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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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The Journal of Indian Education is a reviewed periodical published in May, August, November and February by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.

NCERT encourages original and critical thinking in education. JIE provides a forum for teachers, teacher educators, educational administrators and researchers through presentation of novel ideas, critical appraisals of contemporary educational problems and views and experiences on improved educational practices. Its aim include thought-provoking articles, challenging discussions, analysis challenges of educational issues, book reviews and other related features.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Education continues to be considered as one of the basic human needs and a potent vehicle for socio-economic transformation. A large infrastructure and the enabling system including financial resources and policy support have been created and are being continually strengthened to provide quality education to all children in our country. However, much more is desired to be endeavoured to eliminate disparities that still exist in the field of education including those based on socio-economic and geographical factors. The system needs to recognise emerging challenges, utilise enabling technology and expeditiously facilitate the process of human and national development through quality education related to our national needs, aspirations and cherished goals.

In this issue of the Journal of Indian Education the papers included are related to important concerns and issues pertaining to the field of education. G. V. Subitha in her analytical paper observes that educational goals arise out of the needs of the society and with growing influence of globalisation, modernisation and digitalisation, the educational goals need to be reviewed. The paper also discusses issues and emerging ideas to understand school as a learning organisation and attach importance to school leadership, teacher leadership, classroom structure and improvement in teaching-learning processes.

R.B.L. Soni in his research paper reports the findings of a study carried out in two districts of Kerala to assess the status of implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. He concludes that the RTE Act is only partially implemented in Kerala.

RTE Act 2009 recommended appointing at least two teachers at the primary level for a class of 60 students. However, we still have single teacher schools in some pockets of rural and remote areas. Manoj Praveen G. and Muhammed Safwan C.P. in their paper present glimpses of a single teacher school located in a remote area in Kerala. The paper concludes that there is a need to revise the curriculum of such school to make it relevant and context specific for children studying there.

In her paper related to functioning of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, Gouri Srivastava brings out the salient features of the scheme initiated by the Government of India to provide second chance of formal schooling facility to out-of-school girls belonging to the most marginalised and hard to reach groups.

Preeti Vivek Mishra provides in her paper the narrative evidence of the prevalence of unintentional plagiarism among research papers and roots for concrete steps to not let scholar become an accidental plagiarists.

Ramesh Pandita's research paper examines the enrolment and the dropout percentage of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) children over a period of time. He recommends that concrete measures need to be taken to reduce dropout rate of these children.

Seema Tare analysed educational guidelines included in the National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF) to identify areas where the school library can make substantial contribution to achieve educational goals. The paper recommends a fresh appraisal of the role of the school library in India in the light of the global recognition of its importance in education.

Yeasmin Sultana in her paper explores the uses of technology supportive material for development of speaking skills in English among children studying in a Bengali medium school.

The issue concludes with review of a book titled 'Danger: School!' which has beautifully exemplified our current school system. The book is reviewed by Pooja Maggu and Shraddha Kapoor.

The authors have made important contributions through their papers and this is sincerely acknowledged. It is hoped that the papers included in this issue shall provide some intellectual stimulus to the curious and enlightened readers. The Journal of Indian Education welcomes feedback and suggestions from our readers and contributors.

*Academic Editor*

# Transformative Education and Social Change

## A Theoretical Analysis

SUBITHA G.V.\*

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### Abstract

*Education is a product of the society and educational goals arise out of the needs of the society. With increased influence of globalisation, modernisation and digitalisation, the educational goals need to be constantly revised and reinterpreted to enable the students fit better and adapt themselves better in the rapidly changing global society. Yet, the general notion is that schools are not catering to the needs of the learners. This could be because of our lack of perception on what could be and should be the function of education in the post-industrial information society. Going by the fact that education is the social process through which society is reconstructed, this research paper analyses the slow but sure shift in the educational goals which have been happening in the country and across the globe. This research paper analyses the new ideas and reforms that have emerged in understanding school as a learning organisation. The paper discusses the importance of school leadership and teacher leadership in transforming schools, the subsequent changes in the classroom structures and processes with emphasis on improving teaching learning processes, the importance of technology in school improvement, significance of doing away with isolation and moving towards networking and collaboration and finally significance of systems thinking in promoting school improvement.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is a product of the society. It is a process through which

society transmits its accumulated values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and customs from one generation

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to another and influences how an individual thinks, feels and acts (Mortimore, 2013). Educational goals arise out of the needs of the society of which the individual is a member (Patil, 2012). Every education system wants to produce a certain kind of human being who will be able to adapt to the changing society. Educational goals therefore need to be reinterpreted and revisited in a changing society so as to ensure that the students are in tune with the changing social ethos, social structures, and organisations so as to enable them fit better in the society. John Dewey (in Ryan, 1995), while elaborating the function of schooling in a democracy, suggested that the school has a role in transmitting the dominant culture of the society. The school plays the role of an agent of social progress.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Educational goals need to be revisited and reinterpreted so as to enable the students fit better in the ever-changing global society. Placing the school as the epicentre of change, the author attempts to describe the new ideas and perspectives in understanding school as a learning organisation, and what is the small and significant step that needs to be taken towards school improvement. The research paper takes into consideration the changing roles of the school leaders, the changes in the classrooms structure and processes, and also the changes in the system as

a whole. The research paper attempts to emphasise that these shifts in ideas of school as a learning organisation has come upon because of the rapidly changing society and because of the huge influence of globalisation, modernisation and digitalisation which has in turn influenced the educational goals.

### **THE 'CRISIS OF PERCEPTION' IN EDUCATION**

The environment within which education is embedded has been changing at an increasing rate since 1900 (Brett, 1992). Yet there is a pall of disquiet evident in the following quote in the *NCF-2005*, "the school system has come to be characterised with a kind of inflexibility that makes it very difficult to breathe fresh life into it; learning for children seems to have become a sort of isolated and perfunctory activity which they are unable to connect in any organic or vital way with the rest of their life" (Position Paper, National Focus Group on Aims of Education 2.1, 2006). The truth is that a sense of concern has crept into the educational system that it is not catering to the needs of the learners. The reason could be as Banathy (1988) labelled our 'crisis of perception' in education – our lack of perception and vision of what could be and should be the function, the substance and the form of education in the post-industrial information society. Though we have been struggling to come out of this malady, the effort has met with little



success possibly as Banathy (*ibid*) puts it because of the piecemeal, or incremental approach; a discipline-by-discipline study of education; and a reductionist orientation.

According to Eisner, 2002, the paradox of our schools is that our schools now educate much more children that it did a decade ago. Yet the general notions remain that our school does not work well. Our schools currently are not in tune with the expectations of the society. This is because we do not have the vision of education that serves as the ideal for both the practice of schooling and its outcomes. We are not clear what we are after. Aside from literacy and numeracy, what do we want to achieve? What are our aims? In short, what kind of schools do we need?

The traditional task of the schools— to prepare the young for a satisfactory life in the society—will have to be reinterpreted to cope with both the increasing demands for professional careers and the qualifications and experiences needed for survival in a ‘do it yourself economy’ (Handy, 1995). Many of the competencies needed for the above tasks are quite new which include to take initiative in responsibly shaping the conditions of one’s life; actively to create satisfactory relationships; to engage in meaningful activities even without integration into a ‘proper job’; to generate test and utilise knowledge; to pause and reflect on the stream of events and to deal constructively with time pressure and information overload. (Posch, 2000).

Going by the fact that education is the social process through which society is reconstructed and that one has to have faith in the ability of education to teach people to develop a vision of a better society and prepare the young for a satisfactory life, slow but sure shift in the educational goals have been happening in the country and across the globe. The following paragraph outlines these shifts.

### **SHIFT FROM THE INDUSTRIAL AGE SCHOOLS TO APPROACHES DESIGNED FOR INFORMATION AND GLOBAL AGE**

The industrial revolution brought about the notion of mass society and mass production that had a debilitating effect on the qualitative or humane dimension of life. Adhering to the industrial revolution, schools adhered to the factory model which meant — standardisation, synchronisation, specialisation, centralisation and bigness. Industrialisation and standardisation isolated the unique elements of human life. Being different was considered as being eccentric, and uniqueness was not respected. The outcome was large class size, little teacher-student interactions and impersonalisation of the children, and a kind of instruction which was designed to a ‘one size fits all’ agenda. Every child was supposed to adhere to a certain set of norms and standards proposed by the school. Howard Gardner in his book ‘the Unschooled mind’ quotes’ “Yet as if guided by an invisible hand, schools

all over the world have come to exhibit certain predictable features. They focus on the introduction of complex symbolic or notational systems that require sustained concentration over long hours for mastery and that therefore are unlikely to be picked up simply by observing competent parents or other elders or masters at work in the society. Regular drill, rote memorisation and recitation are featured. The ultimate utility of these skills is not an important concern of day-to-day schooling, and indeed, in contrast to apprenticeships, the school experience is marked by an extreme dissociation from important events or palpable products in the life of the community” (Gardner, 2011).

The factory model of schooling is being shadowed by a more progressive perspective of schooling that is leading towards a more developmental approach to schooling and student learning. There is a shift towards the organismic model (Reese and Overton, 1970), which stresses more on interaction and development of the individual. More and more initiatives are being taken in this regard wherein experience is being given a lot of importance rather than training to bring about changes in the learner. This approach also encourages looking at the interrelationship between the personal and social dimensions for bringing about changes in the individual. This approach has emphasis on the quality and process of change. In the organismic view, the

organism makes judgments, thinks, feels, has choices, takes actions, reflects, learns from experiences, plans future learning and prioritises goals (Askew and Carnell, 1998). The kind of methodology here would entail less of teacher talk and more of students reflecting and discovering learning. The teachers would give students the freedom to think, reflect, inquire and discover rather than indulge them in a monologue of teacher talk. The emphasis is more on learning here rather than instruction.

With advances in technology and modernisation, there is a clear need to develop among the children those basic skills and competencies that would be closely relevant to their jobs which they would take up later on as adults.

Thus, greater thrust is being provided to approaches that are more students centred and enable the students to attain knowledge at higher levels of cognitive rigour and also ensure that the knowledge is practical to ensure all round development and have scope for enabling the student adapt to the evolving society.

Recently, a synthesis of theories and approaches adapted from social, cognitive and humanist learning theories have resulted into a category referred to as ‘Cognitive Humanism’, (Prickel, nd). Cognitive humanistic theory consists of an integration of the core components of cognitive learning, social learning and learner centred humanistic principles and is

an attempt to create learners of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**EMPHASIS ON GLOBALISATION,  
LOCALISATION AND INDIVIDUALISATION  
– A TRIPLISATION PARADIGM**

According to Cheng, (2000), globalisation, localisation and individualisation are core to educational reforms in the new millennium which is the New Triplisation Paradigm.

The term 'Globalisation' refers to the transfer, adaptation and development of values, knowledge, technology, and behavioural norms across countries and societies in different parts of the world (Brown, 1999; Brown and Lauder, 1996; Water, 1995). Globalisation in education can be brought about through web based learning, use of the Internet in teaching and learning, international exchange visit programmes and sharing through video-conferencing across countries, communities and individuals. The schools and the school heads need to be in tune with the new millennium aims and goals of education. The school heads and learners need to be equipped with sound knowledge on information technology so as to prepare themselves for the future. They need to be aware of the intellectual discourse happening globally and new age thrust and policy initiatives in the area of education especially in realm of teaching and learning. Thus, encouraging schools towards global networking is definitely an asset for

the schools in moving towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This would provide scope for the school heads, teachers and students in pooling of international resources and intellectual assets and initiatives from different parts of the world to support the teaching learning process. The pursuit of new vision and aims at different levels of education, life-long learning, global networking, international outlook, and use of information and technology are just some emerging evidences of the third wave (Cheng, 2001).

Localisation, on the other hand, refers to the transfer, adaptation development of relevant values, knowledge, technology and behavioural norms from and to the local contexts. Currently, there is considerable importance given to localisation in education as it would initiate community and parental involvement in school education; home school collaboration, assurance of school accountability, implementation of school based management, school based curriculum, and community related curriculum, and development of new curriculum content related to local developments in technological, economic, social, political, cultural and learning aspects. With localisation, education will be able to meet local needs, involve community support, procure local resources and promote site level initiatives (Cheng, 2003).

In the case of individualisation, the challenge is to individualise

teaching and learning process to meet the individual needs of the learners to cope with the multiplicity and complexity in human nature through measures like individualised learning targets, encouraging self-learning, self-actualising and self-initiating. With individualisation, education reforms can meet the needs of students, teachers and schools; motivate them to develop their potentials. Thus, globalisation, localisation and individualisation are core to educational reforms in the new millennium which according to Cheng, 2000, is the New Triplisation Paradigm.

**SHIFT IN LEARNER’S EXPECTATIONS FROM SCHOOLS AND CONSEQUENTLY CHANGES IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS**

The concept of individualisation generated by the globalised society has resulted in increased emphasis being placed on personal development and self fulfilment in students and young people. The students themselves have realised the importance of being exposed to meaningful activities in classrooms. As a result, activities that are not experienced immediately as meaningful are opposed by many children (Posch, 2000). What do the children want from their schools– the answer they tell us is community, working in groups, doing projects, having the opportunity to share their ideas with their peers and hear what their peers have to say, being challenged, being asked interesting

questions, being listened to, being respected (Prensky, 2007).

**EMPHASIS ON COOPERATIVE LEARNING**

It has been understood that learning in groups has its impact on the emotional, social and cognitive dimensions of learning. By group learning we have infinite opportunities to improve our knowledge by discussions with others and through hearing alternate perceptions. Group learning also provides for ample reflections on ourselves viz., our preferred role whether we lead or let the others take the lead, how we react to feedback and how we deal with conflict. The organismic world view discussed earlier encourages collaborative learning as collaborative groups contain the potential for support, challenge and feedback; for learners to cooperate and collaborate (Askew and Carnell, 1998, pp 40). Samples (1992) argue that nature taught us to cooperate to learn–society teaches us how to learn to cooperate. He points out that in education, cooperation is usually a way of organising experience to have students perform better at school work. The superiority of cooperative over competitive and individualistic learning increases as the task is more conceptual, requires more problem solving, necessitates more higher level reasoning and critical thinking, needs more creative answers, seeks long-term retention and requires application of what is learned (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). Cooperative

learning has positive effects on academic achievement; development of higher-order thinking; intergroup relations, self-confidence and self-esteem of learners; development of social skills and the ability to take perspective of another (*ibid* Askew and Carnell, pp 43). According to Slavin (1990), the most useful effects of cooperative learning occur when there is a combination of group goals and individual accountability which ultimately leads to a shared vision. Sharing vision enables meta cognitive thinking wherein we reflect and reconsider our own thoughts and the reaction to them in a dynamic and creative way. Not just within classrooms, but cooperative learning is catching up at the systems level and organisation level also. Change in organisations is more likely to occur when individuals within organisation work toward shared goals and a shared vision. The perspective of members of organisations working together, sharing experiences and sharing learning leading towards shared goals and shared visions are new thoughts of networking in the global age.

### **SHIFT IN CLASSROOM STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES**

Globalisation and modernisation has brought marked shift in the area of teaching learning process. Schooling is no more primarily about creating workers and test takers, but rather about nurturing human beings (Wolk, 2007).

As quoted in John Dewey's 'Experience and Education', (1938, p49): What avail is it to win prescribed amounts of information about geography and history, to win the ability to read and write, if in the process the individual loses her/his own soul?" In the current schooling experience, there is an attempt to make our schools places of joy. New pedagogies that are marked by joyful learning activities have gained importance and there is a lot of importance being given to active learning and joyful learning. This is in answer to the concerns of educationalists like Goodlad, 1982, when he said, "Boredom is a disease of epidemic proportions ....why are our schools not places of joy?" Through capacity building programmes that adopt reflection as a primary pedagogy, there are attempts to enable the school heads and the teachers to ponder over questions like 'what is the purpose of education? How do we help our children adjust well in the society? How would school as an organisation enable the learners to fit themselves to a 21<sup>st</sup> century society? How do we inculcate life skills among the children?' The responsibility to educate the whole child, mind, heart and soul is slowly gaining prominence.

### **LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THEORY OF CONNECTIVISM AND NAVIGATIONISM**

As the world moves towards the digital age, there are different approaches to learning in the digital era.

Connectivism proposed by Siemens (2004) is a theory aiming to provide a basis for examining how multiple aspects of information creation interact and evolve. The theory considers how people, organisations such as school and technology work collaboratively to construct knowledge, building on ideas that have merged since the introduction of widespread interaction and access to information through the internet. The central idea in the learning theory of connectivism is the continual expansion of knowledge as new and novel connections open new interpretations and understandings to create new knowledge. On the other hand, Brown (2006), proposed that the focus in the knowledge era should be on how to navigate the information and knowledge available through digital technologies rather than existing knowledge. Brown (2006) proposed navigationism arguing that there was a need to move from content driven teaching to a focus on information navigation skills which he saw as essential skills for students to learn in future.

### **EMPHASIS ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

School leadership as a construct is gaining global interest now— the early part of the 21st century. It had been in the shadows of educational administration and management until now but is slowly emerging out of its confines to establish itself as one of the *de facto* force behind school improvement. It is currently

the answer to one of the fundamental questions raised by educationalists which is ‘how do we improve schools?’

Many countries across the globe have identified school leadership as the central lever in school transformation. There is increased belief in the potential of the school heads to make a positive difference to their schools and also improve the educational outcomes (Harris, 2005). Researchers from the international fields of school effectiveness and school improvement have consistently highlighted the importance of leadership in generating better schools (Hargreaves *et al.*, 1998; Hopkins, 2001; Sammons, 1999). Leadership has been shown to make a difference to the schools ability to improve by influencing the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching which takes place in the classroom (Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2001). According to Leithwood and Riel (2003:3), large scale studies of schooling conclude that the effects of leadership on student learning are small but educationally significant. Leadership has become centrally synonymous with school effectiveness.

It has come to be that the school head is the key player who can ensure the success of a school and play a major role in the school improvement. Their role has grown far beyond the administrator to that of a leader.

There is a lot of emphasis given to transformational leadership with focus on developing transformational leadership among the school

heads to improve their schools. Transformational leadership derives its importance from the strong links between leadership and culture of the organisation (Dalin, 1996), where leaders have the potential to alter the cultural context in which people work. According to Leithwood *et al.*, (1999), transformational leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of the organisational members. Higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity. An overview of research relating to transformational leadership has suggested that, taken at face value, transformational leadership is strongly related to positive perceptions of the head teacher's effectiveness, organisation level effects, and student effects (Leithwood *et al.*, 1999).

According to Leithwood *et al.*, (1999), core leadership activities of transformational leaders are:

- Setting directions (includes vision building, goal consensus, and development of high performance expectations).
- Developing people (includes the provision of individualised support, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of values and practices important to the mission of the school).
- Organising (culture building in which colleagues are motivated

by moral imperatives and structuring, fostering shared decision-making process, and problem-solving capacities.

- Building relationships with the school community.

There is evidence to demonstrate a positive relationship between such transformational leadership approaches and school improvement (Leithwood *et al.*, 1999).

According to Mulford and Silins, (2010), to promote leadership practices that promote organisational learning in schools, the head teacher needs to work towards whole staff consensus in establishing school priorities which need to be communicated to students and staff so as to give a sense of overall purpose. The school head needs to create a vision among the school staff and students with respect to the development of the school and the direction to take things forward. The school head needs to promote an atmosphere of caring and trust among the staff. The school head teacher should support a school structure that promotes participative decision making, delegating and distributing leadership to encourage teacher autonomy for making decision. The head should promote intellectual stimulation among the staff by encouraging them to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with their students, facilitate opportunities to learn from each other. The school head needs to be a role model herself or himself to encourage continuous learning through her/

his own practice. The school head needs to set high expectations for staff and students to be effective and innovative and promotes a climate of collaboration. Thus, effective leadership tends to lead the school towards transformation and change.

### **EMPHASIS ON TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the increase in knowledge has outstripped our abilities to learn it all in a life-time. The need for greater information-processing skills has therefore received greater attention, and the teacher's role has shifted to some extent from information-giver to facilitator (Askew and Carnell, 1988). Few teachers, at least the smart ones, have come to realise that learning comes from passion and not discipline. Thereby, they are slowly morphing into the role of challenger, observer, guide and coach to their students (Prensky, 2007). The emphasis is more on learning rather than instruction than ever before. The strategy is to co-create a shared vision having the child as the centre, with responsibilities and roles clearly defined for the individual stakeholders concerned with the school, one of whom is the teacher. Teacher leadership has gained prominence and is being explored as a distributed phenomenon, as a form of social action, where teachers have both agency and authority to lead (Harris, 2004). Teacher leadership connects teachers and principals in their mutual mission: improving

learning for students (Scherer, 2007). Teacher leadership is gaining prominence with due emphasis being laid on the professional development of the teachers through coaching and mentoring. There is a huge thrust on managing schools through collaboration and cooperation rather than linear hierarchy. Teachers are extending their reach beyond their own classrooms to their teaching teams, schools and districts (Danielson, 2007). Through teacher leadership, teachers have begun to prompt changes in their schools and extending their reach outside schools and to the community. It is an idea whose time has come. The unprecedented demands that are being placed on schools today require leadership at all levels (Danielson, 2007). By using the energy of teacher leaders as agents of school change, public education will stand a better chance of ensuring that 'every child has a high quality teacher' (Wehling, 2007, p14). The teachers constitute the single largest group in a school. They need to be encouraged to understand that they could be the leaders and the agents of change in their schools. Their vast resources need to be trapped by offering opportunities and guidance to develop their leadership skills and by promoting a school culture that respects their leadership. Thus, understanding the phenomenon of teacher leadership and developing in the teachers the attributes and skills required of teacher leaders



would definitely enable the school transformation become a reality.

### **TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

Research has established that good school leadership definitely has a strong impact on teacher development. Most learning and development opportunities for teachers will inevitably occur in schools, whether through working alongside colleagues, through opportunities to reflect upon their own and others classroom planning and practices, through the quality of professional relationships and the attention which is given to their learning needs, through the quality of regular and responsive provision for learning and development by school leadership (Day, 2013). As mentioned under the section on school leadership, principals of schools play an important role in establishing the conditions, structures, cultures and climate for professional learning and development in their schools (Day, 2013, p 31). Quality of leadership affects teacher's individual and collective sense of efficacy and their organisational commitment (Ross *et al*, 2008). Successful school heads are those who consistently provide staff with opportunities to engage in regular professional learning activities, related to individual and organisational needs both within and outside the schools (Day and Leithwood, 2009; Day *et al*, 2011). Teacher engagement improves

when the school heads attempt to identify the teachers' professional development needs which may change in accordance to school context and situations.

### **REDEFINING TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES**

In tune with the increased significance being given to school leadership and teacher leadership, there is now increased expectation to redefine the initial teacher education courses to accommodate the principles of leadership. This idea goes with the perception that if student teachers of the pre-service teacher education courses are taught about leadership, then the student teachers coming out of these courses would have imbibed leadership traits that are apparently lifelong. Currently, the teacher education courses imbibe skills only within the framework of leading their students—and not leading beyond their schools. Teacher leaders to assume a leadership role, may need expertise in curriculum planning, assessment design, data analysis, and the like. They may also need to develop the abilities to listen actively, facilitate meetings, keep a group discussion on track, decide on a course of action, and monitor progress. These skills are not typically taught in teacher preparation programmes (Danielson, 2007).

According to Danielson (2007), teacher leaders need to move from their limited matrix within their schools and classrooms to across

the schools (neighbourhood schools) and beyond the schools (districts level). Teacher leadership connects teachers and principals in their mutual mission— improving learning for students (Scherer, 2007) and towards change.

**EMPHASIS ON NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION — ESTABLISHMENT OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES (PLCs)**

As already mentioned in the previous session on collaborative learning, the idea of networking within schools and across schools for knowledge sharing and problem solving has gained fervour. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) as an effective tool to alleviate isolation among teachers and school heads are also gaining prominence. According to the Glossary of Education Reform, Professional Learning Communities is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students ([www.edglossary.org](http://www.edglossary.org)). Through Professional Learning Communities, teachers and leaders work together and focus on student learning (Fullan, 2003). It acts as shared forum where teachers work together to innovate and to improve their teaching practices. Teachers work in teams, engaging in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep team learning. This process in turn leads to higher levels of student achievement (Dufour, 2004)

Sometimes teachers tend to cling to something that works as ‘the strategy’ rather than continuously building better strategies and adding to their repertoire. The Nobel Prize winning psychologist Hebert Simon called this phenomenon as ‘satisficing’— because it is a matter of being satisfied with whatever minimally suffices (in Tomlinson, 1995). PLC helps teachers get away from this ‘satisficing’ syndrome by giving them opportunities to discuss with their peer group and encourage them to continuously evolve and grow and innovate better and practical solutions and strategies to their teaching issues. According to Fullan, (*ibid*, 2003), Professional Learning Communities internal to a school should reduce the variation across classrooms with more and more teachers gravitating towards the best practices.

**EMPHASIS ON NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION – TEAM BUILDING**

For schools to succeed in improving student learning requires leaders’ attention to a mutually supportive, multilayered, non-linear, extraordinarily complex often competitive association of interrelated factors (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2010). The thrust is on school leaders and teachers to work as a team to build their schools. The idea is to develop a team of teachers with shared values and goals who are able to identify and solve problems

and collaborate towards student learning. The team should have a sense of collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement (Garmston, *et al*, 2012). This kind of culture in schools would lead to school dynamics of optimism towards growth and development. The focus is on creating a culture of openness, and trust, empowering teams to make decisions that improve student learning. In moving schools, collaboration is the key to success. (*ibid*, Garmston). It has become self-evident that schools in which faculty members feel a collective responsibility for student learning produce greater learning gains than do schools in which teachers work as isolated practitioners (Louis, Marks and Kruse, 1996). Working in teams invariably leads to creation of Professional Learning Communities. Louis research found school based, professional communities have greater potential to create teacher empowerment, personal dignity and collective responsibility for student learning.

### **EMPHASIS ON SCHOOL AS AN OPEN SYSTEM AND DEVELOPING A SYSTEMS THINKING**

Developing a systems thinking would mean focusing on the whole, not just the parts; one that is synthetic, rather than analytic; one that integrates,

rather than differentiates (Bretts, 1992). This would mean that all programmes of the school are aligned with the larger goals and processes of the system concerning school improvement, student performance, and enhanced efficiency and effectiveness (Schleicher, 2012). This would also mean viewing school as an open system open to change and transformation in accordance to the changing intellectual discourse happening across the globe. This has huge implication with respect to understanding school as a learning organization and viewing the school head and the teachers as the change agents; inter-linkages between schools and community—the emergence of whose links has implications for the concept of learning, which can include the production of local knowledge and activities to shape the conditions of life in the changing society (Posch, 2000).

### **CONCLUSION**

Thus, there are shifts in the approach to school and to education *per se* which is surely creating a ripple effect on the educational goals at the indigenous and global level. An analysis of these shifts would definitely enable one to understand the transformations in the area of education with respect to the constantly changing society.

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# The Status of Implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 for Disadvantaged Children in Kerala

R. B. L. SONI\*

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to explore the status of implementation of the Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 for disadvantaged children and children with disabilities in Kerala. Two districts (Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam) with high population of SC/ST/BPL/children with disabilities were selected through purposive sampling. However, respondents in each category were selected using stratified random sampling. Both rural and urban schools (four in Thiruvananthapuram district and five in Kollam district) were selected. A total sample of 66 respondents was selected for this study. Since the study was of in-depth nature, responses of respondents to each item were categorised, and simple descriptive method was used in describing the results. Main findings of the study were that no information was given about SC/ST/ children with disabilities during orientation of RTE, pupil-teacher ratio is 1:50, mid-day meal consumes a lot of time because of formalities involved, children of migrant labourers from other states leave school because of inadequate arrangements for age-appropriate training for placement in different classes, weekly visit by special teacher to children with disabilities is inadequate to ensure proper learning, teachers experience difficulties in teaching different categories of children with disabilities, teachers have not been trained in the area of disabilities, and visually impaired children have not been provided teaching-learning materials individually. Thus, there is a partial implementation of RTE Act, 2009 for children with disabilities in Kerala.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 passed by the Indian Parliament mandates free and compulsory education of all children of 6-14 years age until they complete elementary education in a neighbourhood school. There is also a reference of children with disabilities in the Act, who are to be given elementary education in the age range of 6-18 year. The Act also has a provision for every child, who is above six years of age and has not yet been admitted to any school or could not complete her / his elementary education due to any reason, to be admitted in a class appropriate to her or his age. The child admitted under age-appropriate admission has a right to receive special training or additional instruction in order to be at par with other children of the class. However, there is an important concern over implementation of RTE Act in the school system with reference to the special training or instruction, its modalities and execution. The states are expected to respond to the situation arising out of the implementation of the Act. States and Union Territories (UTs) are required to pay special attention to cope with the situation in terms of appointment of qualified teachers, development of special training programmes for out-of-school children admitted to age appropriate classes and preparation of relevant teaching learning materials.

This study was conducted by the researcher under the auspices of NCERT New Delhi to find out the status of implementation of various provisions of RTE Act, 2009 in states and UTs for children with disabilities, and disadvantaged children, and concerns and problems of states/UTs to implement the Act. As the Act was implemented with effect from 1 April 2010, states and UTs were supposed to take up preparatory activities in this regard. The study explored the steps taken by states/UTs for implementation of RTE Act, 2009 and their difficulties in proper implementation of the Act. It was important to assess the level of preparedness of states and UTs to take effective steps for the implementation of the Act at various levels. It was also important to assess their readiness in implementing RTE in states/UTs. The readiness of states means awareness of stakeholders to take advantage of the Act. Community awareness is a very important factor in making a programme a success. As such, the study also tried to explore steps taken up by states/UTs in this direction.

Children belonging to disadvantaged groups, *e.g.* SC/ST/BPL, have specific economic and social problems and special focus is needed to ensure RTE to the children of these categories. Various categories of children with disabilities have special needs depending on the nature of disability. Therefore, special aids and appliances, educational



materials, special teacher support and infrastructural modifications are required to ensure RTE to these children. Awareness of inclusive education at all levels – functionaries, head teachers/teachers, parents and community – is of paramount importance and urgent steps in this direction are indispensable. The study explored all these aspects.

