. The overall national level data indicate that there are several girls in rural areas could not attend their schools because it is too

far away as the NFHS Report has mentioned. The proportion of such girls is 9.2 percent which is much higher than boys (2.9 percent). In addition, around 8 percent girls mentioned marriage as the main reason as discontinuing their education. There are several other reasons, lack of safety, absence of female teachers, lower parental preference, because of less value attached to girls' education, or some other reasons which make girls in more difficult situation than boys. In view of this, in the recent article Bandyopadhyay, M. (2018, 446) has stated that "the deeper insight into the present situation through different data sources and studies reveals that despite substantial expansion of educational facilities, never enrolment, low attendance, dropout and low learning levels of children are still continuing that pose severe challenge for Government for achieving goals of UEE and as well as MDGs. It has been observed that, differentiation in educational facilities has perpetuated inequality to such extent that instead of bridging gender and social gaps it is widening these gaps rapidly. It has been found although, girls are increasingly gaining physical access to schools particularly to those run by Government, but they become educationally disadvantaged due to various school as well as family related reasons, leading to their serious learning deficit and dropout. It is needless to say that the girls from the socially disadvantaged groups suffer most.' As per the data, on the whole the proportion of girls is little less than boys. However, there are some variations at the state level for example while in the sample schools of Haryana, the proportion of girls has increased from 50.33 to 52.24 percent during 1st and 2nd round survey the proportion of girls is quite low in the schools of Himachal Pradesh (Table 9). The same situation is prevailing in Karnataka. The situation is quite satisfactory in the schools of Odisha where proportion of girls is almost equal to boys in the schools selected for study.

Table 9: Proportion of Girls in Schools

States	Baseline Total Enrolment	Percent Girls	End line Total Enrolment	Percent Girls
Himachal Pradesh	326	45.40	280	46.79
Haryana	453	50.33	425	52.24
Karnataka	365	47.67	361	46.81
Mizoram	882	50.79	951	52.26
Madhya Pradesh	433	49.88	439	45.10
Odisha	332	50.00	334	49.40
All States	2791	49.44	2790	49.53

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

The grade wise distribution of the girls' students in **Himachal Pradesh** shows that majority of the proportion of girls is much lower as compared to boys in case of grade II (42.55), IV (35.19), VI (36.84), VII (40), VIII (34.78) in baseline. Their proportion did not even reach 40 percent in some of these grades such as IV, VI and VIII causing high gender disparity in different grades. The same situation is persisting during end line survey when except grades III and IV the proportion of girls has been considerably lower than their male counterparts in all other grades. The number of enrolment has also declined during the end line survey in all the grades of focus schools under study along with proportion of girls. Similar kind of gender disparity could be found in different grades in **Haryana**. While during the baseline survey, the proportion of girls was much lower in grades III (47.27), IV (48.39) and V (45.45), their proportion was found less than 50 percent in grade II (45.16), VII (48.33) and VIII (47.83) during end line survey. It was found only 45 percent in grade II. The sample schools during baseline survey had lower proportion of girls in grade I (36.36), II (47.50), IV (28.95), VI (47.50) and VIII (47.06), their proportion was found less than 50 percent except grade III, V and VII. Their proportion was also found less than 50 percent in all grades except V and VIII during the end line survey in these schools. The situation is quite different in sample schools in **Mizoram**. It is heartening to see that, the proportion of girls was much higher than 50 percent in all other grades except grades I (41.94), III (48.18) and V (44) in these schools during baseline. The situation improved more during end line when their proportion was less than 50 percent only in grade I (47.47) and II (43.10). This has resulted in the overall increase in girls' proportion in these schools as observed in end line.

The situation is not an exception in **Madhya Pradesh** as far as gender disparity in grade wise enrolment is concerned. Although, the overall proportion of girls was almost equal to boys, but they accounted for only around 35-36 percent in grades II and IV. It was also quite low in grade III and VI but it was substantially high in grade VII (60.4). During end line survey the overall proportion of girls declined considerably in these schools and it was recorded only 45 percent to total enrolment. Their proportion was much lower than boys in all grades except grade I and it was only 33 percent in grade IV. In **Odisha**, the overall proportion of girls was quite satisfactory at the time of baseline survey but it was not that good if we look at the grade wise percentage distribution of girls because their proportion was abysmally low in grade III which was only 30 percent of total enrolment. It was also very low in grade I (42), III (47), VI (48) and VII (47). But their proportion was very high in grade II (63) and VIII (67) which was above 60 percent and even in grade V with 56 percent girls in total enrolment. The proportions of girls have substantially declined in some of these grades during end line survey.

School Wise Girls' Enrolment

If we look at the school wise data it is found that many schools have lower proportion of girls than boys. For example, in **Himachal Pradesh**, GMS Mayfield

which is a sample school had only 37 percent girls to total students during 1st round survey and their proportion has slightly declined at the time of 2nd round survey. The proportion of girls (44 percent) was also low in GPS Taradevi but it increased to 50 percent during 2nd round survey though the total number of children in these schools declined marginally. In Haryana except GPS Uditpadhapur girls accounted for more than 50 percent to total enrolment in all other schools, i.e Kungar Kheri and Alakhpura and their proportion continued to be more than 50 percent during second survey too. In **Karnataka** out of total four sample schools two had very low proportion of girls. These are GHPS Chattobanhalli (43.4) and GHPS Mitlakatte (42.03). In other two schools proportions of girls were more than 50 percent. The proportion of Girls also was varying across the schools in **Mizoram**. Their proportion was more than 50 percent in some of the sample schools like GMS Bawngkawn (54.10), Chhinglung Academy (51.75), GPS Roseland (54.86) but in two other schools their proportion was less than 50 percent. These are GMS Roseland (47.70) and GPS Bawngkawn (41.67). Similar kind of variation has been found in proportion of girls in the schools of **Madhya Pradesh**. While during 1st round survey two sample schools of GMS Khadara and GPS Shantipur had very low proportion of girls, but GMS Kharimal and GMS Shantipur had higher proportion of girls than boys. It is also surprising to see that the three sample schools such as GMS Kharimal, GMS Shantipur and GPS Shantipur have witnessed sudden drop in the proportion of girls at the time of the 2nd survey in 2018. On contrary to it the GMS Khadara which has experienced slightly lower enrolment in 2018, it has registered considerable increase in girl's proportion. In **Odisha**, it has been found that except Naranapur UPS, all other schools had much higher proportion of girls as compared to boys during 1st round survey. However during 2nd round survey the girls' proportion declined in two schools, these are: Jamudihi UPS and Naranapur UPS but Belagachhia UPS has shown little increase in girls' proportion during 2nd survey.

From above analysis, it has been found that although, overall representation of girls in the selected states seems to be almost equal to boys, but their distribution among selected schools indicates persistence of gender disparity. Though some schools experienced increase in total enrolment but the proportion of girls did not increase always.

Social Background

It is widely acknowledged that the socio-economic background of children has a considerable impact on their schooling. Many researchers have indicated this association between schooling and socio-economic background of learners. In a recent document by Haque and Reddy (2019), it has been mentioned that 'there has been a sharp increase in inequality of both income and wealth in recent year, particularly after the advent of policies of liberalization and globalization from approximately the mid- 1980s.' The authors have also mentioned that this 'inequality

has had a huge negative impact on the economic growth and social and political stability' in many countries including India. A chapter by Govinda and Bandyopadhyay (2019), in this above document has also examined this 'rising inequality' with reference to school education and found that 'disparities have not reduced to acceptable levels. The most subordinated and poorest ethnic groups still experience gross forms of educational deprivation.' With this backdrop, an effort has been made to find out the socio-economic background of the children enrolled in the schools. It has been found that being government schools, most of these schools selected for study are providing education to the children from socially disadvantaged groups such as ST, SC, Muslim minority and other backward groups (Table 10).

Table 10: Social Category wise Distribution of Enrolment during both Surveys

States		ST	SC	Minority	OBC	General	Total (N=100)
Himachal Pradesh	Baseline	0.31	34.05	9.20	4.91	51.53	326
	End line	0.36	26.79	14.29	1.79	56.79	280
Haryana	Baseline	0.22	47.90	0.00	31.57	20.31	453
	End line	0.24	52.24	0.71	29.41	17.41	425
Karnataka	Baseline	21.10	30.14	3.29	38.90	6.58	365
	End line	22.44	39.34	0.00	35.73	2.49	361
Mizoram	Baseline	98.87	0.45	0.00	0.34	0.34	882
	End line	98.63	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	951
Madhya Pradesh	Baseline	46.88	3.70	0.00	12.70	36.72	433
	End line	46.47	6.61	0.00	11.62	35.31	439
Odisha	Baseline	11.14	24.70	0.60	41.27	22.29	332
	End line	14.37	29.64	0.00	38.32	17.66	334
All Visited States	Baseline	42.67	19.35	1.58	17.77	18.63	2791
	End line	45.63	20.79	1.54	15.70	16.34	2790

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Altogether, around 19 percent children are from the general category. It has been found that except Himachal Pradesh with around 51 percent students from general category, other states have much less percentage of such children in the schools under study. However, the proportion of such children is around 37 percent in Madhya Pradesh. In case of SC category students, it has been found that their proportion is quite high in case of Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka while their proportion has been very low in other states. Mizoram has shown highest proportion of ST children in its schools as the state is pre-dominated by tribal population. Similarly, the schools in Madhya Pradesh also has high share of ST children as compared to other states. The proportion of ST children also is substantial in selected schools of Karnataka and Odisha. The proportion from Muslim minority is not that

Caste, Class and Gender in Educational Access and School Participation

high in the selected schools in most of these states except Himachal Pradesh. The proportion of OBC students has been considerably high in the schools of Karnataka, Odisha and Haryana, while, their proportion is very low in Himachal Pradesh where majority of children are from general and SC category. Thus, it is important to know that the composition of students in government school of all the states was quite diverse and they need multipronged strategy for effective education.

While, most of the children in selected schools, as mentioned above were found from socially disadvantaged groups, the data also show that most of these children are typically from poorer economic background. It is also noteworthy that majority of children under BPL category belong to scheduled tribes followed by scheduled caste children. Although, there are 520 or around 19 percent general category students, they account for only 5.5 percent to total children under BPL category and 26.39 percent among the children belonging to affluent families. If the gender-wise composition of poor as well as socially deprived groups is considered, it is found that, the poorest and poor girls and boys both are mostly in these government schools. In fact, the proportion of boys is much higher than girls among BPL categories indicating poor and socially disadvantaged parents generally prefer to send their children both boys and girls to government schools. However, with the increase in income category and caste hierarchy, the proportion of boys reduced than girls. This trend is quite visible in case of OBCs and general categories. While, altogether, the proportion of OBC girls with richer background was 8.56 percent in these schools, for boys it was 6.69 percent. Similar trend is also noticeable in case of SCs and general category students. Table 11 provides the composition of students in schools selected for this study.

Table 11: Caste, Class and Gender wise Composition of Students in Sample Schools

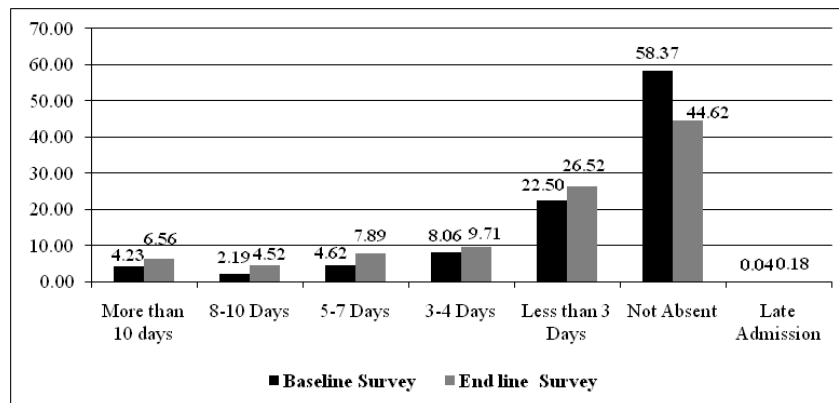
		BPL			Poor Eco. Condition but not BPL			Average Eco. Condition			Good Eco. Condition			Total (N=100)		
		F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T
ST	Baseline	52.14	54.2	53.15	32.07	32.76	32.41	11.84	9.26	10.58	3.95	3.77	3.86	608	583	1191
	End line	48.61	50.08	49.33	10.68	10.37	10.53	37	35.57	36.29	3.72	3.99	3.85	646	627	1273
SC	Baseline	42.63	55.71	49.63	41.83	36.33	38.89	10.76	5.54	7.96	4.78	2.42	3.52	251	289	540
	End line	37.74	43.49	40.86	33.96	36.51	35.34	26.04	18.41	21.9	2.26	1.59	1.9	265	315	580
Minority	Baseline	6.25	7.14	6.82	75	67.86	70.45	18.75	14.29	15.91	0	10.71	6.82	16	28	44
	End line	10.53	0	4.65	26.32	37.5	32.56	63.16	58.33	60.47	0	4.17	2.33	19	24	43
OBC	Baseline	38.91	47.28	42.94	34.24	28.45	31.45	18.29	17.57	17.94	8.56	6.69	7.66	257	239	496
	End line	39.47	42.86	41.1	29.82	27.14	28.54	27.63	25.71	26.71	3.07	4.29	3.65	228	210	438
General	Baseline	9.27	15.44	12.5	44.76	47.79	46.35	36.69	31.25	33.85	9.27	5.51	7.31	248	272	520
	End line	14.73	12.07	13.38	22.77	21.55	22.15	59.38	64.66	62.06	3.13	1.72	2.41	224	232	456
Total	Baseline	39.71	44.93	42.35	37.03	36.36	36.69	17.39	14.25	15.8	5.87	4.46	5.16	1380	1411	2791
	End line	39	40.41	39.71	20.48	21.02	20.75	37.34	35.44	36.38	3.18	3.13	3.15	1382	1408	2790

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Status of Attendance and Absenteeism among Children

Absenteeism is the major factor which affects the participation and learning outcomes of children. In the present study, data on absenteeism was also collected from states for different period of time to identify the children who are in vulnerable situation because of their poor participation in school. An attempt has been made to analyse the status of attendance and absenteeism in the previous month of school visit.’ It is heartening to see that majority of children (58.4 percent) attended their schools regularly in the ‘previous month of the visit’. Also, quite a substantial number of children reported that they remained absent only for 3 days or less in schools. If we compare this situation with end line survey, we find that, though, the proportion of children who never remained absent in the previous month has declined considerably from 58.4 percent in baseline to 44.6 percent in end line survey but, there has been marginal increase in proportion of children who remained absent only for 1-3 days at the same time. It is also to be noted that, while 6.42 percent children remained absent for more than 8 days at the time of baseline survey, their proportion increased to more than 10 percent at the time of end line survey.

Figures 3: Status of Absenteeism during Baseline and End line Survey (Previous Month of Visit)



Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

So, it is also a matter of concern that this long absenteeism has shown considerable increase in the sample schools over two years. This indicates that long absenteeism of some children is a common problem in all the government schools across the

country and this has a serious impact on teaching learning process as well as learning outcomes of individual children.

The gender wise attendance status during ‘previous month’ of data collection indicates that around 59.7 percent of girls against 57.05 percent boys could attend their schools all the days in previous month of data collection during baseline survey. However, this proportion of regular attendees declined during the end line survey for both girls and boys but even then, more girls (47.54 percent) than boys (41.76 percent) reportedly attended regularly. The proportion of girls (4.49 percent) who remained absent for more than 10 days was slightly higher than boys (3.97 percent) during the baseline survey but it is just reverse during the end line survey when more boys (7.6 percent) than girls (5.5 percent) remained absent for such a long time. If we look at the data of children who remained absent for 8-10 days, the trend is quite similar as those who remained absent for more than 10 days. However, the proportion of boys as well as girls increased slightly from baseline to end line survey in sample schools. It is a matter of concern that in previous month a large number of children remained absent for 5-7 days which might have impacted considerably on their learning. It is to note that around 3.7 percent girls and 5.5 percent boys remained absent for 5-7 days during baseline survey which increased during end line survey. While, 6.4 percent girls remained absent for 5-7 days, the proportion of boys became as high as 9.4 percent during this end line survey. Thus, if we look at the situation of absenteeism of more than 5 days during a whole month, we find that altogether 16 percent girls and 22 percent boys remained absent for more than 5 days in the previous month of data collection during the end line survey.

The interplay between caste, class and gender also can be seen in attendance of children in school. It is noteworthy that majority of children in our sample were Scheduled Tribes. The numbers of such girls were 608 and boys were 583. More than 50 percent of these children are from BPL category while around 30 percent are from poor household but don’t hold BPL card. While more ST boys than girls under BPL category remained absent for more than 7 days, the proportion of girls was more in case of poor but do not hold BPL card. It is to be noted that as compared to girls higher proportion of boys in each social category attended their schools regularly without being absent for a single day in the previous month of data collection.

Table 12: Status of absenteeism (in Percentage) of Previous Month of the School Visit

Social Category	Baseline/End line	Eco. Category	Female				Male				Total			
			More Than 7 days	1-7 Days	Not Absent	Total	More Than 7 days	1-7 Days	Not Absent	Total	More Than 7 days	1-7 Days	Not Absent	Total
ST	Baseline	BPL	21.21	55.13	56.22	52.14	34.62	55.49	56.42	54.20	27.12	55.32	56.32	53.15
		Poor but not BPL	68.18	27.56	27.72	32.07	50.00	30.06	31.56	32.76	60.17	28.88	29.57	32.41
		Total (N=100)	66	156	386	608	52	173	358	583	118	329	744	1191
	End line	BPL	75.00	49.56	43.61	48.61	75.34	46.98	46.56	50.08	75.19	48.25	45.00	49.33
		Poor but not BPL	5.00	11.95	10.83	10.68	8.22	10.78	10.31	10.37	6.77	11.35	10.59	10.53
		Total (N=100)	60	226	360	646	73	232	320	627	133	458	680	1273
SC	Baseline	BPL	0.00	26.80	55.86	42.63	30.77	44.90	63.48	55.71	18.18	35.90	60.06	49.63
		Poor but not BPL	88.89	50.52	33.10	41.83	46.15	44.90	30.90	36.33	63.64	47.69	31.89	38.89
		Total (N=100)	9	97	145	251	13	98	178	289	22	195	323	540
	End line	BPL	33.33	36.52	40.00	37.74	51.22	36.63	51.96	43.49	43.66	36.59	45.50	40.86
		Poor but not BPL	30.00	33.04	35.83	33.96	31.71	41.28	30.39	36.51	30.99	37.98	33.33	35.34
		Total (N=100)	30	115	120	265	41	172	102	315	71	287	222	580
Minority	Baseline	BPL	0.00	10.00	0.00	6.25	0.00	5.56	11.11	7.14	0.00	7.14	7.14	6.82
		Poor but not BPL	0.00	70.00	100.00	75.00	100.00	72.22	55.56	67.86	50.00	71.43	71.43	70.45
		Total (N=100)	1	10	5	16	1	18	9	28	2	28	14	44
	End line	BPL	0.00	14.29	25.00	10.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.25	14.29	4.65
		Poor but not BPL	12.50	28.57	50.00	26.32	25.00	44.44	66.67	37.50	20.00	37.50	57.14	32.56
		Total (N=100)	8	7	4	19	12	9	3	24	20	16	7	43
OBC	Baseline	BPL	33.33	39.53	38.79	38.91	50.00	46.94	47.48	47.28	37.50	43.48	42.76	42.94
		Poor but not BPL	33.33	33.72	34.55	34.24	50.00	23.47	31.65	28.45	37.50	28.26	33.22	31.45
		Total (N=100)	6	86	165	257	2	98	139	239	8	184	304	496
	End line	BPL	0.00	38.71	44.68	39.47	28.57	44.09	43.48	42.86	16.67	41.43	44.17	41.10
		Poor but not BPL	30.00	26.61	34.04	29.82	42.86	28.35	21.74	27.14	37.50	27.49	28.83	28.54
		Total (N=100)	10	124	94	238	14	127	69	210	24	251	163	438
General	Baseline	BPL	0.00	5.31	13.82	9.27	5.56	9.02	23.97	15.44	3.45	7.32	18.85	12.50
		Poor but not BPL	100.00	41.59	43.09	44.76	66.67	51.88	40.50	47.79	79.31	47.15	41.80	46.35
		Total (N=100)	11	113	123	248	18	133	121	272	29	246	244	520
	End line	BPL	14.81	15.25	13.92	14.73	2.94	13.86	12.77	12.07	8.20	14.61	13.29	13.38
		Poor but not BPL	25.93	17.80	29.11	22.77	26.47	23.76	15.96	21.55	26.23	20.55	21.97	22.15
		Total (N=100)	27	118	79	224	34	101	94	232	61	219	173	456
Total	Baseline	BPL	17.20	33.12	46.00	39.71	27.91	38.27	51.06	44.93	22.35	35.85	48.50	42.35
		Poor but not BPL	70.97	37.88	32.77	37.03	53.49	38.65	33.04	36.36	62.57	38.29	32.90	36.69
		Total (N=100)	93	462	824	1380	86	520	805	1411	179	982	1629	2791
	End line	BPL	43.70	37.46	39.42	39.00	46.55	37.75	41.50	40.41	45.31	37.61	40.40	39.71
		Poor but not BPL	17.04	20.51	21.16	20.48	21.26	24.96	16.33	21.02	19.42	22.83	18.88	20.75
		Total (N=100)	135	590	657	1382	174	641	588	1408	309	1231	1245	2790

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Caste, Class and Gender in Educational Access and School Participation

While looking at the competency level of children, it has been noted that 453 girls and 486 boys appeared for the competency test conducted for this research purpose. It is also to be noted that the proportion of boys who have obtained less than 33 percent is much higher (22.02 percent) than girls (14.6 percent). Similarly, while around 9.09 percent out of 121 ST girls who belong to BPL category, obtained below 33 percent, this proportion is around 13.74 percent in case of boys (131). The proportion of girls is also lower in case of those who are poor but don't hold BPL cards among STs. Similar gender gap favouring girls is also found in case of other social groups as the proportion of students obtaining below 35 percent is higher in case of boys among SC, General and OBC categories.

Table 13: Gender, Caste and Economic Status wise Cumulative Assessment Ranges (Percentage of Students)

Social Category	Baseline/End line	Eco. Category	Female					Male				
			Below 33	33-<50	50-<75	75-100	Total (n=100)	Below 33	33-<50	50-<75	75-100	Total (n=100)
ST	Baseline	BPL	9.09	9.92	42.98	38.02	121	13.74	15.27	45.8	25.19	131
		Poor but not BPL	5.36	17.86	28.57	48.21	56	11.11	17.46	38.1	33.33	63
		Total	8.61	12.44	34.93	44.02	209	14.93	14.93	39.82	30.32	221
	End line	BPL	19.05	17.14	31.43	32.38	210	24.4	14.83	36.36	24.4	209
		Poor but not BPL	7.69	5.13	38.46	48.72	39	12	4	36	48	25
		Total	14.42	14.42	32.21	38.94	416	18.87	13.48	34.5	33.15	371
SC	Baseline	BPL	17.24	37.93	44.83	0	29	42.31	28.85	26.92	1.92	52
		Poor but not BPL	33.33	33.33	30.3	3.03	33	32.43	32.43	32.43	2.7	37
		Total	27.03	31.08	36.49	5.41	74	37.23	30.85	28.72	3.19	94
	End line	BPL	21.43	33.93	39.29	5.36	56	50	31.43	15.71	2.86	70
		Poor but not BPL	20	27.5	50	2.5	40	36.36	38.64	25	0	44
		Total	21.43	30.16	42.86	5.56	126	44.53	33.58	19.71	2.19	137
Minority	Baseline	BPL	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	2
		Poor but not BPL	0	0	0	100	1	16.67	33.33	50	0	6
		Total	0	0	0	100	1	33.33	22.22	44.44	0	9
	End line	BPL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Poor but not BPL	50	0	50	0	2	0	33.33	66.67	0	3
		Total	50	25	25	0	8	44.44	11.11	33.33	11.11	9
OBC	Baseline	BPL	14.63	34.15	36.59	14.63	41	27.91	32.56	37.21	2.33	43
		Poor but not BPL	25.71	42.86	31.43	0	35	29.41	38.24	23.53	8.82	34
		Total	19.61	35.29	37.25	7.84	102	26.88	39.78	29.03	4.3	93
	End line	BPL	19.7	25.76	43.94	10.61	66	10.71	35.71	41.07	12.5	56
		Poor but not BPL	28.13	28.13	25	18.75	32	29.17	33.33	37.5	0	24
		Total	19.01	28.87	40.14	11.97	142	17.09	29.91	44.44	8.55	117
General	Baseline	BPL	0	33.33	50	16.67	6	16.67	58.33	25	0	12
		Poor but not BPL	14.29	39.29	25	21.43	28	10.71	35.71	50	3.57	28
		Total	11.94	34.33	35.82	17.91	67	15.94	37.68	43.48	2.9	69
	End line	BPL	20	20	40	20	10	30	30	30	10	10
		Poor but not BPL	32	28	28	12	25	46.67	20	33.33	0	15
		Total	17.27	22.73	45.45	14.55	110	23.53	29.41	41.18	5.88	102
Total	Baseline	BPL	11.17	19.8	42.13	26.9	197	23.33	23.33	38.75	14.58	240
		Poor but not BPL	17.65	30.72	28.76	22.88	153	19.64	28.57	36.31	15.48	168
		Total	14.57	23.84	35.76	25.83	453	22.02	26.13	36.21	15.64	486
	End line	BPL	19.59	21.64	35.38	23.39	342	27.54	22.03	32.75	17.68	345
		Poor but not BPL	21.01	21.01	36.96	21.01	138	29.73	27.03	32.43	10.81	111
		Total	17.08	20.7	37.03	25.19	802	24.32	22.01	34.24	19.43	736

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Performance of Tracked Children appeared in Assessments conducted during both Surveys

Another interesting trend is found when the learning outcome (marks obtained in competency test conducted for this study) of students who have appeared for the test during end line and baseline both survey. It has already been mentioned earlier that the competency tests were conducted for English, Math and Mother Tongue for the children who were enrolled in grade IV and V in primary sections and grades VI in case of upper primary sections in the first-round survey. During the second-round survey, these tests were conducted for grade IV and V for primary schools and grades VI, VII and VIII for upper primary schools. Altogether 576 children appeared for the test during first round survey and whose performance was tracked during second round survey. It has been found out of the 576 children, 3 percent only could perform outstanding in total (altogether in English, Mother Tongue and Mathematics) during baseline survey and all of them were from Mizoram. The performance of such children increased to around 5 percent during end line survey. However, substantial proportion of children performed well during baseline survey and their proportion also increased more during the second-round survey. It is also noticeable that the proportion of poor performers declined from 23 percent to 16 percent during this period of time. This indicates that around 7 percent poor performing children could show improvement in their learning level during the second-round survey.

