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The purpose is to provide a forum for teachers, teacher-educators, educational administrators and research workers; to encourage original and critical thinking in education through presentation of novel ideas, critical appraisals of contemporary educational problems and views and experiences on improved educational practices. The contents include thought-provoking articles by distinguished educationists, challenging discussions, analysis of educational issues and problems, book reviews and other features.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The core of school education is a child who enters in school in her early childhood and expected to stay there generally till the end of her adolescence. This does not happen with all the children. They start dropping out since their early classes. Data shows more dropouts in girls and also amongst children belonging to marginalised groups.

So, still a good number of children are out of our school system. Open schools are also in place to cater to the needs of those children who cannot join formal schooling. Even then, the number of out of school children draws our attention.

Why this drop out? Of course, socio-economic factors play a greater role in this. But school factors are also responsible for not retaining children. What are these school factors? These are the factors, which not only push children out of the school but also are responsible for the deterioration of quality of schooling.

An article on 'Education for Tribal Children: Need for Improved Pedagogy' written by Malli Gandhi included in this issue talks about various factors which are important to enhance the quality of school education addressing needs of diverse group or children. The article focusses on modification of pedagogic routine in tribal context. Another article by Sunita Chugh entitled 'Civil strife and education of Children: A Study of Districts Affected by Left Wing Extremism' raises issue of schooling in a different contexts where the ever presence of large contingent security personnel and ever present threat of violence breaking any point of time has put off children particularly girl child from schools. This paper attempts to identify areas of concern that need immediate policy attention.

A research article contributed by Deepti Srivastava and Shobha entitled 'Researching with Children's Voice: Challenges in the Field' raises a concern on children's voices not being heard in the formal school situation. When these voices are heard in free spaces, these gave an idea of how children are constantly engaged, reflected, manipulated and guarded themselves in their social world which need to be connected with school knowledge. This concern is further strengthened by an article on the analysis of home assignment of students at the primary level, wherein Kusum Bhatia emphasises upon creation of desire in teacher to engage children in activities and to participate in learning experiences.

When children get opportunity to share their experiences in the classroom, they feel respected, they experience freedom of expression and this leads them towards strengthening their self-esteem. A memorial lecture on the theme 'Rabindranath Tagore and Democratic Theory' given by Amiya Kumar Bagchi in the Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar under NCERT's Memorial Lecture Series reflects upon human freedom in

the context of democratic society. In the lecture the statement 'Democracy and its foundation, human freedom, are both endangered in today's world' points towards educationists, posing a challenge of practicing democracy in the classroom rather than discussing democracy right from the early stages.

This issue also includes an article which looks at teacher as a leader. The article 'Students Learn When Teachers Lead' by Sameena Basu, examines the relationship between leadership behavior of teachers and students' achievement, whereas a research article contributed by Anjali Sharma explores relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

With child in the centre, the essential components such as curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, etc. at different stages seek our serious attention.

Two articles – one on 'Exploring the Science of Society' by Pankaj Arora and the other one entitled 'School Economics in the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER): An overview of the developmental process' by Aerum Khan provides an overview of shifts in subject-specific perspectives. A status report on the growth and development of pre-primary education in Assam by Sumona Roy and Rashmi Rekha Saikiya raises various concerns for pre-primary teacher education in Assam. The issue concludes with the review of a book entitled 'School Without walls: Inclusive Education for All' done by Pushpa Mandal, wherein the author raises the issue of equity and social justice in the context of education.

Let us not sum up the discussion, let us now begin another series of deliberations.

JIE invites your opinions and articles on various aspects of education.

Academic Editor

Education of Tribal Children

A Need for Improvised Pedagogy

MALLI GANDHI*

Abstract

The focus of this paper is to answer some of the questions on pedagogy of the adivasi children in the tribal schools of Andhra Pradesh. Provision for quality education for the tribal children through mother tongue instruction, types of action plans for implementing multilingual education, contextualisation of the content of the school textbooks, support materials required, provision for support materials in tribal dialects, contextualisation of classroom transactions, integration of life skills in the curriculum, overall need for modification of pedagogic routines in tribal context, in-service teacher training programmes are some of the emerging issues that need urgent action in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Various recent studies on education of tribal children (from the perspective of social inclusion) throw light on the poor state of affairs. A recent study on school management practices under SSA supported by European Union states in its report that the prescribed curriculum and related TLM (Teaching Learning Material) are top-down in nature and do not create opportunities or the administrative space and scope for need-based development of material and need-based planning at the school level and inclusion of children in border areas and tribal/ forest areas remains weak. Similarly, transition rates from primary to upper primary and secondary show significant dropout rates in case of marginalised sections and minority religions, and there are significant gender differences. Literacy rates among SC, ST and Muslim minority children still lag behind in many states. In brief, decentralised community mobilisation efforts have improved enrolment but this cannot be said for inclusion of the most deprived communities or social groups.

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Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, religion, caste, sex or place of birth. It stands for equity and equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. Inequitable circumstances leading to socio-economic and educational deprivations have created imbalances in society, affecting more severely the communities which for historical reasons and lack of resources have tended to remain backward. The Constitution has made provisions for safeguards (social, economic, educational, cultural, political, service) and protective measures to ensure all round development of weaker and disadvantaged sections. It also provides that States will promote educational and economic interests of weaker sections of society, in particular scheduled castes and tribes.

The national policy on Education (1986, 1992) and its programme of action (1992), have identified special measures for fulfilling the constitutional commitments to scheduled tribes which include opening of primary schools, Aanganwadis, non-formal and adult education centres, construction of school buildings in tribal areas, development of curricula and instructional materials in tribal languages so as to render tribal students switch over to regional languages in course of time. The priorities also include establishment of residential schools, formulation of

incentive schemes and scholarships for higher education, and designing curriculum at all stages to create awareness of the rich cultural identity of tribal people and their enormous creative talent. Various short term and long term measures as indicated in the programme of action on National Policy on Education (1992) have been identified for this purpose. A number of welfare, administrative and educational provisions have been made to improve the situation in respect of scheduled tribes. Funds have also been earmarked for the educational upliftment of this group under Tribal Sub Plan. The major programmes of Elementary Education viz. District Primary Educational Programme, *Lok Jumbish*, *Shiksha Karmi*, Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education and the National Programme for Nutritional Support to primary education have accorded priority to areas with concentration of scheduled tribes.

Scheduled Tribes deserve a high priority in any programme of elementary education and the main reason is that a large majority of the tribal children who are not part of the formal system of education come from this group. The Working group report on education of the disadvantaged sections during Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) brought out by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in November, 2001 has mentioned that: "despite the fact that there has been an increase in the

literacy rate of the SCs/STs since independence, the present position is still far from satisfactory. The overall increase in the literacy rate in the country during the period 1961-91 was 28.19% against which increase in literacy rate for scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes during the same period was 21.07 respectively". The situation in respect of these sections of people is still far from satisfactory and greater efforts are required to bring them on par with the general population.

The Tenth Five Year plan has also recognised the need for increasing their retention and reducing their dropout rate as one of the measures to empower them. Therefore, there is a need to identify issues, which need to be addressed through carefully devised methodology of teaching these children so that they are in a position to derive full benefit from the education system. National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE, 2000) recognised the need to respond to the specific educational needs of the learners from various sections of society by integrating socio-cultural perspectives in the educational programmes, partly by showing concern for linguistic and pedagogical requirement of socially disadvantaged groups. This is more relevant to scheduled tribes as they exhibit different culture and use different languages. Some of the languages do not have their own script and use scripts of other languages. India is a multi-

cultural and multi-lingual society. Tribal population constituting 8.1% of the total population comprises different social systems and dialects. Contextualisation of curriculum and incorporation of fundamental rights of the disadvantaged groups are the right kind of steps to be taken up for promoting respect for all cultures, equity and democratic values.

Pedagogy in Tribal Context

Subject matter and pedagogy are the important components of tribal education. Tribal children bring with them the rich experiences and perspectives of different cultures, which are different from other groups. They bring with them a set of values, attitudes, perceptions that may not be necessarily be the same as those of others. This diversity is at times confused with multiculturalism. While diversity refers to individuals/people that exemplify all cultural and congenial differences, multiculturalism means inclusion of theory, fact, values, and beliefs of all cultures. Therefore, the pedagogical strategies used for teaching in the tribal context are ought to be different. There needs to be synchronisation between school activities and lives of students contextualising curriculum and its transactions by linking with the experiences and skills of students.

The primary purpose of schooling is to assist an individual to develop her/his full potential as well as knowledge, attitudes and skills to interact with the environment in a

successful manner. Family, culture, community and total environment of a tribal child plays an important role in the teaching-learning process. It is necessary for the teacher to have complete knowledge and understanding about the various aspects of child's environment, which consists of her/his lifestyle, worldview, her/his cultural background, traditions and learning styles so that pedagogy of teaching is appropriately suited to the child's needs. This modification becomes more important if there is a big difference between the environment and the cultural context of the child and the teacher.

If one looks at the material used for training teachers in pedagogy one would notice that a uniform teacher-training package is being used for teachers of both tribal and non-tribal areas. There is almost no emphasis on understanding psychology of children from tribal areas, their specific-socio-cultural milieu, learning environment and the indigenous learning styles at home and community. Some of the training packages include a small module on tribal education, which often deals with macro issues mainly due to the paucity of time and space. As a result of this, in the post-training phase, the trained teachers find it difficult to establish an effective linkage between text books and the unique socio-cultural environment of tribal society. Composition of Indian society calls for specific pedagogical inputs in

teaching the tribal communities. This requirement is also supported by the recommendations of NCFSE 2000, which state that internationally, pedagogy is perceived not merely as a science of instruction but as a culture or as a set of sub-cultures as well which reflect different contexts and different teaching behaviors-inside and outside the classrooms.

The pluralistic nature of Indian society needs to be reflected in the pedagogical approaches. Since there is no single universal way in which learners learn, there is a strong need for looking into the specific cultural context in which a learner is placed. Though all learners process information in roughly similar ways, the content of processing varies considerably from tribal society to high socio-economic stratum of urban areas. Pedagogy, therefore, should be culture specific. Instead of using one uniform way of teaching-learning method, cultural practices like storytelling, dramatics, folk play, community living etc., should become a strong basis of pedagogy. Cultural specificity should get embedded in the pedagogical practices. This would lead to joyful learning and involvement of schools with the local people, their festivals, functions and lifestyles. The issues related with development of pedagogy of tribal education can be divided under the following categories: 1. Medium of instruction 2. Contextualising textbook content and preparation of material 3. Contextualising

curricular transaction 4. Integrating life skills and entrepreneurship and, information technology with curriculum 5. Changing timings and holidays of tribal area schools 6. Improving organisational climate in residential schools.

Medium of Instruction

Education through mother tongue has been emphasised both by Kothari Commission report (1964-66) and the National policy on education (1986, 1992) and its programme of Action (1992). The Constitution of India allows the use of tribal dialect (mother tongue as the medium of instruction in cases where the total population of a tribe is more than one lakh). In the NCFSE, 2000 and NCF-2005 mother tongue has been mentioned as the most vital factor for children's intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth. It is the central factor in the nurturance of children's intellectual and emotional development. Various cognitive processes like perception, apprehension, responses, and creative expression are maximally developed through the medium of mother tongue, the medium of instruction, therefore, ought to be the mother tongue of children enrolled in schools. Smooth transition from students' operations in the mother tongue to those in the regional language is to be ensured. The transition from mother tongue to regional language is very critical to language learning. There is a need to take up studies on use of mother

tongue as the medium of instruction in schools serving tribal population.

Contextualising Textbook Contents and Preparation of Support Materials

In most of the states in India, tribal children have to learn from those textbooks, which are being used for the non-tribal children of the state as a whole. The contents of these books deal with subjects/topics unknown to the tribal children. The tribal children, who live in isolated and remote villages, may not be able to identify themselves with such type of textbooks because of their urban-based non-tribal contents. Besides the illustrations used in these textbooks are also from the world alien to tribal children. There is an imperative need that these textbooks are revised on a state-to-state and district-to district basis so that necessary changes in them could be made to suit the socio-cultural and linguistic requirements of children from various tribal communities. It may not be a simple task to prepare suitable textbooks for tribal children, as most of the tribal literature available is not in printed form but only in the oral form. Writing of books needs special skills, aptitude and a thorough knowledge of tribal life and culture. Such step certainly will lead to elimination of the hitherto existing biases. The actual situation is that this has not happened as the decision makers find it difficult to introduce different sets of textbooks prepared in different dialects, as

they do not find it feasible. Besides the efforts made by Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, some sporadic efforts have also been made to develop such books but the pace could not be maintained as the text book revision for the general population has been done at a much faster speed. The result, is that there is dearth of learning materials in the tribal dialects which is a strong factor contributing to high dropout rate of tribal children. Even the text books written in the regional languages do not permit the child to identify him with the content and its context. Besides the difference between the home language and the school language, non-inclusion of folk literature and culture specific stories, dialogues etc also hamper the interest of tribal children in learning.

There is a need to revise the prescribed text books on a State to State basis, which needs to be supplemented by development of culture specific material through District Institutes of Education and Training in collaboration with voluntary agencies working in the tribal areas. There is a need to develop specific support materials, both at the district and grassroots level, to support learning by tribal children in their own mother tongue. Some concrete steps in this direction have been taken by states under SSA programme. Culture specific teaching-learning materials have been prepared by the state governments such as Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh,

Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. This includes language books, glossaries, supplementary reading materials, bridge inventories, learning kits etc. Anada Lahari developed by the state of Andhra Pradesh under the Janasala programme is exemplary in this regard.

Contextualising Curricular Transaction

It has been found that the rigid system of formal schooling has made children wary of school. Formal schools often emphasise on discipline, routine norms, and teacher centered instruction etc. This is a contradiction and poses problems to the free environment of tribal culture. This has led to sharp difference in the surrounding social environment of home and school. This difference in two environments is, to a great extent, responsible for high drop out of tribal children from the school. The teaching adopted in schools is largely text book based and has clearly failed in making teaching interesting for tribal children. Tribal children are accustomed to learn in groups through observation and practice, which is sharply in contrast with rote learning practices of schools. This can be solved by the use of alternative teaching methods taking into account the capacity of the tribal children, availability of resources in tribal schools and the physical environment in schools. Teachers working in tribal

schools are expected to know cultural values, practices, traditions and communication style of tribal children as well as the factors affecting their achievements in schools and learning difficulties. *Adivasis* lay a great emphasis on learning by memory because of their oral traditions. They are very much fond of riddles and narrative personal indulgences. All these issues are essential not only for a contextualised teaching-learning transaction but also for adopting appropriate evaluation procedures for the continuous and comprehensive evaluation of the tribal children in their environment.

Holistic Curriculum

One of the objectives of education for life is development of life skills relevant to the target group and their local contexts. These skills are basically local specific. These life skills are important for individuals to face challenges in their life. These life skills can be classified into four broad categories such as: universal life skills, teacher oriented life skills, student oriented and subject oriented life skills. Student oriented skills need to be addressed in the specific socio-cultural context of *adivasi* children. Subject oriented values, which refer to clarity of expression; empathy and respect for individual differences etc. are also to be looked at from the perspective of the tribal children. Information technology has become an integral part of school education as it facilitates exchange

of information among students, teachers and researchers all over the world. Mobile phones, personal digital assistants, and computer screens are no longer status symbols. With the process of globalisation they became useful tools for cultural exchange and learning through use of IT as a tool to support pedagogical revolution in school system. However, schools in tribal areas, due to their geographical isolation are deprived of emerging educational support systems. Education has to address both globalisation and localisation related problems so that a balanced personality is developed. This task is more difficult in the tribal context where Information technology facilities are very limited.

Change of Timings and School Related Holidays to Suit the Needs of Tribal Children

It has been advocated by many scholars and research studies that along with the academic studies, vocational training studies, courses also should be incorporated in the education system and curricular practices of *adivasi* children. At least a few hours' in a day may be allocated for vocational training of *adivasi* children in their schools.

Improving the Organisational climate of the residential, ashram, tribal welfare schools

In tribal areas there is a vast networking system of residential, welfare and Ashram type of schools which have

been established and functioning for the overall development of adivasi children. These schools are under the management, supervision and control of tribal welfare departments and integrated tribal development organisations. Reports on functioning of these schools across the country reveal mixed stories. While some schools are effectively functioning, other schools have not exhibited satisfactory results due to variety of reasons. Insensitive nature of supervision, lack of effective monitoring system, teacher absenteeism, poor motivating factors and poor residential conditions in these schools have a potential bearing on the socio-cultural practices of the adivasis. Teachers working in the tribal schools are generally not mentally geared towards serving tribal children. They generally teach in mechanical and routine manner. It is important to develop a specific training component for teachers and wardens who work in tribal schools. Moreover, teachers need periodic motivational training and field placement to become familiar with home environment of children and also their psychology. A few suggestions can be made to improve the educational scenario of the scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh.

- The government has to conduct sample surveys to know about the present state of education, literacy, academic achievement levels of the tribal children in primary, upper primary, residential and Ashram tribal schools in Andhra Pradesh.
- They should be provided with jobs which give them immediate remuneration and relief.
- A few more schools may be established and be provided with necessary infrastructural facilities.
- Rigid enforcement of the provisions of compulsory primary education Act is highly essential under RTE.
- Free coaching centres should be opened in the tribal villages for the educated and unemployed youth.
- Best sports persons are available among the tribal children, so physical education should be improved and special training facilities should be provided to make them national and state level players etc.
- Universalisation of ICDS with secured Anganwadi workers.
- Compulsory Elementary Education for PTG and Hill tribes' children.
- Reduction of dropout rate among PTG children.
- Need for providing commutation devices to tribal children to cover long distances to schools.
- Availability of Upper Primary and High schools in hilly tribal villages.
- Enhancement of Scholarships for the tribal children for Classes –VI to XII.
- Simplification of norms for

- admission to tribal children in government and aided schools.
- 25% clause to be activated to ensure children from these communities to be a part of the schools.
 - Girl-child friendly toilets in tribal schools.
 - Qualification norms for teachers should be in accordance with RTE norms.
 - Teachers working in the tribal schools should be versatile in local languages.
 - Strengthening of District Institutes of Teacher Education (DIETs) to ensure availability of local teachers to teach in mother tongue.
 - Community participation in tribal schools.
 - Nagaland model for strengthening the system of governance in tribal schools.
 - Local self-help groups, NGOs to be involved in the education system of tribal children.
 - School development plans for tribal schools.
 - No detention without effective implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation.
 - For migrant workers among the adivasis' alternative schools/tent schools/mobile schools.
 - Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas for tribal girls and effective skill development norms for girl child education in tribal villages.
 - Safety for the tribal children in Naxalite, interior forest areas to be enhanced.
 - Banning of screaming, bullying, beating, severe punishments in schools.
 - CSIR, Kendriya Vidyalaya and Navodaya Vidyalaya, Defence, schools in tribal villages
 - Facilities for post elementary education for tribal children in tribal localities.
 - Widening of Secondary Education network in tribal areas.
 - Greater thrust on quality education for the tribal children in schools.
 - Mobile, tent schools for the children of the migrant laborers among the adivasi communities, and post matric scholarships for tribal children.
 - Child survival and health issues affecting tribal children under the age of 18 need remedial action.
 - High levels of malnutrition in tribal villages require immediate attention.
 - Prompt action in the cases of atrocities on the tribal children.
 - Special concern for the health of the girl children.
 - Sale of children in some of the tribal villages to be considered seriously.
 - Access to public services (health, PDS etc) to be improvised.
 - Mobile hospitals for the tribal children.
 - Life skills training for women, youth and children in tribal villages may be organised.

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Civil strife and Education of Children

A Study of Districts Affected by Left wing Extremism

SUNITA CHUGH*

Abstract

Activities of left wing extremists called naxalites are adversely affecting the functioning of school system in several parts of the country. The problem is found to be particularly severe in a few states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal. In all, about 83 districts were identified as affected by civil strife with 35 of these as severely affected. These districts are predominantly inhabited by population of different tribal groups and are mostly covered with forest that provides natural protection to armed groups. The security forces have occupied several schools either partially or fully driving out teachers and students disturbing the function of schooling system in these areas. The ever presence of large contingent security personnel and ever present threat of violence breaking any point of time has put off children particularly girl child from schools. These conditions pose several immediate challenges in achieving universalisation of elementary education. The present paper makes an attempt to review the current status of elementary education using a couple of indicators on participation of children and infrastructure facilities available in schools drawing from DISE data and attempts to identify areas of concern that need immediate policy attention. An attempt has been made to juxtapose the districts affected by civil strife as identified by Government with those that are not affected by civil strife within each state.

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Background

The conflict, both external and internal, would adversely impact the well being of people in general and the children in particular. The impact of conflict is found to fall more acutely on vulnerable groups like women, poor, children, etc. While the impact of external aggression on people in general and children in particular is widely recognised and documented but the impact of internal conflict on well being of children is only beginning to be recognised now. According to a DFID (Department for International Development) commissioned report (Smith and Vaux, 2003), 82 per cent of the reported 113 million children out-of-school were from crisis and post-crisis countries. Rose and Greeley (2006) add to this the estimated figures that as many as a third to one-half of all out-of-school children live in 'fragile' states, and observe reaching these groups which are excluded from education is very difficult. Global Monitoring Report on Education for All (EFA), 2011 mentions that the armed conflicts are diverting funds from the social sector including education into military spending. The expenditure on defence and armaments is much higher than on education which destroys the opportunities for millions of children. Nevertheless whenever conflicts are documented education seldom gets figured, its only life and property that is counted and there is no mention of the hidden costs and lasting legacies that these violent

civil strife's have. Human Rights Watch in its report on 'Sabatoged Schooling' has highlighted as to how the schooling is being disrupted by the ongoing conflict between naxalite insurgents and police in the eastern states of Bihar and Jharkhand. The report also mentions that children live in fearful condition when they come to school. Even children cannot play freely during the recess time. Now the question comes how it will be possible for the school to function smoothly and peacefully when the schools are bombed and parents fear to send their children to school. It is quite sure that at any moment of time Child's right to free and compulsory education is violated and also the other child right too. NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child's Rights) in its report on Protection of Children's Rights in Areas of Civil Unrest acknowledges the extremely difficult circumstances in which children in areas of civil unrest live and the gross violation of their rights including education. The internal conflict may likely to be limited to small pockets often located in remote parts or to demographically a small proportion of population who may often tend to be most undeveloped communities. As such these areas and/or population groups are in need of special measures for development and well being. The internal conflict may confound the problems of these groups further.

The activities of left wing extremists called naxalites are

concentrated largely in districts located in central India on the borders of several states that include Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra. These districts are predominantly inhabited by population of different tribal groups and are mostly covered with forest that provides natural protection to armed groups. In all about 83 districts were identified as affected by civil strife with 35 of these as severely affected (List of districts is given in Annexure-I).

In the recent past it was widely reported by media, civil rights groups, etc that in several parts of the country affected by activities of left wing extremists the security forces have occupied several schools either partially or fully driving out teachers and students disturbing the function of schooling system in these area. It was also reported that naxalites are blasting off schools on the pretext that they are being used as shelter by security forces. The residential schools in tribal areas are sometimes used as shelter and recruitment ground by left wing extremists. This lead to complete disruption in the functioning of schooling system and many a times schools are closed down for months together. The presence of large contingent security personnel and ever present threat of violence breaking any point of time has put off children particularly girl child from schools. Teachers are unwilling to be posted and work in areas affected

by naxalites. They are more likely to be absent. Further teachers seldom get a safe place to stay or bring their family to the village where they are working. In fact the Supreme Court hearing a PIL has directed the state governments to vacate schools immediately and observed under no condition security forces can occupy schools. The frequent exchange of fire and demolition of schools has adversely impacted the infrastructural facilities in schools. Further violent conditions in these districts have become stumbling block in improving the infrastructure destroyed by naxalites or deteriorated over time. The poverty, limited opportunities for employment, and more importantly violent conditions and consequent migration in these districts have also adversely affected the nutritional status of children endangering the growth of children. These conditions pose several immediate challenges in implementation of RTE 2009.

Key Educational Issues in the Naxal Affected Areas

- The naxal affected areas are mostly the tribal areas and therefore there is double disadvantage. The geographical inaccessibility of the naxal prone areas makes it extremely difficult for teachers to reach such areas and community support is also lacking in running schools. There is no community ownership of schools as the communities themselves are displaced.

- There is no convergence amongst different policies so as to have focused efforts.
- Schools are occupied by security personals and in that case the naxalites are more likely to damage schools.
- There is no forward linkage for secondary schools which also demotivate the children for taking up education.
- Irregular attendance of students and increasing dropouts due to the violent atmosphere is another major problem.
- There is lack of human resource since regular teachers are not willing to move to such regions due to fear of security personals and naxals as well. High teacher absenteeism is another major issue.
- Due to displacement and migration to another area/state, language and medium of instruction becomes a major issue for the children.

In such a situation the challenge is how to ensure all children enroll and attend schools regularly. How to ensure the provision of schooling and infrastructure facilities in schools are in sync with the norms of RTE 2009. What strategies can revive the functioning of schooling system? Can involvement of community, local political leaders including front organisations is possible and ensure revival of the functioning of schooling system? Do the facilities in schools vary across different districts

especially those located in civil strife area? These are some questions that arise in the context of participation of children in school in areas affected by conflict. The present paper reviews the current status of elementary education using a couple of indicators on participation of children and infrastructure facilities available in schools drawing from District Information System for Education (DISE) data and attempts to identify areas of concern that need immediate policy attention. An attempt has been made to juxtapose the districts affected by civil strife as identified by Government with those that not affected by civil strife within each state. The paper also presents the challenges in reviving the schooling system. These include upgrading the infrastructure on par with RTE, identifying and enrolling all children, ensuring regular attendance of teachers and students, ensuring regular functioning of schools with community monitoring, prevention of dropping out, etc.