Various newspapers reported problems in implementation of RTE Act, 2009 in schools. Times of India New Delhi dated 30 June 2012 reported that only 5 % of the schools were following RTE guidelines. Additionally, there were problems, such as shortage of 10,00,000 teachers, untrained teachers in some places, para-teachers and student-teacher ratio. Times of India New Delhi, dated 2 July 2012 reported that 95 per cent of schools were not complying with the RTE laws. Lack of teachers, infrastructural deficiencies for children with disabilities, violation of age-appropriate admissions were other issues that need urgent attention. Hindustan Times Mumbai, 8 August, 2013 brought out facts where with over 90 per cent of city schools still to meet infrastructure norms required under the Right to Education Act, 2009, the blacklisted schools were given two months to comply with these norms or else face de-recognition. Hindustan Times Mumbai, 20 July 2013 informed that only 103 schools in the city had fulfilled the norms. Hindustan

Times', New Delhi, 17 January 2011 reported the plea of Central Government before the Supreme Court that the Right to Education Act (RTE) applied to private unaided schools, including minority schools and it did not violate any rulings of the top court. "The provisions... regarding grant of admission by private unaided schools, to the extent of at least 25 per cent of the strength of Class I to children belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory elementary education till its completion, in no way curtails the right or autonomy of the private unaided institutions," the HRD ministry said in an affidavit, "The Act is anchored in the belief that values of equality, social justice and democracy and the creation of a just society can be achieved only through provision of inclusive elementary education to all," the affidavit sworn by department of school education and literacy. The Indian Express Ahmedabad, Wed 5 Jun 2013 stated that Three years after the implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act, the state government passed a resolution to reserve 25 per cent seats for economically weaker section (EWS) and disadvantaged groups in unaided private schools. 'The Hindu', Bangalore of 19 October 2013 reported Father Edward Thomas speech in a conference in which he said that parents and children were victims of various private unaided schools that

were obligated to admit 25 per cent children belonging to “weaker sections of society and disadvantaged groups”. Indian Express New Delhi, Friday, 18 January 2013 pointed out that school-level enrolment rates continue to rise. The Right to Education Act (RTE) helping develop better school infrastructure and there are more toilets for girls in schools. Indian Express Ahmedabad, Monday, 16 January 2012 reported of disturbing student-teacher ratio in Ahmedabad where a shortage of nearly 500 teachers was observed. “Nearly 100 teachers are required in Urdu medium schools because many from Urdu schools, despite existing shortage, have been moved to Gujarati medium schools. ‘Hindustan Times’, Mumbai, 16 May 2011 reported a survey of 600 teachers across 60 SSC schools (30 aided and 30 unaided) by a non-profit group, Parent-Teacher Association United Forum, and found that only 60 per cent of unaided school teachers and 50 per cent of aided school teachers were aware of their duties and responsibilities as enlisted under this Act. While 71 per cent aided school teachers were aware of what the Act says about children’s rights, only 54 per cent of unaided school teachers knew about this. Further, only 45 per cent of aided school teachers and 52 per cent of unaided schoolteachers were aware of the school’s duties and responsibilities. The Hindu New Delhi, Wednesday, 25 July 2012 wrote “Even as enrolment in schools remain high, statistics

concerning disadvantaged children dip with not much time left for the full roll-out in the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, weaker sections and minorities continue to be at a disadvantage”. The latest DISE figures suggest that the number of children enrolled in government primary schools has dropped by 21 lakh between 2009-10 and 2010-11, while there has been an increase of 11 lakh in enrolment in private schools. One glaring lacunae in schooling efforts continues to be in respect of ‘Children with Special Needs’; only 5.02 lakh of whom are enrolled, which constitutes a meagre 0.26 per cent of the total enrolment and what is more, according to DISE, only half of the 1.5 million elementary schools have provided barrier free access through ramps for these children. “Having ramps does not make a school accessible by itself, as it does not help a child with hearing and visual impairment. The HRD ministry officials need to sit together to make all schools barrier-free for all kinds of disabilities and special needs”, says Javed Abidi, convenor of Disabled Rights Group.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Find out the status of implementation of various provisions of RTE Act, 2009 in States and UTs.
- Study the steps taken for age-appropriate admission of out of school disadvantaged children.

- Find out if teaching learning materials have been prepared for children admitted under age appropriate admission.
  - Assess the awareness level of stakeholders in states and UTs to implement RTE Act, 2009.
  - Find out concerns and challenges of states and UTs for effective implementation of RTE Act, 2009 for disadvantaged children.
  - Find out strategic plans of action prepared by states/UTs for providing free and compulsory Elementary Education to implement RTE to children of SC/ST/weaker sections, and children with various disabilities.
  - Find out specific steps taken by states/UTs to inspire parents and community to admit these children into schools.
  - Find out arrangements being made for providing free pre-school education to these children below 6 year of age.
- 2009 for disadvantaged and disabled (challenged) children.
- Phase II:** The following tools were developed for the study:
- A Questionnaire for Preliminary Information about Implementation of RTE Act, 2009
  - Interview Schedule for Functionaries
  - Interview Schedule for Head teachers/Teachers
  - Interview Schedule for Disadvantaged Students
  - Interview Schedule for Students with Disabilities
  - Interview Schedule for Parents of Disadvantaged and Disabled Children
  - Observation Checklist
  - School Information Sheet

## METHOD

Based on the objectives of the study, normative survey, followed by in-depth study, was most appropriate design. The study was conducted in two phases:

**Phase I:** in this phase, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) was studied. Based on provisions of the Act, a questionnaire was developed and sent to states/ UTs to seek preliminary information on the status of implementation of RTE Act,

A questionnaire was designed to collect preliminary information about steps taken for implementation of RTE for disadvantaged and disabled children in states/UTs. Questionnaire items sought information on strategic plan of action prepared to implement RTE in states/UTs for providing free and compulsory elementary education to children (SC/ST/BPL/children with disabilities); specific steps taken to inspire parents and community to admit children into neighbourhood schools; arrangements made for providing free pre-school education to disadvantaged and children with disabilities below six years of age; major initiatives and interventions taken since inception of RTE, especially for children with special needs; and other steps taken to

ensure RTE for disadvantaged and children with disabilities.

The interview schedule for functionaries had six open-ended items that sought in-depth information about:

- Specific steps taken for SC/ST/BPL students and children with disabilities.
- Specific steps taken for non-enrolled and dropout children with disabilities.
- Various facilities available for children with disabilities.
- Arrangements for special teachers, educational materials and infrastructure modifications.
- Future plans for additional facilities to children with disabilities.
- Arrangements for pre-school education of children with disabilities.

The interview schedule for head teachers/teachers inquired about:

- Information about disadvantaged children during the orientation of RTE.
- Provisions and facilities for disadvantaged children in the school.
- Steps taken for age appropriate admission of disadvantaged children.
- Steps taken for the training of non-enrolled and dropout children for age appropriate placement in different classes.
- Assessment procedures being used for evaluation of children's progress.

- Steps taken to provide supplementary instructions to educationally weak children.
- Cooperation from parents of disadvantaged children.
- Constraints and challenges in the implementation of RTE for these children.
- Suggestions for proper implementation of RTE for these children.
- Information about children with disabilities in the orientation of RTE.
- Special provisions/ facilities for children with disabilities in the school.
- Steps taken for special teacher, educational materials and infrastructural modification.
- Steps taken for age appropriate admission of children with disabilities into different classes.
- Assessment procedures being used for different categories of children with disabilities.
- Cooperation from the parents of children with disabilities.
- Difficulties encountered in teaching different categories of children with disabilities.
- Constraints and challenges in the implementation of RTE to children with disabilities.
- Suggestions for proper implementation of RTE to these children.

The interview schedule for disadvantaged students was designed to collect information if they were receiving various educational facilities

and positive social environment in the school. Items sought information from students was related to:

- Educational materials received from school free of cost.
- Regularity in attending the school. If not regular, reasons for being absent.
- Training or help received from school if admitted under age appropriate admission.
- Additional academic help from teachers.
- Behaviour of teachers and classmates towards them.

The interview schedule for students with disabilities sought information about:

- Specific educational materials received from school free of cost.
- Difficulties faced in coming to the school.
- Difficulties encountered in moving in and around the school.
- Aids and appliances received.
- Training received for the use of aids and appliances.
- Additional help from teachers.
- Special training received if admitted under age appropriate admission.
- Behaviour of teachers and classmates towards them.

The interview schedule for parents of disadvantaged and disabled children inquired about:

- Difficulties faced in the admission of child.
- Information about RTE Act, 2009.
- Special facilities provided to the child in the school.

- Additional help to the child in the school.
- Kind of special training to the child, if enrolled late.
- Problems faced by the child in the school.
- Last PTA meeting attended and its outcomes.
- Suggestions for improvement of education.

The purpose of observation checklist was to verify existing facilities and safety measures in the school. The items related to:

- Number of teachers.
- Number of students.
- Number of various categories of children.
- Teacher-pupil ratio.
- Infrastructural modification and safety measures for children.
- Availability of educational materials for different categories of children with disabilities.

School Information Sheet was developed to obtain elaborate information about:

- Infrastructure, such as number of rooms, separate toilets for boys and girls, disabled friendly toilets, ramps with railings, safe drinking water, safety precautions for children, playground etc.
- Number of teachers.
- Number of students.
- Category-wise number of children (SC, ST, various categories of children with disabilities).
- Number of boys and girls in each category.
- Teacher-pupil ratio.

Purposive sampling was used in selection of districts with high population of SC/ST/BPL/children with disabilities. Schools from rural and urban areas with high population of SC/ST/BPL/children with disabilities were also selected through purposive sampling. However, stratified random sampling was used in the selection of respondents in each category. Since the study was of in-depth nature, responses of respondents to each item were

categorised, and simple descriptive method was used in describing the results. The same method was used for responses of all instruments used in the study.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two districts (Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam) were selected for in-depth study based on high population of ST/SC/BPL and children with disabilities. The following table shows samples of the study in both the districts:

**Table 1**  
**Respondents (Samples) in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts**

Respondents	Thiruvananthapuram			Kollam		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Functionaries	01	00	01	01	00	01
Head Teachers/Teachers	02	04	06	05	03	08
SC/ST Students	04	01	05	05	06	11
Children with Disabilities	03	03	06	07	03	10
Guardians	03	05	08	03	07	10
Total	13	13	26	21	19	40

**Table 2**  
**Area-wise sample schools and respondents in two districts**

	Thiruvananthapuram			Kollam		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Schools	02	02	04	04	01	05
Head Teachers/Teachers	04	02	06	06	02	08
SC/ST Children	02	03	05	08	03	11
Children with Disabilities	03	03	06	08	02	10
Guardians	04	04	08	08	02	10

The table clearly shows that there were an equal numbers of females and males (13 each) in Thiruvananthapuram district; while there were 21 males and 19 females in Kollam district. The number of female respondents in each group differed (except for functionaries), though the total number of males was more than the total number of females in the sample.

Only two functionaries – one in Thiruvananthapuram district and Kollam district – could be interviewed. They were asked about the steps taken by the state for SC/ST/BPL/ various categories of disabled children in the light of Right to Education Act, 2009. The functionary in Thiruvananthapuram had joined his duties recently and was not clear about steps taken. He told that all children were being brought to schools for their education with the help of their parents. The functionary in Kollam district claimed that he himself conducts monitoring work and ensures facilities to children in accordance with their needs. ‘Sahavasa’ programme is conducted in each block for SC/ST children for personality development and coaching is provided in the subjects in accordance with their needs. Teachers and parents participate in this programme in order to provide coaching. The facilities, *e.g.*, free textbooks, uniform, scholarship are given to these children. ‘Sahavasa’ programme is conducted in Panchayat Bhawan where children from their

respective homes come for various activities. School Management Committees (SMCs) also discuss about various facilities to be provided to SC/ST children. The functionary in Thiruvananthapuram told that Below Poverty Line (BPL) children had been provided textbooks, uniform and school bags. The functionary in Kollam informed that ‘*Padhnavedu*’ programme was going on for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) children. ‘*Padhana Vedu*’ programme is coaching classes that are organised everyday from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Teacher provides coaching to children in the subject areas where these children are weak. One centre in each Panchayat has been opened to run this programme and there are 30 centres in Kollam district. Parents and villagers fully support this programme.

The DPO of Kollam told that spectacles and large print picture charts were provided to children with low vision. Since children with total loss of vision were not found in the survey conducted by the DPO office in Kollam, Braille books were not supplied to schools. Hearing-impaired children were provided hearing aids after assessments. These hearing aids were prescribed by the audiologists. The DPOs in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam informed that disabled-friendly toilets and ramps with railing had been constructed in all schools to facilitate easy access to wheelchair users (children with locomotors disabilities). When deficiencies in

construction of ramps were pointed out, the DPOs said that they would incorporate necessary changes in the ramps. The DPO of Kollam also told that wheelchairs, walking sticks as per need are being provided to children with locomotors disabilities after assessment. Scholarships are given and suitable furniture for seating children with locomotors disabilities are also provided in the classrooms. There is a provision of Rs. 5000.00 per child per year for corrective surgery for children with disabilities.

DPOs in both the districts informed that home-based education is given to children with mental disability and children with multiple disabilities. The DPO in Kollam also told that parent counselling is done to train them in handling these children. In twelve Block Resource Centres (BRCs), 132 resource teachers had been appointed to help children with disabilities in their education. Education volunteers had been appointed to visit children with multiple-disabilities at home and provide counselling and basic lessons in language and arithmetic.

Another item for functionaries was concerned with steps about non-enrolled and dropout special needs children's admission and training for age-appropriate placement in different classes. DPOs of Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam reported that they did not find any non-enrolled and dropout special needs children during their survey.

The functionaries were requested to tell about various facilities available to different categories of children with disabilities. The DPO in Thiruvananthapuram told that educational material for visually impaired children was available at BRC, but it was not fully accessible to these children. The DPO in Kollam, however, told that these children were being seated in front rows, and spectacles, large print picture cards and chart boards were provided to them. In Thiruvananthapuram district, children with hearing impairments were assess for hearing loss and suitable hearing aids were provided. Speech therapy was provided to these children for improvements in language. In Kollam district, these children were seated in the front row in the classroom and teacher paid individual attention to them. She used various teaching strategies and modified them in accordance with the specific needs of these children.

DPOs in both the districts said that wheelchairs, walking sticks (crutches) and callipers were provided to children with locomotors disabilities as per their needs. Ramps with railings and disabled friendly toilets had been constructed in schools. Inclusive Education Centre (IEC) provides physiotherapy to children with locomotors disabilities and all necessary equipment for this purpose is available in such centres. There is a provision of Rs. 5000.00 per child per year for corrective surgery. The



provisions for home-based education for mentally challenged and children with multiple-disabilities were available in both the districts, but parent counselling was a special feature for such children in Kollam district.

The functionaries were requested to tell about the steps taken for special teachers, educational materials, and infrastructural modifications to meet varying needs of disabled children. Both the DPOs told that resource teachers had been appointed to help children with disabilities in their education, and training of these teachers is organised at state level. Adapted educational materials, such as adapted textbooks, educational toys, picture charts are available in BRCs. The DPO of Kollam added that these items are supplied to schools as per the subject and needs of children. Both the DPOs claimed that infrastructural modifications, such as construction of ramps with railings, disabled friendly toilets had been done.

When asked about the future strategy of state to implement inclusive education, they said that all defective ramps would be reconstructed as per specifications. Special sitting furniture for CP children and others would be arranged, and classrooms would be made disabled friendly. Groups consisting of general teachers, parents of children with disabilities and resource teachers are formed to share and discuss their problems and find solutions. BRCs carry out

monitoring work and provide on-site support to teachers.

The functionaries were asked about the arrangement of pre-school education for children, including children with disabilities. The functionaries informed that government is planning to start pre-primary section with every primary school. *Anganwadi* centres are already there, but parents of children with disabilities do not send them to these centres.

Head teachers/teachers were asked if they had been told about Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Below Poverty Line (BPL) children in the orientation programme for Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009. All fourteen respondents (6 in Thiruvananthapuram and 8 in Kollam) told that general instruction like no discrimination, age-appropriate admission were given; but no specific instruction were given about SC/ST/BPL children. The second item in the interview schedule for head teachers/teachers inquired about special provisions for different categories of children. All respondents in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam informed that SC/ST/BPL children receive scholarship (Rs. 250 per year from Classes I-IV and Rs. 700 per year from Classes V-VIII). Free textbooks and free uniform are provided to all children (general, SC/ST/BPL). They also informed that educationally weak SC/ST/BPL children receive free coaching everyday either before the school starts or after school hours.

Head teachers/teachers were asked about the steps taken for non-enrolled, dropout and age-appropriate admission belonging to above categories and their training for placement in different classes. Since all children come for admission at the prescribed age, there is no problem of non-enrolled, dropout and age-appropriate admission and their training for placement in different classes, said 13 respondents.

When inquired about assessment procedures used for educational evaluation of children, all respondents in both the districts said that they maintain individual profile of daily activities of children in the school for which marks are given, and these marks are converted into grades. Children are also given monthly, half-yearly and annual tests and marks are awarded. These marks are later converted into grade. Head teachers and teachers were asked to tell about the steps they take for providing supplementary instruction to educationally weak children. All respondents in both the districts informed that extra classes are organised to impart instruction to educationally weak children either before the school starts or after the classes are over. One head teacher added that SSA appoints additional teacher to provide instruction in extra classes, and monthly salary of Rs 750 is paid.

The head teachers/teachers were asked if they face difficulties in seeking cooperation from the

parents of children of various categories; except four respondents in Thiruvananthapuram, all head teachers and teachers in both the districts reported of receiving full cooperation from parents of children. Four respondents, who told of not receiving cooperation from parents, explained that these parents belong to BPL category and they do not pay attention to the education of their children.

The respondents were asked to narrate constraint and challenges, if any, in the implementation of RTE, 2009. Out of fourteen respondents in both the districts, one head teacher in Thiruvananthapuram said that, 'there are constraint and challenges in the implementation of RTE in the real sense. The pupil-teacher ratio is 1:50, which is not as per RTE norms. There are no supporting staffs for library and Lab, and one staff was appointed by Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to look after library at monthly salary of Rs 2000. Mid-day meal also consumes a lot of time, because head teacher and teacher have to go to store to collect grain and complete all formalities. He further added that children of migrant labourers from Hindi speaking states, Gujarat, Kanada and Assam come for admission and leave school because of inadequate arrangements for age-appropriate training for placement in different classes.'

Head teachers and teachers were requested to give suggestions for proper

implementation of RTE, 2009. One head teacher in Thiruvananthapuram said that recurrent training programmes should be conducted in the area of RTE, so that teachers are made fully aware of various provisions of RTE. One respondent in Thiruvananthapuram and four respondents in Kollam maintained that awareness campaigns for parents and society should be conducted to create awareness for RTE. Two respondents in Thiruvananthapuram and three respondents in Kollam said that scholarship amount to children from Classes I-VIII should be enhanced to Rs. 5000 per year, while one teacher in Kollam stressed that children should receive scholarship amount monthly, not at the end of the year. One respondent in Thiruvananthapuram and two respondents in Kollam told that transport arrangements should be made to bring children to school and drop them back home, particularly for those who come from a far-flung areas.

The head teachers/teachers were asked if the respondents had received any orientation about RTE for children with disabilities. One respondent in Thiruvananthapuram and four respondents in Kollam informed of receiving general orientation about children with disabilities during the orientation of RTE. However, a majority of respondents (05 in Thiruvananthapuram and 04 in Kollam) denied having received any information about RTE to children

with disabilities during the orientation for RTE.

When inquired about provisions/facilities in the school for children with disabilities, all respondents in both the districts told that ramps with railings and disabled friendly toilets were available at school level. Children with disabilities receive aids and appliances as per their needs. BRC provides special educational materials, and special teachers visit schools once a week to provide guidance to these children.

Head teachers/teachers were asked to tell about the steps taken for special teachers, educational materials, infrastructure, etc to meet varying needs of different categories of children with disabilities. Almost all respondents told that a special teacher visits the school once or twice a week, which is inadequate. Daily visit of a special teacher to every school should be ensured so that children with disabilities could benefit in improving their learning. Further, special teachers have specialisation in one disability, while they deal with all types of disabilities. It is difficult to understand how much justice they may be doing to children with other disabilities when they have no expertise in different disabilities. As far as educational materials are concerned, special teachers bring such materials with them and take it back with them. If teachers take special materials back with them, how children with disabilities will learn? In most of the

schools, ramps with railings were not made as per specification making it extremely difficult for wheelchair users to use them. One head teacher in Thiruvananthapuram and one head teacher in Kollam districts claimed that their schools had special furniture to meet specific seating needs of Cerebral Palsy (CP) children.

The respondents were asked about the steps taken for age-appropriate admission of children with disabilities. All respondents in both the districts said that they did not have problem of over-age children coming for admission. The head teachers/teachers were asked to tell about assessment procedures they use for different categories of children with disabilities. A majority of respondents claimed that CCE was being used in the assessment of children with disabilities. In case of children with low vision, teachers used oral assessment procedures. A minority of respondents, however, told that assessment of children with disabilities was being done by the special teachers. One teacher in Kollam district informed of assessing mentally challenged children through picture charts and toys.

When asked about cooperation of parents of children with disabilities with school, all respondents gave affirmative answer. The teachers were asked about difficulties that they encounter in teaching different categories of children with disabilities. Virtually, all respondents in both the districts said that they encountered

difficulties in teaching different categories of children with disabilities. They said that behaviour problem of children with mental disabilities (challenges) makes it difficult to manage classroom teaching. These teachers do not have any special training and they find themselves helpless in dealing with children with mental challenges. Two of the teachers said that in a class of 50 children, it is extremely difficult to pay attention to children with mental challenge and they try to help these children by explaining them personally.

The respondents were asked about constraint and challenges in the implementation of RTE for these children and give their suggestions for the same. A majority of respondents (3/6 50 per cent in Thiruvananthapuram and 6/8 75 per cent in Kollam districts) maintained that handling children with serious mental disabilities in the classroom is a major challenge, particularly, when teachers are not trained in dealing with such children. Remaining respondents in both the districts did not have any problem in dealing with these children. It is possible that these teachers may not be teaching children with mental disability or they may not have children with disabilities in their classrooms. The following suggestions were given by the respondents for proper implementation of RTE:

- A special teacher should be appointed at school level to help children with disabilities,

said 4/6 respondents in Thiruvananthapuram and 8/8 in Kollam districts.

- One respondent in Thiruvananthapuram and two respondents in Kollam districts suggested that general teachers should be provided training in dealing with children with disabilities.
- Two respondents in Thiruvananthapuram and four respondents in Kollam districts told that relevant materials for teaching children with disabilities were not available in schools. These materials should be supplied to schools urgently.
- Three respondents in Thiruvananthapuram said that aids and appliances should be made available to schools to ensure RTE to children with disabilities.
- One respondent in Thiruvananthapuram maintained that children with mental disability should be sent to special school.
- Two of the respondents in Kollam district suggested that suitable modifications should be made in the classroom by providing appropriate furniture to children with disabilities in accordance with their specific needs.

Interviews with SC students were conducted to have first-hand information about various facilities and educational help they receive. ST students were not available in the

sample schools. Five SC students in Thiruvananthapuram district and eleven SC students in Kollam district were interviewed. The first item in the interview schedule related to various facilities, such as free textbooks, scholarship and uniform. All sixteen respondents in both the districts confirmed having received free textbooks, uniform and scholarships (Classes I-IV Rs.250, Classes V-VI Rs. 500). Four SC students in Kollam district informed that they had received teaching-learning materials, such as sketch pens, charts and markers.

Another item inquired if these students were attending schools regularly. All sixteen students in both the districts told that they attend their schools regularly except when they are sick. Out of sixteen SC students in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts, thirteen students said that their teachers helped them in overcoming academic difficulties. They take extra remedial classes also to help educationally weak children. However, three students in Kollam district told that no extra classes were being organised for educationally weak children, but teachers do help children during the class teaching. SC students were asked to tell their experiences about behaviour of classmates and teachers towards them. All students in both the districts expressed full satisfaction over the behaviour of classmates and teachers.

Six children with disabilities (two low vision, two no vision and

two mentally challenged) were interviewed in Thiruvananthapuram district and ten children with disabilities [three locomotors, two cerebral Palsy (CP), one low vision, three mentally challenged and one suffering from multiple-disabilities] were interviewed in Kollam district. The help of teachers was taken in interviewing children because of language problem. Children were asked to tell what educational materials they received free of cost. All children in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts received free textbooks and uniform, which are given to non-disabled children also. All six children suffering from various types of disabilities received Rs. 1100 per year under the scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). One mentally challenged child told that he had also received Rs. 500 per year from state government in addition to Rs. 1100. As far as aids and appliances and other teaching materials were concerned, special teachers brought materials with them from the resource centre and took it back with them. Children have not been provided teaching-learning materials individually despite the fact that SSA has a provision for Rs. 3000 per disabled child per year. One child with total loss of vision in Thiruvananthapuram reported of receiving Braille kit from Kerala Federation of the Blind. Two low vision children did not get large print or Braille books; but one low vision child received glasses after

assessment. In Kollam district, low vision child did not receive TLM or large print materials in accordance with her specific needs. Out of ten children with various disabilities in Kollam district, only four children (two locomotors and two mentally challenged) received TLMs. It is difficult to understand why other children were not given TLMs.

Children with disabilities were asked to tell about their difficulties in coming to the school. Some schools in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts have been provided buses to bring children to schools and take them back home, while other schools did not have this facility. Some children with disabilities were being accompanied by their mothers or any other family member. Thus, there was no major problem for children with disabilities in coming to the school in both the districts. Children with disabilities were asked if they encounter problems in moving around the school. Although ramps were not made properly, children with disabilities did not experience serious problems, because they received help from people in the school in both the districts. However, most of children with disabilities remained in classrooms during recess.

The children with disabilities were asked to tell about the aids and appliances they received. It was obvious from the interviews with children suffering from total loss of vision that they did not receive individual educational aids and

appliances in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts. However, some children received Braille kits from Kerala Federation of the Blind. Children suffering from locomotor disabilities received crutches, wheelchairs, calipers, etc from SSA. Children who received aids and appliances were given training in the use of these items in Block Resource Centres once a week.

Children with disabilities were asked if they were receiving additional help from teachers. All children with disabilities in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts told that teachers pay special attention to them and take special care of them. Teachers seat them in the front row and provide help whenever needed. They also told that their classmates and teachers behave with them nicely. There were no cases of late admission or dropout of children with disabilities.

Interviews with parents of SC/disabled children were conducted in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts to find out their awareness of RTE, various facilities to their children, additional educational help to their children and any difficulty faced by their children. Eight parents of SC /disabled children in Thiruvananthapuram district and ten parents of SC /disabled children in Kollam district were interviewed. The parents were asked if they had encountered any difficulty in the admission of their children. None of the parents in both the districts faced any difficulty in admission of

their children. Half of the parents (4/8) in Thiruvananthapuram and less than half of the parents (4/10) in Kollam had some knowledge of RTE. These parents came to know about RTE either through acquaintance or school meetings.

In response to the question what special facilities are provided to their children, all parents in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts told that their children had received free textbooks, uniform and scholarship. Six of the ten parents in Kollam district told that their children with disabilities had received wheelchair, special shoes and TLMs besides free textbooks, uniform and scholarship. One parent of a child with disability in Thiruvananthapuram told that her child had received special shoes after one year of assessment resulting in acute pain in wearing these shoes. Therefore, the child could not use those shoes. When this matter was reported to the concerned authorities, she was told that assessment would be done again and new special shoes would be provided. The parents were asked if their children had received additional help from the school. Except three parents in both the districts, all other reported of receiving help from schools. The help was in the form of extra coaching to educationally weak children and special attention to children with disabilities. However, out of these three parents, the child of one parent in Thiruvananthapuram did not receive any aids and

appliances, while child of one parent in Kollam was receiving home-based education. One SC parent in Kollam reported of no additional help from the school. When asked about problems faced by their children, no problems were reported. They said that other children help the disabled children taking them to toilet. The parents were asked to tell if they participate in the PTA meetings of the schools and give suggestions for improvements, all parents in both the districts informed of participating in various meetings of school. They said that educational progress and health issues of children are discussed in meetings. Parents gave the following suggestions:

- Three parents wanted scholarship amount to be enhanced.
- Two in Thiruvananthapuram district and eight parents in Kollam district demanded that trained special teachers should be appointed in every school.
- Two parents in Thiruvananthapuram and one in Kollam districts maintained that aids and appliances in accordance with specific needs of children with disabilities should be provided. One parent in Thiruvananthapuram demanded that escort facility should be provided to needy children with disabilities.
- Two parents in Thiruvananthapuram district demanded that regular medical checkups should be organised for children with disabilities.

**Table 3**  
**Facilities in schools**

Items	Thiruvananthapuram			Kollam		
	Available in schools	Not available in schools	Total schools	Available in schools	Not available in schools	Total schools
Safe drinking water	04	00	04	05	00	05
Separate toilets for boys and girls	04	00	04	05	00	05
Disabled friendly toilets	03	01	04	04	01	05
Ramps with railings	04*	00	04	05*	00	05
Railing/other safety measures (railings on stairs, boundary walls) in the building	02	02*	04	03	02*	05
Playground	02	02	04	02	03	05
Approach road to the school for wheelchairs	00	04*	04	04	01	05



- Two parents in Thiruvananthapuram and one parent in Kollam districts wanted transport facilities to bring their children to schools and back. These parents were from the schools where transport facilities were not available.
- Suitable infrastructural changes in school buildings should be made to ensure accessibility and safety of children with disabilities. Furniture, including special furniture in accordance with needs of children with disabilities should be provided, said two parents in Thiruvananthapuram and one in Kollam districts.

The facilities in schools have been shown in Table 3.

Safe drinking water and separate toilets for boys and girls were available in all sample schools of Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts. Disabled friendly toilets were available in three out of four sample schools in Thiruvananthapuram district and four out of five sample schools in Kollam district. Although ramps for wheelchairs were available in almost all sample schools of both the districts, none of them was constructed as per specifications making it extremely difficult for wheelchair users to use them. The photographs of ramps are shown here.

Two out of four sample schools in Thiruvananthapuram and in three out of five sample schools in Kollam districts had safety measures, such as railings on staircase, balcony

and veranda. Playgrounds were not available in two of the sample schools



in Thiruvananthapuram district and three of the sample schools in Kollam district. As far as suitable approach

roads to schools for wheelchair users were concerned, only four sample schools in Kollam district had this facility.

### SPOTLIGHT

- **Orientation for RTE did not include information about disadvantaged and children with disabilities.**
- **The pupil-teacher ratio is 1:50, which is not as per RTE norms.**
- **Mid-day meal consumes a lot of time because head teacher and teacher have to go to store to collect grain and complete all formalities.**
- **Children of migrant labourers from Hindi speaking states, Gujarat, Karnataka and Assam leave school because of inadequate arrangements for age-appropriate training for placement in different classes.**
- **Weekly visit by a special teacher to children with disabilities is insufficient to ensure proper learning.**
- **Teachers experience difficulties in teaching different categories of children with disabilities.**
- **Teachers have not been trained in the area of disabilities.**
- **Children with disabilities, especially visually impaired, have not been provided teaching-learning materials individually.**
- **In conclusion, one can say that there is a partial implementation of RTE Act, 2009 for children with disabilities in Kerala.**

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# Ethnographic Study of a Single Teacher School in Kerala

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## Abstract

*A single teacher school or Multi-grade Learning Centre (MGLC) occurs in primary education when a teacher has to teach two or more primary school student grades in the same class. MGLC plays an active role in giving primary education to marginalised society. MGLC schools clearly keep their motto “if the child cannot reach the school, take the school to the child”. Here, the teacher creates a home atmosphere, so students are fearless and treat the school as a place like their ‘kudi’ (home). Apart from being a school, MGLC becomes a part of entire village activities. All needs of the village, be it social, cultural or health related matters are fulfilled by MGLC. The teacher demands direct involvement of every student in class activities. Here, traditional teaching methods like lecture method, etc. are not effective since, at a time, students belonging to four grades are involved in learning activities. In spite of the sincere efforts of the teacher, the study reveals that the students of MGLC have low aspirations and achievement levels and are bound by their social and cultural settings.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Alternative schools have been established since about the 1970s to meet the needs of the children and adolescents who cannot learn

effectively in traditional school environment due to learning disabilities, social and cultural conditions, psychological and behavioural issues. An alternative

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education programme is defined as “an instructional programme approved by the school/board that utilises successful alternative or adaptive school structures and teaching techniques and that is incorporated into existing traditional classrooms or regularly scheduled curricular programmes. Alternative education programme does not include a private school or a home-based private educational programme. Multi-grade schools are considered as the part of alternative education. Multi-grade schools occur in primary education when a teacher has to teach two or more primary school student grades in the same class.

