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The NCERT encourages original and critical thinking in education. The 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 aims include thought-provoking articles, challenging discussions, analysis, challenges of educational issues, book reviews and other related features.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Section 16 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 states that, "No child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education". The Act also stresses on the effective implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) of students' performance and the need to provide continuous support to students in order to ensure that all students learn. We have witnessed a huge change in our elementary education system in terms of providing access to greater numbers of children since the implementation of the Act. At the same time, we also witnessed a huge cry from different corners of our society about the implementation of CCE in schools. Recently, our government decided to roll back the 'No-detention policy' by introducing examinations at the end of Class V and Class VIII.

Two articles in the present issue of the journal explore the no-detention policy and the CCE. The paper by Preeti Vivek Mishra analyses the roll-back debate on no-detention policy. The author scrutinises the arguments for and against the roll-back under the lenses of the human rights-based and post-development thought paradigms. The article tries to provide a deep insight into 'roll-back of no-detention policy' for future research and exercise. It looks at the various dimensions of the structure of the policy as well as the debate surrounding it. Kavita Sharma through her paper highlights the strengths and gaps of CCE schemes implemented in 22 States/UTs by analysing the CCE materials of those States/UTs and makes a proposal for qualitative improvement of elementary education as envisaged under RTE Act.

Various initiatives have been undertaken by the Central and State governments to provide quality education to all in order to ensure the constitutional commitment to social equality and social justice. The recent initiative of Inclusive Education will be successful only if we provide quality education to all children without any discrimination. In an analytical paper, Yaipharemba discusses the Loktak Floating Elementary School, a community initiative school for dropout children in Langolsabi Leikai of Champu Khangpok floating village in the northern part of Loktak Lake, in Manipur. The article shares the journey of struggle to deal with the high dropout rate of underprivileged children and adults, due to the removal of more than 770 floating huts. It explains how the State and educational bodies tried to accommodate and bring back these children and adults to mainstream education. The author describes the functioning of the School as 'Floating RTE' on a conflict-torn lake providing a beacon of hope for the underprivileged children.

An analytical review has been done by Suman Rana and Wairokpmam Premi Devi about the educational status of Scheduled Tribes (STs) of Rajasthan based on various Central and State government reports and statistics. The review highlights factors such as low literacy level, lowest transition rate from primary to upper primary level and secondary to higher secondary level of education and the dropout cases among the STs.

The paper by Suman Negi looks into the current state of government school participation in Himachal Pradesh which has decreased sizeably over the decade. While on the contrary, the share of private school participation has increased. With this context, the study raises a serious concern to revisit the government schooling system, and highlights the need of all stakeholders to take responsibility to build a strong public education system in the State.

The moment we talk about school education system, one needs to take a note of the teacher education system as well because the quality of education is highly dependent on the quality of teachers. Two papers in the present issue throw light on different aspects of teacher education. A reflective paper by Jyoti Kohli critically analyses the recently recommended School Internship programme in the two-year B.Ed. curriculum. She argues that the effective implementation of this internship requires the Pre-service teacher education institutions to re-envision the school observation and school internship programmes in order to ensure that teachers entering the school system are ready for the myriad demands they are likely to face in schools.

The paper by B.C. Das analyses the organisation of secondary teacher education programmes specifically in the north-eastern region of the country. It investigates the various obstacles and challenges that are faced in the organisation of this programme and proposes suggestions for improving quality and functioning. Though the paper has been written before the implementation of National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) 2014 regulations, which proposes the enhancement of duration of B.Ed. programme to two years. The historical description of teacher education programmes in various north-eastern states given in the paper may be useful and knowledge-enhancing for teachers, teacher educators and researchers.

Organising and managing in-service programmes for teachers requires innovative as well as systematic mechanisms. The paper by Atul Bamrara explores the application of information and communication technology tools for the training need analysis and applicability through a model called ADDIE model. A joint paper by Surabhi Negi and Sunita Magre focusses on the problems faced by teens due to cyber bullying. The study also provides some solutions by looking at the key roles of the victim and other people. It also discusses a few practices that can help in preventing and reducing the number of cases of cyber bullying.

The significance of active learning strategies which increase the dynamic involvement of students is highlighted in Smitha J.M.'s paper. Her paper proposes an innovatively designed teaching methodology to enhance the information processing activities by the human brain to satisfy the cognitive need of the adolescents. Pooja Bahuguna discusses about the importance of early literacy in Indian context based on theories and researches done in that area. The paper by Rakesh Kumar Patel looks at the initiative taken by few administrative officers to establish libraries in the villages of Uttar Pradesh as he believes that these village libraries can strengthen the fundamental democratic institutions of rural India. The paper also talks about how the development of such libraries can help to fill the huge gap between the rural and urban educational infrastructure.

This issue of *JIE* provides articles and research papers on a variety of issues and themes under School Education and Teacher Education. We hope that our readers will be able to relate their personal experiences with the issues/concerns discussed by the authors of these articles/research papers. We invite our readers from different levels of school education and teacher education to contribute to the journal by sharing their knowledge in the form of articles, action research reports, theoretical papers, book reviews, etc. Your valuable suggestions and comments for improvement of the quality of the journal are welcome.

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No Detention Policy

An Ontological Analysis of the Rollback Debate in India

PREETI VIVEK MISHRA*

Abstract

The contemporary international discourse on education and development is dominated by two perspectives, namely the human rights approach and the post-development perspective. The present article seeks to utilise the ontological-epistemological toolkit provided by these perspectives to examine the debate on rollback of No Detention Policy. The article begins with an explication of the backdrop of the rollback debate in India. It then scrutinises the arguments for and against a rollback under the respective lenses of the rights-based and post-development thought paradigms. The intent of the article is not to suggest a definite resolution to the debate but to provide an informed theoretical grounding for the stakeholders to further reason their case.

INTRODUCTION

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is a constitutional 'commitment' in India (Panchapakesan, 2013). The Constitution of India guarantees elementary education to every child as a matter of 'right' (GoI-MHRD, 2012a). A legislation called the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) was passed

in 2009 to 'define the substance of the right more clearly' (Dam, 2012).

The RTE Act has garnered much international accolade and is positioned as indicative of Government of India's (hereafter GoI) sustained commitment to the various international treaties and conventions (Juneja, 2003). RTE's reception in India is ambivalent. With its provision prohibiting detention

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(failing) of students up to Class VIII; also called the No Detention Policy (NDP), it has become 'arguably the most controversial' clause in the Act (CPRI, 2015b). The debate is fuelled by conflicting evidence from the field.

The GoI is gearing up to mandate the rollback of NDP (*Hindustan Times*, 2016a). The federal consensus favouring rollback is firming up (GoI-PIB, 2016, 2017). This has led to a public debate among educationists, advocacy groups, etc., accompanied by an intellectual mobilisation to stall the rollback terming it detrimental to the marginalised. Yet, the debate seems to be nearing a non-dialogic, top-down resolution.

The present article seeks to deconstruct the NDP debate by invoking the rights-based and post-developmental approaches to education, respectively. The discussion deconstructs the rollback debate using the ontological-epistemological toolkit provided by these perspectives. At the same time, the intent is not to suggest a definite resolution but to analyse the debate as it continues to unfold; the intent then is to provide an informed theoretical grounding for the stakeholders to reason their case.

THE NDP ROLLBACK DEBATE: AN EXPLICATION

The fundamental focus of RTE was to address the issues of wastage and stagnation in education by, among other things, paving a way for a child-friendly assessment modality. Building on an earlier recommendation

of the Ministry of Human Resource Development's (MHRD) Parliamentary Standing Committee (1997) that formal certification of education be done only after Class VIII or 'upper primary years' (GoI-INSCED, 2014), it created a legislative framework for enabling and fear-free assessment through the following articles.

- Chapter IV: Section 16 on 'Prohibition of holding back and expulsion'—
No child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education.
- Chapter V: Section 29(2)(h) on 'Curriculum and evaluation procedure'—
Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same.
- Chapter V: Section 30(1) dealing with 'Examination and completion certificate'—
No child shall be required to pass any Board examination till completion of elementary education.

The above provisions are referred to as RTE Act's 'No Detention Policy' (NDP). The NDP does not mean 'no assessment' or 'no relevance of assessment' (CABE, 2014); instead it led to moving away from high-stakes assessment in elementary education and adopting the assessment modality of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (henceforth CCE) for 'improving the learning of children and the pedagogy' (CABE, 2014, p. 23).

The CPRI policy brief (2015a) points out the undergirding of the NDP as comprising educational-pedagogical, legal and social-equity based considerations. CABE report (2014) highlighted the pedagogic rationale informing NDP as, ‘a commitment of the nation to every child to provide quality education with a guarantee to ensure expected learning outcomes within the academic year with required support systems including remedial/additional instructions’.

The social considerations are highlighted by CPRI policy brief (2015a) by pointing out that failure reinforced social inequity in opportunities for educational success, by pushing out low-performing students usually hailing from the marginalised strata of the society. Repetition of grades too fed into the high rates of wastage and stagnation characterising Indian education system.

NDP also derives from the RTE’s legal commitment to compulsory education wherein ‘compulsory’ is defined in terms of the ‘State as an active subject’ in place of the pre-rights based paradigmatic perspective of ‘population as a passive subject’ (Juneja, 2003). Therefore, the onus to provide enabling and non-stifling conditions for students to pursue and complete elementary schooling is on the State. As CPRI policy brief (2015a) puts it, ‘Failing a child penalises the child, but not the system and goes against the spirit of the RTE Act’.

Despite the well-intentioned policy discourse of NDP, the public discourse has been marred by scepticism and pessimism (Ghosh, 2015). Official reports lament that NDP has been misunderstood by various stakeholders alike to connote an absence of assessment and its rationale has been lost in the cacophony of misguided objections arising there from (CABE, 2014). Despite initial research evidence that RTE legislation led to a decrease in dropout rates in 2010–11; the very first year of its implementation, widespread dissatisfaction among teachers and parents over the alleged drop in the quality of education created pressure on the MHRD to re-evaluate the NDP. In 2012, a sub-committee of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) was constituted and notified (GoI-MHRD, 2012b). Its mandate was to furnish a report on ‘Implementation of CCE in the context of the No Detention provision’ after ‘consulting State governments and other stakeholders’ (CABE, 2014).