Literacy

Literacy rates reveal efforts made for educational development cumulated over a period of time. Districts and states vary widely in terms of literacy rates. In Chhattisgarh, though variation within districts affected and not affected by extremism is high but majority of districts not affected by extremism have high literacy levels. For example, 8 districts (Raigarh, Korba, Janjgir-Champa, Kabeerdhan,

Durg, Raipur, Mahasamund, and Dhamtari) except for Bijapur out of 9 districts that are not affected by extremism have literacy rates above 60 per cent compared to 7 districts (Koriya, Surguja, Jashpur, Rajnandgaon, Bilaspur, and Uttar Bastar Kanker) out of 10 affected by extremism. Remaining 3 districts (Bastar, Narayanpur, and Dakshin Bastar Dantewada) have literacy rates well below 60 per cent. Similarly, in Andhra Pradesh, 15 districts (Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Medak, Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda, Warangal, Khammam, Srikakulam, Vishakhapatnam, Guntur, Prakasam, Kurnool, Anantpur, Vizianagaram) out of 16 affected by extremism have literacy rates between 60-70 per cent and only 1 district (East Godavari) has literacy rate in the range of 70-80 compared. In comparison to this out of 7 district not affected by extremism, 2 districts (Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore, Y.S.R. Kadapa) have literacy rate in the range of 60-70 percent and 5 districts (Rangareddy, West Godavari, Krishna, Hyderabad and Chittoor) are having literacy rate in the range of 70- 80 per cent. In Bihar, the patterns seem to be somewhat different. In Bihar, 6 (Munger, Patna, Bhojpur, Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad) out of 14 districts affected by extremism have literacy levels between 70-80 compared to just 2 (Siwan and Buxar) districts out of 22 not affected by extremism. Another 5 districts (Nalanda, Gaya, Nawada, Jamui and Jehanabad) that are affected

by extremism have literacy levels between 60-70 per cent compared to 11 districts (Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Saran, Vaishali, Samastipur, Begusarai, Khagaria, Bhagalpur, Banka, Sheikhpura and Arwal) that are not affected by extremism. A large chunk of districts i.e, 9 districts (Shohar, Supaul, Araria, Kishanganj, Purnia, Katihar, Madhpura, Saharsa, Darbhanga) out of 22 that are not affected by extremism have literacy levels between 50-60 per cent compared to 3 (Paschim Champaran, Purba Champaran and Sitamarhi) out of 14 districts that are affected by extremism. In Jharkhand also 5 districts (Bokaro, Purbi Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Ramgarh, Ranchi) out of 15 affected by extremism have literacy rates between 70-80 per cent compared to just 1 district (Dhanbad) out of 7 not affected by extremism. Another 9 districts (Garhwa, Chatra, Kodarma, Giridih, Lohardaga, Palamu, Latehar, Gumla, Saraikela-Kharsawan) affected by extremism have literacy rates between 60-70 per cent compared to 3 districts (Deoghar, Dumka, Jamtara) that are not affected by extremism. Only one district (Paschimi Singhbhum) out of 15 affected by extremism has literacy levels below 60 per cent compared to 3 (Godda, Sahibganj, Pakur) out of 8 not affected by extremism. In Orissa however, a large majority of districts not affected by extremism have higher literacy rates; for example only 6 districts (Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Nayagarh,

Ganjam) out of 13 affected by extremism have literacy rates above 70 per cent compared to 13 (Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Debagarh, Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Anugul, Khordha, Puri) out of 15 not affected by extremism. While 5 districts (Gajapati, Rayagada, Nabarangapur, Koraput, Malkangiri) affected by extremism have literacy rates less than 60 per cent compared to one district (Nuapada) not affected by extremism.

The above discussion points out though variation in literacy rates within districts affected by and not by affected by extremism is high but these two groups of district do differ at least moderately. However, the patterns change by state. In Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa districts affected by extremism have lower rates of literacy whereas, in Bihar and Jharkhand they are on par or moderately higher literacy rates than districts not affected by extremism.¹

I. Participation of Children in Education

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) reveal the progress made in bringing of elementary education and RTE. The variation between districts in terms of GER and NER appears to be moderate within states. However, districts not affected by extremism appear to be moderately ahead of districts affected by extremism (Table 1, Annexure II).

In Chhattisgarh a few districts appears to be off the mark in terms of participation in education with districts not affected by extremism appears to have moderately higher participation rates than districts affected by extremism. For example in 3 districts (Kanker, Bastar, Dantewada) out of 8 affected by extremism have NER lower than 60 per cent at the upper primary level. All districts not affected by extremism have NER higher than 60 per cent. However, it may be noted that participation at the upper primary stage is quite low across districts as except for Janjgir-champa, no other district has NER higher than 70 per cent barring single exception. At the primary level NER is 100 or nearly 100 in all districts barring 2 (Kanker and Dantewada) and 3 districts (Raigarh, Durg and Dhamtari) affected and not affected by extremism respectively.

The data on GER and NER in Andhra Pradesh is somewhat unconvincing. Ten districts both affected and not affected report GER less than 100 per cent even at the primary stage. At the upper primary stage all districts barring one report GER less than 100 per cent. The NER reported at the upper primary stage hovering around 50 in several districts. Even some of the known educationally advanced districts have much lower GER and NER.

In Bihar GER at the primary level is well over above 100 per cent in respect to both districts affected and

¹ Detailed Tables are available with author at Sunitachugh11@gmail.com

not affected by extremism barring Patna and Jehanabad. NER at the primary stage is exactly 100 per cent in all districts barring a lone exception! At the upper primary stage however, the level of both GER and NER are much lower across districts. However, variation between districts affected and not affected by extremism appears to be very marginal. For example 8 out of 14 districts affected by extremism and 11 out of 21 districts not affected by extremism have GER lower than 60 per cent at the upper primary level. Only 6 extremist affected districts and 10 districts not affected by extremism have GER above 60 per cent at the upper primary stage. The numbers once again confirm that Bihar in general is underdeveloped including in education sector.

In Jharkhand, GER at the primary stage varies quite widely with many districts reporting over 100 per cent and two districts reporting even less than 90 per cent. However, NER is reported to be 100 across districts with few exceptions. No discernible differences can be found between districts affected and not affected by extremism. The participation rates at the upper primary stage were generally low across in majority of districts. Even GER is found to be as low as 45 per cent in Dumka or barely about 42 per cent in Pachim Singhbhum in 2010-11. Similarly, NER at the upper primary stage is reported to be less than 60 per cent in 3 out of 6 districts not affected by extremism and 4 out

of 10 districts affected by extremism. The data once again points out the educational backwardness of Jharkhand encompassing the whole state. It appears that in Bihar as well as Jharkhand, the overall backwardness of states and extremism are confounded masking distinct impact of extremism on schooling.

In Orissa, also GER at the primary stage is well over 100 per cent across all districts affected and not affected by extremism with few exceptions. NER at the primary stage is also 100 or nearly 100 per cent in 9 districts out of total 13 districts and in remaining four districts it is in the range of 80-90 per cent. However, no discernible differences are observed between districts affected and not affected by extremism. However, the participation rates at the upper primary stage continue to be low across all districts though districts not affected by extremism do have somewhat higher participation rates. For example, NER at the upper primary stage is less than 50 per cent in 10 out of 13 districts affected by extremism compared to 6 out of 17 not affected by extremism. In 11 out of 17 districts not affected by extremism NER at the upper primary stage is more than 50 per cent compared to just 3 districts out of 13 affected by extremism.

From the above discussion it is clear that the participation rates at the primary stage is approaching near universalisation with notable options but at the upper primary

stage it is still a long way to go across all districts. Districts affected by extremist activities appear to be moderately lagging behind districts not affected by extremism in a few states. Further, it appears that extreme backwardness and the impact of extremism confounds making it difficult to identify distinct impact of extremism.

II. Promotion, Dropout and Transition

It is not adequate that all children are enrolled in schools and GER and NER is very high. It is feared that many children dropout in progression from one grade to next grade and also in transition from primary to the upper primary stage. An analysis of progression of children from one grade to next and transition to next stage of education provides insights into the functioning of schooling and implementation of RTE 2009. Whether the districts affected by extremism display higher levels of dropout rates than the districts not affected by extremism is moot question. This section analyses promotion, dropout and transition rates drawing data from DISE.²

From Table 2 (Annexure II) it appears that the annual average dropout rate as calculated by DISE is high in a large number of districts particularly in Bihar, Jharkhand

and also in Chhattisgarh and Orissa. Dropout rate is more than 5 per cent in over 80 districts in these states. In more than 20 districts it is over 10 per cent. In Chhattisgarh and Orissa dropout rate is distinctly high in districts affected by extremism. Similarly in Andhra Pradesh also districts affected by extremism have higher dropout rates than districts not affected by extremism. In Bihar and Jharkhand, all districts whether affected by extremism, dropout rate is very high-in most cases upwards 5 per cent over 20 per cent. One can find similar trends in promotion rates-obverse of dropout rate across districts. Districts not affected by extremism having higher promotion rates than districts affected by extremism in many states.

Similarly, transition rates are uniformly low across districts both affected and not affected by extremism in Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa. Transition rates are as low as or even lower than 70-80 per cent in several districts. In Chhattisgarh, transition rates are generally high compared to Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa. Not significant difference is found between the districts affected by extremism with districts not affected by extremism in Chhattisgarh and Orissa. The transition rate in Chhattisgarh and Orissa is over 90 per cent with few

² DISE publications calculate annual dropout rates by grade adjusting for repetition and averages over all grades. Promotion rate is obverse of dropout rate adjusted for repetition. Transition rate to the upper primary education is calculated between grade 5 (terminal grade of primary level) and grade 6 (entry grade of the upper primary stage).

exceptions in mostly districts affected by extremism. In Andhra Pradesh, a few districts affected by extremism display lower transition rates in comparison to the other districts not affected by extremism. In all districts barring lone exception not affected by extremism, transition rate is over 90 per cent in Andhra Pradesh.

From the above discussion it is clear that the districts affected by extremism have higher dropout rates and lower promotion and transition rates. In underdeveloped states like Bihar and Jharkhand, all districts have higher dropout rates and lower promotion and transition rates.

III. Infrastructure Facilities in the Schools

Infrastructure facilities play pivotal role in facilitating teaching learning process. RTE 2009 prescribed a few norms on minimum facilities that should be available in schools. This section examines the availability of a few basic facilities like girl's toilet and drinking water facility arbitrarily chosen as proxy to facilities in schools.

Availability of Girls' Toilet

Districts vary quite widely on the availability of girls' toilet though no discernible differences could be found between districts affected by extremism and not affected. Overall girls' toilet is available in less than 50 per cent of schools nearly in half of districts. The upper primary

schools with primary section appear to be somewhat better placed as in more than 70 districts girls' toilet is available in more than 50 per cent schools.³

In Chhattisgarh, the proportion of schools with girls' toilet is less than 50 per cent in all districts barring one in case of primary schools. Availability of girl's toilet in the upper primary schools is no different barring a few exceptions. In Bihar, the proportion of schools with girls' toilet in districts affected by extremism is much less than the districts not affected by extremism. In several districts affected by extremism girls' toilet is available only in miniscule number of schools. In Jharkhand, proportion of schools with girls toilet varies by margin across districts with no noticeable differences between those affected and not affected by extremism. In Orissa also districts vary widely by the proportion of schools with girls' toilet but with districts affected by extremism at a distinct disadvantage. In Andhra Pradesh, girls' toilet is available in more than 50 per cent in all extremist affected districts except one. Ironically districts known as advanced and not affected by extremism one can find fewer than 50 per cent schools with girls' toilet. However both extremist affected and not affected appear to be equally deficit in the availability of girls' toilet.

The foregoing description makes it clear that in a large number of districts

³ Detailed tables are available with author

girls' toilet is available only in 50 per cent of schools. From the discussion it also emerges that districts affected by extremism are at best on par with or even worse than the districts not affected by extremism with respect to availability of girls toilet.

Availability of Drinking Water

Drinking water facility is another indicator usually examined to assess the condition of schools. It appears more than 70-80 of schools have the drinking water facility across all districts. The upper primary schools appear to be better placed with nearly 100 per cent schools having drinking water facility in large majority of districts. The districts affected by extremism and not affected by extremism appear to be not differing in the availability of drinking water facility across all states.

Epilogue

From the foregoing discussion it can be surmised that districts affected by extremism are at best on par (or as low as) or lower than districts not affected by extremism on a host of variable relating to universal elementary education and right to education. By no means, this means causation. The discussion also hints that in underdeveloped states, backwardness and extremism appears confounding making it difficult to identify distinct patterns between districts affected by extremism and not affected by extremism. The discussion also points the strengths and weaknesses

using district aggregate level data in identifying the impact of extremism on education. Perhaps district level aggregate data at best can indicate differences between districts affected and not affected by extremism. Under conditions of extreme backwardness, district aggregates may not reveal anything however, as mentioned earlier that the education of children gets adversely affected in these conflict prone areas therefore the innovative strategies have been adopted by the state and civil society organisation to tackle this situation.

State Initiatives to Improve Participation of Children in Conflict Areas

In this conflict prone situation the State has taken into cognizance that education must be kept high up among the top priorities of the country as it has the greatest potential for building peace and prosperity in the long term. The SSA Framework for Implementation has been aligned to the mandate of the Right to Education Act. Under SSA, "equity" means that the programme will focus on addressing issues of excluded children of various categories such as SCs/STs/urban deprived/ minorities etc. A new category of children living in areas affected by civil strife has now been added. Such children, particularly those living in areas affected by left wing extremism, are marginalised from educational processes because of the conditions prevailing in such

areas. SSA recognises the situation of these children as an alarming problem. The programme treats areas affected by civil strife as Special Focus Districts for the purpose of appraising the Annual Work Plan and Budget of States and suggests some measures to try and insulate children and their education from the impact of situations prevailing in such areas. These measures include — banning the use of school and other educational facilities for housing police/paramilitary/military personnel; making schools safe zones by providing adequate security and emotional support to children; in the absence of security, making alternative arrangements for all affected children to enable them to continue their education without a break – for example by provision of residential schools or transportation to safer schools and also organising special negotiations with leaders in these areas to ensure that schools are allowed to function uninterrupted. Some of the states affected by civil strife have taken few steps to mitigate the effects of conflict on the education of children as discussed below:

Few Innovative Strategies

- (a) Chhattisgarh has opened residential schools on a large scale. The experiment of residential schools in left wing extremism affected districts in Chhattisgarh has been quite successful. It has demonstrated that a school constructed with pre-fabricated bamboo construction material is likely to continue being used as a school because it is unsuitable for occupation by security forces. The speed of construction is another advantage of using such pre-fabricated material.
- (b) Balbandhu program' has been initiated in 10 districts of civil unrest of Assam, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh in Phase I and in areas of civil unrest of States of Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Odisha in Phase II. The focus of the programme is to mobilise the community on child rights, and give it confidence to access institutions for children such as primary health care centres, anganwadi centers, schools, Ashramshalas, hostels, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya's (KGBVs) and all other entitlements and to interact with the government at the block and district level to bring to the fore the gaps in access to public institutions.
- (c) Bamboo mission schools have been established in the Bastar region. The Naxalites (Maoists) destroyed several buildings. But these (bamboo) buildings ensure that the children continue going to schools.
- (d) Initiatives such as 'Sports for Development' and psycho-social support like arts-based therapy have been promoted by UNICEF in partnership with government and civil society groups to schoolchildren in districts

affected by civil strife to help them overcome trauma, dislocation and stress.

Way Forward

How can we instill confidence in children and their parents that sending children to school is not only safer but a potential antipode to violence? For this to happen, schools should be freed from interference both from security forces and also extremist activities. Further awareness programmes may have to be initiated among the people about positive benefits of education and schooling. Perhaps initiation of a school reconstruction programme

to uplift the infrastructure facilities could revive the functioning of schooling in these districts. Number of Residential Institutions should be increased in the district. As a short term measure for disruption of schools, temporary schools may be established with makeshift infrastructure by pooling together teachers and students of nearby schools with appropriate facilities for accommodation if necessary. Involvement of community, parents and leaders of various political parties and civil rights activists is crucial in confidence building measures and revival of schooling system in the conflict prone area.

Annexure – I

Districts Identified as Affected by Civil Strife

<i>State</i>	<i>Districts in State</i>	<i>Districts Affected</i>	<i>Districts Affected</i>
Andhra Pradesh	23	16	Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Khammam, Medak, Nalgonda, Mahbubnagar, Guntur, Prakasam, Anantapur, Kurnool, Vizianagaram, East Godavari, Srikakulam, Nizamabad, Vishakhapatnam
Bihar	38	15	Aurangabad, Gaya, Jehanabad, Rohtas, Nalanda, Patna, Bhojpur, Kaimur, East Champaran, West Champaran, Sitamarhi, Arwal, Munger, Nawada Jamui
Jharkhand	24	18	Hazaribagh, Lohardaga, Palamu, Chatra, Garhwa, Ranchi, Gumla, Simdega, Latehar, Giridih, Koderma, Bokaro, Dhanbad, East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharsawan, Khunti, Ramgarh
Madhya Pradesh	50	1	Balaghat
Chhattisgarh	18	9	Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Rajnandgaon, Sarguja, Jashpur, Koriya, Narayanpur

Maharashtra	35	3	Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Gondia
Orissa	30	15	Malkangiri, Ganjam, Koraput, Gajapati, Rayagads, Nabarangpur, Mayubhanj, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Jajpur, Deogarh, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal, Nayagarh
Uttar Pradesh	72	3	Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli
West Bengal	19	3	Bankura, West Midnapore, Purulia
Total		83	

Annexure – II

Table 1

GER and NER in Districts affected by Civil Strife

	GER				NER			
	Primary		upper primary		Primary		upper primary	
	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10
CHHATTISGARH								
<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>								
Koriya	115.8	118.1	92.3	88.4	100.0	100	67	62.7
Surguja	143.5	142.9	94.7	86.3	100	100	72.4	64.9
Jashpur	112.4	115.3	90.7	85.6	100	100	65.3	61.1
Rajnandgaon	120	122	104.7	96.5	100	100	73.8	69
Bilaspur	157.9	154.4	105.0	100.1	100.0	100	71.0	67.6
Kanker	116.5	115.4	91.9	79.3	94.7	94.2	59.4	50.9
Bastar	129.4	119.1	73.2	65.6	100.0	97	47.7	36.4
Dantewada	109.2	101.9	43.2	40.9	93.7	85.7	28.4	26.3
<i>Districts not affected by naxalites</i>								
Raigarh	101.9	101.5	86.7	82.8	89.6	88.8	64.3	60
Korba	117.5	120.1	91.5	85.8	100.0	100	74.1	66.6

Janjgir - Champa	126.5	126.7	103.1	97.2	100	100	80.8	74.4
Kawardha	175	167.9	107.0	96.2	100	100	70.9	61.6
Durg	103.1	106.5	94.9	91.3	86.8	87.4	66.3	61.2
Raipur	134.8	131.2	108	96.5	100	100	74.1	66.8
Mahasamund	119.7	121.8	102.2	95.6	100	100	70.2	65.7
Dhamtari	110.1	112.3	104.0	100	88.5	92.5	70.0	65.5
Bilaspur	157.9	154.4	105.0	100.1	100.0	100	71.0	67.6
ANDHRA PRADESH								
<i>Naxalite Affected districts</i>								
Adilabad	129.3	125.9	89.3	87.6	100.0	92.1	68.9	61.9
Nizamabad	110.7	109.3	90.3	89.9	90.5	86.6	68.4	72.2
Karimnagar	97.0	97.3	96.2	92.2	79.5	80.2	73.0	70.9
Medak	120.6	114.3	89.6	87	95.3	90	69.4	66.1
Mahbubnagar	122.9	119.8	80.3	79.2	95.9	94.1	61.2	60.2
Nalgonda	105.9	101.7	87.1	82.5	87.5	83.7	69.2	65.2
Warangal	110.9	106.2	95.3	89	89.5	85.5	78.3	70.6
Khammam	104.5	100.3	87.8	80.8	85.7	80.8	65.7	61
Srikakulam	98.9	97.1	78.1	74	79.7	78.3	56.2	53.9
Vizianagaram	99.6	98.7	75.1	71.8	79.9	79.1	53.3	52.3
Visakhapatnam	104.5	99.5	78.2	72.2	85.2	81.2	57.6	53.8
East Godavari	94.4	81.9	76.5	70.7	78.0	67.5	56.0	52.4
Guntur	89.1	70.4	69.6	57.3	72.9	57.4	51.0	41.5
Prakasam	111.4	95.6	74.2	63.7	89.8	76.7	53.1	46.5
Kurnool	120.5	116.6	84.1	81.6	96.0	94.9	60.3	59.7
Anantapur	99.0	94.8	78.2	74.5	78.1	73.8	53.7	53.8
<i>Districts not affected by naxalites</i>								
Hyderabad	119.2	110.7	93.9	90.3	89.2	82.4	68.4	65
Rangareddy	166.5	162	128.5	124.9	100.0	100	97.4	96.2
West Godavari	90.5	80.7	76.0	68.4	75.0	67	56.1	51.2
Krishna	86.3	79.6	71.1	66.9	71.3	65.8	52.3	50.2
Nellore	96.0	89.8	71.4	68.1	79.0	74.1	51.4	49.8
Chittoor	93.0	90	81.9	78	74.0	72.3	55.7	53.8

BIHAR								
<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>								
Pashchim Champanan	138.0	133.7	41.3	39.5	100.0	100	34.2	33
Purba Champanan	152.4	146	56.3	45.9	100.0	100	48.7	41.7
Sitamarhi	144.6	135	51.7	44.2	100.0	100	45.6	41
Munger	136.5	119.1	62.9	57.3	100.0	100	59.5	54.6
Nalanda	115.6	118.3	58.8	55.6	100.0	100	51.8	52.6
Patna	93.9	84.4	42.1	37.4	87.4	80.4	37.7	34.7
Bhojpur	161.7	152.4	72.1	66.9	100.0	100	62.5	63.8
Kaimur (Bhabua)	146.7	138.7	84.6	82.6	100.0	100	79.5	78.2
Rohtas	124.0	119.6	67.5	65.2	100.0	100	64.6	62.5
Aurangabad	151.5	144.3	71.0	65.8	100.0	100	62.1	60.7
Gaya	140.9	125.7	61.7	56.3	100.0	100	59.3	52.8
Nawada	144.7	137.4	59.4	57.6	100.0	100	51.5	53.2
Jamui	158.1	145	55.3	50	100.0	100	52.3	46.3
Jehanabad	91.5	131	40.4	60.4	80.6	100	34.5	54.6
<i>Districts not affected by naxalites</i>								
Sheohar	149.8	142.8	53.2	46.3	100.0	100	46.2	40.3
Supaul	169.3	148.8	62.6	67.1	100.0	100	54.2	52.9
Araria	163.1	146.5	47.0	34.7	100.0	100	39.9	34.7
Kishanganj	172.1	159.7	56.8	52.6	100.0	100	43.5	45.7
Purnia	159.9	140.9	46.4	44.2	100.0	100	42.9	40.6
Katihar	198.7	157.6	58.4	44	100.0	100	41.8	44
Madhepura	175.0	175	61.7	49.9	100.0	100	54.6	43.9
Saharsa	175.0	172.9	52.5	44.6	100.0	100	44.0	40.1
Darbhanga	138.4	131.6	55.0	50.4	100.0	100	50.4	47.7
Muzaffarpur	123.2	141	55.3	52.9	100.0	100	46.8	47.5
Gopalganj	146.3	141.3	63.5	58.9	100.0	100	50.9	48.1
Siwan	133.7	131.1	65.5	58.9	100.0	100	56.7	55.6
Saran	136.7	121.4	63.7	54	100.0	100	56.9	49.7
Vaishali	137.5	132.2	74.0	64.3	100.0	100	69.9	61.2

Samastipur	150.1	142.9	58.0	54.4	100.0	100	48.2	50.6
Begusarai	156.1	145.7	78.3	68.7	100.0	100	73.6	66.6
Khagaria	144.6	149.4	76.3	56	100.0	100	60.9	43
Bhagalpur	133.4	128.4	55.0	51.1	100.0	100	50.3	42.6
Banka	139.2	134	60.7	44.9	100.0	100	54.3	41.3
Sheikhpura	140.1		55.0		100.0		48.8	
Buxar	150.8	125.9	75.7	56.9	100.0	100	68.9	52.3
Arwal	N.A	129.5	N.A	54.2	N.A	100	N.A	46.2
JHARKHAND								
<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>								
Garhwa	175.0	175	110.3	93.2	100.0	100	94.3	75.8
Chatra	175.0	175	103.2	106.8	100.0	100	86.9	93.3
Kodarma	175.0	169.8	106.9	84.2	100.0	100	84.4	66.6
Giridih	175.0	175	74.0	63.7	100.0	100	58.8	50.8
Bokaro	112.5	106.7	81.0	73.3	100.0	100	69.1	59
Lohardaga	175.0	175	113.5	95.7	100.0	100	85.0	78
Purbi Singhbhum	106.0	94.4	73.1	66.3	97.1	86.4	63.8	55.9
Palamu	151.7	149.9	78.4	66.1	100.0	100	64.5	54.8
Latehar	N.A		N.A	NA	N.A		N.A	
Hazaribagh	87.3	91.2	53.4	50.1	78.1	81.4	48.7	42.7
Ramgarh	N.A	n.a	N.A	n.a	N.A	n.a	N.A	n.a
Ranchi	120.5	113.9	79.5	69.7	100.0	97.1	66.8	56.6
Gumla	110.7		55.4		85.4		42.6	
Pashchimi Singhbhum	90.1	88.6	43.0	41.9	75.9	81.9	38.2	34.5
Saraikela- Kharsawan	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
<i>Districts not affected by naxalites</i>								
Deoghar	168.1	164.5	88.1	77.7	100.0	100	67.4	65.5
Godda	170.2	166.4	75.5	68.5	100.0	100	64.7	61.4
Sahibganj	175.0	173	77.6	58.1	100.0	100	62.2	43
Pakur	168.3	163.6	67.4	59.8	100.0	100	55.4	54.2
Dhanbad	110.1	84.6	70.9	51.8	99.5	75	59.4	44.6

Dumka	99.7	97.5	45.6	39.8	85.4	81.9	33.6	31.4
Jamtara	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ORISSA								
<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>								
Sambalpur	101.1	99.6	88.4	69.5	80.2	78.3	65.7	51
Sundargarh	106.5	104.6	75.2	67.2	85.1	82	54.2	47.6
Mayurbhanj	137.8	132.6	64.7	64.7	100.0	100	45.9	45.9
Jajapur	124.0	95.9	100.0	61.9	99.1	77.4	71.7	61.9
Dhenkanal	109.4	105.2	94.1	68.7	87.7	85.5	65.1	43.6
Nayagarh	111.1	111.1	73.2	73.2	88.7	88.7	47.4	47.4
Ganjam	125.8	125.3	95.0	73.7	100.0	100	66.8	49.8
Gajapati	155.9	158.3	75.6	67.5	100.0	100	52.8	48.2
Kandhamal	175.0	169.8	99.3	77.9	100.0	100	71.7	55.9
Rayagada	150.4	142.8	65.4	55.5	100.0	100	46.6	38.7
Nabarangapur	166.5	152.5	76.9	63.1	100.0	100	57.4	46
Koraput	155.8	145	61.5	54	100.0	100	42.8	36.8
Malkangiri	175.0	173.5	67.0	56.4	100.0	100	40.0	41.9
<i>Districts not affected by naxalites</i>								
Bargarh	94.4	89.2	93.0	72.3	75.4	69.9	66.5	50.4
Jharsuguda	103.8	95.9	103.0	83.9	84.8	77.4	77.5	61.9
Deogarh	134.1	131.8	110.4	82.2	100.0	100	78.4	60.2
Balasore	130.0	126	100.9	74.3	100.0	100	72.8	50.1
Bhadrak	134.4	132.4	107.4	78.8	100.0	100	73.7	46.8
Kendrapara	112.6	109	98.9	73.1	92.5	88.2	70.4	73.2
Jagatsinghapur	102.6	91	90.3	63.5	85.9	74.6	67.3	41.4
Cuttack	88.1	81.5	75.3	56.1	72.0	66.8	52.5	36.6
Anugul	115.7	110.4	100.4	77.4	90.8	88.1	71.8	52.6
Khordha	110.3	89.4	91.3	62.3	90.6	75.1	64.9	43.6
Puri	104.3	102.8	91.6	70.1	80.9	84.5	61.7	45.7
Baudh	137.8	142	121.2	87	100.0	100	85.4	59.7
Sonepur	109.6	108	101.0	79.4	87.5	87.7	69.0	50.2
Bolangir	136.0	133.1	101.2	78.8	100.0	100	72.6	55.8
Nuapada	165.8	166.2	104.5	81.6	100.0	100	78.7	62.9
Kalahandi	149.7	143	92.9	69.6	100.0	100	69.4	51.7