If we look at the state wise distribution, majority of poor performers were typically found in Madhya Pradesh during baseline survey but their proportion substantially declined from 51 percent to 30 percent at the time of second round survey. The proportion of such children has declined in Odisha, Haryana and Karnataka as well and in Mizoram their proportion was nil at the time of second round survey. However, despite this decline, the proportion of such children was highest in Haryana (30 percent) followed by MP and was above 20 percent in Karnataka and Odisha.

Table 14: Performance of Tracked Students in All Subjects (English, Mother Tongue and Maths) during 1st and 2nd Round Surveys in Focus Schools

States Name	Baseline/End line	Poor (Below 33)	Average (33 = <50)	Good (50 = <75)	Very Good (75 = <90)	Out standing (90 – 100)	Total (N=100)
Himachal Pradesh	Baseline	10.34	20.69	51.72	17.24	0.00	58
	End line	8.62	17.24	68.97	5.17	0.00	
Haryana	Baseline	31.67	46.67	20.00	1.67	0.00	60
	End line	30.00	41.67	26.67	1.67	0.00	
Karnataka	Baseline	23.66	40.86	31.18	4.30	0.00	93
	End line	16.13	27.96	38.71	17.20	0.00	
Mizoram	Baseline	1.13	10.73	38.42	40.68	9.04	177
	End line	0.00	1.13	19.77	63.84	15.25	
Madhya Pradesh	Baseline	44.90	28.57	24.49	2.04	0.00	98
	End line	27.55	26.53	36.73	9.18	0.00	
Odisha	Baseline	18.89	37.78	34.44	8.89	0.00	90
	End line	18.89	21.11	45.56	14.44	0.00	
All Visited States	Baseline	19.10	27.60	33.68	16.84	2.78	576
	End line	14.24	18.75	35.42	26.91	4.69	

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Comparing the marks obtained by these students during both Survey, it is also possible to find out who are the children could or could not improve their performance.

Table 15: Gender Wise Performance of Students Appeared in the Tests during Both Surveys

	Gender	Performance of Students in Second Round Survey (Percentage) 2018					
		Ranges	Below 33	33 = <50	50 = <75	75 - 100	Total
Performance of Students in First Round Survey (Percentage) 2016	Female	Below 33	52.94	43.14	7.78	0.00	16.79
		33 = <50	41.18	37.25	31.11	7.62	24.64
		50 = <75	5.88	17.65	51.11	42.86	36.43
		75 - 100	0.00	1.96	10.00	49.52	22.14
		Total (n=100)	34 (12.14)	51 (18.21)	90 (32.14)	105 (37.50)	280
	Male	Below 33	64.58	36.84	9.65	0.00	21.28
		33 = <50	31.25	47.37	29.82	18.18	30.41
		50 = <75	4.17	15.79	42.98	41.56	31.08
		75 - 100	0.00	0.00	17.54	40.26	17.23
		Total (n=100)	48 (16.22)	57 (19.26)	114 (38.51)	77 (26.01)	296
	Total	Below 33	59.76	39.81	8.82	0.00	19.10
		33 = <50	35.37	42.59	30.39	12.09	27.60
		50 = <75	4.88	16.67	46.57	42.31	33.68
		75 - 100	0.00	0.93	14.22	45.60	19.62
		Total (n=100)	82 (14.24)	108 (18.75)	204 (35.42)	182 (31.60)	576

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

It is heartening to see out of 280 girls, who appeared for the test during both surveys, 38 percent could obtain more than 75 percent in 2018 and their proportion was only 22.14 percent in 2016. Around 50 percent of girls who obtained more than 75 percent in 2018 also secured more than 75 percent during first survey in 2016. The proportion of high achievers was much lower in case of boys during both surveys of baseline (17.2 percent) and end line (26 percent). It is heartening to see that, altogether 12 percent children could improve their performance substantially and the proportion of boys (18.2 percent) is much higher than girls (7.6 percent) in this regard. However, the proportion of poor performers was also much higher among boys than girls during both surveys.

The picture becomes clearer through mean and standard deviations which are varying considerably from state to state. It is to be noted that girls have scored higher than boys though standard deviation is little higher than boys. This indicates there is significant inequality as far as learning level is concerned and the mean scores in most cases remained less than 50 percent of total score (60) of the tests conducted for this research.

Table 16: Mean and SD of All Assessed Subjects (English, Mother Tongue & Maths) out of Total 60

States Name	Female			Male			Total			
	Baseline/ End line	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Himachal Pradesh	Baseline	34.70	10.91	37	31.53	10.14	43	33.00	10.56	80
	End line	26.50	10.53	52	24.63	13.10	52	25.56	11.87	104
Haryana	Baseline	25.05	10.46	73	25.60	10.07	71	25.32	10.23	144
	End line	24.72	10.35	76	22.89	9.20	47	24.02	9.93	123
Karnataka	Baseline	30.28	10.87	65	25.80	9.56	75	27.88	10.40	140
	End line	31.43	10.84	119	26.75	12.00	116	29.12	11.64	235
Mizoram	Baseline	42.93	8.26	170	41.10	9.79	169	42.01	9.09	339
	End line	42.21	10.37	321	42.50	8.82	256	42.34	9.70	577
Madhya Pradesh	Baseline	21.05	12.24	55	20.55	10.02	62	20.78	11.07	117
	End line	28.10	13.69	127	24.01	10.65	158	25.83	12.24	285
Odisha	Baseline	31.49	11.98	53	24.61	9.21	66	27.67	11.04	119
	End line	29.57	12.36	107	25.46	11.51	107	27.51	12.09	214
All Visited States	Baseline	33.57	13.02	453	30.77	12.58	486	32.12	12.86	939
	End line	34.01	13.23	802	31.06	13.45	736	32.60	13.41	1538

Source: Field Data - Baseline (2016) & End line (2018)

Conclusion

From the above discussion it has been found that, gender disparity is still prevailing in enrolment, retention and school participation of children which is revealed in their learning outcome and transition as well. Although the national average indicates considerable reduction in gender gap, the empirical study reveals that the gender gap is still a major challenge that to be met for universalisation of elementary education.

The analysis of the situation in different states indicates a considerable increase in total enrolment of sample schools in case of Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha during baseline and end line surveys. However, on the contrary, a major decline in the enrolment in the sample schools selected from Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana. From the gender perspective, it was revealed in the study that, girls' share is around 50 percent in total enrolment in majority of the sample schools from these selected states indicating gender disparity is not an issue of concern in these schools. Further, an analysis of socio-economic background of learners reveals that in all states particularly in Karnataka, a substantial proportion of children enrolled in these government schools were typically from the households falling in BPL category or poor economic condition indicating. This can be an important factor which possibly affects the attendance and learning level of these children. In nutshell, one can say that the more number of children from weaker sections of society now coming to schools which are mainly run by government and the proportion of girls is also quite high in many of these schools. It is now a challenging task for schools to ensure their regular attendance and improvement in learning achievement as mere enrolment in schools is not sufficient for addressing the right to education of children which has already been mentioned earlier. It is the children's meaningful participation in schools, which includes regular attendance, grade promotion and higher learning achievements, is a major contributing factor for holistic development children.

If we look at the status of attendance then on an average, more girls than boys remained absent from schools. It is also mention worthy that the girls outnumbered boys as far as regular attendance is concerned. Those who remained absent for longer period of time are mainly from socially deprived group. However, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha have witnessed a substantial increase in the proportion of absentee children from general category as well while, on the other hand, Mizoram has experienced a great fall in the student absenteeism at the time of end line survey. It is worth to mention that there are two focus schools namely GPS Taradevi in Himachal Pradesh and GHPS Chattobanahalli in Karnataka,

where a substantial rise was observed in the number of regular attendees. In addition, almost all schools of Mizoram except GPS Bawngkawn maintained high attendance of children but these schools experienced slight decline in proportion of regular attendees from baseline to end line survey. It is also heartening to see that many children have improved their attendance as the proportion of children who remained absent for longer period of time declined to some extent. In some of the states, more girls than boys regularly attended schools and this situation continued during the end line survey. It is also to be noted that the attendance pattern of children considerably varied not only from school to school but also the socio-economic background and gender of children played an important role in participation of children on day to day basis. This must have considerable impact on learning outcomes of children.

It has been noted that the low performance of children is a matter of concern in most of the states except Mizoram where majority of children have gained the functional/basic knowledge in all the three subjects for which tests were conducted. It is also a matter of concern that even after attending primary education, a huge number of children who are enrolled in grade VII and even in grade VIII could not acquire the fundamental knowledge in these three subjects. It is heartening to see that, though a substantial proportion of children performed poor and average in their tests, several children on the other hand performed better during end line survey.

One can understand the close association between regular attendance and better performance of children in the schools of Mizoram where majority of children not only attended schools regularly but also have shown better performance in all the three subjects during baseline as well as end line surveys. It is also to be noted that quite a substantial number of children who appeared for this test during both surveys could improve their performance. So this indicates it is possible to improve the learning outcome of children in government schools, provided a continuous support and encouragement is given to them in addition to different initiatives that have taken for improving teaching learning process and school environment. It is heartening to see that more girls than boys performed well scoring more than 75 percent in these tests, the percentage of girls who could improve their performance from base line survey to end line was also higher as compared to boys. Thus gender stereotyping in case of attendance and learning outcome has to be tackled and schools need to provide a gender friendly environment to all children for their meaningful access and effective participation and better learning outcome.

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Critical Comparison of the provisions made on Inclusive Education in NPE 1986 and NEP 2020

Guriya Sharma and Khushbu Sharma***

Abstract

Inclusivity and equal opportunity in education is considered the foremost priority of any nation as education is the only tool that helps an individual to develop their inner abilities, communicate and express themselves logically, and strive to achieve their desired goal in life. But the problem of student exclusivity and unequal educational opportunity is faced since India's Independence. As a solution to this issue in 1986 National Education Policy come into existence which pin-points various issues and gave recommendations regarding inclusive education. Some of the necessary recommendations include women's education, educational provision of Handicapped Children, emphasis on Backward students, Minority education, and Correspondence education. Although the NEP 1986 has made an attempt to cover every possible area to provide inclusivity in education yet some of the areas are not highlighted or emphasized such as Transgender education which is recommended in the NEP 2020. Secondly, the process of bringing gender equality in education has also been recommended to achieve with different strategies, one of them is to provide teachers training and learning processes relevant to Gender which help teachers to use and adapt learning activities that foster a gender-sensitive classroom environment. Hence there are many more updated recommendations given in the new NEP 2020 at the same time it is also necessary to understand critically the essence of both the NEP 1986 and 2020 in terms of inclusive education.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Education Policy.

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, which was in place for 34 years, was replaced by the NEP 2020, the first education policy of the twenty-first century. This policy, which is based on the fundamental pillars of Access, Equity, Quality,

* Research Scholar, University of Calcutta., Email id: guriyasharma9099@gmail.com

** B.Ed. Student, West Bengal University of Teachers' Training, Education Planning and Administration, Emailid: khushbusharma9099@gmail.com

Affordability, and Accountability, is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and seeks to transform India into a thriving knowledge society and a global knowledge superpower by making school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, appropriate for the needs of the 21st century, and focused on bringing out the individual talents of each student (Vikaspedia, 2020). In both policies, various aspects of education have been covered one of them is Inclusive education, but the initial policy of 1986 was mainly based on the theoretical approach and lacks the practical aspect. Secondly, the policy was outdated with the changed scenario of present Indian needs and requirements, hence the need for developing a new NEP 2020 became significant and crucial.

The concept of inclusive education is not new in India's educational history, literatures prove that from time-to-time various initiatives have been taken to provide equal educational opportunity to the disadvantaged. Some of the initiatives are the National Policy on Education (1986), Plan of Action (1992), National Curriculum Framework (2009), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which has emphasized on the integration of special needs children with other groups (Smile Foundation, 2022; Sanjeev & Kumar, 2007). The concept of inclusive education although introduced in India in the late 90s (i.e., in 1997) in DPEP (District Primary Education Programme) the true principles were not implemented completely (Sanjeev & Kumar, 2007). India is a heterogeneous society and consists of diverse individuals, schools must meet the needs of everyone by giving them equal access to learning. If this area is not given attention, there will be a large number of school dropouts, which will eventually result in illiteracy and stop the country's development. So, it becomes extremely necessary to understand the concept of inclusivity and highlight the various recommendations given by NEP in 1986 and 2020.

Concept of Inclusive Education

Many individuals believe inclusive education is another form of special education or is exclusively relevant to students with disabilities. The fundamental ideas and presumptions behind inclusive education, however, are in many ways diametrically opposed to those underlying special education (Stubbs, 2008). Inclusive education in terms of UNESCO states that for the improvement of the educational system as a whole "Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes

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and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision to educate all children” (UNESCO, 2005). Another definition presented and accepted in the Agra seminar in 1998, states inclusive education includes (a) formal, informal, and non-formal educational system; (b) recognizing and respecting variation in children; age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, HIV/TB status, etc., (c) in the process of continuous evolvement, (d) enable changes in the educational system, structure, and methodology to fulfill the needs” (Stubbs, 2008).

Hence, it can be stated that inclusive education is a system of education that welcomes and supports all students, regardless of who they are, what they can do, or what their needs are, so that they can learn. This entails ensuring that instruction and the curriculum, as well as school infrastructure such as playgrounds, classrooms, and restrooms, are suitable for all students at all levels. All children learn together in the same schools in an inclusive environment.

Objectives

- (1) To understand the Concept of Inclusive education with special reference to NEP 2020.
- (2) To understand the recommendations of National Educational Policy 1986 on Inclusive Education.
- (3) To understand the recommendation of National Educational Policy 2020 on Inclusive Education.
- (4) Critically analyses the recommendations given in NEP 2020 policies regarding Inclusive education.

Method

To expedite the comparison of the NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 in terms of inclusive education, the content analysis method, which is primarily qualitative in nature, has been used.

Database

Data on the comparison between NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 on inclusive education were gathered using secondary sources, including documents of the NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 as well as websites, magazines, journals, newspapers, and e-contents.

Observation

Inclusive Educational Provisions in NEP 2020

Despite consistent progress in ending gender and socio-economic disparity across all levels of schooling, there are still significant gaps, particularly at the secondary level. Studies show that there is an increasing dropout rate of students while they move toward higher secondary schooling especially SC, ST, minority females, etc. According to U-DISE 2016–17 data, the primary school enrolment of Scheduled Castes reduces from 19.6% to 17.3% in upper secondary classes. These enrolment declines are worse for children from Scheduled Tribes (10.6% to 6.8%) and those with disabilities (1.1% to 0.25%), and they are even worse for female students (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2020). Hence in order to reduce this phenomenon the new NEP 2020 has recommended the following recommendation-

Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)

This is a broad category including various socio-economically backward groups and can be divided into the bases of Gender identity (female and transgender individuals), sociocultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), Geographical Identities (such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts), Disabilities (including learning disabilities), and Socio-Economic Conditions (such as migrant communities, low-income households, children in vulnerable situations, victims of or children of victims of trafficking, orphans including child beggars in urban areas, and the urban poor) (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2020).

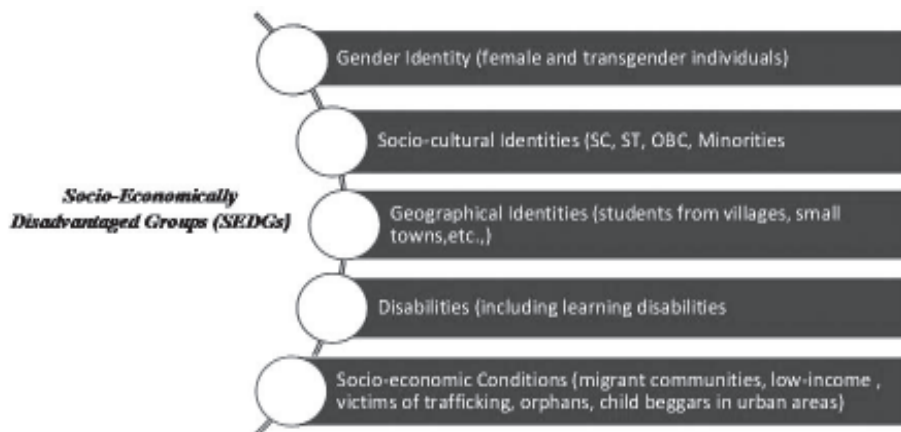


Figure 1: Image showing the categories included in the inclusive education of NEP 2020

Recommendations of NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 regarding Inclusive education

	NEP 1986	NEP 2020
Women education	● University of women's \ education. ● Adult education for girls who were unable to receive school student or school dropout. ● Increasing access to vocational, technical, and professional education. ● Creation of Women's' Cell in NCERT so that core curriculum based on women's equality and removal of sexist biased textbooks. ● Inclusion of more women teachers and instructors at adult education and non-formal educational program. ● These teachers must receive timely orientation and training so they can perform the role of activist towards Women equality. ● Promote women's studies as a part of various courses.	● Universal access and retention on female students. ● Highlighted the various recommendations female gender and transgender. ● Vocational, technical, and professional training for women. ● "Gender Inclusive Fund" is specifically used for fulfilling the gender-specific requirement in order to achieve school education. ● Free-boarding facilities for women in institutions similar to the standard of Jawahar ● Navodaya Vidyalaya in Special Education Zones, Aspirational Districts. ● Providing bicycle and organizational cycle, and walking groups for safety and parental comfort.
Education of SC, ST Categories	● Major objective was to reduce the dropout rate of SC, ST students and increase the enrolment of rate of these students. ● To motivate students towards education, more teachers are recruited to belong to this category. ● For easy access, the SC/ST students are provided with hostel facilities at a district headquarter. ● Parents must be given incentives that motivate them to send their	● Special hostels in dedicated regions to be created. ● "Inclusive fund" is recommended for the inclusion of SC/ST women in education, community base intervention to remove the local barrier, etc. ● Free textbooks, two pairs of uniforms, scholarships, etc are to be provided. ● For easy access to the student, educational institutions of high quality are to be made in the

	children to schools regularly up to the age of 14 years. ● Students are given scholarships, Uniforms, free textbooks, and stationery. ● School buildings, balwadis, and adult education centers are created near the SC/ST communities or tribal villages.	neighboring tribal community or in the Special Educational Zones, Aspirational districts.
Minority Education	● Religious or language-based minority students were allowed to establish their own educational institutions. ● University students were recommended to provide coaching classes for educationally backward minorities under UGC scheme. ● NCERT and SCERT must provide training to the teachers, and managers principle of minority institutions.	● Scholarship facilities, textbooks, and various means of access to education have been stated.
	● Children with mildly handicapped must be taught in an integrated educational system, whereas those having severely handicapped are taught in a special education system. ● There must be provision for early diagnoses and identification of students while placing the students in schools. ● Timely training orientation and in-service training must be provided to the teachers, managers, and administration. ● Development of Psychological service at district level.	● Children must be taught in an inclusive educational environment. ● The NIOS will be responsible for introducing Indian Sign Language. ● The Special teachers or instructors must be trained in cross-disabilities. ● Home schooling facilities for children with Special needs. Children with disability can choose where they can take education either in regular schools or special schooling.

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Education of Handicap-ped	● The school infrastructure must be modified (removal of the barrier). ● The disabled students must be provided with transport facilities, free textbooks, uniforms were given. ● Special schools must be established at district level and sub-district level. ● For making these students self-dependent vocational training must be provided either in school or adjunct area. ● The special teacher and vocational teachers must be given additional salary of 20 percent of their basic salary. ● There must be modification in the curriculum and flexibility in the ennnnnnnnnnn.	● Provision for Free textbooks, and residential facilities. ● Through Home schooling the parents/guardians of disabled students are also skilled in dealing with CWD. ● Emphasized the Specific Learning Disability. And made necessary recommendations in this aspect ● One-to-one teachers and tutors, peer tutoring, Open Schooling, etc., must be organized for disabled students. ● The school or school complex must organize necessary support to suit the need of the special students.
Language of study	● Three language formula- First language (Mother tough/regional language), Second language (In Hindi speaking states, other Indian modern languages or English whereas in non-Hindi speaking states, it will be Hindi or English), third language (in Hindi speaking states, it will be English or any modern language)	● Three language formula will be followed but there must be flexibility in the hands of the states, regions and students itself in choosing the language to be studied.
Urban Poor students	● No such recommendation	● Encouraging the urban poor parents to send their children in schools. ● Assist them through various scholarships, incentives to achieve education.

Comparative analyses between NEP 1986 and NEP 2020 in terms of Inclusive Education

The provisions on inclusive education in both the NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 are based on some areas they are such as upliftment of women's condition, provision for SC, ST and minorities, recommendation for children with disabilities, etc., hence the following are some recommendations given by both the policies to achieve the goal of inclusiveness in education.

Women Education

i) In the new NEP 2020, it has been stated that women have covered the half of SEDGs groups hence special emphases has been placed on the education of upliftment of education of the women. The NEP 1986 has stated for increasing the enrolment of women students, it recommended the creation of special Women's Cell in NCERT so that Biased free textbooks (curriculum) can be created. Another provision was adult educational program for the school dropout or the late students; the policy has also emphasized on the appointment of maximum women teacher or instructor at formal and non-formal educational program, lastly women are engaged in vocational, technical and professional studies. Whereas the NEP 2020, has present far more updated recommendations which is not only limited to female gender but along with that transgender has also received importance. According to the NEP 2020, there must be a "Gender Inclusion Fund" which would be used by states or regions to assist women and transgender students in their assess to education (such as sanitation, toilet, bicycle, conditional payment etc.,). There is other common successful provision also such as providing bicycle and organizational cycling and walking groups for safety and comfort to their parents (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2020)..

Children with Disabilities

In the concept of inclusive education, inclusion of Children with disabilities are the most concerned aspect. The NEP 1986 was one of the initial policies which has recommended for the integrated system of education were the Children with Disabilities could study together within the same school with special attention. The teachers were recommended to identify the mild and severe handicapped students initially and then based on the this the mild handicapped students were allowed to study in an integrated environment whereas the severely handicapped were not taught in special schools. The policy has made some significant recommendations regarding transportation such as providing a capital cost for buying a school rikshaw for a rural area institution that has at least 10 handicapped

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children, other than this per month these students are provided with 50 rupees for their transportation. Arrangements of free textbooks and uniform are made, along with this there must be a special school at district and sub-district level with appropriated facilities needed by children with disabilities. The NEP 1986 has highlighted the importance of Psychologists, hence recommended appointment of Psychologist at district level. For motivation, the special teachers or instructor additional pay of @ 20 percent of the basic salary are given to this teacher. Lastly, with a view to making these children self-dependent various vocational training is to be given in the school attached vocational center (Puju& Dar, 2021).

But recommendations given by NEP 2020, starts from including handicapped students at ECCE (Early Childhood Care Education) stage with diversified curriculum because the need of children changes according to the different type of disabilities. For this diversified need of the special children the policy stated that the teacher must be trained in cross-disabilities, the students must be taught with assistive technology, and accessible textbook such as large written latter Braille. Interestingly, the NEP 2020 advocated that the CWD can decide where they would feel comfortable to take learning either in schools or home schools. In case home schooling is done the teacher can assessed the parent/guardian with the necessary skills needed to deal with disabled children. Contrary to the NEP 1986, the recent NEP 2020 has separately pinpointed the specific learning disability, according to them, learning disability must be initially diagnosed by the teacher and then suitable assistive technologies, flexible curriculum and easy assessment and certification is done.