The sub-committee reported two noticeable trends in post-RTE years. Firstly, it noticed a decline in Learning Level Outcomes (hereafter LLOs) in government schools. Secondly, it noticed a trend of migration of students towards private schools. It also identified several causes for these trends, namely lack of assessment, low student motivation, low teacher accountability, lack of a pedagogy

that sufficiently addresses multi-level environments, insufficient teaching skills and insufficient systemic support. Noticeably, an explanation for each cause was found in misunderstanding of the rationale of NDP and CCE as well as problems in its day-to-day deployment along with the systemic unpreparedness of Indian education system for adopting the modality in toto (CABE, 2014).

The sub-committee recommended *inter alia* to 'amend the roll-out plan of No detention' (Section 3.5, p.17). It specifically proposed: firstly, a phased roll-out of NDP with state-level assessments at Classes III, V and VIII with no detention till Class V, provisional promotion after Class V and detention after Class VIII. Secondly, it called for more flexibility in exercising 'No Detention' thereby implying possibility of selective detention of students found to be 'lagging behind' in acquiring grade-appropriate competencies.

The recommendations created an ideological rift within the committee. Two members, both educationists, tendered their written disagreement (CABE, 2014, Annexure xvi). Their objections largely implied that the proposal for rollback was made on scanty academic and pedagogical evidence and was rather a testament to systemic unpreparedness and deficits in teacher capacity building. The objections are esemplastic and are corroborated by the concluding section of the report itself which reads:

While theory and theoreticians may have a strong case for retaining the provision of 'No Detention' (this view has been specifically put forward by two members of the Committee), the practical reality and experience across the country, across the stakeholders, clearly shows that ground is not ready to receive this positively. In absence of ground preparation, the intentions of the provision have not been met at all... At this stage, it would be prudent to re-iterate the need for assessment of learning outcomes and make it consequential by linking it to promotion or otherwise to the next class beyond Class V. [CABE, 2014, p.18]

As a follow-up to the report, MHRD decided to seek a written response from all States/UTs concerning their views on the NDP. Noticeably, 22 responses were received with 18 states suggesting that NDP required modifications (GoI-PIB, 2016).

The governmental consensus on NDP rollback has been met by a commensurate mobilisation of opinion against it among rights-based advocacy groups and academics, alike. Print and social media too has been abuzz with discussions and debates.

Those battling for the rollback, including CABE sub-committee, have cited the findings of the Annual Status of Education Report Surveys (ASER). The ASER reports are

based on household surveys with a representative sample of children in over 560 rural districts of India with claims to reach over 6,50,000 children in more than 16,000 villages in the country (ASER, 2014b). The ASER report (2014a) has demonstrated that the school-enrolment rate for students aged 6–14 years has consistently remained above 96 per cent since RTE, the school facilities have improved over time and the trend of older girls (11–14 years) dropping out of school has been bucked in most of the states except two.

On the flip side, the percentage of children in the age group of 6–14 years, enrolled in private schools has increased from 18.7 per cent in 2006 to 30.8 per cent in 2014. The most strategic and disturbing trend is observed in the learning level outcomes and grade-appropriate competencies. To illustrate: Not only are the students seriously lacking in age-appropriate reading competencies, but the competencies have declined over time. Similar trends have been observed for arithmetic skills too. ASER (2014 a) shows that almost half the number of children completing eight years of schooling have not acquired the basic arithmetic skills. A similar number of Class V students deficient in arithmetic skills commensurate to Class II.

The ASER reports hypothesised about a cause and effect relationship between these disturbing trends and the provisions of NDP-CCE (*The Indian Express*, 2013). The federal

machinery due to a self-professed absence of an alternative data source has generally adopted the statistics, as well as, the intellectual hypothesis of ASER (Oza and Bethill, 2013; see also CIBE, 2014).

Scholars have objected to the governmental reliance on ASER data citing methodological anomalies in its collection (Panchapakesan, 2013). The hypothesis about declining learning and performance levels was also contradicted by data showing that despite graduating from a system of no public examination till Class VIII, there has been an increase in the pass percentage of students appearing in public examination in ‘Class X and Class XII for the years 2009, 2012 and 2013’ in most Indian states (GoI-PIB, 2015).

The advocates of NDP argue that punishing children by detaining them without providing them the necessary infrastructure and teaching is really shifting the blame on the children.

Others have expressed an apprehension about the effect of a sudden rollback on students who are presently enrolled in Class I–VIII and have been failed by the system in terms of not receiving age-appropriate skills. Reverting to examinations will invariably imply failure for them in absence of an academic and cognitive readiness to face exams thereby forcing them to drop out (Devendra, 2013).

At this precise moment, the NDP rollback debate has been framed between the conflicting persuasions

of pragmatism vs. idealism, logistics vs. pedagogy and education for learning outcomes vs. education for enabling. Both sides of the debate have conflicting yet valid claims to make. Equally, both sides base their arguments on conflicting research evidence from the field. This amplifies the challenges to a straightforward resolution to the debate.

Assuming that a theoretical lens to assess the arguments on either side can help highlight further issues—gross and subtle—that are imbued in the present ideological impasse. To this end, the subsequent sections attempt to further an ontological analysis of the debate in view of the human rights and post-development perspectives in education, respectively, both of which hold conspicuous currency in the global discourse on educational policy and practice.

THE RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The rationale for rights-based approach to education derives from the twin positioning of education as: a human right in itself and as an empowerment right or the ‘means of realising other human rights’ (UN-CESCR, 1999). Surprisingly, the rights-based approach to education has only recently become a focus within the education sector (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007).

An internationally significant call for education as a human right was made through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (hereafter UDHR) (UN, 1948,

Article 26). Since UDHR, several international treaties have reinforced education as a human right.

The rights-discourse on education revolves around aims of education and the meaning and implication of the right itself and the obligations arising from there. Since UDHR, the discussion on aims of education has been successively augmented and enriched by various international declarations/conventions like the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13-1), the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (1990: Article 1), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 29-1), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (Part I para 33, Part II para 80), and the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (para 2).

The commonly agreed upon aim of education is the recognition, protection and promotion of ‘human dignity innate in every child and of his or her equal and inalienable rights’ (UN-CRC, 2001). This core aim is explicated to include: holistic development of the full potential of the child including development of respect for human rights, an enhanced sense of identity and affiliation at various levels, the child’s socialisation and interaction with others and with the environment (UN-CRC, 2001).

With regard to the governmental obligations arising from education as a human right, the international discourse has adopted a 4A scheme

mandating that education be made available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable (Tomaševski, 2004).

With specific reference to right to elementary education, the UDHR professed vide sub-clause (1), 'Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory'.

Despite successive global human rights instruments adopting a rights-based approach to education, the same has not reflected in global political commitments to education. Tomaševski (2006) notes that 'free and compulsory education for all the world's children forms the backbone of international human rights law but does not shape global educational strategies'. The absence of a unified global strategy has resulted in clashes in global approaches to education which themselves originate from conflicting ontological understandings of the aims of education. Tomaševski's exegesis (2006, pp.xiii–xvii) highlights the conflicting interests and agendas of diverse global actors like development banks, private providers, UNESCO and the bonafide 'aid-seeking' state negotiating the 'labyrinth which constitutes global educational governance'.

This decentralised and conflicting global governance of education resulted in the use of an evasive terminology in several international summits on education. Tomaševski (2006) establishes through a comparison of international legal

guarantees and global political commitment on education beginning with Jomtien that, 'it took 15 years (since 1990) to revert to the wording of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that education should be free and compulsory'.

India's own attempt towards a rights-based approach to education has a long history. During the drafting of the Constitution of independent India, it was proposed to include education up to the age of 14 years under Fundamental Rights but the proposal was rejected and the advisory committee placed it under non-justifiable rights instead (RTEc, n/a). Whereas the 1966 Education Commission reiterated the importance of education for all children, a politico-institutional ethos for concerted action was truly enabled in 1976 when education was shifted to the concurrent list (Jha and Rani, 2016, p. 1). This resulted in the first ever centrally sponsored scheme in 1978 to educate out-of-school children aged 6–14 years through non-formal education. Another poignant political commitment to UEE came in the form of National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. The NPE recognised infrastructural and human resource deficiencies as key impediments in UEE and took steps to redress this. It is noteworthy that these developments preceded the 1990 Jomtien Conference.

Alongside the renewed global discourse on EFA (Education for All), two landmark Supreme Court

legislations in 1992 and 1993 reiterated that education flows directly from the right to life and personal liberty guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution. India being a signatory of all principal global human rights treaties, a justifiable claim to right to education was only established with the constitutional amendment of 2002. Mehendale (2014) notes that, 'One of the key implications of the amendment was paving a path from discretionary state level legislation to a rights based central legislation'. Subsequently, RTE Act, 2009 further explicated the states' obligations in this regard.

While there are several loopholes in the Indian conceptualisation and implementation of right to education via the dilution of rights commitment from 'all children up to 14 years of age' to 'children from 6–14 years of age', identification of child within strict gender binaries of male/female, non-committal definition of 'free education', exemption of minority schools from the ambit of RTE Act, etc., the present article seeks to delimit the discussion to the proposed NDP rollback as framed against India's ostensible commitment to the right of all children to elementary education.

The question to be asked is 'whether a detention policy violates the right to education'. The answer derives from 'who gets detained and why?' The CABE sub-committee recommends detaining the students 'lagging behind' in achieving grade-level competencies (2014). An attempt

to identify trends pertaining to socio-demographic profile(s) of these students is frustrated by lack of comprehensive data. Unfortunately, despite ASER reports and NCERT's National Assessment Surveys (NAS), a comprehensive picture (covering the complex matrix of habitations, school typologies, ages, socio-economic demographics and areas of learning/competencies) at the national level eludes us due to specific objectives, sampling and coverage of each data-source (ASER, 2014c). Some indicative data emerge from reading the two sources in conjunction.

- Where the national statistics of dropout rates is 19.8 per cent at primary and 36.3 per cent at the upper primary level for all students, the same when segregated for Schedule Tribe (ST) students is as high as 31.3 per cent and 48.2 per cent, respectively. Therefore, even with NDP in place, the dropout rates for ST students approximate twice that of national average (GoI-MHRD, 2014).
- NCERT-NAS (2014) presents an indicative account of location of government schools wherein 75.4 per cent schools of the 6,541 surveyed were in rural areas. The locational data read in conjunction with ASER data (rural) on a continuing decline in learning level of students leads to concerns about the 'vicious cycle of inequalities accumulating in time and space' for rural students

enrolled in government schools (Tomaševski, 2003).