In the context of Kerala, single teacher schools are also known as “Ekaadhyapaka School” or “Alternative and Innovative Center” (AIEC) or Multi-grade Learning Centres (MGLC). It is where a teacher has to teach two or more primary school student grades in the same class. The single teacher school was an initiative launched as part of the DPEP Programme in 1997. It was later brought under the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) with funds from the Department of Education as well as grants to tribal students from the Scheduled Tribes Development Department of the Kerala Government. The project was a direct response to the high rate of dropout of tribal children from main stream schools as learners felt disconnected with classroom environment, teaching style and medium of education.

These mainstream schools are often also located far away from the forest interiors. Presently, there are 354 MGLCs running in Kerala. A total of 11,888 children are getting education in these 354 MGLCs. In Kerala, MGLC concentrates more in most tribal populated areas, like Palakad, Malappuram, Thrissur, Kannur, Idukki and Pathanamthitta districts.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study about the nature of single teacher school with special focus on curriculum, teaching learning practices and school community interaction.
- To study the classroom structure and the student-teacher interaction in the single teacher school context.

### TOOLS EMPLOYED FOR THE STUDY

In the present study, the investigator used the following tools for the required data collection:

1. Semi-structured interview schedule
2. Observation schedule
3. Achievement test
4. Focus group discussion

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present study entitled attempts to find out the nature and structure of single teacher school in Kollankadavu at Attappadi tribal region in Kerala. Being an ethnographic study, the researcher used qualitative techniques which include data source triangulation method for data collection. Data source triangulation

method uses evidence from different types of data sources, such as primary and secondary research or interviews, documents, public records, photographs and observations. The researchers selected 15 students and one teacher of the single teacher school at Kollankadavu Oore (parish) of Attappadi region in Palakkad district of Kerala. The location of the school is geographically remote; the universe of the study is culturally isolated from the township and the schooling procedures are unique to the locality. The nature and character of education designed for marginalised societies like the tribes are almost one and the same in India. What is reported in this study may be seen in schools existing in such tribal and other isolated areas as well.

### **METHOD**

As the school is situated in the forest area, the researchers at first obtained the necessary permission from the District Forest Office, Palakkad. Then the researchers contacted the teacher of the single teacher school through Block Resource Centre in Agali, Palakkad. Before that, the researchers were assured the necessary cooperation and assistance from the *Ooru Moopan* (Chieftain) of Kollankadavu and prominent community members were done through telephonic conversations.

The researcher spent three weeks in the school along with the inhabitants, including the teacher, students and other related

personalities, collecting the required data. During this period, the researcher deployed various research tools, such as interview schedule, observation schedule, Focus Group Discussion and interviewed the teacher, observed the students and their classroom activities and interacted with the parents. The researcher recorded the available data using various electronic devices, such as tape recorder and video camera. The researcher prepared a diary which provides a detailed description of the daily interventions with respect to her/his research.

### **BACKDROP OF THE SCHOOL**

One can reach Kollankadavu by walk from Pakulam town in Palakkad district in Kerala. The Pakulam town can be reached travelling approximately 30 kilometres by bus through the Ghat roads from Mannarkad town in the Kozhikkode- Palakkad national highway. From here, one can reach the Kollankadavu Oore walking four kilometres through the mountain paths. Kollankadavu Ooru is situated in a serene atmosphere. It is a beautiful place covered by fog the whole day. Kollankadavu is in a valley beneath the "Malishwara" Peak. This is a place surrounded by mountain ranges.

Kollankadavu Ooru is important among the 170 parishes in Attapadi village. 'Ooru' means a place where tribal people live together. Its old name was "Kollankad". These people made their living from agriculture

alone. In earlier days, many people came from different parishes in Attapadi to Kollankadavu. They used to stay there and work and lived by the grains got from there. “*Ooru Moopan*” (Chieftain) is the important power in the “*Ooru*”. He is known by the names like “*Karuthala*”, “*Bandari*” and “*Mannakaran*”, etc. A total of 78 Scheduled Tribe families live in Kollankadavu. They belong to “*Irula*” community. 300 people comprising 153 men and 129 women. *Irula* is their language. *Irula* is a mixture of Malayalam, Kannada and Tamil languages. The researcher communicated with them with the help of teacher. Their language is rich with folk songs and stories. These

are orally communicated from one generation to the other.

Kollankadavu has turned to be the liquor free village in Attapadi. It was result of a joint attempt of social activists and the MGLC teacher. Even though these people have their own agriculture fields; they work in others’ fields. The increase in the cost cultivation and low price for their products force them to go for work outside. Increase in the cost of living has made these aboriginals’ life miserable.

Now, changes have occurred in dress, language, culture, and food style of Kollankadavu. But road to Kollankadavu is still far away from reality. Materials are carried to



*Fig. 1: View from Kollankadavu valley*



*Fig. 2: MGLC- The “school” at Kollankadavu*

Kollankadavu on head. These people depend on narrow mountain passes to travel to outside world. It affects the educational activities badly. Formal schools for giving general education to tribal people living in mountains away from inhabited lands are not practical and it is also impossible for the tribal children to come to formal school travelling kilometres through forests and hills daily.

Kollankadavu MGLC started to function in June 2003. MGLC was set up here taking the lack of transportation into consideration. In the beginning, the school was run in a house in the ooru. But in 2007, ADHADS built the school with the help of forest department. In the

beginning there were 39 children and the number fluctuated each year. Now, 16 children are studying in this MGLC. At present, about 15 students who passed out from this MGLC, continue their study in mainstream schools.

Through teacher’s words about Kollankadavu MGLC:-

“When this MGLC was started in Kollankadavu in June 2003, doubts were more than hopes. Though started with 39 students, now it continues with 16 children. We could send 23 children for higher studies. In the society, number of drunkards decreased, much change occurred in health matters, sanitation and agriculture. In the beginning, mid-



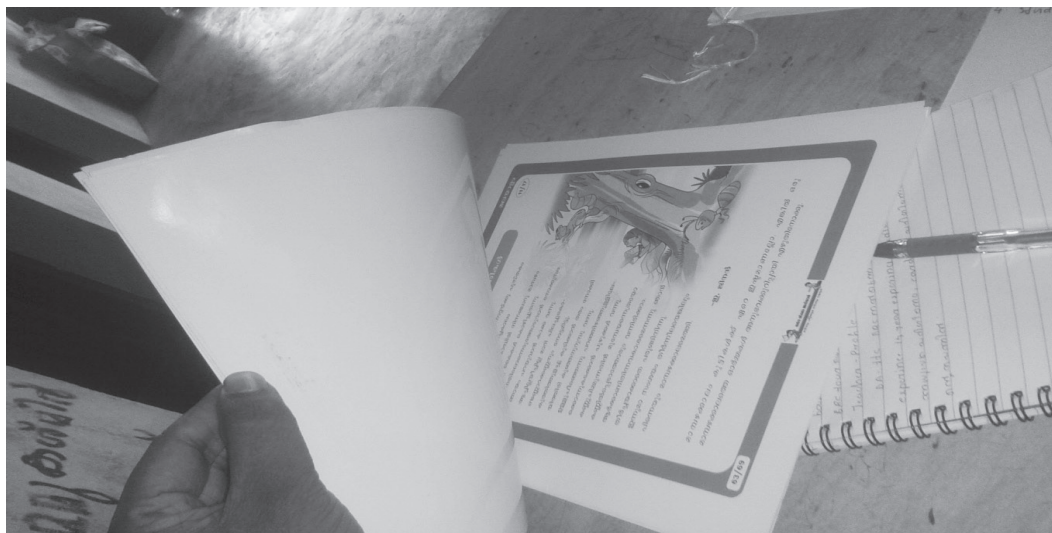
day meal was a problem. Today, we get rice and peas regularly from government machinery”.

Apart from a school, MGLC becomes a part of entire village activities. All needs of the village, be it social, cultural or the health related matters are fulfilled by MGLC. Thus, MGLC becomes the symbol of expectation and love of the village.

### **CURRICULUM OF THE SCHOOL**

MGLCs had their own curriculum up to 2009. The curriculum that MGLC followed from its beginning to 2009 was entirely different from normal school curriculum. It was tailored to the nature and function of MGLC. Its important speciality was that it used card method instead of textbooks. Learning activities were conducted according to this card method. From Standard I to Standard IV, teacher used to conduct learning activities

with the help of different cards. Card system used pictures of various animals, birds and insects printed on it to assist learning. For example, elephant card was used in language learning. Picture of birds were used in learning of mathematics. Picture of insects were used in environmental studies. Promotion to the next class was given after learning 12 cards. Its advantages were that students never felt any burden in learning process. Card system was used in evaluation process also. But subsequent revisions that happened in the state syllabus left out revising the MGLC curriculum. At present, MGLC follows the curriculum of SCERT, that is the curriculum of mainstream schools. It causes many problems in MGLC classroom. A culturally and socially different student at MGLC faces many problems when she/he is introduced to textbooks in normal schools.



*Fig. 3 (a): Card system*

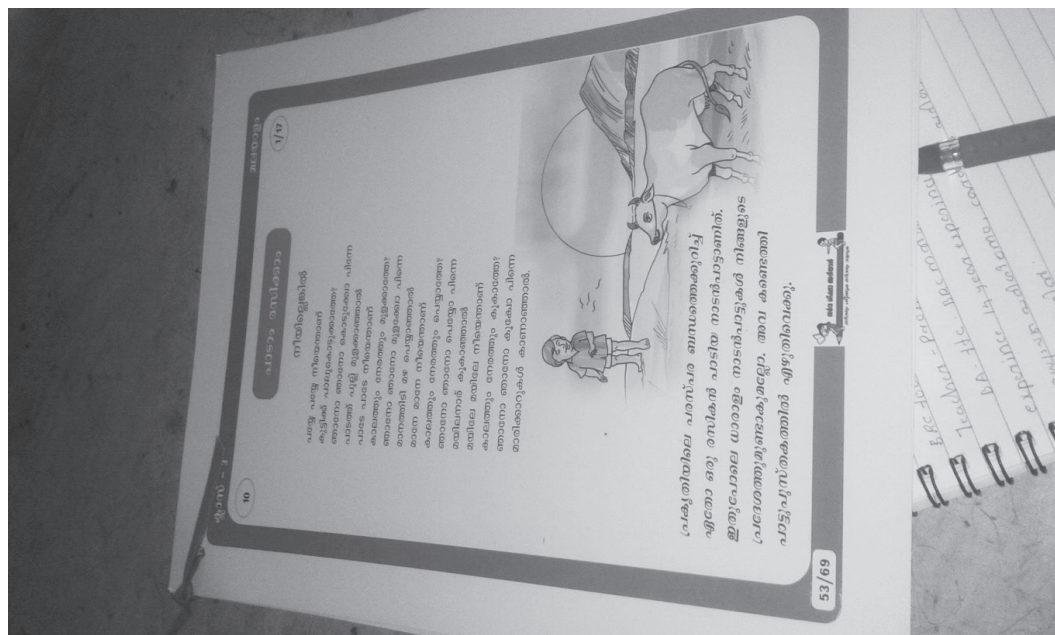


Fig. 3 (b): Card system

**TEACHER’S WORDS**

“Card system was helpful for MGLC student to study according to her/his interest and brilliance. But since the textbook system is different from students’ social and cultural surroundings she/he faces many problems in learning activities”.

Different from normal schools, in MGLC there is no bell to remind timing. There is no attendance. Students come here in a free atmosphere and indulge in learning activities. Here, the teacher creates a home atmosphere, so students are fearless and treat the school as a place like their ‘kudi’ (home). That is why the number of dropouts in MGLC is very less.

Co-curricular activities like sports and arts meets, including all MGLC schools in Attpadi region are conducted each year. In “Bal Sabha”, students perform various programmes, like speech, song and dance, etc. Tour programmes for students and teachers are conducted every year. On special occasions, like August 15, various programmes are conducted. Many such co-curricular activities are organised in MGLC study centres. It provides the students in MGLC with same experiences that the normal school students get. All special services given in normal schools like mid-day meal, egg and milk programme, etc. are given in MGLC also. In MGLC



*Figure 4 Students playing near MGLC building*



*Figure 5 Simple but neat kitchen*

classroom, teacher uses Malayalam and *Irula*, the native language of students, as medium of instruction.

But since the teacher is not a tribal, uses Malayalam more. Students most often use their tribal language.

It creates challenges in classroom activities. Many Malayalam words are unfamiliar to them. But the ignorance of native language is a challenge for the teacher.

### TEACHING METHODS AND STRATEGIES

Here, traditional teaching methods, like Lecture method, etc. are not effective. Because of student, belonging to four grades are involved in learning activities.

For effective teaching, the teacher uses heuristic method in MGLC classroom. It aims at the self-learning of students; that is the teacher gives assignments to each grade. For example, fourth grade are asked to find out the causes of environment pollution. They sit together and try

to find out its answer simultaneously while third standard students are given some other assignments. They too try to do it. The same is practised in first grade and second grade and the teacher guides them all. In MGLC classroom, teacher uses strategies appropriate for students' social and cultural surroundings. Common teaching strategies used in MGLC classroom are tribal riddles, drama based on native language, mono act, Song, *Kummikali* (local game), *Ellomkaradi* (tribal game), Proverbs, and tribal riddles. Riddles are common strategy used in MGLC classroom. Mainly they are used in their native languages.

Example: *Jill Jill Marathil Pathayiram Kakkakal* (thousands crows in a tree)



Fig.6: Learning aids

Teacher uses drama for some socially relevant studies. Dialogues of this drama are in their language. All students participate in such strategies. Teacher uses tribal song as an important strategy in classroom activity. There are many tribal songs which arouse social and scientific awareness. Teacher used them in this part of learning activity.

Example: “*Attapady Deva mallishera*

*Nine kannan vandhu ne eshara*” (The God of Attapadi is Mallishwran, I worship him every time). Sometimes, teacher uses traditional tribal art form, such as *Kummikali/Ellomkaradi*, etc., in classroom. These help students develop an awareness of their cultural and social surroundings. These kinds of art forms have been passed through generations.

MGLC keeps all records that are found in normal schools. All records except the attendance register are kept here. The teacher handles and keeps all records, like PTA report, mid-day meals record, admission register, TC book, TC copies, noon meal programme register, cash book, programme card records, Integrated Tribal Development Programme grant records, Health records of students, etc.

### DAILY SCHEDULE

School assembly is conducted each day before the class starts. Assembly is conducted in classroom itself. Assembly starts with prayer. After prayer, a fourth standard student

reads the pledge. Other students repeat it. Then the teacher reads important news-items from the newspaper taken from her this home. After that, the teacher gives some stories or songs with a normal lesson. After that, students’ practice drill, the assembly is dismissed. All students take part in assembly with interest.

Following is the class schedule in MGLC School.

09.30 to 10.45	- Environmental studies
11.00 to 11.45	- Mathematics
12.00 to 01.00	- Language
01.00 to 02.00	- Break
02.00 to 02.45	- Story/poem/drama, etc
03.00 to 04.00	- Self-learning

The atmosphere in MGLC is different from normal schools. Here the teacher provides a calm atmosphere in both classroom and school. This atmosphere is much interesting and joyful for the students.

### CLASSROOM STRUCTURE

Classroom structure in MGLC is quite different from that of normal classrooms. Here, pupils sit according to their grade. First grade students take the first row of seats. Other students occupy seats according to their grades. Thus, learning activities are done properly.

The main feature of a MGLC classroom is its diversity of the students. The pupil varies in IQ, emotional abilities, interests, etc.

Such factors make a MGLC classroom a great challenge to the teacher. In the case of classroom instruction, the teacher must be able to meet the requirements of every student in the class. The teacher demands direct involvement of every student in activities. Everyone takes part in this. A teacher can thus overcome the issue of individual difference in a MGLC classroom. And because of this reason the classroom is very active.

While observing the peer group interaction, we understand the affection and concern of fourth grade student and the naughtiness of the first grade students alike. The relationship between the students is generally very healthy. The students

are not at all hesitant to share their matters. According to the teacher, uniform is their favourite dress code. They are proud to wear uniform. Because by wearing uniform they think they have grown up. Teacher is very vigilant in students' personal hygiene. If they come to school with their nails uncut, the teacher herself/himself, does it at school. Teacher details to them the importance of neatness and good habits. As MGLC School provides a home environment, each student is fearless in classroom. The nature is so beautiful and green and students indulge in learning activities freely. Here, the student makes the school a home. School becomes joyful for them.



*Fig. 7: Homely classroom*

### THE TEACHER IN THE MGLC

Teacher has to take up many roles at a time. Those of a mother, a friend, so on and so forth. In short, a teacher is the soul of an MGLC, by whom a whole village gets transformed.

The desirable basic educational qualification for an MGLC teacher is graduation. Still some of them pass TTC also. With a meagre salary of Rs. 3000, the teachers in each MGLC have to suffer a lot. They have to overcome the bad weather and to cross deep forests to reach the respective schools. They overcome all these difficulties with the strength of their passion for teaching. They improve themselves through the training BRC gives in each six months. There is an organisation of MGLC teachers in Kerala called All Kerala Teachers Association. The MGLC teachers are commonly known as education volunteers. Joji, the teacher *Kollankadavu* MGLC, says-

“We work for a salary of Rs 3000 which is really meagre these days. To add to our woes, we haven’t got remuneration for the last 6 months. Still we cannot think of giving up this job with these children since they are our soul mates.”

They don’t have any complaint that they work for just Rs 3000 because they love students they teach very much. This very relation makes them adhere to this job. A teacher in a normal school may wind up her/his job after teaching her/his students. But things are really different in an MGLC. The duties are:

- To teach the students.
- To handle office duties relating to school.
- To deal with the day-to-day life of the students and to discuss it with their parents.
- To bring the children from remote areas who do not come to school by themselves.
- To handle the extension works related to the school.
- To handle office duties pertaining to BRC, DD office, etc.

If the teacher is on leave for a day then the whole school activities get blocked having no other teacher to substitute. So, MGLC teachers care for such a situation very much and even if one is on leave, she/he finds a suitable substitute there to get on with the school activities. Thus, an MGLC teacher deals with many things single handedly, though a helper is provided to support the daily meals programme.

### SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

Community and school depend upon each other for development and consistency. The effective involvement of MGLC has made *Kollankadavu* an alcohol-free *ooru*. MGLC also involves in the sanitary and health matters of *Kollankadavu ooru*. Water and fire wood for cooking at MGLC is brought by the *ooru* people. The people take part actively in all activities of MGLC. The people treat the programmes of MGLC as the programme of *ooru*. Cleaning of MGLC is done by the local people. For people in *ooru*, MGLC is

not a mere school; instead it is their social and cultural centre. As all parents actively participate in PTA and MTA meetings, the teacher can give clear directions to parent about their children. It is an important factor for the growth of school. MGLC conducts many extension activities in *ooru* like old age education, tailoring classes, agricultural awareness Classes, etc. *Rooni*, Chieftain of the *Ooru*, opines that MGLC has really made their *ooru* life full, which was earlier in darkness.

#### **ASPIRATION LEVEL AND ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS**

The aspiration of a normal school student may be to become a doctor or engineer. But the aspiration level

of tribal children in an MGLC is bound by their social and cultural surroundings. For example, a fourth grade student named Manikandan wishes to become a honey collector. Mallika's aspiration is to become a farmer. Students of second or third grades have no aspirations. They come to school just to get the mid-day meal.

As part of the study, the researcher conducted an achievement test in *Kollankadavu* MGLC. The question paper contained 10 questions from General Knowledge (G.K.), Malayalam and English. A test using this question paper was conducted in third and fourth grade students. The same test was given to third and fourth grade students in normal schools also. When the result was



*Fig. 8: A standard I student drawing*



compared, it was found that, MGLC students have scored very low marks. MGLC students did not even attempt some questions. It means that MGLC students' achievement level is very low. If the syllabus of normal school is retained in MGLC, this achievement level will continue to be low. So, the teacher suggests bringing the old card system back.

## CONCLUSION

MGLC schools play an active role in giving primary education to marginalised society. MGLC schools clearly keep their motto "if the child cannot reach the school, take the school to the child". Government has to formulate a curriculum based on their cultural settings, like the card system of teaching-learning which they earlier had. If textbooks are re-designed, including more elements of

their culture, their own games and folk art forms, the students learning may get improved. Though heuristic methods are followed in MGLC classrooms, it can be hoped that the introduction of new technologies, like IT enabled classrooms will better the output. It would be better to appoint two teachers in one MGLC instead of one. And if one teacher is from the tribal community, it would be much better. With proper learning experiences, IT enabled lessons and first-hand experiences, including exposures to the life of the main land, we can hope that we could increase the aspiration levels of these tribal children and instill in them a national outlook and a global vision. Whatever be the academic achievement they make, MGLCs would continue to remain as a centre to discover oneself and the world outside for the marginalised child.

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# Strategies Adopted for Enrolling Girls in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas Managed by Different Agencies in Gujarat

## An Exploratory Study

GOURI SRIVASTAVA\*

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### Abstract

*The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme is a promising and successful initiative of the Government of India. It is an integral part of SSA programme. The scheme provides second chance of formal residential schooling facility to out-of-school girls belonging to the most marginalised and hard to reach groups. Located in the Educationally Backward Blocks of twenty-seven states of India, it attempts to fulfil the Constitutional mandate of providing elementary schooling to girls, thereby reducing gender gaps at this crucial stage of education. It is specially designed for SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, BPL and for girls facing different physical disabilities. The scheme is being implemented by SSA, NGO's and the Mahila Samakhya Society. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to examine the strategies adopted for enrolling girls by different agencies in Gujarat and to see whether the neediest and the deprived get enrolled in the scheme.*

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### INTRODUCTION

The State of Gujarat came into being on 01 May 1960. The main produce of the state are tobacco, cotton and

groundnut. Rice and wheat are the major staples. About 3.665 million hectares of land area is under irrigation. It is also well known for

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textiles, garments, gems and jewellery, oil, soap, food and agro-processing industries. It is a major salt producing state.

The demographic composition within the state highlights that STs and SCs account for more than one-fourth of the state population. Nearly 4 per cent of the country's Muslim population lives in Gujarat. In the context of sex ratio, Gujarat with 918 females per 1000 males is below the National Sex Ratio of 940 females per 1000 males in 2011. The Child Sex Ratio is 886 females per 1000 males which is below the overall National Sex Ratio i.e. 914 as per Census 2011. Recently, released data on Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) as mentioned in Times of India (dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2014) states that in Gujarat's arid districts of Kachchh, Banaskantha and Surendernagar, IMR is high at 51. Average IMR in Gujarat is 45 slightly higher than the national average of 42. Some of the reasons cited in the newspaper are the absence of private doctors in Kachchh and inability of government centres to cope with this situation. Moreover, absence of health facilities in scattered and far flung habitations have also resulted in compounding this phenomenon.

The status of poverty in Gujarat as mentioned in India Human



**Table 1**  
**Select indicators of Gujarat**

<b>Total population</b>	<b>6.03 crore</b>
% Urban population	42.6
% SC population	6.7
% ST population	14.8
% Muslim population	9.06

Source: Census 2001.

Development Report, 2011 is lower than that of India in both rural and urban areas. Rural poverty is higher than urban poverty for all social groups. Poverty among STs is higher than the State average, but still lower than the incidence of poverty among SCs and STs at the all India level.

The rank of the state in the context of female work force participation rate was 26.0 as per Census 1991 and 27.9 in 2001. The percentage of female workers and non workers in Gujarat is given in Table 4.2.

**Table 2**  
**Female workforce participation (%)**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Female workers</b>	<b>Main workers</b>	<b>Marginal workers</b>	<b>Non-workers</b>
Rural	38.54	18.83	19.71	61.46
Urban	9.41	7.23	2.19	90.59
Total	27.91	14.60	13.32	72.09

Source: Statistical Profile on Women Labour, p.g.-13

From Table 4.2, it is seen that the percentage of female main workers in urban areas was more compared to rural areas. In the context of marginal workers, a similar trend was observed. The rural areas in Gujarat had more women marginal workers as compared to urban areas. The figure of non-workers shows a very interesting trend. The percentage of non-workers in urban areas was as high as 90 per cent whereas in rural, it was 61 per cent. It may be inferred from the above data that the female work force participation is more in rural areas as compared to urban areas. This phenomenon may be due to poverty of the household.

One programme that is implemented in Gujarat is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005).

This Act guarantees employment at a minimum wage for only 100 days in a year. Women account for 48 per cent of person days worked under the scheme nationwide, well above the 33 per cent guideline. MGNERGA provides social and economic security to women who are old, widowed and separated. Studies have highlighted that participation of SC and ST women has been generally high. This has been observed in States like Bihar and Jharkhand. The share of women's participation in MGNERGA in Gujarat and India are mentioned in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 highlights that MGNERGS in Gujarat and in India are same. The rural workforce involved in the scheme is 24 in Gujarat and at the all India level it is 22. The worker population ratio of rural women aged

**Table 3**  
**Share of women's participation in MGNERGS: Rural workforce and worker population ratio in 2009-10 (per cent)**

<b>State</b>	<b>MGNERGS</b>	<b>Rural workforce</b>	<b>Worker population ratio of rural women aged 15 and above</b>
Gujarat	48	31	19
India	48	22	22

Source: India Rural Development Report 2012-13, p.g. 276

15 and above for Gujarat is 19 and at the all India level it is 22.

During the freedom struggle, some of the significant events took place in different parts of the state and brought into prominence the city of Ahmedabad. Here, during the 1902 session of the Indian National Congress, Lady Vidyagauri Nilkanth and her sister Sharda Mehta, sang the National Anthem. The textile mill workers strike also began at this place in 1918. In this strike, Ansuya Behn, sister of Ambalal Sarabai, participated. The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 spearheaded by Gandhiji began from Sabarmati Ashram. This ashram is located in the Sabarmati suburb of Ahmedabad, on the banks of the river Sabarmati. From here the famous Dandi March was organized under the leadership of Gandhiji to break the salt law. This march began from Sabarmati Ashram near Ahmedabad, to the coastal village of Dandi, located at a small town called Navsari. After making salt at Dandi, Gandhi continued southward along the coast, producing salt and addressing meetings on the way.

Another place that has reminiscences of the freedom struggle is Kheda. Here, the poor peasants revolted against unjust tax levied due to famine in 1918. Borsad came into prominence in 1923-24, wherein a large number of women participated in the *satyagraha*. About five thousand women attended the meeting addressed by Gandhiji and in

another place, Auklao, four thousand women attended the meeting. They showed great courage in resisting police atrocities when their cows, buffaloes and other property were confiscated.

Bardoli rose into prominence in 1928. In the *satyagraha* movement that took place women out-numbered men in all political gatherings. They protested against the unjust tax that was levied by the government. Women supported their men folk in non-payment of their dues, even though they were evicted from their lands, their livestock were confiscated and their household goods auctioned. Some of the women intelligensia who supported the Bardoli *satyagraha* were Manibehn Patel, Mithuben Petit and Bhaktibehn Desai. These women stayed in a temporary tent on land declared to be sold by the government. Bardoli set a new example as this was the first time that simple, unsophisticated rural women participated in the freedom struggle, though they belonged to the well-off peasant section and were owner cultivators i.e. *the Khudakhasta*.

In the context of education, as early as 1893, Maharaja of Baroda introduced Compulsory Education for boys in Amreli Taluk and, in 1906, it was extended to the rest of the state. In 1917, Vithalbai Patel got the Bill on Free and Compulsory Education, passed which became the first law on Compulsory Education, popularly known as Patel Act.

In the arena of women's education, the name of Vidya Gauri Nilkanth (1876-1958) and Sharada Behn Mehta (1882-1970) stand out. Both educated, they were the first two lady graduates of the state. Other women who contributed in the freedom struggle and in the overall development of women, were Maniben Patel, Anusuyabehn Sarabhai, Mridula Sarabhai, Sarladevi Sarabhai, Indumati Sheth, Gangabehn Vaidya and Hansa Jivraj Mehta, the noted educationist. These eminent women personalities made a significant mark in education in the post-independent India. Under the leadership of Hansa Mehta, a Committee (1962-64) was constituted by the National Council of Women's Education (NCWE). Among the significant recommendations of the committee that continue to influence education in India is the induction of women teachers in boys' schools to encourage girls to join these institutions. Same curriculum for boys' and girls at the elementary stage with home science as a common core subject for both boys and girls at the middle stage were recommended. It was envisioned that this focus would go a long way in addressing gender bias and stereotypes.

To continue the legacy of education and overall empowerment of girls and women in the state, several schemes and programmes have been initiated. They are -

- Enrolment drive campaign – “*Shala Praveshotsav*” and “*Kanya Kelwani Rath Yatra*”. These campaigns are organised at the beginning of every academic year.
- To encourage girl's education, a scheme of *Vidyalaxmi Bond* has been introduced. Under the scheme, a girl child enrolled in standard is given a bond of Rs. 1000. The amount of the bond with interest is handed over to the girl child after completion of the primary education cycle i.e. after passing standard VII. Total 11, 84,655 *Vidyalaxmi Bonds* worth Rs. 115.45 crore have been distributed.
- Separate toilets have been constructed in government primary schools to promote health and hygiene.
- Free uniforms, textbooks, school bags, notebooks, reference books, fee exemption, mid-day meals are some of the incentives given to strengthen access and retention of girls.
- Further, to reduce the drop-out rate of girls at upper primary level '*Meena Campaign*' has been introduced in 18,920 schools. Around 3.93 lakh girls are under *Meena Manch* (at upper primary level), 2.68 lakh girls under *Meena Cabinet* (Primary level), 2.75 lakh girls under *Sanghas* (Community members), formed in 2009-10. *Meena Manches* and *Meena Sanghas* were active in creating awareness among peers as well as community members.
- To address the phenomenon of declining sex ratio, *Sarpanches*



of some villages have taken initiatives like making couples and guests take a 'save the girl child' pledge at marriages and religious functions. 'Beti Bachao, Beti Vadhao' scheme is also being spread to villages.

- Special programmes under SSA have been implemented for marginalised girls i.e. National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)*.

The above initiatives, along with the efforts of Non Governmental Organisations, have impacted the educational scenario. This phenomenon is reflected in the indicators given below:

Literacy rate in the state has shown an increasing trend over the years. In 1991, the percentage of literacy for men as well as women was higher than the national average. This phenomenon was also seen in 2001 and 2011.