SC and ST Students

The main focus of NEP 1986 regarding SC/ST students was to reduce the dropout rate and increase the enrolment ratio of the students. There are various recommendations made to achieve this goal, such as the provision of scholarships, free books, uniforms, hostel facilities, and stationery to motivate students towards learning, along with this the parents/guardians are also attracted to incentives so that parents regularly send their children to the schools until the age of 14 years. SC/ST communities mainly reside in their own tribal area or villages and hence hesitate to go out of their tribes or villages, in this concern the policy recommended the establishment of schools, balwadis, and adult educational centers near their tribal villages or community. Most of the efforts were made to encourage the students to pursue education, for this reason, the teachers in these schools are recruited from SC/ST community. Similar to the NEP 1986, the NEP 2020 has continued the various scholarship, provisions for uniforms, textbooks, and residential

schools in government schools (Ministry of Education, India, 2021). Interestingly the NEP 2020, has not limited itself to SC/ST education to the school level, various recommendations are made to retain and motivate students for higher studies also such as mitigating opportunity costs and fees, Indian languages and bilingualism used to teach degree programs, enforce all anti-discrimination and harassment laws strictly Scholarships and financial aid are offered to SEDGs in both public and private institutions, etc (Ministry of Education, India, 2021).

Education of Minorities

The recommendation made in NEP 1986, includes a provision to establish a religion or language-based minority institutions, free classes or coaching on the university or college campus, various scholarships, etc. But in the NEP 2020, there is no recommendation for the protection of religious or minority institutions. No recommendation has been made for reservation of seats in admission to the schools or relaxation in educational performance. Various recommendations are made but not specifically to minorities which makes it a little confusing.

Inclusion through Language learning

Language is the base of any learning process, India is a multilingual country where various language is spoken and used, but in most of cases, students find it difficult to continue studies with a language that they don't know (other than their mother tough). Hence, the need to preserve the Indian languages and increase the retention of the students, in NEP 1986 in the form of Three-language formula. Through this formula, there are three languages (mother tough/regional language-first language, Hindi- a second language, and English- third language) that were compulsorily taught to the students. But the NEP 2020, has advanced this system, which has realized the need for flexibility in the choice of three language formula, stating that the three languages will be chosen by the state, regions, and of course, the students from which at least two languages must be Indian Native languages. It is very clear that NEP 2020 has emphasised mostly on preserving the richness of the Indian language (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2020).

Critical Analyses of NEP 2020

The NEP 2020, has highlighted various advanced recommendations for the inclusion of the students such as Indian Sign Language, home-schooling for disabled students, additional pay of @ 20 percent of the basic salary to the special teachers and so on which was not mentioned in the NEP 1986, but these are some of the highly critical to achieving in the Indian system of education. The policy itself states that for the inclusion of the stated recommendation, there must be changes in the school culture. Teachers, principals, administrators, counselors, and students will

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be made aware of each student's needs, the ideas of inclusion and equity, and the respect, dignity, and privacy of every person.

Secondly, the NEP 2020's recommendation regarding inclusive education is quite confusing because it included all the areas of inclusive education in a broader term namely SEDGs, and mentioned the needed recommendation as a whole which makes it difficult to understand the specific provision. Other than this every aspect of inclusiveness is different in terms of need, location, etc., hence a common recommendation for all the sectors of inclusiveness is critical to achieving.

Thirdly, regarding Language learning the NEP 2020 is of great importance, as the present Indian society is moving towards foreign languages, forgetting the importance of the Indian native language it becomes necessary to emphasize. NEP 2020 has provided flexibility in selecting language to be learned by the state and students themselves. But for the implementation of this recommendation, all teachers must be trained in different native languages.

Fourthly, NEP 2020, has not mentioned anything regarding the reservation of seats or age relaxation for SC, ST, OBC, and CWD. Although the reservation of seats for backward communities has been highlighted by various committees. Reservation of seats is extremely necessary for the child with disabilities because they are in much more physical as well as mental distress.

Fifth, NEP 2020, has mentioned the inclusion of transgender and provided equal provisions which were not mentioned in NEP 1986 which is extremely needed in the present society but the policy has mentioned only used the term transgender which is a part of LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more. Hence a huge area has been overlooked.

Last but not the least, India is a developing country that has a maximum population below the poverty line, hence implementing NEP 2020 which has recommendations of scholarships, free books, transport facilities, parental incentives, etc., for all the SEDGs make it unrealistic to be implemented. Hence there is an urgent need to critically review the NEP 2020, in the context of Indian society and make necessary planning or strategies for its implementation.

Conclusion

The NEP 2020 is an extremely updated version of NPE 1986 in terms of Inclusive education, this policy, as anticipated, has many positive aspects, but it still needs to be strengthened and reviewed in some concern areas. NEP 2020 may end up being the best policy in terms of education and human resources if its policies are regularly updated.

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Education and Employment of Women in Darjeeling Hill Towns: A Focus on Married Women in Service Sectors

Ritu Mangar and Ujjwal Kumar Bhui***

Abstract

Women gradually gained access to formal education as it spread through educational institutions established in the hill towns of Darjeeling Himalaya, albeit at varying degrees and in far smaller numbers than those for the menfolk. When we look at the region's history, we can see that women of this region have worked in a variety of works. However, with the increased access to educational institutions, women found encouragement to choose paid employment over manual labour. As such, this paper is a micro-level exploration of educated employed women and their family lives. It engages with a specific section of women employed in service sectors in the towns of Darjeeling hills. It attempts to explore how they were able to gain access to different levels of education and how it helped them to secure salaried jobs and to make more informed choices in their personal and family lives. The analysis is also inclusive of their self-perception.

Keywords: *Women, education, service sectors, decision-making, family and personal life.*

Introduction

The 1990s saw a rise in the importance of education on a worldwide scale, particularly with regard to women's education and empowerment. As can be seen, major international organizations have since placed education at the forefront of development efforts. One of the primary goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 was to ensure education for all women. Similarly, the Millennium Summit 2000 calls for universal basic education and the elimination of the gender gap in secondary and higher education. According to an overview of the World Bank Report on 'Girls' Education' 2022, "Girls' education goes beyond

* Research Scholar, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal

* Professor of Sociology, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal

getting girls into school. It is also about ensuring that girls learn and feel safe while they are in school; have the opportunity to complete all levels of education, acquire the knowledge and skills to compete in the labour market; gain socio-emotional and life skills necessary to navigate and adapt to a changing world; make decisions about their own lives; and contribute to their communities and the world.”All of these organizations advocate for the importance of education for women and raise awareness of the major issues that surround women’s education.

In accordance with it, the Indian government has launched a number of initiatives to guarantee and promote the education of women through programmes like the National Education Mission of 2018, the Beti BachaoBeti Padhao 2015 initiative and many others. One of the main goals of these programmes has been to increase women’s literacy and raise awareness of gender bias and discrimination in the country. Yet, even after all these years, these educational policies overall have not brought significant changes and are falling short of their intended goals in the country. The reasons may array from a lack of planned expenditure/s to administrative challenges as well as social and cultural barriers. Therefore, what is needed at present is to recognize that, in order to actualize women’s education and empowerment; the emphasis should be placed not only on the macro factors outlined by policymakers and organizations but also on the role played by micro factors of family and cultural differences.

The significance of understanding the connectivity of both the macro and micro factors has been emphasized by certain scholars [Chanana (1990); Chanana (2001); Chanana (2002); Kumar (2010); Mukhopadhyay, and Seymour 2021)] whose research examine the relationships between the institution of education and the institutions of family, culture, religion and others. They have emphasized the value of comprehending the social context which truly influences how well government programmes and policies for women’s education are carried out. Chanana (2002) and Kumar (2010) have claimed in their respective publications that women’s access to educational facilities is influenced at the micro level, and that women’s education needs to be regarded from a much more comprehensive and nuanced perspective. A larger view would enable us to acknowledge the historical and cultural factors at play.

Therefore, following this line of thought, this paper is a micro-level exploration of educated employed women and their family lives. It engages with a specific section of women employed in service sectors in the towns of Darjeeling hills. It attempts to explore how they were able to gain access to different levels of education

and how it helped them to secure salaried jobs and make more informed choices in their personal and family lives, inclusive of their self-perception.

As such, the paper has been divided into two sections; the first section deals with a brief historical background of the growth and development of formal education in the hills of Darjeeling during the colonial period. It highlights very briefly how women from the hills could gain access to it. The second section deals with the education and employment status of a specific section of married women in service sectors. In-depth interviews of thirty women have been taken into consideration. Personal observation forms a key part of the description of accounts throughout this paper. This paper is only a part of an ongoing research work, as such the analysis here is only limited to the variables of education and employment with specific aspects of women's everyday lives.

Women's Education in Darjeeling Hills: A Brief History

The colonial history of Darjeeling is crucial in trying to place the issue of women and education in the area. Because of this, thinking about it is important since it was the colonial discovery of a salubrious mountain site that led to the emergence of a mountain urban locality that is now officially known as Darjeeling hills and the addition of Kalimpong to the district in 1866, that served as a strategic location and expansion of British political power (Bhattacharya, 2013; Sharma, 2016). The territory was only sparsely populated at the time of British annexation, but in the decades that followed, the population increased due to the considerable inflow of people from both the plains of mainland India and the hills of neighbouring regions. The colonial powers were an influential force in the development, exploitation, and shaping of social positions, life chances, and aspirations of people in the Darjeeling hill region (Chettri, 2013).

Given the colonial past of Darjeeling Hills, it was the Christian missionaries who indeed played a pioneering role towards the growth and advancement of formal education. However as stated by Roy (2019), initially only the education of the children of the European families who lived there was of primary interest, the Roman Catholic missionary groups established convent schools in the hills to provide quality education for them. The local children of the hill tract were not included in this endeavour in the earlier stage. By the late nineteenth century, another missionary group, namely, the Church of Scotland Missionary Society came to the Darjeeling hills and took up the mission of educating the 'natives' of the hills. It was Rev. W. Macfarlane who led this group of missionaries and from then onwards, widespread growth in primary education of the locals can be traced in the region.

In comparison to the rest of the nation, the advent of formal education for women in the Darjeeling hills was a late event. Pradhan and Pain (2020) have highlighted in their work that the missionaries were determined to educate women and the presence of Mr and Mrs Graham, Church of Scotland Mission members, bolstered their efforts. Thus, by their endeavours, schools for girls were established, and encouragement was given for technical and vocational education in various fields. Indian elites, notably Bengalis, had begun to settle in the Darjeeling Hills by the end of the nineteenth century. Bengali 'Bhadraloks' (Gentlemen) began to populate the area, bringing with them educated 'Bhadramahilas' (Gentlewomen) who took the initiative to provide schooling for Indian girls. Consequently, the missionaries, government, and private and local enterprises made various efforts to provide education for women in the hills.

Pradhan and Pain (2020), have also discussed that despite such efforts, education was not popular among the general public. One of the main obstacles in this regard was the fear of conversion; additionally, the gender disparity that began at home posed a significant challenge to it, which obliged women more, to perform tasks within the household. In the case of Darjeeling hills, however, the social scene was different in that, due to low economic conditions the women were mostly involved in skill-based jobs, for example, they were in high demand in the tea plantation sector. This resulted in a significant number of school dropouts, which hampered the smooth operation of the schools. Most of the girls dropped out of school also due to domestic responsibilities and early marriage. Another impediment to women's education was the geographical factor. Darjeeling's rugged terrain, combined with a lack of adequate transportation, acted as a barrier between the girls and the schools. Furthermore, even after finishing school, there was no encouragement to pursue higher education in the hills at the time.

The authors have however also noted that, notwithstanding these difficulties, some hill women managed to overcome obstacles and accept western education, which helped such women to advance in society. Such changes, nevertheless, were fairly slow and not immediately apparent in the early stages. The twentieth century marked a new beginning in the lives of hill women. They became acquainted with concepts such as nationalism, the freedom movement, liberty, colonialism, and so on. It can be seen that the hill women gradually began to feel the impact of modern education towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. There is no doubt that modern education had a humble beginning. We cannot, however, deny that the independent consciousness and awakening had an impact on the lives of the women of Darjeeling Hills.

Women's Education and Work in the Towns of Darjeeling Hills

Women gradually gained access to formal education as it spread through educational institutions that were established in the hill towns, albeit at varying degrees due to factors such as the disparity in class positions, the enrolment ratio between girls and boys, the dropout rate, and the cultural expectations within families. Even while it happened in far smaller numbers than among menfolk, the increase in educational institutions and their access encouraged women to choose paid employment over manual labour.

When we take a look at the region's history, we can see that women have worked in the region in a variety of works, and even today, women are participating increasingly in different types of paid labour at different levels. Women work in tea plantations, agriculture, and the informal sector, and also some women manage to run small stores and restaurants. In addition, while in relatively small numbers, women are also employed in the service industries, mainly in urban areas. Through their work, mobility and participation, women have in various ways contributed to the region's economy and gradual changes.

Despite certain pervasive traditional cultural norms and the added challenge of restricted options, women with some levels of education have managed to find employment in services in the towns. The expanding requirements and concerns of economic need, increased consumerism, changes in people's attitudes and increase in educational opportunities can be expected to drive women's participation in paid labour, particularly in the context of an aspirational population.

Thus, this paper focuses on the group of women who represent a section of this aspirational category of the population in the hills of Darjeeling. The following section also represented through a table, deals with a specific group of married women who work in teaching, nursing and administrative sectors (governmental and private enterprises) in the towns of Darjeeling and Kalimpong. It seeks to bring forward these respondents' access to education and employment in relation to decision-making with an emphasis on financial matters, child education, and freedom of mobility in familial and personal lives. The respondents who have been interviewed belonged to the Nepali ethnic population of the Darjeeling hills and were above 30 years of age.

Table 1: Educational Level and Occupation of Women Respondents:

Type of Occupation	Educational Level				
	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Graduation	Post-Graduation	Total
Teaching			10	5	15
Administrative Staff	2	3	5	1	11
Nursing Staff		3	1		4
Total	2	6	16	6	30

The above Table No. 1 represents the type of occupation and educational level of the total thirty women respondents from Darjeeling and Kalimpong towns. Out of the total thirty women, the majority are college educated and are employed as teachers. Those with graduation and above are employed as teachers in higher secondary schools and colleges. Some of them are employed in government institutions, while others are in private ones. They all agree that teaching is a respectable and noble profession for women. Additionally, they think it is fortunate to have a stable job in one's hometown because teaching isn't a particularly demanding job that required moving around a lot. Also, they can devote time to their families.

Those who work as administrative staff in offices likewise agree that it is a convenient job. A couple of them even with limited educational attainment have managed to get the job through referrals from local political parties and influential people in the town, and a few have gotten jobs through died in harness cases. After several years on the job, some have received promotions to senior positions. They all are of the opinion that it is preferable to be employed, even if the job is low-paying in some situations because it allows them to be less dependent on their husbands. Those with higher positions and better salaries reported that they contribute more to the family income in comparison to their husbands and as such can provide their families and themselves with better lifestyles.

The women who work as nursing staff revealed that they have to plan their shift schedules with their family members, particularly those who have young children. They also admitted that, in order to get their housework done, the majority of them have employed domestic helpers. They feel that their employment in this field has brought them respect from their families and society.

Every respondent believes that education of women should be the primary emphasis of every household. According to their own personal experiences, it is now more crucial for a married woman to have a job because sharing financial responsibilities with the husband can significantly improve the standard of living for the family and serve as an example for others.

Decision-making in the Family and Personal Life

The benefits of education can be seen in married women's awareness of their own and their family's well-being which is enhanced by their participation in paid work. When these two resources of education and employment are provided, women have a greater ability to participate in family and personal decision-making.

When the decision-making skills of the women respondents were looked into, it has been found that most of the time they share financial decision-making equally with their husbands. Women are involved more in deciding how to manage family spending the more educated they are; this is also because they make significant financial contributions to the family. It is also discovered that women's financial decisions are linked to their husbands' acceptance and respect of their decision-making capacity. In response to some of the privileges women feel they have in their life as a result of their financial independence, they stated that they do not have to ask their husband's permission to fulfil their personal needs and wishes, which makes them feel very good. Some even said that they can assist their parents and other members of the family without even requiring telling their husbands about it every time. They can even meet some of their children's needs on their own. Although some of them indicated that they would be able to engage in family decision-making even if they were not employed, they strongly believe that their confidence in certain areas of societal ways and means has strengthened since they started working outside the home.

Additionally, it was seen that the more educated a woman is, the greater influence she has over the choices her children make about their schooling and careers. In a few instances, it was clearly evident that the women have been all the decisions on this matter. Inquiries and network building for the child's entrance to specific academic subjects are also part of their active participation. Some of the women also admitted that because they have more time to devote to the child than their husbands do, they are more responsible for the child's upbringing and education. They also believe that because they have educated themselves, they can supervise and oversee their child's education. In one of the cases, it was also revealed that the woman is solely responsible for her son's schooling, while her husband is in charge of the other expenses of the household.

With regard to their mobility, it has been discovered that the women have full discretion over when and where they are to go, but all of them agreed that they are to notify their husbands in advance and have come to anticipate that the husbands would do the same. They acknowledged at the same time that while they have the right over their level of mobility, it is still their duty as wives to respect their boundaries and not overstep on their partners' confidence. Also, it has been noted that decisions on the wives' mobility/movement grow gradually throughout the course of a marriage; the younger the married couple, the more the wife has to negotiate with her husband and occasionally with his family members regarding her choices over when and where she goes.

Summing up

The significance of the variables of education and paid work in relation to women is also thoroughly discussed by Kabeer (2005) who further argues that these variables have the capacity to make a difference in the lives of women, both immediate and long-term. According to the interviews conducted for the existing research study and also to write this paper, this argument is evident since education not only prepares women for employment but also fosters confidence and awareness in them. The majority of respondents were the first generation in their family to complete higher secondary school and beyond. There is a noticeable shift in their mindset and aspirations, as revealed by the in-depth interviews that are done with them thus far. Moreover, women's decision-making abilities in both their personal and familial lives are directly related to their own educational attainment, employment status and ideological viewpoints as well as of their respective husbands.

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Educational Committees, Commissions, and Policies in India after 1947: A Chronological Overview from a Historical Perspective

Sabir Ahmed and Md Mahasin Ali***

Abstract

This research paper focuses on the key educational commissions, educational committees and national educational policies and their reports from a historical perspective, especially after the independence of India. Very briefly, the main focus of this paper is how and why the different educational commissions, educational committees and national educational policies were purposeful, visionary and well-connected to each-others politically, economically, and sociologically from the national level from the historical point of view. This paper covers the various key educational commissions, committees and national policies after 1947 to till date, including the University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), the Indian Education Commission (1964-66), the National Educational Policy of 1968, the National Educational Policy of 1986, the Ramamurti Committee Report of 1992, the Program of Action 1992, and the Yashpal Committee Report of 1993 and National educational policy of 2020 as an overview from the historical perspective. Especially this paper presents what were the major objectives of these educational commissions, committees and policies and how those objectives were relevant and significant in that particular situation from their point of time very precisely and chronologically from the historical perspective. This paper will give a holistic understanding of how the Indian education system is growing up after its independence, basically what are the major historical milestones in the educational field and how those milestones help in Indian national development.

Keywords: *Educational Committees, Educational Commission, National Educational Policy, Historical Perspective.*

* Assistant Professor, North Bengal Teachers Training College, affiliated to WBUTTEPA, Email: sabirahmed12494@gmail.com, Contact: 9732297613

** Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Calcutta, Email: mdmalieducu@gmail.com, Mob- 6290307441

Introduction:

The Indian education system has a rich and diverse history, from early ancient times to till date. In the Vedic period, there was a gurukul system of education, in the post-Vedic period Buddhist education system, in the medieval period Muslim education system and the earlier colonial modern era English education system by the British ruler, later on after Independence modern education system has been going on till date by the Indian Government. If we look at the Indian education system very deeply, we will realize that it has evolved over thousands of years, with various schools of thought and philosophies contributing to its development. From the ancient Gurukul system to the modern education system, the Vedic and post-Vedic periods, especially in the Buddhist period, were the most prosperous Indian higher education systems in the world. India has seen ups and downs, and very significant changes in its approach to the education system. Although this comprehensive Education has always played a crucial role in shaping the history and culture of India. Education has been a crucial role in India's socio-economic development for centuries. Since gaining independence in 1947, India has prioritized the improvement of its education system as a means of achieving its social, economic, and political goals. To achieve this aim, various educational committees, commissions, and policies have been set up in India after 1947 to enhance the quality of education and expand access to all.

The paper begins by providing an overview of the historical context and sets the stage for understanding the challenges and opportunities that existed in the country at various times-point to its educational development after independence. This research paper presents a comprehensive and historical overview of the major educational committees, commissions, and policies that have been set up in India after 1947. The aim is to examine the context in which these initiatives were introduced, and the rationale behind them, including the University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), the Indian Education Commission (1964-66), the National Educational Policy of 1968, the National Educational Policy of 1986, the Ramamurti Committee Report of 1992, the Program of Action 1992, and the National Education Policy of 2020.

Objectives of the Study

Each India Educational Commission, educational Committee and national educational policy after 1947 has a detailed comprehensive report with various significant recommendations or policies according to their objective. The main aim of this paper is to highlight and overview the various key educational Commissions, educational Committees and national educational policies and their

reports from a historical perspective, especially after the independence of India. The objectives of this study on

To explore the background and context of the University Education Commission (1948-49) in India from a historical point of view.

To understand the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) on the development of secondary education in India from a historical perspective.

To understand the holistic role of the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) in the improvement of education in India from a historical point of view.

To evaluate the necessity of the first National Educational Policy of 1968 on the development of the Indian education system from the point of view.

To examine the necessity of the second National Educational Policy in 1986 on the modernization and expansion of education in India from a historical perspective.

To overview briefly Program of Action 1992 on education in India from a historical perspective.

To identify the innovations in the new national higher education policy 2020 from a present and future point of view.

To highlight and overview the policies of the newly accepted higher education system.

Method

The method consists of a conceptual discussion on the key educational Commissions, educational Committees and national Educational policies and their reports from a historical perspective, especially after the independence of India and highlighted gist of this paper is what were the major objectives of these educational Commissions, Committees and policies and how those objectives were relevant and significant in that particular situation from their point of time very precisely and chronologically, from the historical perspective. Holistic understanding of how the Indian education system is growing up after its independence, basically what are the major historical milestones in the educational field and how those milestones help in the Indian national development.

Journey Of The Modern Education System In British India

Before starting to discuss the educational committee, commissions and national educational policy of India after 1947, we should understand what was the condition of education in India before 1947. We know the British East India Company came to India by the name of business around the 16th century but later on, they tried to

come into political power by conquering the Battle of Plassey in 1757 against the king of Bengal Nawab Sirajuddaula. Initially, the East India Company ruled through a dual system of Government but later gained monopoly political power after defeating the Nawabs of Bengal-Bihar-Orissa in the Battle of Buxar in 1764. British East India Company ruled India as a Colony for over 100 years from 1757 to 1857. But did not take any single step in the Indian educational sector, except Wood's Dispatch (1854), which was nothing more than an educational document, much good was said but none was implemented. The East India Company continued to exploit India economically and did not take any measures in the field of education.

Revolutions against the East India Company took place in different parts of India at different times to get rid of exploitation and oppression. When exploitation and oppression were left to an extreme level, the Indian people and the Indian soldiers working under the Company started the Great Revolution in 1857 against the British East India Company. As a result of the Great Rebellion, the British Parliament realized that a colony like India could not be ruled by the East India Company any more, and the British Government took power from the East India Company directly to Parliament and the British Government continued to rule the Indian through the Charter Act passed by the British Parliament. and the first time started to think about social and educational reform in India, Specially for educational reform British Parliament issued Stanley Despatch as a revised form of Wood's Despatch in 1859 and later on, after two decades for the reformation of primary education one commission was set up under the chairmanship of William Hunter which is known as Hunter Commission (1882-83) but in reality, nothing was done because no money was allocated for education.

At first, in 1813 AD, it was said to spend Rs 100,000 per year on education in India, but there was no clear message whether that education would be English education or Indigenous Indian education. As a result, Angloxist and Orientalist conflict has arrived. Ironically, the General Committee of Public Instruction (GCPI-1823) was formed a decade later to resolve the conflict, and the GCPI took another decade to resolve the conflict. Finally, in 1835 AD the Macaulay Minutes were accepted and adopted by governor general William Banting. After that, the British Government started to promote English education which was a turning point for the Indian education system. The main intention for introducing English education in India through the Macaulay Minute was to create a class of clerks to rule a colony like India very smoothly for a long period. Somehow, he was successful in his plan and intention. By creating a class of clerks through this so-called English education system, Britishers were able to continue their rule in India for almost

one century. During this long time, they have introduced some educational reforms like The Indian Universities Commission in 1902 by Lord Curzon, The Morley-Minto Educational Reforms became in 1909, The Hartog Committee established by the Simon Commission in 1929 and Sergeant Plan of Education in 1944 etc. but these were not for the interest of Indian social and national development.

Journey Of The Indian Education System After Independence

World War I and World War II were dramatic turning points in the historical perspective of the whole world. Although the British supported Allise power got the victory but became very weakened economically and militarily. In this situation, in front of extremist and moderate nationalist movements, the British government was forced to hand over full independence to Indians on 15th August 1947. Along with all self-sacrificing Patriotic and unforgettable freedom fighters and national leaders, Mahatma Gandhi played a leading role in Indian National development. He has played a very crucial role in Indian school education. He introduced the concept of Craft centred basic education at Wardha Conference in 1937. Later, after getting independence his concept was adopted as the rationalization of Secondary Education at the school level.