Table 2
Transition Rate, Drop-Out Rate and Promotion Rate

States	Districts	Transition Rate	Drop-out Rate	Promotion Rate
		P+UP	primary	primary
Andhra Pradesh	<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>			
	Adilabad	90.9	6.6	93.3
	Anantapur	96.2	4.8	95.
	East Godavari	94.8	4.1	95.6
	Guntur	95.4	5.6	94.1
	Karimnagar	94.4	4.8	94.8
	Khammam	95.9	5.5	93.8
	Kurnool	88.2	4.3	95.4
	Mahbubnagar	95.1	9.7	89.0
	Medak	95.1	6.9	91.0
	Nalgonda	94.7	8.1	90.8
	Nizamabad	93.4	5.4	94.3
	Prakasam	86.8	7.5	92.1
	Srikakulam	93.0	5.8	93.6
	Visakhapatnam	89.9	8.1	91.7
	Vizianagaram	89.7	8.0	91.3
	Warangal	93.9	8.3	91.0
	<i>Districts not affected by Naxalites</i>			
	Hyderabad	93.5	3.6	95.4
	Rangareddi	98.4	9.5	89.7
West Godavari	91.9	4.2	95.8	
Krishna	90.4	5.7	94.2	
Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore	91.0	5.0	94.5	
Y.S.R. Kadapa	N.A	N.A	N.A	
Chittoor	96.2	2.4	97.5	
<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>				
Bihar	Aurangabad	82.9	1.6	85.6
	Bhojpur	63.8	18.3	76.5

Gaya	77.7	4.1	89.1
Jamui	82.3	7.3	86.4
Jehanabad	78.3	6.3	81.4
Kaimur	81.6	0.3	96.4
Munger	74.6	3.7	90.8
Nalanda	92.8	N.A	N.A
Nawada	74.5	9.1	90.3
East Champaran	78.5	4.2	92.9
Patna	80.5	0.2	93.3
West Champaran	60.3	10.6	79.3
Sitamarshi	75.4	4.3	86.4
Rohtas	82.6	7.5	90.2
<i>Districts not affected by Naxalites</i>			
Sheohar	72.6	6.7	82.2
Supaul	78.4	7.2	91.4
Araria	62.9	7.6	79.3
Kishanganj	74.6	3.3	84.5
Purnia	55.7	8.5	83.5
Katihar	79.3	7.7	91.0
Madhepura	72.2	7.3	82.8
Saharsa	69.8	7.1	84.7
Darbhanga	64.2	14.7	77.9
Muzaffarpur	82.8	2.9	94.7
Gopalganj	70.6	18.5	77.7
Siwan	81.3	8.3	82.6
Saran	81.2	5.1	85.8
Vaishali	85.5	0.5	92.3
Samastipur	81.7	9.4	84.1
Begusarai	89.4	7.1	87.8
Khagaria	90.8	N.A	N.A
Bhagalpur	68.2	4.2	83.5
Banka	75.4	N.A	N.A
Sheikhpura	84.4	3.3	88.8
Buxar	87.1	N.A	N.A
Arwal	83.2	N.A	N.A

<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>					
	Baster	96.7	9.4	89.5	
	Dantewada	82.5	22.3	73.7	
	Kanker	99.6	3.7	96.1	
	Rajnandgaon	97.6	2.3	97.1	
	Bilaspur	94.9	5.2	93.9	
	Jashpur	96.7	5.3	94.3	
	Koriya	99.9	4.4	95.6	
	Surguja	91.8	9.0	90.8	
	<i>Districts not affected by Naxalites</i>				
	Bijapur	N.A	N.A	N.A	
	Dhantari	97.4	2.7	95.7	
	Durg	N.A	1.2	98.7	
	Janjgir – Champa	95.2	3.1	95.9	
	Kabeerdham	N.A	N.A	N.A	
	Korba	97.3	1.5	98.2	
	Mahasamund	97.7	4.0	95.9	
	Raipur	96.3	4.4	95.2	
	Raigarh	N.A	3.5	95.7	
	<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>				
	Jharkhand	Bokaro	93.7	5.3	90.7
Chatra		66.8	9.0	83.5	
Garhwa		77.8	10.8	82.6	
Giridih		68.6	18.8	75.8	
Hazaribag		80.6	12.6	81.5	
Koderma		80.0	8.8	85.2	
Latehar		72.3	13.6	82.5	
Lohardaga		75.2	13.7	81.4	
Palamu		73.2	9.5	79.8	
East Singhbhum		86.9	9.6	87.2	
West Singhbhum		72.9	9.8	82.7	
Ramgarh		70.7	16.9	78.8	
Saraikela Kharsawan		77.7	12.1	82.6	

	Khunti	79.7	15.4	81.7
	Ramgarh	N.A	N.A	N.A
	Ranchi	72.5	18.8	78.4
	Simdagi	78.9	17.1	71.1
	Gumla	74.6	16.5	74.5
	<i>Districts not affected by Naxalites</i>			
	Deoghar	74.1	11.9	82.7
	Dhanbad	83.9	10.9	84.4
	Dumka	71.9	13.9	82.0
	Godda	69.7	8.7	87.4
	Jamtara	79.3	15.2	81.7
	Sahibganj	75.1	11.2	86.1
	Pakaur	70.3	10.2	80.2
	<i>Naxalite affected districts</i>			
Orissa	Rayagada	70.5	7.9	89.2
	Deogarh	91.7	6.4	89.0
	Gajapati	76.7	7.7	91.3
	Malkangiri	52.4	12.2	87.8
	Sambalpur	87.4	7.0	89.6
	Ganjam	87.5	4.3	94.3
	Koraput	52.3	13.3	78.6
	Nabarangpur	74.2	8.3	88.1
	Mayurbhanj	85.8	9.0	85.9
	Sundargarh	95.7	N.A	N.A
	Keonjhar	81.2	11.7	85.6
	Jajpur	N.A	N.A	N.A
	Kandhamal	81.3	8.3	87.0
	Dhenkanal	91.4	7.2	92.5
	Nayagarh	91.6	6.0	92.9
	<i>Districts not affected by Naxalites</i>			
	Angul	87.8	5.5	91.3
	Bolangir			
	Balsore	91.4	4.2	92.6
	Bargarh	99.2	N.A	N.A

Boudh	87.0	6.5	87.7
Bhadrak	88.3	6.7	92.1
Cuttack	98.1	N.A	N.A
Deogarh	91.7	6.4	89.0
Jagatsinghpur	89.5	8.9	89.6
Jharsuguda	91.0	4.6	94.0
Kalahandi	86.2	5.1	94.0
Kendrapara	89.9	6.2	92.9
Khordha	93.7	N.A	N.A
Nuapada	87.4	4.7	91.8
Puri	93.4	5.5	92.6
Sonepur	95.9	2.5	96.2

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Researching with Children's Voice Challenges in the Field

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Abstract

The study looked into the contested notion of childhood and its implications for research conducted with children. It located the view of childhood as socially constructed (James and Prout 1997), and delved into the world of street children who stayed in a non-government, non-custodial, voluntary and comprehensive care children's home in north Delhi. The objectives of the study were to grapple with the theoretical and methodological tensions of engaging in a non-invasive dialogue with the culturally different children in order to locate agency in children's voice. These voices were heard in the 'free spaces' within the institution to minimise the structural constraints imposed by formal spaces. The findings of the study revealed the methodological research challenges including children's ability to withdraw from situations due to the researcher's proclivity to under or overestimate the choice of tools. It also showed how children constantly engaged, reflected, manipulated and guarded themselves in their social worlds and brought forth the need to understand these negotiations within similar spaces in the formal school context, in addition to observations within the classrooms, to understand the agency in children's voice.

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Introduction

“Mera bhai kehta hai ki tu anaath hai. Mujhe hansa aati hai.” (My brother says I am an orphan. I feel like laughing.) This was an expression of 11 year old Ruksaar who was one among the seventy-five girls staying together in a children’s home run by a non-government organisation that works for the safety, security and education of the most vulnerable, urban-poor in Delhi. Ruksaar and many other girls like her decided to stay here, separated from their siblings and parents. Their decision to stay in a children’s home reflected a larger problem on the oppressive social and economic hierarchies that children like her and their communities inhabited in the urban developments.

These Children under Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC) were homeless, abandoned, orphaned, delinquents or in conflict with the law. Vulnerable, marginalised, destitute, neglected and frequently deprived of their basic rights to family care, protection, shelter, food, health and education they were more prone to physical and mental abuse besides being involved in hazardous work in unsafe working conditions. Even in such difficulty, they have aspirations from education and want to study as shown in a survey which reported that of the 49 per cent street children who were literate “23 per cent had received some form of formal education (13%

up to pre-primary, and 2.4 per cent up to middle school)” (Bhaskaran and Mehta 2011, p.8).

In this case, Ruksaar along with other participants of the study also had aspirations from education which is why they decided to live away from their families in the children’s home. Their decision to exit from the streets, to live in the children’s home prompted us to understand how, staying together in this home away from their homes, they took decisions for themselves and invented, understood and guarded their social worlds. We wanted to experience the inherent dynamism in the children’s social worlds through this study, by taking children’s voice as the starting point of our research. We engaged reflectively with three children spread over a period of one month in a unique setting where we immersed ourselves in the setting to understand the vocabularies and context of children and engaged in dialogue with children in a perspective display sequence (Rapley 2007). This meant that we let the children talk and asked them questions relevant to our focus area wherever we found an opportunity to do so.

To explain how and why we engaged in dialogue with children and how it connected to agency in children’s voice we explicate the construct-‘children’ and reflect on our vantage point of the term. We then, look at the methodological and analytical aspects of ‘exploring the agency in children’s voice in a Home away from home’.*

*[P.S.: The term ‘Home’ is used for the home where children stay and the ‘home’ is for their parental homes.]

Children – The Construct

Viewed independently, children are conceptualised as bestial, savage, tabula rasa and, even innocent and pure by theorists. When juxtaposed with the term 'adult', the term 'children' becomes paradoxical as, on the one hand children are considered to be naïve; in need of constant adult supervision and on the other, they are considered to be sharp in looking for alternatives. One reason why such paradox occurs is that we view children from an adult eye. (Alanen, 2010; Fine and Sandstrom, 1988; Jenks, 2005; Waksler, 1986)

One notices such paradoxical use of the term in readings about children. One such instance is Rousseau's *Emile* where he says,

Nature wants children to be children before they are men. If we deliberately pervert this order, we shall get premature fruits which are neither ripe nor well-flavored, and which soon decay...

(Rousseau cited in Jenks, 2005, p.3)

The reason why children are seen as children before they are men is because theorists conceptualising children have normative concerns of how children become adults. Chris Jenks views such adult concerns as hegemonic. One can see such hegemony in education too, as education is informed by theories of socialisation and developmental psychology which view child as premature; dependent upon adults for psycho-social development. Parsons

cited in Jenks 1982; Piaget cited in Waksler 1986). These normative concerns of the adults undermine the children's voice which emphasises children's agency and participation in the social world.

Another point of concern is that children are taken to be natural and universal though they live and grow in particularistic socio-cultural contexts which are unique to them. The problem with naturalness is that adults have been children in the past themselves and they consider their own world-view of children to be as authentic as the world view of children themselves. There are theorists, who suggest that the 'processes with which children and adults make sense of the world are similar'. They believe that, 'The different worlds do not teach lessons that are in conflict, but rather they co-operate to teach the skills, attitudes, values and beliefs that are appropriate for the life at the time and also are a good preparation for later on.' (Sluckin cited in Fine and Sandstrom, 1988, p. 57) There are others however, who emphasise that the sets of meanings and values of children are distinctly different from adults. "In addition to suggesting that children are competitive interpreters in the world" they suggest that, "they are in possession of their own culture or succession of cultures." (Robert MacKay cited in Fine and Sandstrom, 1988, p.57) These two stances represent the "fluctuations between the normative and analytical register" (Alanen, 2010, p. 5) and are

common to researching children's voice. Though there are fluctuations between the analytical and normative approaches in research with children, the researchers commit (normatively) to improve children's position and valuation in the society by endorsing children's voice as a starting point of research. (King, 2007)

Doing Research

When listening to children's voice, the researchers have to take into account that children inhabit two sets of cultures— one that belongs to them and the other, created by adults. Also, children are quick to swap from one culture to another as they are “highly fluid and capable of rapid change and creativity” (Davies cited in Tammivaara and Enright 1986, p. 234) therefore it is crucial for the researcher to define his/her role in a study prior to entering children's social world. Since, in the present case, we were looking for agency in children's voice in the culture that belonged to them, we assumed the role of a friend (positive contact and low authority) and embedded ourselves into the setting to understand,

- How to engage in non-invasive dialogue with children and to
- Explore the agency in children's voice.

As we wanted to observe and study children closely, we chose a setting where children were a segregated social grouping and had more scope of mixing with each other. This was a children's Home in Delhi. It was

easy for us to gain access into this setting as we knew Junaid (one of the coordinators) of the NGO- Zindagi. He referred us to Seema, coordinator of the North Delhi Home. We spoke with her over the phone. She told us to meet anyone from the organisation to understand the nature of their work before meeting the children. We were however keen to meet the children so we asked her if we could get acquainted with them. She agreed saying that we will not be able to resist talking to the children as ‘they are free and not caged.’ So, eagerly we went, the next day, to locate the Home in North Delhi. When we reached the metro station, we asked the locals about the address and spent some time reaching it as it was located deep inside the market.

Into a Home Away From Home

We reached there to find an old bungalow with a large courtyard in the front. The entrance had a large iron gate tied with a chain. We undid the chain and went inside to meet the house-manager. We told her we had talked to Seema and wanted to see the Home. She promptly took us around and showed us the office and the rooms upstairs. As she walked with us, children (4-11 year olds) huddled around her to see the strangers. As she was showing us around, she got a call from Meena (the other coordinator whom we had not spoken to before coming) who got suspicious of us and spoke to us sternly over the phone. It was when we told her we

had sought permission before coming to the Home that she was agreeable and offered to meet us the next week when she told us about the North Delhi Home.*

Sketch of North Delhi Home



Fig. 1: Photo courtesy: Shabnam, a resident of North Delhi Home

Zindagi, the NGO that runs this Home to provide care, protection and education to the children was a joint endeavor of the Delhi government under the broad umbrella of the government programme 'Bhagidari' and more specifically under the government enrolment drive, 'School Chale Hum' campaign to ensure education as a matter of Right (MHRD 2008). The program, with its belief in equity, planned to work with the most vulnerable population in Delhi. This population was identified as the children on the streets of Delhi. This program was planned in two phases:

Phase 1: Building relationships with children and

Phase 2: Working for their betterment in terms of providing a Home for security, protection and education.

The NGO appointed fieldworkers to map the city and prepare a profile of the population, community's occupations and their problems to get a realistic picture of the magnitude of homeless children. After careful mapping they identified the needy children, built trust with their parents, talked to them to let their children stay in the homes. An MoU was signed with the Delhi government on the following three issues:

- (1) Buildings to serve as RBC (Residential Bridge Course)/ RSTC (Residential Special Training Centers) to be provided by the government.
- (2) Government would provide ₹ 6800 per child per year which was later raised to ₹ 19,200 per child per year and
- (3) Government would provide help in case of problems in seeking formal admission to government/private schools

This 'Home' was one such building provided by the government. It had 75 girls, 2 coordinators, 3 house-mothers, 2 teachers, 1 security guard and 1 cleaner. Of the 75 girls, about 95 per cent had parents who came to take them home on holidays and festivals which is why we called it 'a Home away from home'.

*[P.S.: The names of organisation and persons have been changed to mask their identities.]

These children were brought in by the consent of parents (through a legal system) for security and education as they were beggars and rag pickers with little or no schooling. Some of them were rescued as domestic labour from homes through CWC (Child Welfare Committee)*.

Some of the children (about 35) from this Home were attending formal schools. For those who were not enrolled in schools, they were enrolled in the residential bridge course under the SSA Scheme of the government (under the *School Chale Hum* campaign) for enrolling children who were out of school (GoI 2004).

Knowing the Children

Once we knew about the Home, we were interested to know the children. As we wanted to understand the children's views in-depth we decided to focus on three children (two 11 years old and one 12 years old). This was a pre-adolescent group. We chose this group as it was here, that children began to explore the ways in which they could fit into the society. At one level, they thought of who they were, and at the other, how people thought of them in a societal frame of reference. They were not

closely monitored by their parents or guardians (more so in this case where they had little parental control or constant adult supervision.) (Weigert, Teitge and Teitge 1986).

We spoke to Ruksaar (11 years old), Rehaan (11 years old) and Pooja (12 years old). Before detailing how we engaged in dialogue with them we would like to give a portrait of the three participants which was constructed after talking to Meena and the three children themselves.

The Three Children

Ruksaar was eleven years of age. The fieldworkers came to know of her from Rehaan's mother (Rehaan was also a participant in this study). She had five sisters and four brothers. Her mother was ailing and her brothers consumed drugs. They abused her mother. Before joining this Home, she was engaged in rag-picking.

Rehaan was also eleven. She preferred to call herself Reena as she did not like her name. She was in this Home since the last two years. Before coming here, she was with her mother in Bawana and was also engaged in rag-picking. She was brought to this Home by the fieldworkers of Zindagi. Her own mother worked as a house-

* CWC is the sole authority to deal with matters concerning children in need of care and protection. A Committee has to be constituted for each district or group of districts, and consists of a chairperson and 4 other persons one of whom at least should be a woman.

The committee has the final authority to dispose of cases for the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of the children as well as to provide for their basic needs and human rights. A child rescued from hazardous occupation, brothel, abusive family or other such exploitative situation must be produced before the CWC who will conduct an inquiry to ensure optimum rehabilitation with minimal damage to the child. (source: <http://dpju.com>)

mother for sometime in the same Home but was transferred later due to some reason. Rehaan was sent to the formal school (class II) but she was brought back after a few months as she could not adjust there. Rehaan's step-father had murdered her brother and was in jail for sometime. She was not in touch with her mother for a month as her phone was switched off.

Pooja was probably from Bihar. She was rescued as a domestic labour from Noida by Sarathi (an NGO) and came through the CWC (Children's Welfare Committee). CWC tried to locate her house from the address she gave but could not find it as she only had a vague idea of where she came from.

These three children were not chosen in the strict sense of the term as one of them (Ruksaar) had huddled around Seema (house-manager) the first day we came to see the Home. That day, she brought to us, a sketch of herself as a doctor. She talked to us the second day too when we went to meet them and became our key informant which was crucial to us "to learn the ropes and gain acceptance by the group of informants". (Fine and Sandstrom 1988, p. 50.) It was due to her that we came in touch with Pooja. Rehaan met us the day we were learning about Zindagi from Meena. She asked us our names and later in the day when we were sitting in the courtyard, talking to Ruksaar, she came and joined us. We had not prepared any questions before going to the field and we did not carry any

camera or tape-recorder initially as we did not want to disturb their 'natural talk' though we do not deny that our presence would have set them thinking why we were there in the first place? We had explained the nature of our research to Meena and she permitted us to talk to children but we had some glitches gaining consent of children.

Gaining Consent

We were not total strangers in the setting as the nature of the Home was such that volunteers came to work, talk and spend time with the children regularly. We went and spoke to the children, told them that we were from the Department of Education. We did not seek their consent to be a part of our study straight away because, as a part of our strategy we wanted initially, to sense and analyse the children's culture through their talk. The first day we sat in the courtyard of the Home talking to Ruksaar, she said, "*Yahan sab log kaam se aaate hain. Humse milne koi nahin aata.*" (Everyone comes here for some work. They don't come to meet us.) We then, thought that we would wait for sometime and gain their trust before seeking consent for recording their voices or doing any activity specific to the research.

We could do so in our fifth meeting with them (on 3rd April, 2010) when we asked them if they knew who we were and why were we there. "*Humein maalum hai. humse milne aaye ho.*" (We know, you have come to meet

us.), said Rehaan. We then, told them that we were there to understand how they lived together in the Home. Even before gaining consent we were engaged in dialogue with children where we were actively listening to them and asking questions wherever we found an opportunity in an ongoing interaction. It was when the children were free from their classes that we sat with them, played with them and talked to them in the courtyard area and the area where they practiced dance for their function to be held on 17th April, 2010.

Engaging in Dialogue with Children

While it was normal for us investigators to come with certain values and cultural baggage to the field it was very imperative to realise that we did not impose these values on the investigation as it may be a cultural invasion for them (Freire 1997). Therefore, we planned to blend into the setting and allowed children to take any direction they chose and responded to opportunity for questioning in an ongoing interaction. Though this required more time and frequency of meetings with the participants, it yielded data in a natural setting. (Taylor and Bogdan 1984) We realised this in the third meeting when we planned to show the picture of 'modes of transportation' which they had done in EVS class. This picture had a cart puller, motor cycle, car and aeroplane. We thought we would show this to

the three participants and see how they interpret it now that we show it to them (our assumption being that that they would see the social class differences). But we did not do so as bringing in of material, though they were familiar with it would lead children to think such an exercise as a lesson to be learnt and they would tend to answer in a way that they think we would like to hear.

Instead, we went upstairs, to a room where Ruksaar and Rehaan were dancing with a group of girls. We sat down to see them dance. Ruksaar felt shy and sat down while the rest of the group danced on another dance number. One of us (researchers) got up and sat next to Ruksaar appreciating her dance and started talking to her about Lily (the elder girl who was teaching them all to dance). Meanwhile, the other (researcher) proposed Pooja to play game of pebbles with us. We made teams of two and while playing we came to know Ruksaar had fasted on Navratri with Pooja in order to regain her friendship. Here is how the conversation took place:

Researcher: *Tum raat ko dost ke saath sotey hoge?* (Do you sleep with your friend at night?)

Ruksaar: *Pehle Pooja mere saath soti thi. Ab Soni ke saath soti hai.* (earlier Pooja slept with me. Now she sleeps with Soni.)

Pooja: *Nahin to. Pehle soti thi. Ab to akele soti hun.* (No. I used to do so earlier. Now I sleep alone.)

(Later when we were going down

for lunch Ruksaar waited for Pooja to come along)

In another instance while we were sitting in the courtyard discussing when to come next? Ruksaar said we should come on Tuesday and Monday was a PTM day. Then we asked her,

Researcher: *PTM mein kya hota hai?* (What happens in the PTM?)

Ruksaar: *Mummy Papa ko bulaate hain.* (They call our parents.)

Researcher: *Kya baat karte hain?* (What do they talk?)

Ruksaar: *Nahin maalum. Bacchon ko ander nahin aane detey.* (I don't know. They don't let us in.)

Researcher: *Kya tumhari mummy kabhi batati hai PTM mein kya hota hai?* (Does your mother ever tell you what happens in PTM?)

Ruksaar (tight faced): *PTM mein mummy nahin aati. Ek baar aayee thi to maine Marriam ki shikayat lagayee thi. Mummy ne kuch nahin kiya to maine bhi batana chod diya.* (Mother doesn't come to PTM. She came once and I complained about Marriam. She did not do anything about it so I stopped telling her anything.)

Though we were careful to ask questions in a perspective display sequence (Rapley 2007) we recognised these three children had a desire to be validated by us so it was easy to establish close friendship with them on their terms. We also realised that they had a fair degree of authority in this friendship as they decided how close we could get to them. They sometimes talked to each

other in a code language in front of us and guarded their private worlds from us. Goody is one researcher who recognises that such difficulties inherent in communicating adequately with children have kept researchers from examining the world of the child from the vantage point of the child for many years (Goody cited in Tammivaara and Enright 1986) and this seems to be a tough challenge.

We faced another challenge when, after having observed the group over time, when we had discerned their interaction patterns (details given in the next section 'Exploring the Agency in Children's Voice) and the terms they used we tried to codify it and record their responses. We had codified the image keeping in mind, that,

- it represented a situation familiar to them so they recognise the situation and
- it was simple (neither explicit nor enigmatic) and offered various decoding possibilities. (Freire 2005).

We asked the children (Ruksaar, Rehaan and Pooja) to respond to the picture while we recorded their responses. They agreed and we took out the drawing and the tape recorder. All was well until Ruksaar refused to get her voice recorded. Instead, she asked Lily (an elder girl who taught them dance) to sing into it. They just walked off with the tape recorder saying they would not let us



Fig. 2

record their voices. The tape recorder was like an invasion into her private world which she rejected outright so, we left the task unfinished and planned another activity for another day.

It was from the field notes of our conversations with children and their drawings that we analysed the implicit themes about their own lives which are explicated below.

Exploring Agency in Children's Voice

The standpoint of exploring 'agency' in children's voices was related to our concerns with children as active constructors of their social worlds. Having an agency, children acted and reflected, negotiated with others and made sense of themselves and those around them. Agency therefore, meant free will and authority but not

complete autonomy as free will is exercised within social structures. (Appiah, 2005) James, Prout (1997) and Jenks (1982) identified "two ways in which children and agency are brought together. First, there is the notion of the 'tribal child' whereby the children are active and formative within their own social world of the peer group. Second, the notion of social structural or 'minority group child' denotes that children's behaviour and ways of thinking needs to be located within the broader social structure. Children's action here is constrained by virtue of a marginal social grouping." (James, Jenks and Prout cited in Wyness, 2000, p.88)

The first approach was relativist as it argued for children as active subjects of social structures rather than passive and in need of socialisation. The second approach was structural as it saw childhood as politically strategised as gender, race, caste etc. This approach argued for a structural overhaul of society, culture and politics for complete social recognition of the child.

From among the above two approaches, we were looking at agency in children's voice from the first approach. We were looking at children as agentive and formative within their own social world of peer group. Here, agentive meant how children constructed, checked, understood and transformed their lines of action in response to the actions of others. This was also one

reason why we focused on children's Home for locating children voice as here, children were a segregated social grouping and more accessible to us as researchers and second, children had more scope to mix with children of their own age group. This enabled us to observe a whole range of strategies (negotiating, sharing, manipulating) which they employed to give meaning to their social world. While observing, we also questioned them on their role in shaping their own decisions and relationships with others as their reflective responses were the key to explore their agency. From our observations (for nine days, spread over a period of one month) our engagement with children and through their drawings we elicited certain themes; the context of these themes were drawn from the vocabulary that children used. These themes are analysed below.