As per the India's Human Development Report 2011, there is high degree of intra-state variation in educational level, with literacy rate being low in the tribal belt. The report mentions that the literacy rate among STs that constitute 17 per cent of the state population is the lowest among all social groups in the state.

The state's decadal differential growth rate in female literacy (12.10) is slightly higher than the national scenario rate (11.3).

**Table 4**  
**Literacy rates in Gujarat and India**

Literacy rate	1991			2001			2011		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
National	64.13	39.29	52.21	75.85	54.16	65.38	82.14	65.46	74.04
Gujarat	73.39	48.92	61.57	80.5	58.6	69.97	87.20	70.70	79.31

Source: GOI Census, 1991, 2001 and 2011 and reflected in Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012

**Table 5**  
**Decadal differential rates in literacy**

Literacy rate	1991-2001			2001-2011		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
National	11.72	14.87	13.17	6.29	11.3	8.66
Gujarat	17.11	9.68	8.40	6.75	12.10	9.34

Source: GOI Census, 1991, 2001 and 2011 and reflected in Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012

Table 6 highlights that the number of co-educational schools is more than single sex schools. At the lower primary level, the number of girls' schools is slightly higher than boys' schools. At the upper primary level, the number of girls' schools is comparatively more than boys.

The enrolment figure at the lower primary school denotes that boys' enrolment is slightly higher than girls'.

At the upper primary level, the same phenomenon has been observed. The gap in enrolment of boys and girls at the upper primary level is more than at the lower primary stage.

Table 8 depicts that the drop-out rate of girls at both the levels of education has been reducing. The drop-out rate, especially in 2005-06, had reduced to nearly half and, at the upper primary level, the drop-

**Table 6**  
**Total schools in the State**

Number of lower primary schools			Number of higher primary schools		
Boys only LPS	Girls only LPS	Co- education LPS	Boys only HPS	Girls only HPS	Co- education HPS
52	67	10,986	1,202	1,349	2,551

Source: DISE and reflected in Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012

**Table 7**  
**Enrolment of girls**

Lower primary schools only			Higher primary schools excluding Class VIII enrolment (Schools having Classes 1 to 7/8)		
Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
21,42,574 (52%)	20,13,082 (48%)	41,55,656	38,74,223 (54%)	33,06,506 (46%)	71,80,729

Source: DISE and reflected in Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012

**Table 8**  
**Drop-out rate of girls**

Details	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Drop-out primary	10.16	5.13	3.24	2.98	2.29	2.20	2.09	2.07
Drop-out upper primary	18.79	11.82	10.29	9.87	8.87	8.66	7.95	7.56

Source: DISE and reflected in Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012

out of girls had reduced by more than half.

The percentage of schools in Gujarat where School Management Committees (SMCs) have been constituted is 97. It has been reported that the curriculum for school education has been revised and Continued Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) has acquired universal coverage. The working hours as per RTE are 40 hours per week. In the year 2012-13, 97 per cent teachers were professionally qualified.

### THE PRESENT STUDY

The study was undertaken with the following objectives to:

- examine different mobilisation strategies for enrolling girls from marginalised groups in KGBVs run by different managements,
- study whether there is any follow up procedure adopted after mobilisation of the community for enrolment of girls, and
- analyse whether the selection procedures adopted covers the most needy and educationally deprived girls as per the norms of RTE Act.

### METHODOLOGY

The study is mainly qualitative in nature. It focuses on examining KGBVs run by different managements in the states of Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. In each state, two KGBVs run by different agencies were studied in depth to examine the strategies adopted for enrolling

girls from the marginalised sections of society. In each KGBV, focus group discussions were organised with parents, community members, teachers and the beneficiaries of the scheme. Interviews were conducted with senior level state officials to know the procedures adopted for enrolling girls. Structured interviews were also canvassed to teachers, wardens and girls to know in detail their perceptions about different mobilisation strategies and barriers for enrolment of girls. Efforts were also made to elicit from them whether the selection procedure adopted by the state covered the most needy and educationally deprived girls as per RTE Act, 2009.

The field visits were undertaken in two KGBVs that are managed by SSA and *Mahila Samakhya*, for examining the strategies adopted for enrolling girls from the most marginalised communities. Before visiting KGBV, discussions were held with senior officers at Ahmedabad to understand the functioning of KGBVs in the state. KGBVs managed by different agencies were identified by the state officials. Accordingly, field visits were undertaken to KGBVs located in Panchmahal, Halol Block and in districts Vadodara, Chhota Udepur Block. Discussions were held with wardens, teachers, girls and parents to ascertain strategies evolved for enrolling girls in KGBVs. In addition, interview schedules were circulated to girls, teachers and community members to know the strategies adopted for enrolling girls.

**STATUS OF KGBV SCHEME**

Table 4.9 highlights that the number of KGBVs in operation has expanded over the years. Presently, there are 89 KGBVs that are operational.

Gujarat has adopted all the three models of KGBVs. Model 1 has a wider coverage compared to Models II and III.

From Table 4.11, it appears that in Gujarat, majority of girls enrolled in KGBVs are from OBC background, followed by girls from ST and SC communities. The percentage of girls from BPL and Muslim backgrounds is less.

**Table 9**  
**Status of KGBV in Gujarat**

State	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Total KGBV sanctioned up to 2013-14
Gujarat	30	14	8	11	23	0	3	89

Source: Data available from the field

**Table 10**  
**Models of KGBV operational in the state by SSA and MS**

KGBV Model	Managed by SSA	Managed by Mahila Samakhya	Total
Model -I	36	7	43
Model-II	17	7	24
Model-III	21	1	22
Total	74	15	89

Source: Data available from the field

**Table 11**  
**Enrolments of girls in KGBVs up to 31.3.2011 in the state**

Category	2011
SC	686(12.37%)
ST	2149 (38.75%)
OBC	2484 (44.79%)
Muslim	179 (3.23%)
BPL	48 (0.87%)
Total	5546

Source: Data available from EdCil

## PERCEPTION OF OFFICER INCHARGE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION

The officer in-charge of girl's education informed that a multi-pronged approach was adopted for enrolling girls in KGBVs. This included organisation of community mobilisation, mass campaigns, rallies, drama, movies and door-to-door campaigns. Well known community campaigns organised at District and Block levels were *Mahila Sammelan* and *Ma-Beti Sammelan* for instilling among parents the importance of education and empowerment of girls and women. Detailed surveys were conducted in villages to identify drop-out and never-enrolled girls. Further, local newspapers of the states advertised about KGBVs. Sometimes important public places were used for disseminating information about KGBVs and the facilities it provided for overall development of marginalised girls.

Mention was made that since the KGBV had completed more than nine years of existence in the state, girls who had passed out and benefited from the scheme had now become popular agents of mobilisation. Many times, they would convince other parents in the neighbourhood to send their daughters to schools, particularly to KGBVs. Facilities,

along with academic and enriched curriculum in the KGBVs, were



mentioned by passed out girls, to motivate parents and community members.

The School Management Committees (SMCs), constituted under RTE, have also helped in identifying and enrolling girls from low socio-economic background. Further, local officials, Cluster Resource Coordinator (CRC) in their meetings also made participants and local teachers aware about the scheme. For ensuring proper functioning of KGBVs as model schools of girls, the government had constituted Kasturba Management Committees (KMCs) for each KGBV. This committee was formed simultaneously with the formation of School Management Committee in the school. It was mentioned that parents were actively involved in the management of KGBVs. Regular

monthly meetings of KMC members were held at KGBVs and decisions pertaining to many activities of girls' education were taken. Quarterly parents' meetings were being held in KGBVs for sharing of girls' progress and achievements (*Initiatives on girls' education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012*). The officer in-charge of girls' education stated that members of the KGBV management committee would be trained for proper functioning of the scheme with close interface with community members with the help of modules developed by the state.

Further, during the discussions, it emerged that enrolments in KGBVs are done before June, i.e. before the academic sessions. Enrolments are also done throughout the years in different classes, based on the available vacancies. The age of girls entering KGBVs varied from ten plus to eleven years. The upper age limit was 16 years. As has already been mentioned, that preference in enrolment was given to those girls who were never enrolled and drop-outs at different stages of Elementary Education. The criteria of the scheme were followed in giving preference only to girls from SC, ST, OBC, BPL and from minority backgrounds. In addition, KGBVs administered by different managements also evolved some additional criteria in the course of implementation of the scheme. Presently, the criteria followed include girls who are orphans, of single parents and girls with disabilities.

There are no set guidelines for assessing the academic levels of girls entering KGBVs. The document "Initiatives on Girls Education under SSA-Gujarat 2010 to 2012" mentions that a pre-test is conducted. Bridge course is conducted for girls of age 10+ years and depending on the competencies, they are enrolled in sixth, seventh or eighth standards. The minimum duration of the bridge course is three months for drop-out girls. However, the girls who require individual attention are provided academic guidance. This matter was discussed by senior officials. During the discussions, it was revealed that senior girls also helped in addressing academic challenges of the new entrants. The state officer mentioned that in most of the KGBVs, oral and written assessments were conducted to identify the learning levels of girls and they were admitted to appropriate classes. In cases where the comprehension level of girls was not up to Class V, bridging was done for periods varying from three to nine months. The criteria adopted for assessing girls were based on writing, reading and numeracy skills. *In 2013-14, the Government of Gujarat plans to enroll girls in Class IX in KGBV if asharamshalas are not located near the habitation.* However, only residential facilities would be provided to girls transiting to Class IX. Transport facilities would also be provided to girls if schools were distantly located for ensuring safety and security.

Enrolments in KGBV at the entry point did not always ensure completion of elementary stage of education. During the discussion, it was reported that after joining a KGBV, few girls dropped out. The main reason cited was poverty of the household, migration of parents due to poverty and unemployment, marriage in the family and work related to agrarian operations. Every effort was made by the teachers and wardens to track the drop-out girls. Parents were contacted to ascertain the reasons. Confidence building measures are adopted to convince both the girls and their parents and regular follow up undertaken by KGBV staff members. Seats of the drop-out girls are kept vacant and filled up only after three months.

### ACTIVITIES IN KGBVs FOR OVERALL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF GIRLS

- Training in self-defence, judo-karate, *lathi*, *lazim* and *tirandaji*.
- Organising sports like kabbadi, kho-kho, long-jump and swimming. Some girls had participated in sports competition- '*Khel Mahakumbh*' and won prizes and certificates.
- Promoting exposure visits to places like

banks, railway stations, libraries, and science city to make them aware of the functioning of public service undertakings.

- Organising educational tours for familiarise girls with developments taking place in Science and Technology.
- Providing vocational training in local crafts. Girls trained in crafts participated in '*Akhil Bhartiya Hastakala Pradarshan*' and won certificates.

### DISCUSSION WITH DIRECTOR Mahila Samakhya

The Director, *Mahila Samakhya* stated that girls enrolled in KGBV belonged to the most marginalised groups. In-depth surveys of drop-outs and never-enrolled girls were undertaken by *Sangha Members* in the months of May and June in their respective villages. *Sarpanches* were contacted to identify girls who have not gone to school for three to four years. Based on the information



provided by grass roots workers, a detailed list was prepared of girls from different villages who had discontinued schooling at different levels. The identified girls were given preference in KGBVs. The *Gram Panchayat* and *Sarpanches* played a proactive role in motivating parents to send their daughters to schools. As stated earlier, since KGBV has now completed more than nine years of existence in the state, girls who had passed out from KGBV, had also become mobilising agents. Another strategy adopted for motivating parents to send the girls to KGBV was by organising exhibitions in different parts of the state. In these exhibitions, different craft items and dresses made by the girls were exhibited to give parents first-hand information about skill based activities in KGBVs. These exhibitions encouraged parents to have a positive image of the scheme and its overall benefits.

The *Mahila Samakhya* Director also mentioned that sometimes discussions were held with influential caste *Panchayat* members to encourage them to motivate parents to send their daughters to schools. They were also appraised about the KGBV scheme. In 2010-11, '*Anandi Yatra*' and '*Tanavana*' were organising for the purpose of enrolling girls in schools and in KGBVs. Religious leaders were at times contacted to convince them about the importance of girls' education.

Mention was also made about meetings with parents at different

villages during late evening, i.e from 8:30 to 9 p.m., to convince them about the importance of girls' education. This time was chosen to get greater representation of parents from agrarian backgrounds, petty vendors and different wage labourers. Sometimes, audio-video materials were used for creating awareness amongst poor parents about the intergenerational impact the scheme had on education and empowerment of girls. One of the films used for spreading awareness about KGBV was *Keri Sansodhan*. In addition, a document that was widely disseminated was 'Girl Star' that was shared with drop-out girls for mobilising them to get enrolled in KGBV. This document mentions girl role models from different fields.

Teachers in KGBV are also trained for mobilising the community on girls' education and empowerment. In *Mahila Samakhya* run KGBVs, girls of 10 years are also enrolled, particularly those who have no parents and guardians. These girls are looked after by a budget provided by MS. Thus, it appears from discussions with Director of MS that KGBVs managed by them do adopt the overall guidelines of the scheme but some modifications are done at the implementation stage. This has been done to cover the most needy and deprived girls and thereby attempting to fulfil the RTE mandate.

Thus, from the discussions with senior level functionaries of the states, it was observed that the most



marginalised girls got preference in enrolments in KGBVs run by both the managements, i.e. SSA and MS. This was well in accordance with the guidelines of the scheme. However, as the scheme had completed more than nine years of its existence in the state, the criteria of enrolment had acquired certain modifications. Presently, it included girls who were orphans and of single parents.

In KGBVs managed by *Mahila Samakhya*, there was flexibility in norms related to enrolment. The intake capacity in Model –II was more than 100 girls at the time of the field visit. This additionality in number of girls and the recurring cost incurred on them, as mentioned, was managed by MS. During the discussion with MS functionaries, it was mentioned that they procured commodities of daily utility for girls, for example, cloth, food items, etc., by negotiating with wholesale dealers. In this, the *Sangha* women played a proactive role in procuring food items for girls from the community.

There are no specific guidelines for enrolling girls with disabilities.

Multiple context specific strategies are evolved for mobilising community and parents for making them aware about the scheme. Follow-up of girls is undertaken by wardens and teachers, especially for girls who had dropped out. Parents and girls are counselled and confidence-building measures are adopted to bring back the girls into KGBVs. Seats are only filled when the girls fail to return within three months.

The process of assessing the learning levels of girls to be enrolled has not been documented.

### PERCEPTION OF KGBV TEACHERS

The present KGBV was established after a lot of struggle. During discussions with the teachers, it emerged that they had to face a lot of challenges in bringing girls to KGBV and in gaining the confidence of parents and the community members. They added that for mobilising girls for the scheme they had to adopt

### CASE STUDY 1

District	Vododara
Block	Chhota Udepur
KGBV	Zoz
Model	1
Location	Gamanfaliya Main Road, At. Gamanfaliya, Ta. Chhotaudepur, Vodadara
Management	<i>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
Building	Own
Enrolments in 2013	100

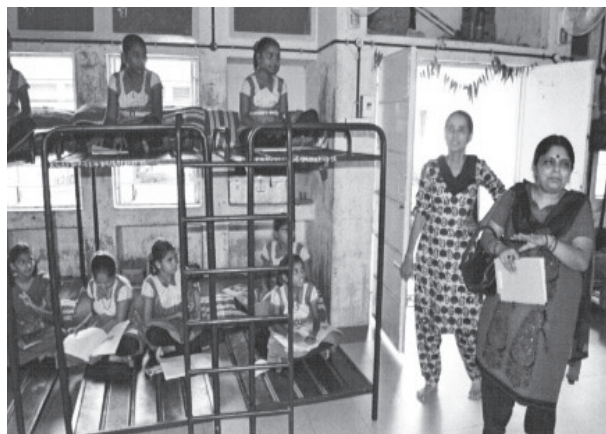


multiple strategies. Initially, they had to personally visit villages, meet community members and convince them about KGBVs and their facilities. In the last few years, pass out girls from the scheme were used for motivating parents, girls and community members. Enrolment drive for identifying potential girls is generally done in the month of April. Admissions are done in KGBVs in the month of June. It was stated that for the last three years' parents themselves are coming personally to KGBVs to enroll their daughters.

The never-enrolled girls are initially bridged for nineteen days in writing, numeracy and reading skills. Once they get familiar with these competencies, they are exposed to the curriculum of Classes I to V. Approximately, fifty-five days or more are required to bridge girls who had dropped out of Class IV. Efforts for bridging girls to Class VI varied from girl to girl. Normally, bridging takes place for one year in some cases. Thus, in limited cases, girls in KGBV stay for a period of four years. At the time of field visit, 90 per cent girls enrolled are from ST communities. They were from Rathava, Naika and Dhanka communities. Most of the girls had parents from low socio-economic backgrounds; they were daily wagers, construction workers and migrant labourers.

The curriculum in KGBV consists of subjects like Gujarati, Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Maths, Science and Social Sciences. Textbooks used in the primary schools of the state are adopted. Method of assessment is similar to those followed by government primary schools of the state. But the girls have difficulty in understanding Maths, Science and English language. The books used by girls are those of Gujarat State Board.

Issues of safety and security are given top priority. Girls are taught



the use of *lathi* for self-defence. Training in *Karate* is also imparted to girls for ensuring their security. During the field visit, demonstration of *Karate* was shown by using terms in Gujarati. Regular *Chowkidar* is appointed for providing secure environment to all girls. All important contact numbers of police personnel and administrative officials of the block and the district are painted on the walls of KGBV.

The enriched curriculum consists of folk dance, music and yoga etc. Sports and physical education are an integral part of the curriculum. Girls in the KGBV are trained in shotput, kabbadi and other athletics events. Teacher and wardens proudly state that some of the girls participate in state level competitions. A few girls have got certificates and medals. Many sports competitions are held by SCERT, *Khel Mahakumbh*, for all primary schools at the block, district and state levels. In these competitions, KGBV girls participate (For details, see publication on Initiatives on Girls' Education under SSA-Gujarat, 2010 to 2012).

Curriculum related activities and enriched curriculum in KGBVs had helped in building confidence among parents and the community. This has positively impacted the enrolment of girls. For the last two years, there has been a growing demand for enrolments of girls. However, as per the scheme guidelines,

only 100 girls are admitted. While the guidelines of the scheme are followed, sometime the teachers had to evolve new criteria for admission by giving preference to girls who had applied earlier.

In the context of enrolment, there was a consensus among senior functionaries and teachers that the most marginalised girls got admitted in KGBVs and that no separate criteria existed for girls with disabilities. This was also observed during the field visit.

#### **DISCUSSIONS WITH TEACHERS, CRC AND BRC COORDINATORS FROM KGBV, NASWADI BLOCK, POCHAMBA**

The teachers and BRC coordinators from Pochamba disseminated knowledge about KGBV in local weekly markets i.e. *haats*. There was mention of two *haats* i.e. Dhvand Ghat and Rangpur *haat*. This initiative was a success as poor parents came to know the details of the scheme. The coordinators mentioned that this scheme with all its provisions had



motivated parents from low socio-economic backgrounds to educate their daughters. The commonly cited attraction was that it addressed the direct and opportunity cost of educating their daughters. Further, the officials also mentioned that now parents want to educate their daughters as there is a feeling that educated girls would help in improving the quality of life of their families of origin, and also in procreation. According to them, the KGBV scheme has seeds of intergenerational impact on equity, equality and quality concerns in education.

Teachers from Pochamba unanimously stated that now there was no need for them to make extra efforts for convincing parents to send



their daughters to school. KGBV had now emerged as an elite institution in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs). The overall environment

comprising of educational facilities, food, and health check-up, life skills, training in self-defence and in traditional crafts motivated community members, parents and girls.

### DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS

Parents were satisfied with the KGBV scheme. They mentioned that they got to know about KGBV through various sources. Some of commonly cited ones were:

- Local media
- Teachers and wardens
- Meeting with *Sarpanches*
- Local weekly *Haats*
- From KGBVs girls
- Community members

Parents are very enthusiastic about the scheme. They proudly mentioned that the KGBV environment had impacted the overall personality of their daughters. In their own words, they mentioned the following:

Parents did not mention the academic aspect of the scheme, as they were illiterate. They were more than happy to know that the scheme took full care of their daughters' academic needs and they had not incurred any direct expenditure on education.

They expressed their satisfaction on the overall performance of their daughters and gave full credit to the teachers for this.

### अभिभावकों के विचार

सभी अभिभावकों ने कहा कि के.जी.बी.वी. में लगातार स्वास्थ्य की जाँच होती है और उनकी लड़कियों का स्वास्थ्य अब अच्छा रहने लगा है और हम इस व्यवस्था से संतुष्ट हैं। हमारे गाँव की लड़कियाँ अच्छा पढ़ रही हैं और हम चाहते हैं कि जो लड़कियाँ हमारे गाँव में शिक्षा से वंचित रह गई हैं उन्हें भी के.जी.बी. वी. में दाखिला मिले। उन्होंने स्पष्ट रूप से कहा कि जो लड़कियाँ के.जी.बी.वी में पढ़ रही हैं वे बाल-विवाह के खिलाफ हैं। वे आगे पढ़ना चाहती हैं और अपने परिवार और समाज की सेवा करना चाहती हैं। उनका सपना है कि वे आगे चलकर अध्यापिका, क्लेक्टर, डॉक्टर, इंजीनियर बनें। कुछ अभिभावकों ने कहा कि उनकी शिक्षित लड़कियों के कारण उनके जीवन में भी काफी परिवर्तन आया है। उनकी लड़कियाँ जब घर आती हैं तो साफ-सफाई के बारे में, स्वास्थ्य के बारे में और बातचीत के तौर-तरीके के बारे में जानकारी देती हैं। इससे उनका जीवन भी सुधरने लगा है। पढ़ाई की महत्ता के बारे में चर्चा करती है जिससे गाँव की और लड़कियाँ भी प्रोत्साहित होती हैं। अब उन्हें सिलाई, सुरक्षा, जूडो-कराटे, योगा और अपनी सभ्यता और संस्कृति के बारे में अच्छी जानकारी रहती है। नृत्य और संगीत तथा हस्तकला का अच्छा प्रशिक्षण दिया जाता है। अभिभावकों ने कहा कि वे के.एम.सी. की मीटिंग में शामिल होते हैं। वे चाहते हैं कि सरकार के.जी.बी.वी. को कक्षा बाहरवीं तक करे।

During discussions, the girls mentioned that they came to know about KGBV from senior girls studying in KGBV. The other sources of information were their own parents, community members. Sometimes, newspapers mentioned about KGBV. Before joining KGBV, their learning levels were assessed by appearing for written and oral tests. However, they were not very clear in their response. Mostly girls stated that they had to appear for oral test. To elicit in-depth perceptions of girls on procedure of enrolment and other provisions of the scheme, interview schedules were set up for ten girls. Out of them, four girls mentioned that they were studying in Class V before joining KGBV. Two girls mentioned that they were studying in Classes I and II and had dropped out after these classes. After

### GROUP DISCUSSION WITH GIRLS

Table 12

#### Age of KGBV girls interviewed

Age	Number of girls
13-16	10

Source: Field Data



a period of three years, they joined KGBV. Four girls mentioned that they had passed Class III and had dropped out. The commonly cited reason for discontinuing education was poverty of the household, involvement in remunerative agrarian work and migration of parents.



In the context of curriculum, the girls mentioned that initially they had problems in understanding the content related to different subjects of Classes V and VI, but after bridging was done for a period varying from three to nine months, they were able to understand the syllabus of Class VI.



Girls were very happy with the facilities provided to them in KGBV. They were very appreciative of the food provided to them. In addition, they mentioned that the training provided to them in karate and using lathis for self-defence was very useful. They mentioned that the training they got in self-defence would be used by them in training other girls in their village and in the neighbourhood. Sessions on dance and music helped them to be connected with their culture and heritage. There was a unanimous agreement among them for up scaling KGBVs up to Class XII.

## CASE STUDY 2

District	Panchmahal
Block	Halol
KGBV	Dhinkva
Model	II
Location	KGBV Building, At. and PO. Dhinkva, Ta. Halol
Management	<i>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
Building	Own
Enrolments in 2013	102



During focus group discussions, girls reported that there was no girl among them who was specially challenged. None of their peers had any kind of disability— visual, hearing or orthopedic. They were also not very clear about the disabled girls in their families and in their own villages in terms of number or their educational status. Only one girl mentioned that her mother did not want to educate her disabled sister as she felt that education held out no future for her.

### DISCUSSIONS WITH BRC/CRC COORDINATORS



The coordinators divulged that enrolments in KGBVs were conducted by organising surveys and enrolment drives in the months of March and April. Girls are enrolled in the month of June. The present scheme had positively impacted the overall status of girls. They added that in district Panchmahal, the incidence of child marriage had declined considerably. Also, reported cases of mis-match marriages of older girls with younger boys show a declining trend. The coordinators mentioned that one

of the reasons responsible for this phenomenon was the proactive role of *Mahila Samakhya* and *Sangha* members. There was also a mention of efforts of non-governmental organisations in preventing such customary practices; however the names of the organisations were not stated. The coordinators mentioned that KGBVs are now becoming agencies of social change, particularly among adolescent girls. According to them, the criteria of enrolment followed were multiple. Some of them are:

- Girls who dropped out of school during past two years.
- Never-enrolled girls belonging to age-group 12-13 years.
- Girls whose parents reside in difficult geographical terrain like hilly areas, scattered habitation and forest reserve areas. Girls in scattered habitation were given preference in KGBV, especially those who came from areas having no school.
- Girls with single parent.
- Orphans.
- BPL card holders.
- Girls whose parents are migratory.

Girls sometimes dropped out in between academic sessions; their seats are kept vacant for three months only.

The BRC and CRC coordinators stated that parents of enrolled girls migrated from Panchmahal district because of poverty, small holdings, and absence of source of income, debt due to borrowing for spending

on social and cultural functions. Alcoholism among male members of the family not only compounded poverty of the household but also impacted the overall wellbeing of girls and women. Parents generally migrated to Kathiwar, Rajkot, Sabarkantha and Saurashtra.

The Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs) stated that enrolments in KGBV adopted a few other strategies that were earlier stated by senior officials and parents. Some of them were door-to-door surveys, organisation of parents seminars and night meetings with them. Also, Right to Education (RTE) campaigns were conducted at *Gram Sabhas* and *Panchayats*, wherein enrolment and retention of girls in KGBVs were focused upon. Four days' campaign "Let's show

the dreams" was used to mobilise community members on issues related to education and empowerment of the girl child. Popularising KGBV scheme with details was also done through posters, rallies, etc. In these rallies, posters were used to disseminate details of the scheme.

The BRC and CRC coordinators stated that the girls were imparted the following skills in KGBV:

- Repairs of cycles.
- Use of potter wheel and instruments used by blacksmiths.
- Traditional printing '*pithore*' along with filling colours in different motifs and designs.
- Beauty parlor technique.
- Jewellery designing.
- Preparing bamboo items.
- Drawing.





- Painting.
- Using computer for designing and typing.
- Skills related to preparing nutritive food items.
- Communications and negotiation skills.
- Karate.
- Music and traditional folk dance.
- Stitching, knitting and sewing.
- Gardening.

### DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS



Parents overwhelmingly mentioned that they wanted to educate their

daughters in KGBV. They were fully satisfied with the academic and other provisions given to girls for their overall development. They informed that in their villages, the *Sangha* members played a crucial role in mobilising girls for education and enrolments in KGBV. Now, KGBV girls have become role models for other girls in their village. As mentioned earlier, KGBV girls have now become important agencies of mobilising other drop-outs and never-enrolled girls in the villages. Parents reported that KGBV experiences had made their daughters assertive, knowledgeable and agents of social change. Their daughters have voiced their opinion against child marriage and were more aware about health and hygiene, particularly menstrual management. In the context of education, they have expressed their desire to pursue higher and professional education. They want to be gainfully employed and contribute to the finances of their family. They strongly felt that

#### अभिभावकों के विचार

हम लोग इस स्कीम से बहुत संतुष्ट हैं। हमारे समय में अगर यह होता तो हम सब पुरुष एवं महिलाएं भी पढ़-लिख जाते। जीने के अच्छे तौर-तरीके सीख जाते, जिससे अपने परिवार और समुदाय को बेहतर योगदान प्रदान करते। एक अभिभावक ने कहा कि उसकी लड़की तथा वे लड़कियाँ जो के.जी.बी.वी. में पढ़ रहीं हैं वे सभी गाँव की शोभा बन गई हैं। पढ़ाई के अलावा ये लड़कियाँ अपनी और गाँव की हर लड़कियों की सुरक्षा कैसे की जाए उसके बारे में अच्छी जानकारी रखती हैं। सुरक्षा से संबंधित लाठी और कराटे की जानकारी सभी को देती हैं। हमारी लड़कियाँ तथा गाँव की हर लड़की अब अच्छा पढ़-लिख जाती है। साफ-सफाई के तौर-तरीके के बारे में भी के.जी.बी.वी. की लड़कियाँ प्रचार व अच्छी जानकारी रखती हैं। हम सभी चाहते हैं कि के.जी.बी.वी. को बाहरवीं तक किया जाए और अन्य ब्लॉकों में भी इस स्कीम को स्थापित किया जाए ताकि गाँव की कोई भी लड़की स्कूली शिक्षा से वंचित न रहे।

education would improve the quality of their family and would have an intergenerational impact on girls, education and empowerment. Some of the parents also stated that the educated daughters helped in preventing domestic and community based violence against girls and women.

### DISCUSSIONS WITH TEACHERS



Teachers revealed that when the scheme began in the state they had to face problems in enrolment of girls.

It was a big challenge for them to convince parents to send their daughters to residential schools like KGBV. In addition, bridging girls was a trying experience for them. Girls seeking admission not only came from different socio-economic backgrounds but also from varying levels of education. Grouping them according to learning level was not an easy task. They were administered both oral and written tests. In this regard, textbooks of government primary schools were used. The period of bridging for drop-out girls varied from three to nine months. Girls requiring individual attention to reach up to the sixth standard were given special attention during extra hours after their enrolment in the scheme.

All the teachers are graduates in particular subjects. Most of them have both pre-service and in-service training experience. In the context of RTE Act, since 2011, teachers recruited in KGBV were TET passed. Part-time teachers appointed were qualified in subjects like Arts, Drawing, Yoga and Computers. They were provided training in content areas related to Mathematics, Science and English by DIET faculty members. Teachers in KGBVs managed by *Mahila Samakhya* were also trained by NGOs. Teachers also stated that the themes that are covered, specially during the induction training programme, related to background of KGBV scheme, socio-economic profile of KGBVs girls and strategies that need to be adopted for inclusion.

There was unanimous agreement among the teachers that since the scheme had completed more than nine years of existence, the initial challenges and bottlenecks faced by them no longer existed. The situation had gradually changed. The environments in KGBV along with facilities provided to girls are now motivating parents from marginalised communities to send their daughters to schools, preferably KGBV. Most of them wanted their daughters to continue their education up to the higher secondary stage. In fact, there was more demand than seats available in the scheme. Further, girls were also convinced when they saw their seniors doing well in KGBV. The teachers highlighted enrolment strategies that were referred by other stakeholders. Some of the ones practised were:

- Door-to-door survey.
- Organisation of rallies and night meetings with parents.
- Holding exhibitions by KGBV girls to convince community members and parents about the scheme and available facilities.
- Dissemination of the scheme by the *Sangha* Members for convincing parents and community members.