When India got independence on 15 August 1947, there were dichotomous situations, on one hand, it was the most historical and happiest moment for every Indian but in another hand, it was a very challenging task for our national leaders to reorganize the Indian state as a progressive strong country by ensuring the development of its all aspects, like social, economical, political, infrastructural, technological and educational etc. But unfortunately, then, India's social, political and economical condition was very critical and poor. It was not possible to provide universalization of primary education in India. In that situation, national leaders, educationists, socialists and the newly formed Indian Government started to recognize the importance of education in the nation-building process. The Government set up a series of committees, commissions, and policies to improve and develop the education system in the country according to their capacity. So, the development of the Nation and its citizens can be ensured very rapidly.

University Education Commission (1948-49)

At first, getting Independence, the Indian Government framed University Education Commission in 1948 -1949. A few logical questions may arise in readers' minds about the historical context, rationale and aims to set up the commission in higher education instead of the school education commission. Because then India's social, political and economical condition was very critical. So, It was not possible to

provide universalization of primary education in India. One big challenge was there in front of our nation, which is a lack of quality leaders to lead a newly independent India like the big subcontinent effectively towards a certain future. That is why, the University Education Commission was formed by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in 1948 to review the higher education in the country and suggest reforms for its improvement. So that, along with quality education research and innovation could be promoted to produce good quality leaders, doctors, engineers, policymakers, and educators to ensure the progress and development of all aspects of our country- economical, social, political, infrastructure, medical, educational etc. As a member, some eminent educationists have participated in this Commission. Such as Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Dr. Tara Chand etc. The commission submitted its report in 1949 with detailed recommendations on Higher Education. One most emphasized recommendations of this Commission was to set up a Commission on secondary school education as soon as possible. It was a landmark event in the history of higher education in India.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)

After the University Education Commission, secondly, the Indian Government set up a commission on the school education system in 1952 named Secondary Education Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar as Dr. Radhakrishnan said in his recommendation. The historical context and rationale behind this are that only quality leaders, doctors, engineers, policymakers or educators could not make this nation progressive and developed until the citizens of the nation are educated. The main objective of this Commission was to ensure quality school education to all as our constitution said in article 45 under DPSP- 'free and compulsory education up to 6 to 14 years for all children within 10 years'. To create them, productive and ideal citizens of this country show that they can contribute to nation-building works to make a nation strong and progressive rapidly. The commission submitted its report in 1953 with detailed recommendations on school education. The most emphasized recommendation was to rationalization of secondary school education as Gandhiji said in his basic education. So that after getting an education they can become more productive and self-reliant in life and can contribute to nation-building. It was a milestone event in the history of the school in India.

Indian Education Commission (1964-66)

After setting up commissions on the Indian educational system separately, first University Education Commission for higher education and second Mudaliar

Commission on Secondary Education, the Indian Government wanted to set up commissions on the entire Indian education system from school education to higher education to get a holistic comprehensive report based on a thorough analysis. So that the Indian Government could bring national education policy to bring uniformity in the Indian education system based on that comprehensive detailed report. For this purpose, the Government introduced the Indian Education Commission in 1964 under the chairmanship of Daulat Singh Kothari. After a detailed analysis of the entire education system, the commission submitted its comprehensive report in 1966. The commission has suggested so many game-changing groundbreaking recommendations like the 10 + 2 + 3 education pattern, three language formula, school complex and so on to bring fundamental positive change in the Indian education system to ensure uniform quality education for all. The title of this Commission report was “Education and National Development”. That is why, this commission’s name is the Indian education commission (1964-64) but This commission is popular as Kothari Commission by the name of its chairman. This Commission report was a seminal event in the history of education in India.

National Policy on Education 1968

Based on Kothari Commission’s comprehensive detailed report the Indian Government introduced a national education policy in 1968 for inter-country. This is the first National Educational Policy in India. This National Educational Policy was very much comprehensive and detailed and committed to bringing fundamental change in the inter-education system all over the country. The then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi introduced this National Education Policy in 1968 and her intention regarding this educational policy was very good. But due to socio-political instability, internal issues and external conflict with neighbouring countries India was complicated in this decade. That is why, national education policies in 1968 could not be implemented successfully, rather they remained on file as an educational document. Although it was a landmark document as a National Educational Policy in the history of education in India.

National Policy on Education 1986

By getting a little bit of recovery from nearly two decade’s socio-political instability, internal issues and external conflict with neighbouring countries, after 18 years the Indian Government under Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the second National Educational Policy was introduced in 1986. Although he did not set up any dedicated commission for making this new educational policy. But before making the first National Educational Policy of 1968, Kothari Commission was set up. So, it was a

popular criticism of this National Education Policy. After all, the National Educational Policy of 1986 was a groundbreaking educational policy in the history of India. The objective of this National Educational Policy was to provide a comprehensive framework for the development of education in the country. It emphasized the need for greater access to education, the promotion of excellence, and the cultivation of secular and democratic values through education. Adult education, computer education, non-formal education, vocational education, technical and management education and Operation Blackboard for primary education – These are the most important recommendations of NPE 1986. This policy also suggested establishing Navodaya Vidyalaya in every district for providing quality education to talented rural students, who economically, socially and educationally belong to the backward class. This National Education Policy also suggested setting up AICTE, NIOS, NCTE, NAAC and DIET like Autonomous and Statutory Educational bodies for the different fields of education to bring powerful transformational qualitative change in the Indian education system. The policy also recognized the importance of integrating knowledge with the needs of the economy and society. The National Educational Policy of 1986 had a significant impact on the development of education in India. Many of its recommendations were implemented by the government. This National Educational Policy served as a foundation for subsequent educational reforms in the country, and its legacy continues to shape the direction of education policy in India today.

Other Educational Committees, and Commissions after NEP 1986

After the Second National Educational Policies of 1986, firstly, the Indian government set up a committee in 1990 under the chairmanship of Rama Murthy. The objective of this commission was to evaluate the national educational policy of 1986 for deciding what important examinations of this National policy could be implemented. Are there any major gaps where new consideration is needed? This Commission was set up for a detailed review of national education policy in 1986. That is why, this committee is popularly known as the review committee of 1990 and the Ramamurti Review Committee both.

After the submission of a detailed review report of Ramamurti in 1991 about the National educational policies of 1986, The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) appointed a new re-review committee on 31st July 1991 under the chairmanship of Janardhana Reddy to review again the implementing matters of National educational policies of 1986 taken into consideration by the report of the Ramamurti Review Committee. So that these could be finalized as a program for

taking immediate action. Finally, this committee emitted its report in 1992, which is also popularly known as the Programme of Action 1992.

For implementing the Program of Action in 1992 effectively all over the country a new committee, named National Advisory Committee was set up by the Indian Government under the chairmanship of Professor Yash Pal in the same year. The objective of this Commission was to create an education system modern and child-centric, by changing the curriculum of school education and teacher education from outdated information based to updated knowledge-based. This committee submitted its report in 1993 with the title 'Learning without Burden'. The main objective of this Committee was to create a vibrant knowledge-based society by creating a psychological education system.

As a long-term effect of the National Advisory Committee report and Commitment to "the universalisation of primary education to all"- the second Millennium development goal (MDGs) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched in 2000 to make Education free and compulsory for 6 to 14 years children up to class VIII by 86th Amendment of the Constitution in 2002. Besides This, National Curriculum Framework 2005, National Knowledge Commission 2007, National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009 and Justice Varma Committee 2012 have been introduced by the direct or indirect influence of this National Advisory Committee report- "Learning without Burden."

National Education Policy 2020

For meeting the changing needs of society and fulfilling the commitment to the 4th goal-Quality education for all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015, The Indian Government wanted to set up a new National Educational Policy. Initially, The government brought a proposed draft of national educational policies in 2016 for review and feedback by parents, teachers and educators. Later on, the committee for draft National Educational policy chaired by Dr. Kasturirangan was appointed by the Indian Government to evaluate and modify according to the 21st century modern ICT based rapidly changing needs and possible future demands of the nation. So that finalized National Educational policy could be brought as soon as possible. After completing the details modifying and evaluating the draft of 2016 holistically, Dr. Kasturirangan committee Submitted finalized draft to the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Indian Government has announced this draft as the National Education Policy 2020. It is a historic and transformative policy for the Indian education system. It is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the previous policy of 1986. The NEP 2020 is the result of extensive research, consultation, and collaboration with various

stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, and the general public. The policy aims to transform the education system by addressing critical issues such as access, quality, and relevance.

The NEP 2020 aims to promote research and innovation in education and create a vibrant research culture in India. It also recognizes the central role of teachers in shaping the future of education in the country and seeks to enhance their professional capabilities through training and development programs. The policy also introduces several changes in the Indian education system including, from 10+2+3 to 5+3+3+4, the establishment of a single higher education regulator, the introduction of multidisciplinary institutions, and the promotion of internationalization of higher education. Overall, the NEP 2020 is a comprehensive policy framework that seeks to create a modern, world-class education system that equips learners with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the 21st century. It is a significant step towards achieving India's vision of becoming a knowledge society and a global leader in education.

Conclusion

After this long but brief analytical and chronological discussion on the Indian education system, basically about various educational Committees, Commissions, and different national educational Policies from a sequential historical perspective, It is very clear that the Indian education system has evolved over thousands of years, with various schools of thought and philosophies contributing to its development from the ancient Gurukul system to the modern education system. Yes, It has seen ups and downs, and very significant changes in its approach at various periods. Every educational initiative in different periods is orderly and interlinked. especially all these educational Commissions, educational Committees and national Educational policies after 1947 are visionary, purposeful and well-connected to each-others politically, economically, and sociologically at the national level from the historical point of view. There might be a constructive discussion on situational and executive limitations for future learning. These all-University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), the Indian Education Commission (1964-66), the National Educational Policy of 1968, the National Educational Policy of 1986, the Ramamurti Committee Report of 1992, the National Advisory Committee of 1992 played their role effectively according to the political, social, economical, and historical background. Education has always played a crucial role in shaping the history and culture of India by contributing to the political, social, economical and other development of the country. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is also a very seminal and fundamental transformative educational policy document in the recent history of education in India. Now it is time to see how and when the various new policies of NEP 2020 are being implemented in the near future and throughout the upcoming decade.

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Effect of Tertiary Education in Music on Psychological Well-Being of Students

*Ankita Parui**

Abstract

The investigation aimed to find out whether education in music influenced the psychological well-being of music and non-music students. Two random samples – one of 40 music students and another of 40 non-music students who have never studied music. Participants were aged between 18 and 25 years. They belonged to middle socio-economic status families as assessed by standardized tool. Data were collected from colleges in Kolkata by administering a General Information Schedule, Socio-Economic Status Index (Verma et al., 2008) and Psychological Well-Being Scales (Ryff, 1989). It was found that students of music differ significantly from those who never learned music in psychological well-being. It was found that the music students significantly more autonomy than those of other disciplines. In view of seeming mental health issues of music students. Music training made them feel emotions including unpleasant ones more intensely. Music students emerged more autonomous than their non-music peers. Counselling services tailored for music students need to be put in place in colleges to tackle their mental health issues.

Keywords: Music education; Psychological well-being

Introduction

Psychological wellbeing is present in life as a form of psychological functioning. It may improve the psychological conditions experienced by increasing self-knowledge and capacity. Individual's psychological well-being shows the individual's ability to overcome difficult conditions by using personal qualities such as attitude, effort, belief, and proactive struggle, all of which are vital in improving psychological well-being to overcome the problems and challenges of life. Psychological well-being is an important concept related to individual mental health through positive

* Research Student, Department of Home Science, University of Calcutta
Email id: mouparui11@gmail.com

thinking, having meaning in life, having a purpose in life, developing quality relationships with others, and striving for personal self development. **Ryff(1989)** claimed that the constructive components of the psychological well-being, includes six factors:

1. **Autonomy** is a feeling of self-determinism and independence, being able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways, evaluating self by personal standards.
2. **Environmental mastery** is a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment, to choose or create appropriate personal relationships.
3. **Personal growth** is a feeling of continued development and its potential, being open to new experiences, a sense of increasing self-knowledge and effectiveness.
4. **Positive relations with others** having warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; being concerned about the welfare of others; being capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy.
5. **Purpose in life** having goals in life and a sense of directedness and feeling there is meaning to present and past life, holding beliefs that give life purpose.
6. **Self-acceptance** is processing a positive attitude toward the self acknowledging and accepting multiple aspects of self, feeling positive about past life.

Kilgo et al. (2019) defined that the components of student psychological well-being include self-acceptance, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, personal growth and autonomy. A high level of good psychological well-being is indicated by the ability to accept and have a positive attitude, having the self-confidence to achieve purpose in life, trusting relationships with others, having good personal growth, feeling able to act, being independent and being able to resist pressure. **Multisari, W. et al. (2022)** used sample of 271 students. Researchers utilized students' psychological well-being scales to collect the data. The instrument obtained 32 items considered valid, which were then analyzed descriptively. The results showed that 32% of students had psychological well-being to be high to very high, 36% had psychological well-being at a moderate level and 32% students had psychological well-being to be low to very low. Individual psychological well-being was described more by personal growth than by the individual's ability to master the environment, autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose in life and positive relationships with others.

According to **World Health Organization (2010)**, a healthy well-being implies that the basic needs of individuals are met that they have a sense of purpose and are able to achieve important personal goals and socialize in the society. According

to **Keyes (2002)** studied a national sample of 3032 Americans aged 25-74. Results showed that adults with higher psychological well-being than younger and showed more openness to experience. Psychological well-being refers to the extent to which an individual can function optimally in his life, encompassing his/her life's meaning and purpose, positive relationship and self-acceptance. **Panahi et al. (2016)** investigated the influence of components of cognitive emotion regulation, social support and physical activity on the Psychological Well-Being (PWB) of 534 graduate students in a local public university. Among the critical findings of this study was given as follows: Firstly, the PWB of graduate students was primarily influenced by planning, especially through facilitating goal attainment. Secondly, self-blame has a significant negative influence on Psychological Well-Being. **Roslan et al. (2017)** examined Psychological Well-Being (PWB) of 192 master students from a local public university using the Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989). They conclude that the students showed satisfactorily high PWB especially in the dimensions of personal growth, purpose in life and positive relations. The study also reports that age and field of study influence the Psychological Well-Being of the graduates. In general, older graduates report a significantly higher mean score of Psychological Well-Being and graduates from the field of languages demonstrate substantially higher mean score compared to other fields of study.

Barbar, A. (2012) showed that morning exercise has a meaningful effect on the psychological well-being of the students. Seventy students were randomly chosen. After answering the health and physical activities questionnaire and psychological well-being questionnaire, were divided into two groups of control and experimental. The heights, weights and the BMIs of the subjects were also measured. The morning exercise has meaningful effect on psychological wellbeing micro scales, such as environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relations with others, self-acceptance, and purpose in life but it has no meaningful effect on personal growth.

Deci et al. (1989) found that managers of a Fortune 500 company who were more autonomy supportive had employees who were more satisfied with their jobs and with various aspects of the work setting. A study by **Baard, Deci, and Ryan (2004)** of investment banking companies indicated that managers who were more autonomy supportive had employees who experienced greater basic psychological need satisfaction were more engaged in their work, evidenced greater well-being, and had higher performance ratings than did employees of managers who were more controlling. **Lynch, Plant, and Ryan (2005)** studied employees of a psychiatric hospital and found that those who experienced more autonomy support reported greater well-being at work and more intrinsic job satisfaction.

Meanwhile, **Diener et al. (2009)** evaluated in a sample of 689 college students. Results showed that psychological well-being refers to the individual's optimal function in life, which includes self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, life goals, and personal growth.

As an important element in human life, psychological well-being is increasingly being emphasized in the field of education, especially at university level. University students with high Psychological Well-Being is usually also considered as having good mental health level and could maintain a positive relationship with other individuals around. They are also productive and maintain a positive attitude toward life (Waghmare, 2016). **Parray, W. M. and Kumar, S. (2017)** studied on 13 students were selected by purposive sampling within the age range of 16-19 years and administered by Rathus assertiveness schedule (RAS), Rosenberg self-esteem (RSE), perceived stress scale (PSS), psychological well-being (PWB) and Academic achieve scale. The results of the study showed a significant improvement in the students' level of assertiveness and self-esteem and very effective in psychological well-being, academic achievement and reducing stress level of the adolescents.

Holliman, A. J. et al. (2022) surveyed on first year University Students (N=411), for their adaptability, social support and psychological wellbeing and distress one year later. Adaptability, but not social support, was also found to predict psychological distress one year later. The Findings demonstrate the importance of adaptability (one social support to a lesser extent) in predicting psychological wellbeing and distress among University students both at course commencement.

However, in the context of local university students, studied by **Nor Sheereen and Rozumah (2010)** sampled of 386 on-campus students of University Putra Malaysia completed the self-administered questionnaire. The results showed that adolescents had good quality relationships with their mothers and fathers. It also showed that there was no significant difference in the level of self-esteem between female and male adolescents. However females were found to score higher on their academic achievement compared to males. Further analysis showed that the quality of parent-adolescent relationship showed positive significant relations with self-esteem. Adolescents with good quality relationship with their parents were found to have a higher self-esteem compared to others. 47.1% of students in low score for psychological well-being and suggested that many students were at risk of psychological problems. **Sun, J. (2022)** conducted in undergraduate and graduate institutions of China. This study was quantitative in nature and data were collected from 319 respondents. Moreover, psychological wellbeing also has a significant and positive impact on student's academic performance. Self-efficacy and self-

esteem significantly mediate the relationship between music education and psychological wellbeing. The findings of this study open new avenues for future research in music education and psychological wellbeing. This study suggests that the practitioners should make such policies that encourage educational institutes to adopt music education to improve the psychological wellbeing of students. **Mehraban, J. (2020)** investigated the role of music education on students' psychological well-being. The method of this study was causal, comparative and this study was Tonekabon high school students in the academic year of 2009-2010. The sampling method was targeted, with 100 students in two groups of music and normal students. The measurement tool in this study was Reef's psychological well-being scale (1989). The results showed that the average rank of psychological well-being of students is equal to 71.61 and of non-students is equal to 29.84 and the Z test value is equal to 7.123 at the level of 0.01 significance. Thus, music education had an effect on students' psychological well-being ($P < 0.01$). By including music education programs as an independent curriculum and to promoted the students' mental health indicators.

Research Objective

To the study influence of educational study (music and other than music) on Psychological Well-Being of tertiary students

Tools

The following tools were administered to participants for data collection.

i) General Information Schedule prepared by the authors: It comprises 12 items for eliciting identifying and pertinent background information from participants. Six items are open-ended; four are closed-ended; and the rest two are a combination of open and closed-ended types.

ii) Psychological Well-Being Scales (Ryff, 1989): It consists of 42 items in the form of statements assessing test-takers self-reported sense of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Each item can be responded to by endorsing any of the six options – strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree. Of the 42 items, 20 are negatively phrased and the rest 22 are positively phrased. It was found that the tool assessed well-being most reliably and validly at middle range of the score distribution for a sample 1179 women aged 52 years in the United Kingdom. Norms in terms of mean and standard deviation values are based on a sample of 321 physically healthy and well-educated men and women.

iv) Socio-Economic Status Index (Verma et al., 2008): It consists of eight items for assessment of socio-economic status of students. The items pertain to family status; parental education, occupation, and income; caste; dwelling-area; possession of valuables; membership of clubs; political positions etc. Test-retest reliability of the tool was found to be .74. As for construct validity, the total scores on the tool correlated .36, .28 and .28 with measures of verbal intelligence, non-verbal intelligence, and achievement respectively; these coefficients were significant at .01 level. Normative sample comprised 1000 girls and boys of class X; norms are in T scores, z scores and stanines.

Sample

Random sampling technique was adopted and two group of samples were selected. One sample group consists of 40 students of music. Students of music were selected from Hindustani Vocal Music, Rabindra sangeet and Instrumental Music, Departments of Rabindra Bharati University. Another sample comprises 40 students who have never studied music either formally or informally. These students were selected from various arts (humanities), commerce and science undergraduate and post-graduate Departments of two colleges affiliated with University of Calcutta. Age-range of the participants is 18 – 25 years. They belong to middle socio-economic status families as assessed by standardized tool. They are residents of Kolkata.

Procedure

Permission of Departmental Heads and Principals of colleges were asked for and obtained before commencing data collection. Data were collected by personally meeting the students (in groups of about 25 individuals each) at respective institutions and administering the tools. Before scoring the standardized tests, random samples were selected by draw of lots. Initially, the socio-economic status index was scored. Only students who belonged to middle socio-economic status remained in the samples. Then information obtained through the General Information Schedule was tabulated. Next, tools assessing psychological well-being were scored. Computerized statistical analysis was conducted. Descriptive statistics was computed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Central Tendency Values of Music (N = 40) and Other Than Music Students (N = 40)

Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being	Music Students (N = 40)		Other Than Music Students (N = 40)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Autonomy	30.68	6.53	27.33	7.95
Environmental Mastery	27.6	9.19	25.3	6.68
Personal Growth	32.65	8.71	29.88	8.81
Positive Relations	29.4	9.39	28.53	10.03
Purpose in Life	30.45	7.73	30.35	6.44
Self - Acceptance	30.7	9.24	27.03	8.39

Mean values (Table 1) show that participants of music students suffer greater Autonomy, Personal Growth, Environmental Mastery and Self-Acceptance in comparison with other than music students. The two groups are on the average, almost equal in Purpose in Life. Similarly, students of disciplines other than music students show equal standard deviation values (Table 1) in Personal Growth and students of music show high standard deviation values in Environmental Mastery.

Table 2 Results of t-test: Differences in Means of Music and Other Than Music Students

Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being	Computed t-values	Inference
Autonomy	3.16	Difference is significant
Environmental Mastery	1.59	Difference is non- significant
Personal Growth	1.84	Difference is non- significant
Positive Relations	0.62	Difference is non- significant
Purpose in Life	0.08	Difference is non- significant
Self - Acceptance	2.74	Difference is significant

Critical value of t at .01 level of significance, $df = 78$

Table 2. Shows the results of t-test. The t-value is 3.16. These indicate that there is significant difference between mean of Autonomy scores for the participants

music and other than music students. The t-value is 1.59. These indicate that there is non-significant difference between mean of Environmental Mastery scores for the participants music and other than music students. The t-value is 1.84. These indicate that there is non-significant difference between mean of Personal Growth scores for the participants music and other than music students. The t-value is 0.62. These indicate that there is non-significant difference between mean of Positive Relations with other scores for the participants music and other than music students. The t-value is 0.08. These indicate that there is non-significant difference between mean of Purpose in Life scores for the participants music and other than music students. The t-value is 2.74. These indicate that there is significant difference between mean of Self-Acceptance scores for the participant for these groups. So, the 1st and 6th hypotheses are supported and 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th hypotheses are rejected.

Conclusion

Participating students of music tend to be suffering greater Autonomy, Personal Growth and Self-Acceptance in compared with their counterparts from other disciplines. So, it should not be assumed that students of music are immune to mental health problems. Music students' mental health does require special attention as they have chosen a career which is unconventional, demanding and routinely evokes powerful emotions. Institutions must provide counseling and guidance services tailored to meet the specific needs of students of music.

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Inclusiveness in the Perspective of Indian Education Policies

Pramita Roy and Ujjwal Paul***

Abstract

In the late 1990s (i.e., 1997), the philosophy of inclusive education was added to the District Primary Education Program (DPEP), which emphasized the integration of children with mild to moderate disabilities and became one of the most important flagship programs of the Government of India. Special education developed in India in the 1880s, and special schools were usually organized for different classes of people with disabilities. The main disadvantage is that it fostered a segregated environment as there were generally no special schools in the immediate area. For these reasons, integrated education was born in 1986 according to the recommendation of the national education policy. In integrated education, the child is seen as a problem, not as a system. The National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) focused on the fundamental issues of equality and emphasized the need to integrate children with disabilities into other groups. An action plan (POA, 1992) was prepared for the monitoring and implementation of NPE, which proposed a practical principle for children with special needs. The PWD Act of 1995 was an extensive breakthrough law passed in the field of education and economic rehabilitation of disabled people. This comprehensive law covered seven disabilities namely blindness, low vision, hearing impairment, physical disability, mental disability, cured leprosy and mental illness. NCF-2005 is an excellent example of inclusive curriculum because it ensured that children from different social and economic backgrounds with different physical, psychological and intellectual characteristics can learn and succeed in school. The National Education Policy, 2020 focused more on gender equality issues through transgender children and the gender inclusion fund. It gave more flexibility and recognition to schools and other educational institutions, and the standardization of Indian Sign Language (ISL), which are welcome measures to promote inclusion.

* Assistant Professor, Bishnupriya College of Education, Nadibhag, Madhyamgram, North 24 Pgs., W.B., India, E-mail: roy16pramita@gmail.com

** Assistant Professor (West Bengal Education Service), Govt. College of Education (C.T.E.), Banipur, North 24 Pgs., W.B., India, E-mail: ujjwalpauls9@gmail.com

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Introduction

The global education development agenda reflected in the Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015, reflects the global education development goal and aims to “provide inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for everyone” by the year 2030. To accomplish such a challenging objective and all of the crucial aims and goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the entire educational system must be redesigned to support and nurture learning. On a global scale, the landscape of knowledge is rapidly evolving.