Analysis of Themes

Theme 1: Belongingness

I: *Yahan tumhari friend kaun hai? (Who is your friend here?)*

Ruksaar: *friend thi. Ab meri friend kisi aur ki friend ban gayee hai.* (She was my friend. Now she has made friends with someone else.)

Ruksaar liked Pooja. She tried to gain her friendship back by keeping Navratri fasts with her. They both went to the temple together. They both used to sleep together before Pooja decided to sleep alone.

When she could, Ruksaar tried to call her within the group. Once when we went downstairs for lunch, Ruksaar waited for Pooja. They bonded with each other and even shared a code language to guard their boundaries with us. Pooja too reciprocated belongingness with Ruksaar as when Ruksaar was angry and rude to her she squeezed Shobha's hand indicating her not to intervene. They both liked each other but Pooja's fear of taking responsibility for herself prevented her to form close relationships with



Fig. 3: Photo courtesy: Ruksaar



Fig. 4: Photo courtesy: Rehaan

others as she said, “*Mujhe apne aap se dar kyun lagta hai?*” (Why am I scared of myself?)

Later, one day when we asked them to draw ‘*Meri dost*’ (My friend) for us, Rehaan drew the photo of her friend who stayed in the Home and was elder to her. Ruksaar refused to draw a friend. We did not force her to draw. In a while she came and drew our photo. Later when we went downstairs she told us she did not like Pooja. We said we thought Pooja liked her and asked her if Pooja had some problems adjusting in the Home. At this she softened and said Pooja felt guilty of something she had done before and was scared of herself which was why she could not make friends.

Theme 2: Fear of being exploited

Rehaan and Ruksaar expressed their fear of exploitation due to their vulnerability when they said,

Rehaan: (to Sonica, health worker) *Tumhara mobile tod dena chahiye. Jab dekho batein karti rehti ho. Humare saath batein karne ka time nahin hai.* (I would rather break your mobile. You talk so much. You have no time left to talk to us.)

Ruksaar: *Yahan sab log kaam se aatey hain. Humse milne koi nahin aata.* (Everyone comes here for their own work. No one comes to meet us.)

Theme 3: Fear of being alone

They also express fear of being alone in a crowd.

Researcher: *Kabhi ghar jaati ho?* (Do you go home?)

Ruksaar: *Shuru shuru mein jab yahan aayee thi to mainne bhagne ki koshish ki thi. Phir mummy aayee thi. Meena didi ne bulaya tha. Ab to chuttiyon mein ghar jaati hun. Shuru mein itni ladkiyon ko dekh kar ghabra gayee thi.* (When I joined here initially, I tried to run away. Then mummy came. She was called by Meena didi. Now I go home during vacations. I got scared amidst so many girls.)

They also show they have to lose authority when staying together.

Ruksaar: *Ghar mein meri bahut zidd chalti hai. Yahan ko chup rehna padta hai.* (My obduracy is tolerated at home. here, I have to remain quiet.)

Yet they are assertive and show authority for their belongings.

Child: *Tuney jo dupatta pehna hai wo mummy maang rahi hai.* (Mummy is asking for the scarf you are wearing.)

Rehaan: *Kyon dun? Wo mera hai.* (Why should I? It belongs to me.)

They also realise that though they have to negotiate with so many children and adults, though they lose their authority in a group as compared to their houses, they are empowered as they endure hardships and education helps them do so.

Ruksaar: *Mera bhai kehta hai ki tu anaath hai. Mujhe hansa aati hai. Main padhungi. Bas school mein ek baar naam likha jaaye.* (My brother says I am an orphan. I feel like laughing. I will study. I wish I get enrolled in school.)

Conclusion

An analysis of the themes revealed that children's actions were intentional and reflexive. Even though they chose to stay in a children's home to study, they expressed a longing for their family ties showing how agency was constrained within structural limitations. Their agency was revealed in their constant engagements, reflections, manipulation and in guarding themselves in their social spaces. It was their culturally different contexts that made them reveal a part of their self as such was the skill of survival they possessed (Aptekar 1994). It also revealed that the choice of methodology was crucial

to elicit dialogue with children in different contexts as children are not a universal category. Contextualised as they are, researching with children required a conscious choice of taking the role of a complete observer and an observer as participant in order to understand the intricacies of their voice. As we heard these voices in the 'free spaces' (playing area, lunch hour, dancing hall), what remains to be seen is whether and to what extent do they have an agency and voice in the bridge course and formal schooling (which are structured spaces) as these children expressed faith in education for empowering themselves.

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Analysis of Home Assignments of students at the Primary Level An Evaluative Study

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Abstract

Home assignments (HA) are not meant to keep children occupied at home. These serve several educational needs which are essential to receive complete education. Practicing home assignments allow children to review what they have learnt in the class. Doing home assignments increases comprehension of a subject or topic by helping children retain it for a longer period of time. Extension of HA includes long term assignments such as small projects appropriate to the age and class of the children. If a teacher can create a desire to engage the children in activities and to participate in learning experiences, learning will become more functional and better designed to meet the objectives. An assignment denotes this aspect of teaching. To know how far teachers in primary schools have realised the potential of the assignment as an important part of teaching the present study was undertaken.

Introduction

Primary education is the first tender step towards planned and deliberately organised learning process with specific objectives,

which constitutes a very important part of the entire structure of education. It is to let children know their environment better and perform to the best of their abilities.

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Children should be able to read, write and perform arithmetical operations whenever they need to. They should be able to express themselves orally as well as in writing. They should also be able to perform activities, and express their feelings to an extent children are expected to at the age of 10+.

Unfortunately, it is observed that children get very little time in school to work independently and do some of the learning activities on their own. In a classroom they either listen to the teacher or copy the work from the blackboard. According to the *National Curriculum Framework-2005* “the concept of time on task is an essentially reckoned criterion for taking into account the total time that children spend actively on learning. This would include time spent on listening, reading, writing, doing activities, discussing concepts, etc. Total study time that is expected from students in both face-to-face interaction, self-study and homework need to be accounted for, while planning the syllabus or course of study for students”.

Homework or home assignments not only present an opportunity to the children to work independently, but it is also an important tool to know their progress. It gives them an opportunity to manage and organise their routine in such a way that they get time to revise the concepts and lessons learnt in the class. HA reduces the gap in terms of time span between teaching and learning processes and is used to encourage

children to study outside the school also. It also helps children to develop the ability to take responsibility for their own learning. Homework fosters discipline and personal responsibility. Corno (1996, p.28) says that this finding is only “one small piece of the bigger pie” and that parents foster these characteristics in larger, broader ways than through “doing homework”. Cooper, Harris (1994) emphasise that homework can lead to greater parental involvement in schools. Bruce and Singh (1996) found that homework improved not only the students’ grades but also their scores on standardised tests.” “Opinion and practices with respect to homework vary widely. Arguments are both for and against giving home assignments” Cooper (2007). In a larger study, Trawein (2007) analysed data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and brought to light that time spent on homework was a predicting factor on the relationship between homework an achievement. According to Cooper, Lindsey, Nye and, Greathouse 1998; Hoover-Dempsey, 2001, “parents involvement in homework influence the skills, behaviors, positive attitudes about school, increased time on homework and greater persistence in learning tasks. Epstein and colleagues’ approach to interactive homework may also be very helpful in guiding parent responses to student homework (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001). These research findings help

teacher, children and parents to see home-assignments as a vital part of home-school partnership which supports children as they learn. The purpose of the present study is to analyse home assignments in some of the primary schools of Delhi.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted keeping following objectives in mind:

- to assess assignments with reference to their type, frequency, periodicity, and utilisation in feedback of teaching and learning.
- to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of assignments with reference to strengthening learning among learners, and
- to give suggestions, if required and to provide training to teachers, if needed.

Sampling

Incidental sampling technique was used for selection of schools. All the MCD Primary Schools and Primary Sections of Sarvodaya Vidyalayas of North West District, Delhi comprised of the population. Schools selected for School Experience Program by DIET Pitampura, comprised of the sample of the study.

Terms Used in the Study

(a) Home assignment (HA)

Home Assignments refer to tasks assigned to the students by their teachers to be completed outside the class. These may include reading,

writing, problem solving, project work and other skills to be practiced. In lay man language it is also known as home work.

(b) Analysis

Analysis of home assignments has been done with reference to their number, frequency, type, content, feedback etc. It included quantitative and qualitative analysis of home-assignments.

Delimitations of the Study

In view of the resources available, the present study had the following delimitations:

- Student sample comprise Social Studies students of class-IV in MCD schools and Sarvodaya schools of North-West district of Delhi.
- Selection of the school sample is based on incidental sampling technique.
- Tools are validated using the technique of content validity by the experts of the field.
- Gender and socio-economic background have not been treated as significant variables in this Social Studies study.

Data was collected during School Experience Programme i.e. from 22nd October to 22nd December 2010.

Procedure of the Study

Every researcher evolves a plan to tackle best the research problem on which she works in the best possible way. This makes the conduct of the

research not only planned correctly to the last detail but systematic as well. Following are the steps taken to conduct the study:

- all the course books of the students of class-IV were studied in order to analyse the content of different subjects taught.
- tools were developed by the coordinator.
- a workshop was conducted in which tools were got validated by the experts of the field namely, Prof. M. C. Sharma (IGNOU) and Prof. Anita Rastogi (JMI Univ.). Suggestions regarding the tools were incorporated and tools were finalised.
- just before the School Experience Programme, one day orientation programme was organised to acquaint the pupil teachers of D.I.E.T., Pitampura regarding the administration of tools of the study.
- a set of all the Tools were provided to the pupil teachers.
- coordinator of the study visited maximum number of schools during the administration of tools in the sample schools.
- data was collected and compiled.
- analysis of the data was done.
- conclusions and suggestions were made accordingly.
- complete report of the research study was prepared.

Developments of Tools

A workshop was conducted for the finalisation of tools where Professor

M. C. Sharma (IGNOU) and Dr. Anita Rastogi (Professor, JMI) were invited. They appreciated the first draft of the tools as maximum aspects of the study were included in the tools. They gave many valuable suggestions regarding the improvement of the tools further e.g., proper classification of items of the tools in Questionnaire, Interview Schedule and Content Analysis, which were duly incorporated.

Administrations of Tools

All the three tools namely, Questionnaire, Interview Schedule and Content Analysis, were compiled in the month of October 2010 as School Experience Programme (SEP) was scheduled from 22nd October to 22nd December 2010. The pupil teachers were oriented about the study as well as about the administration of the tools before the start of SEP. The tools were administered during SEP by the pupil teachers of ETE first year in the M.C.D. schools selected for SEP. Tools were administered to teachers and students of selected classes in all the fifteen schools selected for the study. Since, the tools were to be administered in Class IV of the sample schools, all the sections of Class IV were selected for the study. This way the Interview Schedule was conducted on forty four (44) teachers and the Questionnaire and the Content Analysis was administered on one thousand nine hundred and Twenty-three (1923) students.

Major Findings

Type of Assignments

(I) Nature of home assignments

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Repetition of class work</i>	<i>Practice Question based on class work</i>	<i>Activities related to class work</i>	<i>Exercises from Textbook</i>	<i>Integrate different subjects</i>	<i>Enrichment of class work</i>
English	92	0	0	92	0	0
Hindi	87	0	0	87	0	0
Maths	91	20	10	91	0	0
Social Studies	93	0	0	93	0	0
Science	85	0	10	85	0	0

In almost all the subjects the home assignments were a repetition of the class work done. No assignments were for the purpose of enriching class-room activities. It may be due to the reason that purpose and importance of HA may not be clear to the teachers. They might not have been aware that by assigning well planned and meaningful assignments to the students, their learning can be extended and enriched.

Most of the assignments in all subjects were mechanical in nature. These assignments were question-answers from the end of the lesson or from the exercise given in the textbook. Assignments classified as interesting were crossword, puzzles, match the answer, filling the appropriate answer or the one which involve some activities by students. These assignments were also given from the textbook. The percentage

(II) Quality of home-assignments

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Mechanical</i>	<i>Interesting</i>	<i>Related to Specific Objective</i>	<i>Involving drawing and colour work</i>
English	75	7	10	8
Hindi	77	8	10	5
Maths	70	10	5	15
Social Studies	64	7	15	14
Science	55	12	15	18

of assignments developed by the teachers themselves was very meager.

The assignments classified as related to specific objectives were those assignments which fulfill the objective of teaching that particular lesson/unit. The percentage of such assignments was also very small. Assignments classified under, involving drawing and colour work were those assignments in which students were required to draw something or fill some figure with colour. The percentage of such assignments was not as desired from the teachers teaching at primary level.

(III) Skills and Levels of learning involved in home-assignments

For the language subjects like English and Hindi the analysis of home-assignments was done on the basis of all the four skills i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Data gathered is tabulated below:

Subjects	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
English	0	0	15	77
Hindi	0	0	21	79

Subjects	Knowledge			Understanding			Application		
	ET	OT	AB	ET	OT	AB	ET	OT	AB
Mathematics	0	32	8	19	20	12	17	0	0
Social Studies	30	16	0	20	18	0	16	0	8
Science	12	28	14	18	21	0	12	0	5

ET: Essay type

OT: Objective Type

AB: Activity Based

For other subjects i.e. Mathematics, Social Studies and Science the analysis of home assignments was done on the basis of levels of learning: knowledge, understanding and application. The data gathered is tabulated below:

Most of the home assignments should have been activity based, but were objective type which required answering in one word or a sentence. Essay type assignments in Mathematics were either word problems or finding L.C.M., H.C.F. etc. Home assignments in Social Studies were given from those given at the end of the lesson in the textbook. Activity based assignment was limited to filling of the map only. Most of assignments in Science were also from those given at the end of the lesson in the textbook. Activity based assignments were drawing of the diagrams given in the textbook.

Frequency and Periodicity of home-assignments

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Units covered</i>	<i>Assignments per Unit (approx)</i>
English	0	26	10	5	2
Hindi	0	50	13	7	2
Maths	0	45	17	8	2
Social Studies	0	25	14	7	2
Science	0	30	12	9	1.5

Number of HA given during a particular period were recorded. In one of the sample schools teachers informed that no HA were given to the students as they perceived that students would not do it. Further, if they would compel or punish the not doers to do it then these students may even drop out from the school system. The mean of number of assignments was highest in mathematics. It may be due to the reason that teachers believed that the learning in mathematics took place through drill and practice. Number of assignments

per unit in each subject was more or less same. This shows that teachers' didn't consider the nature of the subject as a criterion for giving HA. For example more assignments could have been planned for English which was considered to be a difficult subject by the Govt. school students at the primary stage.

The frequency of HA was found to be less in English and Social Study. It should be realised that assignments play an important role for better understanding in all the subjects.

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Once a week</i>	<i>Twice a week</i>	<i>Thrice a week</i>	<i>Daily</i>	<i>Never</i>
English	18.75	31.12	8.25	18.75	6.25
Hindi	6.25	25.00	18.75	43.75	6.25
Maths	6.25	18.75	18.75	50.00	6.25
Social Studies	6.25	56.25	18.75	12.50	6.25
Science	6.25	37.50	31.25	18.75	6.25

Utilisation of Feedback

(I) Evaluation of home-assignments

Regular checking of HA motivates the students to complete the assigned work. The way the checking is done also has a deeper impact on their

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Regularly</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
English	35.8	44.2	20.0
Hindi	25.5	46.7	28.0
Maths	39.0	40.5	28.5
Social Studies	36.3	36.4	27.3
Science	38.5	39.5	22.0

Regular evaluation of HA was done only in about one third of the sample schools. Where as in a significant number of schools (nearly one fourth), the evaluation of the assigned work was never done. In large proportion of schools say, 36.4 per cent to 44.7 per cent, a casual approach of teachers was observed regarding the regular evaluation of HA.

motivational level. Very few teachers checked the assignments with remarks or by correcting their errors. Evaluation with the mark of right/wrong was done by about one half of the teachers in sample schools which neither make the learners aware of their errors nor motivate them to work better next time. The data give an impression as if the teachers were not

(II) Nature of Feedback

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Simply Checked (right/ wrong)</i>	<i>Checked with remarks</i>	<i>Highlighted</i>	<i>Corrected</i>	<i>Reinforcement Provided</i>
English	48.0	10.0	31.4	10.0	0.6
Hindi	45.0	10.0	23.3	12.0	1.3
Maths	44.3	8.6	30.3	16.3	0.6
Social Studies	47.7	11.4	25.0	15.7	0.6
Science	42.6	12.6	32.9	10.6	1.3

(III) Frequency of Correction Work

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Regularly</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
English	26.2	40.0	33.3
Hindi	20.0	53.3	26.6
Maths	43.4	30.0	26.6
Social Studies	26.6	40.1	33.3
Science	26.8	46.6	26.6

aware of the importance of providing reinforcement to the students and its role in applying the concepts learnt in the in day to day life.

Correction of the errors committed was done in just one-fourth of the sample schools. Correction work is required in every subject at the primary level in general and in the subject like mathematics it is a must due to the reason that it is a subject of practice and drill.

Follow of the correction work by the maximum teachers was done, in mathematics regularly. Maximum teachers were not doing follow up of the correction work in Social Studies and Science. There was no gap between the number of teachers who followed up correction work in English regularly and the number of students who actually did correction

in the same subject regularly. This shows that better results could be achieved if more efforts are put in by the teachers as far as correction work in English is concerned.

Only one-fourth of the students only in the sample schools did their HA independently. It may be due to the reason that they were not given opportunity for working independently or they did not comprehend either the class work or the HA. A large percentage (ranging from 40 per cent to 51 per cent) sought help from others i.e. they had joined private tuitions for completing their HA. It is a pity that poverty is one of the main hurdles in achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education on one hand and parents are sending their wards to the private tuitions for completion of HA on the other.

(IV) Follow up of Correction Work

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Regularly</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
English	26.8	53.3	20.0
Hindi	13.7	53.3	33.0
Maths	60.0	20.0	20.0
Social Studies	23.0	36.6	40.0
Science	20.0	40.0	40.0

(V) Support required in doing the home-assignments

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Independently</i>	<i>With parents/ sibling help</i>	<i>Help from others</i>
English	20.4	33.3	46.4
Hindi	33.3	26.8	40.0
Maths	20.0	28.8	51.0
Social Studies	28.8	28.8	41.8
Science	20.1	33.3	46.6

(VI) Keeping record of the defaulters

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Maintained</i>	<i>Sometimes Maintained</i>	<i>Not Maintained at all</i>
English	20.0	23.5	56.5
Hindi	20.0	35.0	45.0
Maths	31.0	23.0	46.0
Social Studies	30.0	32.5	37.5
Science	26.25	18.75	55.0

Keeping a record of defaulters may not be used as a punishment of any type, but the purpose is that they should be paid more attention by the teachers so that they develop the habit of doing HA regularly. Nearly one fourth teachers of the sample maintained the record of defaulters, which shows that a small proportion of teachers were making efforts to bring not doers of HA in to the category of doers.

attending school, attempting the HA partially and not regular in doing HA i.e. they were attempting the HA sometimes, fell in this category. Reasons for this may be attributed to their irregular attendance, casual attitude towards HA, inability to complete HA on their own or lack of support at home.

Maximum number of students did not attempt HA in the English. The reason is clear from the following

Status of Home-Assignments

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Partially Completed</i>	<i>Not Done at all</i>
English	6.25	46.5	47.25
Hindi	37.5	50.5	12.0
Maths	31.25	51.75	17.0
Social Studies	31.25	62.5	6.25
Science	31.25	56.25	12.25

Most of the students partially completed their HA in all the subjects. Students who were: not regular in

table which shows that they did not have any note book (four-lined) for doing English HA.

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Separate note book</i>	<i>C W note book</i>	<i>Any note book</i>	<i>No note book</i>
English	26.8	20.0	13.4	39.8
Hindi	22.0	40.6	13.4	24.0
Maths	26.6	50.6	6.6	16.2
Social Studies	23.4	50.6	10.0	16.0
Science	40.0	30.3	6.6	23.1

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the present study and the experience gained while conducting study, it may be concluded that the planning and assigning of Home-Assignments (HA) in Class IV is a much neglected area of school teaching. Teachers are not aware of the importance and utility of HA in teaching-learning process. No desirable efforts are being put by the teachers to plan HA which is an extension of class room teaching. Students' interests are not taken care of while assigning work to the students. Answers to the questions given at the end of the lesson/unit are written on the black board and the same questions are given as HA for practice to the students. Other uses of HA like: confirmation of the concepts taught in the class, better understanding, improvement in students' learning, providing appropriate experiences to the students and the application of the concepts taught in the class are being ignored. The whole process of assigning HA, their checking, correction work, follow up of correction work, maintenance of record of defaulters etc. are being taken in a routine way. Many students in the sample schools are not doing their assignments due the reason that they do not have note books to work on. Those students who are not very regular in attempting HA given to them either due to the reason that they are not regular in schools or sometimes they do not bother to complete their

HA, are not motivated effectively to make them regular in doing HA. It has been felt by the coordinator that by the implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation in classroom teaching, it is necessary to improve the status of Home-Assignments in schools. If well organised and systematic HA are planned and checked by providing need based feedback to the students then it will not only help in improving learning in students but it also in assigning appropriate grades for Formative Evaluation i.e. Formative Assessment (FA)-I, FA-II, FA-III and FA-IV to the students as well.

Implications of the Study

Based on the various findings and conclusions of the study, the following implications have been formulated.

1. Type of Assignments

(i) Nature of home assignments

The importance of home assignments as extension and enrichment of class work may be realised by the teachers. Efforts may be put in to prepare those assignments for the students which confirm their classroom learning, develop their interest in class room teaching and explore concepts related to class work.

(ii) Quality of home-assignments

Home assignments at the primary level should be more interesting, joyful and related to specific objectives of the lesson/unit. Assignments should be

planned in such a way that students complete them on their own without any feeling of burden and boredom. Students' interest may be taken care of while planning assignments for them as at the primary level they are at the take on stage of developing the habit of self learning and working independently. Students usually take more interest in drawing and colour work, so more assignments involving drawing and colour work may be planned. Assignments involving cross-words, puzzles, riddles, matching, exploring, collecting objects, locating on map etc. should be planned more. Students may be motivated to perform activities mentioned in the textbook along with the activities given as assignments by their teachers. One thing should also be taken care of those activities given as assignment must be discussed the next very day and positive reinforcement is provided otherwise students would not take interest in assignments.

(iii) Skills and Levels of learning involved in home-assignments

For teaching languages like English and Hindi, home assignments which strengthen skills of listening and speaking in students, may be given. Teachers may chalk out certain activities like giving a list of programs on radio or television to the students for listening and a discussion regarding the same may be held the very next day. Students who have listened to these programs

must be appreciated and others may be motivated for the same. Likewise students may be given opportunities to speak about their school, any successful event or celebration that has taken place in the school to their family members and friends and discuss with other students of the class for a period or two in a week. This will help in developing the speaking skills of the students.

For teaching at the primary level more activity based assignments may be given so that interest of the students may be created in doing home assignments. Teachers may plan activities to be given as home-assignments, related to the concept or lesson they are teaching in such a way that students not only feel joy in performing them but their interest in learning is also developed. If possible group activities may be planned for the social development of students. Group activities also help in developing the feeling of cooperativeness and respect for others in the group.

2. Frequency of Home-assignments

Teachers may be advised to design assignments according to the nature of the topic/subject. The assignments should be provided to the students as they facilitate better understanding and clarity of the subject matter. Coordinated policies on HA may be formulated at the district, school, and classroom levels by the consensus of the concerned authorities and teachers.

A clear and broad rationale for assigning homework, as well as general guidelines for the amount of how much HA should be assigned may be prepared at the District level. Schools need to provide more specific time requirements, coordinate assignments between classes, and describe the role of teachers and principals.

3. Periodicity of Home-assignments

No home assignment should require more than half an hour for completion because if students get home assignments in two subjects then these would require more than one hour to complete them which may become a burden for students, rather than learning process. While assigning home assignment students' age group, mental level and their concentration span must be taken care of, otherwise the purpose of assigning home work will be defeated.

For development of good study habits, learning on one's own and to enrich/revise the concepts taught in the class learners may be assigned tasks which require about one hour of inputs at home. Since, the five subjects are being taught in the class, the teachers may develop a HA time table. They may also decide upon a minimum number of assignments at class level to be given from each lesson. It would be certainly better if this activity is done by consensus of all the concerned teachers before the beginning of the session.

4. Utilisation of Feedback

(i) Evaluation of home assignments

Regular evaluation of the home-assignments has always motivated the students for doing their home-assignments for all the subjects. Teacher should plan their work in such a way that regular evaluation may be done by them in the class.

(ii) Nature of Feedback

Not only regular checking of home assignments motivates the students to work assigned to them but the way the checking is done, has deeper impact on their motivational level. Checking with mark of right /wrong neither makes them aware of their errors nor motivates them to work better. Very few teachers checked the assignments with remarks or by correcting their errors. Number of teachers provided reinforcement while checking/evaluating was negligible. Teachers may provide positive reinforcement wherever possible as it motivateSocial Studiesudents not only to work but to work to their best. Also errors may be highlighted and corrected, otherwise the very purpose of giving and checking home-assignments of the students fails.

(iii) Frequency of Correction Work

One of the benefits of giving assignments to students and checking them is that teachers and students come to know the errors, difficulties and bottlenecks of learning. These errors and difficulties

may be overcome by doing correction work. In correction work the practice of the correct spellings, meanings of difficult words, correct method of solving problems, correct diagrams, exact location on the map etc. are done and repeated three to five times, thereby reducing the chance of committing the same mistake again to a great extent. Therefore, students need to do correction work regularly for every home assignment.

(iv) Follow up of Correction Work

Every home assignment may be followed by correction work. Teachers may develop a habit that before evaluating any assignment they turn back the pages of the note-book to see whether correction work of the previous assignment has been done or not. Adopting this practice by the teachers will definitely help to develop the habit of doing correction work by the students.

(v) The support required in doing the home-assignments

It was informed by the teachers that a significant number of students who sought others help had joined private tuitions. The students therefore may be given adequate inputs in the class so that they may complete the home assignments on their own. Moreover the assignment may be explained well in the class by the teachers and if still students have some difficulty then they should be motivated to ask the teachers for help rather than joining private tuitions.

(vi) Keeping record of defaulters

Teachers should maintain a record of students who do their home assignments regularly and those who default it. Students who are regular and punctual should be given some credit in the form of badges etc., or stars on their assignments so that defaulters may also be motivated.

5. Status of Home-Assignments

The present status of HA shows that little attention is being paid to HA in schools. It may be due to the reason that during most teachers education courses, (in-service and pre-service teacher trainings) teachers receive a little or no training on: how to plan or devise good assignments? how to motivate students for attempting work assigned to them? how to make effective assignments? etc.