Bridge course is provided to girls to bridge them to Class VI. Bridge courses were provided in language and Mathematics. These courses are developed by teachers. Bridging of drop-out girls varies from 30, 45 to 60 days.

## DISCUSSIONS WITH *SANGHA* MEMBERS



The *Sangha* women stated that they were already working for education and empowerment of rural girls and women in the district. KGBV initiative had further motivated them to bring the most marginalised girls into the portal of education. They observed that education had both intrinsic and extrinsic value. According to them, educated girls would help in bringing about qualitative change in their own lives and their families of origin, and in procreation. For enrolling girls in KGBV, they conducted door-to-door survey in rural areas for mapping drop-out and never-enrolled girls. Once a detailed data base was prepared, they would contact parents individually and motivate them about benefits of education and its intergenerational impact on status of girls and women.

The *Sangha* women said that during discussions with parents they disseminated the entire nitty-gritty of the scheme. Sometime, they had to physically get girls to KGBV. *Sangha* women also conducted “*Anand Yatras*”

for sensitizing community members on the importance of girls' education. Two *Sangha* women mentioned that in their own villages they encouraged women construction workers to send their daughters to KGBV. They said that the construction workers had earlier sent their daughters to *Mahila Shikshan Kendras* run by them and they later send their daughters to KGBV for pursuing elementary education. Members of the *Nari Adalat* (Women's Court) particularly propagated the importance of girls' education to male members of the village so that they would send their daughters to school or KGBV. It was also stated that in the regular *Sangha* meeting organised by MS, one important agenda is promotion of girls' education.

The *Sangha* women added that during awareness campaign conducted by them all efforts were made to mobilise the communities from scattered habitations in sending their daughters to KGBV.

## DISCUSSION WITH GIRLS

**Table 13**

### Age of KGBV girls interviewed

Age	Number of girls
11-16	10



There was mixed response of girls regarding strategies adopted for enrolling them. Perceptions elicited from interview schedules canvassed to ten girls were varied. Out of ten girls, only three mentioned that some kind of oral test was administered to them for knowing their educational level. After the test they were admitted to Class VI. The girls are happy with the facilities provided to them in KGBV.

Most of them mentioned that they were studying before joining KGBV. Only four girls were studying in Class V before joining KGBV. The remaining six had dropped out from Classes III or IV before joining KGBV. The following reasons were cited by them for discontinuing their education:

- Poverty of the household.
- Care of siblings.
- Frequent migration of parents.
- Difficulty in understanding subjects related to Maths and English.

Girls mentioned that after joining KGBV they were motivated to pursue higher and professional education. They stated that the pedagogical approach followed in teaching different subjects encouraged them to pursue higher and professional education.

### SOME SUCCESS STORIES



Name : Rathva Sheela Mage  
Community : ST  
Age : 17  
Class : XII

Rathva is a former student from KGBV, Kwant, Vododara. She did commerce in Class XII. She wants to pursue BBA, B.Com., M.Com. and later become a Chartered Accountant. She does not want to marry.

She belongs to village Namacosta in Kwant Taluk. In her village, there was only one primary school and therefore she studied up to Class V. Her school teacher informed her about KGBV. The teacher spoke to her parents about KGBV and all facilities provided in the formal residential school and helped her to get enrolled. Her parents were very happy with KGBV and decided that they would

provide all support to her so that she would complete her school education. Rathva Sheela was highly motivated when she joined KGBV by the existing enabling environment that provided all opportunities to her for pursuing her dreams. She mentioned that a lot of activities were conducted in KGBV for concept clarification in different subjects. She was particularly happy with the project work that was conducted during the teaching of science and social science. Both the subjects were taught with the help of teaching aids and organisation of exposure visits to places of historical and cultural importance. The teachers in KGBV made all efforts to address difficulties encountered in subjects. She also mentioned that human values related to learning to live together was emphasised. Focus of activities in KGBV was on physical fitness, cleanliness, hygiene. A lot of emphasis was on promoting skills of communication and negotiation. She was a member of Bal Sabha and propagated among peers about the ill effects of child marriage.

According to her, peer group interactions were one of the positive aspects of KGBV. Here, they had a chance to discuss issues that impacted their overall growing up. They discussed about menstrual management and also about addressing difference forms of violence encountered by them and their family members.

Sheela added that after studying in KGBV, her individual identity

had been recognised by her parents. Now they value what she says and encourage her to pursue higher and professional education. Her father said that though his earning was limited as a driver, he would save money for sending her for higher education. She added that after successfully passing out from KGBV she enrolled herself in Classes IX and X in the nearby *Ashramshala*. However, the facilities in *Ashramshala* were limited.

Recalling her experience in KGBV, she mentioned that they were now model schools for girls, as they provide every opportunity to marginalised girls to bring out their best. Parents and the community members had positive opinion about KGBV. The entire community felt proud of her achievements and hoped that she would work for upliftment of women of her village.

Summing up her experiences in KGBV, she said that it had a multiplier and cascading impact on her, her family and the community. It led to her personal growth, improvement in quality of life of her family and she became a role model for the entire village. Now parents in her village want to educate their daughters.

Name : Rathva Sangita  
 Community : ST  
 Age : 18  
 Place : Chotanagar,  
 Taluk, Pavi, Jetpur

Rathva is a former student of KGBV, Vododara. She has passed Class XII. She had done Arts and

the subjects she liked most were Psychology, Philosophy, Sanskrit and Computer. She is from BPL family and wants to become a nurse. Due to poverty and community pressures, her parents got her married. Recalling her schooling experiences she states that her early education at the primary level was in her own village. Here, the teaching and learning process focused on rote learning. After school hours, she would spend time grazing cattle and doing household chores. Her mother was informed by *Sangha* members about KGBV and she was highly motivated. She decided to send her to KGBV so that she could complete elementary education. She stated that she was successful in getting enrolled in KGBV, but initially found the environment very restrictive. Many times, she wanted to run away because of strict rules and regulations. However, slowly teachers and students made her feel comfortable and she decided to pursue her education in this residential school. She happily stated that she enjoyed all the activity-based teaching learning methods adopted by different teachers in the teaching of Science and Maths. Even though the enriched curriculum stressed on stereotyping, it was liked by her as she saw great utility in it. She felt that stitching and sewing her own dresses saves money of the household. She would also pursue it as a profession later. She proudly stated that she succeeded in getting four more girls to KGBV from her village.

Name : Salat Pushpa  
 Community : OBC  
 Age : 16  
 Village : Hirapur,  
 Jambughoba

Name : Salat Sharmistha  
 Community : OBC  
 Age : 17  
 Class : IV

Salat Pushpa has passed Class X with 68 per cent marks. She was a student of KGBV, Dhinkva. She liked English as a subject as well as a medium of education. Presently, she has joined stitching classes in Vadodara. She aspires to start her own business in stitching and tailoring later in life.

She mentioned that she had got her initial education in her own village. She studied up to Class III and had dropped out because of poverty, household chores and sibling care. Her mother was motivated by *Sangha* women to make her pursue her education in KGBV. According to her, this scheme took care of all expenses related to education and overall development of girl from marginalised groups. She narrates the positive impact being enrolled in KGBV had on her overall personality. In KGBV, she liked the different pedagogical approaches followed in teaching different subjects. She liked the food and skill-related activities such as sewing, stitching, karate, athletics and exposure visits. In KGBV, social issues were discussed with girls', for instance, related to child marriage. Most of her friends were against it and they mentioned that when they would go to their own villages, they would influence their friends not to succumb to such practices.

Sharmistha begun her education in her own village and studied up to Class IV. Later, she enrolled in *Mahila Shikshan Kendra* and joined KGBV, Dhinkva to complete her elementary education. After passing out from KGBV, she studied at higher secondary school at Jambughoda which was government-aided. She had successfully passed Class X examination with 86 per cent marks. The subjects taken by her were Gujarati, Hindi, English, Maths, Sanskrit, Social Studies and Science. She wants to become a professional tailor.

She recalls her stay in KGBV as a stepping stone for pursuing her ambition of being an independent professional. In KGBV, she was satisfied with the methodology of teaching and the food provided to the girls. She said that time management in KGBV was realistic and the day was fruitfully spent in academic and co-curricular activities. She specially liked physical activities, sports and karate taught to girls for self-defence. She mentioned that KGBV gave her confidence in speaking English and voicing her opinion without any fear. Her mother can also speak some English words taught by her. Village women also seek help from her in speaking English.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

- Since KGBVs have been in existence in Gujarat for more than nine years, the scheme has acquired confidence among parents and community. Therefore, canvassing for the scheme is not always necessary. Sometimes there is more demand of enrolment than the existing provisions.
- The pass-out girls of the scheme have now become agents of mobilisation.
- There is no specific provision for admitting girls with disabilities.
- Multiple strategies are adopted by both agencies managing KGBVs.
- Follow-up mechanism of drop-out girls once they had enrolled in KGBV was done for a period of three months.
- The percentage of never-enrolled girls in KGBVs was minimal.
- Criteria for enrolling girls are based on the guidelines of the scheme; however additional criteria like orphan girls and of single parent are also preferred for admission.
- There are no fixed criteria for assessing learning levels of girls.
- There was varied response by stakeholders about bridging mechanism in assessing learning levels of girls entering KGBV. Responses were related to both oral and written assessment tests.
- Bridging was done with the help of state textbooks.
- Girls from KGBV had transited to higher education. It appeared that there was a positive linkage between KGBV and secondary education.
- Stakeholders reported that, in future, KGBV girls would have an inter-generational impact on overall education and empowerment of girls from the marginalised groups.
- Selection procedure covered the most needy and marginalised girls as per RTE norms.
- KGBV scheme had the potential of changing the nomenclature of Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) to Educationally Forward Looking Blocks (EFLBs).
- In Gujarat, the government has started a Gujarat KGBV programme and has opened KGBV in Non-EBB blocks. This initiative is fully funded by the state government.
- Gujarat has forged links with MNREGA scheme for building and construction, and training security guards who have been placed in 28 KGBVs.
- States like Gujarat and Jharkhand have started residential schools with state funds or through Public Private Partnership (PPP).
- In all states, including Gujarat implementing Models II and III, the data on KGBVs were captured in U-DISE.
- Transition of girls from KGBV to Secondary level is ensured in Gujarat, where additional



budget is provided for conveyance allowance and hostel facility in 22 KGBVs. The girls reside in KGBV and attend nearby government schools in Classes IX and X.

### SUGGESTIONS

- Guidelines for enrolment of girls in KGBV can be formulated.
- Database on girls belonging to communities who are still not attending formal education can be prepared. This would help in enrolling girls from those communities.
- Period of bridging drop-out and never-enrolled girls can be specified.
- Provisions need to be made for girls with disabilities.
- Teaching and learning facilities for specially challenged girls can be identified.
- In-depth database of the enrolment of marginalised girls can be developed community-wise.
- A comparative study of KGBVs and *Ashramshala* can be undertaken to know community support and provisions provided to girls from marginalised groups.
- Data on age appropriate admissions in each Class can be prepared. This would help in knowing the socio-economic profile of each girl who enters the scheme after Class VI.
- Documentation of areas can be done where the scheme converges with other State Departments/ Public Sector Undertakings, etc. for improving the overall facilities in KGBVs.
- Research studies can be undertaken to know whether there exists any kind of interface of MGNREGA with KGBVs.

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# Plagiarism in Academics: Examining the Issues, Incidence and ‘Intent’

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## Abstract

*Plagiarism defies a conclusive definition. Whereas the law-makers of the land have indirectly touched upon the issue while discussing Copyright infringements, a go-to legal definition of plagiarism per se continues to elude us. As a result, legal initiatives to understand and address plagiarism continue to be found inadequate. Plagiarism in academics is undeniably topical and is approached as an ethical issue. This approach to plagiarism foregrounds the primacy of intent in defining it. Whereas attempts have been made to find a nuanced response to the question ‘what constitutes plagiarism’, the academic community engaging with anti-plagiarism efforts has found it increasingly difficult to do so, conclusively. It is realised that plagiarism is to be understood against the backdrop of the changing academic and research scenarios. With the ever-bludgeoning dependence and legitimisation of internet as a source of knowledge-sharing, newer forms of plagiarism have surfaced and found a place in an already open ended discourse. This paper argues for the accidental plagiarist. It posits ‘intent’ as the definitive touchstone of the ‘severity’ of plagiarism. It provides narrative evidence of the prevalence of unintentional plagiarism among research scholars and roots for concrete steps to not let a budding scholar become an accidental plagiarist.*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2009, the editorial of a Taylor and Francis journal carried a public

apology for accepting an article which was later reported to be plagiarised. The apology read as follows:

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### **“STOP PLAGIARISM!”**

The Editorial Board of the Journal [name] apologise for the paper... published in [name of the Journal] 21(3) 2006 that was considered as a typical example of PLAGIARISM (similarity index with other papers approximately 62 per cent).” (Editorial, 2009) (Parenthesis [] introduced to protect identity)

The editorial comment ended with a declaration in a *visibly bold font*:

“The Editorial Board of the Journal [name] is AGAINST PLAGIARISM” (2009) (parenthesis [] introduced to protect identity)

Expectedly, the board went ahead and retracted the paper. What was interesting about the turn of events was *how plagiarism was understood* by the board. The editorial apology mentioned that the authors of the said paper produced improper citations as they did not use three of the original references they have listed in the reference section. Plagiarism, by inference, was defined to include *lying about or providing (3) ghost citations!*

### **DEFINING PLAGIARISM: THE ISSUES INVOLVED**

Plagiarism has not been defined with legal precision so far. Therefore, it is not uncommon to confuse or hold synonymous *Plagiarism*

and *Copyright in fringement*. This understanding is flawed on several related counts; firstly, whereas copyright infringement applies only to cases where a copyright has been legally awarded in the first place, plagiarism does not engage with and even transcends the issue of *legal* copyrighting. As Nandita Saikia; a media and technology lawyer puts it, “Plagiarism itself is primarily an ethical issue...Plagiarism may occur independently of copyright infringement. This is because any use of a work without crediting its author would be plagiarism” (2011). Secondly, a copyright is usually not granted for ideas and concepts “unless they are expressed and ‘fixed’” (2011). Plagiarism, on the other hand, is generally understood in a broader fashion and does not exclude ideas and concepts from its ambit. Finally, whereas a copyright expires after sixty years of the death of its author, plagiarism is not confined by such restrictions on the continuity of claim to authorship.

As it is, taking the legal path to understanding plagiarism poses several challenges. Whereas, the law does see plagiarism as more nuanced (than copyright infringement), it seems that it is not seen as being equally offensive. At a time when serious charges of plagiarism have been levied against the media (Saha, n.d.), the literary and music fraternity (Chaudhary and Chakrobarty, 2009) and academia (TOI, 2009) alike, legal initiatives to either understand or

address acts of plagiarism continue to be found inadequate.

Plagiarism in academics is undeniably topical and its occurrence disturbingly frequent (Carroll and Appleton, 2001). The influx of anti-plagiarism software(s) bears testimony to the loss of innocence in academia. In such a context, it is even more disconcerting that seeing plagiarism in academics through a legal prism may result in overlooking cases like *ghost citations* altogether. Clearly, there is a need to evolve a more comprehensive discourse on what constitutes plagiarism in general and in academics in particular.

### **DEFINING 'PLAGIARISM IN ACADEMICS': THE EFFORTS AND THE ROADBLOCKS**

Rosamond (2002) calls plagiarism "the most grievous academic crime". Of course, it is provided, it is done with a malicious intent. Whereas, it is easy to engage in labelling *any* and *every* act of plagiarism as undeniably 'bad', it is proposed that plagiarism in academics is defined and understood against the backdrop of the changing academic and research scenarios.

The global academic community driven by the travails of its journal publishing arm has not failed to recognise and rise to the need articulated above. Concerted and continued efforts are being made to define plagiarism holistically and at the same time non-mechanistically. To illustrate, in an article published under the aegis of Committee on

Publication Ethics (COPE); a not-for-profit UK organisation which discusses issues relating to ethical publishing, Wager (2011) reinforces the nuanced nature of plagiarism as she enlists seven factors vis. extent, originality, intention, language, etc. which "*may* be helpful in distinguishing types of plagiarism (emphasis added)". Despite containing detailed tables and flowcharts on the various types of plagiarism, how to identify and address them, the COPE article continues to acknowledge the tentativeness of its conceptualisation of plagiarism.

Similarly, ever-denying a common definition, the increasing understanding of the nuanced nature of plagiarism has instead introduced several new terms into the discussion. Terms like auto-plagiarism, self-plagiarism or redundant publication, micro-plagiarism, major-plagiarism, minor-plagiarism and so on only accentuate our bewilderment when faced with the task of defining plagiarism. As Carroll and Appleton (2001) too admit, "Although definitions of academic misconduct in general and plagiarism in particular are universally regarded as important, the *latter* are difficult to devise (emphasis added)."

A similar tentativeness is expressed by none other than the Turnitin think tank. Their tentativeness holds great weight as Turnitin is "the world's leading web-based solution for plagiarism prevention, used by educators

worldwide to check students' papers for originality" (Turnitin, 2012). Why this tentativeness?

It is a growing acknowledgement that the difficulty of defining plagiarism emanates from what many refer to as the evolution of web 2.0. As the Turnitin paper on plagiarism observes:

"Increasingly though, the lines of what constitute plagiarism are blurring as the Internet reshapes culture and education.

The Web's more interactive "Web 2.0" evolution has created an environment that encourages information sharing and values the remixing and remaking of original content. In this environment, plagiarism is easier to commit and originality more difficult to define." (p.3)

One agrees and adds that defining the term was indeed a straightforward task in the pre-knowledge society era. An act of Plagiarism would be considered committed if an author fraudulently claimed credit for an idea or work not originally her/his own. (Turnitin, 2012). However, in the era that we inhabit, the pursuit of ethical research is determinately difficult and at times perplexing.

The conceptualisation of a knowledge society is, as it is, inextricably and symbiotically connected to the world of internet.

Our move towards creating knowledge societies and the resultant *ever-bludgeoning dependence* and *legitimisation* of internet as a source of knowledge-sharing, has conspicuous and pressing implications on how we may answer the question '*what constitutes plagiarism?*' How we answer this principal or seed question has implications for practice of ethical research.

Web leaders in plagiarism detection services like Turnitin and J.I.S.C. have helped identify more and more forms of plagiarism. The Turnitin document has for *e.g.* identified no less than ten different forms of plagiarism simultaneously rating them on a descending severity index. This document labels the *ghost citation* instance mentioned in the beginning as a definite act of plagiarism and labels it as '404 Error'. Clearly, the recent efforts have attempted to explore the limits of plagiarism in depth.

A constant underlying theme in these attempts however has been an awareness of and the resultant sensitivity to the predicament of an academic researcher facing the challenges of the information and knowledge boom. Herbst (2010) succinctly articulates this challenge as:

"The knowledge explosion coupled with technological advancement enables a researcher to gain access to a wealth of information. This development not only

allows for the availability of more material than can be scrutinised and analysed, but also often leaves researchers exasperated with the amount of knowledge that can and should be dealt with.”(p.vii)

In a scenario like this, attempts to understand the changing landscape of a researcher's intellectual habitat become a pre-requisite to understand plagiarism. The next section attempts to document this landscape.

### **THE ACCIDENTAL PLAGIARIST: FOREGROUNDING INTENT AS THE TOUCHSTONE**

Increasingly, more and more literature is available on practices which constitute plagiarism. As discussed above, these definitions continue to be open ended and dynamic. At the same time, there exists a consensus on 'intent' as being the definitive touchstone of the 'severity' of plagiarism. It is to be understood that intent is to be understood in conjunction with knowledge/ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism. Literature on plagiarism has routinely recognised the prevalence of *unintentional* plagiarism (Turnitin). Editorials have earnestly admitted that most instances of plagiarism stem from 'a kind of sloppy referencing that has ignorance at its roots' (Herbst, 2010).

Educators, editors and the academic community at large must cognise that our transition to being

a knowledge society lies at the core of some of the issues raised above. A knowledge society is to be understood as:

“one in which the conditions for generating knowledge and processing information have been substantially changed by a technological revolution focused on information processing, knowledge generation, and information technologies. The knowledge society is people-centric... everyone must be able to move easily through the flow of information submerging us, and to develop cognitive and critical thinking skills to distinguish between “useful” and “useless” information. (Mishra, 2012).

The generation today is aptly referred to as *Digital Natives* by Turnitin. The impact of information revolution on their study and research habits is too conspicuous to be missed. The World Wide Web has convincingly replaced the physical libraries for a vast majority of technology savvy academic researchers. The transition to virtual libraries is a personal choice and is to be respected as it is. Institutions worldwide have, in fact, supported this transition by going digital. The web has significantly furthered our reach and enabled extensive referring by countering the challenges of manual search for relevant material

spread far and wide across diverse physical and geographical locations.

It seems however that these digital natives find it difficult to balance their technological proficiency in finding reference material with their academic *naiveté* in discerningly sifting the *more* relevant with *less* relevant material. As a result, the present day researcher has to her/his disposal more and more seemingly relevant information than she/he may probably be able to systematically process, filter and assimilate.

This can be a precarious situation for the scholar. It is not uncommon to feel overwhelmed when struck with the realisation that shockingly large volumes of research has already been undertaken in what one may have thought of as a niche area of potential research. What can be equally frustrating is the logistic impossibility of continuing to refer indefinitely and therefore the compulsion to delimit your references once the Pandora's Box lay open on the turf of the World Wide Web.

A brainstorming discussion on plagiarism with a group of doctoral research scholars enrolled in the Department of Education, University of Delhi, reaffirmed the following:

- Intentional plagiarism was attribute to such reasons as the *fast approaching submission deadlines*, *lack of motivation* for a particular task, non-comprehension of the *academic expectations from a task* and in some cases the *pressures to publish*.
  - With regard to unintentional instances of plagiarism, most scholars expressed their ignorance about the complicated matrix of types of plagiarism. For most of them plagiarism referred to *copy-pasting of text without acknowledging the original author*.
  - Scholars admitted that they did not follow citation norms seriously and found the rigours of citation manual very demanding. It had not occurred too many that incorrect citation too could be labelled plagiarism.
  - The discussion also reinforced the earlier analysis pertaining to information overload as they shared that wading through the *never ending list of search results* returned by sundry search engines was *unnerving* and led to *a sense of academic inferiority*.
  - The enormity of the material available on the web marred their *academic courage* to undertake something new as they realised there was *nothing left to pursue from them*. Whereas, contextualising the findings of researchers done in foreign/different contexts was identified as one legitimate area of research, but it raised the fear of being called a “copycat” with reference to the theoretical frameworks.
- By the end of the discussion, the scholars accepted to have unintentionally committed plagiarism at one time or the other. They also rued the lack of concerted and consistent



efforts to educate and sensitise them towards the issue of plagiarism in academic writing.

### THE ROAD AHEAD

The group discussion reinstated the author's belief that the growing instances of plagiarism need not be equated with a culture of *academic dishonesty*; for every instance of intentional plagiarism, it seems, there has been existed multiple instances of unintentional plagiarism. The thing with the latter is that as it is not a conscious act of unethical academic practice, it bodes well for the success of awareness-based interventions to minimize plagiarism.

These interventions can range from course inputs on plagiarism, orientations and workshops of

citation requirements as also kinds of plagiarism, institutional forum for research scaffoldings and dialogues, availability of an institution specific document/web page on plagiarism, clearly established code of research ethics with precisely articulated policy on dealing with plagiarism and so on.

One also feels that, at the Macro level, a dialogue needs to be initiated between the community of practice in academics and the law makers of the land to ensure that plagiarism is understood with utmost sensitivity by law makers to begin with. However once a consensual understanding of what constitutes plagiarism in the digital era is reached, it needs to be seen that any legislation so drawn has sufficient bite to curb the menace of intentional plagiarism.

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# Dropout Percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Children in India

## A Decadal Analysis up to Secondary Level

RAMESH PANDITA\*

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### Abstract

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*The present study seeks to examine the enrolment and the dropout percentage of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) children in India. The study is supported by empirical findings based on the analysis of secondary data retrieved from the official website of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, for the period 2001-02 to 2010-11. The enrolment and dropout percentage of SC/ST children have been studied separately for the boys and the girl at three stages viz., primary, upper primary and secondary level. SC and ST are the two largest socially disadvantaged sections of Indian society. During the period of study, the overall enrolment percentage of SC and ST children have increased by 37.49 per cent and 37.92 per cent and their average annual dropout percentage has declined by 3.27 per cent and 2.23 per cent respectively. Among SC children, compared to 51.41 per cent boys, 52.16 per cent girls dropped out annually, while as among ST children, compared to 59.87 per cent boys, 61.32 per cent girls dropped out annually. Nearly 68.21 per cent ST and 62.57 per cent SC children drop out by the time they reach upper primary level and 88.17 per cent ST children and 83.62 per cent SC children dropped out by the time they reach secondary level. There is a need to observe caution while generalising the findings, especially while co-relating them to other sections of the Indian society.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The problem of child dropout at school level is a global problem and so holds true about India, but when it comes to the Indian context, without doubt, one can say the problem is somewhat deep rooted in the Indian school education system. No country or nation can prosper or progress, if it has a weak educational sector and if there is any leveller in the world, what makes individuals, groups, communities, societies or, for that matter, nations to stand shoulder to shoulder with their developed contemporaries is the education and so holds true of the socially disadvantaged and they are no exception to it. Education is one such tool in the hands of common masses, which can turn any curse into a blessing and so holds true of turning a socially disadvantaged section of a society into a socially advantaged one.

As per 2011 population Census of India, India is a home of more than 1.2 billion<sup>1</sup> people in the world, the second largest populous country in the world after China. Given the economy, growth, development, resources and other services available in the country, one has got every reason to justify the higher dropout percentage of children from Indian schools for many reasons and the problem is still more serious when taken the case of socially disadvantaged sections of Indian social setup. What is more worrying is that despite so many measures

taken by both central and state governments, the dropout percentage hasn't declined to a considerable level as yet. Government of India is committed to provide free and compulsory elementary education to children between the age-group of 6 to 14 years which stands duly envisaged under article 21 (A), Right to Education Act of 2009<sup>2</sup>.

"....educational disparities, which contribute a great deal to the persistence of massive inequalities in Indian society, also largely derive from more fundamental inequalities such as those of class, caste and gender..... p. 982" Dreze (2003)<sup>3</sup>. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the two largest socially disadvantaged sections of the Indian society and together they constitute more than 25 per cent of India's population<sup>[1]</sup>. There are also children who are deprived of the right to education for belonging to other weaker sections of society, including minorities and various others. Since the present study is confined to the enrolment and the dropout scenario of SC and ST children, as such emphasis has been laid only on these two particular sections.

Under Article 366 (24 and 25) of the Indian Constitution, the definitions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes stand summarised as, "Scheduled Castes" and "Scheduled Tribes" means such castes/tribes, races/tribal communities or parts of or groups within such castes/tribes, races/tribal communities as

are deemed under articles 341 and 342 to be Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe for the purposes of this Constitution<sup>4</sup>.

### **BRIEF BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT SCs AND STs IN INDIA**

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been identified as the two most disadvantaged sections of Indian society. The people belonging to these two sections have been identified as economically weak, educationally backward, having no major share in government jobs.

Scheduled Castes are the ones who have been generally found as doing all types of odd jobs, which range from scavenging to other cleanliness jobs, but could never find a dignified place for themselves in society and in the larger part of modern Indian history; these people were known and rated as untouchables. To be more precise, every 6<sup>th</sup> person in India belongs to a Scheduled Cast community and as per 2011 population Census of Government of India, 16.6 per cent

belongs to Scheduled Castes and this percentage has increased by 0.4 per cent from 16.2 per cent<sup>1</sup>. Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are the leading SC populous states in India.

Scheduled Tribes, on the other hand, are mostly concentrated in Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Although economic activity of ST population varies considerably from place to place, but still agricultural activity is their mainstay. ST population is also addressed as *Adivasis* (Original Inhabitants), although known for living a nomadic life, but, of late, they too have started living a settled life. Domesticating animals, poultry, etc are their other economic activities. As per the 2011 census of government of India, 8.6 per cent<sup>1</sup> of the total population of the country consists of Scheduled Tribe people, which also means every 12<sup>th</sup> citizen in India belongs to the Scheduled Tribe community. ST population since 2001 has grown by 0.4 per cent, which then was 8.2 per cent.

**Table 1**

#### **Literacy rate of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) – 1961-2011**

Sl.No	Year	SC			ST			Total (All Castes)		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	1961	16.96	3.29	10.27	13.83	3.16	8.53	40.40	15.34	28.31
2	1971	22.36	6.44	14.67	17.63	4.85	11.30	45.95	21.97	34.45
3	1981	31.12	10.93	21.38	24.52	8.04	16.35	56.37	29.75	43.56
4	1991	49.91	23.76	37.41	40.65	18.19	29.60	64.13	39.29	52.21
5	2001	66.60	41.90	54.70	59.20	34.80	47.10	75.30	53.70	64.80
6	2011	75.20	56.50	66.10	68.50	49.40	59.00	80.90	64.60	73.00

Source: National Commission for SCs and STs, Fifth Report and Census of India, 2011

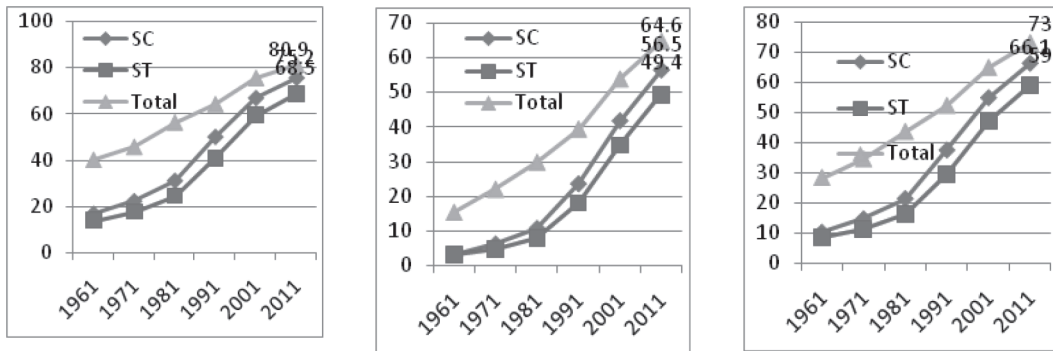


Fig. 1: Literacy levels of SC and STs in India

Provisions have been made under the Constitution of India towards the upliftment, welfare and betterment of the SC, ST and OBC people under article 15, which ensures prohibition of discrimination on the basis of cast, race, gender, religion, etc. Under article 16, equality of opportunity; under article 17, abolition of untouchability; under article 46, promotion of education and economic interests; under articles 330 and 332, reservation of seats for Scheduled Casts in the house of representatives and legislative assemblies respectively; under article 335<sup>[5]</sup> reservation for services and posts; and many more provisions have been created to safeguard and protect the interests of these socially disadvantaged sections.