Inclusion is an actual implementation as a fundamental human right to education and accommodates the development of societies. Inclusive practice is a teaching technique that acknowledges and utilizes the diversity of students. It ensures that all pupils have access to instructional knowledge equitable. Also, have the opportunity to fully participate in their inclusive education studies. Inclusion demands the deconstruction of discriminatory mechanisms that have resulted in resource deprivation and a lack of possibilities. In India, inclusive education is not a native concept. It was adopted from recognized intergovernmental organizations like UNESCO OF World Bank. Children of all abilities have equal access to and meaningful participation in child care services when included. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participation) Act of 1995 provided equal opportunities, protection of rights, and full participation to people with disabilities. The Integrated Education of Disabled Children Act is a federal law that mandates that disabled children get an integrated education.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To have an insight on the inclusion of disabled children in various school education policies.
- ii. To study the recommendations of various committees, commissions and educational policies from inclusive viewpoint.
- iii. To study the measures recommended in school curriculum to accommodate disabled students in mainstream education.

Background of the Study

The National Education Policy (NEP), which was long-awaited and finally released this year after a torturous wait of more than three decades, has been one of the year’s biggest highlights. It is difficult to create a national education policy for a

nation with such diversity, especially given how quickly social and economic conditions can change.

One issue among the numerous topics that have drawn public interest is the concept of equity and inclusion. Making education affordable and accessible to everyone, especially for kids from underprivileged environments, has been a central theme of all educational initiatives over the years. Each policy statement provides a distinct account of which types of learners in inclusive education need help and attention, even though the general premise is more or less the same. The reasons for making such decisions are not readily evident and require a deeper analysis that is outside the scope of this essay. Our focus will be on how various concepts and applications of inclusive education have traditionally found a home in NEPs. Understanding Inclusive Education in India, the idea of inclusive education is not a native one. The idea gained popularity in India after the 1990s after being appropriated from established international contexts (mostly through international intergovernmental institutions like UNESCO, World Bank, etc.). The initial underpinning of inclusive education was limited to 'special education' or inclusion of children with disability, which has seen some expansion in the past few years. Inclusive education is considered as taking "a holistic approach to school reform and so transforming the way the educational system confronts exclusion". The approach ensures the presence, engagement, and academic success of all students and their diversity in the least restrictive setting and is concerned with identifying and removing educational hurdles. LRE or Least Restrictive Environment was first addressed in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), a law that governs special education in public schools and was passed in the USA in 2004. The classroom for general education isn't always used for LRE. That varies from student to student. The majority of students can learn in a general education classroom, while some may require a more intimate environment like a resource type classroom for certain of their services. A pupil shouldn't be excluded from the general education setting only because the general education curriculum needs to be changed.

Discussion

National Policy on Education (1986)

To encourage education among Indians, the Government of India created the National Policy of Education (NPE). In both rural and urban India, the strategy encompasses all levels of education up to and including colleges. The policy demanded that gaps be eliminated and that educational possibilities be equalized, particularly for Indian women, members of scheduled tribes, and members of scheduled castes. The National Policy of Education, 1986 (NPE, 1986) placed

equality's core concerns in the front center. It emphasizes the significance of including children with disabilities in other organizations. The goal was to "integrate the physically and intellectually challenged with the general population as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth, and to enable them to confront life," as stated in the NPE, 1986. To "integrate the physically and mentally challenged with the general population as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth, and to enable them to confront life with courage and confidence," as stated in the NPE of 1986, was the goal.

The subsequent actions were designed to be taken in this regard.

- Where possible, children with mild disabilities and those with motor impairments would get an education similar to that of other students.
- For children with severe disabilities, special schools with hostels would be offered as close to district offices as possible.
- Sufficient plans would be established to provide impaired pupils with vocational training.
- Teacher training programmes will be refocused, especially for primary school teachers, to address the unique challenges faced by children with disabilities.

Every effort will be made to support voluntary activities for the education of children with disabilities.

Programme of Action (1992)

Plan of Action (1992) was created for the implementation and follow-up of the National Policy of Education. The POA proposed a practical approach for kids with special needs in light of the size of the effort involved in caring for and educating the estimated 15 million children with disabilities. The idea was that a disabled child who can attend a general school should only attend a general school and not a special school. Even children who are first enrolled to special schools for instruction in extracurricular subjects should be moved to regular schools once they master basic academic concepts, social skills, and daily life abilities. It placed a strong emphasis on developing and supporting adult education, education for people with disabilities, non-formal educational institutions, distance learning, rural universities, and early childhood care and education. The POA recommended requiring that the education of children with moderate disabilities, such as those affecting locomotion, be the same and inclusive as that of other children.

The goal should be to integrate those who are physically and mentally challenged into society as equal partners, to set them up for normal development, and to provide them the tools they need to meet challenges head-on.

The following actions were to be taken:

- As much as feasible, the district headquarters will offer special schools with hostels for the children who are severely disabled.
- Adequate plans will be established to provide disabled people with vocational training.
- Teacher education programmes will be revised to better address the unique challenges faced by children with disabilities.
- Every effort will be made to promote voluntary work towards the education of people with disabilities.

Persons With Disabilities Act (1995)

The Person with Disabilities (equal opportunity, protection of rights and full participation) Act, 1995 is the most significant piece of legislation in the history of special education in India. The PWD Act, 1995 was a comprehensive piece of ground-breaking legislation that provided for the economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities as well as their educational needs. It stipulates that up to the age of 18, children with disabilities are entitled to free education in a suitable setting. This comprehensive law addresses seven disabilities, including mental illness, leprosy remission, low vision, hearing loss, locomotor disability, and blindness. The act's Chapter 5 (Section 26), which deals with education, states that the relevant government and the local authorities shall "strive to encourage" the integration of pupils with disabilities in the regular schools.

- Encourage the establishment of special schools in the public and private sectors for those who require special education, with the goal of ensuring that all children with disabilities residing in the nation have access to such schools.
- Make an effort to provide vocational training facilities for the special schools for children with disabilities.
- Transportation services for pupils with disabilities or other financial incentives for parents or legal guardians to help their disabled children attend school.
- The removal of physical obstacles from schools, colleges, and other institutions that provide training for careers in many fields.
- Providing books, uniforms, and other supplies to disabled kids who are enrolled in school.
- Scholarships awarded to students with disabilities.

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- The establishment of a suitable forum for the resolution of parental complaints over the placement of their disabled children.
- Appropriate examination system alteration to exclude questions that are solely mathematical for the benefit of pupils who are blind or have low vision.
- Curriculum revision for the benefit of students with disabilities.
- Redesigning the curriculum to make it easier for students with hearing impairments to take just one language as part of their studies.

National Policy of Disabilities (2006)

On February 10th, 2006, the National Policy for People with Disabilities was established. The Ministry of Social Empowerment has officially endorsed this policy. The policy seeks to fulfil the ideal of an inclusive society where everyone has room for herself and others. The policy serves as a reminder of the rights to equality and freedom for all individuals in all sectors of life. Additionally, it guarantees the idea that it cannot be violated under any circumstances. The National Policy of Disability, 2006 recognizes that people with disabilities are an important source of human capital for the nation and works to foster an environment in which they have access to equal opportunities, full participation in civic duties, and knowledge of their legal entitlements. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2006, serves many of the objectives of the concerned people. It has certain principles that deals with-

- Prevention of disabilities and rehabilitation measures for women with disabilities.
- Children with disabilities.
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), ie., barrier free environment.
- Issue of disability certificate.
- Promotion of NGOs.
- Collection of information of disabled persons; analysis and research of the current situation.
- Social security.
- Cultural involvement of children with SENie. Special Educational Needs.
- Amendments to the existing acts, dealing with the children with disabilities.

National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005

The NCERT created the National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education, a Framework in 1988 in response to the National Policy of Education,

1986. National Curriculum Framework for school education was created by NCERT in 2000. The 2002–2003 academic year marked the start of the curriculum. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE), 2000 was reviewed by the NCERT in 2004 in light of the study “learning without load,” 1993, at the request of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The 35-member National Steering Committee was established with Prof. Yashpal, a former UGC chairman, as its chairman. The National Curriculum draught was created and distributed among the various divisions. Consultations were held in all parts of the country. Newspaper advertisements asking for the public’s comments were published in both national and local publications, and many answers were received. In June 2005, a draught of the national curriculum was presented to the Central Advisory Board of Education for approval. A few members made changes recommendations. The draught and National Curriculum received some modifications before being submitted for CBE approval. The conversation took place on September 6th and 7th, 2005. On September 7, 2005, the CBE adopted the National Curriculum.

The NCF, 2005 proposes the following four principles of curriculum development-

- Linking classroom learning to real-world situations.
- Ensure that rote learning techniques are abandoned.
- Adding to the curriculum such that it promotes children’s general growth as opposed to just serving as a repository for textbooks.
- Increasing the flexibility and integration of examinations with classroom activities.

The NCF 2005 is an excellent example of inclusive curriculum. NCF makes sure that youngsters from various social and economic origins and with a range of physical, psychological, and intellectual traits may study and succeed in school. The needs of impaired children must be addressed directly, starting in early childhood, not only via policies and programmes but also through the design and choice of learning tasks and pedagogical techniques. The major highlights of the inclusive curriculum (NCF, 2005) are-

- All learners should have access to enabling opportunities through the curriculum.
- The teaching-learning process must accommodate the learners’ various needs.
- Instructors must look at methods for assisting all students, including those with disabilities, in learning.

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- Collaboration between instructors and even with other organizations could help achieve this goal.
- Teachers need to give each student individualized attention and be adaptable with activities and objectives.
- The curriculum advises that in order to enhance classroom activities, younger students and older students should be included in planning. This would enable a policy of no rejections, the education of children with special needs (CWSN) in a setting most suited to their needs, and flexibility in lesson plans to accommodate learners' specialised needs.
- Schools need to improve their standing as institutions that help kids, especially those with disabilities, get ready for adulthood.
- Giving every child a multisensory learning experience, given that every child learns differently.
- The schools must maintain quality within the context of cultural and socioeconomic diversity.
- The children with diverse learning abilities must be provided learning experiences with multiple possibilities, including Sign language, Braille, etc. based on the child's needs.

Curriculum design must reflect the commitment to UEE (Universal Elementary Education) not only in representing cultural diversity, but also by ensuring that children from different social and economic backgrounds with variations in physical, psychological and intellectual characteristics are receiving equal educational opportunities.

National Education Policy, 2020

In these times of swift development and advancement, the Ministry of Human Resource Development presented the New Education Policy 2020 prospect, which was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on July 29, 2020, with the sole goal of creating citizens who are holistically productive, contributing to the construction of an equitable, inclusive, and plural society with an increased Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 50% by 2035.

The education system has undergone structural reform as a result of NEP 2020, which aspires to make India a worldwide knowledge giant while promoting equity and inclusion.

Provisions of NEP, 2020 inclined towards the provision of better education for students with disabilities:

- All teacher education programmes now include instruction in how to teach students with certain challenges.
- Neighborhood schools, special schools, and home-based education as possibilities for the education of kids with disabilities, as a start towards resolving misunderstandings over educational options that surfaced during the Right to Education Act, 2009, the RTE Act's 2012 revision, and the RPwD Act, 2016.
- If a student chooses to receive their education at home, the instruction they receive will be reviewed in accordance with the standards in the RPwD Act of 2016. Due to concerns expressed about the availability and calibre of the education given to the students, this provision was implemented.
- To guarantee that there are sufficient resources, such as resource centres, educators, and schools nearby, available for students with impairments
- Schools within a radius of 5-10 km will be combined into one school complex to ensure the provision of necessary services for students with disabilities, including resource centres and educators. The goal of this clause is to address the escalating issue of the shortage of special educators.
- NEP, 2020 has developed short-term specialist courses to teach children with impairments with the existing framework. According to the wants and needs of the pupils, the teachers will be free to select any number of teaching tools.
- The establishment of PARAKH, a national assessment centre. For kids with learning difficulties, PARAKH will ensure accessible evaluation procedures (see "NEP 2020: Making education more inclusive").
- Broadly aligns with the objectives of the RPwD Act, 2016. It has referred to the RPwD Act, 2016 at multiple points and clears out a lot of ambiguities regarding the type of schools for children with special needs.
- Instructors will be prepared to perceive and recognize inabilities, especially explicit learning handicaps because, without such comprehensive training, there will be a staggering lack of skilled teachers. Hence, attention wouldn't be provided to children with disabilities and even if they are provided with the attention it would lead to wastage of time for other children in the class. ("Equitable and inclusive vision in the National Education Policy 2020: A Critique")
- Teachers will be equipped to perceive and identify disabilities, particularly explicit learning disabilities, because there won't be enough qualified teachers without such thorough training. As a result, children with disabilities wouldn't

receive attention, and even if they did, it would cause other students in the class to waste time.

- A greater level of alignment between the NCTE and the RCI has been made to close the gap that both teachers and special educators have identified regarding the lack of pedagogical and content understanding among special educators.
- In line with NEP 2020, a flexible curriculum will be implemented. The Directorate of Empowerment of People with Disabilities will contact national institutes before making any curriculum adjustments (“Examining disability inclusion in India’s new national education strategy”)
- NIOS will create top-notch courses to teach Indian Sign Language and other fundamental disciplines.
- Resource centres and special educators will work together to address the educational and rehabilitation needs of students with severe or multiple disabilities. (“NEP 2020”)
- The NEP 2020 also includes measures for monitoring, non-discrimination in schools, accessible infrastructure, reasonable accommodations, tailored supports, and the use of Braille and Indian Sign Language in the classroom.
- NEP schools and school complexes will be equipped with resources for the integration of children with disabilities with mainstream students. • Provisions for the recruitment of special educators with cross-disability training that combines disability awareness within teacher education.

The NEP combines various schools of thought about the education of kids with impairments. On the one hand, the policy treats disability as a personal issue that needs to be resolved through “rehabilitation” and “mitigation” in order to make it easier for kids with impairments to integrate. On the other hand, it supports the notion of developing an educational system that is intended for kids with and without disabilities to be in the same classroom, tackles barrier-free access, and presents a strategy for including kids with disabilities in the curriculum and evaluation. These seem to be tacked-on, retrofitting answers to the “problem of disability,” rather than a critical analysis of current norms and how they support ableism. The policy, therefore, further undermines the notion of inclusive education, which views the challenges of disabled people as a result of structural constraints, not individual shortcomings that need to be fixed.

Other Government policies & Initiatives:

One of the main initiatives of the former SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA), RTE and RMSA programmes was inclusive education for CWSN. SamagraShiksha will focus on raising educational standards for all students, including CWSN, starting in the academic year 2018–19. Thus, this intervention is a crucial part of SamagraShiksha. The component supports a variety of student-focused initiatives, such as the identification and assessment of CWSN, the provision of aids, appliances, corrective surgeries, Braille books, large print books, and uniforms, therapeutic services, the development of teaching-learning material (TLM), assistive devices & equipments, environment building and orientation programmes to create a positive attitude and awareness about the nature and needs of CWSN, the purchase/development of instructional materials, in-service training of special educators and general teachers on curriculum adaptation, stipend for girls with special needs etc. The element also highlights how the Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act of 2009 is being implemented for kids with special needs (within the age group of 6-14 years). To properly address the needs of CWSN inside the school, additional independent resource support (financial aid towards the salaries of special educators) is also made available. The Inclusive Education for Disability at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) programme was put into place to meet the educational needs of CWSN in the secondary and senior secondary levels. The Plan sought to give all students with disabilities who had completed eight years of elementary school the opportunity to finish four years of secondary school in a supportive setting within the secondary general education system (classes IX to XII).

Conclusion

India, however, still lacks a well-recognized ‘working definition’ and shared understanding of ‘Inclusive Education’. This is due to a lack of systematic effort amongst government and other stakeholders in exploring the meanings, relevance and applications of Inclusive Education in India. This is also the reason why expressions of Inclusive Education are often placed under broader social concepts like inclusion, equity, access etc. Special Education is not a place. It is not a room at the end of the hallway, where students with disabilities are educated separately from their peers. It is a service or services provided in a variety of ways and settings, based on a student’s individual needs. One of the components of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Special Education law, is the expectation that student with IEP’s should be educated alongside their non-disabled peers (in the General Education classroom) as much as it is appropriate, which is referred to as the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for that student.

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Jesuit Education: Contemporary Crossroads Ahead

*Debasis Poddar**

Abstract

The Society of Jesus has celebrated 2021-22 as the 500th anniversary year of so-called 'Cannonball Moment'; since St. Ignatius of Loyola, forerunner in the Society of Jesus, received the providential brunt out of a cannonball shot in the Battle of Pamplona on 20th May, 1521. Since then, a poles-apart legacy vis-à-vis philanthropic service- by public education for commoners- has been set, often than not known as Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP), to turn these pro bono educational institutions a Jesuit missionary network with global outreach to its credit; under the leadership of Catholic Church. The Jesuit enterprise has had a lasting impact upon the spread of education-modern (read the Western) education in particular- while India was colonized and the mission did carry forward its presence in public education enterprise even afterwards. With the wake of liberalization-privatization-globalization, however, Jesuit mission is put to a paradox of public education discourse. On one side, basic utility services like education and health turn privatized to such extent that public education and public health sound oxymoron while, on the other, proximity to profiteering policy ought to take the Jesuit mission away from public service; thereby push the same towards existential perils. With his lived experience of Jesuit lifeworld around, the author pleads for means and methods to carry forward the pro bono service vis-à-vis public education with survival instinct on in the midst of market economy across the world. In the pedagogical context of Jesuit education, the forthcoming plaint is applicable to all sundry social enterprises alike.

Keywords: *ad maiorem dei gloriam, alumnorum cura personalis, Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, servant leadership, etc.*

* Professor of Law, National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam.

“Ite inflamate omnia” (Set the world on fire). St. Ignatius of Loyola.¹

I. Public Education for Sustainable Peace

Besides mainstream orthodox mission of its praxis, the Ignatian pedagogy may be read with secular canons of narratives; thereby getting craftsmanship of the discourse developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola contextualized to his time and space. Accordingly, the pedagogy experimented by Ignatius corresponded to the then lifeworld so well that the legacy subsequently extended its reach far and wide across the world; by courtesy, colonial expansionism of the West-European states. More than mere coincidence, it was far-reaching foresight of the pedagogue that a self-sustained genre initiated its odyssey toward fruition of the nation-building enterprise in the West; followed by extension of the legacy to rest of the world through Society of Jesus. So far as schooling is concerned, Jesuit legacy deserves credit of a forerunner in modern public education by merit of its own. At bottom, Xaverian cult has served the systemic purpose of civilization vis-à-vis preparation of disciplined, educated and enlightened workforce to ascertain uninterrupted supply chain of labour, skilled labour in particular, to engage capitalist mode of production, thereby succeed newer economy; after Adam Smith, to boost wealth of nations. What St. Ignatius and his Society of Jesus engaged was minute experimentation with servant leadership to keep Jesuit spiritualism afloat in this increasingly materialistic lifeworld.

A vital lesson to learn from Ignatian pedagogy lies in getting modern public education charged with value education. While industrial political economy takes citizenry away from the basic humanity, Ignatian pedagogy is but known for reverse syndrome to take citizenry back to the spirit of basic humanity; a universal and non-negotiable criterion for humane civilization beyond the bound of time and space. The world thereby learnt to stay committed to the greater glory of God, an icon of inner integrity for mankind, while leaving nothing beyond scientific inquiry about the universe; by courtesy, science, a newer knowledge domain on its rise. What went instrumental was parental protection from getting development blown out of proportion. Hitherto chronicles witnessed priest as a parent of civilization. Jesuits carry forward the responsibility to care for humanity and keep the same customized to contemporary times; by means of Ignatian pedagogy. The author explores prudence in the praxis; leaving its perennial relevance to humanity even after five

¹ “Set the world on fire” is a curious expression. Fire destroys; the world is already on fire with hatred, resentment, greed, lust, and other passions that consume individuals and whole societies. But fire purifies too; in the Bible, flames burn up the weeds and the refiner’s fire purifies gold.

Jim Manney, Go Set the World on Fire, IgnatianSpirituality.com (A Service of Loyola Press). Available at: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/go-set-the-world-on-fire/>

hundred years of his cannonball moment in the Battle of Pamplona (1521). The legacy of Jesuit mission prompted Vivekananda to constitute Ramakrishna Mission in 1897. Governed by liberal politics, after missionary Christians, Missionary Hindus initiated drive for education and health to attain larger public good.

The single largest agenda before St. Ignatius was restoration of peace; thereby prevent his Christian brotherhood from such mutual destruction through bleeding one another. With this wisdom, Ignatius found public education instrumental to his peace mission. Here lies the genesis behind his drive for public education; for the marginalized mass in particular. St. Ignatius finds his seat in the chronicles of Christianity for his struggle against conflict. He waged a peaceful war against the hostility of war during his lifetime; with radical means and method of public education around. Education so far remained individualist and limited to elite gentry. Ignatius extended the same to the community; somewhat similar to import of fire by Prometheus from heaven for men of the morbid and the mortal world. The substance of his public education appears revolution in itself. hitherto public education was limited to means and methods of warfare while Ignatius initiated his public education for building character of the community; with his wisdom to develop a citizenry worthy of humane civilization. The contemporary West-Europe remains hypothecated to the pro-bono cult initiated by Ignatius with public education. India is no less beneficiary of the Jesuit legacy; in the wake of modern public education in India during nineteenth century in particular. Whether and how far the driving force was conversion is a point apart since the same ought to drive research foci elsewhere. Sporadic cases of resort to force apart, freedom of profession, practice and propagation of religion stands recognized nowadays. Besides, the same is guaranteed by Article 25 of the Constitution of India. In contemporary times, conversion is no longer a concern; albeit, few- too few- cases of resort to force apart.

So far as team spirit toward public good by selfless public service is concerned, credit of maiden responsible civil society movement is due to Society of Jesus since Ignatius constituted this congregation of Jesuits as God's own army; way back in 1534. Indeed, the mission went initially well. However, with gradual decline of the catholic church in Vatican as a powerhouse, Jesuits witnessed public hostility across the continent and struggled to survive anti-establishment protestant public since the Society was branded by popular (mis)perception as an agency run by papacy with allegiance to the Vatican;² similar to civil society comradery getting scandalized in recent times.

2 Read Alexandra Walsham, "This Newe Army of Satan": The Jesuit Mission and the Formation of Public Opinion in Elizabethan England, in D. Lemmings et al (eds.), *Moral Panics, the Media and the Law in Early Modern England*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009; pp. 41-62. Available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057%2F9780230274679_3

II. Epiphany in Knowledge Epistemology

Besides metamorphosis vis-à-vis purpose of education, i.e., from war education to peace education, Ignatius initiated a paradigm shift in philosophy of education. So far as newer epistemology of education is concerned, hitherto assumption went replaced by experience; then then emerging genre. Thus, a-priori method went set aside by a-posteriori method to set Ignatian pedagogy, i.e., hypothetical fiction getting testified by corroborated fact. By courtesy, Ignatian praxis, fact emerged as corroborated fiction, something worthy of cognizance to knowledge profession till date; albeit, with more rational qualifiers nowadays.

Here lies the epiphany in education; brought in by Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP). In earlier times, both war education and eclectic education were governed by blind adherence to substance of instruction since conviction was locomotive for both. Indeed, like eclectic education, IPP is inspired by conviction (read faith). In his pedagogy, Ignatius transcended parochial faith: "... those who do not share this faith can gather valuable experience from this document because the pedagogy inspired by St Ignatius is profoundly human and consequently universal".³ Also, for instance, responsibility to care for each individual student attract appreciation: "In this whole effort to form men and women of competence, conscience and compassion, Ignatius never lost sight of the individual human person. He knew that God gives different gifts to each of us. One of the overriding principles of Jesuit pedagogy derives directly from this, namely *alumnorum cura personalis*, a genuine love and personal care for each of our students".⁴ The responsibility for moral and intellectual formation of students rests upon teacher concerned: "every teacher worthy of the name must believe in young people and want to encourage their reaching for the stars, to internalize attitudes of deep and universal compassion for suffering fellow men and women and to transform themselves into men and women of peace and justice, committed to be agents of change in a world which recognizes how widespread is injustice, how pervasive the forces of oppression, selfishness and consumerism".⁵ A combination of three elements reigns the circle: experience, reflection and action and the same constitutes the core corpus of IPP: "It is our way of proceeding ... as we accompany the learner on his or her journey of becoming a full human person".⁶ All these mentioned above are charged with humanity; more than the faith alone.

3 Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach*, London, 1993; paragraph 6. Available at: http://www.sjweb.info/documents/education/pedagogy_en.pdf

4 *Ibid*, paragraph 139.

5 *Ibid*, paragraph 123.

6 *Ibid*, paragraph 29.