- RTE Act, 2009 (Sec. 8–9) forecloses parental claim for reimbursement of expenditure on elementary education upon enrolment of their ward in ‘a school other than a school established, owned, controlled or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly by the appropriate Government or a local authority’. The access to private schooling is therefore restricted for many parents from economically backward strata. Read in conjunction with ASER (2014b) observation that the gap in reading levels between rural children enrolled in government schools and private schools seems to be growing over time; the RTE Act unwittingly essentialises economic backwardness into a lack of access to education of equitable quality.
- The NCERT-NAS (2014) revealed that of the 6,541 government schools surveyed, 65 per cent were utilising the SSA grants for school maintenance, and only 14 per cent schools utilised the same for procuring teaching-learning material. The lack of adequate and up-to-date learning resources impinges upon the learner experiences and performance in government schools.
- NAS (NCERT, 2014) results also show that nationally 37 per cent

students were being taught in a language different than one spoken at home. Startlingly, for students from Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Sikkim, the numbers went as high as 83–89 per cent.

The above observations prepare the ground to argue that the rollback of No Detention Policy will substantially belie the rights-based commitment to the 4As.

It will compromise *accessibility* of education by perpetuating a discriminatory regimen of default disadvantages for certain students. The students most vulnerable to grade-inappropriate learning competencies may variously or cumulatively belong to rural background, government schools and marginalised socio-demographic profiles *vis-à-vis* a student from ST background. It must be iterated that the unavailability of national data on LLOs and dropout rates stratified by indigenous groups, linguistic minorities, sexual minorities, children with special needs, etc., severely constrict an exhaustive exegesis on learner vulnerability profiles. The availability of such data can only add to the list of discriminatory grounds on which some and not others stand to be detained.

With regard to *acceptability*, students routinely receiving instruction in a language other than one spoken at home, or receiving comparatively low-quality education owing to type of school they attend or those forced

to study in schools with deficient teaching-learning resources, etc., are failed by the system in its commitment to acceptable education. NDP has allowed these students to survive so far. Whereas, stalling a rollback of NDP does not redress the lack of 'acceptability' criteria, but it does foreclose further victimisation of victims of a failed commitment to acceptable education.

Finally, the guiding conviction behind NDP was the principle of *adaptability*. It sought to be sensitive to children's psycho-social contexts and promote children's right to learn in an enabling ethos free of fear, anxiety, trauma and harassment (RTE, 2009). A provision for detention, on the other hand, contravenes the core value of all global human rights instruments, i.e., the inherent dignity of human beings. UNICEF/UNESCO (2007, p.xi) states that 'a comprehensive rights-based approach must be dynamic, accounting for different learning environments and different learners. It must aim to perpetuate human rights and sustainability of a dignified life'.

Tomaševski (2006, p.xi) noted that 'the need for a human rights challenge stems from the proverbial double standard, whereby we apply to the poor much lower standards than we would accept for ourselves'. The NDP rollback debate presents a similar challenge as it exemplifies the discriminating double standards in access to quality education

and opportunities to survive and succeed.

POST-DEVELOPMENT THOUGHT

Post-development furnishes an ontological critique of 'formalist development orthodoxy' of modernisation and neo-liberal theories and their neglect of contextuality and historicity (Brohman, 1995). Modernisation theory is critiqued for its 'evolutionist and unilinear ontology of development, where complex development realities received monocausal explanations', which establishes positivist orthodoxy and economic imperialism resulting in a growth-oriented, government-controlled economic face of development (Andrews and Bawab, 2014). This positions the indigenous knowledge-systems as deficient, retrograde and inferior to superior scientific knowledge of the developed north (Shiva, 1997). Similarly, neo-liberalism is critiqued for its overarching emphasis on market economics and reintroducing imperialism in the garb of globalisation and its blatant disregard for the 'social', 'cultural' and 'environmental'.

For post-developmental theorists, 'development' was a discursive implantation by the global north in a post-war, decolonising world (Brohman, 1995). This discourse served to continue erstwhile patterns of domination through co-optation of the leadership of the subjugated (Rahnema, 1997). The development project was a way to incorporate 'previously autonomous communities

within the networks of power' (Rapley, 2004). This was effected by creating a discourse wherein modernisation was desirable and severed 'archaic superstitions' (Escobar, 1997). Modernisation was constructed as resulting from industrialisation and urbanisation and thus required capital investments. Thus, the white man's burden was redefined in economic terms with international organisations taking 'an active role in promoting and orchestrating the necessary efforts to overcome general backwardness and economic underdevelopment'. The intent was not 'human improvement' but to exercise 'human control and dominance' (Rapley, 2004).

To sum up, post-development theorists contend that development works as a discourse. It relies on the processes of representations, knowledge–power relations, depoliticisation and homogenisation (Haslam, Schafer and Beaudet, 2012). It is an ethnocentric and essentialising grand-narrative which repudiates particularities. It positions development as objectively verifiable and desirable. Post-development thought emphasises that developmental discourse forms and essentialises its object systematically; through a set of relations between institutions and practices. Escobar notes that notions like 'illiterate', or 'underdeveloped' are 'discursive abnormalities/artificial constructions' created to provide

justification for structural reform (Andrews and Bawab, 2014). Brohman (1995) highlights the casualties of development discourse: 'Inappropriate policies resulting from basic misapprehensions of Third World realities have exacted heavy social, economic, and psychological costs, particularly for the poor majority in most developing societies'.

I now frame the debate on the proposed rollback of No Detention Policy (NDP) against the post-developmental framework.

Firstly, 'Education' itself is a discursive construction of the development-project. A deconstruction of the global discourse on education is, therefore, in order.

The Jomtien Declaration 1990 using the discursive representation of forging 'a worldwide consensus' was instrumental in influencing global discourse on education. Its preamble exemplifies its approach—

'... (there have been) major setbacks in basic education in the 1980s in many of the least developed countries. In some other countries, economic growth has been available to finance education expansion... In certain industrialised countries too, cut backs in government expenditure over the 1980s have led to the deterioration of education'.

Post-developmental critique of non-neutrality and instrumentality of language in affecting representations can be invoked here. The idea

of 'least developed vs. industrialised countries' bolsters the rhetoric of inevitability and interconnectedness of 'education-industrialisation-development', etc.

The lack of self-sufficiency of subjects, nations or citizens, is orchestrated discursively and rendered 'a historical' and 'depoliticised' (Haslam et al., 2012). The Jomtien declaration synonymises education with 'basic learning needs'. It ends with, '...basic learning needs of all can and must be met...we commit ourselves to providing basic learning opportunities for all the people of the world' (1990).

Education disbursed through schooling is the panacea for the skill and knowledge deficit required in the industrialised world. The 'unschooled or illiterate' is therefore constructed subject of redemptive economic/systemic assistance.

In addition, a discourse of indispensability of 'assessment' is also woven in—

'The focus of basic education must, therefore be on actual learning acquisition and outcome...it is therefore necessary to define acceptable levels of learning acquisition for educational programmes and to improve and apply systems of assessing learning achievement'.

While this 'hegemonic' synonymisation of education with assessable learning garnered discursive currency, the discourse was remodelled by MDGs Millennium Development Goals, which as Global Monitoring Report, 2015

points, 'shifted the global agenda of education' towards primary education so that 'efforts since 2000 to advance education around the world have become almost synonymous with ensuring that every child would be in school'.

The resultant discourse rendered primary education as the summum bonum, school as the naturalised site of education, and education itself misrepresented as assessable learning in pre-defined 'basic' domains. Here it is noteworthy that the post-developmental thought has repeatedly pointed out the depersonalising and elitist agenda of formal schooling along with the divisive and stratifying agenda of assessment (Ki-Zerbo, Kane, Archibald, Lizop and Rahnema, 1997).

Yet, the discourse enjoys an omnipresence signifying a remarkably similar ontological understanding of education among global actors repudiating Tomaševski's (2006) argument on contrasting understandings. To illustrate: EFA GMR, 2013–14 notes that 'Fifty-seven million children are still failing to learn, simply because they are not in school. Access is not the only crisis—poor quality is holding back learning even for those who make it to school' (UNESCO, 2014, p. i). The ontological premise being that schools are indispensable to learning and assessable learning is same as education.

The assessment machinery has generated sub-discourse on 'worthwhile' knowledge by establishing primacy

of reading, mathematics and science over affective-emotive capacities. This intermeshing discourse on learning and assessment has affected India, too.

India made global headlines as a ‘poor performer’ by pulling out of PISA-2012 (*The Times of India*, 2013, TES, 2013) India’s accusation of culturally disjunct testing was termed escapist by citing ASER survey results to corroborate poor performance (*The Indian Express*, 2012). Noticeably, ASER too buys into the primacy of reading and arithmetic as adequate indicators of basic learning (ASER, 2014c). Here the discursive notion of ‘worthwhile knowledge’ is evident.

The NDP rollback debate is itself a result of conflicting discourses on education informing. GoI’s about-turn on NDP requires closer scrutiny.

GoI’s initial articulation of aims of education can be found in RTE-2009/Article 29(2), which envisions a curriculum for holistic development of children, their knowledge, potentiality, talent and physical and mental abilities. GoI adopted the National Curriculum Framework–2005 (NCF) as the framework for designing such curriculum (GoI-MHRD, 2012c). The NCF–2005 identifies the aims of education and assessment as, ‘Education is concerned with preparing citizens for a meaningful and productive life, and evaluation should be a way of providing credible feedback on the extent to which we have been successful in imparting such an education’.

NCF adopts a post-developmental stance in that it emphasises context-specificity of knowledge and instruction which is antithetical to the developmental universalism of international discourse. NCF’s approach addresses the post-development criticism of education as erasing ‘historic memory of children’ and severing them from their cultural-ethical roots (Ki-Zerbo et al., 1997). It recommends using the socio-cultural context and values as primary referents for designing educational experiences. It also recognises cognitive, physical, aesthetic and affective-emotive aims of education (NCF–2005). It balances the fast-changing economic-technological realities of India with its diverse cultural, secular-spiritual, linguistic landscape.