As per the past six population censuses carried out by the Government of India, the literacy rate of both SC and ST community has remained below the national literacy rate to a considerable level. Although the literacy rate of these two

disadvantaged groups has improved tremendously in past two decades, but still have to go a long way to make it at par with the national literacy rate. The scenario of SC and ST female literacy among both the groups has been very abysmal from the very beginning. The female literacy rate of SC population is better than the ST population, but both are far less than the national female literacy rate.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Educationists, social scientists and other governmental agencies have already undertaken a good number of studies concerning the enrolment and the dropout problem of socially disadvantaged sections of Indian society. Some of the related works which form the basis of the present study have been reproduced hereunder for better understanding of the concept of the dropout problem among the disadvantaged groups.

McNeal, 1999; Rumberger and Larson, 1998; Pong and Ju, 2000<sup>6,7,8</sup> in their respective studies have

detailed a range of factors, which they found to influencing the dropout of a child. The authors are of the view that, the family background of the child, children's own behaviour, educational background of the parents, especially in the matters to educate a girl child, communities, peers, poor infrastructure, improper seating arrangement, socio-economic status of a family, their income level, etc. immensely contribute towards the dropout of a child. Birdsall *et al*, 2005; Bruneforth, 2007; Cardoso and Verner, 2007<sup>9,10,11</sup> are of the view that poverty is one of the significant reasons, which leads to child dropout. Children who are able to seek more support from their parents, be it for access to quality schools, private tuitions, or the teaching at home are less prone to dropout. Parents who keep constant watch over their wards, regulate their behaviour in the desired direction, provide emotional support or constant encouragement excel in their studies and their dropout chances becoming diminish drastically Rumberger 1995; Ainsworth *et al*, 2005)<sup>12,13</sup>.

Chug (2011)<sup>14</sup> in her study, undertaken on the dropout of children dwelling in slums in Delhi, which mostly consists of Scheduled Caste population, termed the problem of dropout as intricate with multiple factions, which together contribute to the dropout of children from schools. The author is of the view that the dropout rate of slum children is higher at lower levels of their classes

and lowers down towards the higher classes. The author, while analysing the enrolment figures of MHRD for the period 2004-05 to 2007-08, found that, compared to the general population, the enrolment ratio of SC children has either gone stagnant or is increasing at a very slow pace. The author believes that school infrastructure, environment and teacher attitude have a profound impact on creating interest or disinterest among students.

Mitra and Singh (2008)<sup>15</sup> in their study conducted during 2002-03, concerning literacy among tribal population in India found that, there is a sharp increase in the dropout rate among both tribal boys and girls, as their educational levels increase. The authors found the dropout rate among tribal children up to primary level was 41.13 per cent for boys and 41.91 per cent, for the upper primary level, it was 66.86 per cent for boys and 71.17 per cent for girls, which was far higher than the general dropout percentage among both boys and girls. Pandita (2015)<sup>16</sup> has undertaken study over the enrolment and dropout percentage among boys and girls in India. The author in his study has observed 40.52 per cent enrolment growth among girls and 18.17 per cent among boys during the decade, which corroborates the fact that there is a substantial change in the outlook of Indian society towards the girl child.

Balgopalan (2003)<sup>17</sup> and Public Report on Basic Education in Indian

(PROBE, 1999)<sup>18</sup> are of the view that socially disadvantaged children face discrimination in government schools, as the government school teachers mostly belong to the upper castes and the children of upper caste mostly join private schools, as a result, teachers are least serious about the education of these children. The author terms this discrimination as terrible and exclusionary, which influences such kind of environment, that encourages the dropout of children from schools.

Dreze and Kingdon (2001)<sup>19</sup> in their study concerning schooling in rural India, found that the education of boys is more responsive to their father's education, but the case is *vice-versa* for girls, however the maternal education has a positive effect on the girl's education. As per the National Council of Applied Economic Research (1996)<sup>20</sup>, children from SC/ST or OBC communities are less likely to go to school than general category children, despite controlling the other household variables, which otherwise hitherto was treated as the factors influencing their enrolment and dropout. The study further observes that, being a SC/ST girl child, her chances of enrolling are reduced by 8 per cent and being an OBC girl child, the chances of her enrolment are reduced by 6 per cent.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This paper intends to achieve the following objectives.

- i. To examine the enrolment and

dropout percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children in India up to secondary level during the period 2001-02 to 2010-11, and.

- ii. To analyse and compare the enrolment and dropout percentage among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children in India, for both boys and girls separately, to that of overall dropout percentage in country.

### **SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

The scope of the present study is confined to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population of India, which are the two largest socially disadvantaged sections of Indian society, having together 25.2 per cent population share in the country. The study encompasses the period 2001-02 to 2010-11. The study is based on secondary data, retrieved from the official website of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India on October 02, 2014 accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33).

### **DISCUSSION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

Data have been tabulated separately for both SC and ST children and to reflect the dropout trend separately for boys and girls, the data have been put under separate tables. Percentage at most of the places has been drawn up to two decimal places and has not been rounded off to 100 per cent figure, as such while computing data



for 100 per cent figure may reflect slight variations.

Annual Corresponding Growth and Annual Corresponding Decline percentage has been computed by using the following formula.

ACG- Annual Corresponding Growth,  
ACD-Annual Corresponding Decline

$$\text{ACG} = \frac{\text{End Value} - \text{First Value}}{\text{First Value}} \times 100$$

$$\text{ACD} = \frac{\text{First Value} - \text{First Value}}{\text{First Value}} \times 100$$

The overall enrolment of SC children has increased from 31.95 million in 2001-02 to 43.93 million in 2010-11, which constitutes an enrolment

growth of 37.49 per cent during the decade. Accordingly, the enrolment percentage up to primary level has increased by 25.25 per cent, for upper primary level 50.66 per cent and for secondary level 93.22 per cent, which is quite encouraging given the 0.4 per cent SC population growth during the same period. The overall annual corresponding growth in enrolment remained positive, except for the year 2002-03, when it dropped by -0.18 per cent. However, the encouraging part is that the overall enrolment percentage of all SC children during the period of study grew on average by 3.27 per cent annually.

In terms of dropout, on average, 24.85 million students each year are

**Table 2**  
**Overall enrolment and dropout of Scheduled Caste children**

Year	Enrolment figures in millions of Classes				ACG%	Dropout percentage figures of Classes				ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Total		I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Avg.	
2001-02	21.50	7.50	2.95	31.95	-	45.2	60.7	72.7	59.53	-
2002-03	21.67	7.49	2.73	31.89	-0.18	41.5	59.9	71.9	57.76	-2.97
2003-04	23.13	8.08	3.23	34.44	7.99	36.6	59.4	73.1	56.36	-2.42
2004-05	24.76	8.70	3.54	37.00	7.43	34.2	57.3	71.3	54.26	-3.72
2005-06	25.31	9.15	3.76	38.22	3.29	32.9	55.2	70.6	52.90	-2.50
2006-07	26.27	9.45	4.09	39.81	4.16	35.9	53.1	69.0	52.66	-0.45
2007-08	26.29	9.93	4.22	40.44	1.58	30.1	52.5	68.4	50.33	-4.42
2008-09	26.71	10.54	5.04	42.29	4.57	26.6	47.3	59.8	44.56	-11.46
2009-10	26.01	10.87	5.44	42.32	0.07	30.0	51.2	59.0	46.73	4.86
2010-11	26.93	11.30	5.70	43.93	3.80	27.1	43.4	56.1	42.20	-9.69
Avg.	24.85	9.3	4.07	38.22	3.27	34.01	54.00	67.19	51.72	-3.27

ACG% - Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

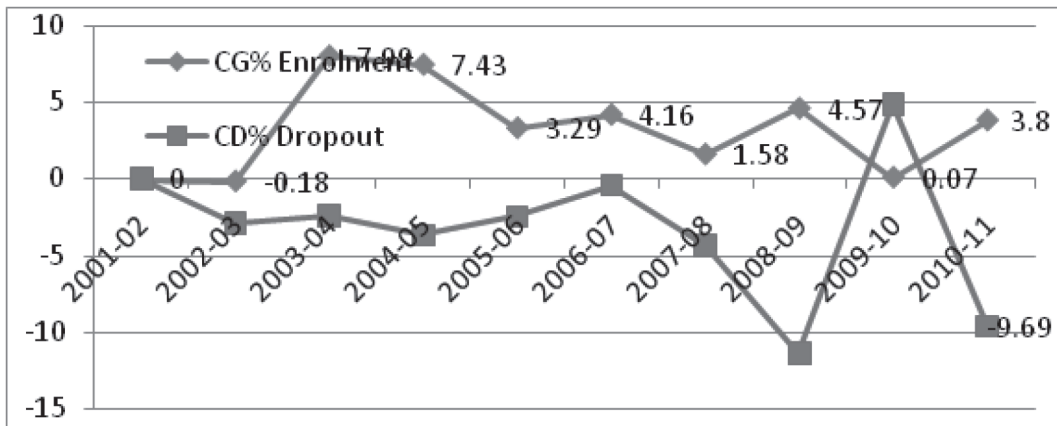


Fig. 1: Frequency Curves of Corresponding Growth in Enrolment and Corresponding Decline percentage in Dropout for all ST Children

enrolled at primary level, while as on average 9.3 million stand enrolled at upper primary level, which also means that 62.57 per cent SC children dropped out before reaching upper

primary level and accordingly 83.62 per cent SC children dropped out by the time they reached secondary level. The average dropout percentage of SC children up to primary level

Table 3

**Enrolment and dropout of Scheduled Caste (male)**

Year	Enrolment figures in millions of Classes				ACG%	Dropout percentage figures of Classes				ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Total		I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Avg.	
2001-02	12.25	4.55	1.83	18.63	-	43.7	58.6	71.1	57.80	-
2002-03	11.94	4.43	1.74	18.11	-2.79	41.1	58.2	69.7	56.33	-2.54
2003-04	12.76	4.73	1.98	19.47	7.50	36.8	57.3	71.4	55.16	-2.07
2004-05	13.76	5.10	2.18	21.04	8.06	32.7	55.2	69.1	52.33	-5.13
2005-06	13.99	5.31	2.30	21.60	2.66	32.1	53.7	68.2	51.33	-1.91
2006-07	14.46	5.47	2.46	22.39	3.65	32.3	51.6	66.6	50.16	-2.27
2007-08	13.71	5.33	2.39	21.43	-4.28	34.4	53.6	68.1	52.03	3.72
2008-09	13.98	5.62	2.83	22.43	4.66	29.6	50.3	59.6	46.50	-10.62
2009-10	13.49	5.75	3.04	22.28	-0.66	33.7	50.8	58.5	47.66	2.49
2010-11	14.03	5.98	3.14	23.15	3.90	30.2	46.8	57.4	44.80	-6.00
Avg.	13.43	5.22	2.38	21.05	2.27	34.66	53.61	65.97	51.41	-2.43

ACG%- Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

during the decade remained at 34.01 per cent, for upper primary level at 54 per cent and for secondary level at 67.19 per cent. Although, a constant and continuous corresponding decline was observed in the overall dropout percentage, but still, on average, 51.72 per cent SC children dropped out annually. Except for the year 2009-10, corresponding decline was recorded in the dropout percentage of SC children, which on average declined by -3.27 per cent annually during the period of study, which is quite noteworthy.

The only aim to have separate analysis for both boys and girls was to assess, as how far the Indian social setup is still inclined towards the male child and how far the girl child suffers on this account. Accordingly, from the analysis, it emerges that the overall enrolment percentage of SC male students during the period of study has increased from 18.63

million in 2001-02 to 23.15 million in 2010-11, which constitutes the growth of 24.26 per cent, while as the enrolment percentage up to primary level increased by 14.53 per cent, for upper primary level at 31.42 per cent and for secondary level at 71.58 per cent. A mixed trend was observed in corresponding annual enrolment growth percentage at all levels, which on average grew by 2.27 per cent annually.

The average enrolment of male SC children at primary level remained 13.43 million, while as, on average, only 5.22 million stand enrolled at upper primary level, which also in a way means that nearly 61.13 per cent dropped out by the time they reached upper primary level. Accordingly, 82.27 per cent SC male students dropped out by the time they reached secondary level and the average dropout percentage of SC male students up to primary level during

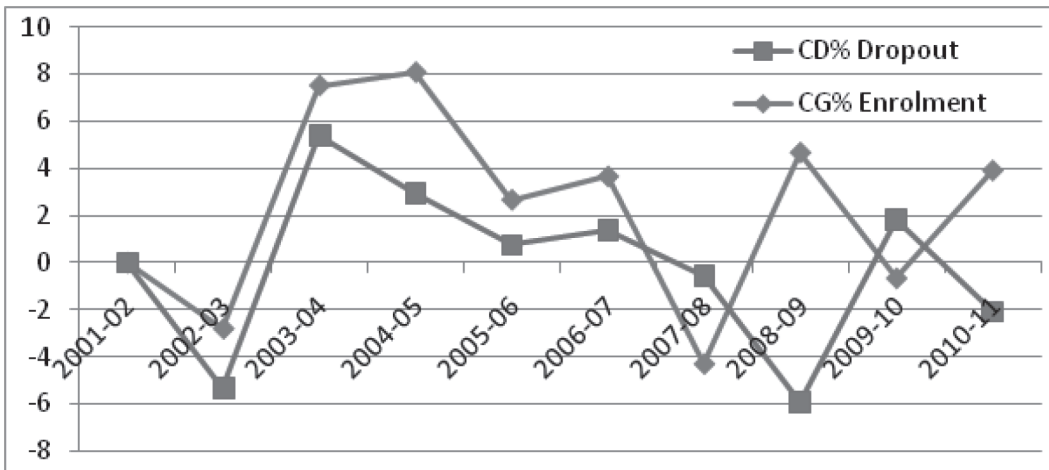


Fig. 2: Frequency Curves of Corresponding Growth in Enrolment and Corresponding Decline Percentage in Dropout for ST Boys

the period of study remained at 34.66 per cent, for upper primary level 53.61 per cent and for secondary level at 65.67 per cent, while as on average was 51.41 per cent SC male students dropped out annually. The dropout percentage of SC male students has shown a considerable decline during the each corresponding year, which on average declined by 2.43 per cent each year, except 2007-08 and 2009-10, when the dropout percentage appreciated by 3.72 per cent and 2.49 per cent respectively.

The overall enrolment percentage of SC female students during the period of study increased from 13.31 million in 2001-02 to 20.77 million in 2010-11, which constitutes a growth of 56.04 per cent during the decade. This enrolment growth of SC girl students is far higher and better than

the overall SC children enrolment percentage and more than double the enrolment growth percentage of SC male students for the same period. This growth percentage also corroborates the fact that there is a change of mindset, whereby girl child is being encouraged to receive formal education even by disadvantaged sections of the Indian society. The enrolment growth of SC girl child up to primary level increased from 9.25 million in 2001-02 to 12.90 million in 2010-11 which means registering a growth of 39.45 per cent during the decade. Accordingly, the enrolment percentage for upper primary level increased by 80.33 per cent, and for secondary level by 129.72 per cent. This also reflects the fact that retention of SC girl child in upper primary and secondary levels has

**Table 4**  
**Enrolment and dropout of Scheduled Caste children (Female)**

Year	Enrolment figures in millions of Classes			Total	ACG%	Dropout percentage figures of Classes			Avg.	ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X			I-V	I-VIII	IX-X		
2001-02	9.25	2.95	1.11	13.31	-	47.1	63.6	74.9	61.86	-
2002-03	9.73	3.06	0.99	13.78	3.53	41.9	62.2	74.9	59.66	-3.55
2003-04	10.37	3.34	1.25	14.96	8.56	36.2	62.2	75.5	57.96	-2.84
2004-05	11.00	3.60	1.36	15.96	6.68	36.1	60.0	74.2	56.76	-2.07
2005-06	11.33	3.83	1.47	16.63	4.19	33.8	57.1	73.8	54.90	-3.27
2006-07	11.81	3.99	1.63	17.43	4.81	39.9	55.0	72.2	55.70	1.45
2007-08	12.58	4.60	1.83	19.01	9.06	24.5	51.1	68.9	48.16	-13.53
2008-09	12.73	4.91	2.21	19.85	4.41	23.0	43.3	60.1	42.13	-12.52
2009-10	12.52	5.12	2.40	20.04	1.00	25.6	51.5	59.7	45.60	8.23
2010-11	12.90	5.32	2.55	20.77	3.64	23.4	39.1	54.2	38.90	-14.69
Avg.	11.42	4.07	1.68	17.17	4.58	33.15	54.51	68.84	52.16	-4.27

ACG%- Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

increased to a considerable level, but the worrying aspect is, that on average 11.42 million SC girl students stand registered up to primary level while as only 4.07 million stand registered at upper primary level, which also means that 64.36 per cent dropped out before they reached upper primary level. Accordingly, 85.28 per cent SC female students dropped out before they reached the secondary level.

The average corresponding enrolment growth percentage of SC female students during the period of study increased by 4.58 per cent annually, while as the average annual dropout percentage among SC girl students up to primary level remained 33.15 per cent, in the upper primary level it remained at 54.51 per cent and for secondary level the dropout percentage remained at 68.84 per cent. The overall average annual dropout percentage of SC girl students during the period was 52.16

per cent, which means more than half the enrolled SC girl students dropped out annually. Except for the years 2006-07 and 2009-10, the average corresponding decline in dropout percentage of SC girl students was at 4.27 per cent annually, which is far better and higher over average SC male students and overall SC children dropout decline percentage.

The overall enrolment of ST children during the period of study has grown from 16.27 million in 2001-02 to 22.44 million in 2010-11, which constitutes the growth of 37.92 per cent. It is equally noteworthy that the ST population during the same period has grown by 0.4 per cent. The enrolment percentage at primary level among ST students grew from 11.73 million in 2001-02 to 14.85 million in 2010-11, thereby recording a growth of 26.59 per cent. Accordingly, the enrolment percentage during the decade for upper primary level has

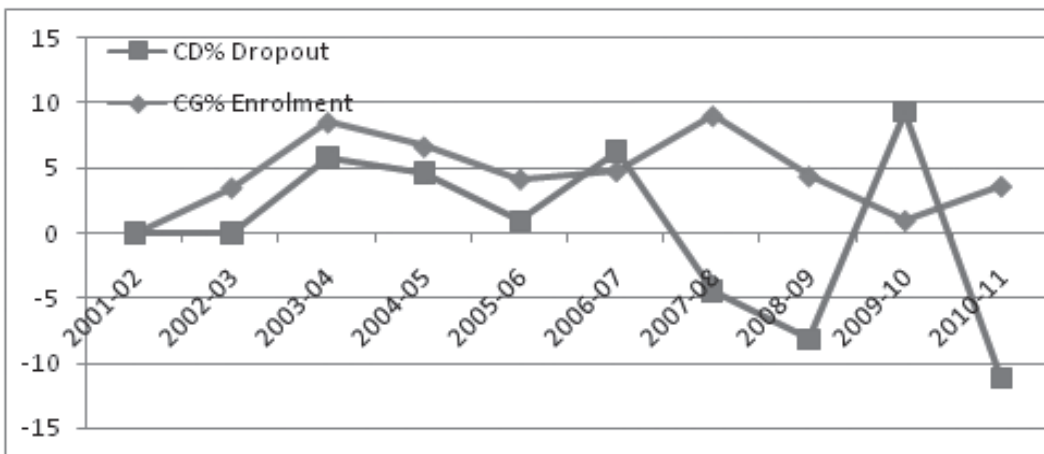


Fig. 3: Frequency curves of corresponding growth in enrolment and corresponding decline percentage in dropout for ST girls

**Table 5**  
**Enrolment and dropout of Scheduled Tribe children**

Year	Enrolment (in Millions)				ACG%	Dropout Percentage				ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Total		I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Avg	
2001-02	11.73	3.36	1.18	16.27	-	52.3	69.5	81.2	67.66	-
2002-03	11.83	3.25	1.21	16.29	0.12	51.4	68.7	80.3	66.80	-1.27
2003-04	12.52	3.66	1.35	17.53	7.61	48.9	70.1	79.3	66.10	-1.04
2004-05	13.74	4.17	1.47	19.38	10.55	42.3	65.9	79.0	62.40	-5.59
2005-06	14.11	4.47	1.56	20.14	3.92	39.8	62.9	78.5	60.40	-3.20
2006-07	14.43	4.66	1.67	20.76	3.04	33.1	62.5	78.1	57.90	-4.13
2007-08	14.68	4.72	1.74	21.14	1.83	31.3	62.5	76.9	56.90	-1.72
2008-09	15.01	4.98	1.89	21.88	3.50	35.6	59.2	76.0	56.93	0.05
2009-10	14.92	5.16	2.07	22.15	1.23	36.8	56.8	74.9	56.16	-1.35
2010-11	14.85	5.42	2.17	22.44	1.30	35.6	55.0	70.9	53.83	-4.14
Avg	13.78	4.38	1.63	19.79	3.31	40.71	63.31	77.51	60.51	-2.23

ACG%- Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage  
 Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

increased by 61.30 per cent and for secondary level is 83.89 per cent. It is equally noteworthy, that on average at 13.78 million ST students are enrolled up to primary level, while as only 4.38 million stands enrolled

at upper primary level, which also somewhere means that nearly 68.21 per cent ST children dropped out by the time they reach upper primary level. Accordingly, 88.17 per cent children dropped out by the time they

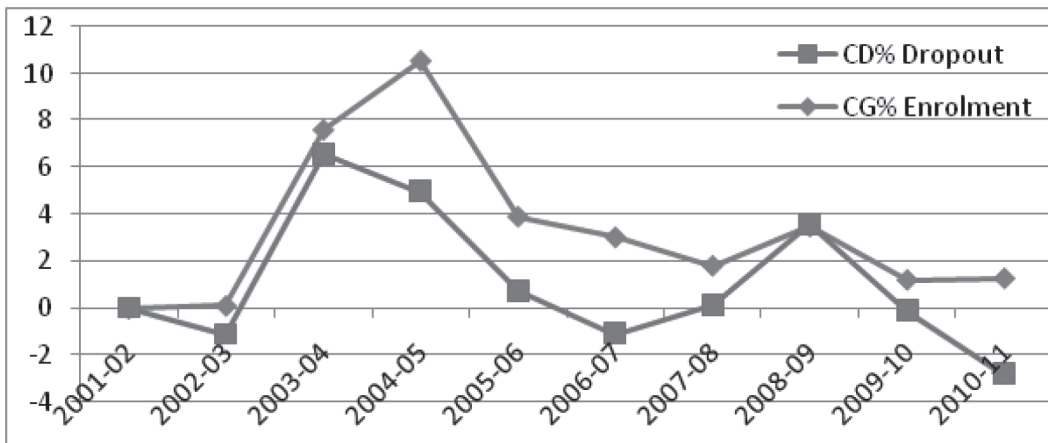


Fig. 4: Enrolment and dropout of all SC children

reached the secondary stage. The overall average corresponding growth in enrolment of ST children during the decade was 3.31 per cent annually.

The average annual dropout percentage among ST children up to primary level remained at 40.71 per cent, for upper primary level at 63.31 per cent and for secondary level at 77.51 per cent with an overall dropout percentage of 60.51 per cent annually. This also indicates the fact that more than 60 per cent ST children enrolled in school drop out annually. Except for the year 2008-09, a constant corresponding decline was observed in the dropout percentage of ST children, which on average declined by 2.23 per cent annually.

The overall enrolment of ST male students during the period of study increased from 9.48 million in 2001-

02 to 11.71 million in 2010-11, which means a growth of 23.52 per cent. The overall enrolment up to primary level increased from 6.69 million in 2001-02 to 7.67 million in 2010-11, which means a growth is 14.64 per cent. Accordingly, the overall enrolment of ST male children for upper primary level has increased by 38.53 per cent and 62.16 per cent in secondary level. On an average, 7.32 million ST male children are enrolled each year up to primary level, while 2.45 million is an average annual enrolment number at upper primary level, which means nearly 66.53 per cent ST male children drop out before reaching the upper primary level. Accordingly, nearly 86.88 per cent of the enrolled ST male children drop out before reaching the secondary level. Except for the year 2002-03, there has been a constant

**Table 6**  
**Enrolment and dropout of Scheduled Tribe children (Male)**

Year	Enrolment (in Millions)				ACG%	Dropout Percentage				ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Total		I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X	Avg	
2001-02	6.69	2.05	0.74	9.48	-	51.0	67.3	79.9	66.06	-
2002-03	6.42	1.93	0.74	9.09	-4.11	50.8	66.9	78.4	65.36	-1.05
2003-04	6.78	2.14	0.83	9.75	7.26	49.1	69.0	77.9	65.33	-0.04
2004-05	7.37	2.40	0.90	10.67	9.43	42.6	65.0	77.8	61.80	-5.40
2005-06	7.51	2.52	0.93	10.96	2.71	40.2	62.9	78.0	60.36	-2.33
2006-07	7.64	2.61	0.99	11.24	2.55	30.6	62.8	77.3	56.90	-5.73
2007-08	7.66	2.61	1.02	11.29	0.44	31.0	62.6	76.0	56.53	-0.65
2008-09	7.80	2.71	1.09	11.60	2.74	36.0	58.5	75.4	56.53	0
2009-10	7.71	2.75	1.17	11.63	0.25	38.1	54.6	74.5	55.73	-1.41
2010-11	7.67	2.84	1.20	11.71	0.68	37.2	54.7	70.6	54.16	-2.81
Avg	7.32	2.45	0.96	10.74	2.19	40.66	62.43	76.58	59.87	-1.94

ACG%- Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

and considerable increase in the corresponding enrolment percentage of ST male children, which on average grew by 2.19 per cent annually, during the period of study.

The overall average annual dropout percentage of ST male students during the period of the study remained at 59.87 per cent. While as, at primary level the average annual dropout percentage remained 40.66 per cent, for upper primary level at 62.43 per cent and for secondary level average 76.58 per cent. The corresponding decline in dropout percentage of ST male children is equally noteworthy, as, except for the year 2008-09, considerable decline was observed in the average dropout, which on average declined by 1.94 per cent annually.

The overall enrolment of ST female students during the decade increased

from 6.79 million in 2001-02 to 10.73 million in 2010-11, which constitutes a growth of 58.02 per cent. The enrolment of ST female children up to primary level increased from 5.04 million in 2001-02 to 7.18 million in 2010-11 with a growth of 42.46 per cent. Accordingly, the enrolment growth among ST female children for upper primary level during the decade was at 96.94 per cent and 120.45 per cent at the secondary level. The growing trend towards ST female child enrolment gets equally corroborated by the fact that their average annual corresponding growth remained 4.72 per cent annually.

The average annual dropout percentage of ST female students during the period of the study remained at 61.32 per cent, while as, for the same period, the average annual dropout percentage up to

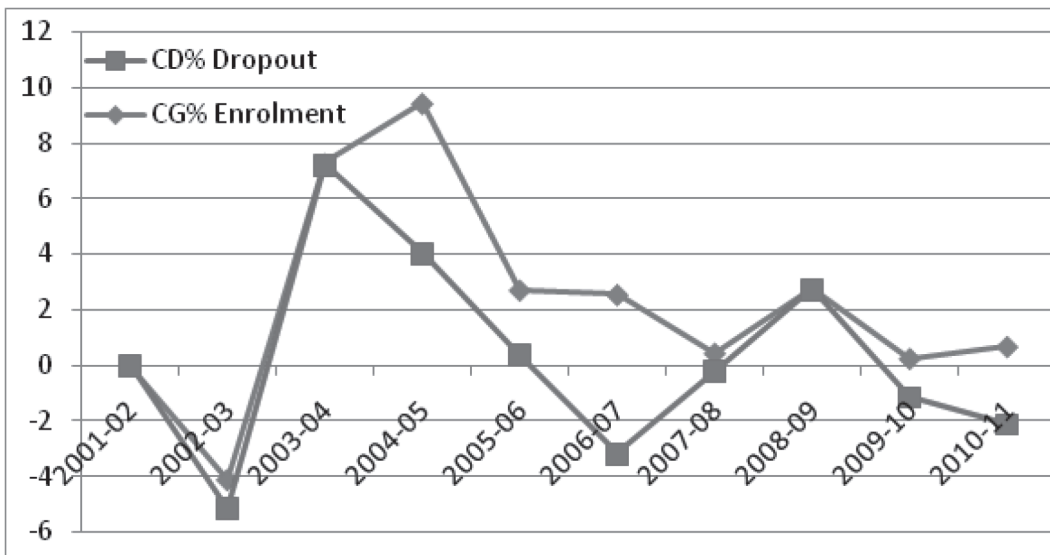


Fig. 5: Enrolment and dropout of SC boys in %



**Table 7**  
**Enrolment and dropout figures of female Scheduled Tribe children**

Year	Enrolment (in Millions)			Total	ACG%	Dropout Percentage			Avg	ACD%
	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X			I-V	VI-VIII	IX-X		
2001-02	5.04	1.31	0.44	6.79	-	54.1	72.7	82.9	69.90	-
2002-03	5.41	1.32	0.47	7.20	6.03	52.1	71.2	83.0	68.76	-1.63
2003-04	5.74	1.53	0.52	7.79	8.19	48.7	71.4	81.2	67.10	-2.41
2004-05	6.37	1.78	0.58	8.73	12.06	42.0	67.1	80.7	63.26	-5.72
2005-06	6.60	1.95	0.63	9.18	5.15	39.3	62.9	79.2	60.46	-4.42
2006-07	6.79	2.05	0.68	9.52	3.70	35.8	62.2	79.1	59.03	-2.36
2007-08	7.02	2.11	0.72	9.85	3.46	31.7	62.3	78.0	57.33	-2.87
2008-09	7.20	2.27	0.80	10.27	4.26	35.1	60.0	76.8	57.30	-0.05
2009-10	7.21	2.41	0.90	10.52	2.43	35.4	59.1	75.3	56.60	-1.22
2010-11	7.18	2.58	0.97	10.73	1.99	33.9	55.4	71.3	53.53	-5.42
Avg	6.45	1.93	0.67	9.05	4.72	40.81	64.43	78.75	61.32	-2.61

ACG%- Annual Corresponding Growth Percentage, ACD%- Annual Corresponding Decline Percentage

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, accessible at [http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field\\_statistics\\_category\\_tid=33](http://mhrd.gov.in/statist?field_statistics_category_tid=33)

primary level remained 40.81 per cent, for upper primary level at 64.43 per cent and for secondary level it was 78.75 per cent. The good thing about the dropout percentage of ST female

students is that there has been a constant and continuous decline in the dropout percentage during the period of study which on average declined by 2.61 per cent annually.