The recent struggle for Society of Jesus appears manifold. First, characteristics of classroom witness volte-face. Jesuit education is preferred by the community. Therefore, classroom is often than not full of pupils from elite background; spoiled by parents. Consequently, words of wisdom from the Jesuits hardly fall in place. Second, IPP suffers setback out of no fault of its own. Jesuits are getting extinct due to want of fresh entry to fraternity in the given age of hedonist consumerism, thereby getting replaced by professional pedagogues devoid of commitment to the Ignatian pedagogy. Indeed, more qualified, they but hardly handhold individual pupils with parental care. Due to want of social security, pedagogues hardly afford to embrace lay-Jesuit order, thereby get pledged to servant leadership, since they possess responsibility to protect kinship in their respective family; perhaps the most primary institution in the society. In the absence of policy regime for acknowledgement of the crossroads vis-à-vis right and duty as 'jural correlatives',⁷ despite their allegiance, people from the laity seldom transcend the threshold of household due to want of basic rights to correspond to duty; otherwise anticipated from the laity.

Last yet not least, higher education institutions appear the Achilles' heels for Jesuits since IPP is primarily meant to boost school education with space for building character; thereby getting the society civilized. The epistemology of higher education is governed by presupposition vis-à-vis freedom of thought; something averse to orthodox genre of getting pupils disciplined to the Jesuit lifeworld; followed by Christian spiritualism. A paradox is apparent on the face of record. While the higher education institutions are often than not troubled by disorder, Jesuit higher education institutions maintain enviable institutional governance. Despite disorder, premier public institutions remain far ahead in pursuit of knowledge. Also, another paradox lies elsewhere. While public higher education institutions remain known for intelligence quotient, Jesuit institutions remain known for ethical quotient. Both possess potential of their own and deserve reasonable classification while getting subjected to comparative value judgment. Albeit, conjunction apart, public higher education institutions appeal to head while Jesuit institutions appeal to heart. Both plead for premises to suit to their ideologue politics; thereby fortify respective castles of their own. In final count, a functional coexistence of both appears in practice so far.

⁷ For details, refer to Wesley Newcomb Hohfeld, *Fundamental Legal Conceptions as Applied in Judicial Reasoning*, The Yale Law Journal, Vol. 26, No. 8 (June, 1917), pp. 710-770. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/786270.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A12cc3313edbf41c6ed6a81f0b3b03c1d>

III. Public Education toward Development

Discipline is followed by development and the wisdom appears axiomatic for individual and collective lifeworld alike. The history witnessed regular contribution of education for peace and development. While Henry Dunant condemned armed conflict after Battle of Solferino (1859),⁸ he followed St. Ignatius' legacy of humanity, albeit unwittingly, to minimize human suffering during and after armed conflict. At bottom, commitment of Dunant to get human suffering out of armed conflict minimized but went initiated by sense of default brotherhood- that the Christians ought not to bleed one other- and, in unavoidable circumstance, evoked international humanitarian jurisprudence to avoid the void of armed conflict; so far as possible. The archaic maxim used to suggest non-applicability of the law while war is on, e.g., all is fair in war, or, where law ends, war erupts, and so on. International humanitarian jurisprudence played a gamechanger, thereby reversed the trend to enable law in times of conflict, e.g., even in time of war, law reigns. Since then, international humanitarian law developed the rule of law genre during armed conflict; something non-negotiable nowadays as customary international law around the world.

The Ignatian mission, however, explores more fundamental concerns, e.g., means and methods to enlighten men; thereby prevent warfare getting institutionalized anyway. The enlightened men ought to prefer peaceful settlement of disputes by default. St. Ignatius thereby intended to set aside warfare, albeit through circuitous route, way back in the early sixteenth century. Thus, Battles of Pamplona and Solferino enabled peace mission through enlightenment of St. Ignatius and Dunant respectively. In its essence, Ignatian pedagogy went played out as pro-development movement. In the midst of late-medieval anarchy, Ignatius regimented skilled workforce with discipline and work ethic to join nation-building mission; thereby engage labour for the progressive development of emerging industrial economy to culminate into fruition afterwards. Reasoning behind servant leadership lies in labour-intensive cadre; inspired by the goodwill to sacrifice own self in larger public service. In the inter-war world, Herman Hesse depicted a narrative of servant leadership in his novel.⁹ In the post-war world, his fiction kindled Greenleaf get the legacy of service theorized in his masterpiece.¹⁰

8 Henry Dunant, *The Memory of Solferino* (1862), reprint by International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, 1939. Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-0361.pdf>

9 Herman Hesse, *Journey to the East* (1932).

10 Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Servant as Leader* (1970); followed by subsequent books. Available at: http://www.ediguys.net/Robert_K_Greenleaf_The_Servant_as_Leader.pdf

Subsequently, the term has turned a buzzword to the Jesuit fraternity since the given spirit of public service owes its legacy to the antiquity of Christianity.

IV. Servant Leadership: A Secular Service

The imagination of leadership in public service owes its genesis to Jesus himself. Jesus went oft-quoted, “I came to serve, not be served”; somewhat similar version got documented later.¹¹ The Jesuits carry forward the legacy of servant leadership; through charitable deeds and public education in particular. The Society of Jesus was the maiden outfit- perhaps- to deliver public education for all sundry students irrespective of faith.¹² Subsequently, other religious outfits followed similar order. For instance, Ramakrishna Mission Belur; well-known for its educational enterprise worldwide, may be illustrated here. However, 500th anniversary of the cannonball moment also appears a time to take stock of the mission and the effort went initiated meanwhile. Introspection may be divided in terms of externality and internality. In the post-war world, and more so since liberalization-privatization-globalization in particular, agenda of value education grapples with existential

11 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? {9:15}

The King James Version of the Holy Bible, New Testament, The Epistle to the Hebrews, pdf 2001, p. 137. Available at: <http://www.davince.com/download/kjvbiblen.pdf>

12 A word of explanation may be in order. What is meant by the expression “the first teaching order within the Catholic church”? What about the monasteries of the Benedictines in the Middle Ages, and what about the great Dominican and Franciscan teachers at the medieval universities? The Jesuits differed from these and similar prototypes in three significant ways. First, after a certain point; they formally and professedly designated the staffing and management of schools a true ministry of the order, indeed its primary ministry, whereas in the prototypes it never achieved such a status. Second, they actually set about to create such institutions and assumed responsibility for their continuance. Third, these institutions were not primarily intended for the training of the clergy but for boys and young men who envisaged a worldly career. No group in the church, or in society at large, had ever undertaken an enterprise on such a grand scale in which these three factors coalesced.

John W. O'Malley, S.J., How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education, in Vincent J. Duminuco (ed.), *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, Fordham University Press, New York, 2000. A pdf version of the piece with permission, as mentioned, is available at: <https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/top/church21/pdf/HowtheFirstJesuitsBecameInvolvedinEducation.pdf>

challenges and the same trouble socio-religious outfits alike.¹³ A paradigm shift appears commonplace in public perception about education. Education is expected to bring in livelihood; rather than salvation. Therefore, functional balance between idealism and realism is a need of the hour. So far as the challenges vis-à-vis internality is concerned, candid introspection by the fraternity flags off gap between theory and practice.¹⁴ such a vacuum ought to indulge in void; if remains unattended. Not without reason that all these otherwise ideologue outfits increasingly insist upon professional education, e.g., commerce and management education, legal education, and the like; thereby assist student attain decent means of livelihood.

In its anxiety of livelihood after higher education, quest for salvation finds backseat. Consequently, Jesuit higher education institutions hardly patronize liberal education and other knowledge domains with lesser market potential; albeit, hardcore religious studies with apparent connect to groom regimented brothers apart. These institutions, therefore, cannot grow as higher education institutions since none of them is justified to the nomenclature of university in technical count as it is yet to house the universe with all its features. For instance, regional language courses cannot be introduced since these courses cannot fit into the given rationale of revenue generation on regular basis. English is but a course available since the same can fit into the given market rationale; rather than academic potential of English language and literature with its own merit. At the same time, in a parallel innuendo, life of subject is limited to its default tenure during revenue generation. Consequently, management education is vulnerable since the same is a sunset

13 Achievement of value-oriented goals is not easy. There are formidable challenges working at cross-purposes to our aims. Here are but a few (e.g., limited view of education, prevalence of pragmatism, desire for simple solutions, feelings of insecurity, government-prescribed curricula, and the like).

Vincent J. Duminuco, S.J., *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, Fordham University Press, New York, 2000, pp. 266-271.

14 The signature Jesuit pedagogy, the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm or IPP, is underutilized at Jesuit colleges and universities. This underutilization is a result of faculty not knowing it exists or knowing it exists and not knowing how to use it, and/or using it without training or documenting its impact on teacher effectiveness and/or showcasing it to their students. As a result, the distinctive Jesuit thinking and learning model (IPP) is not effectively employed by either teachers or students and, as a result, cannot strengthen teaching and learning respectively.

Maureen McAvoy, *Training Faculty to Adopt the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, IPP and its Influence on Teaching and Learning: Process and Outcomes*, e-Publications@Marquette University, 1-1-2013. Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/67757694.pdf>

discipline worldwide. The corporate policy for profit alone ought to reduce knowledge to product, education to service and pedagogue to service-provider; thereby turns institution to industry; something antithetical to progressive development for the philanthropic praxis of St. Ignatius in time ahead. A public discussion followed by public debate- after Amartya Sen- upon the university as a seat of public domain for knowledge practice ought to proceed toward resurrection of the Jesuit institutions; towards fruition of the fraternity into perfection.

Emphasis upon the systematic socialization of IPP through orientation programme for the fresh cadre and refresher course for all others in the faculty on regular basis, followed by evaluation and increment on the count of score may work well to get them incentivized. In course of socialization to the legacy, potential lay-Jesuits may be identified by few veterans with the passage of time. Lay-Jesuits are entitled to no patronage by the Society of Jesus while they are expected to follow order similar to those designated by the Society. In the absence of basic social security, the project appears devoid of pragmatism. Appropriate induction policy is required to facilitate lay-Jesuits maintain at least themselves- not family peers- vis-à-vis financial security and basic healthcare after the age of superannuation. A duty toward individual care- *cura personalis*- corresponds to original thought of the mission and thereby applicable to lay-Jesuits; pledged to supplement Jesuits to deliver public service to those in need. Subsequently, conundrum between competing- if not conflicting- agenda of the order, e.g., *cura personalis* on one side and *nihil ultra* on the other, stands unfolded; followed by conversation between them towards mutual conciliation.

Even before the advent of state as a political institution, St. Ignatius initiated Society of Jesus as institutionalized cadre; pledged to public service. Accordingly, bureaucracy- as articulated by Max Weber a century back and practised by state afterwards- followed ancient Jesuit legacy vis-à-vis mission of public service. Irrespective of ideology, most of hitherto regimented political outfits- Communist Party of India (CPI) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) alike- engage institutionalized cadre to deliver respective political agenda. Jesuit fraternity deserves credit for the maiden effort in getting cadre regimented to deliver voluntary public service for the humanity even during peacetime. A credit of the Ignatian mission lies in the delivery of secular service despite the same getting delivered by an outfit with faith in religion.

V. Privatization of Basic Public Services

In contemporary times, public-private polemics may and does engage Jesuit fraternity vis-à-vis establishment of private higher education institutions around while mission for Society of Jesus is public service. Whether and how far delivery of public service is possible by private institutionalism raises moot point since private entrepreneurship is often than not played out for profit; something antithetical to legacy of the Society of Jesus and the conundrum need to get clarified to the society at large.

The confusion may be clarified by classification of the given private institutionalism. Indeed, private enterprise often than not proceeds for profit. However, the correlation between private enterprise and profit may be contested by both logic and experience. While getting carried away by the synergy between private players and profit motives, diversity of private players is left to oblivion. Economic enterprise proceeds for revenue while social enterprise run by Jesuits to deliver public service proceeds for reputation. Visva-Bharati is another classic illustration. Established by Tagore, a private institution until bequeathed to Government of India, it was not known for profiteering motivation; even before Visva-Bharati got nationalized. Therefore, hypothesis stands clarified that the Jesuit higher education institutions and those profiteering are Janus-faced vis-à-vis institutional characteristic. Even otherwise, in recent past, a papal message condemned privatization of natural resources like water.¹⁵ Similar allegation against privatization is available in the Jesuit fraternity of India.¹⁶ Jesuit higher education institutions need to avoid pitfalls of profiteering motivation; even with otherwise smart argumentation advanced by the neoliberal lay-Jesuits with a crocodiles' cry for institutional survival. In final count, soul ought not to stand sacrificed for life.

15 We urgently need shared projects and concrete gestures that recognize that every privatization of the natural good of water, at the expense of the human right to have access to this good, is unacceptable.

Pope Francis on the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation; 1 September 2018. Available at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180901_messaggio-giornata-cura-creato.html

16 The most important aspect of globalization is privatization. Privatization of government enterprises has adversely affected the lives of the poor. Even since globalization began, there have been cuts in government spending particularly expenditure on services that are crucial to the poor, the vulnerable and the aged.

Fr. Ambrose Pinto, S.J., Jesuit Response to Globalization, Ranchi Jesuits, 4 June 2019. Available at: <https://ranjesu.org/getResources.php?newsid=13>

Core normative issues apart, Jesuit institutional governance nowadays appears flexible about inclusion of the laity and prudence behind such a policy is apparent on the face of record. First, gradual decline in the Jesuit population poses a contemporary concern for Society of Jesus. Second, lay-Jesuits possess lived experience in mundane affairs. Consequently, lay-Jesuits increasingly take-over the management of Jesuit institutions nowadays; middle management in particular. Whether and how far lay-Jesuits deliver public service to those in need- the way Jesuits did so far- remain somewhat unsettled; albeit, left to judgment of the posterity.

Another challenge lies in getting Jesuit higher education institutions inclusive enough; not to keep public sphere limited to men alone. Reasoning behind St. Ignatius' policy was charged by the bona fide intent to protect women from the vagary of public space in the late-medieval lifeworld. Now, five hundred years after the cannonball moment, the Society of Jesus ought to appreciate character of the community in its given times. In an ever-changing universe, what alone appears constant is change. In earlier times, not even a century back, coeducation in the Jesuit institutions was beyond imagination. Subsequently, coeducation got accepted by Jesuit fraternity. Likewise, entry of women cadre to the institution-building leadership is a matter of time. Rather than placement of male and female colleagues together, missionary institutions may follow separation of gender otherwise. Accordingly, Jesuit Fathers may run institutions for male students while women cadre may be given responsibility to run institutions for female students. The missionary school education is run likewise as parallel enterprise since long back. The legacy may be extended to higher education institutions as well.

The Ignatian intent behind emphasis upon education was supply of the competent cadre for public service; something belongs to public sphere and deserves non-discriminative policy by default. In the given age of gender equity, women frequent to even hazardous public spheres, e.g., aircraft to statecraft, healthcare to hostility, and so on, with laurels no less than men. St. Teresa set a signal for the Jesuit fraternity to follow in time ahead. The apprehension about dilution of the original order lacks logic. Timely evolution went apparent meanwhile with introduction of coeducation in Jesuit educational institutions. Before Society of Jesus is misunderstood on the count of patronage to protectionism, prudence lies in getting its policy customized to keep pace with time; sans compromise with individual integrity. Both are but placed in the Garden of Eden to stay together- yet mutually separated- with default integrity.

Indeed, inclusive service is apparent in practice. For instance, sisters receive assignment of running female hostel and services are provided to the best of their ability and agility. Non-negotiable inclusion peculiar to women apart, Jesuit institutional governance but remains devoid of women; something similar to privatization by the dominant gender. At its least, the same constitutes male monopolization in technical sense of the term. A parallel cadre, like Society of Mary or Jesuit Sisters or something else, is anticipated in advance to bring in gender equilibrium in time ahead. Without dilution of the legacy, inclusion of women cadre in the leadership ought to supplement institutional governance with a newer workforce while the Jesuit headcount suffers steady decline.

For prospective policy prognosis, public discussion- if not debate- appears axiomatic to work out a policy prescription for the Jesuit institutional governance in time ahead. A policy paradox lies in tension between aspiration for continuity of the Jesuit legacy on one side and apprehension of compromise with the Jesuit legacy on the other. Thus, in the midst of polemics between classical thought and liberal thought, the movement is posited at the crossroads of institutional governance. A policy advocacy to spearhead liberal thought, this effort is meant to advance arguments with reasoning that inclusion of the laity and women cadre to institutional governance ought to fortify their fortress better than ever before; more so due to decline vis-à-vis headcount in Jesuit fraternity. Taken together, they contribute to pro-Jesuit community- a somewhat secular agency- to carry forward the Jesuit mission toward delivery of public service to those in need of care. The legacy initiated by St. Ignatius was subsequently adopted by nation-states through doctrine of responsibility to protect (R2P); equivalent to the peremptory norms of international jurisprudence (read *Jus cogens*). In the wake of recent privatization, while statecraft succumbs to intangible systemic persuasion to minimize public service to its subjects, Society of Jesus but continues to deliver public service to those in need. Inclusive governance facilitates the fraternity cope with struggle for its own survival; something beneficial to larger public interest, more than survival of the fraternity alone.

VI. Resurrection of the Cannonball Moment

In the wake of privatization, potential pitfalls appear plenty to subvert public service mission of the Society of Jesus in time ahead and the predicament may and does emerge from within the system. Interpretation of diversified agenda of the mission may and does create a conundrum of choice before the fraternity. For instance, both *cura personalis* and *ad maiorem dei gloriam* comprise core corpus of the Society while craftsmanship of intellectual technology may challenge the Jesuits at critical crossroads of conscience; thereby drive the fraternity either way. While lay-Jesuits secure entry to the hierarchy, neoliberal politics ought to get played out to trap the Society with the totem of profit. Consequently, *cura personalis* may get

set aside in time ahead with systemic spotlight upon *ad maiorem dei gloriam* alone, with innuendo that care for human being must get push to backseat to facilitate rush for the greater glory of God through maximization of productivity twisted out of human agency; without heed to basic human rights and fundamental freedom while the same went acknowledged, also endorsed, worldwide.¹⁷ More than privatization in technical sense of the term, reduction of Jesuit institutions to profiteering organizations to exhaust life expectancy of its industrious workforce ought to emerge as single largest challenge before the Society in contemporary times and the Jesuit hierarchy is required to respond to the challenge of systemic bestiality in time ahead. The glory of God cannot go greater anyway by getting His own children grinded into the yoke of corporate greed. The inner chapel sermons humane compassion and those employed in God's own mission deserve the same alike.

In its essence, *cura personalis* is meant to gestate a spirit for the Jesuit order vis-à-vis exchange with one and all around; not pupils alone, but pedagogues and the public alike. As a forerunner in the delivery of public service for several centuries, the Society ought not to fall prey to corporate boobytraps in quest of financial gain alone since goldrush for profit ought to disintegrate the Jesuit spirit vis-à-vis public service in time ahead; similar to slow-yet-steady loss of salt from its body while a salt doll getting weathered. The parochialism involved in the corporate lifeworld ought to prevent public charity as revenue loss for the worthless and such a systemic estoppel appears a matter of time to prompt the Society getting unbecoming of its own. In reverse situation, the Society getting insolvent while delivering public service to those in need resembles the salt doll getting dissolved to get merged to the sea itself. Let the Jesuit fraternity take the call after a narrative persona of The Isha Upanisad.¹⁸ Indeed, sustainability appears concern for institutions including the Society of Jesus. The default fallacy in financial prudence but needs no proof since no corporate inc. has survived five centuries the way Society of Jesus does so far with its benevolence. What is born will die after the law of nature. What but remains is the deeds during lifetime.

In the New International Economic Order, two alternatives are available to the Society: fraternal benevolence and financial prudence. The Jesuit fraternity is required to respond to the clarion call with due care and caution. Indeed, balances between these two canons of lifeworld sounds sense. In cases of irreconcilable conflict, the Society is required to take the call to adopt one and the same lies in policy priority of one above another. In final count, *cura personalis* cannot be

17 For details, refer to the Charter of the United Nations, 1945; read with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

18 For another (diversified) version, refer to THE SALT DOLL, in Anthony de Mello, S.J., *The Song of the Bird* (1982).

compromised to let the glory of God glitter since the same ought to disown God himself. In the Garden of Eden, without guilty mind, Adam defied divine intent to care for the fellow creature out of *cura personalis*; albeit, in its primitive form. They were subjected to sexual sensuality only after consumption of the forbidden fruit. The original scene is pregnant with potential for interpretation in reverse way. Had he not cared for fellow creature, Adam could have failed the test by the God for unkindness to fellow creature; thereby been convicted to death penalty. Compared to death, exile to the Purgatorio¹⁹ deserves public appreciation as lesser evil for the humanity to survive by lesser punishment despite defiance to the divine intent. Even the God Himself sacrificed Jesus- His own son- for emancipation of His creation. Therefore, canonization to get God glorified through compromise with His creation suffers from vacuum- if not void- as righteous interpretation of the divine intent behind. In final count, the Jesuit mission is intended to deliver service to public, including those employed inside, not to extract profit by resort to the systemic force in lieu of livelihood. In final count, service for humanity is construed as creation of the God while servitude against humanity is recreation of the devil: 'The Merchant of Venice'.²⁰ The enterprise is no longer social while the same turns too commercial to put its subjects to jeopardy; something antithetical to the ancient vision²¹ and to the Constitutional provision²² alike. The oft-quoted wisdom of Abraham Lincoln appears appropriate to the Jesuit mission:

19 Refer to Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Part II* (1304-07).

20 Refer to William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (1600).

21 When you eat your fill, when you build and occupy good houses, when your cattle and flocks increase, when you have plenty of silver and gold, and when you have abundance of everything, be sure you do not feel self-important and forget the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, the place of slavery, and who brought you through the great, fearful desert of venomous serpents and scorpions, an arid place with no water. He made water flow from a flint rock and fed you in the desert with manna (which your ancestors had never before known) so that he might by humbling you test you and eventually bring good to you. Be careful not to say, "My own ability and skill have gotten me this wealth." You must remember the Lord your God, for he is the one who gives ability to get wealth; if you do this, he will confirm his covenant that he made by oath to your ancestors, even as he has to this day.

Deuteronomy 8:13-8:18. Available at: <https://bible.org/download/netbible/ondemand/bybook/deu.pdf>

22 The State shall, in particular, direct its policy toward securing-that the ownership and the control of the material resources of the community are so distributed to subserve the common good; that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. Article 39(b)(c) of the Constitution of India, 1950.

In the heat of the American Civil War, one of President Lincoln's advisors said he was grateful that God was on the side of the Union. Lincoln replied, "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right".²³

Here lies a lesson for the mission. The glory of God stands omnipresent. What the Army of God does is limited to acknowledgement of what is perceived by faith; nothing more and nothing else. Likewise, insight to sense the divine intent is critical for the mission to serve the God and *cura personalis* constitutes non-negotiable means of the service. The goldrush for power needed a cannonball to get the Saint set to the service of God. The goldrush for profit may need another to get the fraternity back to His service. Thus, prudence lies in minute introspection to providence and getting institutional policy customized accordingly. Prevention is always better than cure. Also, it is instrumental to retain the missionary spirit; thereby restrain the mercantile spree and not vice versa; more so in the wake of Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization.

After 500th anniversary year of the Cannonball moment, therefore, it is a clarion call for the Society to reiterate commitment to public service, an otherwise secular mission, thereby avoid the void of infernal fallibility to corporate caprice toward profiteering pursuit; something with potential to turn social enterprise to commercial enterprise. Besides, there is potential pluralism for the Jesuit mission in time ahead. In final count, Jesus- the historic persona- did not preach institutionalism.²⁴ He brought in the social revolution to his given time and space by spirit of humanity. The religious cloak apart, therefore, mission of Jesus was secular by default- with no monopoly on Jesus Christ- since the legacy of Jesus constitutes a spiritual heritage of mankind; irrespective of faith in Christianity. The reference of secularism is a conscious policy choice by the author since secularism does never refer to atheism; unlike the commonplace misperception. Thus, possibility of another community of Jesus- a secular Society- cannot be ruled out in time ahead. With its adherence to Jesus, the prospective Society has had potential to extend services to those in need; thereby supplement the Society of Jesus in place in time ahead. The technical nitty-gritty apart, such as, registration of a nomenclature "Society of Jesus" is allotted to the priesthood of Jesuit order, there is nothing

23 Joe Stowell, Whose Side Are You on? Today's Scripture and Insight, December 3, 2014. Available at: <https://odb.org/IN/2014/12/03/whose-side-are-you-on>

24 Davian Brown, Jesus Didn't Start Christianity, Constantine Did, June 17 2019. Available at: <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/jesus-didnt-start-christianity-constantine-did>

wrong in getting another community registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 with similar yet not the same nomenclature; such as, “Servants for Jesus”, to avail a hypothetical nomenclature. Thus, Jesuit order will be empowered to carry forward its own mission with secular supplement; charged with identical ideology vis-à-vis service to the society, if not religious faith as such with technical sense of the term. In final count, what matters is prospective citizenry- men and women for others- and getting them charged with spiritual public education.