Ideally, this post-developmental approach to education does not lend itself to the drudgery of nomothetic assessment resulting from the neoliberal aftermath of essentialised homogeneous domain of knowledge lending themselves to universalised ‘measuring operations’ (Connell, 2014).

Yet, the NCF paints a perplexing picture!

For assessment, it recommends, ‘no formal periodic tests, no awarding of grades or marks, and no detention’ for primary grades and ‘continuous as well as periodic assessment (unit tests, term-end tests)...system of “direct” grades... (and) no detention’ for Classes VI–VIII.

Although it recommends no detention up till Class VIII, it does recommend formal assessment after primary classes. Here the influence of the dominating discourse of MDGs and implied sacrosanct nature of primary education becomes evident. CABE (2014) too has bowed to it by rendering primary education untouchable by assessment, while assessment becomes the legitimising-validating touchstone of learning for higher grades. From a post-development lens, CABE's recommendation for selective and/or progressive detaining of students is an instance of discursive subjugation to the international discourse on education and antithetical to NCF.

Clearly, the international focus on primary education along with the omnipresence of discourse synonymising learning with performance indicators and assessment promulgates a hegemonic discourse, thereby allowing a differential treatment for post-primary classes. This differential stance has intensified conflicting discourses at national level.

This conflict is evident within GoI's approach as the proposal for NDP rollback is antithetical to NCF's ontological understanding of learner and learning. The disjunction between the contextually rooted aims of education stipulated by NCF and the call for detention which operates

on the premise of assessable learning as synonymous with knowledge and primacy of certain knowledge areas over others, is indicative of intermeshing of conflicting global-local discourses.

At a macro level, the debate to 'detain' in essence arises from the conflicting discourses of the human capitalist pragmatics of education as investment vs. post-development hope of education as transformative. It embodies the tension between education as mastery of subject-specific skills vs. education as critical consciousness.

Assessment accordingly is either a tool to quantify learning to screen those 'lagging behind' thereby constructing them as 'backward' and 'deficient' or it is, as intended by No Detention policy, a pragmatic toolkit to empower students to critically reflect on their needs, strengths and capacities in partnership with teachers as facilitators.

The rollback signifies GoI's backtracking from the ontological-epistemological commitment to primacy of learners and their unique contexts throughout elementary education to the internalised developmental discourse which prioritises primary education and synonymises education with subject learning, and learning synonymises with schooling and performance in exams.

In the conundrum, the ‘failure’ of the child ‘lagging behind’ is depoliticised, essentialised and granted a historical stability and the functioning of assessment as selective and divisive-disintegrative is overlooked.

CONCLUSION

The rights-based and post-developmental framework when stationed face-to-face lead to further concerns which accentuate the NDP rollback debate beyond the foregoing discussion.

Whereas, the conceptualisation of education as an ‘empowering right’ evokes a natural affirmation when seen from the human-rights lens, a post-developmental lens leads one to question the historicity of disenfranchisement which led to deprivation of ‘other rights’ in the first place. It also forces one to question the construction of education as the ‘redeeming genie’ (Ki-Zerbet al., 1997). Thus, the arguments against rollback debate are rephrased from mere ‘right’ to continuing education with dignity to subverting an education system which constructs failure and stabilises it as an identity.

Although a rights-based perspective may root for no detention and suggest focusing on the quality imperative in

education to ensure every child attains the basic learning competencies, the post-developmental critique may not settle for the monolithic and universalised construction of basic learning standards. In fact, these may actually be responsible for the notion of child ‘lagging behind’ through the process of depersonalisation (Ki-Zerb et al., 1997).

Finally, whereas the rights-based perspective conjures a proactive image of the developmental state as guarantee of compulsory education (Juneja, 2003) and others (Routray, 2015; Andrews and Bawab, 2014) working within the post-developmental paradigm focus on the dynamic interconnectedness the of state and the society, the global discourse on education reiterates the critiques around co-optation of state machinery. If unchecked, the rushed federal consensus on NDP rollback may present another exemplar of the same.

To conclude, the above analysis at the least evidences that the debate is far from being articulated in all its complexity just as yet. Consequently, the GoI’s attempts at amending the RTE *vis-à-vis* No Detention Policy would benefit if the debate is allowed to thrive and intensify.

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CCE Programme of States and Union Territories in India

A Review

KAVITA SHARMA*

Abstract

With the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act–2009, it became mandatory for the States and Union Territories (UTs) to implement Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) as mentioned in its Section 29(2). Since the Act aims at all-round development of children by enabling them to learn and progress in a fear- and anxiety-free environment therefore, while prohibiting any external examination till the elementary stage, it mandates using CCE as a school-based activity to ensure the right of each child to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality. Post implementation of the RTE Act, almost all the States and UTs initiated steps in this direction, developed a variety of material on CCE and even implemented it in schools. To understand the extent to which the CCE schemes of the States/UTs incorporate and reflect the ethos of CCE, a review of the CCE material of 22 States/UTs was undertaken. This article is an attempt to highlight the strengths and gaps to help the States and UTs improve their CCE schemes and thus progress towards qualitative improvement of elementary education as envisaged under RTE Act.

INTRODUCTION

Credible assessment and evaluation is crucial for quality education. It encourages all children to learn and progress, and discourages unhealthy

competition and labelling them. It supports each child to learn and progress without being subjected to any punitive practices. Sharing the progress report with different

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stakeholders especially parents/guardians, with information on the quality and extent of children's learning helps them support and contribute to their development.

Despite many educational reforms that happened over the last few years in curriculum renewal or revision at both the Centre and States in India, not much improvement in the assessment and evaluation practices is seen. 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation' (CCE) introduced decades ago, as mentioned in various national policy documents—Report of the Education Commission, 1964–66, National Policy on Education (NPE)–1986 and its modified version in 1992 was emphasised by subsequent National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs)–2000, 2005 developed at the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an apex body in school education in India. However, till date the students face continuous tests that haunt them, create fear and anxiety making them disinterested in activities in school. The teachers too find it cumbersome as most of the teaching-learning time is compromised for preparing question papers, marking them and observing exhaustive procedures of recording and reporting.

THE BACKGROUND

Taking cognisance of the examination reforms by the Kothari Commission (1964–66) set up by the Government of India, the NPE–1986 deliberated and considered assessment of

performance as an integral part of any process of learning and teaching. It envisaged implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation that incorporates both scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of education, spread over the total span of teaching-learning time emphasising the use of grades over marks. It also called for streamlining of the evaluation at the institutional level and reduces the predominance of external examination. The Programme of Action (PoA) 1992 brought out a roadmap for the implementation of NPE–1986 at the school level. Both the National Curriculum Frameworks, subsequent to this, developed in 2000 and 2005 recommended an evaluation system integral to the teaching-learning to avoid any undue pain, anxiety, harassment and humiliation to help children grow as social beings. The National Curriculum Framework–2000 envisaged the use of multiple techniques of measurement to reflect the outcomes of learning intervention in terms of grades predominantly as compared to marks in evaluation. The NCF–2005 portraying child as a natural learner emphasised giving space to children to find their voice and opportunities to nurture their curiosity to come up with knowledge as the outcome of their active engagement with the world around. Considering attitudes, emotions and values as the integral part of cognitive development, NCF–2005 recommended an internal school-based system of assessment that could provide information on a

child's overall development in a continuous and comprehensive manner. Continuous here refers to, during the teaching-learning process, informing about teaching and areas that need improvement in learning along with assessment at the end of the term. Comprehensiveness is seen as considering the child's overall development including spheres apart from typical curricular areas.

This system of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was recommended to identify the learning needs, difficulties and conceptual gaps to provide timely and appropriate interventions to reduce the stress and anxiety and enhance learning to help children progress. It was also intended to reduce rote learning, help teacher reflect, review and improve his/her teaching and provide children with the feedback to improve their learning. However, it needed to be made more credible through various means suiting the context.

Despite the recommendations of various policy documents, implementation of CCE was only taken seriously at the grassroot level in States/UTs when it became mandatory with the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009). While mandating free quality elementary education for all children in the age group of 6–14 years, we are aware that the RTE Act emphasises on an all-round development of children, building up their knowledge, potentiality and

talent with development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent through activities, discovery and exploration in a fear-, trauma- and anxiety-free environment using comprehensive and continuous evaluation. To work towards its implementation, the RTE prohibits any external examination up to the elementary level. As per its provisions, Section 29(2) ensures the right of each child to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

ABOUT THE STUDY

Under the obligation to implement the RTE Act, the States and UTs initiated steps in this direction which included the development of CCE schemes/guidelines, teacher training material, sample report cards, etc. Many States introduced it in schools and started practicing it as well. Although the States differed from one another on the respective schemes in terms of the duration, frequency and the weightage of assessment strategies but drifting away from the spirit of the inherent purpose of CCE on certain aspects could affect its implementation. Therefore, it means taking corrective measures at the planning stage can lead to effective implementation of CCE. This requires understanding the extent to which the CCE schemes of the States/UTs incorporate and reflect the ethos of CCE, assessing

the gaps and suggesting appropriate steps for addressing them for which this study with the following objectives was taken up.

- To identify the strengths and gaps, if any, in the CCE schemes/ guidelines as per the underlying assumptions in literature related to assessment and evaluation.
- To suggest measures to address/ overcome these gaps.