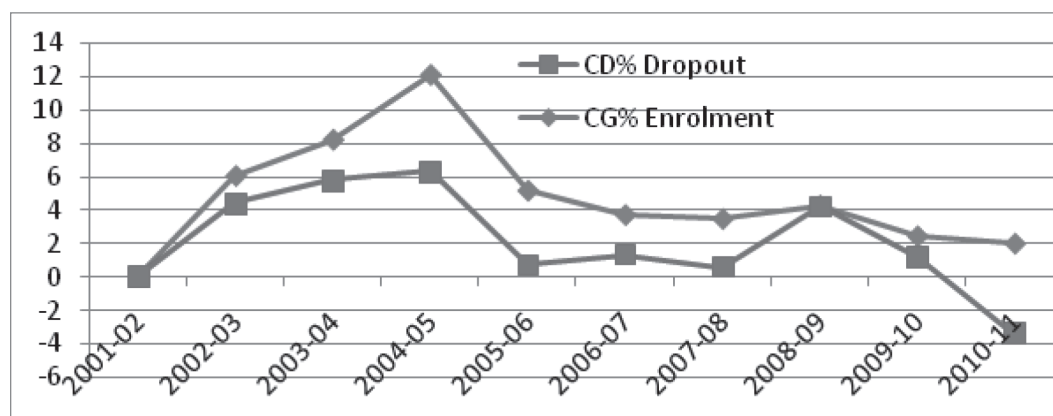


Fig. 6: Enrolment and dropout of SC girls in %

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The caste ridden Indian social setup can be termed as one of the main reasons to polarise the country's social setup. The children dropping out from schools is a common problem in social setup, while the children belonging to socially disadvantaged sections of society are vulnerable in school dropout. These children face a range of problems on day-to-day basis, with the result, sooner or later, they succumb before the circumstantial pressure, which they fail to resist for long, hence drop out.

The overall enrolment percentage of both SC and ST children during the period of study has improved by 37.49 per cent and 37.92 per cent. Therefore, their annual percentage dropout has declined annually by an average of 3.27 per cent and 2.23 per cent respectively. These sections of society need to understand that their educational backwardness gets reflected in all other sectors as well. These disadvantaged groups need to understand that their educational backwardness gets reflected in all other sectors as well. Government in general and SC and ST communities in particular should pay greater attention towards retention of their children in schools.

Compared to 45.13 per cent gross average national dropout percentage, the overall average annual dropout percentage of SC and ST children in the same period remained at 51.72 per cent and 60.51 per cent, respectively,

which is higher when compared to the overall dropout percentage of the country. The reason for the higher national dropout percentage can be owed to the fact that majority portion of such percentage comes from SC/ST groups. While as, the dropout percentage of general and other category of children during the period remained 23.18 per cent.

Accordingly, in the category of SC and ST male students the enrolment percentage has grown by 24.26 per cent and 23.52 per cent, at the same time their dropout percentage has declined on average annually by 2.43 per cent and 1.94 per cent. While as in case of female SC and ST students, the enrolment percentage has increased by 56.04 per cent and 58.02 per cent, while as their dropout percentage has on average annually declined by 4.27 per cent and 2.61 per cent respectively, which again is quite encouraging and noteworthy. It is equally interesting to note that the girl child enrolment percentage among both SC and ST communities has increased considerably and is far higher and better over their male counterparts.

During the period of study, compared to 51.41 per cent SC male students, 52.16 per cent SC female students dropped out and compared to 59.87 per cent ST male students, 61.32 per cent ST female students dropped out annually. These figures somewhere reflect the fact that male and female children do not receive the same treatment among the two

socially disadvantaged sections under study. Need it to pay more attention towards the retention of SC/ST girl child in schools and it is thereafter one can expect of some grass roots level changes in their overall welfare and betterment.

Compared to 88.17 per cent ST children, 83.62 per cent SC children dropped out by the time they reached secondary level and compared to 68.21 per cent ST children, 62.57 per cent SC children dropped out by the time they reached upper primary level. Among the two disadvantaged sections, Scheduled Casts are slightly on the better side than Scheduled Tribes at the enrolment and dropout front of school education.

The constitutional provisions under different articles, though apparently sufficient, have not yielded the desired results. All this has resulted government to grant an extension to all such policies and programmes from time to time, so that the maximum population of these two sections of society may get benefitted. The literacy rate of both SC and ST community has yet to go a long way to make it with the national literacy rate. The scenario of female literacy rate among both the communities is abysmal and needs to be improved significantly to make it at par with the national literacy rate.

### **FACTORS LEADING TO INCREASED SC/ST CHILD DROPOUT**

It has been observed that the social disadvantages are directly

associated with economic status of an individual, a family, a community, a group, a section and society at large. Better the economic health of an individual or a section of society, better are the prospects of their being on the advantageous side. Accordingly, economic status of SC/SC communities is being seen as one of the main reasons for these groups being the disadvantaged lot. Education is one such grey area, where the children of these socially disadvantaged sections are lagging behind, but surely economics is not the only aspect responsible for their educational backwardness. From the above discussion and earlier studies undertaken, some other factors contributing to their educational backwardness, include

- It is always difficult for a first generation learner to let understand the value, need and importance of education to her/his predecessors who may have never attended the schools or may have never received the formal education.
- Illiteracy of parents is the prime factor, which contributes to the early dropout of SC/ST children.
- Treating girl child as a burden is very common among socially disadvantaged groups, as such, they may begin by enrolling their daughters in schools but mostly end up with forcing them to dropout
- Early marriage.
- Raring and caring of the younger siblings and the domesticated

animals is one of the prime reasons which forces children from SC/ST communities to drop out.

- Pushing younger children in doing odd jobs and to work as child labours to support their families is a common practice among SC/ST families.
- Children from SC/ST families, mostly show the tendency of psychological weakness, as they seem to have accepted poverty and other social disadvantages as their true identity, which they don't want to lose easily.
- The people belonging to the creamy layer of the SC/ST community are not putting in a generous effort towards the betterment of all downtrodden people of the community. These people seem more interested in securing their personal ends rather taking the welfare cause to their extended community brethren.

### **POSSIBLE MEASURES**

Although there is no end to the measures, which can put forth or offer towards the improvement of the social standing of the SC/ST groups, but still there is a need to give heed towards the following few areas:

- It would be more ideal to segregate households of those disadvantaged sections who may have availed benefits in one or the other form, as such, the chance may be given to the beneficiary next in the queue.

- Need to regulate the type, kind and number of times these benefits should be availed by an individual beneficiary or household.
- Need is to identify those communities who for want of their identification belonging to SC or ST community remained deprived of all such benefits extended to such groups.
- Need is to extend all privileges to both boys and girls equally, with zero tolerance towards male dominance in all such matters where there is discrimination on the basis of gender in general and among these disadvantaged communities in particular.

Apart from these, there is far greater need to shun the conservative mind by Indian masses, be it about these social groups or towards the existing social stratification. Without bringing change in our outlook and imbibing the attitude of change towards growth and development, most of our efforts are bound to turn futile.

### **SOME GOVERNMENTAL MEASURES**

Efforts of the government and its agencies towards the promotion of child enrolment in schools and their retentions is equally laudable, be it about the introduction of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) in 2001, *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhayala* (KGBV) residential schools for SC, ST, OBC and Muslim girl child, National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL),

Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), 1995, *Rashtriya Madhimayk Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) (2009-10) and many more scholarship schemes are there for both technical and other vocational education, concerning modernisation, infrastructure development, ICT applications, etc., Accordingly, PROBE (1999) <sup>[17]</sup> in its report has made some considerable observations and has put it like“..... parents are not generally opposed to female education, but they are reluctant to pay for it. School meals could make a big difference here, by reducing the private costs of schooling....)” (1999, p. 97)

### CONCLUSION

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the two largest socially disadvantaged sections of Indian society, are still reeling behind in the race of life despite numerous provisions created under the Indian Constitution for their betterment and upliftment, even after 67 years of India's independence. There is something seriously wrong with the implementation of schemes launched for their welfare and betterment from time to time. Most of the benefits of all such schemes are generally reaped by people belonging to the creamy layer of these two disadvantaged sections of society. Still more, it is the urban cousins of these sections of society who are benefitted most by all such schemes for being more aware about the policies and programmes meant for them. On the other hand, people putting up in the countryside

and other rural areas are the ones who generally remain deprived of all such benefits. The Government and its executing agencies are required to develop a much broad based and fool-proof mechanism whereby all such schemes serve the real purpose for which these schemes are actually meant. Need is to ensure that benefit from all such schemes launched for these socially disadvantaged sections must reach the most deserving and needy and should not get hijacked by the creamy layer of these sections.

In fact, education is major agents for change and leveller of society, which plays its part in each sphere of human activity, be it social, political, economic, cultural and many more in overcoming the age-old barriers of caste, colour, creed or even for that matter the gender bias. Education can give wings to any downtrodden to fly and chase her/his dreams. There cannot be any other better instrument in the hands of common masses than education, which can bring social justice or reforms in any other form. There is no denial of the fact that despite putting in a lot of effort by the Government of India, neither there is any significant change on the ground, which may single the upliftment of these disadvantaged sections nor is there any substantial improvement in their betterment. A lot may have indeed already been done, but still there is a lot yet to be done. The foremost thing, which needs to be ensured, is to retain the children of these disadvantaged groups in schools by all possible means.

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# Identifying Potential Roles for a School Library in the Achievement of School Education Goals

## An Analysis of National Curriculum Framework 2005

SEEMA TARE\*

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### Abstract

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*The paper presents the hypothesis that the potential of a school library to become a true partner in education has not been duly recognised in the Indian scenario. It analyses the educational guidelines propagated by NCERT's National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF) to identify areas where the school library can make substantial contribution to achieve school education goals. The paper recommends a fresh appraisal of the role of the school library in India in light of the global recognition of its importance in education. It suggests supplementary and complementary informational and educational roles for the school library, including contribution towards information literacy, value and peace education, development of reading habit among children, fostering art education, and imbibing socio-cultural awareness in school children. For effective functioning of the school library as a partner in education, the paper advocates introduction of the Teacher Librarian concept in the Indian school scenario, and the creation of a national workforce of such Teacher Librarians through the introduction of specific school librarianship courses / optional papers in the curriculae of University Departments of Library & Information Science.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION**

The Programme of Action (POA) of National Policy on Education 1992<sup>1</sup> is based on the cardinal principle that 'education is a unique investment in the present and the future.' It describes education as being fundamental to an all-round development, both material and physical. Education helps to build a scientific temper and develop independence of mind and spirit. It refines sensitivities and perceptions towards others, thus facilitating national integration, engendering feelings of unity in diversity, and peaceful and productive co-existence among persons of different cultures, castes, gender, economic strata, linguistic communities and religion. Work-related professional education develops manpower resources for all levels of the economy. Education lays the foundation for Research and Development (R&D) activity which leads to the achievement of national self-reliance. Education thus proves to be an invaluable national investment.

### **NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK 2005 (NCF)**

The NCF document<sup>2</sup> corroborates this educational policy by specifically identifying the broad aims of education: "...independence of thought and action, sensitivity to others' well-being and feelings, learning to respond to new situations in a flexible and creative manner,

predisposition towards participation in democratic processes, and the ability to work towards and contribute to economic processes and social change."

The scope of NCF ranges from elementary school education to higher secondary school. It strives to redefine educational aims and suggests guidelines for curriculum development which will improve the quality of school education. It deals extensively with all the factors which come into play in this area— the students, the teachers, the academic and non-academic subjects, teaching methods, the physical school environment and other school facilities. Thoughtful consideration has been given to students' requirements at various levels. Room for improvement in the teaching of the four academic subjects— mathematics, languages, science and social sciences has been identified. The importance of values and peace education in school curricula and ways of teaching non-academic subjects such as arts and crafts, sports, etc. have been emphasised. Guidelines for the development of an ideal curriculum are extensively spelt out.

### **EDUCATIONAL CONSTRAINTS IN THE MODERN SCHOOL SCENARIO**

However, in the actual school scenario as it exists today in both the rural and urban environments, the NCF guidelines in totality might appear to be a 'tall order', difficult to

implement in practice owing to certain genuine and unchanging constraints, such as a massive syllabus difficult for both teachers and students to handle, short attention span of students, constraints of space and time, large numbers and diversity of students, absence of teaching aids, compulsions of examinations and so on. Moreover, a tightly packed school schedule leaves very little room for NCF-suggested novel progressive ideas to be implemented.

### **THE SCHOOL LIBRARY SOLUTION**

In view of this difficult scenario, the development and proper use of one hitherto neglected player on the school stage can significantly alter the school education system, bringing it nearer to the achievement of the goals as set down in the National Education Policy and the NCF. This new player is none other than the school library, which, if exploited to its full potential, can prove to be a decisive game-changer in the school education arena.

The NCF document deals with the role that a school library can play, through short discussion on Libraries at Para 4.6.2 and scattered references to library usage throughout the document. School libraries have been described as 'an essential component of the school at all levels, a resource for learning, pleasure, and concentration, an intellectual space providing the means to deepen ... knowledge and imagination, and an access point to

new global information technology.' It recognises that creating such resource libraries would support teachers, complement and strengthen curriculum renewal, and provide information for various class projects. NCF also suggests amalgamation of block-level or cluster-level libraries, community and government libraries in a school library network to be monitored by Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation. Regarding the physical requisites of a school library, NCF recommends a separate room for the library, good lighting and seating arrangements. It views a school library as a place for holding discussions, art/skill demonstrations or story sessions.

The concept of the school library is discussed in NCF as an additional facility in schools, rather than as a partner in education. The important role of a school library in teaching and learning as documented by internationally recognised bodies such as UNESCO and International Association of School Libraries (IASL) and reflected in the progress in school libraries in the developed countries is not adequately acknowledged in NCF.

### **GLOBAL RECOGNITION FOR THE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

#### **1. School Library Manifesto Published by UNESCO in 1999<sup>3</sup>**

describes various attributes of an ideal school library:

The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental

to functioning successfully in our increasingly information- and knowledge-based present-day society... equips students with lifelong learning skills and develops their imagination, thereby enabling them to live as responsible citizens.

It has been demonstrated that, when librarians and teachers work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem-solving and information and communication technology skills.

The school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development.

The school library is integral to the educational process. Its goals include supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum; developing and sustaining in children the lifelong habit and enjoyment of reading and learning; offering opportunities for creating and using information in all forms and mediums for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment; providing varied resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions; organising activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity; promoting intellectual freedom and access to information not only to the school community but to the whole society, thereby enabling effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy.

## **2. The IASL Policy Statement on School Libraries<sup>4</sup>**

also reaffirms that the school library is a vital part of free and compulsory education as proclaimed in the United Nations declaration on the Rights of the Child<sup>5</sup>. It states that the school library is essential to the development of the human personality as well as the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic progress of the community. It functions as an integral part of the total school programme, being involved in the teaching and learning process. It fulfils informational, educational, cultural and recreational functions– providing access to information independently and as part of networks, making available facilities for learning, encouraging development of arts and cultural appreciation, and enabling productive use of leisure time through provision of a variety of recreational material and programmes.

## **3. The International Guidelines formulated by the Research Team of IASL (2012) also**

- assign specific functions to the school library<sup>6</sup>:
- Promoting the love of learning and reading, and assisting in literacy development on all platforms.
  - Supporting the school curriculum by providing a variety of resources in digital and non-digital, traditional and emerging forms to support teaching and learning.
  - Teaching learners media and information literacy skills, supporting inquiry and ensuring

that all learners are effective and ethical users and producers of information.

This global acceptance of the indispensability of school libraries for education needs to be adequately reflected not only in the National Education Policy but also in NCF's treatment of libraries in schools, incorporating many of the attributes and roles of school libraries spelt out by IFLA, IASL and such international bodies of repute. Both NEP and NCF could strongly recommend that the school library model found in the developed countries be replicated in Indian schools, whereby libraries would become an integral part of school education. A school librarian is most suited to provide additional and reliable assistance to education, enabling the implementation of new educational ideas and teaching techniques.

## **POTENTIAL ROLES FOR THE SCHOOL LIBRARY IN INDIAN SCHOOLS**

Certain specific thrust areas in education, indicated in NCF, where substantial contribution can be made by a progressive school librarian, are discussed here.

### **1. Development of Knowledge Base for Students and Teachers**

#### **(i) Knowledge Base for Students**

School libraries can make available the "input-rich communicational

environments" propagated by NCF by building a treasure-house of knowledge, which is an 'accumulation of human culture and knowledge, and ways of knowing and doing things ... a valuable part of the inheritance of human society.' NCF further emphasises the children's right to 'access this knowledge, to educate and enrich their common sense, to develop and discover themselves and the world of nature and people, through these lenses and tools.'

Moreover, this knowledge should be made available in all genres – the conventional print forms and other audio-visual and digital formats. The print resources could include fiction and non-fiction, magazines and newspapers, parallel books and materials such as workbooks, co-curricular and popular science books, and children's encyclopaedia with rich visuals in more than one language, reference books (dictionaries, encyclopaedia, fact books, etc.), maps and posters. The audio-visual material could incorporate CDs/DVDs on a variety of academic subjects, on music, on sports and health, on the plant and animal world. Other material resources in the library could include mathematical games, models explaining scientific and geographical phenomena, three-dimensional replicas of ancient equipment/tools and musical instruments.

The library resources would need to cater to a wide range of

informational needs of children of varying intellect and mental ages - from the kindergarten pre-primary school children to the higher secondary students, reflecting various stages of growth and development, and also of fundamental shifts and changes in interests and capabilities.

As a novel initiative, the school library could also encourage the children to generate knowledge resources in the form of useful databases such as a cumulative, ever-expanding database of scientific innovations, by utilising their information retrieval and organisation capability to harvest physical resources of their library and digital / online resources such as the Internet facility.

### **(ii) Knowledge Base for Teachers**

A basic academic requirement of teachers from a school library is the availability of all textbooks prescribed by school's examination board, along with a choice of textbooks of various other boards / publishers/textbook bureaus, since no one textbook can cater to the diverse needs of different groups of students, and the same content/ concept can be taught in different ways.

Besides, the school library could provide a vast resource of supplementary material for teachers for an input-rich curriculum. Such material would include teachers' manuals/handbooks and other publications such as subject dictionaries, supplementary books,

workbooks, and extra reading, audio-visual materials, photographs, charts and maps, replicas of archaeological and material cultures, and atlases and posters of the natural and human habitat. Based on the requirements of the syllabus and specific needs of teachers, relevant internet sites can be identified and selective material can be downloaded by the librarian for dissemination to the teaching community. Such added services form an integral part of the duties of the school librarian, and provide the stimulus for teachers to 'devise activities, projects and studies, both drawing from textbooks and going beyond them, to encourage children to explore, investigate and construct knowledge.

NCF emphasises the need for documentation and research in teaching practices. Individual teachers often explore new ways of transacting the curriculum in addressing the needs of students within their specific classroom context, overcoming several inescapable constraints. The sharing of teaching experiences and diverse classroom practices within the same school and among different schools can encourage new ideas and facilitate innovation and experimentation in teaching methodologies. The school library's role would be to initiate the maintenance of an audio-visual database of good teaching practices, comprising not only textual documentation of innovation and experimentation in teaching

techniques but also good quality educational video-recordings of teachings on a variety of subjects. When advanced IT infrastructure in a digital India makes it possible to conduct 'tele-teaching' classes by expert teachers on a nation-wide basis, recordings of such teaching sessions could also be maintained and disseminated by the school library through a school library network.

### **(iii) Knowledge Base of Arts and Crafts**

NCF points out the void in art education, lamenting that the visual and performing arts, which include folk and classical forms of music and dance, theatre, puppetry, clay work, visual arts, and crafts from every region of India, have not been duly recognised or given their rightful place in the curriculum. The school library can make adequate attempts to fill this void through procurement and dissemination of authentic resource material for arts education teachers for the popularisation and encouragement of the arts and heritage crafts – textual information resources such as design books, samplers, source books, tool guides, and crafts maps and copies of art works by famous Indian and international artists, as well as audio/video-recordings of vocal / instrumental / folk music by other performing artistes, and recordings of crafts and trade practitioners at work. Virtual tours of important

museums of India would be another contribution of the school library to nurture artistic capabilities and familiarise students with the Indian artistic and cultural traditions.

## **2. Development of Language and Reading Habit**

NCF lays great emphasis on language and other forms of expression as a basic capability to be nurtured in children as it 'is synonymous with development of understanding and identity, and also the capability of relating with others.'

The library in its traditional form, as a storehouse of books, has always been the ideal source for reading material. Inculcating reading skills and fostering a lifelong taste for reading should be the school library's prerogative. Concerted efforts need to be taken to collect the right books to suit the range of age groups in a school. Multilingualism should be encouraged through a rich print collection of dictionaries and selective literature in a variety of Indian languages, including folk tales, prose collections, anthologies of poems, novels, drama in the original vernacular and also translated versions wherever available. Audio-visual material in regional languages such as recordings of songs, plays and poetry recitals would expose children to the rich Indian literary traditions.

Reading is an important component in language education. School syllabi 'burdened with information-absorbing and memorising tasks' take

the pleasure out of reading. Libraries could be the ideal promoters of a culture of reading, which includes silent, individual reading of fiction/non-fiction as well as 'reading aloud' activity.

Storytelling or narrative discourse has proven useful for all ages, laying the foundations of logical understanding, expanding imagination and enhancing the capacity to participate in situations distant from one's life. Reading out or storytelling by a competent reader with appropriate gestures and dramatisation can provide the right thrust to the generation of reading skills. Such reading sessions can also be conducted in the literature-rich environment of the school library.

Reading clubs conducted by the school library can encourage school children to present their views on a popular work of fiction or a new bestseller or share a story they have enjoyed with other children. This would serve the dual purpose of improving both linguistic skills as well as oral presentation skills.

### **3. Value and Peace Education**

NCF lays particular emphasis on the cultivation of values and peace education, which are essential factors in individual character development and also societal development. Education should aim for 'a commitment to democracy and the values of equality, justice, freedom, concern for others' well-

being, secularism, respect for human dignity and rights.'

The school library can take special efforts to procure literature facilitating such a value-based and peace-loving culture. Biographies, speech collections, essays of world leaders who have successfully propagated feelings of universal brotherhood, non-violence, peaceful co-existence and who have fought for the abolition of social injustice in all forms, are a rich source of positive inputs for the formative minds of children. The library's collection could also hold audio recordings of speeches/interviews of such eminent social personalities.

NCF suggests various peace activities for practice by teachers which could easily be carried out by the school library. It could arrange for procurement and screening of films and documentaries promoting values of justice, peace, tolerance, and healthy and mutually rewarding relations among individuals belonging to varied cultural-social-economic backgrounds. Besides, the children could be encouraged to select news clippings on specific socially relevant topics for the school notice boards. The school librarian could arrange for children's views and articles to be regularly published in local newspaper editions under the Newspapers in Education scheme. Resource persons from the media could be invited for lectures or talks with children. The rich resources of the school library could be utilised to

extract interesting information about the cultural and religious diversity of India, and a display or exhibition of textual matter and photographs/ images could be arranged in the library, with the active participation of school children of all ages, on the occasion of any festival or cultural/ religious event or on internationally proclaimed days such as Women's Day, Labour Day, days highlighting the plight of physically and mentally challenged individuals, and other days of special significance. This would promote in the children an attitude of respect and responsibility to lesser privileged or neglected social components, and foster peace and value education. Discussions and dynamic interactions among children would encourage them to comment upon, compare and think about elements that exist in their social and physical environment, as reflected in print media (books, magazines, newspapers) or audio-visual forms (Television programmes, movies, advertisements, songs, art works, etc). This would also strengthen their psychological and social foundations, while increasing their emotional intelligence quotient.

#### **4. Creation of Institutional Repositories**

Institutions with requirements to store, preserve and provide access to digital materials created by their own members benefit by creating their own repositories. A school too could have its own repository built up of one

or more sub-repositories as indicated below, comprising a variety of material having long-term use, recorded in the digital format for better preservation and access. In this area, the school library could play an important role by identifying such material, recording it, preserving it and making it accessible to potential users of this information, thereby accepting the responsibility of management and dissemination of such locally generated digital material.

##### **4.1 Students Projects Repository**

There is ample scope in the school curriculum for students' projects in various subjects. Due emphasis has been given by NCF to the knowledge generation aspect of such projects. The project material so generated can be preserved in the original format as posters and models for a limited period of time in the school library or a separate gallery or school museum. For long-term use, however, it could be further digitised by the school library in an appropriate manner and preserved in a digital form as photographs and audio-visual recordings, as part of a progressive digital database—a projects repository. The school library could also offer to prepare a roster of project ideas in each area of study highlighted in the NCF, to enable teachers to select relevant topics for students' projects, and make available all possible information resources to the students and assist them in their project development. Such students' projects



repository would prove useful not only to that particular school but also to schools across the country if and when a school network is developed. The following categories of students' projects repositories could be maintained by the school library:

#### **(a) Environmental Projects**

NCF makes a strong case for increasing the environmental awareness of children by involving them in study projects on various aspects of their physical environment (animals, forests, rivers, plants, etc.) acquiring information pertaining to naming and categorising plants, or ways of harvesting and storing water, or of practising sustainable agriculture, documentation of environmental history or creation of biodiversity registers containing people's representations of the environment through various forms of art, music, dance and craft, etc. All such environmental projects prepared by students would contribute to the richness of the projects' repository, and, if uploaded on a publicly accessible website, would create a comprehensive database on India's environment.

#### **(b) Socio-cultural Projects**

The school library could take special efforts to encourage and preserve students' projects on socio-cultural topics of interest, reflecting the immense socio-cultural diversity of India, its different ethnic communities, different social and

cultural traditions and practices, festivals, food-clothing-housing and lifestyles of local communities and tribes, including the rich cultural resources of local communities - local stories, songs, jokes and riddles, oral histories and art. Thereby it could develop a rich socio-cultural repository having immense scope for knowledge generation.

#### **(c) Science Projects**

Students are required to develop study projects on scientific topics discussed in their textbooks. They are encouraged to display scientific models or posters on particular themes as part of activities for the National Science Day or for science exhibitions. The school library could manage the science projects repository where the award-winning and good quality scientific projects can be appropriately preserved in the form of digital recordings for future use. The library with its knowledge resources could stimulate students' curiosity regarding common items and services they use every day, for example, machines of different kinds, and encourage them to prepare audio-visual presentations/projects on such scientific innovations, which would be a valuable addition to the scientific projects repository.

### **4.2 Resource Persons Repository**

NCF has stressed the usefulness of learning from practitioners of knowledge, working professionals, artists, etc. Such resource persons

could be invited to school to let students experience 'living craft skills, techniques, designs and products' which are a rich source of knowledge for the curricular areas of art and work. Similarly, in other non-curricular areas such as work, health, yoga and physical education, specialists in these areas could be invited for demonstrative lectures. To introduce students to different career and study opportunities and skill development, resource persons (including parents and community members) belonging to a variety of disciplines, could make children aware of the multitude of skills and professions practised in society, developing their interest in disciplines outside their curriculum. It should be the school library's prerogative to record and preserve all such lectures/meetings/interviews/demonstrations with resource persons, as also recordings of study tours, in an ever-increasing Resource Persons Repository, having potential use for future generation of students.

### **PROVIDING AN ADEQUATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Much importance has been given in NCF to the physical environment in school. However, in a school which may have more than 30 classrooms, developing the physical environment as recommended by NCF may not be feasible due to space and monetary constraints. On the other hand, all those ideas can be implemented within another learning environment,

*viz.*, the school library— a single entity, occupying a few large rooms within the school building or existing as a separate wing or small building. This limited area can certainly be developed into a child-friendly space with a colourful, friendly, peaceful and welcoming atmosphere. Bright interiors, with adequate natural light, fresh and soothing wall colours, appropriate colourful wall displays, largely comprising children's art work, would attract children to a welcoming learning environment. The library could engage commercial artists or interested student artists to prepare a range of changeable, well-planned posters and charts to supplement textbook material in various subjects. Such posters could be displayed on soft boards outside classrooms, on corridor walls, library walls or moveable display boards.

The library area could be compartmentalised into separate sections with flexible arrangement of furniture. The pre-primary and primary students could be accommodated into special nooks and corners, with pictures and models of animals, flowers, trees and toys for company. Simple and comfortable furniture for reading and discussions, appropriately designed to suit different age-groups, with floor mats for art and craft work would be a suitable seating arrangement in the library. Different learning materials could be placed in different corners of the library. A special section could

be reserved for TV and audio-visual presentations.

It would be feasible to ideally design the school library's physical environment to provide the right learning atmosphere, compensating for any limitations in the design and furnishing of the school classrooms.

### **ACHIEVING INFORMATION LITERACY**

NCF states that the learning objective in a school can be achieved when the learner 'has also learnt where to find information, how to use information, and to analyse and evaluate the same.'

Technological advances have made available information retrieval tools like the internet and the mobile phone, which have proved a boon for education. Whether or not it is feasible to introduce a computer in each classroom for learning, for the school library it is possible to make IT tools available in the library premises. The school library can thus make students of all classes aware of websites of their interest, teaching them how to retrieve relevant information and use it, thereby arousing their hunger for knowledge for its own sake, as well as for the sake of supporting various school projects allotted to them.

The students can also have access to a multitude of databases procured or developed by the school library. The institutional repository of the school would be an additional source of interesting information. In future when tele-conferencing and tele-teaching facilities are introduced, the school library could be the central

IT access point for students to reap benefits of such a facility.

A good IT infrastructure could be developed to enable the establishment of a school library network at the local, district, state or national level, allowing sharing of resources between school libraries.

### **TEACHER LIBRARIAN**

An essential component of an active school library is the librarian. In recognition of the immense potentialities of the school library, NCF needs to not only redefine its concept of school libraries but it should also strongly propose the development of 'teacher librarians' for fulfilment of educational goals. NCF stipulates that 'Training of teachers in library management and use is required to meet the demands of this situation'. Unfortunately, teachers are already working under severe constraints of time, hard-pressed to complete the existing syllabus, while being burdened with other obligatory duties. Therefore, instead of teaching them library management skills and weighing them down further with library duties, it would be more convenient to train professional librarians to become teacher librarians as is the practice in the U.S.A., Australia and other developed countries.

The Australian School Library Association (ASLA) defines a teacher librarian as follows:

- A qualified teacher librarian is defined as a person who holds

recognised teaching qualifications and qualifications in librarianship.

- Teacher librarians are uniquely qualified - curriculum knowledge and pedagogy are combined with library and information management knowledge and skills.
- Teacher librarians support and implement the vision of their school communities through advocating and building effective library and information services and programmes that contribute to the development of lifelong learners.<sup>7</sup>

ASLA identifies three major roles for teacher librarians: as curriculum leaders, as information specialists, and as information services managers. As curriculum leaders they work with Principals and senior staff to ensure information literacy. They are involved in curriculum planning. They plan, teach and evaluate collaboratively with teachers to ensure the effective integration of information resources and technologies into student learning. As information specialists they provide access to information resources through efficient and well-guided systems, and provide training and assistance to students and staff in the effective use of these systems. As information services managers they develop policies, procedures and criteria for selecting resources which meet curriculum, informational and student recreational needs. They develop information systems and services responsive to student

and teacher needs. They provide a stimulating, helpful environment which is a focal point and showcase for students' learning achievements, and promote the effective use of resources and information sources, systems and services both within and beyond the school, thus encouraging a lifelong learning process.