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Mental Health of Secondary School Students: A Perspective

*Pempa Phuti Bhutia**, *Sandhya Rai***

Abstract

*Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. The present study examined the levels of mental health among secondary school students. Sample consisted of 100 males and 100 females from the government secondary schools of Sikkim. Mental Health scale developed by **Talesara and Bano (2017)** was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics namely mean, Standard Deviation, t-test were used for attaining the objectives of the study. Results revealed that the Mental Health of secondary schools students of Sikkim is below average and the study also found that there is no significant difference between the male and female secondary school students with regard to their level of Mental Health but while comparing female students are slightly better in their mental health. It was also found that there is no significant difference between the rural and urban secondary school students in respect of their level of Mental Health but while comparing the urban secondary school students are slightly better than the rural secondary school students.*

Keywords: *Mental Health, Secondary School Students, School Related Causes, Home Related Causes, Peer Group Related Causes.*

Introduction :

Adolescence is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of good health. It is the period where the adolescents experience rapid biological and psychological changes. Education has to train the individual how to develop and preserve the individual health. The aim of education

* Ph.D., Research Scholar, Loyola College of Education, Namchi South Sikkim

** Assistant Professor, Loyola College of Education, Namchi South Sikkim

is to provide healthy personality for an individual which is one of the important ingredients of education (Murugan, 2017).

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research reported that about 12.8 percent of children (1-16 years) suffer from mental health problems in India. To ignore adolescents means ignoring the future of our nation. Therefore, when young people's mental health problems go untreated, they can affect their development, school performance and relationships, also leads to school failure, family conflicts, drug abuse, violence and even suicide.

The World Health Report (2000) highlights that, worldwide, up to 20% of children and adolescents suffer from a disabling mental illness and worldwide, suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents.

According to World Health Organisation (2001) mental health is viewed as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contribution to his or her community”.

Adolescence is a phase where a child needs more guidance and to be taken cared of, he or she hesitates to listen to their elders, parents and teachers. In this stage a child has to be protected, nurtured diligently for their better future. It is a crucial phase for every individual as it shapes the future of adolescents according to the tendencies they show during this period. Thus, a proper guidance becomes a must.

Theoretical Background:

Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioural and emotional well-being. It is all about how people think, feel and behave. It includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, act and helps to determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices (Felman, 2020). There are different theories which have discussed about Mental Health.

Cognitive Developmental Theory- Jean Piaget's Theory of cognitive development suggests that children move through four different stages of mental development. His theory focuses not only on understanding how children acquire knowledge, but also on understanding the nature of intelligence.

Social Learning Theory- This theory was propounded by Albert Bandura, emphasizes the importance of observing, modelling and imitating the behaviour, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behaviour.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

G. Arumugam and M.Mahendraprabu (2014) did a study on ‘A study on the Mental Health Of Higher Secondary Students. The findings of the study showed that there is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students also there is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in respect of their level of Mental Health.

Nivedita, Bezbaruah.B (2015) studied on Mental Health Problems among Adolescents in Secondary Schools of Jorhat District. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in Mental Health status of male and female students studying in the secondary schools of Jorhat district. The study also revealed that that there was no significant difference in the mental health status of adolescents of rural and urban areas in relation to the different dimensions of mental health (emotional stability, overall adjustment, autonomy, security-insecurity, self concept and intelligence).

C.Ashok ,Kumar (2021) did a study on “Mental Health and Adjustment Problems of Higher Secondary Students. The purpose of the study was to find out whether there is any significant difference between the higher secondary students in their mental health, adjustment problems with regard to gender, medium of study, stream. Locality, types of institution and family type. The study found out that there was significant difference between the male and female, Tamil and English medium studied, arts, science and vocational subject group, boys and girls and co-education schools and rural and urban milieu of higher secondary students in their mental health and adjustment problems. The study also revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between mental health and adjustment problems.

Bharti and Pramod (2022) conducted a study on Mental Health of Secondary School Students: Issues and Challenges. The study revealed that secondary school students are facing various mental health related issues and challenges like lack of awareness, resources, facilities, services, social dilemmas, financial problems, personal and mental conflicts, environmental and technological complications etc which hamper their academic, social and personal life. The results showed that the status of mental health in India is not in good condition due to various issues and challenges in terms of misconceptions about mental health.

RATIONALE

School is a miniature society and if the marshalling of the status of mental health of the school children is taken care, it will tackle the problems of adolescents like depressive disorders, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, psychosis to scholastic

problems as well. The good mental health of the students is highly essential for their progress in life. In the present era school students experience a high level of mental pressure from parents as well as from their teachers, as a result the mental health of students get affected. Adolescence is a crucial phase under which a child has to undergo a fair amount of changes be it physical or psychological. Since Mental health of the school children is one of the most neglected areas of health globally, pandemic has further worsened the status of mental health.

According to the World Health Organisation(2020) , the covid-19 pandemic has disrupted and upsurged critical mental health services in 93% of the countries worldwide. About 50% of mental disorders start by the age of 14. Hence, in this context it is highly essential to deal with the topic ‘Mental health of secondary school students:A Perspective’.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The objective of the study is to investigate the mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim with reference to gender and locale in order to make the students, teachers as well as the parents aware about their mental health status of the adolescents. On, the basis of the rationale of this study the problem is stated as ‘Mental Health of Secondary School Students: A Perspective’.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION:

Mental Health: According to World Health Organisation (2001) mental health is viewed as “ a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contribution to his or her community”.

Secondary School Students: Students of an age group of 14 to 18, who are enrolled in secondary education are secondary school students.

School Related Causes: In school students faces a number of stimulus which may effect mental health of them such as teachers behavior, over strictness of school administration, pressure of competition,

stress of over loaded curriculum, lack of concentration, stress of examination etc.

Home Related Causes: Home environment influence starts very early in life time. The process of birth brings the individual into environment. Family is the society in miniature where he lays foundation of his life.

Peer Group Related Causes: Students are greatly influenced by their peer. Sometimes peer group tease or try to dominate, or comment on him. This situation of torchering affect mental health of student.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the level of mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim.
2. To study the level of mental health with regard to different dimensions of secondary school students of Sikkim.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference in mental health of secondary school students with respect to the following background variables:
 - (i) Gender [Male/Female]
 - (ii) Locality of school [Rural/Urban]

HYPOTHESIS

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Mental Health of secondary school students with reference to gender.

H_{1,1}: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Mental Health of secondary school students with reference to locale.

METHODOLOGY

To study the mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim with reference to gender, locale and the types of management of school, the researcher opted Descriptive survey research method.

POPULATION

The population in this study consists of male and female students of class IX of Government Secondary Schools belonging to the rural and urban locale of Sikkim.

SAMPLE

The investigator used stratified random sampling method for selecting the sample. In this study the sample consisted of a total of 200 secondary school students with 100 males and 100 females each under the age group of 14 to 18 years. Out of 100 males the investigator has taken 50 boys from rural and 50 boys from urban locale similarly out

of 100 females the investigator has further split it into 50 grils from rural and 50 girls from urban locale.

TOOL USED FOR THE STUDY

a) Mental Health Scale

Mental Health Scale by Sushma Talesara and Akhtar Bano (2017). This scale consists of 54 items divided into three dimensions namely:

- i. School related cause
- ii. Home related cause
- iii. Peer group cause.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The investigator took the formal permission from the Education Department to administer the test on secondary school students of various government secondary and senior secondary school in Sikkim. Furthermore, permission was taken from principals/headmasters/headmistress of the concerned schools. The data were collected from the sample using the above mentioned tools.

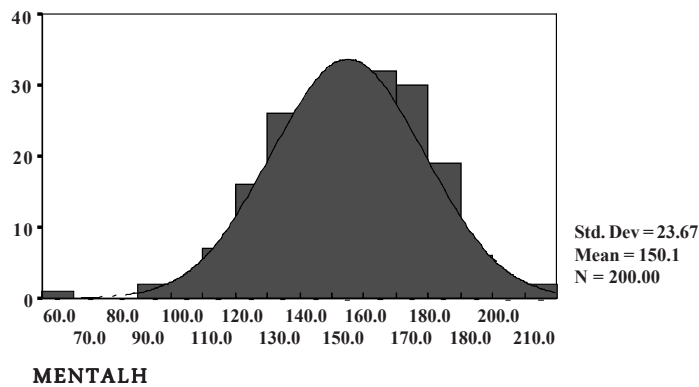
DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis and Interpretation of the result pertaining to objective number one that is to study the level of mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim, the investigator made the use of descriptive statistics by calculating the mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Showing the Mean and Standard Deviation of Mental Health of Secondary School Students.

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	S.D
Mental Health	200	150.05	152	170	23.67

Figure 1: A normal probability curve showing the mean and standard deviation of secondary school students level of Mental Health.



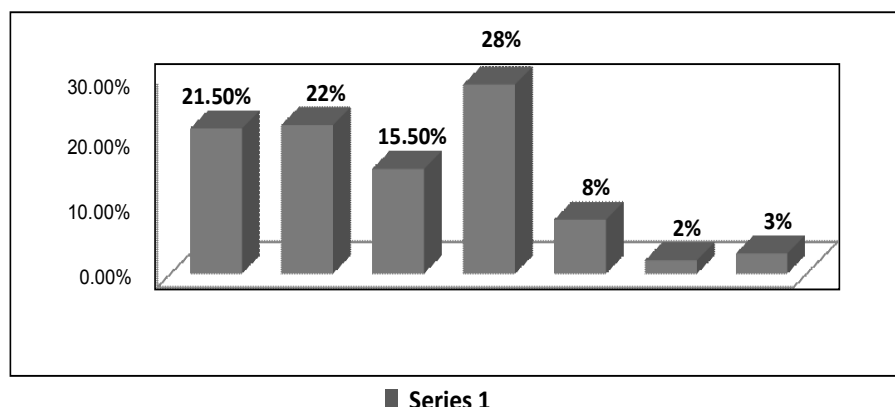
Interpretation- On perusal of the table 1 and figure 1 it was observed that most of the students level of mental health is below the mid point value (152) which indicates that the level of Mental health of Secondary School Students of Sikkim is not good.

To study the different level of Mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim, the raw score were converted into Zscore and the different categories of Mental health were assessed by following the norms given in the tool by Taleswara and Bano (2017) and the following table shows the details of the same.

Table 2 :Shows the level of Mental Health of Secondary School Students of Sikkim.

SL.No	Raw score Range of Full Scale	Z-Score Range	f	f%	Level of Mental Health
1.	170 & above	+ 2.01 & above	43	21.5%	Extremely Good
2.	155 to 169	+1.26 to +2.00	44	22%	Very Good
3.	140 to 154	+0.51 to +1.25	31	15.5%	Good
4.	120 to 139	-0.50 to +0.50	56	28%	Moderate
5.	105 to 119	-1.25 to -0.51	16	8%	Poor
6.	91 to 104	-2.00 to 1.26	04	2%	Very Poor
7.	90 & below	-2.01 & below	06	3%	Extremely Poor
			200	100	

Figure 2: A bar graph showing the level of mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim.



Interpretation- The above table shows the level of Mental Health of secondary school students in percentage. It is found that 21.5% of secondary students has extremely good level of Mental Health, 22% of secondary students has very good level of mental health, 15.5% of secondary students has good level of Mental Health, 28% of students has moderate level of Mental Health, 8 % of secondary students has poor level of Mental Health, 2% of secondary

Analysis and Interpretation of the result pertaining to objective 2.

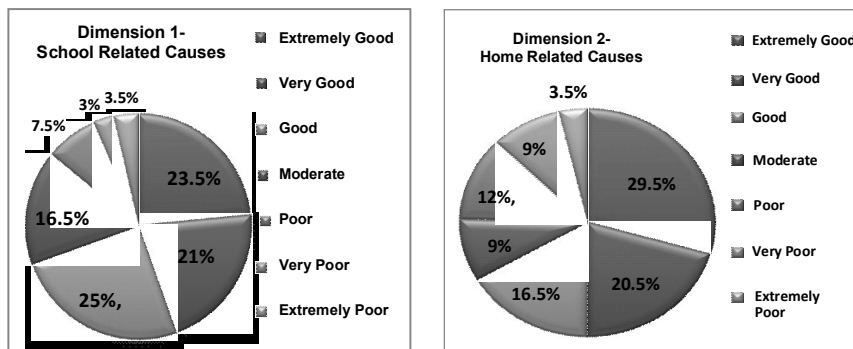
students has very poor level of mental health and 3% of secondary students falls under the extremely poor level of mental health.

Table 3: Shows the level of Mental Health of Secondary School Students of Sikkim with regard to three dimensions of Mental Health.

DIMENSION1				DIMENSION2				DIMENSION3				Level of Mental Health
SCHOOL RELATED CAUSES				HOME RELATED CAUSES				PEER GROUP RELATED CAUSES				
C. I	Z-Score Range	F	f%	C. I	Z-Score Range	F	f%	C. I	Z-Score Range	F	f%	
57 & above	+ 2.01 & above	47	23.5%	68 & above	+ 2.01 & above	59	29.5%	46& above	+ 2.01 & above	36	18%	Extremely Good
52 to 56	+1.26 to +2.00	42	21%	62 to 67	+1.26 to +2.00	41	20.5%	41 to 45	+1.26 to +2.00	55	27.5%	Very Good
47 to 51	+0.51 to +1.25	50	25%	57 to 61	+0.51 to +1.25	33	16.5%	37 to 40	+0.51 to +1.25	36	18%	Good
40 to 46	-0.50 to +0.50	33	16.5%	50 to 56	-0.50 to +0.50	18	9%	31 to 36	-0.50 to +0.50	39	19.5%	Moderate
35 to 39	-1.25 to -0.51	15	7.5%	44 to 49	-1.25 to -0.51	24	12%	27 to 30	-1.25 to -0.51	16	8%	Poor
30 to 34	-2.00 to -1.26	06	3%	39 to 43	-2.00 to -1.26	18	9%	22 to 26	-2.00 to -1.26	11	5.5%	Very Poor
29 & below	-2.01 & below	07	3.5%	38 & below	-2.01 & below	07	3.5%	21& below	-2.01 & below	07	3.5%	Extremely Poor

Figure 3

A pie chart showing the level of Mental Health of Secondary School Students of Sikkim with regard to following three dimensions namely- School Related Causes, Home Related Causes and Peer Group Related Causes.



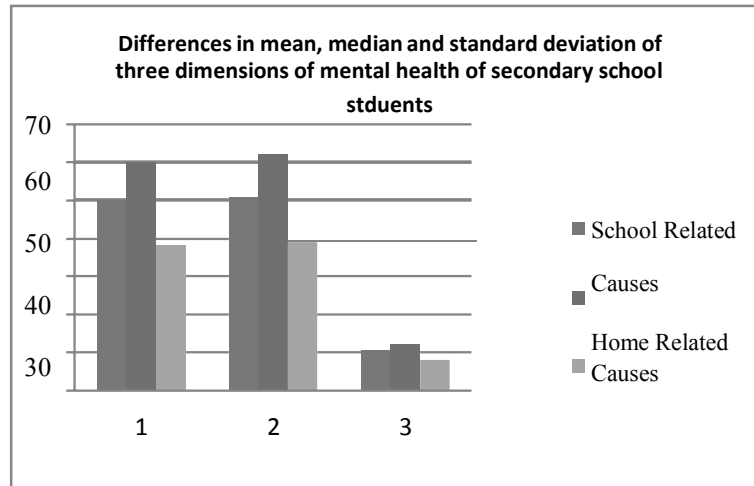
Interpretation- The above table 3 and figure no 3 revealed that 23.5% of secondary school students has extremely good level of mental health , 21% has very good level of mental health, 25% has good level of mental health, 16.5% of secondary school students falls under moderate level of mental health, 7.5% of students has poor level of mental health, 3% of students has very poor level of mental health and 3.5% of students has extremely poor level of mental health with regard to the dimension school related causes. It is found from the above table that 29.5% of secondary school students has extremely good level of mental health, 20.5% of students has very good level of mental health, 16.5% of secondary school

students has good level of mental health, 9% of students has moderate level of mental health, 12% of secondary students has poor level of mental health, 9 % of secondary students has very poor level of mental health and 3.5% of secondary school students has extremely poor level of mental health in relation to Home related causes. The above table 3 and figure no 3 depict that 18% of secondary students has extremely good level of mental health, 27.5% has very good level of mental health, 18% has only good level of mental health, 19.5% has moderate, 8% falls under poor level of mental health, 5.5% has very poor level of mental health and only 3.5% has extremely poor mental health level of secondary school students of Sikkim.

Table 4: Dimension wise variation in mean, median and standard deviation of mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim.

Dimensions	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
School RelatedCauses	50.125	51	10.61
Home RelatedCauses	60.06	62	12.03
Peer GroupRelated Causes	38.23	39	8.07

Figure 4: Showing the difference in mean, median and standard deviation of the three dimension of Mental health of secondary school students of Sikkim.



The close perusal of Table 4 and figure 4 revealed that the Mean score of School Related Causes, Home Related Causes and Peer Group Related Causes are 50.12, 60.06 and 38.23 are less than the Median scores 51, 62 and 39 respectively. It has depicted that secondary school students of Sikkim have low level of Mental health. Home Related Causes seemed to more prominent reason of low level of mental health than the other two causes.

Null hypothesis H01: There is no significant difference in the mean score of Mental Health of secondary school students with reference to gender.

To test the hypothesis (H01), the t-test was applied and the result is interpreted in the following Table 5.

Table 5: Gender wise variation in Mental Health.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Std. Error Mean	Critical value of t	t-value	Remarks
Mental Health	Male	100	148.45	21.3515	2.13515	1.96	1.004	Not significant
	Female	100	151.81	25.77396	2.57740			

** - Not significant at 0.05 level

Figure 5: Showing the difference in Mean & Standard deviation of male and female secondary school students interms of Mental Health.

Table 5 and Figure 5 revealed that mental health of girls (151.81) is slightly better than the boys (148.45) however the difference in terms of gender is not significant because the 't' value is less (1.004) than the critical value of 't' (1.96) at 0.05 level of confidence.Hence the null hypotheses is accepted.

****Confirmingstudies: G.Arumugam, M.Mahendraprabu (2014), Nivedita, Bezbaruah.B (2015)**

To test the hypothesis ($H_{1.1}$), the t –test was applied and the result is interepreted in the following table. Inferential statistics was adiminister and the result was displayed in the following table.

Table 6 Mean difference between Urban and Rural Secondary School Students.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Critical Value of t</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Mental Health	Rural	100	136.6300	32.14634	3.21463	1.96	0.6	not significant
	Urban	100	139.3100	26.67867	26.67867			

******- Not significant at 0.05 level

Locality wise variation in Mental Health.

Figure 6: Showing mean difference between rural and urban secondary school students Mental Health.

Table 6 and Figure 6 showed that the 't' value is found to (0.6) and it is not significant. Therefore, it is concluded that urban students have slightly higher level of mental health than that of rural students, however, there is no significant difference

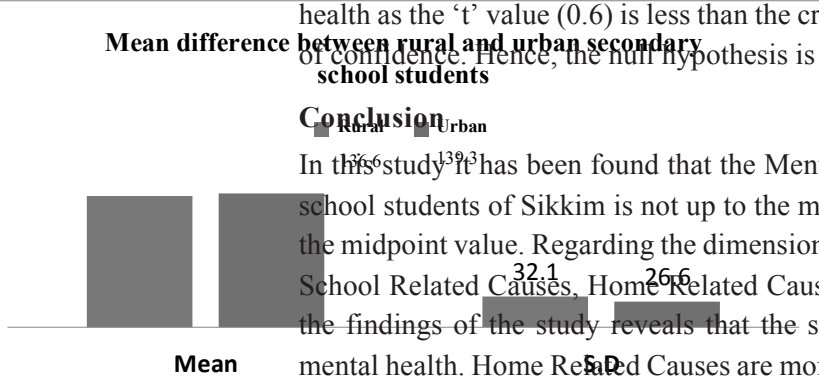
****Confirming studies: Nivedita, Bezbaruah. B(2015)**

between rural and urban secondary school students in terms of their level of mental health as the 't' value (0.6) is less than the critical value of 't' (1.96) at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion

In this study it has been found that the Mental Health of government secondary school students of Sikkim is not up to the mark as their mean scores falls below the midpoint value. Regarding the dimensions of Mental Health Scale in terms of School Related Causes, Home Related Causes and Peer Group Related Causes, the findings of the study reveals that the secondary students has low level of mental health. Home Related Causes are more prominent than that of School and Peer Group Related Causes. A thorough survey of the home environment could give more light to support this type of study.

The present study states that there is no significant difference between the male and female secondary school students with regard to their level of Mental Health but while comparing the mean scores of male and female secondary school students, the female students are slightly better in their Mental Health. Almost identical findings were hinged by **G.Arumugam, M.Mahendraprabu(2014), Nivedita, Bezbaruah.B (2015)**. The study also reveals that there is no significance



difference between the rural and urban locale of secondary school students in respect to their level of Mental Health but the mean scores of the urban secondary school students have slightly higher than the mean scores of the rural secondary school students which shows that urban secondary school students are moderately better than the rural secondary school students. Almost identical findings were hinged by **Nivedita, Bezbaruah.B (2015)** this could be because of good school environment, consciousness of parents towards their child, good economical background and usually girls get more connected with their mentors than the boys .Government has also come up with schemes focusing more on puberty and adolescence for instance Sikkim Government has come up with projects like “Baini”, SAATHI (Sikkim Against Addiction Towards Healthy India) and NGOs. According to census survey (2011), parents are more educated and aware about healthy parenting , they are more conscious and concerned for their Childs upbringing and better future.

Limitations and future direction

Limitations

- This study is a pilot study and is limited by small sample size of secondary school students.

Future direction

- It can be study by taking the large sample size for the generalization of results. From the above findings and interpretations of the study, the investigator would like to suggest to all the concerned educators that life skill education can be taught to the adolescents for their improvement in the level of their Mental Health, meditation and yoga can be conducted in schools for dealing with their Mental Health and also special orientation programme regarding mental health can be organized and can be included in the syllabus.

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The Changing Teaching-Learning Discourse in India: Exploring the Emerging Public-Private Partnerships

*Harshita Sharma**

Abstract

The world is slowly recouping from the pandemic, as is the Indian-education-system. There have been multiple efforts to minimise access-barriers and maximise opportunities for learning for all stages especially at the school-level. The paper examines the effort the government and its institutions in India have taken to bridge the widened learning gap. The National Education Policy, 2020 came at a crucial juncture, where equity and inclusivity are quintessential to ensure justice as the role of market increases. World rankings have become important to make India a knowledge economy, quality of education and creation of learning opportunities is of prime importance to the country. Both formal and informal education markets have gained an exponential momentum as we move towards India becoming an education hub. The paper examines the informal tutoring industry and its growing role in Indian education system wrt to NEP, 2020 recommendations. In most cases, academics condemn the private-tutoring-industry for extensive commercialisation, exclusionary-practices and profit-maximisation strategies. Unlike before, formal-institutions are now seeking partnerships with these tutoring agencies for their strategic reach, approach and contributions to student-learning. The exercise is directed to reach the earlier learning equilibrium, which although was not an ideal case but showed much more promise in relative terms. Franchise tutoring bodies (like Khan Academy, VidyaMandir Classes etc.) and educational technology companies (like Unacademy and BYJUs) have been approached to enhance equitable access to quality education and address the learning-needs of public-school students. A comparative case-study design examines the role of this public-private partnership, ensuring that 'cases' are not measured against a universal-yardstick or pitted against-one-other; rather appreciated for their variations and contributions across Indian states. The paper discusses both privatisation

* Doctoral Research Scholar, Department of Higher and Professional Education, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, India, Email address: harshita@niepa.ac.in

Harshita Sharma

of existing-formal-schooling-sector and growth of private-informal-institutions. It explores the debate around the welfare-state's responsibility to ensure the education as right and the public-private partnerships adopted by the state to enhance equitable-access to education with reference to NEP, 2020 vision.

Key words: Education Policy, Public-private partnerships, shadow education, ed-tech.

1. Introduction

When the first case of COVID-19 was discovered in Wuhan, China (Bryner, 2020), no one expected it to be an incident that would mark the beginning of a worldwide epidemic and suffering. While COVID-19, pandemic, masks, social distancing, lockdown etc became part of our everyday vocabulary, we saw some of the biggest healthcare failures, dramatic economic downfalls and rising social problems during these years of the rising pandemic (Statista, 2020). Each one of us, in one way or the other, has been affected by the Corona-virus pandemic. Like many other sectors, education and people concerned with education have also been adversely affected. The teaching-learning process has undergone a huge change for students, teachers, educators and policymakers. The precarious circumstances have put everyone into a situation where taking concrete steps have been immensely difficult. To stop the spread of Corona-virus and fight the pandemic, governments across the world suspended classroom teaching and closed the educational institutions initially as all the crowded places had to be shut down which impacted approximately 95% of the students throughout the world (United Nations, 2020). This initial selective shutdown soon turned into complete lockdown which was imposed to slow down the rate of transmission of the Corona-virus (Sintema, 2020). Organizations and people adopted various strategies to deal with pandemic and simultaneously progressed with various activities. But interestingly, these coping mechanisms have also been responsible for adversely affecting the education sector.