Method and Instruments

The study being qualitative in nature was aimed to evaluate the underlying assumptions of the CCE programme of the States/UTs, through document review approach. The CCE material from the following twenty-two States and UTs were procured and analysed using a document review template (Sharma, 2015a, 2016) which had

items looking for the evidence related to some general aspects (Section A; 6 items), detailed information on CCE related guiding principles, the purposes of assessment as per literature (Section B; 21 items), the extent of usage of the document(s) (Section C; 2 items) and some overall comments (Section D; 3 items) from the State CCE documents. The items for Section B were based on the CCE Framework (Sharma, 2015b) which incorporated the guiding principles of assessment as identified under global literature (Black and William, 2009; Chappuis and Stiggins, 2002; Crooks, 2001; Dunn and Mulvenon Sean, 2009; OECD, 2005; Koller, 2005; Shepard, 2000) developed during the study—Theory Evaluation of CCE programmes of Mizoram and Chhattisgarh. (NCERT, 2013)

Table 1
CCE Material of the States and UTs

Region	States/UTs	CCE Material
East	Odisha	Source Book (Classes I–VIII), Training Module for Trainers, Handbook on CCE for Teachers
	West Bengal	Peacock Model (CCE Training Module for Teachers)
	Jharkhand	<i>Prathamik kakshaon ka mulyankan</i> (Classes I–II and III–V)
	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Teachers' Manual on CCE for Classes I–II (Levels–I and II)
North East	Meghalaya	Handbook on CCE for Teachers
	Mizoram	Source Book (Classes I–VIII)
	Manipur	Manual on CCE
	Nagaland	Teachers' Manual and Pupil Cumulative Record Book

	Assam	Handbook on CCE for Teachers, Two Training Modules (Primary and Upper Primary Level), Academic Calendar for Teachers and Trainers
	Arunachal Pradesh	Separate CCE Manual for Teachers teaching Classes I to V and VI to VIII A Training Package on CCE (Elementary Stage)
	Sikkim	Revised Guidebook on Continuous Comprehensive Assessment (CCA)—Classes I–VIII
	Tripura	Teachers' Diary, SCERT, Tripura
West	Madhya Pradesh	Manual on CCE
	Gujarat	CCE Scheme, Evaluation Formats
	Chhattisgarh	CCE Scheme and Subject-wise and Class-wise Modules
	Maharashtra	Teachers' Handbook on CCE developed by MSCERT-2011
	Goa	Handbook for Teachers on Active Learning and Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)
South	Karnataka	Modules on CCE for Teachers, Progress Report Formats
	Kerala	CCE Guidelines up to Elementary Level
	Tamil Nadu	CCE Guidelines and Subject Specific Manuals up to the Elementary Stage
North	Uttarakhand	Manual on CCE
	Haryana	Handbook for Teachers for CCE — Elementary Stage, Evaluation Sheets, Report Card

Limitations

The study was restricted to only document review and did not take into account the field situation. Only main documents of CCE provided by each State or UT were reviewed.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The qualitative data, item-wise, on all the four sections using the document review template was compiled. This was categorised into the following 10 attributes on understanding and

implementation of CCE. A colour code was used during this process to highlight and separate specific points under different categories.

1. Continuous (Formative, summative, assessment, evaluation)
2. Comprehensive (Holistic assessment of curricular, other curricular, Personal Social Qualities [PSQs])
3. Criteria for assessment (Learning indicators/outcomes)
4. Addressing learning needs of all children (Styles, developmental level, inclusive aspect)
5. Multiple evidence based (Tools, techniques of assessment)
6. Process of recording (Frequency, ways, log book, teacher's diary, number of entries to be made per subject/per child/per quarter)
7. Feedback mechanism (clear, specific, timely, use for different stakeholders)
8. Reporting (Effective communication to different stakeholders—child, parents, teachers, educational functionaries) (frequency, at what time, reporting formats—simple/elaborate, qualitative/quantitative reporting, extent of usefulness for different stakeholders)
9. Flexibility (Non-threatening, adopt/adapt at the school level)
10. Implementation (Training modalities, feasibility)

The observations helped to identify the common features uniform across the States and also the gaps

concerning the conceptualisation and planning of the CCE, which could eventually affect its implementation. The following are some common features followed by a sub-section on the findings related to gaps and the suggestions for improvement of the CCE documents of the States/UTs.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Some Common Features

- Most of the States initiated their efforts on CCE initiatives post implementation of the RTE Act-2009 and some of them have carried out revisions in the light of new developments at the State and National level.
- The documents on CCE include manuals, source books and modules for teachers that range from one comprehensive document at a particular stage to subject-wise for each class in some of the States. Some States developed separate reporting formats whereas others included them in their manuals, source books or other material.
- Almost all the documents were on same lines with respect to the theoretical elucidations of CCE, i.e., aptly interpreting the terms continuous, comprehensive, evaluation, assessment, summative, formative, etc.
- In some documents examples are provided for the teachers to understand how to integrate assessment with teaching-learning, identify learning gaps and address

them suitably to help children learn and progress.

- Alternative modes of assessment, such as debate, theatre, oral, art and open-book examination, etc., which vary across States, are suggested by all the States and UTs.
- The documents are suggestive in terms of these tools and techniques to be used for assessment with examples across different subjects to map the learning progress.
- Rubrics for evaluating the learning progress have also been suggested by some States. Teachers have also been given flexibility to choose the tools suited to the need of the learners.
- The propositions such as not to label children, threaten or compare them with others also find a place in the States' documents. The comprehensive aspect of CCE has been addressed by including the assessment on Personal Social Qualities in addition to that on the cognitive aspects.
- Guidelines for the teachers also include as to on what kind of information needs to be recorded about children's learning progress.
- The frequency of the recording and reporting of the learning progress varies from three to four cycles of Formative Assessment to two cycles of the Summative Assessment.
- A few schemes recommend integrating art education, physical and health education and work

experience with other subjects but also envisage assessment of socio-emotional qualities in an integrated manner with them and not to assess, record and report them in isolation thereby making an attempt to address the issues of inclusion in assessment.

GAPS AND SUGGESTIONS

In spite of the appreciable efforts towards implementation of CCE, there are some gaps that are required to be addressed by reviewing/revisiting the existing practices of CCE given in the States' CCE material (Table 1) in the light of the following suggestions, which can help them plan and implement assessment not only in a learner-friendly but also in a teacher-friendly manner and as per the intent of the RTE Act.

As per the CCE material, most States are either yet to initiate or have partially accomplished the development of learning indicators and learning outcomes against which a learner's progress could be mapped. The inclusive aspect of assessment especially for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) has not been paid adequate attention by majority of the states.

It is crucial to devise learning indicators and learning outcomes that can help teachers design, review and direct their teaching-learning as per the intent of each curricular area. These should encompass different domains of development and be inclusive in terms of catering

to the individual abilities of each child. Appropriate adaptation of the tools, techniques with suitable accommodation in provision of time, special aids, etc., is also needed to accommodate the disadvantaged sections especially CWSN.

The terms 'continuous', 'comprehensive', 'formative' and 'summative' are defined appropriately but these definitions do not reflect aptly in the strategic details of CCE implementation. Lack of understanding of the terms 'formative', and 'summative' reflects in the manner in which formative assessments (FAs) and summative assessments (SAs) are dealt with. For example, continuous assessment through three to four FAs and one to two SAs makes the assessment highly rigid and cumbersome for both teachers and children. The recording and reporting on FAs and SAs emphasising the cumulative performance of children in grades or percentiles leave little scope for assessment during learning or assessment during the formative period, which is meant to identify gaps and offer timely feedback and support for further learning.

More clarity for the terms 'continuous, comprehensive, formative, summative', is required for their implementation strategies. The continuous aspect needs to be clearly spelled out especially with respect to recording and reporting. There is a need to do away with giving any weightage to the formative assessments (FAs) and adding it to SAs for the cumulative overall assessment. The documents

need to bring better clarity on formative assessment that primarily aim at assessment for learning and not frequent or periodic testing.

The comprehensive aspect has been misconstrued to the extent that most documents offer little scope of gathering information on Personal Social Qualities (PSQs) as an integral component of assessment of different curricular areas, while a child is engaged in different learning tasks like how he/she was working in groups, doing paper-pencil test, drawing and reading pictures, expressing through different means, composing a poem/song, etc., are provided. The assessment of PSQs in isolation from that of the curricular areas is inapt to holistic assessment. Further, the grading of the PSQs completely demean CCE as some States have either given criteria to convert the assessment on PSQ into grades and others recommend absolute grading. This quantification of the PSQs is highly unjustified and unreasonable. Provision of a prescriptive list of the PSQs is also inappropriate as there will always be a scope of their addition, merge or overlap. There is a danger of a misinterpretation by different stakeholders that each child needs to be evaluated against each of the qualities with suitable activities, which would not just be tiresome for both teachers and children, but also a futile exercise towards obtaining 'comprehensive' picture of a child's learning and development, no way in tune with the ethos of CCE.

Compartmentalisation of the curricular areas into scholastic and co-scholastic ones or those testing cognitive areas and PSQs separately are against the perspective of holistic education. It creates dominance of the cognitive attributes over PSQs in assessment making socio-emotional qualities as not just secondary to the cognitive attributes affecting their assessment and eventually the teaching-learning as well. No demarcation in scholastic and co-scholastic areas should be encouraged. The socio-emotional qualities need to be evaluated in an integrated manner with teaching-learning of different areas. Their compartmentalisation into curricular/co-curricular or scholastic/co-scholastic needs to be re-looked into from the perspective of holistic development. The preference of quantification over qualitative assessment is merely because of the comfort of the evaluators to award marks or grades in comparison to writing four sentences about the learning progress after deeper analysis of children's performance on different learning tasks. This can be encouraged with including suitable examples in the CCE material and building the capacity of teachers through appropriate trainings.

In spite of citing different tools and multiple sources of assessment, weightage given to the paper-pencil tests is exceptionally high. Moreover, alternative modes of assessment, i.e., assessment based on different activities in addition to the paper-

pencil tests are suggested primarily for Formative Assessments whereas Summative Assessments are mostly written exam-based only. This difference between formative and summative assessment is neither reasonable nor justified. So it is difficult to accept the claim made by most States that dominance of written examinations has been done away with. Besides this, gathering information of a child's learning progress through different cycles of FAs is only being used to label children with marks or grades and assign level thus beating the purpose of Assessment for learning.

To obtain an authentic picture of a child's learning and personality, an evidence-based assessment procedure using multiple use of resources needs to be in place not just for the formative but also the summative assessment, i.e., information needs to be gathered using various modes besides the written examination.

Some of the State documents mandate selection of a particular number of tools and techniques of assessment out of a specific number provided, for example, any three out of the given list of five. However, the choice of tool(s) for both assessment and teaching-learning depends on the context, resources, needs of children and the curricular area/topic. Some of the documents even allocate a particular time and subject area to assess some of the attributes of a child's learning and personality,

for example, morning assembly/zero periods and art and physical education to assess PSQs. This makes CCE a burdensome, rigid and prescriptive activity for especially the teachers and children.