### **NEED FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP COURSES**

Only a couple of institutes/universities in India have thought it necessary to introduce an optional paper on school librarianship, in spite of the fact that there is a specific requirement for such study by the very nature of the school librarian's work. For the professional librarian running a school library in India, resource development, database management, satisfaction of information needs and other extension activities are an integral part of good librarianship, as taught in Library Science graduate and post-graduate courses of Indian universities. However, what is not taught in these courses are education related subjects necessary for a practising school librarian-educational techniques, child psychology, educational psychology, etc. Knowledge of these subjects would be beneficial for a school librarian in order to better understand the requirements of school children of varying physical and mental ages as also the educational needs of the teachers which can be satisfied by the school library. This requirement of an

amalgamation of librarianship and educational skills can be satisfied by augmenting the curriculae of Library & Information Science Departments of various state and private universities to include not only an optional paper on Management of School Libraries but also short-term school librarianship courses of an interdisciplinary nature, which will teach relevant librarianship concepts and techniques with a slant to the school environment as well as school education philosophy and teaching techniques, thereby producing a new workforce of library professionals in India, *viz.*, Teacher Librarians.

### **THE ROAD AHEAD**

There is a need to recognise the indispensability of a school library for a school, and acknowledge its undisputed potential for the achievement of educational goals as a vital partner in education. An important step in this direction would be for a premier educational body such as the NCERT to redefine its concept of school libraries in the NCF, and strongly lay down prerequisites for a school library – the physical space and infrastructural requirements, the range of services expected, the budget-manpower requirements, with special emphasis on the recruitment of trained school librarians or teacher librarians, who will be able to carry out the dual responsibilities of librarianship and teaching. The Raja Ram Mohan Roy Foundation has been recommended

in NCF as a nodal agency for establishing a national school library network. It could also be entrusted with the responsibility of producing trained school librarians through the introduction of specialised school librarianship courses at Library & Information Science Departments of state and private universities.

### **CONCLUSION**

School libraries have great potential for contributing to education in a number of innovative ways. They can develop a rich knowledge base for teachers and students not only in conventional curricular areas but also in equally important peripheral areas such as arts and music, work and skill development, health and physical education. Development of non-conventional but useful databases and institutional repositories of school generated information such as students' projects, teachers' lectures, presentations of resource persons, etc. could prove to be unique initiatives of school libraries, with potential use not only for the parent school but also to other schools through school networks. Inculcating the reading habit in children and developing linguistic skills using novel ideas and techniques, and promoting value and peace education could be very significant contributions of school libraries to society. In the digital age of information, the school libraries are the ideal means of encouraging information literacy and the optimum use of information technology. By

providing an adequate physical environment for learning, school libraries can encourage children to become lifelong learners, a very useful asset to the progress of society.

The school library can seamlessly merge into the teaching and learning activity in the school through the practice of 'embedded librarianship', becoming a true partner in education. It can play both supplementary and complementary roles – supplementing what is taught and learnt in class by providing additional learning materials and information to both students and teachers, and

in its complementary role, it can make available NCF recommended resources and services which the teachers are unable to provide, thereby contributing substantially to the fulfilment of NCF guidelines for education. The possibilities for involvement of the school library in the education process are thus limitless. Recognition of its potential and governmental encouragement to the establishment of a well-equipped and adequately manned school library in every school is required in the interest of society and the nation as a whole.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Government of India, *National Policy on Education 1986* (revised 1993). New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup>NCERT. *National Curriculum Framework*, 2005. New Delhi.

<sup>3</sup>IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto, "*The school library in teaching and learning for all*". 1999. The Hague, IFLA.

<sup>4</sup>"IASL Policy Statement on School Libraries". 1993. *International Association of School Libraries*. accessed November 19, 2014, <http://www.iasl-online.horg/about/handbook/policys1.html>.

<sup>5</sup>United Nations. 1959. "*Declaration of the rights of the child*". Geneva.

<sup>6</sup>International Association of School Librarianship. 2012. "*What is a school library?: International guidelines*". Research SIG, Chicago.

<sup>7</sup>Australian School Librarian Association, "*What is a teacher librarian?*" <http://www.asla.org.au/advocacy/what-is-a-school-librarian.aspx>, Accessed December 19, 2014.

# Developing Speaking Skills in English among School Children Using Technology Support

YEASMIN SULTANA\*

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## Abstract

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*This paper is based on an experimental type of research work. It aimed to see the effectiveness of using technology support in classroom situation to develop speaking skills of learners studying in Class VI in a Bengali medium school in Malda district of West Bengal. The researcher used animated videos of Panchatantra tales as technology supportive materials in her study. The researcher had used two groups pre-test and post-test design and followed the purposive sampling method. Experimental and controlled groups were formed before giving them the treatment. The data were collected through administering various exercises and tasks requiring the learners to provide short answers, retelling a story, etc. The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantified data demonstrate that students from the experimental group did better than the controlled group in terms of development of speaking skills. Therefore, we can say that technology support rendered English language learning interesting and motivating.*

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant concerns for teaching English to our school students is to develop their speaking skills. Since English is taught as a

second language, it's very important that all our students especially at school level should have enhanced speaking skills in English. Speaking is the productive skill in the oral

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mode. Unlike other skills, it is more complicated because it involves more than just pronouncing words. Speaking skills in English refer to the process of verbally exchanging information/ideas from one person to another. Speaking is a two-way process between the speaker and the listener and involves the productive skills of speaking and the receptive skills of understanding. Speaking takes place in the presence of a listener because listener responds to the speaker's communication. From daily communication point of view, speaking is possibly the most essential skill. But it is found that the students fail to develop enough competence in speaking skills in English as their mother tongue is not English and they are not yet skilful in using English at the school level. Hence, it is very important to direct our attention towards the development of speaking skills in English specially among our students at the school level. Now a days, the use of technology in language learning is well reported (Brandal, 2005). But, it is found that the development of speaking skills in English is not properly cared at our school stage.

Therefore, the researcher is keen to see the effectiveness of using technology support for developing speaking skills in English among school students.

### **WHY USING TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT?**

Textbook is considered the main supply of knowledge. Textbook writers

write textbooks keeping the National Curriculum Framework in their minds. They follow the recommended aims and objectives of language teaching given in the National Curriculum Framework. But, a textbook ceases to sustain the interest of the learners when every unit or lesson in the textbook has a predictable structure. As a result, there remains no element of surprise, novelty and curiosity. The textbook acquires the status of a ritual. However, it is very difficult to develop curriculum and syllabus which cater to the needs of all kinds of learners. In the second language classroom, especially in Indian context, it is observed that students come from different socio-economic and socio-cultural background. Their language needs vary accordingly. It becomes very difficult to the English teacher as well as the textbook to satisfy the language needs of all the learners. Here comes the need for the supplementation. Teacher uses different kinds of supplementary material to quench the thirst of knowledge.

Using only course books in the classroom makes teaching and learning boring, so sometimes teacher should use visual, audio, audio-visual materials in the classroom to motivate students. On the other hand, supplementary materials always carry an element of unfamiliarity and unpredictability. Therefore, we need to bring in variety in the form of types of exercise/material/method, etc. So, the researcher is keen to use



technology support for developing speaking skills in English among school students.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

As behaviourists strongly believe in the role of 'stimulus' in eliciting 'response', modern ELT experts believe in the role of learners' interest, attitude, and motivation as instrumental to effective learning. It can be strongly argued that materials used in language classroom ought to be interesting and also thought-provoking. In this context, animated tales may be considered as a source of productive materials for promoting language learning. When English is taught through structural approach or form-focused activities, students find it very difficult and boring. Though students master the rules of grammar in due course, but they are unable to communicate using the language in real life situations. Hence, the teaching method should involve creation of communicative situations and students should be encouraged to interact in those situations using the target language.

The current study aims at developing speaking skills using '*animated tales*' as supplementary texts. According to the National Curriculum Framework 2005, language teaching should promote values and culture. Animated tales used in the study are sources of moral values which represent Indian culture. These tales will, however, be used to supplement the prescribed

course book and enable learners to think beyond the texts and the four walls of the classroom. In other words, these tales are expected to engage learners in meaningful language use and keep the class environment enjoyable and active.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the present study is:

- To study the effect of using technology support for the development of speaking skills in English with regard to pre-test and post-test scores.

### **HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

The hypothesis of the present study is:

- There is a significant difference between mean scores of overall speaking skills developed through using technology support and mean scores of overall speaking skills developed through ULM in English with regard to pre-test and post-test scores.

### **PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA**

The present study was concerned with the school level and more specifically it was conducted on Class VI students of a Government school of Malda district, West Bengal. The study was conducted in the context of rural and Bengali medium schools in West Bengal.

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The present piece of research was a quasi-experimental research. The

researcher had used two groups pre-test and post-test design in the present study. The relative effectiveness of using technology support and Usual Learning Method (ULM) for the development of speaking skills in English of Class VI students was studied in the present study. In this study, use of technology support and usual learning method were considered as the independent variables; and development of speaking skills in English was considered as the dependent variable.

### **SAMPLE**

The study has been carried out in Golapganj High School, Malda. It was established in 1944. At present, there are three thousand students studying in this school. It is a Bengali medium school where students can continue till higher secondary level. There are forty teachers teaching different subjects. Among them, eight teachers teach English. There are three hundred students in the eighth standard. Most of the students come from the local area and share middle class socio-economic background.

The learners are chosen from Class VI. The class has been divided into five sections (A to E). The students taken for the study are from sections A and B. They come from similar socio-economic background, i.e., middle class families. In most of the families, only mother tongue (here Bengali) is used as a means of communication. Classroom is the only place where they get a chance to listen to English and use it. Most of the times, they do not get chance to speak in the class itself because of the huge number of students in the class and lack of classroom management skills of teachers. On the other hand, they hardly speak English outside the English language classroom.

In the present study, the researcher had followed the purposive sampling method in order to select the sample. Section A of Class VI of Golapganj High School formed the controlled group while the other section i.e. Section B of Class VI of Golapganj High School formed the experimental group in the present study. Total 128 students were there in the entire sampling group at the beginning of the experiment. However, 122 students were present

### **Description of the sample**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Purposively selected schools</b>	<b>Name of the learning stage</b>	<b>No. of the sections/ classes taken for experiment</b>	<b>Name/ category of sections</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Sections forming the treatment groups</b>
1.	Golapganj High School (MALDA)	Class VI	2	Sec- A	60	Controlled group
				Sec- B	62	Experimental group

in all the stages of experiment. The details of the sample of the present study are given below.

### **MATERIALS USED FOR THE INTERVENTION**

Here animated *Panchatantra* tales were used for developing speaking skills. These animations are available on the website *www.youtube.com*. The selected animated tales are designed by Rajashree Production especially for kids. The selected animated tales are very much culture-specific and apt for Indian ESL learners. They do not represent or criticise any religion. Most of the characters are animals which are metaphors of human kind. They represent human sentiments, intelligence, stupidity, and many abstract qualities and vices. Every animated story used in the study ends with a moral lesson which helps students to grow as clever, emotional and rational human beings. The language used in the animation has a neutral Indian accent. The delivery of dialogues, sentences, phrases are intelligible. Stress and intonation are properly maintained. The delivery of animation which includes speed of the audio-visuals, clarity of the video and plain audio is very believable.

The length of the tales is moderate. It is neither lengthy nor too small.

### **DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

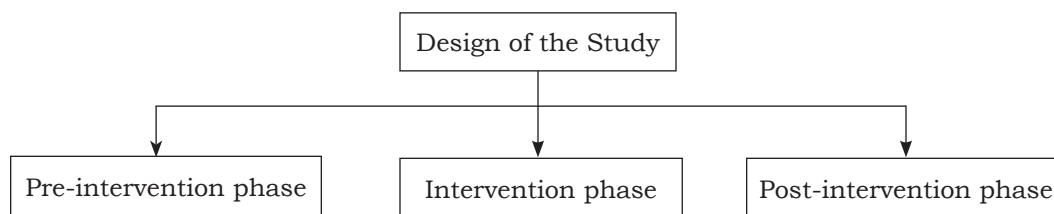
The study is divided into three phases which are as follows:

#### **PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE**

The controlled group and the experimental group were given a pre-test with a view to measuring their level of proficiency in speaking skills. The test was same for both the groups, but it was given separately to each group. In the pre-intervention phase, the tasks given included blanks-filling, comprehension questions, and situations those demand speaking.

#### **INTERVENTION PHASE**

Enhancing speaking skills through animation was a month-long programme which excluded pre-test and post-test hours. Everyday, forty-five minute periods were allotted by the school for the above mentioned purpose. The controlled group was taught for forty-five minutes using usual traditional method in their regular classroom while the experimental group was also taught for forty-five minutes but in the computer laboratory. The school



had big computer laboratory with a LCD projector. Here, the students would watch the animation carefully. They worked on comprehension and vocabulary tasks individually. To start with, speaking tasks were made into group tasks. Later, students performed speaking tasks in pairs. The stories chosen for the intervention were The Talkative Tortoise; Monkey and Crocodile; Blind Vulture; Grapes are Sour; The Clever Son; and Mice and The Elephant.

#### **POST-INTERVENTION PHASE**

The controlled group and the experimental group were given a post-test with a view to measuring their level of proficiency in speaking skills after giving them intervention for a period of one month. The test was the same for both the groups, but it was given separately to each group. Various tasks given in the post-test included blanks-filling, comprehension questions, and situations those demand speaking.

#### **DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

In the beginning of the present research, a pre-test was conducted in the classroom to know the present level of proficiency in speaking. After the results of the pre-test, a twenty-day teaching course was designed. It includes the use of animated tales to improve the speaking skills so that the students are able to comprehend speeches and try to speak English in their everyday life. At the end of the course, a post-test was conducted

and the results of the pre-test and the post-test were compared.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS**

For the present piece of research work, the researcher has used descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, graphical representation of data, etc. and the inferential statistics like 't' test for the analysis of data.

**CG-** Controlled group

**EG-** Experimental Group

**SD-** Standard Deviation

**SEM-** Standard Error of Mean

**DF-** Degree of Freedom

\* - Not Significant

# - Significant

**Table I** is concerned with 't' value showing the effect of using technology support over ULM for the development of speaking skills in English with regard to pre-test and post-test levels separately.

The Section A of Table I states that there exists no significant difference between the pre-test results of the controlled group and the experimental group. Because, from the same section (i.e. Section A) of Table I, it is evident that the obtained 't' ratio between the pre-test scores of the controlled group and the experimental group is 1.861; and this 't' ratio is less than the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of confidence for 120 DF. For 120 DF, the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of confidence is 1.98. Since, the table value of 't' is more than the obtained 't' ratio between the pre-

**Table I**

**Table showing the effectiveness of using technology support over ULM for the development of speaking skills in English with regard to the Pre-test and Post-test scores**

<b>TABLE-I</b>									
<b>'t' value showing the effectiveness of using technology support over ULM for the development of speaking skills in English at the Pre-test and Post-test level separately</b>									
<b>SEC-A of TABLE-I</b>									
<b>'t' test results of control and experimental groups at Pre-test level.</b>									
<b>Level of test</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SEM</b>	<b>'t' value</b>	<b>Table value of 't' at 0.05 level</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Pre-test level	CG	62	52.23	13.912	1.767	1.861	1.98	120	*
	EG	60	52.28	8.824	1.139				
<b>SEC-B of TABLE-I</b>									
<b>'t' test results of control and experimental groups at post-test level.</b>									
<b>Level of test</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SEM</b>	<b>'t' value</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Sig</b>	
Post-test level	CG	62	55.28	12.393	1.574	2.840	120	#	
	EG	60	58.13	8.963	1.157				

test scores of the controlled group and the experimental group, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that at the initial stage of treatment there exists no significant difference between mean speaking skills in English (m=52.23) of the controlled group and mean speaking skills in English (m=52.28) of the experimental group.

The Section B of Table I states that there exists significant difference between the post-test results of the controlled group and the experimental group. Because, from the same section (i.e. Section-B) of Table I, it

is found that the obtained 't' ratio between the results of the controlled group and the experimental group is 2.840; and this 't' ratio is more than the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of confidence for 120 DF. For 120 DF, the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of confidence is 1.98. Since the calculated 't' ratio between the mean results of the controlled group and experimental group is more than the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of confidence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is inferred that at the post-test stage of treatment there exists significant difference between

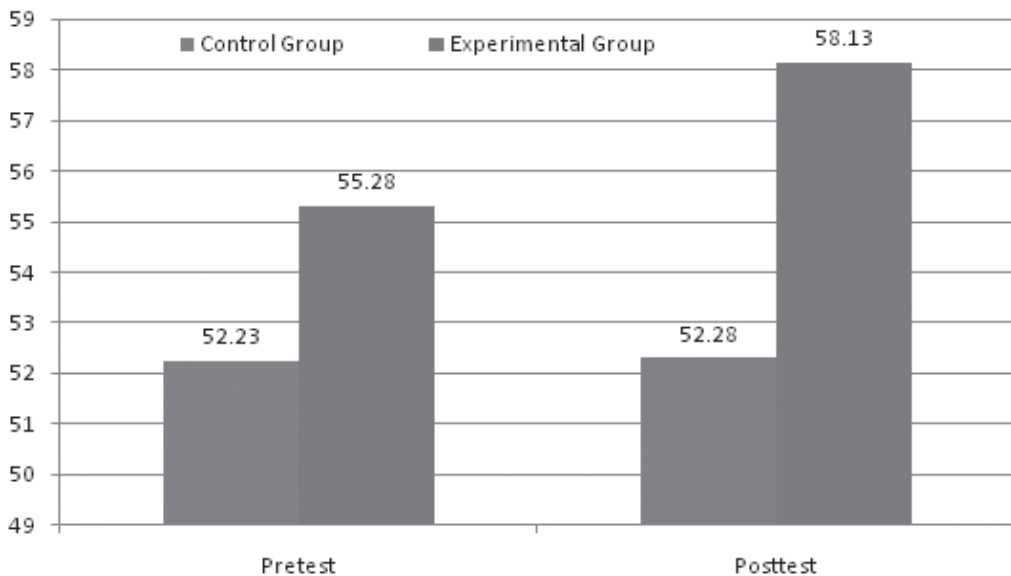
the mean speaking skills in English ( $m=55.28$ ) of the controlled group and mean speaking skills in English ( $m=58.13$ ) of the experimental group.

From Part-I of the Table I, it is found that at the pre-test level there exists no significant difference between the controlled group and experimental group with regard to their speaking skills in English but at the post-test level, there exists significant difference between the controlled group and experimental group with regard to their same speaking skills in English.

### CONCLUSION

After carefully analysing the data, it became evident that the experimental group had shown improvement

in speaking skills over a month. Students from the experimental group had performed well in comprehension skills, because they could relate the spoken words with the visual form of animation. Animation helped them understand the tales better. On the other hand, students from the controlled group did not show as much improvement in the comprehension as the students from experimental group. Moreover, lack of support through animation resulted into lack of proper understanding of the theme, the characters and the implied moral that the story intends to convey. This difference between the understanding and performance of the controlled group and that of the experimental group is indicative



*Fig. 1: Mean level performance of controlled group and experimental group showing the development of speaking skills in English*

of the effectiveness of using animated tales in language learning.

The experiment demonstrated that animated tales helped the students understand and remember new words better. The visual images of words made them comprehend difficult vocabulary, for example, 'famine', 'graveyard', 'crocodile', 'majesty', 'assembly', 'rose apples', etc. It was observed that use of animated tales motivated the students to participate in group works. They learnt the skills of turn taking, responding to questions, asking questions, debating, making

decisions, and listening to others and respecting their opinions. Such skills would definitely enable them to communicate with more confidence in their day-to-day life. The tasks designed on the animated tales were based on their personal experience sharing, so they were able to involve themselves completely in doing the tasks. It seemed to make them feel more comfortable. Taking into consideration all these inferences, it is summarised that use of technology support is a better method than ULM for developing oral skills in English at the elementary stage.

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## Book Review

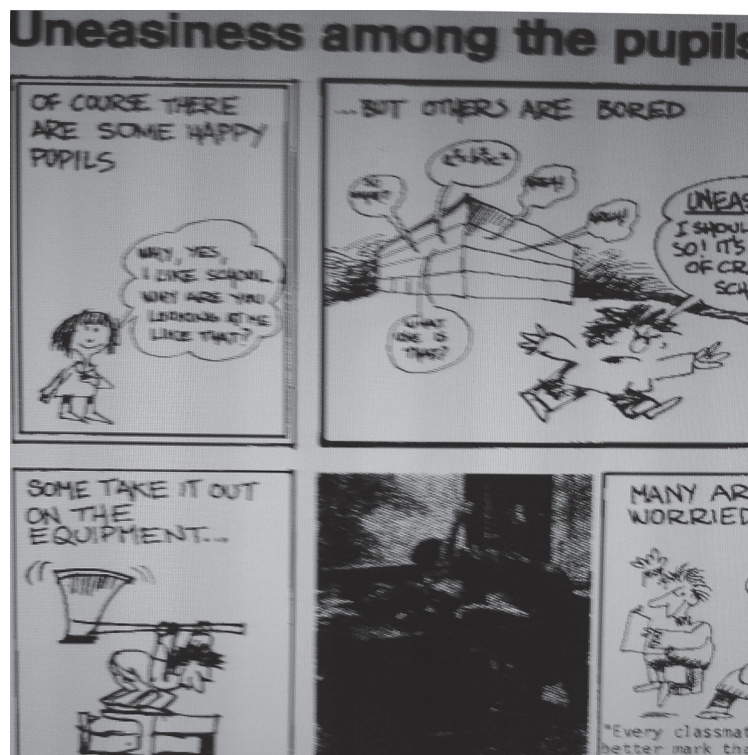
# Danger: School!

**Author and Publisher:** Institute for Cultural Action  
Indian Edition

Other India Press

**YEAR:** 1996

**PAGE:** 100; **Price:** ₹160



Provocative in nature, the book questions the education system. It gives a detailed account about children's experiences at school. Difficult to word, the inner experiences of school are beautifully illustrated in the book. It was prepared by members of the Institute for Cultural Action (IDAC), Geneva for children, parents and teachers. Etched by one of the most distinguished cartoonists, Claudius, the book employs graphics, illustrations, quotes, comics and photographs, explicating beautifully an 'inside of the school'. The symbol 'school ahead' is also used in a slightly modified way, as a cover picture to depict a hurried child. Much was learnt, as I exchanged some e-mails with Arvind Gupta, a toy maker. He revealed, "Paulo Freire, the radical Brazilian pedagogue was expelled from his country for professing a liberating educational method. The World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland gave him refuge. IDAC started there. Danger School was illustrated by Claudius - Brazil's ace political cartoonist. After Freire's death, the group disintegrated" (A. Gupta, personal communication, July 16, 2014). He also mentioned that it is difficult to find any references to IDAC on the internet. Mr. Gupta and his friends Mr. Claude Alvares and Dr. Vinod Raina worked together in making an Indian adaptation to the same. Illustrations in the book were re-done to suit Indian conditions. Its translation has also been printed in Hindi and Marathi with the name, '*khatra: school*'.

The book comprises of excerpts from Friere's (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* focusing majorly on aspects like 'oppressed states', 'banking concept of education' and 'narration sickness'. Emphasis is also laid upon Bronfenbrenner's (1979) *Ecological Systems Theory* demonstrating, in great detail, the significant role of the environment in child's development. The book cites certain researches as well. It also introduces us to the two comic characters who in continuous dialogues with each other define school. School is defined as a place that creates some uneasiness amongst students, teachers and parents. It is also seen as a place where children are not allowed to talk.

The book also gives an elaborate account about the schooling system in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It discusses how schools came into being and how 'Education for All' gradually emerged as a new trend. The book compares the school system with a machine and various aspects of it, which have been referred as cogs, with different parts of the machine. All the functions of school are shown as mechanical, like the way machine works. The book describes school as *a world apart*, where child is entrusted like a registered parcel. The illustration disguised children as parcels are tagged 'fragile'. The silent comic strip introduces the readers to yet another cog of this teaching machinery and calls it, *cut off from life*. This comic strip shows the child

looking gruelingly at school. School is also ascribed with the label of a *world of unchangeable rites* where everything is fixed. The book quotes a child's spontaneous reply to his mother as an example. When he was asked about what he learnt about speaking, he replied that they were told to keep quiet, thus introducing yet another world, one that of *silence and immobility*. School is also seen as a place where *uniformity* is practised. Each child is expected to work and behave the same way. Does this let us think that we expect children to work at the same pace? Is there then a space for individual differences? Besides this, school is also a *world of punishments* and of *unusual subjects*. It tells us how the same is devoid of reality. Subjects taught are devoid of everyday real events and practical experiences.

Some illustrations in the book made me remember my own anxieties at school, while some, forced me to raise few imperative questions.

- i. In one of the illustrations, teacher's face consists of a 'talking' mouth. Emphasis on mouth alone explains that the role of a teacher is to do the talking. She is also shown with a stick in one hand. Whereas, students are denoted by ears illustrating children as passive listeners. This corresponds well with the 'narration sickness' elaborated by Paulo Friere, where teachers act as narrating subjects while students as listening objects. Narration
- sickness explains how children are expected to mechanically memorise the narrated contents.
- ii. There is a great variety of subjects that children study at school. But, there seems to be no association between them. Illustrations in the book reveal how children are put to study those subjects, the usefulness and the meaning of which is not known to them. Adults do not have any answer to convince them except establishing it as a fact that the same is going to be useful in the later years of their life.
- iii. Teachers apparently get busy highlighting their own respective subjects, thus creating a hierarchy. Some subjects are considered more important than others. Parents give prime importance to the science and commerce streams as choosing humanities is looked down in the society. Parents often worry that if their children score less, they may be forced to opt for the courses which are less valuable.
- iv. Hierarchy is not only created in the value a subject holds, in fact, even the people associated with the schools are put under a hierarchical framework. The book talks about the teachers who have the authorities over children at school. Although they are powerful, yet are worried and afraid of those who have the authorities over them. Teachers

are bound to work according to the institutions in which they serve. They are tied to the people above them, also colleagues, parents and the school programme. We talk about children's freedom. Can this freedom be brought by the teachers who are themselves not free?

- v. Tests and examinations, today, are considered hurdles as it creates fear and anxiety in children. High competition and the idea to stand well to the expectations of teachers and parents further worsen the situation. A child with poor marks is seen with low eyes. This further enforces the sense of competition in young children. However, it gets so high that they tend to keep their personal notes and notebooks hidden.
  - vi. The book shows us the sample of a kind of punishment often put to use by the teachers in school like writing for a given number of times, the acts which are not permissible. For example, I will not misbehave in class; I will not come late to the school etcetera. The child is made to write what he is ought *not* to do.
  - vii. Through interactions and everyday practices, it is often communicated to the children that there is simply one way to learn— the way indoctrinated by the teachers. Any diversion in the same will bring punishments. Thus, a child is not free to act
- his way but the desired or the expected way. In order to avoid conflicts that may otherwise arise, the child never questions. Thus, establishing silence as the most acceptable norm in schools. It is often thought that a quiet class is a good class. In the pursuit of maintaining discipline, the child is often rendered silent and immobile.
- viii. The book is critical to the fixed number of hours of study, of play, of going to the toilets etcetera. This is, however, a difficult question to answer. For the ones who talk about freedom in school looks critically at binding children in hours and for the ones who enforce discipline, makes it a forced one.
  - ix. As Mackenzie (1970) pointed out, "Philosophers throughout the ages have debated what the word 'good' means, but the educationists have no doubts. The good pupil is the the pupil with the high intelligence" (p. 18). In this particular statement, the title 'good' is associated sarcastically with intelligence. In a similar way, the book also talks about the model of a good pupil. One of the teacher's definitions of a good child is: "*A docile, patient child who knows how to keep quiet and listen to what the teacher is saying, we give good marks to those who fold their arms!*" (p 40). The book cites a research

by Robert Rosenthal, who with an experiment conducted at an elementary school in South San Francisco, found that the idea of good and bad pupils was teachers' own creation.

Through the title and cover page, it can be deduced that school is a place that creates 'unrest' amongst all those who are closely associated to school— children, teachers and parents. Pictures, illustrations, graphics and drawings have been beautifully used to convey significant meanings about school. For example, an illustration of the distorted school building exemplifies its broken state. It, however, seems to be an audacious attempt to label school as danger. The book is sure to keep its readers engrossed through its captive illustrations. Apparently, the descriptions made in the book are quite critical and sarcastic. For example, sarcastic comparisons between: '*school system and machinery*' and '*good and intelligence*'; sarcastic labelling of various cogs of teaching machinery like: *a world of punishments, world*

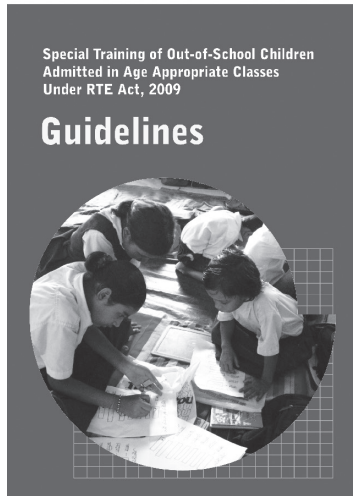
*of silence and immobility, cut off from life etcetera; inferiority and fear of conflict* defined as values; calling these values, a *mechanism* for the effective functioning of schools. Besides captive illustrations, another major strength of the book is the way it ended. Even though the book was critical and sarcastic to majority of the children's school experiences, it ended with a positive note. It welcomes and appreciates 'change'.

The book has revealed a lot about the child's experiences at school. Though the book was written years ago, it has beautifully exemplified the current school system in our nation. It thus seemed important to revive such a strong and powerful book. Besides the fact that Government has, since then, formulated various reforms, policies and acts towards free and compulsory education, it seems imperative to review this book before attempting to formulate any policy related to education. Probably, as a benchmark, it is also important to understand 'school' from the child's perspective so as to be able to design a 'happy school'.

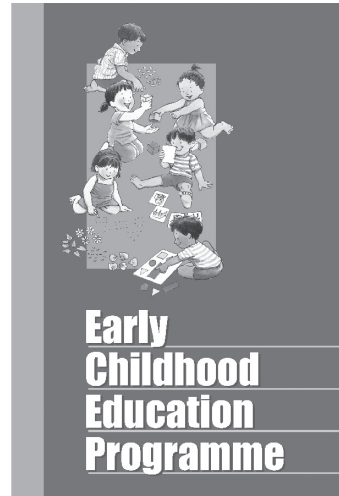
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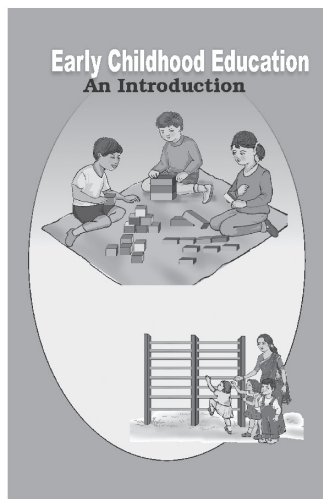
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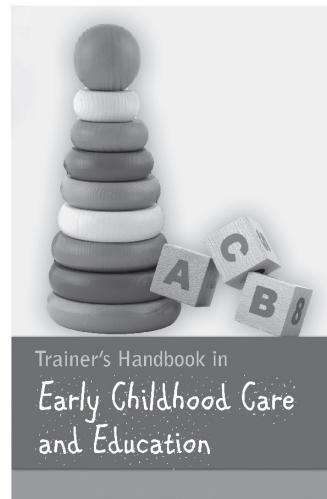
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