6. Demand on the Part of Teachers

Mostly home-assignments are written without any novelty. This is one of the many reasons why to most of the students home-assignments are not a challenge or joyful activity but a burden. Some other reasons may be: the mechanical nature of HA; HA being repetition of class work; teaching methods may not fit the student's learning style; expectations from the students may be unclear or unreasonable; students may not have notebooks for attempting HA; students may not have confidence in attempting HA etc. It is demanded from the teachers that they should

find out the reason for the same and put all their efforts to make effective use of HA in their teaching learning process. They should follow as has been suggested in NCF, 2005 that in primary classes, no homework should be assigned up to Class II and two hours assignments may be assigned a week from Class III to V.

7. General Policy Guidelines

Based on results of various researches, articles, and findings and conclusions of the present study the coordinator felt the need of following general policies to be adopted for improving the status of Home-Assignments in schools.

1. Coordinated policies on HA may be formulated and suggested by consensus of the concerned persons at district, school, and classroom levels.
2. A clear and broad rationale for assigning homework, as well as general guidelines on the quality and quantity of HA may be prepared at District level. Examples of various motivational strategies for attempting HA effectively and joyfully by the students may be provided to the teachers to make use of, in their classrooms.
3. Primary school students should be assigned homework, even if it does not improve their achievement, as HA help young students develop good study habits, promote positive attitudes toward school, and communicate to students that learning takes place outside as well as inside the school. The assignments for students at the primary level should be brief, involve materials commonly found in the home and should not be too demanding and time consuming.
4. The academic function of HA as a motivational tool should not be ignored.
5. Teachers should NEVER use homework as punishment.
6. Teachers should view the homework as an extension of the classroom. Homework that involves practice and review of lessons previously taught and simple introductions to material prior to its coverage in class is desirable. Assignments that require students to integrate skills or differing parts of the curriculum should also be involved in HA.
7. Regardless of students' ages, the formal role of parents in homework should be minimal.
8. It is also advised that teachers should individualise few assignments within the class. However, developing individualised homework demands considerable teacher time.
9. Finally, teachers should not view homework as an opportunity

to test the students. Almost all students may complete assignments successfully, thus, teachers should not differentiate much among performance levels. Having students do homework out of fear of negative consequences turns a situation ideal for building intrinsic motivation ("I must enjoy this; I'm doing it and the teacher isn't standing over me") into one that implies that the teacher believe Social Studies students need rewards or punishment in order to complete assignments. Teachers may collect homework, check it for completeness,

and give clear and supporting feedback. This procedure shows that the teacher takes homework seriously and that it is purposeful. The major purpose should be to identify individual students' learning problems.

10. Special attention may be paid to sensitise the teachers about the remarks/comments made on the assignments while correcting the assignments. Follow up action of correction/improvement to be carried out in the assignments is needed. This will reinforce better understanding of the subject matter to the learners.

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Students Learn When Teachers Lead

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Abstract

The present study examined the relationship between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement at higher secondary level of education. The sample comprised of 480 teachers identified from government higher secondary schools of Kashmir Province. Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire having two subscales was administered to collect the data from sample teachers. Statistical techniques like percentage statistics, coefficient of correlation and ANOVA were used to analyse the data. The results showed that majority of the teachers exhibited ineffective initiating structure and consideration leadership behaviour and also showed that leadership behaviour of teachers is significantly related with academic achievement at higher secondary level.

Introduction

Given the current demands for accountability and student learning results, the approach to linking educational leadership with formally designated positions appears to be changing and now leadership in educational institutions is examined through a broader interpretive lens that views teacher leadership as a cooperative agency that is less

organised than the traditional held notions of formally approved leadership roles. The educational institutions need teachers as individuals, who can make decisions and cope with the stress of the changing world. Teachers are expected to extend their influence beyond the classroom and into institute wide leadership activities. This advocacy for teacher effectiveness and

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expanded leadership role is based on the belief that teachers are the nuclei of education system; the teacher leaders are in a unique position to make change happen and are critical partners in transforming schooling and teaching.

Research has led to the conclusion that teachers need greater leadership opportunities if education is to survive in any kind of meaningful way. When teachers step into leadership positions, they become more active learners, students learn by being immersed in a democratic community of learners, and institutions benefit from better decisions. Teacher leaders act as facilitators within the institute and as important element in spreading and strengthening institutional reform and improvement. Agba et al. (2010) revealed that teachers' leadership style significantly influence student academic performance. The study carried out by Akert (2009) concluded that teachers would like to have more responsibility in all areas when it comes to teacher leadership roles. Yildirim et al. (2008) indicated that teacher leadership style was the main factor affecting academic performance. Muijs and Harris (2006) found that there were five dimensions of teacher leadership namely shared decision-making, collaboration, active participation, professional learning and activism. Teacher leadership was viewed as positive, and as being a key contributing factor to school

improvement, because it was seen to harness teacher creativity and devolve work and responsibility from the head. Wright (2005) concluded that teacher leadership affects school improvement and that principal leadership helps to influence, support and sustain both teacher leadership and school improvements. Katyal (2005) conceptualises that students perceived teachers to be primarily instructional leaders. However, even in their role as instructional leaders students do not seek knowledge in terms of information. Teacher leadership affected the engagement of students with schools. Silins and Mulford (2004) found that teacher leadership contributes significantly to organisational learning and improvement in student performance. Study by Cheng, Yin, C. (1994) showed that class teacher's leadership style was strongly related to social climate and student-affective performance. Savadamuthu (1988) pointed out that although the higher secondary school teachers possessed both types of leadership behaviours-initiating structure and consideration, they didn't reveal any distinct type of leadership behaviour.

Research on teacher leadership has identified positive influences on the teacher leader, their colleagues, the school organisation and the students. A close look at the reviewed studies, however, reveals that the nature and importance of teacher leadership has been explored mostly in international studies. Noting

international and systematic call for teacher leadership as well as the lack of research in this area in Indian context, the investigator has identified research into leadership behaviour of teachers as one of the issues to be explored.

Objectives

The following objectives were formulated for the present investigation:

- to describe the sample of teachers with regard to their leadership behaviour at higher secondary level.
- to study the relationship between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement at higher secondary level.
- to study the effect of leadership behaviour of teachers on academic achievement at higher secondary level.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the present investigation:

- leadership behaviour of teachers is significantly related with academic achievement at higher secondary level
- teachers with effective leadership behaviour differ significantly from teachers with average and ineffective leadership behaviour in terms of their influence on academic achievement at higher secondary level.

Methodology

Method: Descriptive method of research was employed to carry out the present investigation.

Sample: The ten districts of Kashmir province were involved in the collection of data. From the total population of 279 Govt. higher secondary schools, 120 schools (12 from each district) served as the sample for the present study. The schools were identified from the list obtained from Directorate of School Education, Kashmir (DESK), by using disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. 4 teachers were selected from each school (120 schools) for the present study by using systematic sampling technique, thus making the total number of teachers as 480. The results of class 12th annual examination were collected from the respective schools, aggregated and computed in percentage form and were taken as a measure of academic achievement.

Tool: Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire — (LBDQ) was administered on the sample teachers for collection of data. The Questionnaire measures the two fundamental dimensions of leadership behaviour i.e., initiating structure and consideration. It consists of a series of 30 short, descriptive statements; 15 statements for each of the two dimensions of ways in which leaders may behave. The possible range of scores on each dimension is 0 to 60.

Statistical Analysis: the collected data were analysed by means of

percentage statistics, coefficient of correlation and ANOVA. Data were analysed through SPSS Version 16.0.

Analysis and Discussion

(A) Descriptive Analysis

This section gives an account of the classification and description of the sample teachers on Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire in the areas of initiating structure and consideration. The scores on this questionnaire being 45-47 were considered as effective, whereas the scores of 32-44 and 19-31 were considered as average and ineffective respectively.

The overall analysis of teachers' initiating structure leadership behaviour has shown that only 15 percent of teachers were effective thereby showing that these teachers

got involved in developing the school improvement plan and in transferring the goals of the plan into classroom practices. It has also been found that 41.66 per cent of teachers possessed average leadership behaviour thereby indicating that they were moderately task oriented; whereas a majority of teachers i.e. 43.33 per cent were ineffective in terms of initiating structure leadership behaviour. These teachers always worked without a plan and failed to express their ideas clearly.

The overall analysis of teachers' consideration leadership behaviour has shown that only 10.83 per cent of teachers were effective thereby indicating that these teachers maintained good relations with their colleagues and were liked by all. They helped their colleagues work together to establish and achieve the goals

Table 1

Overall percentage of teachers on initiating structure dimension of Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire — LBDQ (N=480)

<i>Scores obtained on LBDQ</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Per cent</i>	<i>Classification</i>
45-57	72	15.00%	Effective
32-44	200	41.66%	Average
19-31	208	43.33%	Ineffective

Table 2

Overall percentage of teachers on consideration dimension of Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire — LBDQ (N=480)

<i>Scores obtained on LBDQ</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Per cent</i>	<i>Classification</i>
45-57	52	10.83%	Effective
32-44	196	40.83%	Average
19-31	232	48.33%	Ineffective

and objectives of the school. 40.83 percent of teachers were moderately people oriented. A considerable majority of teachers i.e. 48.33 percent of teachers were ineffective in terms of consideration leadership behaviour. It indicates that these teachers lacked the interpersonal skills that enable them to deal effectively with the group members.

(B) Correlational Analysis

In order to discover any correlation between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement, Karl Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r) was employed. The results were analysed at the level of school in order to minimise the impact of individual bias. The results of relationship between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement are presented in the following table:

Table 3

Correlation between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement (N = 120)

<i>Leadership Behaviour of Teachers</i>	<i>Value of 'r'</i>
Initiating Structure	0.55**
Consideration	0.57**
Overall Leadership Behaviour Score	0.59**

Dependent variable: Achievement

** Significant at 0.01 Level

The above table depicts that there is a positive and high correlation

between Initiating Structure dimension of leadership behaviour and academic achievement having coefficient of correlation as 0.55 ($p < 0.01$). This indicated that when teachers acted as agents to initiate changes for school Improvement, and participated enthusiastically in school development efforts and plans, student performance was significantly enhanced. The table further reveals that a positive and high correlation exists between Consideration dimension of leadership behaviour and academic achievement having coefficient of correlation as 0.57 ($p < 0.01$). This revealed that when teachers were more involved in decision-making, maintained positive and productive working relationships with colleagues and students and collaborated with other teachers to identify obstacles to student learning, it had a positive relationship with academic achievement. Lastly the table reveals that Overall leadership behaviour of teachers is also positively and highly related with academic achievement having coefficient of correlation as 0.59 ($p < 0.01$). This implied that leadership behaviour of teachers strongly influence academic achievement of students.

In the light of the empirical evidence discussed above, hypothesis number one which reads as "*leadership behaviour of teachers is significantly related with academic achievement at higher secondary level*" stands accepted.

(C) Analysis of Variance

To find out the effect of teachers' leadership behaviour on academic achievement of students, the sample schools were categorised, on the basis of overall teachers' leadership behaviour score, into three subgroups i.e. Schools with Effective, Average and Ineffective Teachers. Further, the corresponding academic achievement scores were taken for analysis of variance (ANOVA). Mean and S.D. of academic achievement scores across three categories of leadership behaviour was computed, results of which are presented in the table given below:

reported average (M=60.65) and low (M=55.49) mean score for achievement respectively.

In order to study whether the difference in mean scores are attributed to real cause or have occurred due to chance factors, ANOVA technique was employed.

Table reveals that there is a significant difference in academic achievement among three leadership behaviour categories as the obtained F-value is 33.98 ($p < 0.01$).

This indicates that schools where teachers were highly task-oriented and took risks in order to find out new ways of accomplishing

Table 4 (a)

Mean and S.D. of Academic Achievement Scores across three categories of schools

Category	<i>N</i>	Mean	S. D.
Schools with Effective teachers	20	65.55	4.52
Schools with Average teachers	43	60.65	3.68
Schools with Ineffective teachers	57	55.49	5.87
Total	120	59.02	6.19

Dependent variable: Achievement

The above Table gives an account of mean and S.D. of academic achievement for three categories of schools i.e. schools with effective, average and ineffective teachers in terms of leadership behaviour. It is evident from the table that schools having effective teachers reported higher mean score for achievement (M=65.55) while as schools having average and ineffective teachers

the institutional goals, students' academic performance was also high. It was further reported that schools having teachers with average leadership behaviour had average academic performance of students. On the other hand, when teachers were disinterested in their work and exhibited lower level of trust and concern about the welfare of their team members; it had significant

Table 4 (b)

**Summary of analysis of variance of teachers' leadership behaviour
and academic achievement**

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Degree of Freedom</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F-value</i>
Between Groups	1677.00	2	838.50	33.98**
Within Groups	2886.96	117	24.67	
Total	4563.97	119		

** Significant at 0.01 Level

negative impact on achievement of students. This suggests that teachers' leadership behaviour has a significant effect on academic achievement of students as more effective the teachers, better was the academic achievement.

In the light of the above results, hypothesis number two which reads as "Teachers with Effective Leadership Behaviour differ significantly from Teachers with Average and Ineffective Leadership Behaviour in terms of their influence on Academic Achievement at Higher Secondary Level" stands accepted.

Conclusion

The current educational context pressures both leaders and teachers to improve their practice and raise student achievement levels continuously. The challenge is not only to improve but also to sustain improvement. These pressures have also put the concept of teacher leadership to the forefront of the educational landscape as the traditional leadership approaches no longer meet the current demands

of school reform. Through stepping out of the confines of the classroom, teacher leaders forge a new identity in the school and create ways of engaging others in development work. The findings of the present study showed that there exist a significant and positive correlation between leadership behaviour of teachers and academic achievement. It was also observed that schools having effective teachers differed significantly from schools having average and ineffective teachers in terms of their influence on academic achievement.

The findings of the study bear implications for policy and practice specifically in the context of secondary education. The study recognises that teachers can be leaders and that their ability to lead has a significant influence upon the quality of education in schools. Ways must, therefore, be looked for to encourage more teachers to actively participate in school decision-making. This study would provide some kind of insight for the school administrators and teacher-leaders to reflect on their leadership with a better

understanding of teacher leadership and how this fosters a learning culture. Furthermore, it reiterates how teacher leadership behaviour is pivotal in generating collaboration between teachers and in securing professional learning communities within and between schools.

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Emotional Intelligence in Relation to Academic Achievement

ANJALI SHARMA*

Abstract

The present study is an attempt to study whether the students of different academic achievement level have the same emotional intelligence and examine if there is any correlation between the two variables — EQ and academic achievement. Null hypothesis were formulated against the objectives, and the normative survey method was used to conduct the study. Data was collected using stratified random sampling method. A total sample of 240 students (both male and female,) studying in class 11th from all disciplines, science, arts and commerce, was taken and the schools from both urban and rural areas have been chosen. Emotional intelligence inventory was used to measure the EQ of the students, and marks obtained in the annual examination of Class X was used to form groups according to their academic achievements. The result showed that emotional intelligence is an independent variable from not only academic achievement but gender as well. Thus, the finding reveals the insignificant correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual recognising his/her own feelings and others, managing one's own emotions and those of

others, motivating oneself and others, as well as handling personal and interpersonal relations; emotionally intelligent person has some other characteristics also such as integrity,

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self development, value orientating, commitment and altruistic behavior.

In order to understand the emotional intelligence clearly we should know some statement given by others.

Hein (2005) defines emotional intelligence as the innate potential to feel, use, communicate, recognise, remember, learn from, manage and understand emotions. Recker (2005) stated that all component of EI, as given by Hein μ feel, use, communicate, recognise, remember and learn from emotion μ can be found in an emotionally intelligent baby. The last component, that is manage emotions, is appears later in life when child begins to develop its ability to reason.

In 1997, Mayer and Salovey introduced four branch model of emotional intelligence. The four branches of emotional intelligence are

1. Perception, appraisal and expression of emotions
2. Emotional facilitation of thinking
3. Understanding and analysing emotions; employing emotional knowledge
4. Reflective Regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth

After expressing these four branches of emotional intelligence they also say that people with high emotional intelligence are expected to progress more quickly through these abilities.

According to O' Neil (1996), "emotional intelligence is a different

way of being smart. It includes knowing what your feelings are and using your feelings to make good decisions in life. It's being able to manage distressing moods well and control impulses. It's being motivated and remaining hopeful and optimistic when you have setbacks in working toward goals. It is empathy, knowing what the people around you are feeling. And it's social skill getting along well with other people managing emotions in relationships, being able to persuade or lead others."

Recker (2005) defined the emotional intelligence in the way how it develops in the child as every child has innate emotional intelligence or innate potential for emotional sensitivity, emotional memory, emotional processing and emotional learning ability. These are inborn components which form the core of the emotional intelligence. He clearly stated that it depends upon the later experiences given by teachers, parents, family members, caregivers during childhood and adolescence, emotional intelligence developed or damaged through emotional handling by these people. The results of emotional handling or lesson given by adults are developed in one's level of emotional intelligence or EQ. Hence the term EQ represents relative measures of a person's healthy or unhealthy development of their innate emotional intelligence.

It may be possible that a child has high innate emotional intelligence but learns unhealthy emotional

habits from home and will grow to have low EI. On the other hand it may be possible that a child starts with relatively low EI but receive healthy emotional nurturing, will grow in higher EQ level. Now it is concluded that it is much easier to damage the innate emotional intelligences than to develop the EQ of an emotionally intelligent child.

The working definition of emotional intelligence can be given as first of all child feels emotions i.e. love, fear, anger and pain. These are the emotions that child feels and trying to meet for its survival and then use these emotion to take needed action and trying to communicate these by crying, smiling, and shaming. After this, he/she is able to recognise the emotion of his/her elders or caretaker. Along with it the child also remembers the details of emotion during the emotional state as what type of behaviour exists and how they are looking and how the pitch of the voices fluctuate. At this stage they also learn that which angers them or which pleasures them and at later stage he will able to manage own emotion and others.

Sabapathy (1986) Ohm (1998) Tapia (1998) Miglani (2001), Manhas (2004) studied about emotional intelligence and found positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Lawrence and Deepa (2013) found that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and

academic achievement of high school students.

Nath and Prashad (2004) studied teaching effectiveness in relation to their emotional intelligence and found that emotional intelligence of the teachers is one of the strongest factors for improving teaching effectiveness. Patra, Swati (2004) studied role of emotional intelligence in educational management and found that EI plays a crucial role in the successful management of educational organisation.

Srivastava, Nidhi (2007) studied emotional intelligence in relation to achievement in environmental studies and found with high emotional intelligence become more emotionally stable and sensitive to their environmental issues than their less their emotionally intelligent counterpart.

The abilities i.e. self awareness, managing emotions, motivating self, empathy and social skills help children academically. Children with higher rate of emotional skill or EQ can do all the assignments perfectly and get success than those with lower emotional intelligence level.

The present study is an attempt to study the emotional intelligence in relation to academic achievement.

Objectives

The objective of the study were as follows—

- To compare emotional intelligence of different academic achievements groups.

- To compare the emotional intelligence of high achievers and low achievers
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of high achievers and average achievers.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of average achievers and low achievers.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of high, average and low achievers.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of different academic achievement groups of boys and girls.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of high achiever boys and girls.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of average achiever boys and girls.
 - To compare the emotional intelligence of low achiever boys and girls.
 - To study the correlation between emotional and academic achievement.
- (4) There is no significant difference between emotional intelligence of high achiever boys and girls.
 - (5) There is no significant difference between emotional intelligence of average achiever boys and girls.
 - (6) There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence among low achievers boys and girls.
 - (7) There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence among low, high and average achievers.
 - (8) There is no correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were formulated.

- (1) There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between high and low achievers.
- (2) There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between high and average achievers
- (3) There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between average and low achiever.

Methodology

Research method

In the present study the descriptive survey method was used

Population and Sample

The entire students studying in class 11th constitutes the population for the present study. A sample of 240 students studying in class 11th from twelve schools of Dholpur district was selected.

Sampling Method

The stratified random sampling method was employed to collect data. First of all the sample was stratified on the basis of locality as urban and rural. Twelve schools, six from urban area and six from rural area were selected by simple random sampling. The second strata was managerial aspect, so from each locality three

government and three private school were selected randomly (3 government, 3 private) each from both urban and rural areas. The third level was sex, for that thirty male and thirty female students from each school were selected randomly. Hence, 120 girls and 120 boys were chosen in the total sample.

Tools

- (1) To measure the variables, Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) which was developed by Dhar, Pethe and Hyde was used
- (2) To measure academic achievement of the students the marks obtained by them in Class X in the annual examinations conducted by Rajasthan Secondary Board Ajmer were taken for group formation.

Group Formation

The groups were formed on the basis of academic achievement. The normal distribution curve was drawn for the marks obtained in Class X, mean score was 57.40. From the mean score +1 sigma distance and -1 sigma distance i.e. 34.13 per cent both the side of mean score (+and-sign) were taken as average achievers, 15.87 per cent of positive sign were taken as high achievers and 15.87 per cent of negative sign were taken as low achievers.

Statistical Techniques

After all the calculations of collected data were done t-test and one way

ANOVA were used to compare the emotional intelligence and find out the correlation.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 Shows that t-value is 3.96 and checked at 0.01 level of confidence and found significant. Hence hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Table 2 shows that t-value is 2.08 which is found insignificant at 0.01 level. Hence hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Table 3 shows that t-value is 2.83 which is higher than 2.60 at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Table 4 Shows that t-value is 1.904 which is found insignificant. Hence hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Table 5 show that t-value is 5.39 that is significant at 0.01 level. Hence hypothesis 5 is rejected.

Table 6 shows that t-value is 1.07 which is insignificant at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence hypothesis 6 is accepted.

Table 7 shows that F-ratio is 6.54 and checked at 0.05 and 0.01 level and found that it is significant. Hence hypothesis 7 is rejected.

Table 8 shows that r-value is 0.186 which is insignificant at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

Findings

- (1) There is a significant difference between emotional intelligence of high and low achievers.
- (2) There is no significant different between emotional intelligence of

Table 1

M and t-value between high and low achievers

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF.	Significance
Low achievers	38	132.475	15.08	3.68	3.96*	74	at .01 2.64
High achievers	38	117.9	17.73				

Table 2

M and t-value between average and high achievers

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF.	Significance
High achievers	38	117.9	17.73	3.17	2.08**	200	at 0.01 2.60
Average achievers	164	124.52	18.80				

Table 3

M and t-value between Average and low achievers

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF.	Significance
Average achievers	164	124.51	18.86	2.81	2.83*	200	at 0.01 2.60
Low achievers	38	132.475	15.08				

Table 4

M and t-value between high achiever boys and girls

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF	Significance
High achiever Boys	13	110.769	15.67	5.54	1.904**	36	at 0.01 2.71
High achiever Girls	25	121.333	17.89				

Table 5

M and t-value between average achiever boys and girls

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF	Significance
Av. achiever Boys	89	117.91	17.28	2.759	5.39*	162	at 0.01 2.61
Av. achiever Girls	75	132.80	17.78				

Table 6

M and t-value between low achiever boys and girls

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	DF	Significance
Low achiever boys	18	129.66	14.11	4.73	1.07**	36	at 0.01 2.71
Low achiever girls	20	134.77	15.77				

Table 7

Comparison among low, high and average achievers

Source of variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square of Volume	F ratio	Significance
Between Group	(3-2) 2	4272.46	2136.23	6.54	at 0.05 3.03 at 0.01 4.68
Within in Group	(240-3) 237	77355.52	326.394		

Table 8

Correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement

Variables	N	r-value	Significance
Emotional intelligence and academic achievement	240	0.186	Insignificant

- average and high achievers.
- (3) There is significant difference between emotional intelligence of average and low achievers.
 - (4) There is no significant difference between emotional intelligence of high achiever girl and boys.
 - (5) There is significant difference between emotional intelligence of average achievers boys and girls.
 - (6) There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence of low achiever boys and girls.
 - (7) There is significant difference among emotional intelligence of low, high and average achievers.
 - (8) There is insignificant correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Conclusion and Discussion

The conclusion of the study is that the emotional intelligence is not correlated with the academic achievement; it depends upon the

circumstance or the atmosphere in which the child grows and gets opportunity to develop the emotional intelligence through the lessons given by elders, teachers and caretakers. As every child has innate emotional intelligence or innate potential for emotional sensitivity, emotional memory, emotional processing and emotional learning ability, these inborn components depend upon the experiences the child will receive in his/her later life, in knowing and managing one's own emotions and of others. Hence, the term EQ represents relative measure of a person's healthy or unhealthy development of their innate emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence can be learned, acquired and gradually developed, unlike IQ. The pupils with different academic achievement may have high emotional quotient due to differential emotional nurturing or nature of emotional intelligence.

Hence, emotional intelligence is independent of academic achievement and sex variable, and its development is in the hand of elders in how they handle the emotional intelligence of the child.

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Rabindranath Tagore and the Democratic Theory

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Abstract

Democracy has been regarded as the ideal of political systems for attaining human freedom. Rabindranath Tagore had written extensively on the ideal of mukti, which he insisted had a different connotation from the European liberal ideal of freedom. The latter, according to him, was an ideal centred on acquisitiveness, on the possessive individual, as the individual has been conceptualised, according to one interpretation from Hobbes to Locke. Tagore's mukti was the ability of the individual to transcend himself, to realise that she/he was both a part of nature and of a human society to which she/he was connected by innumerable threads of nurture, culture, sustenance and love.

Tagore's apparently idealistic or romantic idea of freedom makes sense in the modern capitalist order where ceaseless competition for goods and resources pitches man against man, and illusions of collective guilt or revenge generate strife between groups divided by religion, ethnicity or skin complexion – strife which is often backed by state power in the domestic and international arenas.

Tagore was severely critical of the caste system, which according to him was a unique way of including alien groups by secluding them in assigned places in the social order. The ideology of subordination and repression of all hierarchically lower ranking groups by the higher orders created a social system that not only deprived both the oppressors and oppressed of mukti in Tagore's sense but made the

* Written text of Rabindranath Tagore Third Memorial lecture delivered on January, 25th 2011 at RIE, Bhubaneswar by Amiya Kumar Bagchi

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whole rigidly stratified incapable of meeting new challenges and deprived it of creativity. Tagore recognised that there had been attempts to reform this system by leaders of new dharmas (Tagore considered 'religion' to be a poor translation of the Indian ideas of dharma) such as Gautama Buddha, the creators of the great Upanishads, Ramanuja, pioneers of the Bhakti and Vaishnavacults such as Dhyaneswara, Chaitanya and Shankardeb, the Sufi saints, Nanak and Kabir and also by Emperors Ashoka and Akbar. He drew his inspiration not only from the Upanishads and Vedas but also from popular religious cults such as the Bauls and Kabirpanthis.

Movements for democracy in society in India was often couched in religious idiom, but these movements conferred dignity on the hierarchically deprived groups who after all formed the majority of the Indian people. How to cement the mentality of all people so that they strive for the good of everybody rather than that of particular groups or classes such as capitalists has been central to the political thinking of the political theorists from Rousseau to Marx, Mill and beyond. Rousseau's notion of the general will demands the recognition of a public good transcending the self-seeking of isolated individuals. Tagore seeks to solve this problem by positing that individuals attain mukti through love of others and of nature's bounty that has to be conserved.