Till July 2020, nearly 98.6% of learners across the world were affected by the pandemic, these learners were from pre-primary to higher education students and this percentage constitutes 1.725 billion learners (United Nations, 2020). When people are drowning, you don't ask which one has sunk deeper! The sudden pandemic shocked everyone and the governments were busy dealing with other necessities like food provisions, maintaining law and order, mass migrations etc. The learning of students suffered hugely with lack of infrastructural facilities, digital-literacy, network availability, etc. These issues were faced by both teachers and the students, while parents got extremely concerned for the future of their

children. Students' learning dropped as teachers struggled to venture into an unexplored digital-teaching territory with little or no pedagogic training for holding virtual classes. The education-technology sector stepped in to fulfil this unmet learning demand. The ed-tech sector joined hands with the private tutoring or coaching industry so as to widen its reach by en-cashing the already established 'test-prep' market. There were billion dollar mergers between education service-delivery giants to cater to the emerging demands. The government further backed up the sector by formal collaborations legitimised by formal policy agendas. In the post-pandemic world different strategies have been employed to revive the education sector and bridge the learning gap created due to irregularities in online school education.

The paper explores this changing discourse of education, one that entrusts the private players while inoculating the state from bearing the burden of delivering quality education. The different sections give a detailed account of the context, the problem, the policy, and the interventions that followed. The larger study¹ uses a comparative case study design to highlight the growth and expansion of franchise tutoring institutes that help students prepare for post-secondary education. The pressing need to understand the trinity of market, the state and technology plays a pivotal role in exploring the frequented private and privatisation debate while transitioning into the 'new normal'. The study is conducted during and after the Covid pandemic which gives it a deeper critical viewpoint of exploring the stakeholder's stand on accessing education in more desperate times of securing basic needs for survival. The aim is to unravel the present situation that would aid in informed policy making in the post- pandemic world.

2. The Changing discourse of Indian Education: the Private and Privatisation

The pandemic witnessed a major policy shift in education through the National Education Policy, 2020. The policy equated 'quality' with a certain westernised practices, with an aim to make India a knowledge economy and an education hub. Moving to a unitary university structure from earlier affiliating structure, introducing multi-exit options, a four-year degree structure instead of three years etc. are a few examples that showcase immolation of westernised structure of education. 'Private philanthropy' is invited while advocating for enhanced efficiency, quality and reduced state expenditure. Such an approach is not in the best interests of a

¹ The piece is a working paper, a section of the scholars' PhD work conducted at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

highly stratified society as often the over commercialisation and marketisation of public goods out-values its public interest principles. In the period of market-led globalization private institutions have been proliferating across developing countries unlike the time of state-led growth. On one side, privatization of the public institutions through market-ideology run operating principles is setting its roots, legitimizing itself through the state led neo-liberal agenda. On the other side private-institutions have gained much popularity (in India like other OECD countries) as they address the unmet quality and quantity demands that public formal structures leave unfulfilled. The private players boost of an increased share in students enrolments at different levels of formal education, as well as through informal structures like shadow education (Varghese et al, 2022). These private bodies that target the students' performance in formal schooling, entrance examinations to post secondary education/university entrances and selection in competitive job market (especially public sector jobs) provide skilling necessary to clear a particular examination. The knowledge acquisition, self improvement and larger social welfare principles of education get sidelined when 'test prep' is the agenda for learning. This sector is often referred to as shadow industry, private tutoring, supplementary education, coaching etc. in academic spaces around the world. The private tutoring industry alone contributed \$3.5 billion to the exponentially growing \$117 billion dollar Indian education market in 2020 where different formalised sectors are the major contributors (Startup talky). The policy conveniently ignores to mention this unregulated industry, its magnitude and the inequalities it promotes in principle and practice.

A unified country-wide aptitude test is suggested that would grant students access to university education. Just like the previous The National Eligibility Entrance Test (NEET), Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) etc. examinations which were specifically for professional higher education courses; the CUET (Common University Entrance Test for undergraduate admissions) would now be necessary for almost all post-secondary admissions. The CUET is based on standardise testing pattern and is very similar in its structure and scope to the SAT and ACT testing that would require 'test-prep training', directly adding expansion to the private coaching industry and ed-tech markets. While the practice is a 'filtering' tool in the education massification era, the 'idea of merit' that it supports necessitates a level playing field for all students. Equitable access is difficult to attain in most stratified societies where certain groups are economically, socially and historically marginalised unless otherwise supported through affirmative action mechanisms.

The New Education Policy, 2020 aims for a 50% GER in higher education by 2030 but the over-emphasis on philanthropy and degrees via distance or online mode can't alone be expected to solve the bottlenecks in Indian higher education system. The online teaching-learning and assessment that the policy stresses on vividly is a difficult endorsement in an unequal society where teachers lack training and current infrastructure is inadequate. Public education has lost its inherent goodness and trust among citizens with increasing endorsement of the private sector and principles that govern it. All these recent factors among many other irregularities already existing in the system have lead to a changing discourse of the education where the private and privatised is much valued over the public education system.

3. Expansion Private tutoring practice in India

There are three major factors that help us understand the demand for tutoring namely: systemic factors, household related factors and the student learning factors. The systemic factors include issues related to quality of schooling and teacher professionalism. The mediocracy and prominent deficiencies that formal education reinforces are often addressed through private tutoring (Singh et al., 2021). Scholars around the world unanimously quote gaps in formal school setup like low public spending, high pupil-teacher ratio, multi-grade teaching, low monitoring, lack of institutional spaces and unavailability of qualified teachers, lack of English teachers (Hamid et al., 2009), teacher absenteeism and heavy workload (academic and non-academic) on teachers (Biswal, 1999; Tansel & Bircan, 2006; Kim & Lee, 2010; Sen, 2010; Gokuladas, 2010; Sujatha, 2014; Sharma, 2019). Teachers in developing economies are often underpaid (Dawson, 2009; Kodirov & Nodir, 2009; Bray & Lykins, 2012) and adapt to taking private tutoring to substitute their meager salaries (Kim & Lee, 2010), often causing an intentional dilution in their lessons at school (Ghosh & Bray, 2020).

The households often feel that tutoring increases their children's chances of getting better university degrees that eventually lead to better jobs (Stevenson & Baker, 1992; Banerjee et. al, 2007; Dang, 2007; Punjabi, 2019; Sharma, 2019). The Confucian culture still holds routes in south Asian countries like China, Japan, India, Pakistan etc. where parents believe that their children's success is their responsibility and stretch to extreme lengths to support them in their education endeavors. In such societies, prestige is attached to investments made in education. The parents spend a large portion of their household expenditure on creating tutoring accessibility for the children for upholding current standard of living and ensuring social mobility. Both rural India and Pakistan show similar trends of household

investment in shadow education irrespective of the household income i.e. demand for supplementation is common in across rich and poor households (Alcott & Rose, 2015). Extensive commercialization, marketing and advertisements done by tutoring franchises make it difficult to believe that success in entrance tests is unachievable without access tutoring (Azam, 2014). This makes parents and students feel insecure and give in to pressures of investments towards tutoring. This is especially common when parents are themselves educationally successful and hope that their ward maintains their socio-economic status.

Finally, student themselves feel that formal education does not help them in gaining skills required for success in competitive undergraduate entrance tests (Kim & Lee, 2010). The school is often unable to cater to the high competition that students face while they try to get into a prestigious higher education system. The aspiration of a particular specialisation at university level (Psacharopoulous & Papakomstantinou, 2005) and the stream the student in formal school plays a very important role in determining the access and the form of tutoring accessed (Sujatha & Rani, 2011).

The supplementary tutoring industry is expanding exponentially across the globe (Bray, 1999). It was expected to reach US\$227 million by 2022 by the Global Industry Analysis Report, 2020. The impact created by the industry around the world is huge, but countries like India having no policy framework on it have shown alarming drawbacks. Deepening of existing inequalities, cultural reproduction, questions on quality, credentialism, increase in number of dummy schools, extensive advertising, unhealthy competition, increased workload on students and unnecessary financial pressure on households, are some of the most recurrent concerns raised by studies conducted on the unregulated and unmonitored industry. The \$45 billion worth Indian franchise tutoring industry, with \$40 million revenue generated alone in Kota, 'the coaching hub of India' (Goyal, 2016) explains the unregulated industry's magnitude. The 'intersection' of disadvantages often prevents students belonging to certain socio-economic classes, castes, gender, having varied capabilities and possessing different types of intelligence to enter the higher education structure.

The much talked about informal shadow education or private tutoring practice has now evolved into a formal systematic corporation model called the 'learning centre franchise' or 'franchise tutoring'. Certain multinational corporations like Akash, Fiit-jee, Vidya-Mandir, Kumon, Sylvan Learning Center, Princeton Review, Oxford Learning Centre etc., that have evolved around the world usually have a centralised global management system that offer franchise to local companies for

day to day operations, while sales and management is done in the global head-office. These tutoring companies provide in-person as well as online training. The year 2020 saw many takeovers and mergers where the tutoring industry and ed-tech companies joined hands and shared expertise in different areas of skilling. They specialise in providing packages for post-secondary entrance examinations that aid transition from school to higher education. The entrance examinations are subject centric examinations that focus on rote memorization and reproduction of content knowledge rather than an aptitude determining approach based on continuous interdisciplinary knowledge construction model.

The role of franchise learning centres in aiding the transition from school to higher education is noteworthy as it defines the success of students in procuring admission to eminent colleges offering professional undergraduate university education. On one hand, employability of a prospective employee is often judged by the prestige attached to its higher education institute, rather than individual capabilities for job performance. This further accentuates and intensifies the disadvantages suffered by students coming from marginalised sections of the society. On the other hand the upcoming Industrial Revolution 4.0 focuses on developing capabilities and 'idea & innovations economy' rather than degree or certifications. Here, the privileged notion of opportunities to develop capabilities and adapt to the upcoming technology challenges with limited resources while struggling for basic necessities for survival is still a question that remains unanswered.

4. Philanthropy to Profit Maximisation and Extensive Commercialisation

Most of the Franchise tutoring corporate today began in the late 1980s with a single tutor, teaching a few students in his house or a small rented space helping students with mathematics and science conceptually so as to perform better at school. It was considered as scaffolding for students who were not able to cope with the pace of classroom setup. Initially tutoring was accessed either by high achievers for more challenging grooming or students in need of remediation. The tutors also started training students for national Olympiads and scholarship exams. These tutors followed the school curricula and instruction style. It was like the 'shadow' of the formal schooling system. With the success of these students the word spread about the teaching styles of these tutors who provided students scaffolding through one on one interaction. More and more students started enrolling in neighborhood tutoring centers with hopes of achieving their maximum potential scores in school examinations.

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The massification of education brought with itself need for a filtering exam that would give meritorious students access to good quality higher education potentially international standards. The undergraduate IIT engineering entrance examination (now called the IIT-JEE examination) and the AIIMS medical entrance examination (presently clubbed under NEET examination) required students to have an edge over the school curricula, prepare a little extra to outperform the others who studied only for boards. The need of supplementation for cracking the entrance examinations gave rise to supplementary tutoring or coaching. The need and demand for more engineering and medical institutes increased exponentially with boom in students writing the exam each year whilst limited seats in colleges. The AIEEE, JEE and NEET examination score help colleges, both public and private filter in the brightest minds. Over the years the level of the entrances has increased much more as the filtering process getting more stringent. While 4lakh 80thousand students appeared for the first IIT-JEE examination in 2012 (Puri, 2012), around 9lakh students are expected to write the 2022 examination. Similarly, around 7lakh students wrote the NEET exam in 2013 when it first began, nearly 16lakh students are expected to appear for it in 2022.

The rising competition for admission in elite undergraduate colleges and reputed professional degrees has also increased chances of rejection and household insecurities. Parents see a degree from prestigious institute equivalent to socioeconomic mobility through better paying campus placements. Both students and parents are ready to forego luxury, even basic necessities for a couple of years so as to get through the college admissions process successfully. The tutoring centers play exactly on this insecurity and fear of rejection; they provide parents with hope and a fake sense of satisfaction that they are investing in a better future as they pay huge sums of money.

The introduction of entrances for other courses such as law, pharmacy, architecture, English Literature and other Humanities subjects the services of the tutoring centers diversified. Demand for coaching or supplementation spread from large metropolitans to small cities and even rural areas. The tutoring firms which had acquired a reputation with maximum selection rates over the years started selling their company name tag to small coaching centers that wanted to expand their reach called the 'Franchising of Private tutoring'. The licenses in-return of huge costs paid by franchise owners- a yearly franchise fee and a sizeable profit share to the head office, which were ultimately borne by the households or customers. This was called the FOFO Model (Franchise Owned Franchise Operated) business model. The small franchise owners often used cheap tricks

and profit maximization strategies with both the head office and the parents. Due to the growing dissatisfaction among the customers, loss of reputation, reduced success rate and lesser footfall, many franchise tutoring centers suffered huge losses and shut in small cities. In some cases the companies themselves bought-out their franchises to protect their reputation and keep the centers running. Center heads were appointed as salaried employees reporting to the regional heads who further reported to state heads, finally all adding up to the central office command. This is called the FOCO Model (Franchise Owned Company Operated). This helped in keeping all levels accountable to the main center, ensuring a proper chain of command, and further standardization of operations and content delivery. The content taught at the tutoring centers and the assessment done at the franchise centers is largely rote-learning done in large auditoriums with a tutor teaching on the stage and large screen set around the auditoriums for hundreds of students to copy lectures from. They have a designated sales team that follows aggressive marketing strategies, run on profit maximization market models offering packages for EMI payments. The tutors have packages ranging from lakhs to crores, where star tutors are graduates from the eminent institutes like IITs and NITs where the students aspire to pursue their higher education. Certain tutoring franchises like Narayana have now ventured into the formal schooling system as well. They have started their own schools which further legitimise as well as legalise their services and increase their epistemic authority and strengthen their grounding in the education market.

The franchises model divides students into categories or sections according to their expected ranks, calculated based on all India scores they receive in weekly assessments. The top scores get scholarship (as they hold the potential to get ranks which are further advise to increase the next year's enrolments), best tutors and get access to aggressive test-prep techniques to get the best course in the institute of choice. While the average and low achievers have to pay high fees and access mediocre services with hopes of just getting selected at least one of the colleges. These exclusionary strategies put excessive financial pressure on families, often break the students' confidence, and take a toll on their physical health and mental well being.

Acquisitions and Mergers between Private Players: The New Tutoring Market

The pandemic has led to a new form of tutoring, the education technology industry. Due to the unavailability of any form of face to face tutoring: shadow tutoring, coaching and franchise tutoring etc., the ed-tech firms have achieved great profits, for example: BYJUs that first began in 2011 has rocketed to becoming a \$16.5

billion company. A ‘new tutoring market’ has emerged that included both privatization of schools and private institutions proliferation through collaborative business models. The ed-tech companies have taken over the education service delivery with convenience, ease of use, lower fees compared to in-person tutoring and more vibrant content delivery. The state governments introduced collaborative projects with ed-tech companies to enhance student learning (India Today, 5/06/2020). This raises question on the quality of content delivery, legitimization of privatisation and most importantly state responsibility of quality education to all students. The ed-tech industry holds huge profits in the name of target oriented learning lessons and demand based content delivery of requested concepts but fails in getting the content verified by authentic and qualified content developers. Teaching and learning on ed-tech platforms is convenient for all stakeholders namely, students who do not have to pay heavy fees to study the whole content just to work on a specific problem area or subject while staying away from families in city hostels, parents who worried for their ward’s safety, tutors who can teach from comfort of their homes especially female tutors and the tutoring company which can draw large profits with little or no infrastructural and management investment. The large BYJU and Akash merger, has become a huge hit among students who can now choose from a range of services and delivery mode available. BYJUs acquired Akash Educational Services Ltd. (AESL) one of the largest acquisitions by an Indian startup, estimated at \$950 million, greater than its acquisition of another ed-tech platform White Hat Jr. at \$300 million. This can be understood as the coming up of a ‘new tutoring market’ characterised by creating a demand which was earlier non-existent, learning in the virtual mode by tutors having no proof of qualifications, high investments, no regulations on profit maximisation, lack of accountability on content or pedagogy and lack of trust in the formal education sector.

The growing demand for ed-tech led ‘new tutoring market’ if given the right to award degrees has potential to replace the formal schooling system, what is questionable is the quality of content, the malpractices adopted to lure consumers (Thathoo, 2022) and its over-powering control over the complete educational ecosystem in India.

5. Emerging Public-Private Partnerships in Post-Pandemic India

The above sections have given a basis of understanding the growth of the ‘new education market’ where ed-tech and franchise tutoring have take the forefront in preparing our next generation for the coming future. Another peculiar phenomena of this emerging market has been able to establish trust amongst various

stakeholders. During the pandemic, these platforms were seen as masiahs or ‘rescuers’ supporting them in ‘conceptual clarity and development of cognitive abilities’ (Proctur, 2020). They had skilled content delivery experts, proficient in use of technology and could engage the learners in fascinating online lectures. Such corporatized institutions also an organised and efficient army of workers, divided into sales, marketing, strategy planning, content delivery etc. that seemed fascinating to the consumers. These companies carved out a niche market for their expansion from the projected \$225 billion (by 2025) education market (Startup talky, 2020) addressing the opportunity of an emerging demand by insecure parents created due to dissatisfaction from formal schooling. The rise of the e-learning sector to \$1.96 billion by 2021 with 9.5 million (Startup talky, 2020) users well dictated the profits the sector made during and after the pandemic. It is noteworthy that the governments too have placed trust in this market, trust that this sector could help bridge the learning gap created due to the pandemic.

Many countries from the developed world like the United Kingdom invested £350m in the New Tutoring Program, in zoom tutors or ‘Zutors’, expected to help students from underprivileged backgrounds cope with the learning deficiencies created due to covid; an additional £650m has been given to schools to spend to make up for missed education (Rowe, 2021). The Australian government implemented AUD 20million ‘Tutoring Voucher Initiative’ to boost achievement of students falling short of national literacy benchmarks in 2005. The programme grants AUD 700 per student to parents who arrange after school tutoring for them. 24,000 students were expected to benefit from the scheme (Gewertz, 2005). A similar programme has been launched in the post pandemic New South Wales 2020-21 Budget with a huge budget of AUD 337 million. This intensive support will be provided through tutoring to enhance student outcomes. By hiring 5500 additional employees the programmes aims to generate opportunities for qualified teachers and university tutors (NSW government, 2020).

Many state governments in India have joined hands with the market enterprises to fulfil a similar agenda. Since, education is a concurrent subject in India, the Niti Ayog joining hands to serve government school students in 112 ‘aspirational districts’ for ‘quality learning’ and ‘test prep’ have served as an exemplar followed by states too (IBEF, 2022). Even though certain state governments had collaborations with test-prep agencies since early last decade, the scope of the programs were rather limited. The centre advocated move further added legitimisation to more such initiatives and has been widely appreciated to give way for similar joint ventures in New Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh etc. The

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following are a few examples of the state government using schemes to help students reach to next level of professional college education from school education to ensure equity and inclusion. The government initiatives for coaching for UPSC and other competitive exams given in states like Chattisgarh, Uttrakhand, and Punjab governments for unemployed or marginalised youth has not been deliberated as it falls under a different gambit of coaching and pre-employment training/skilling.

One such program called the ‘Coaching classes for Super Talented Students under CMs Scholarship Scheme’ helped exceptional students get access to free coaching facilities in leading test-prep giant VidyaMandir Classes. A screening test was usually conducted (after Xth standard boards) for all admissions (for two year IIT preparation course for grade XI and XII students) to the prestigious coaching institute, which then selected students based on their scores/All India ranks for in-person classes, part-time classes, weekend batches or distance learning/correspondence courses. This was the practice to choose the cream of students who had maximum chances of selection in IITs, as the demand for coaching at IIT alumni run VMC was quite high while seats in the coaching institute were limited (unlike the present case where only fee-structure and tutors vary depending on a student’s rank as a revenue enhancement strategy) . The Directorate of Education conducted a ‘Screening-Test conducted at the coaching center itself, to select talented children in order to provide them fee scholarship for professional coaching to prepare for entrance examinations of reputed Medical and Engineering institutes’ (Refer, Edudel.nic.in). The students in DoE schools went through multiple rounds of selection before actually get admission to VMC institute which would eventually prepare them for post secondary entrances in their last two high school years. This move was further expanded to include greater number of students to make coaching further accessible to all. Recently, after the pandemic, the Delhi Government again partnered with VidyaMandir Classes (VMC) in their ‘Dr. BR Ambedkar School of Specialised Excellence’ project (SoSE). The SoSE school project started in 2021 to provide specialised training in ‘Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), humanities, performing and visual arts, high-end 21st century skills and armed forces preparatory school.’ VMC has been entrusted with STEM education and preparation for engineering and medical entrances. Another scheme called the Jai Bhim Mukhyamantri Pratibha Vikas Yojana has been launched by the Delhi government to benefit those SC/ST/OBC and EWS categories receive private coaching for JEE, NEET, and Civil Services in both offline and online mode (HT, 19 June 2021).

Bihar state government has also ensured that its 45 lakh students studying in class IX to XII from over 9000 schools are not left behind in reaping benefit from

online education. It joined hands with live tutoring app 'Filo' as a move to ensure equitable access to vetted professional tutors. The pioneering platform connects students with 'top tutors' across the country in less than 60 seconds, available 24*7 via live, 1-1 interaction and video learning sessions. The Co-Founder of the app has drawn inspiration from US and states that the approach is 'a tried and tested model followed in districts like San Francisco, Florida, Chicago and Los Angeles' (Basu, 2022).

In its recent attempt to ensure maximum selection in IITs, IIMs and medical courses from the state has decided to setup Kota-style coaching centers in its four major cities namely, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot and Surat (Press Trust of India). Kota being the 'coaching hub of India, and the center of renowned enjoys a huge footfall of students from across India owing to its pioneers of coaching giants eg. Bansal Classes, Resonance, Allen, Vibrant etc. The move is not only philanthropic and prestige attached, rather a very strategic economical instrument to generate revenues. With the Chief Minister advocating for the initiative through financial provisions in the budget the industry would surely flourish in the coming years.

Almost all other states like Maharashtra, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Assam, etc. have partnered with ed-tech and franchise tutoring companies to promote the equity agenda in a commercialised free market by ensuring free aid for a few meritorious students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is important to note that the 'merit' agenda is pushed for in all these schemes, whereby merit is judged through rankings or scores in a specially curated screening entrance test or marks in school examinations. While merit is assumed to be an equity and equality generating concept, it does not ensure justice. Since, inherently capacities and capabilities are generated through an individual's social, cultural and economic capital, assuming that students suffering from extreme marginalisation would emerge as 'heroes' miraculously scoring high scores is a little over-estimation of the welfare agenda. This again follows symptomatic treatment or palliative treatment mechanism rather than finding a 'cure' for the quality education as a right and ensuring equality in opportunities as well as success in those opportunities is difficult to achieve by pushing philanthropic agenda while rooting for massive privatisation in all sectors.

6. Conclusion - Anticipations around Institutionalisation of tutoring through PPP model

The paper made examines how the rise in private players in Indian education system is institutionalised through privatisation of public spaces and absence of

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any national wide data that could enforce informed policy making on the subject. State governments in India and abroad have been increasingly inviting private coaching companies and education technology giants to ensure equitable opportunities and quality education agenda, widely advocated by the National Education Policy, 2020. Although the move is laudable, it cannot be ignored that a profit making, highly commercialised industry, necessarily running on free market principles cannot serve as a cure for years of disadvantage and exclusion; the least it can be a band-aid, a temporary solution. The government and civil society agencies need to advocate for this move circumspectly, chances are that these institutionalised giants might take over the education market completely, eventually start dictating pedagogy and practice, and reshape the educational ecosystem of the country. In all probability, with exponential expansion of the shadow industry around the world, reduction in public expenditure and distrust in public education systems the monopoly of such service delivery agencies very much possible in the near future.

In India only two states, namely Jammu and Kashmir ; and Arunachal Pradesh have a mechanism for registering coaching institutes to track their expansion, fee and scope of the services they provide. Such a mechanism comes very handy to implement and ensure the regulatory principles needed to keep the free market bodies under a check. Although the Supreme Court expressed the need for implementing regulation at the national level, little has been done since. The bill introduced in Lok Sabha in 2016 for the rules and regulations of the private coaching to prohibit them of misusing their powers called the Private Coaching Centre Regulatory Board Act, 2016, extending to the whole of India is still due .The Coaching Federation of India, a unified front for all tuition providers across the country came about in 2020, the peak of pandemic. The CFI is managed by veterans of coaching industry advocating for removal of tax regulations, subsidies etc. (necessary for all institutions registered under the Companies Act, 2013) with an argument that they are providing ‘education services’, similar in nature to private school might lead to complete dismanteling of state principles on right to education. The Right to Education act, 2009; SDGs for reducing inequalities and ensuring quality education, Education for all principles are all a part of this Rights based education discourse wary of failing in absence on regulations due to laissez-faire state policies. The joint ventures between the tutoring companies (called b to b mergers) are a wakeup call for the state to implement mechanisms that can keep a tab on their profit maximisation strategies. There need to be regular checks to ensure that the institutes do not follow malpractices like dummy schools, have a stable grievance redressal mechanism for consumers, and are rather treated a

supplement, not the remedification strategy to bridge poor quality of education delivered in state schools and to manage learning gaps. Quality in-service and pre-service teacher training and better assessment strategies are imperative to ensure optimal student learning. The idea is to move away from a business model for profit maximization to a more pedagogically sound good-quality education for holistic personality development of Indian.

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