It should solely be the prerogative of a teacher and his/her children to select/adopt/adapt the tools, administer them at the convenience of his/her children besides giving flexibility to decide any time/duration to record and report assessment on socio-emotional attributes without compromising the quality of teaching-learning and assessment. In no way it should be a prescriptive activity.

Recording and reporting of the assessment seems to be more tiresome activity for teachers. Report cards are to be filled predominantly with quantitative description of the learning progress which itself is a cumbersome activity as the teachers need to keep records of the performance of children in multiple tasks across different curricular/co-curricular areas and the assessment cycles. The quantitative information completely shadows the qualitative progress if at all captured at any level as the CCE material lack strategies to systematically collect and report such information.

The process of recording requires a critical contemplation by all the States. There is a need to reduce the burden on teachers by doing away with formal, prescriptive and rigid recording procedures of the FAs described in the CCE material of most States. There is a serious need

to build a common consensus and understanding on informal and formal recording of children's progress where the former intends to help the teacher identify gaps in children's learning in order to review, reflect and modify her teaching-learning whereas the latter is aimed at communicating to different stakeholders about children's performance and seek their involvement to help children develop. This gap needs to be addressed giving appropriate examples making the process of recording less cumbersome.

The documents also lack the space for a constructive feedback mechanism especially between children and a teacher and among other stakeholders, i.e., parents, other teachers and even authorities at different levels where the latter are only at the receiving end with no major role beyond signing the report cards. The overemphasis on quantification of the achievement through marks/percentage/grades does not rule out the labelling of children as claimed by almost all States. In addition to this it limits the crucial role and contribution of the qualitative component of assessment towards improving and enhancing children's learning.

Suitable opportunities need to be suggested for effective communication among different stakeholders for reporting the learning progress and involve them to contribute towards children's learning and development. The documents need better clarity towards the involvement and support of different stakeholders for identifying

and addressing the learning needs and gaps of children. The documents need to elaborate reporting component of CCE so that not only the progress report conveys useful information on children's learning that helps each stakeholder, i.e., parents/guardians, other teachers, authorities besides the learner herself to act and improve it. Better elucidations on the approaches suggesting better communication among teachers, children and parents/guardians to help them understand and perform their roles meaningfully.

Self- and peer-assessment have not been fully utilised in the assessment strategies of various curricular areas.

Although these notions are defined yet guidelines for self-, peer-assessment and assessment by parents and community members should be explicitly stated and elaborated.

It is good that the States developed the recording and reporting formats but rigidity for adopting them uniformly for each child and each school makes the whole process centralised and authoritative.

Flexibility to adopt/adapt/design the reporting formats at the school level as per the contextual needs is to be provided.

Combining performance of different curricular areas to take out the average or cumulative grade is against the notion of CCE.

Reporting formats need to be simple and clearly reflecting the child's progress, strengths and gaps both qualitatively and quantitatively wherein the qualitative reporting actually helps both children and parents to gain an insight on the existing level of learning and take steps to improve it further.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above and the fact that education being on concurrent list, it is the mutual responsibility of different stakeholders at both the Centre and the State or UT level to address the crucial issue of assessment as it holds the key to quality improvement in education. The gaps at the level of planning in any educational reform will reflect in its implementation which could be dear in terms of time and resources, therefore, it is important for the States and UTs to review and modify their CCE schemes in the light of the suggestions given above and thus implement and use it as an effective tool to bring about quality improvement in education.

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Loktak Floating Elementary School

A Beacon of Hope for School Dropouts of the Champu Khangpok Floating Village

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Abstract

Right to Education is for every individual, regardless of caste, creed, age or gender. An individual must be empowered by education irrespective of circumstances. When a child picks up a pencil, it exemplifies as one more responsible person in the making. Pursuing an education is not only practically gaining knowledge, but also earning dignity to live as a free person in the society. Without the value of education, a civilisation is near to be doomed, hence, getting a formal education encourages a culture to the very peak of development and prosperity. This is a study of Loktak Floating Elementary School, a community initiative school for dropout children in Langolsabi Leikai of Champu Khangpok floating village in the northern part of Loktak Lake, which elucidates a belief of enlightenment among many underprivileged children and others. The school was formally inaugurated on the occasion of World Wetlands Day, 2 February 2017, though it had already started functioning since December 2016. Presently, the school accommodates 25 students (Classes I-III) and two teachers from the community. It is envisaged to cater to the needs of illiterate adults as well. The idea was to establish the school surface considering the high dropout rate of children living in the floating villages when the Loktak Development Authority removed more than 770 floating huts as per the Loktak Lake (Protection) Act 2006, five years ago, resulting in extensive displacement of the fishing community. Subsequently, children belonging to Langolsabi and Komjao floating localities under Champu

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Khangpok comprising 204 families and a population of 460 fishermen were forced to discontinue their education. The study conducted is an attempt to highlight the overall basic process of imparting education on Phum/Phumdi in the middle of the conflict-torn lake.

INTRODUCTION

Loktak Lake is nature's gift to Manipur; the lake is ancestrally interwoven with the history and the rich culture of Manipur. Besides being an environmental marvel, the lake can be profoundly described as the face of Manipur. Many families survived with resources reaped from the lake, be it from aquatic resources or a place of habitation on *Phum/Phumdi* (floating accumulated plant mass). It is a classic example of a symbiotic relationship between man and nature. When the Loktak Lake (Protection) Act 2006 was implemented, authorities destroyed many huts built on the *Phum/Phumdi* that rendered many families homeless. Fishermen who thrived in the lake for daily livelihood

were evicted consequently leading to the loss of income and accessibility to formal education. As a response to bringing such children back to education, the collective efforts of the village community and concerned NGOs together established a primary school in the vicinity, on the *Phum/Phumdi* itself. Thus, the Loktak Floating Elementary School was established in December 2016 and formally inaugurated on World Wetlands Day on 2 February 2017. The school is built on *Phum/Phumdi* to cater to the needs of the affected children and illiterate adults of the community. Previously, it was man and nature bonding at the lake and now it is the conflict of man and law; a law that is devised to protect the environment.



Figure 1. Loktak Floating Elementary School in the Middle of the Lake

Source: www.mateng.com

The rhetoric of education as being the 'great equaliser' that will bring people out of poverty is nothing short of familiar. With the rise in globalisation and internationalisation of services, the idea of the knowledge-based society has never been as relevant as it is now. However, the modern association with the knowledge-based economy, like that of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), has aggravated the movement of poor communities farther beyond the periphery. Despite the overall advancement that can be seen in the societies, and the connectivity through virtual worlds that ICT has introduced, greater divergence endures, as a considerable number of individuals who lack essential and basic services continue to exist. Dropout rates also remain high, especially in developing countries, where students often stop schooling due to lack of financial resources to continue or to help the family earn a living by working when their parents deem the children fit. While economic growth has been at the forefront of development policies, poverty alleviation, now more than ever, emerges as its fundamental objective.

Education

Education has its origin in the Latin word 'educatum' composed of two terms—'E' and 'Duco'. 'E' implies progressing from inward to outward while 'Duco' means developing or progressing. In its most literal sense, therefore, education means becoming

developed or to progress from inside to outside. Education, thus, is the process of developing the inner abilities and powers of an individual. The term is also often connected with the Latin word 'educere', which means propulsion from the internal to the external. This Latin term means to educate through a change brought about by practice or usage. In this manner, education implies some kind of change for the better in a person.

Plato, an ancient Greek philosopher, defined education as a life-long process starting, "*from the first years of childhood and lasting to the very end of the life*". He used the term education in a very wide sense, "*which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey*". Education not only provides knowledge and skills but also inculcates values, training of instincts, fostering right attitudes and habits. In Republic, Plato points out that "*true education, whatever that may be, will have the greatest tendency to civilise and humanise them in their relation to one another and to those who are under their protection*". This humanist definition of education propounded by Plato is still the most widely accepted meaning of education.

Defining Dropouts

There is no consensus on how to define a school dropout. Although a school dropout may be defined as

someone who leaves school before completion, such a definition masks the complexity of the phenomenon, particularly in a highly differentiated and open-schooling system, where leaving school does not preclude a return at some later date. Moreover, different administrative agencies and jurisdiction may use different definitions used by social scientists in large-scale social surveys and other forms of research.

School dropouts have different social background; they are more likely grown up in poverty or a household with low socio-economic status. Poverty is one of the root causes of correlation between social background and dropping out.

Some of the main reasons of school dropouts are:

1. Cost of Education
2. Distance to School
3. Poverty

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study is carried out to highlight the overall basic process of imparting education for school dropouts and illiterate adults at Loktak Floating Elementary School built on a *Phum/Phumdi* in the middle of the conflict-torn lake.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study is descriptive research in nature which describes social situations or social events. The method of research used is case study, to study the phenomena

through intensive analysis of the case. One case study is undertaken of the Loktak Floating Elementary School. Both primary and secondary data were utilised for the study.

Primary data were collected from two groups of respondent—one was an office bearer of the People Resources Development Association (PRDA) and other was a female member of Langolsabi Champu Self Help Group (LCSHG).

Secondary data/ sources comprise descriptive literature, including related books, local newspaper articles and online sources, both print and graphic.

Unstructured interview was carried out. The in-depth personal telephone interview was used as the tool for collecting the necessary data.

Aggravation of Crisis

The Government of Manipur had started burning down floating huts built over *Phum/Phumdi* by the fishermen living in Loktak Lake from 15 November 2011 onwards. The Loktak Development Authority (LDA) officials and State Police carried out the deliberate burning of the huts. The LDA had issued an eviction notice to the residents on 11 November 2011. Nearly 200 floating huts were already burnt by 17 November 2011, and the remaining 1,132 floating huts were to meet a similar fate. There were about 5,000 persons living in the floating huts located in Khuman Yangbi, Nambul Machin and Karang Sabal within the Loktak Lake.

The burning down of the floating huts was in accordance with the provisions of Sections 19 and 20 of the Loktak Lake (Protection) Act, 2006 which divides the 236.21 sq. km lake into two zones — a core zone comprising 70.30 sq. km, which is a ‘no development zone’, or ‘totally protected zone’, and a buffer zone of other areas of the lake excluding the core zone. A vital aspect of the division is the prohibition on building huts on *Phum/Phumdi* inside the lake, or *Athaphum*, a form of fishing using vegetation enclosures (man-made) in the core area. This, however, adversely affects many fisherman living in huts built on *Phum/Phumdi*, as well as others dependent on the lake.