Democracy and its foundation, human freedom, are both endangered

in today's world. The danger emanates not only from groups openly opposed to formal democracy but from those who profess to be believers in and practitioners of democratic procedures in politics and society. At this juncture Rabindranath Tagore's enormous corpus of work centring on his ideas of mukti, which he time and again insisted, is different from the liberal concept of freedom and dharma, which he insisted was different from the idea expressed in the English word, 'religion', and from all types of denominational religion, is a great resource for all believers in real democracy and the right of every human being to live in freedom and dignity.

I will refer to his works in English, but my major sources will be his poems, songs, fiction and discourses in Bangla, because many of his deepest thoughts were expressed in songs and poems. For most of them no English translations are available; only a fraction of the poems have been translated. But the translations, even when done by the poet himself, fail to convey the depth and emotional or intellectual energy of the original,

In order to grasp the essentials of Tagore's perspective on democracy and freedom, one has to think of Tagore both as the dreamer and the prophet, whose thoughts encompassed the whole world, including the atmosphere, the oceans, mountains, all the wonders of nature and human beings as awe-struck wanderers in this unfathomable universe, and

Tagore as the earth-bound being. He was plagued by illnesses, suffered the untimely loss of many of his children, his favourite great-nephews, the calumny of envious contemporaries, the humiliation of a colonial subject, the contumely of racist rulers and their friends, and had to make his living as a manager of his father's zamindari, and then of his truncated inheritance landlord, and had to beg and borrow to fulfil his mission to create innovative educational institutions and institutions of rural uplift—against enormous odds.

Tagore believed fervently in reason, and a chief complaint of his against rigid, institutionalised religion was that it insults reason (Tagore 1923/1996, p. 463). He also studied developments in the theory of evolution of species and of the nature of the universe as it was known in his time. These studies informed, and to a large extent confirmed his postulate that man's capacity is both finite and infinite. (I am using 'man' as Tagore often did to denote both men and women, that is, as Karl Marx would have said, man as a species being rather than human beings just as mammals or primates, although their animal nature was essential in thinking of the possibilities and limits of their freedom.

In his Hibbert Lectures, delivered in 1930 and published as *The Religion of Man* (Tagore 1931/1996, p.88), he wrote

'The most perfect inward expression has been attained by

man in his own body. But what is most important of all is the fact that man has also attained its realisation in a, more subtle body outside his physical system. He 'misses himself when isolated; he finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship, His multicellular body is born and it dies; his multi-personal humanity is immortal. In this ideal of unity he realises the eternal in his life and the boundless in his love...'

That Tagore was fully conversant with the discovery of the atomic and subatomic nature and was able to reconcile the scientist's models of matter and the universe with our daily experience of living is indicated by another couple of sentences in the same lectures of 1920:

'He [man] makes use of the table with full confidence for his physical purposes, and with equal confidence makes intellectual use of it for his scientific knowledge. But the knowledge is his who is a man. If a particular man as an individual did not exist, the table would exist all the same, but still as a thing that is related to the human mind. The contradiction that there is between the table of our sense perception and the table of our scientific knowledge has its common centre of reconciliation in human personality.'

It is necessary to mention this aspect of Tagore's clarity of thinking because some scientists, including Arthur Eddington, a leading cosmologist and populariser of science, had made heavy weather of

it, and had been scathingly criticised by the philosopher, Susan Stebbing (Stebbing 1937), quite a few years after Tagore's lectures.

Tagore's imaginative construction of a fully free human life and his realisation that such life is unattainable for most people of India in his time had come quite early to him, before he was thirty years of age. Already by the early twenties, he had been recognised by the literary figures of Bengal, including Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the arbiter of literary worth in his time, as a major poet. By the time he was twenty-eight or so, Rabindranath was sent by his father, Debendranath Tagore, to manage their zamindari estates, spread over the three districts of Bengal, namely, Nadia, Rajshahi and Pabna.

While visiting Rampur Boalia, the zila sadar town of Rajshahi, he wrote a wake-up call for himself in March 1894 ('ebar phirao more' published in *Bangla Chitra*, in 1896). The poet will have to give voice to the countless millions who had been oppressed for centuries, and tell them that they must fight evil and injustice, in the full conviction that the unjust and evil-doers are ultimately cowards. If the people confront them without fear, they would slink into their lairs with tails between their legs. The poet will have to instill faith among the people whose right it was to have enough food, clean air, light and life in the full sense of the word.

His next burst of creativity giving expression in poems to the

requirements of a fully human life and his anguish and anger at the violation of those requirements through the human agency of imperialist aggressors and a demeaning social system binding Indians down can be dated to around 1900, when he penned probably the noblest paean to human dignity ever written. Fortunately it reads almost as well in the English translation he did for *Gitanjali* (1912, poem no. 35), as in Bangla:

*Where the mind is without fear and
the head is held high*

Where knowledge is free

*Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments*

By narrow domestic walls

*Where words come out from the depth
of truth*

*Where tireless striving stretches its
arms towards perfection*

*Where the clear stream of reason has
not lost its way*

*Into the dreary desert sand of dead
habit*

Where the mind is led forward by thee

Into ever-widening thought and action

*Into that heaven of freedom, my
Father, let my country awake*

The power of this poem (translated from Bangla) was realised by our late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who had briefly studied at Santiniketan and had known Rabindranath. She banned its airing on the All India Radio during the Emergency.

He penned another poem as a prayer for his land. That was

translated later into English as 'Freedom' (Tagore 1936/1994, p. 320) *Freedom from fear is the freedom I claim for you my Motherland! –fear, The phantom demon, shaped by your own distorted dreams; Freedom from the burden of the ages, bending your head, breaking your back, blinding your eyes to the beckoning call of the future; Freedom from the shackles of slumber wherewith you fasten yourself in night's stillness, mistrusting the star that speaks of truth's adventurous path; Freedom from the anarchy of destiny whose sails are weakly yielded to blind uncertain winds, and the helm to a hand ever rigid and cold as Death. Freedom from the insult of dwelling in a puppet's world, where movements are started through brainless wires, repeated through mindless habits; where figures wait with patience and obedience for the master of show, to be stirred into a moment's mimicry of life.*

He also wrote movingly on the end of the nineteenth century which witnessed the invasion of China and the destruction of the imperial palace in Peking by the armies of the British, the Germans, the French and the Americans in the East and the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa. He appended a translation of this poem to his lectures on nationalism as 'The Sunset of the Century' (Tagore 1917/1996a, p. 466):

The Sunset of the Century
(Written in the Bengali on the last day of last century)

THE last sun of the century sets amidst the blood-red clouds of the West and the whirlwind of hatred.

The naked passion of self-love of Nations, in its drunken delirium of greed, is dancing to the clash of steel and the howling verses of vengeance. The hungry self of the Nation shall burst in a violence of fury from its own shameless feeding.

For it has made the world its food, And licking it, crunching it, and swallowing it in big morsels, It swells and swells

Till in the midst of its unholy feast descends the sudden shaft of heaven piercing its heart of grossness'.

There has been a considerable confusion about Rabindranath's attitude towards 'nationalism'. The best way to understand his real perspective on that is to stick to the special sense in which he used the word 'nation' in his essay, 'Nationalism in the West:

'A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organised for a mechanical purpose. Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself. It is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships, so that men can develop ideals of life in cooperation with one another. It is an end in itself. It has also a political side, but this is only for a special purpose. It is for self-preservation. It is merely the side of power, not of human

ideals. And in the early days it had its separate place in society, restricted to the professionals. But when with the help of science and the perfecting of organisation this power begins to grow and brings in harvests of wealth, then it crosses its boundaries with amazing rapidity. For then it goads all its neighbouring societies with greed of material prosperity, and consequent mutual jealousy, and by the fear of each other's growth into powerfulness. (Tagore 1917/1996a, p. 421)

This quotation in fact shows that Tagore knew that a nation, even in the sense of a 'people' organised for a mechanical purpose, can serve as a focus of self-preservation, among a people. What he was opposed to was the conversion of a nation organised for the purpose of self-preservation into an aggressor against other peoples. Just like Lenin's Imperialism, Rabindranath's Nationalism can be seen as a parable against Western imperialism in general and British imperialism in particular. He was clear-sighted enough to see that the Japanese nation, organising itself successfully against Western aggression, had been rapidly transformed into an imperialist power. The British government was not fooled by Rabindranath's omission of any call for struggle against the British, or by his acceptance of a knighthood from it (an honour he repudiated soon enough, after the massacre of Jalianwalla Bagh), for they were deeply suspicious of his intentions

and his influence on Indian public opinion from the days in which he actively participated in the movement against the first partition of Bengal during the viceroyalty of Curzon.

People can be very diverse and the diversity has to be welcomed and made room for in any project of self-determination of nations. But that requirement does not take away the necessity, in a world organised into an unequal geopolitical order, of collective organisation for improving the standard of living of the people and defence against the subversion of people's welfare by imperialists and local collaborators. (Bagchi 2002; Sinha 2010, Chapter 10)

Tagore realised that in a capitalist society or a commercialised society under the sway of capitalist imperialism, it was competition for money and power that led nationalism to develop into imperialism, which he opposed totally. But he did not blame imperialism alone for all of India's ills, nor did he think that imitation of the imperialist nations was the way forward for India, or for any other country. The abiding concern of Tagore was that human beings should stick to satya and dharma as the only way to mukti, which he insisted was very different from the nineteenth century liberals' idea of 'freedom'. Apart from his own poetic sensibility, he drew inspiration from both the high traditions of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* and Buddha's teachings and from the traditions of the 'low' traditions of popular

religious cults and great teachers such as Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, and the Sufi saints.

From the very beginning of his interventions in social and political issues, Rabindranath emphasised the distinctiveness of Indian civilisation, and the need for Indians both to revitalise that civilisation through creative engagement with social issues, for example, the problem of supplying drinkable, unpolluted water in Bengal under the colonial rule, and to widen the real opportunities of learning from other peoples by tackling the rigidity of the caste system and other internal evils of Indian society. One of the most succinct accounts of his thinking about Indian society and polity in his time was laid out in a letter he wrote on 4 January 1909 to Myron H. Phelps, an American friend of India, which Rabindranath revised for publication in *The Modern Review* as 'The problem of India' (Tagore 1910/1996). It is instructive even now to read it as a searchlight illuminating the deepest problems of India:

Our country is divided by numberless differences— physical, social, linguistic, religious, and this obvious fact in any course which is destined to lead us into our own place among the nations who are building up the history of man ... It would be a sad misreading of the lessons of the past to apply our energies to tread too closely in the footsteps of any other nation, however successful in its own career ... (Ibid, p. 731).

Rabindranath regarded the caste system as the device by which Indian society had absorbed many different groups of people who had come to India, without trying to exterminate them as the white immigrants into North America and Australia had done. But this system was also a device to keep the differences among the groups alive. He then goes on:

'Thus secure in her rigid system of seclusion, in the very process of inclusion, India in different periods of her history received with open arms the medley of races that pour on her without any attempt at shutting out undesirable elements... But this very absence of struggle, developing into a ready acquiescence in any position assigned by the social system, has crushed individual manhood and has accustomed us for centuries not only to submit to every form of domination, but sometimes actually to venerate the power that holds us down' (Ibid, p. 732)

He also blamed the caste system for the inability of Indian society to generate a feeling of common interest and to adapt creatively new situations.

This completeness of stratification, this utter submergence of the lower by the higher, this immutable and all-pervading system, has no doubt imposed a mechanical uniformity upon the people, but has at the same time kept their different sections inflexibly and unalterably separate, with the consequent loss of all power of adaptation and

re-adjustment to new conditions and forces.

The regeneration of the Indian people, to my mind, directly and perhaps solely depends upon the removal of this condition whenever I realise the hypnotic hold which this gigantic system of cold-blooded repression has taken on the minds of our people ... (Ibid)

There were two very different perspectives that he brought to bear on his conception of the role of the state in human life. One was that of what could be done under the colonial conditions of India. He regarded the colonial state as both extremely stingy and unjust in meeting the real needs of Indians. He believed that Indians had the right to demand more power for themselves in running the state. One of the clearest expressions of this view was given by him when he read out an address called 'kartar ichhay karma' (translatable as 'work according to the will of the boss') at a meeting convened in Calcutta to protest against the internment of Annie Besant by the Madras government for demanding home rule (Thakur 1324 BS), the same year his book *Nationalism* was published. He also referred to the need for independence of India from foreign rule on many other occasions. But he believed neither in an armed struggle for independence, which he believed to be both impractical and likely to lead to very undesirable consequences for the real liberty of the people, nor in endless petitions to a thoroughly callous foreign government by a tiny

westernised middle class. He wanted the mind of the people to be prepared for real freedom through continuous education, including constructive work that was within the constraints of a foreign-ruled country. In the meanwhile, he also wanted the people to remain open to productive foreign learning of all kinds, including the little that was doled out by the alien rulers.

But as a seer, he rejected the notion of freedom as possessive individualism. His concept of mukti revolved around the ability of the individual to transcend his narrow self-interest and connect with people as a condition of fulfilment of his own personality. Secondly, he wanted dharma to govern every person's activities in daily life and not to be confined only to the observance of certain rituals in temples, churches or mosques. It was not to be found in renunciation of the world, or in blasphemous prayers for victory in unjust causes including that of war between nations. Finally, he wanted the creative freedom of people, so that his scheme of education would not follow either the official models of education in colonial India or the extreme discipline of *nai talim* favoured by Mahatma Gandhi.

While his hatred of cruelty in all its forms and love of nature and beauty were expressed in his poems and songs from his early manhood, we can trace some change in his perspective with respect to at least three aspects of a society, especially a society that

has not just the formal but also the substantive part of human freedom as its goal. The first was his idea about whether a labouring class that would only work for others so that things of beauty can be built by the privileged was a necessary evil. He had at first a very gloomy suspicion that such a class might after all be necessary for human civilisation even in his sense (bereft of war and undue restriction of creativity) to advance. But he revised this opinion after his visit to Soviet Russia and watching how they had been able to educate all the people in such a short time and introduce them to the riches of classical literature and ballet.

The second area of a change in his perspective was his increasing

appreciation of the power of ideology such as the degrading caste system to enslave not only the slaves but also their masters. In the very beginning when he was trying to bring out the glories of Indian civilisation as against the aggressive and commercialised Western civilisation, he had a tendency to idealise the varnashramdharma as a way of incorporating alien peoples without annihilating them. But he later wrote that the ideology of subordination inculcated among the shudras had also led to the crippling of the upper strata of Indian society to make creative innovations of their own or adapt to the new circumstances, and had been one of the reasons they had succumbed to foreign rule.

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Exploring the Science of Society

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Abstract

The present article is an attempt to present a sketch of the origin, evolution, present and future of the discipline— Social Science. The author has strongly advocated that the Social Science had never been given its due place/respect in the world of knowledge. Author emphasised that the study of Human Society has always fascinated the intellectuals and theorists, but they hold different views about the nature of this study. Should it be like that of Natural Sciences or it can remain scientific with its own characteristics? Do we need to study human society in a style which is close to the study of natural science or it can have the flexibility to accommodate the dynamic strength of different dimensions of the society, such as pluralism, democracy and liberalism etc. Various debates in this regard from Auguste Comte to David Easton and Carl Popper have been discussed and presented in this write-up. At the end of this article, author has supported the idea of granting it the status of soft science, which, not only, uphold the scientific flavor in the study of social science but also, accommodate the unique characteristics of the discipline of social science. We need to encourage social science research at university level and community level to facilitate the generation of new knowledge in social science and this is the need of the 21st century.

Introduction

Human Society has become a complex entity; the more we try to understand it, the more complicated it becomes. In the present world,

when human life has become a web of crisscross equations, starting from nowhere and reaching out to another web, it becomes even more complicated. Some 40-50 years ago,

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we used to define primary human needs as food, shelter and clothing, as the bare minimum necessities for all living creatures on this earth. Gradually, with the development of civic amenities and the use of Technology in our day-to-day life, instead of making life simple and straight-forward, we have, further, complicated it.

Today, human life is multi-faceted, be it in the field of Social, Political, Economic, Psychological, Emotional, Scientific, Literature and so on. The question regarding the methods of understanding these dynamics of human life is a matter of concern. At all times of development, thinkers have tried their level best to comprehend this critical aspect about the study of human life. Another critical question that arises is where should we start to understand this web of human relations? This web could, further, be referred to as Society. For a long period of time, thinkers who have tried defining society have got entrapped in an endless debate about the individual and society. The philosophers of ancient Greek—Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were the first in the series who reflected on human society, and they tried to project models in which society should operate. Thereafter, for centuries, Social, Political theorists and philosophers kept exploring answers to the same question. Many Romans followed the same line of thought. For many centuries,

analysis of society, largely, remained philosophical. Thinkers did not attempt to understand society in a systematic manner. In other words, they lacked systematic analysis of this structure and the working of human relationships at the micro level of the family and the macro level of human society. Although the Greek and Roman philosophers did construct grand models and schemes about the individuals and their equations, yet, they failed to look at the modus operandi of the workings of these Societies.

It's only in the modern world, that attempts to define human society were made on some systematic basis, post the industrial revolution. Human relationships were being looked at through a different perspective. It was at this time, that the social thinkers tried to understand Society through an economic perspective, dominating all other perspectives; or through the political perspective by belittling others. There were huge gaps in the interpretation of these different perspectives, with reference to the comprehensive understanding of Society. In other words, we can say that these different perspectives complemented each other, whereas, a few thinkers perceived them as parallel. This was the time when new structures of knowledge were taking shape, while, on the other hand, the French revolution, American Freedom Movement, Imperialism and Colonialism helped the evolution of large Nation-States.

Social Science Under the Influence of Natural Science

However, from the 18th century onwards, in Europe, important changes took place in the way of understanding of Society and the place of the individuals in it. Many significant inventions took place in scientific discovery to understand the composition of the physical world which surrounds human beings. This was the time when natural sciences were in their infancy and were trying to develop systematic methods for the study of the physical world and the role of individuals in it. The term 'social science' first appeared in 1824, as an inquiry into "principles of distribution of wealth." Natural Sciences were being increasingly recognised and valued for generating this new knowledge, which was called scientific. This growth of Natural Sciences gave birth to an enquiry, if such Scientific and Rational approaches can be applied to the relationships of humans in Society. The social thinkers of the 20th century were struggling to explore if human experiences and behaviours could be better understood with the help of these approaches of Natural Sciences.

The Industrial Revolution and the renaissance were contemporary to the Scientific and Technological development and laid the transformation for an urban, industrial and mechanised living style. Agriculture, methods of production, transportation and communication

brought large scale changes in the life of human beings and a greater variety of occupations emerged. In the Open the Social Sciences, Gulbenkian Commission Report (1999) it has been mentioned that the impact of the natural sciences, both in academia and the larger society, catalysed an attempt to introduce scientific methodologies in those disciplines that were concerned with humans and society. Along with this, a conscious process of institutionalisation made possible the establishment of the various disciplines of social sciences. Thus, the evolution of these disciplines and their formal institutionalisation has been a dynamic and continuous process, which has been in constant dialogue and debate with various other factors.

The influence of Natural Sciences has been significant to the growth and development of these upcoming disciplines. It's important to mention, at this point, that these early Social Scientists were not individuals with a radical outlook. Never-the-less, they were people who tried to obtain the scientific basis of the Study of Society. Therefore, they gave great emphasis on the need to analyse Social Life scientifically. Auguste Comte is known as the founder/father of Sociology, as he emphasised the need to analyse Society through a scientific method. This emphasis had significant importance for the development of the discipline. Auguste Comte revived the term 'social physics', suggesting, thereby,

that society was best studied along the model of physics. Thus, to study society, one had to be scientific, in the sense that the study should be confined “to the study of real facts, without seeking to know their first causes or final purpose”.

Origin and Growth of Social Science

The Report of the Commission, further, suggests that in the period of 1850-1914, clear divisions emerged between the disciplines belonging to the social sciences. There were five main places where these disciplines were institutionalised: Great Britain, France, the Germanys, Italy and the United States. Five disciplines were accepted as belonging to social sciences. These were: history, economics, sociology, political science and anthropology. A tradition of history was already present in some form and it became the first discipline among these five to attain a degree of autonomy. Around this time, a new discipline was formed and a new name for it was coined by Comte, called sociology. He thought that sociology would be the queen of the social sciences (perhaps like mathematics was seen as the queen of the Natural sciences). The discipline of sociology, itself, was formed through a conscious institutionalisation in the second half of the 19th century. Initially, the people involved in it were those who were associated with social reform groups. This was similar to what had happened in anthropology.

As is well known, early anthropology was largely done by explorers, traders and officials of colonial regimes. The institutionalisation of this discipline occurred when they were absorbed in the university system.

The human beings thought that they were capable of constructing their own laws for social and political systems. This fact, opines Wagner (1999), distinguishes that many techniques were presented by Social Science to manage post-revolutionary political situation. The mid of 18th century had observed the enlightenment of the human beings. Their tendency of being sociable and its effects on practical order of the world was central concern of Social Science. This metamorphosis into social science took place until the mid of 19th century. So, Social Science, from the beginning, has contributed in alteration of society-as foreseeable. In renovating society for the advancement, Social Science has been instrumental.

How Scientific the Social Science is?

Here, it is important to discuss the development of Natural Sciences that was largely affecting the Studies of Society. Classical mechanics, which was first formulated by Newton and, further, developed by Laplace and others, is seen as the foundation of science, as a whole. The influence of Newtonian thinking was so great that the upcoming Social Scientists, in their attempt to study the Society

using a scientific method, plagued it with paradoxes, confusion, and unclear interpretation.

Auguste Comte was of the view that a theoretical Science should discover the laws that govern the phenomenon which social scientists were investigating. Similarly, Durkheim, in *the Rules of Sociological Method*, outlined his view of the logic and method of sociological inquiry. He argued that, the first and most fundamental rule is to consider social facts as things. Thus, the belief systems, customs and institutions of society, the facts of the social world should be considered as things, in the same way, as the objects and events of the natural world. As such, they can be directly observed and objectively measured. Although social facts enter the consciousness of individuals, i.e., the belief systems of society form a part of the outlook of its members, social facts are external to individuals. They are impressed upon them by society; they exist outside the individual and can, therefore, be studied objectively as external things. In Durkheim's view, society is not simply a collection of individuals; each was acting independently in terms of his or her particular psychology or mental state. Instead, members of society are directed by collective beliefs, values and laws, by social facts, which have an existence of their own. In Durkheim's words, 'collective ways of acting or thinking have a reality outside the individuals. Social facts, therefore,

constrain individuals to behave in particular ways. The explanation of human behaviour, thus, involves an examination of how that behaviour is shaped by social facts. Just as the behaviour of matter can be regarded as a reaction to external stimuli, so the behaviour of human beings can be seen as a response to the external constraints of social facts. Given this view of the nature of human beings and society, social facts are amenable to analysis in terms of the natural science methodology.

In 1897, Durkheim's now famous work, *Suicide: a Study in Sociology* was published. Durkheim believed that this study provided the evidence to support his views on methodology outlined two years earlier in *the Rules of Sociological Method*. He argued that his research on suicide demonstrated that 'real laws are discoverable', that social phenomena obey laws in the same way as natural phenomena. It showed that suicide was not simply an individual act, but a product of a social force external to the individual. Its causes are to be found in society. It is the product of social facts, of 'real, living, active forces, which, because of the way they determine the individual, prove their independence of it'.

In a series of writings on suicide, the British sociologist, J. Maxwell Atkinson, rejects the logic and procedures of positivist methodology. He maintains that the social world is a construction of actors' perceptions and subjective interpretations. As such, it has no reality beyond

the meanings given to it by social actors. Thus, an act of suicide is simply that which is defined as suicide by social actors. Atkinson rejects this assumption, arguing that suicide is not an objective fact that can, somehow, be separated from the perceptions of social actors. It, therefore, makes no sense for sociologists to treat suicide as facts and seek to explain their cause.

From a phenomenological perspective, therefore, the social world is a world of meaning. There is no objective reality, which lies behind that meaning. Thus, the social world is not made up of entities, which are external to the subjective experience of its members. To treat its aspects as 'social facts', as 'things', is to distort and misrepresent social reality. Thus, sociologists, who treat crime and suicide as anything other than constructions of meaning, are imposing their own reality on the social world and so distorting the very reality they seek to understand.

Social Science in 20th Century

Twentieth century, believed Wagner (1999), can be marked as a century when Social Sciences got acceptance not only at political level but also at the institutional level. On the onset of the 19th century, only a few institutions in Europe and North America adopted Social Sciences as an area of research and for teaching. But in contemporary times, institutes devoted to the study of society or social world are in abundance. In

1970's, the detailed analysis and assessments of the social sciences started to re-appear with respect to epistemology, ontology and methodology of these sciences. After a lot of experiments and experiences with the social sciences, this century revealed their narrowly set limits.

This awakening of society for Social Sciences has not been an easy process; therefore, Wagner suggests four major issues confronted by Social Sciences in that era. First issue is "rationality" of these sciences. Secondly, their "usefulness" for managing or regulating power. The third issue was related to the "structure" of social sciences, whether it should have disciplinary structure or it should be interdisciplinary based as per the need of the society. Last issue faced was the "scientific nature" of Social Sciences in accordance with the circumstances at the beginning and the end of 19th century.

The revised version of positivism appeared in the early 20th century and came to be known as logical positivism. But, nevertheless, Newtonian Scientism did receive a challenge from the theory of relativity, which was, initially, developed by Einstein and given a new meaning by Karl Popper: The most characteristic feature that bothered Popper was the incessant stream of confirmations, of observations, which "verified" the theories in question; and this point was, constantly, emphasised by their adherents.

These factors when united made Popper take falsifiability as his foundation for separating science from non-science: if a theory is discordant with the probable experimented observations, it is deemed scientific. On the contrary, if a theory is attuned with all the empirical observations, like in Marxism, it has been altered purely to make space for such observations, or because, like in the situation of psychoanalytic concepts, it is in tandem with all the probable observations, is regarded as intuitive. However, for Popper, just because a theory has been suspected to be unscientific, doesn't necessarily uphold the fact that it is not informative and is thus, throwaway. There exists in all possibility, the chance, that in the near future, with the advancement of technology, that very unscientific theory can be falsified.

The Twentieth century is known as the century of Social Science. Ways of thinking, particularly towards the end of the eighteenth century were called Social Science not because new questions came into existence but because a spectrum of new answers came into sight (Heilbronn et al., 1998; and earlier Therborn, 1974; Hawthorn, 1987). A lot of it is owed to American and French revolutions, that is why Wagner (1999) put it as the legacy of revolutions.

The World War-II brought landmark changes in Social Sciences. After 1945, fast changes took place in all the areas of Social Sciences. The major reasons for this were the

Emergence of the U.S.A. as a major power, the political world wars now being defined by two aspects: the cold war with the USSR and the self-assertion by the known European countries. This was the time when the university system was being expanded in all parts of the world. The academia received and used these universities as a platform for experimentation and generation of knowledge in the field of Social Sciences.

Irrespective of the adulation amassed by Popper's Open Society and its opponents during the World War-II, the effect of determinism was unshakable, even in the post war period. The Behaviourism approach (unlike the behaviourism of the learning theory) in political science quests for an objective, quantified approach that strives to define and anticipate political behaviour. This approach is associated with the ascent of behavioural sciences and has taken shape from the natural sciences. Before the ascent of the behavioural revolution, political science's standing as a science was undecided, for the critics believed that political science lacked a scientific method of study and is overly qualitative and normative, hence, unfit to be deemed as a science. On the other hand, behaviourist methodology and empirical research were austere enough to confirm their study as a social science.

He described Behaviourism in the following words: "Behaviourism

was not a clearly defined movement for those who were thought to be behaviourists. It was more clearly definable by those who were opposed to it, because they were describing it in terms of the things within the newer trends that they found objectionable. So, some would define behaviourism as an attempt to apply the methods of natural sciences to human behaviour. Some others would define it as an excessive emphasis upon quantification. Another group of scholars would define it as individualistic reductionism. From the inside, the practitioners were of different minds as what it was that constituted behaviourism, and a few were in agreement.”

Other scholars have pointed out that science and culture have become closely associated in the post-modern period, most noticeably in the way that the Chaos Theory and deconstruction subvert the dominant values of established paradigms. TR Young identifies similarities between the Chaos Theory and Post Modernism in *Chaos and Science: Metaphysics of the Postmodern* (1991) arguing that the Chaos Theory ‘decenters’ determinism, certainty, coherence and order from primacy in science and, therefore, that it is compatible with the indeterminate parameters of the Post Modern culture. He suggests that the chaos theory displaces ‘all claims of perfection, finality, normality or historical necessity’ from the elevated, unquestioned

positions in a similar manner to Post Modernism and argues, from this, that the Chaos Theory provides ‘an elegant theoretical envelope in which to locate Post Modern Science.

The Gulbenkian Commission (1996) had appropriately pointed out that World War-II: the first thing to note is where this institutionalisation took place. There were five main locales for social science activity during the nineteenth century: Great Britain, France, the Germanys, Italy, and the United States. Most of the scholars and most of the universities (of course, not all) were located in these five places. The universities, in other countries, lacked the numerical weight or international prestige of those in these five. To this day, most of the nineteenth century works that we still read were written in one of these five locales. These names, as we shall discuss, was primarily, five: history, economics, sociology, political science, and anthropology. One might add to this list, as we shall see, the so-called Oriental Sciences (called Orientalism in English), despite the fact that they self-consciously did not consider themselves social sciences. Why we do not include geography, psychology, and law in this list?

The Gulbenkian report (1996) ends with a short commentary on the future of the social sciences. The members believe that multidisciplinary work has come to stay, even as they recognise, that due to the problem of resources, there will be constant tension between

new disciplines being formed and the consolidation of the established disciplines. Also, they strongly feel that multidisciplinary work must be institutionalised in various ways, such as offering appointments to faculty in more than one department and having students attached to different departments. This formal movement from one discipline to another constitutes an important mark of liberal education.

Alex M. George and Amman Madan (2009) *Social Sciences in Indian schools* states that Social Sciences are, in an in-enviable position. One hand, they are expected to shoulder the bulk of the normative expectations from schooling. Thus, they are supposed to teach everything—from a commitment to keeping the streets clean to the internalisation of a pluralist vision of the nation. Yet, they are treated as step sisters of science. Science is seen as a solid grounding for a lucrative career, while social sciences are considered soft, trivial and for the weak. It puts the social sciences at the centre of a struggle over the purpose and the meaning of schooling is—only about getting a job or to become a better person?

In India, we have over emphasised the institutional structure. We have

very limited number of research journals and publishers in the field of social sciences. On the other hand, our university system is not open to the needs of social science research. Our university system does not agree to inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary movement of faculty or researchers, so as to encourage social science research for teaching. The Indian bureaucratic model of educational institutions is always burdened with undue interference of ideologies and agendas. Our universities are still considering natural sciences as an important area of research at the same time, social sciences as well as humanities, are treated as step children.

As conclusion, I would like to say that social sciences and natural sciences have never been compartmentalised, as there has always been the influence of sciences over social science. In our attempts of discovering a science of society to the present day, it would not be an exaggeration to say that a science of society is possible. By the science of society, I do not mean devising universal laws or rules of Society, which would help, predict the future, but it should be to help in understanding society.

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School Economics in the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER)

An overview of the developmental process

AERUM KHAN*

Abstract

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are increasingly being promoted by enthusiasts in the field of education as a solution to the challenges of access, quality and cost of digital content worldwide. The National Policy on Information and Communication Technology by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (2012), in its policy goals discusses about creating an environment for collaboration, cooperation, sharing and promoting universal, equitable, open and free access to ICT. The most important aspect of openness is the free availability of resource over the Internet, and recurrence of as few as possible restrictions, in the form of licensing activity, on the use of resource by the users. Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has launched National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER), which is a digital repository of open educational resources offering resources for all school subjects and grades in multiple languages. The resources are available in the form of concept maps, videos, multimedia, interactive objects, audio clips, talking books, photographs, diagrams and charts, articles, lesson plans and textbook pages. This research paper provides a glimpse to the NROER with special reference to the Economics content of Secondary school level. It is an attempt to provide an overview to the complete methodology of development of Economics content in the form of concepts, concept maps and multiple resources on the NROER.

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Introduction to Open Educational Resources (OERs)

Open Educational Resource (OER) is a new phenomenon which may be seen as a part of a larger trend towards openness in education including more well known and established movements such as Open Source Software (OSS) and Open Access (OA). The most important aspects of openness are the free availability of resource over the Internet, and recurrence of as few restrictions as possible on the use of the resource by users. There should be no technical barriers (undisclosed source code), no price barriers (subscriptions, licensing fees, pay-per-view fees) and as few legal permission barriers as possible (copyright and licensing restrictions) for end-user. The end-user should be able not only to use or read the resource but also to adapt it, build upon it and thereby reuse it, given that the original creator is attributed for her work.

The term Open Educational Resources first came to use in 2002 at a conference hosted by UNESCO. Participants at that forum defined OER as: "The open provision of educational resources, enabled by information and communication technologies, for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes." Open Educational Resources are digitised materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research.

OER is said to include the learning content which have full courses, courseware, content modules, learning objects, collections and journals; tools which are software to support the development, use, reuse and delivery of learning content including searching and organisation of content, content and learning management systems, content development tools, and on-line learning communities; and implementation resources comprising of intellectual property licenses to promote open publishing of materials, design principles of best practice, and localisation of content.

National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER)

Keeping in line with the OER movement throughout the world, CIET, NCERT is involved in the development and management of the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) (Fig. 1). The National Repository is developed in collaboration with the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. Metastudio, the platform hosting the repository is an initiative of Knowledge Labs, Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Mumbai. NROER was launched by the then Honorable Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister, Govt. of India Dr. MM Pallam Raju in presence of the then Honourable Minister of State for



Fig. 1: The interface of National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER)

HRD Dr. Shashi Tharoor, the then Secretary, Higher Education Shri Ashok Thakur, the then Secretary, School Education and Literacy Shri Rajarshi Bhattacharya, the then Director, NCERT Professor Parvin Sinclair and other distinguished guests during the National Conference on ICT (Information and Communication Technology) for School Education on 13th August 2013 in New Delhi.

NROER is a solution developed to address the challenges faced by the education sector of our country. It intends to reach the unreached, include the excluded and extend education to all. It is a collaborative platform involving everyone who is interested in education. It offers resources for all school subjects and grades in multiple languages. It brings

together all the digital resources for a school system such as educational videos, concept maps, audio clips, interactive objects, photographs, diagrams, charts, images, articles, learning objects, talking books, textbook pages and documents, any resource that can be served digitally. The major objectives for developing the national repository are:

- to make digital electronic content available for teachers and students.
- to enable the participation of the institutions/ organisations, community in development and sharing of digital resources.
- to create mechanism to evaluate digital content.
- to provide platform for teachers and students to participate in online courses.

Licensing Process on NROER

Open Educational Resources provide teaching learning fraternity with the quality study materials to facilitate the expansion of learning worldwide. By the use of open licensing the teachers and learners can be liberated from the concerns of the permissions and other conditions attached with the use of content or software. NROER uses Creative Commons license for promoting quality education. Creative Commons has six types of licences. NCERT has taken the initiative of declaring that NROER carry the CC-BY-SA (Creative Commons Attribution — Share Alike) license instead of CC-BY-SA-NC (Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial Share Alike) which contains a more restrictive clause

and was advocated by Wikimedia and other advocates of open educational resources (Fig. 2). This decision by NCERT is in tune with UNESCO's Paris Declaration on Open Education Resources and will ensure that all the resources are freely accessible to all. To put it in the language of the Creative Commons—to reuse, revise, remix and redistribute.

Development of Economics Content on NROER

NROER is based on concepts; the complete structure of it is knitted around the concepts which are extracted from the textbooks of NCERT. The Repository is offering the content for all the levels of school education, starting from Elementary level and proceeding to Secondary

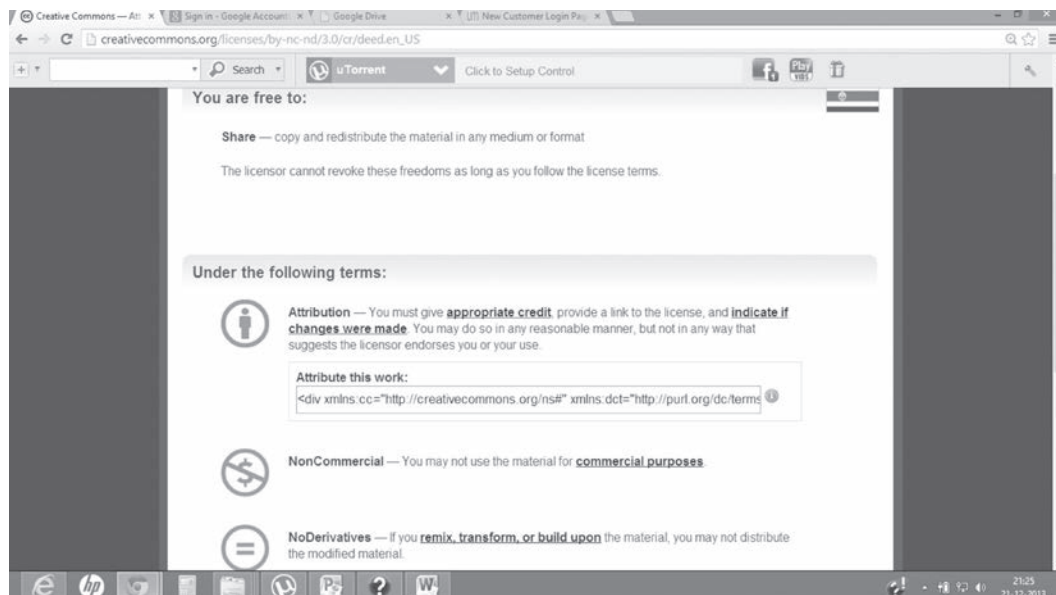


Fig. 2: Details of licensing process provided by Creative Commons

and Senior Secondary Levels. In the subject of Economics the NROER is starting with Secondary level, there are more than 45 concepts listed in the subject. All these concepts are linked with each other to constitute a concept map. The whole process of development of Economics content on the NROER is discussed as under:

(1) Identification of the Concepts of Economics

The process of concept identification in Economics started by the thorough study of the textbooks of 9th and 10th along with the syllabus document of NCF 2005 by faculty members and through workshop mode, the concepts were listed out and debated upon among the group of teachers of various Government and Private schools while the workshops and

after that the final list of concepts to be shown to public after uploading on NROER was finalised (Fig. 3). In the meantime the concepts identified by the internal faculty was also standardised through the workshops by the group of teachers.

(2) Concept mapping of identified concepts providing them relations and reverse relations

As the NROER is based on concepts, it organises its collections into an ever growing semantic map of concepts. Concept mapping is the essential part of process of development of the repository; therefore the institute is working towards this direction. The concept map itself is a learning resource for teachers, providing an opportunity for critically assessing the curriculum and aiding the construction of their own unique

Level	Subject	Concept
Secondary and Higher	Science (10-X)	Health
Secondary Level	History (10-X)	Poverty
Elementary Education	Geography (10-X)	Public facilities
	Political Science (10-X)	National Development
	Economics (10-X)	Income
	Mathematics (10-X)	Education
	RtEIT (10-X)	Labour
		Land
		Capital
		Production
		Skilled labour
		Unskilled labour
		Human capital
		Tertiary sector

National Development

Concepts Related Concepts Resources Comments

Control-Click on any related concept (any concept that is not highlighted by a blue ellipse) to expand the concept map.

Powered by: Onevays-Studio, Azmi Bhasha Centre for Science Education, TFR

This site is best viewed using current versions of Firefox, Chrome, Safari or Microsoft Internet Explorer (8 or higher) at a screen resolution of 1024 x 768 or higher.

Fig. 3: Concept list of Economics for Secondary level displayed on NROER

learning themes for their classrooms. The digital resources are mapped to concepts. This enables access to a library from which teachers can choose appropriate resources. Each resource is tagged to related concepts making it accessible for use. The resources can be downloaded and commented upon and are released for free use.

The concept maps on NROER are prepared by groups of teachers along with CIET faculty members in workshop mode. The concept maps primarily were sketched on charts or sheets of paper by the group of teachers by making discussions on the different aspects on which the relationships between the concepts constitute in order to produce a complete semantic map. The speciality of concept maps on NROER is that there is a reverse relationship also with every relationship among the concepts. After the preparation

of concept maps they were presented in front of the forum of teachers and subject experts for verification, after verification the uploading of concept maps was executed on NROER web site.

If a ctrl + click is executed with any concept of the concept map the concept map expands, and on clicking to any concept of the concept map the designated page for the concept opens, which comprises the Concept Name with its definition(s), and other details like related concepts, resources and a comment box, this resultant feature of getting the page for a particular concept is same when we search or browse any concept on the NROER (Fig. 4 and 5).

(3) Adding up of multiple resources with every concept

On the NROER, after linking the concepts with each other in the concept maps the concepts were

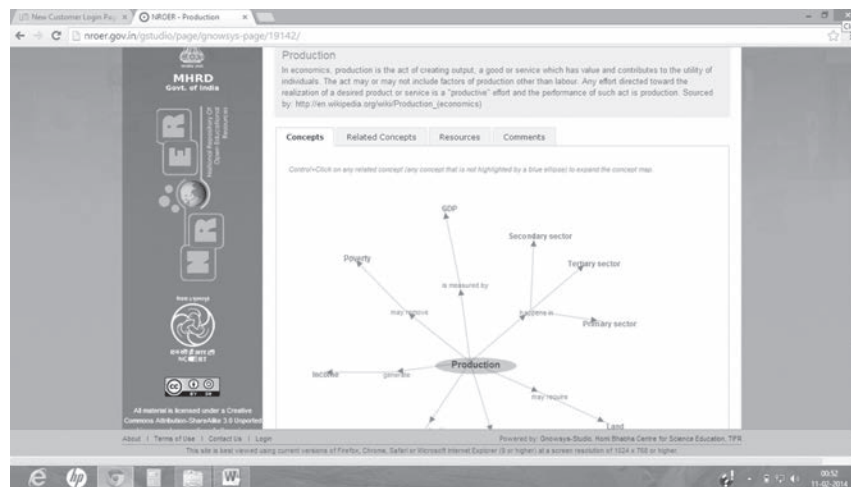


Fig. 4: A concept page from the Economics concept list on NROER, showing definition of the concept, buttons for related concepts, resources, comments and concept map as a default feature.



Fig. 5: A ctrl + click expands the concept map to its extension limits

mapped with different available related resources like videos, audio clips, images, documents, etc. (Fig. 6). These resources can be accessed by the people in various ways, they can view download, use, reuse, revise, remix and redistribute these resources, in this process they have to take care of releasing the revised resource again on NROER under CC BY-SA license.

(4) Tagging of concepts to allow multiple access with other related concepts and resources

On the NROER every concept is provided with certain tags, these tags are the nearest neighbourhood terms or most appropriate related key term with the concept. By assigning tags the application of search option is

enhanced as these key terms help in navigating through the related resources for the concept because every related resource for the concept is also tagged with the same tags/key words (Fig. 7).

Advantage of Concept Mapping as a Tool for Learning

NROER is completely based on concept mapping and online accessibility of resource in such a form which bridges the gap between cognitive learning and application based learning. Concept maps are based primarily on the learning theories of cognitive psychologists, specifically Ausubel's Assimilation theory. A concept map helps represent ideas in a way that models an individual's cognitive structure.

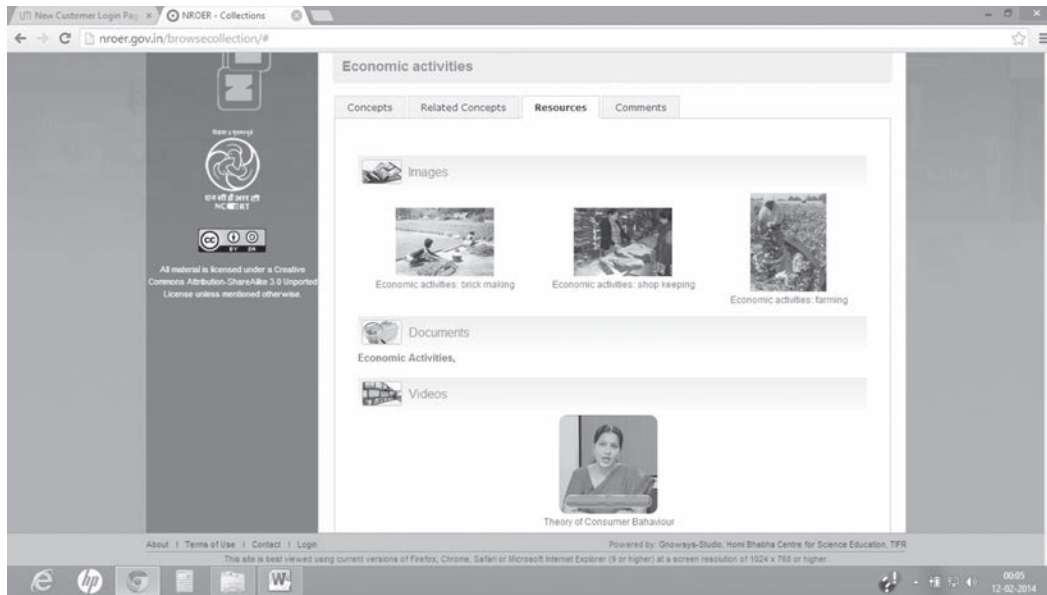


Fig. 6: The resource page on NROER showing multiple resources for the concept of 'Economic activities'

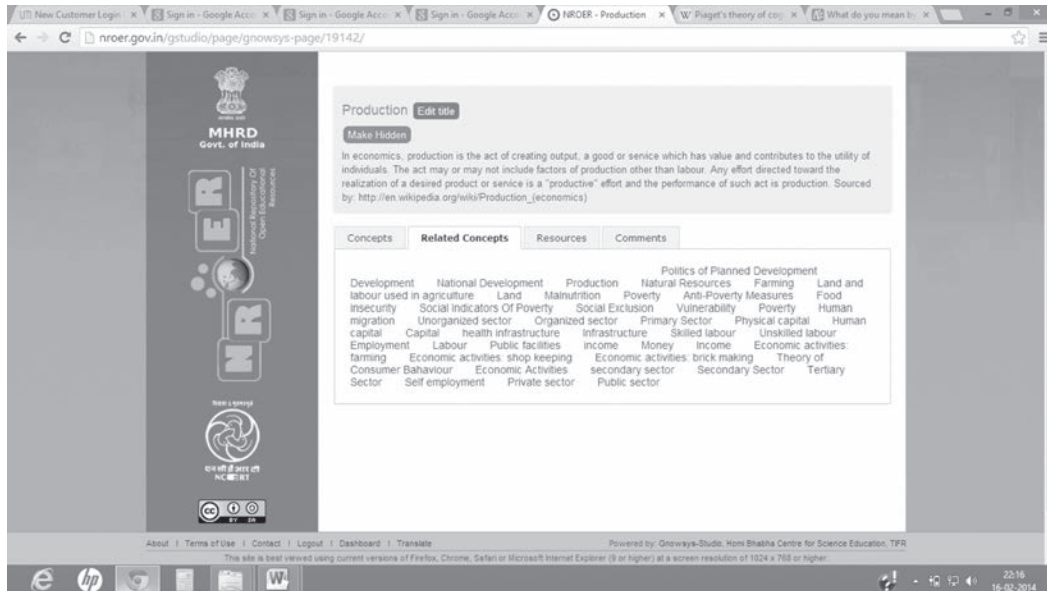


Fig. 7: The window on NROER showing related concepts/tags with the concept 'production'

According to David Ausubel, "the most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows" (Novak, 1998). Relationships between concepts are formed when two concepts overlap on some level. As learning progresses, this network of concepts and relationships becomes increasingly complex. Ausubel compares meaningful learning to rote learning, which refers to when a student simply memorises information without relating that information to previously learned knowledge. As a result, new information is easily forgotten and not readily applied to problem-solving situations because it was not connected with concepts already learned.

However, meaningful learning requires more effort, as the learner must choose to relate new information to relevant knowledge that already exists in the learner's cognitive structure. This requires more effort initially, however after knowledge frameworks are developed, definitions and the meanings for concepts become easier to acquire. Further, concepts learned meaningfully are retained much longer, sometimes for a lifetime. Teachers can encourage creative thinking by using tools such as concept maps.

Educational Implications of NROER: What People (Teachers, Students, etc.) Can Do on the Repository?

The NROER provides multiple resources for every concept in order to

make the teaching-learning process of the same more effective. These resources are present in the form of videos, audio clips, interactive objects, images and documents. Anyone who accesses the repository can view, download, use, remix, revise, reuse and redistribute the selected resource, but the revised resource should be shared again on the repository for further dissemination of the same, as all the resources are released under CC BY-SA licence on the NROER. This process has a wide scope of frequent use of digitised content by the society, fulfilling the most important objective of NROER. In addition there are some more educational implications, listed as under:

(1) Contribution of digitised resources by teaching-learning community on the NROER

The collaborative creation of e-content is among the aims of NROER, to fulfil this aim NROER invites contribution of resources from the teaching-learning community or anybody who has created or retrieved any open educational resource and want to release the same under CC BY-SA license (Fig. 8). For making a contribution one has to register on the Repository after that a small form with fields for licensing attribution and details of the contributed resource is to be filled, this is followed by attaching the resource to be contributed, and submitting on the NROER. The contributed resource will be uploaded on the Repository after

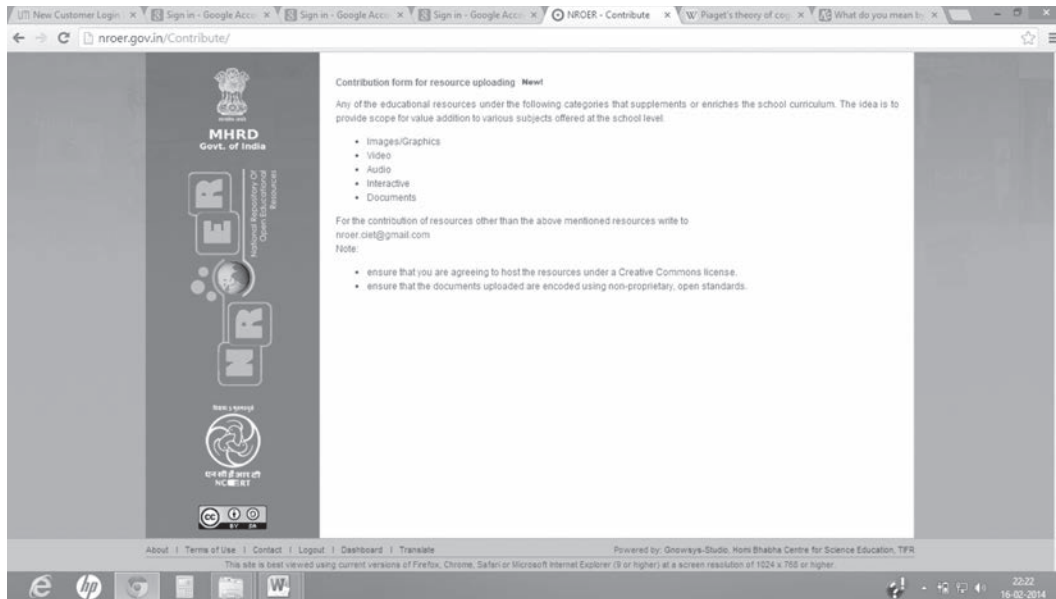


Fig. 8: Window for contribution of resources on the NROER

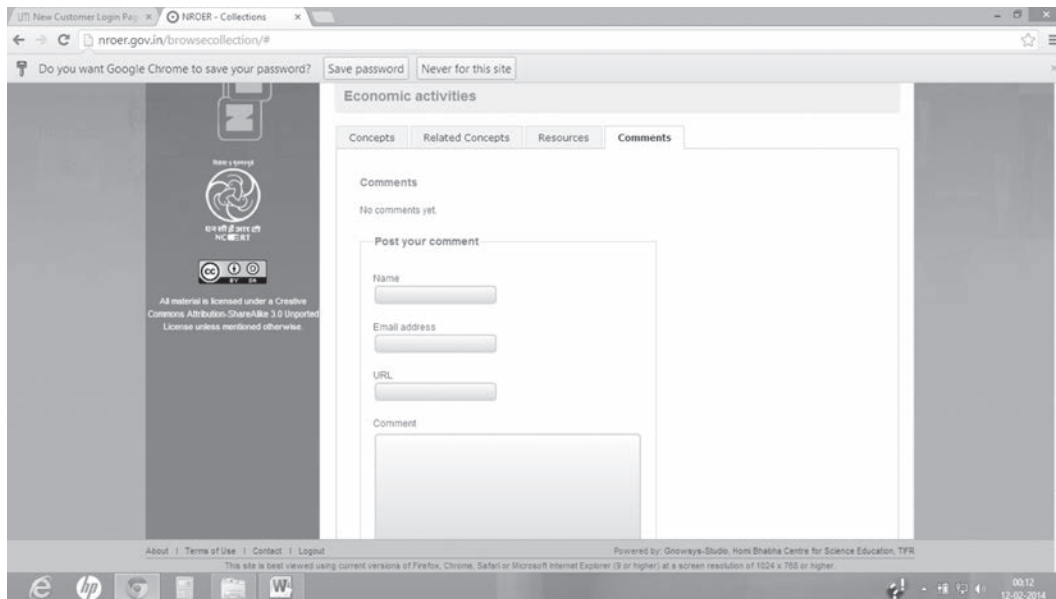


Fig. 9: Window showing comment/critique option on the NROER

evaluation of the same, evaluation is done by a structured mechanism on NROER.