The removal of nearly 770 floating huts led to the displacement of many community members who had

been living in the floating huts for generations. The number of affected families was expected to increase as the burning down of huts continued. The victims, including women, children and the aged sought refuge at the Ningthoukhong Makha Leikai community hall in Bishnupur district, Manipur. The fishing gears and nets of the communities were also burned and this had left the community with no means to earn an income forcing a deplorable state. Having lost their belongings, including books, uniforms and school bags, many children could no longer go to school and ultimately became school dropouts and started helping their parents in fishing and allied activities to support the family. Each household was offered ₹ 40,000 as compensation before their huts were burned. However, most of the villagers rejected the amount and



Figure 2. Loktak Floating Elementary School

Source: www.NElive.com

received only ₹ 17,000 in hand which was not enough to compensate their livelihood and survival needs.

Geographically, the school is on *Phum/Phumdi*, in the middle of the Loktak Lake. To reach the school from the nearest comfortable land area which is Ningthoukhong Project Gate, a travel time of 1½ hours is needed by wooden boat. Other than the Project Gate, there are two spots, one is Nachou that takes 15 minutes and is not a popular point due to difficult and uncomfortable travelling and another is near IIIT Ningthoukhong which requires 1 hour 20 minutes travelling time by the same means of transport. Although three different spots are available for the floating village of Champu Khangpok, the choice spot for their embarkation and debarkation is Ningthoukhong Project Gate due to adequate availability of surface transport to another part of the town and Imphal city.

There are government as well as private schools in the nearby land area in Thanga, Ningthoukhong, but the children have to travel a long distance on the boat themselves, which takes away a lot of time in the journey, therefore the parents decided not to send the children to the school. Another reason is the lack of income. After the Loktak Lake (Protection) Act 2006 was implemented, the income of fishermen drastically reduced owing to eviction. Due to this, they could not send their children to school, hence the children started helping their parents in the daily

chores and fishing activities to earn extra income. While the income was good, some children were even sent to private schools, but due to shortage of income later on, parents faced a situation of non-payment of fees for the school resulting in dropping out of their wards.

The Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) of Zone IV of Bishnupur district inaugurated the school formally as other government officials were present at the occasion of the World Wetland Day, 2 February 2017. The school aims to admit 40 students ranging from Classes I to V, though, presently only 25 students are admitted including nine girls in a hut divided into two parts; one meant for Class III and the other meant for students of other classes. Some of the students are able to reach up to Class V at the school. The school has no proper infrastructure, such as desk, table, etc., but efforts are being made to make the floor of the school using wood to equip the required furniture. At present, bamboos are been used to make the flooring and carpet topping. In the classroom, two blackboards have been used as a basic teaching mode. In spite of improper facilities, the school is a boon for the kids from floating villages as it inculcates an environment of learning process and provides education to them. Imparting education to the dropouts and providing a beacon of hope for education is the very purpose of establishing the school. For effective transportation of the children from

their village to the school, a wooden boat costing ₹ 1,20,000 having a capacity of 20–22 persons has been purchased, but due to crunch of the funds, 40 life-jackets costing ₹ 3,000 per piece have not been purchased yet. For the life-jackets, PRDA is looking for donors and contributors.

The school runs from 11 am to 2 pm for children, and from 5:30 pm to 8 pm for educating the adults. An interesting aspect of the Loktak Floating Elementary School is that besides providing primary education to the dropouts, it also provides education to 40 illiterate adults of the floating village; mostly women and a few men from nearby Khomjao. Currently started, the women belong to two self-help groups of the villages, namely Champu Self-Help Group, Langolsabi and Langolsabi Ngamee Lup. The main reason behind the enrolment is that adults want to eradicate their illiterate state and upgrade themselves to write their name or be able to sign properly instead of using thumb signature. The teaching process is also in a mixed form as both basic Manipuri and English are taught. The adult education programme usually starts at 5:30 pm and ends at 8 pm for all learning days, except Sunday and general holidays. The age of participating women ranges from 25 to 60 years and some men are about 70 years old. The zeal of the women is highly encouraged as they have the urge to learn and the school is providing the opportunity. For the adult education

programme, an amount of ₹ 1,00,000 was donated by Manipur Rural Bank (Nambol Branch). This helped to prepare for necessary requirement of education in addition to fishing material and solar lamps for the night school. Still, there is a regret of inadequate lighting at the night schooling since many of the learners are aged and have weak eyesight. There is a demand of good lighting system for the night schooling. After the school, the learners pursue their fishing activities at the lake. It is a classic example of learning and earning together.

Even the Governor of Manipur, Dr. Najma Heptulla donated 40 school bags, textbooks and notebooks required for students up to Class V. The Governor's gesture to contribute study material to the Loktak Floating Elementary School children is a noble effort to spearhead the cause of education in Manipur.

The education at the school is completely free for the students and the two Teaching Volunteers receive an honorarium of ₹ 3,000 per month from the PRDA under a project titled "*Empowering Local Vulnerable Community for Sustainable Development*" funded by Action Aid India.

During a talk with the ZEO, the assimilation of provisions of Right to Education (RTE) to the floating school has been discussed. Although any formal order is not established yet, discussion is going on and as soon as any related scheme gets

available, the School can be covered under the preview of India's Right to Education Act giving full benefits to the students. Before the eviction, the fishermen had enough income to send their children to school situated in the nearby land village. It is the aim of the floating school to provide basic schooling to the dropouts for a couple of years till their parents' income gets better, after which the students can be transferred to the school of their choice. For the time being, the dropouts are given schooling at the floating school.

The PRDA in addition to the school, desires to have a small floating playground, suitable enough for kids' play and recognition from the Manipur Government. If such a floating playground comes up near the school, it will be like a trophy for the school and the villagers. This recognition will develop the school further. The dreams are high for the school and the dedication to conquer them is exemplary. RTE is planning to install more solar lamps at the school and if the resources are enough to buy a solar powering system, even computer facility will be provided at the school. The school is used for multiple purposes—educating young school dropouts, as a learning centre for adults and a space for conducting community meetings. For the floating villages which are incapable to build a public hall on *Phum/Phumdi*, the school acts as a multi-purpose venue. What the villagers want to have in their village is an Anganwadi facility

or a Day Care Centre to cater to their young ones, when both the parents go for fishing.

Near the school, PRDA is building a floating hut to be named as Loktak Resource Centre (LRC) costing ₹ 50,000 which will serve as a centre for showcasing old literature books, material related to Loktak fishermen, to preserve aquatic animals found in the lake, etc. The Centre will be utilised as a tourist spot to earn some income for the evicted fishermen as an alternative arrangement.

Since the school as well as the village fall under the core zone area under the LLP Act 2006, no human settlement is permitted in the lake within the core zone. But after due consideration for the time being, the school is formally running with success and the Governor's interest in the school further strengthens the foundation of the school in the core zone. There is a wide belief that concerning the unique nature of the school, the concerned authorities might have a soft hand in the establishment.

On the other hand, the fishermen have every responsibility to protect the fragile ecosystem of the Loktak Lake and minimise pollution of the lake. Loktak Lake is the face of Manipur and the home of many aquatic animals as well as many foreign migratory birds. So, the fishermen in particular need to safeguard the ecosystem and act as first line of defence against the man-made pollution. People living

near and within the lake drain their waste into the lake, causing a great concern for the authorities.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Loktak Floating Elementary School is a community-based floating school, one-of-its-kind at the Loktak Lake for the dropouts who appeared after the eviction of the fishermen of Langolsabi and Komjao floating localities of Champu Khangpok village.
2. In addition to imparting formal education to the children, as many as 40 adults mainly women and few men have joined the school for adult literacy programme after the usual school hour.
3. Much school infrastructure is highly needed, such as school desks, benches, and proper lighting system. Books, school bags had been donated by the Governor of Manipur.
4. The school aims at providing basic schooling to the dropouts till their parents' income regains good posture, after which the students can be transferred to a better school for higher studies. Another objective is to erase the gap for the sibling of the fisherman who discontinues studies due to eviction.
5. Many of the students help their parents in fishing activities to earn some money and then come to school for education. Almost all the material of the school are either donated or come from the PRDA's Action Aid India project.
6. There are pending issues of facilities that can be extended to the school under the RTE Act and other facilities provided by the Government of India. The facilities of the Midday Meal Scheme, SSA can be extended to the school if the Government of Manipur recognises the school and takes further steps to improve it.
7. For effective transportation of the children from the village to the school, a wooden boat costing ₹ 1,20,000 having a capacity of 20–22 persons has been purchased, but due to crunch of funds, 40 life-jackets costing ₹ 3,000 per piece have not been purchased yet. For the adult education programme, an amount of ₹ 1,00,000 was donated by Manipur Rural Bank (Nambol Branch), with this amount necessary requirements of the education were met in addition to solar lamps for night schooling. After school, the learners pursue their fishing activities, balancing learning and earning together.
8. The school as well as the village fall under the core zone area as prescribed under the Loktak Lake (Protection) Act 2006; no human settlement is permitted in the lake within the core zone. But the school is running successfully and the Governor's interest in the

school further strengthens the foundation of the school.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The Government of Manipur must recognise the school as a state asset valuing its unique nature. The necessary infrastructure must be provided and upgraded for better learning. It will be a great advantage for the students if the RTE provisions get extended at the School and the Government of India provides benefits like Mid-day Meal Scheme, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, etc.
2. The Government of Manipur, along with the concerned NGOs should work together with the villagers of the floating community for an alternative arrangement to earn extra income besides fishing and environment protection. After the eviction, fishermen's income reduced drastically leaving their wards to leave schooling.
3. Loktak Floating Elementary School should be developed as a tourist spot besides imparting education to the dropouts owing to its singular nature of existence on a *Phum/Phumdi* in the middle of the lake. By doing this, extra income can be generated and utilised.
4. One good aspect of the school is the night schooling or adult education of women members of the self-help groups. The school can be a beacon of hope not only

for the dropouts, but also for the illiterate men and women.