(2) Commenting, critique on the concepts or related resources

NROER follows a democratic mode of action which includes active involvement of users and contributors by the means of commenting or critique on any aspect of the Repository, be it resources, descriptions, concept maps, definitions or others (Fig. 9). The users can also rate a resource by assigning stars to it. This process allows the management team to continuously receiving feedbacks and acting accordingly. This process also allows a user to share the ownership of a resource as everything is released under Open Access Scenario on NROER.

Conclusion

The open educational scenario worldwide and especially in India is

gaining popularity with every passing day. National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) is an enthusiastic project in this row. Resources housed on NROER are free to access, reuse, remix and redistribute by anybody, as they are released under the CC BY-SA licence. With NROER the NCERT is willing to cross the boundaries of the textbook. The Economics content is one of the examples in this line. The dream of NROER will be realised when it becomes useful for each and every teacher, each and every child, across geographies, bridging the digital divide. This dream requires the contribution and critical participation of each one of us. Be a part of the movement.

Web Resources

- <http://nroer.gov.in>
- <http://www.oecd.org>
- <http://www.openaccessweek.org/>

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Note: This paper was communicated through oral and poster presentation both in the ‘National Seminar on Economics Curriculum in Schools’ at DESS, NCERT on 25 - 26 February 2014.

A Study on Growth and development of Pre-primary Education in Assam A Status Report

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Abstract

Pre-primary education is the basic foundation upon which a child's educational and social, personal habits and values stand. Therefore, the stronger this foundation, the stronger the child will emerge in education and personality development. The national policy makers' awareness to this fact is reflected in formulation of various policies and directives in post colonial era. The state of Assam also witnessed a drastic change in early childhood education. Although the concept of Pre-primary education was evident in this state in few institutions since pre-independence era but the education system is devoid of a proper pre-school education system for children. It lacks not only the structural requirements of a minimum Pre-primary infrastructure but also the functional requirement of a formal Pre-primary teacher's education. However, remarkable efforts are being made at the government level through the SCERT, Assam and Sarva Siksha Abhijan (SSA), Assam for proper functioning and proper implementation of Pre-primary education in respect to teacher training, material development for classroom transaction, monitoring and evaluation system, etc. Various policies and programmes formulated by the Government of India as well as Government of Assam which were implemented in the state have been critically reviewed.

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Introduction

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) includes the Pre-primary stage of education. It provides a comprehensive aid in preparing the child for formal education, which begins with the primary stage. This early childhood stage is also important as a foundation for inculcation of social and personal habits and values that are known to last a lifetime. The crucial importance of investing in these early years to ensure an enabling environment for every child, and thereby a sound foundation for life, which is not only the right of every child but also something that will impact, in the long term, on the quality of human capital available to a country.

Policy Perspectives

In order to keep track and respond to such emerging needs of ECCE, several international commitments, constitutional directives, legislative measures, policy framework, public initiatives, action plans and development planning were undertaken by Government of India in post-colonial era. The constitutional Eighty sixth Amendment Act has substituted Article 45 (Directive Principles of State Policy) to read that the state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years. During the post Independence era, the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) remarked that at the Pre-primary

stage, the child is introduced to the joy of learning through companionship and recreational activities and she/he is gradually guided towards the development of proper habits of life, cleanliness and a healthy mode of living. The National Education Commission (1964-66) highlighted the significance of physical, emotional and intellectual development of children, especially those from under-privileged background. The Commission recommended that there should be State level centre for the development of Pre-primary education located in the State Institute of Education. They stressed the need for coordination among different agencies that work for child care and Pre-primary education with regard to enrolment, a feasible target was to be sent for effective care of the children in the age group of 3 to 5 years. In 1967, a Parliamentary Committee on education stated that Pre-primary education should receive greater attention from Government as well as voluntary organisations. More emphasis should be laid on setting up Pre-primary institutions in urban slums, rural areas and for children belonging to weaker sections of the society with financial assistance from the Government. The National Seminar on Pre-primary education organised by the department of Pre school education, NCERT, held in 1971 and a study on the development of the Pre-school child conducted in 1972 also made significant recommendations,

these are (1) expansion of training facilities for Pre-primary teachers (2) development of various techniques for popularisation of Pre-primary education (3) promotion of optimum physical, mental, emotional and social development of the Pre-school child along with coordination of education, health, nutrition and welfare service, and (4) provision of a strong administration machinery.

The National Policy for children (1979 and 1986) specially emphasised investment in the development of the young child, particularly children from those sections of the population in which first generation learners predominate. Considering the holistic nature of proper child development viz. nutrition, health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development, Early Childhood care and Education (ECCE) should receive high priority and be suitably integrated with the integrated child development scheme (ICDS) wherever possible. Programmes of ECCE should receive high priority and be suitably child-centred, focused around play and the individuality of each child and discourage formal methods or the early introduction of the 3R's (reading, writing and arithmetic). The total community should be fully involved in these programmes.

The mid term assessment of Tenth Five year Plan (2002-2007) document has also acknowledged the ECCE as a first step in the educational ladder and reaffirms its priority for the development of

children with a special focus on early childhood care and education adopting 'Right Based' approach as advocated by the National Charter for children (2004) under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* too, which is one of the major initiatives of Government of India for universal retention by 2010 in a mission mode. A provision has been made for taking up the ECCE in the form of school readiness projects on a small scale under the innovative head. Provision has also been made under National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary level (NPEGEL) to establish ECCE centre at cluster level. National curriculum Framework, 2005 has also advocated the introduction of 2 years' early education for all children in the age bracket of 3-8 years.

Development of Pre-primary Education in Assam since Independence

Prior to the reorganisation of the structure of education in Assam as per the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66), Primary schooling in the State was of 5(five) years' duration and the first 2(two) years of these 5(five) years were called classes 'Ka' and 'Kha' (i.e. classes A and B). The two classes were essentially a part of the formal system of primary education dealing with the teaching of the three R's. Therefore, classes 'Ka' and 'Kha' of primary schools in those days were not Pre-primary education in the true sense of the term, although the play

way method of teaching was employed in varying degrees in respect of the children concerned.

However, Pre-primary education was available in a few institutions before and after Independence. Kindergarten classes were also maintained in the Mission Girls' Middle English schools at Nagaon, Golaghat and Guwahati and in St. Mary's Convent and Sishu Vidyalaya, Guwahati.

The State Government had developed a policy of opening Pre-primary sections in each primary school so as to maintain continuity and coordination between Pre-primary and primary education. In 1963-64, there were 74 Pre-primary schools or classes all over Assam. The Pre-primary classes were gradually separated from primary schools, and sections were functioning independently during the period 1965-77. In 1968-69, some Nursery schools were started in a few towns of Assam for Harijan children with financial aid from the Central Government. In 1977, the number of Pre-primary schools catering to the educational needs of Pre-primary children rose to 307. Besides the Government, Missionaries and voluntary organisations were also engaged in imparting Pre-primary education.

Responsibility of administration of Pre-primary was in the hands of the Joint Director of Public Instruction for a few years. But when the duration of Primary schooling

was reduced to 4 years in 1973, following the implementation of the 10+2+3 structure, classes 'Ka' and 'Kha' were abolished. When the Assam Government decided in 1975 that more importance should be laid on Primary education, the stress on Pre-primary education decreased further. The number of Pre-primary schools in 1982-83 rose at a snail's pace to 482, out of which 400 were attached to Primary schools and rest were Montessori's, Kindergarten and Nursery schools recognised by the Government. Teachers of Pre-primary are designated as 'school mother'. In 1976, the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) of the Social Welfare Department was introduced which provided to children till six (6) years of age food for nutrition, free health check up and informal education.

In 1994-95, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), in their pilot project, started 60 Early Childhood Care centre in Dhubri, Morigaon, and Darrang districts in the first phase. After that, on public demand, 300 such Early Childhood Care centres were established in all the 9 DPEP districts. Teachers (Malinis and Sahamalinis) were also trained as per the guidelines of NCERT.

In the year 1999, the Government of Assam introduced 'Ka-sreni' (class A) in each Primary school in Assam. However, no additional teachers have been appointed for the purpose. The number of Pre-primary sections of primary schools during the period

Table 1

Pre-primary Institutions, Enrolment and Teachers in Assam

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of Pre-primary Institution</i>	<i>Enrolment</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Trained Teachers</i>
1970-71	72	2,601	92	63
1971-72	62	2,103	77	59
1972-73	65	2,194	83	61
1973-74	113	3,952	134	82
1974-75	150	5,402	174	100
1975-76	285	11,360	337	109
1976-77	307	13,254	344	111
1977-78	295	12,322	335	123
1978-79	293	13,964	300	89
1979-80	263	10,964	300	152
1980-81	291	12,674	326	167
1981-82	291	13,418	326	167
1982-83	482	19,089	482	168
1983-84	482	19,470	482	168
1984-85	482	19,920	482	168
1985-86	482	20,516	482	188
1986-87	482	16,034	482	188
1987-88	482	18,989	482	188
1988-89	482	20,950	482	218
1989-90	482	21,860	482	218
1990-91	482	22,635	482	218
1991-92	482	23,480	482	218
1992-93	482	24,520	482	218

(Source: Barua, Sailabala: *Sishu Siksha Aur Madam Montessori*, published by Banthi Prakash, Guwahati)

1999-2000 stood at 199 (Source: Directorate of Elementary Education). The number of Pre-primary schools at 482 from 1982 to 1994, but it decreased to 199 in 1998-1999. According to the Directorate of Elementary Education, the decrease was due to the discontinuance of Pre-primary sections with the retirement of the School Mothers in the schools concerned.

The only Government Pre-primary Teacher Training Institute at Dibrugarh has been upgraded to Basic Training Centre to increase the intake capacity of in-service teachers at the Primary level keeping in view the urgency of reducing the backlog of untrained teachers. There is one non-government Pre-primary Teacher Training Institute permitted by the government at Jorhat, started in 1987 where enrolment is on decline because trained pass-outs have no job prospects in the existing Primary setup.

Present Status of Pre-primary Education

ECCE is recognised as a support programme for Universalisation of Elementary Education. In the context of realisation of Universalisation of Elementary Education, which is a national goal, ECCE assumes importance. Considering the significance of early years and its contribution towards making elementary education universal, Govt. of Assam in the year 1999, through a notification, passed an order for

opening *Ka-sreni* in all provincialised LP schools of Assam. This *Ka-sreni* was meant for children of 4-5 years and was equivalent to Pre-primary education. However, due to various constraints, the government was unable to provide any additional teacher for *Ka-sreni*. Barring a small number of schools in the erstwhile nine DPEP districts, *Ka-sreni*, in reality did not receive any attention in most cases and it was viewed as a liability/burden by the schools/teachers. As a result, till 2001-02 *Ka-sreni*, by and large failed to make any specific impact.

Thus, it is obvious that implementing *Ka-sreni* demands a great deal of understanding and skill on the part of the teachers. Without knowing or understanding what is *Ka-sreni*, what are its objectives, how it is different from other classes, how to help small children learn, it is not possible for the teachers to do their job. The problem becomes more serious when there is lack of adequate infrastructure such as teachers, space and materials.

In view of the above, the following Innovative activities were undertaken by the State for supporting *Ka-sreni* children and also capacity building of teachers for *Ka-sreni* during 2002-2008.

Training of Teachers on *Ka-sreni*

- *Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission* (SSA) Assam had imparted 21626 nos of regular teachers

from 36456 schools on *Ka-sreni* till 2010-11 from inception (one teacher from one school). These trained teachers were assigned to run *Ka-sreni* at least for 2 and ½ hours besides their normal regular classes. These kind of schools of which *Ka-sreni* is catered after by regular classes are called “*Ka-sreni* Trained Teachers Supported Schools”.

- **Capacity building of teachers**

21626 teachers have been imparted induction training on early childhood education (ECE). Year-wise status of induction training is given below.

Table showing the numbers of teachers attended in induction Training (year-wise)

Sl. No.	Year	Number of teacher trained
1	2003-2004	1463
2	2004-2005	1873
3	2005-2006	1572
4	2006-2007	1258
5	2008-2009	4279
6	2010-2011	10016

Source: SSA, Annual Report

- **Engaging *Ka-sreni* workers**

SSA Assam has engaged community volunteers specially the female namely ‘*Ka-sreni* Workers’ to run *Ka-sreni* in single teacher school. They were engaged in 2008-09 and 2009-10. Only 20 per cent of the total single teacher school could cover by these *Ka-sreni* workers. A total of 1165 *Ka-sreni* workers have

been supporting *Ka-sreni* in the entire state. A six day district level residential training on *Ka-sreni* was imparted on these *Ka-sreni* workers.

- **Engagement of AWWs for *Ka-sreni* support**

The scheme of attaching AWWs (Angan Wadi Workers) of ICDS scheme in the nearby formal school (L.P. and M.V) with inadequate teacher strength for *Ka-sreni* support was started in 2003-2004. This prompted SSA, Assam to widen the coverage of reach of AWWs in the subsequent years.

- Reinforcement training and Review cum workshop were also organised for *Ka-sreni* workers and *Anganwadi* workers from time to time by SSA, Assam

- **Orientation of Head teachers**

In view of the fact that many AWWs and *Ka-sreni* trained teachers do not receive required support from the Head Teachers of their respective schools in implementation of *Ka-sreni*. It was therefore thought to orient the Head Teachers on principles of ECE, importance of *Ka-sreni*, appropriate methodology for ECE and role of Head Teachers in proper implementation of *Ka-sreni*.

Awareness on *Ka-sreni*

- **Orientation of CRCCs, ABRCs-aca and RTs on *Ka-sreni***

Orientation of Cluster Resource Centre Co-coordinators (CRCCs),

Additional Block Resource Centre Co-coordinators-Academic (ABRCCs-aca) and Resource teachers (RTs) has been organised from time to time to make them understand about *Ka-sreni* related matter.

- **Meetings with SMC and Mothers' group**

Involvement of SMC and Mothers' group for the proper implementation of *Ka-sreni*

- **Organisation of Bal Mela at school level**

To make the teachers, parents and community aware about ECCE/*Ka-sreni*-its aims, objectives and activities of *Ka-sreni* 'Bal Mela' locally named as *Akanir Mela*' was organised in each school for *Ka-sreni* children.

- **Training of District Core Group (DCG)**

In 2003-2004 all districts had formed district core groups comprising of the DPO (ECE), one lecturer from DIET/DRC/BTC and four RPs (non-official with earlier experience of working for (ECE). All these members received induction training and 3 Reinforcement trainings on ECE.

Convergence with ICDS of social Welfare Department

- To get a fruitful impact of the programmes at the grass root level, several convergence meetings at different levels viz. state, district, block were conducted among Education and Social Welfare

Department. Nearly 25000 Anganwadi workers were trained up under ECCE component of SSA, Assam so that they could perform the activities in their respective Anganwadi centre.

Teaching Learning Materials for *Ka-sreni*

- Teaching-Learning materials developed by SCERT, Assam
 - A workbook for *Ka-sreni* children in the light of NCF 2005 and adopted to other medium in Hindi, Bengali, Bodo, Manipuri, Nepali, Hmar Garo for children of Assam.
 - A Curriculum cum teacher's handbook for transaction in the classroom.
 - English has been introduced right from *Ka-sreni* since the academic session 2007-08. A workbook for the purpose has been developed by SCERT, Assam, incorporating child friendly activities to motivate children towards learning of English with the help of pictures, rhymes, games, etc.
- **Teaching-Learning materials developed by SSA Assam**
 - 'Thematic Activity Book'- a hand book for *Ka-sreni* teachers are provided to all *Ka-sreni* trained teachers, *Ka-sreni* workers and also to *Anganwadi* workers. so that teachers could plan properly and arrange activities for the children in a systematic way.

- 'Compilation of Songs, Rhymes and Games Books'- a hand book for *Ka-sreni* teachers are provided to all *Ka-sreni* trained teachers, *Ka-sreni* workers and also to Anganwadi workers
- 'Sabi-Aku, Rang karu'-an activity book for *Ka-sreni* children which was designed in 2005-2006 was printed and distributed to all the children of *Ka-sreni* of all the provincialised LP and MV and Tea Garden Managed schools. The books are being served as a resource book for teachers and help them to use the book for designing different activities.
- For effective use of the 'Drawing and colouring' activity book, pencil, rubber and crayon were provided to each children of *Ka-sreni* of all the Provincialised L.P and M.V and Tea Garden Managed Schools.
- A TLM Kit box comprising of 14 items was distributed to 4700 schools where *Ka-sreni* is supported by trained teachers.

Supervision and Monitoring Scheme for *Ka-sreni*

Though SSA, Assam has been supporting *Ka-sreni* since 2002, there was so far no specific strategy to understand how far these supportive mechanisms, have been effective, what specific support was needed for

qualitative improvement of *Ka-sreni*. With this realisations', Assam evolved a supervisory and monitoring system for *Ka-sreni* supported schools during 2005-2006.

Facilities and Activities in Schools

It is observed that provision for various activities for the child in Pre-primary classes such as rhymes; storytelling, singing, dance, etc. are available in both Government and Private schools. In addition, writing of words and numbers are taught in these schools in accordance with the individual abilities of children through play way methods which puts unnecessary pressure on children at this tender age. However, the NCERT curriculum for Pre-primary stage and the recommendation that there should be no reading, writing and arithmetic (the 3Rs) has not been strictly adhered to.

Problems

Administrative: Although national policies on the children's nutrition, etc. have clearly laid down broad principles of education of children and their nutrition, there is a lack of effective measures in the implementation of schemes in these areas.

- *Ignorance and Poverty of Parents:* Most of the parents especially of rural areas are totally ignorant of the necessity and utility of Pre-primary education. The majority of them are very poor having to

live hand to mouth and therefore, they are often not in a position to send their children to Pre-primary schools.

- *Lack of trained teachers:* Lack of properly trained teachers for Pre-primary school is a major stumbling block in the way of successful Pre-primary education.
- *Lack of Supervision:* Although a good number of Pre-primary schools exist in the state, their quality has suffered greatly due to inadequate supervision and guidance.
- *Mass apathy:* The people in general are not fully aware of the importance of ECCE.
- *Commercialisation:* Pre-primary schools have grown in large numbers, especially in towns. For a section of people, it has become a source of income at the cost of quality of Pre-primary education.

Conclusion

Life period of a child from birth to about six years of age is of exceptional importance as far as possible his/ her growth and learning are concerned. If no advantage is taken of possibilities for learning and growth at this stage, it would be too late in the life of the child to make amends later. The outcome of the interaction of health, nutrition and psychological processes during these early years conditions the readiness of the child for school, which in turn influences the child's success in future. The child is a better achiever in adult life if she/he

grows up in a suitable environment at an early age. Children who are involved in Pre-primary education tend to participate in education to a much greater extent at later stages.

To work with children effectively and fulfil the objectives of the Pre-school education, a teacher should have special training in this field. Teachers' performance is the most important crucial input in the field of Pre-primary education. Whatever policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers. During 1994-95, the Pre-primary Teacher Training centre at Dibrugarh was converted to a Basic Training Centre owing to the lack of enrolment in the institutions. Since the importance of ECCE is being realised, a Pre-primary teacher training centre needs to be reopened by the Government in the state of Assam as early as possible although the SCERT and SSA, Assam are involved in training up the teachers of *Ka-sreni* on ECCE.

Recommendations

The curriculum of Pre-Primary and Primary level are not the same; as such the teachers dealing with the classes of Pre-primary must know the approaches and method of transaction properly because the teaching learning methods in both the cases are quite different. Therefore, for proper implementation and quality maintenance Government may appoint a separate teacher exclusively

for the Pre-primary classes who has experience and training on ECCE.

The parents are not acquainted with the importance of Pre-primary Education. Therefore, awareness programmes should be arranged among the parents and community so

that they could realise the importance of Pre-primary Education for all round development of their children.

For proper implementation of Pre-primary Education the government should arrange supervision and monitoring system from time to time.

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BOOK REVIEW

School Without Walls— Inclusive Education for All

AUTHOR

Madan Mohan Jha

PUBLISHER

Heinemann Educational, Halley Court, Oxford

YEAR: 2002

PAGES: 200

Schools Without Walls— Inclusive Education for All by Madan Mohan Jha is an outcome of his efforts to delve into the scenario of inclusive education in historical and current perspectives. The context is relevant in developed countries, particularly United Kingdom, as well as in developing countries like India.

The author points out in his book that the concept of inclusive education is a confused and contested one. In richer and developed countries, education is already inclusive of girls, disadvantaged and all ethnic groups. Children with disabilities or having learning difficulties received special attention for inclusion into mainstream education unlike developing countries where a majority of children with special needs are excluded from mainstream education.

Inclusive education has now come to assume the connotation

of Education For All (EFA) which should mean the inclusion in education and the removal of educational disparity for all non literate adults and children. The most vulnerable children, those belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, ethnic minorities, the disabled, destitute, child laborers, street children, orphans and the victims of war, violence and natural disasters, face the problem of equitable access to education. Hence, inclusive education is an issue of equity, ethics, human rights, social justice and of economic improvement. Author opines, in both developed and developing countries, inclusive education is a growing concept and an evolving practice; it is “a means not an end, a journey not a destination, a process not a product.”

The challenges of inclusive development in India are diverse and pressing. Inclusion means not only the inclusion of those with disability but also of the enormous number of socially and economically disadvantaged section belonging to diverse social, cultural and linguistic groups.

The book has 9 chapters beginning with an introduction, the 21st 'Century School' which traces the origin of the school as it exists today.

It has been argued that the institution of the present school was created to meet the needs of an industrial society in the nineteenth century. In the first chapter, an attempt has been made to find an answer to the question: Can the school of today meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and of the information age, and can it create an inclusive environment for all children to learn together? It raises the issues of effectiveness and equity. It presents certain features expected in the information age that can help address the issues arising out of concerns for rights, equity, diversity, excellence and inclusion. (Chapter two)

This chapter also deals with the educational thoughts of philosophers like Tomlinson, Illich, Deniels and Garner, Lipsky and Gartner about their vision on schools for the twenty first century in context of inclusive education. Chapter three, 'International Perspectives' is

devoted to the mapping of different perspectives and approaches to inclusive education at the international level. An attempt has also been made to present a brief picture on the status of inclusive education as it exists in developed countries.

Two separate chapters (four and five) give an account of the development of special education in Britain and India respectively. 'The British Scene' examines the development of special education in England and Wales, and how it has changed the policies and practices, given the background of inclusive education. The chapter holds relevance in Indian context, since there is a tendency to follow western models of inclusive education although the need and context may be different. In chapter five the author has described his experiences on his visits to schools in Oxfordshire and observations made in classrooms. It also presents models for practices for developing inclusive schools for children with disabilities, learning difficulties and disadvantages. This chapter may be of special interest and great utility to Indian readers, particularly teachers, trainers and educational practitioners.

Further, in Chapter Six 'The Indian Context', historical perspectives on policy development on special and integrated education have been discussed in detail. Progress on education of the disabled and its status in respect of implementation of various projects

has also been presented. Since inclusion has been interpreted in the book as including all children in mainstream neighbourhood schools, the development of multi-track school systems, different schools for different categories of children has been critically examined and certain roadblocks identified. It has been mentioned that an appropriate approach to issues relating to language, textbooks, curriculum, teaching methodology and examinations could help in eliminating such roadblocks. The chapter also acknowledges the efforts of many voluntary agencies in building up innovative and inclusive pedagogy at the level of primary education. The strategies for inclusion, elaborately explained, are informative; however, the facilities with regard to infrastructure, teaching learning materials/equipments and teachers' preparedness need to be addressed to carry out these strategies. One important highlight of chapter six, which is, provision of one-to-one support of a student with hearing loss placed in a mainstream school, is one of the significant classroom strategies, and holds special significance in Indian context as well, as this kind of intervention can aid special children in learning to a great extent in inclusive set up.

Chapter seven is devoted to inclusive practices in classroom. There is limited literature on the pedagogy of inclusion. Since the practice follows policy and a robust

policy of inclusion is yet to be developed, there is not much on what can be recommended as inclusive teaching methodologies. It is always more than that and children in a classroom may belong to different age groups and grades. An attempt has been made to find out if some British teaching strategies could be adopted to address these issues in the Indian situation.

'Making it Happen', takes note of inclusion in practice recommended in some of the contemporary literature from Australia, America and Britain. It also presents a set of advisories that could be considered by a school, or a school system, for making schools more inclusive. While some policy adjustments may facilitate the process, it has been argued that schools need not wait, they can develop an inclusion plan and inclusion pedagogy that would benefit all children and the school system on the whole.

The last chapter, 'In Conclusion', sums up the answers to questions researched and opines that the inclusion process may be started by teachers and schools even without waiting for debate on the subject to conclude and desired policy to change, since the existing Indian policy framework provides for such an initiative.

As outlined above the author has covered a large spectrum regarding Inclusive Education for All in his book 'School Without Walls' historically, internationally including the scenario

in India, which is appreciable. After reading the book, the reviewer is of the opinion that the concept of inclusive education in this book has been dealt in a way which has much deeper connotation, than Inclusive Education is being perceived in Indian education system. Presently under RTE Act, 2009 minimum 25 per cent admission has been mandatory for the children from weaker section of the society, ST, SC, OBC, Minorities and other disadvantaged (socially, economically) community in un-aided and private schools including CWSN at the entry level. Children under such categories happened to be an integral part of inclusive education. There is a felt need that learning gaps of such children should be addressed in a focused manner for their educational developments in inclusive set up.

All aspects of Inclusive Education have been dealt in depth which would facilitate stakeholders at all levels, particularly teacher educators and teachers who are involved in the educational development of CWSN. Often it is debated whether children with disability should access the same curriculum as available to non-disabled children or should it be modified, curtailed or adapted for disabled children? To which the author has quoted Kugelmass, J.W. (1996) (Reconstructing Curriculum for Systemic Inclusion) Berres, M.S.,

Ferguson, D.L. Knoblock, P. and Woods, C. (eds.) *Creating Tomorrow's School Today: Stories of Renewal, Change, and Renewal*. New York: Teacher College Press, p.136) where three assumptions in this regard have been mentioned, that operate in the traditional school system, which are significant and the learning points for teachers, trainers, educators and curriculum designers. In this context the author has explained on what could be the effective curriculum by quoting Rose (1998:138) in the book, which happens to be very relevant in today's context of inclusive education under RTE Act. It is stated, 'effective curriculum will be the one, which not only allows for the differences, but which also enables pupil to reach his or her potential through a process of collaborative learning, within a school which celebrates the whole range of its pupils' needs. Schools, which endeavour to create a suitable climate for inclusion, will need to achieve a curriculum balance, Rose, R. 1988 (*The Curriculum: A Vehicle for Inclusion or a Lever for Exclusion?*) in Tilstone, C., Florian, L. and Rose. R. (eds.) *Promoting Inclusive Practice*. London: Routledge).

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