5. Providing better lighting facilities for night schooling since many of the learners are aged and have weak eyesight. Life-jackets and computers are essential for the school. The locality as well as the concerned NGOs should look for sponsorship and donations for this purpose. The concerned government authorities should extend adequate help.

CONCLUSION

Loktak Lake is the mirror and an important part of Manipuri culture. It is a culmination of history, literature, resources and source of pride for people of Manipur. Environmentally, the lake is a unique ecosystem where humans live in huts built on floating biomass and it is also home to many aquatic flora and fauna. Many migratory birds visit Loktak Lake during migratory season, adding another feather to its cap. To this very lake, a unique floating school is in the making to emphasise India's Right to Education. India started its domestic *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* programme, first announced in 2000, to eradicate all obstacles to primary school access. In 2010, the RTE Act came into force after several years of discussion and debate, shifting education from a non-binding 'directive principle' to an enforceable 'fundamental right' in Indian constitutional law, providing all children aged between 6 and 14

years the right to free and compulsory education in a school within one to three kilometres of their home. But somewhere, in a corner of India, some village children who reside in floating huts in Langolsabi Leikai of Champu Khangpok were losing the essence of education due to poverty.

After the enactment of the Loktak Lake Protection Act, authorities removed floating huts leaving many homeless. The eviction led to income reduction due to restrictions on fishing activities. Such restrictions

indirectly impacted the schooling kids whose education had to stop due to non-payment of fees. In order to educate these dropouts, a unique floating school was built on a *Phum* in the lake, i.e., Loktak Floating Elementary School. The functioning of the school is proudly described as 'Floating RTE' on a conflict-torn lake which defines a rare combination of children and parents schooling in the same classroom, aiming to spread education for societal development and prosperity.

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A Review on Educational Status of Scheduled Tribes of Rajasthan

SUMAN RANA* AND WAIROK PAM PREMI DEVI**

Abstract

Scheduled Tribes are geographically secluded, socio-economically isolated and marginalised communities of India. They are often illiterate or less educated despite several efforts from the government through programmes/schemes. The policymakers' little attention to ST population has led to high school dropout rates and consequently, it has directly impacted the overall educational status of the tribals. The main objective of the study was to identify the educational status of ST population in the State of Rajasthan. The present study is based on government reports, i.e., Census of 2011; Statistical Profile of Scheduled Tribes 2013; All India Survey on Higher Education (2011–12); Educational Statistics at a Glance 2016; Educational Status Report Rajasthan; Secondary Education in India Progress towards Universalisation; and School Education in India (U-DISE) and it is meta-analytical in nature. This study, though limited in scope, clarifies the educational status of ST population in Rajasthan. It presents comparative analysis of the available data on ST population of Rajasthan with the total population of India. A critical scrutiny of the data revealed that inspite of high enrolment in all levels of education, the literacy is quiet low in comparison to the other categories. They have even the lowest transition rate from primary to upper primary level and secondary to higher secondary level of education. The dropout rate is also high among them. Despite several Central and State government initiatives for ST population, the tribal groups still remain unreached and vulnerable. The study proposes that the Government of Rajasthan should

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take initiative to improve the educational status of ST population in the State by introducing some programmes on identification of education-related issues and mechanism to resolve it.

INTRODUCTION

Education is considered important for personal development and nation-building at large. It imparts knowledge, skills and character to an individual. Post Independence, the Government of India emphasised more on education, i.e., reading, writing and arithmetic to fulfill the expectations of Directive Principles of State Policy (Brahmandam and Babu, 2016). "Education is a powerful instrument for preparing our citizen in the knowledge society. It will mix globalisation with localisation, making our children and young ones to become world citizen while their roots deeply embedded in Indian culture and tradition" (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016b, p. 1). Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Commission (1948–49) states:

"The most important and urgent reform needed in education is to transform it, to endeavor to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby make it the powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realisation of the national goals. For this purpose, education should be developed so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernisation and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values" (MHRD, 2016b, p. 1).

India as a country promotes inclusive growth but due to lack of educational and skills development, the tribal population is not becoming a part of the inclusive growth (Brahmandam and Babu, 2016). For inclusive growth, our Constitution has given special consideration or reservations to the tribal population in education and jobs. However, these provisions have been unsuccessful to merge the tribal population into mainstream population. Post Independence, the first three decades witnessed slow growth rate due to high dropout rate and the differences between tribals and non-tribals. However, the tribal population has seen increased trend from 2001 to 2011 in education but it still lags behind the national average. In 1960, the Dhebar Commission identified some problems behind the educational backwardness of tribal population. Identified problems were: vague generalisation, inappropriate pedagogy utilised by teacher, poor economic conditions and subsistence economy (Brahmandam and Babu, 2016). The Kothari Commission also emphasised paying special attention to the education of Scheduled Tribes. It also stated that "there are several tribal groups in India whose educational needs have been neglected almost completely" (Kothari, 1966, p. 139). It further recommended that for the development of tribal population

several efforts have to be made through marketing, finance, health and education facilities (Kothari, 1966).

The Census of 2011 data revealed that educational status of ST population in terms of literacy rate is not similar in every State. Further, it showed that some States, such as Mizoram (91.5%), Nagaland (80%), Manipur (77.4%), and Meghalaya (74.5%) with high concentration of tribal population, have high literacy rate. On the contrary, States such as Jharkhand (57.1%), Madhya Pradesh (50.6%), Odisha (52.2%), Rajasthan (52.2%) and Andhra Pradesh (49.2%) with high tribal population continue with low literacy rate.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- to appraise the statistics and educational status of Scheduled Tribes across Rajasthan;
- to identify the educational status of Rajasthan at the national level, and
- to suggest some measures for improvement of educational status of ST population in Rajasthan.

METHODOLOGY

Authors have analysed the reports of: Ministry of Tribal Affairs—Statistical Profile of Scheduled Tribes 2013; All India Survey on Higher Education (2011–12); Educational Statistics at a Glance 2016; Educational Status Report Rajasthan; Secondary Education in India Progress towards Universalisation; and School

Education in India and other national based reports. From a methodological perspective, authors have used meta-analytical design while analysing the reports to make a critical viewpoint on the educational status of Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan.

SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

The term Scheduled Tribes initially appeared in the Constitution of India. According to Article 366 (25) of Indian Constitution, Scheduled Tribes are defined as “such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of this constitution.”¹ Article 342 describes that “only those communities that have notification will be considered as scheduled tribes. Any further amendment in the existing list is through an act of Parliament” (Kalyan, 2011, p. 4). If a community has status of Scheduled Tribe in a State, it need not be so in another State (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013). The characteristics of Scheduled Tribes laid by Kelkar committee are as follows:

- a) primitive traits;
- b) distinctive culture;
- c) shyness of contact with public at large;
- d) geographical isolation, and
- e) backwardness— social and economic (Kalyan, 2011, p. 4).

Tribal groups live in diverse climatic conditions ranging from

¹ www.tribal.nic.in/Content/DefinitionpRfiles.aspx (Retrieved on 19/07/2017)

plains to dense areas. Every tribe is at different stage of its social, economic, and education development. Most of the tribes at present have adopted mainstream way of living but 75 Scheduled Tribes still choose the primitive ways of living. These tribes are called as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) having specific characteristics.

- a) pre-agricultural level of technology;
- b) stagnant or declining population;
- c) extremely low literacy; and
- d) subsistence level of economy (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013, p. 1).

Scheduled Tribes of Rajasthan

The total tribal population of Rajasthan constitutes 13.5 per cent of the entire population of the State. Each tribal group has its own culture, rituals, traditions and festivals. The major tribes with the majority of population are Bhils and Minars.² As per the report of Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2013), the following communities have the status of Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan.

1. Bhil, Bhil Garasia, Dholi Bhil, Dungri Bhil, Dungri Garasia, Mewasi Bhil, Rawal Bhil, Tadvi Bhil, Bhagalia, Bhilala, Pawra, Vasava, Vasave
2. Bhil Mina
3. Damor, Damararia
4. Dhanka, Tadvi, Tetaria, Valvi

5. Garasia (excluding Rajput Garasia)
6. Kathodi, Katkari, Dhor Kathodi, Dhor Katkari, Son Kathodi, Son Katkari
7. Kokna, Kokni, Kukna
8. Koli Dhor, Tokre Koli, Kolcha, Kolgha
9. Mina
10. Naikda, Nayaka, Cholivala Nayaka, Kapadia Nayaka, Mota Nayaka, Nana Nayaka
11. Patelia
12. Seharria, Sehria, Sahariya.

Rajasthan is situated in the north-western region of India and geographically it is the largest State in India. The total area of Rajasthan is 3,42,239 sq. km. and it consists of 33 districts³ with Jaipur as its capital. Some demographic statistics of Rajasthan are given in Table 1. The population of Scheduled Tribes is 92,38,534 which is 12.6 per cent of the total population of Rajasthan. Based on the Census of India, 2011 and Directorate of Census Operations, Rajasthan, the district-wise population of STs is given in Table 2. Some of the districts have high tribal population in rural areas than the average (16.9%) of the State, e.g., Banswara–81.3%, Dungarpur–74.4%, Pratapgarh – 68.5%, Udaipur – 60.3%, Sirohi – 33.0%, Dausa – 29.3%, Baran–27.3%, Sawai Madhopur–25.5%, Karauli – 24.4% and Bundi – 24.4%.

² <http://www.rajras.in/index.php/tribes-of-rajasthan/> (Retrieved on 18/07/2017)

³ <http://www.rajasthantourism.gov.in/Rajasthan/About-Rajasthan/TopographyRajasthan.aspx> (Retrieved on 15/07/2017)

Table 1
Statistics of Rajasthan

S. No.	Item	Period	Unit	Particulars
1.	Area	2013	Sq. km.	3,42,239
2.	Population	2011	Numbers	6,85,48,437
	i. Urban			1,70,48,085
	ii. Rural			5,15,00,352
	iii. Males			3,55,50,997
	iv. Females			3,29,97,440
	v. Sex Ratio (per 1,000 males)			928
	vi. Density (per sq. km)			201
	vii. Literacy (Male %/Female %)			79.20/52.10
3.	Number of Towns	2011	Numbers	297
4.	Villages	2011	Numbers	44,672
5.	Village Panchayats	2012-13	Numbers	9,177
6.	Panchayat Samities	2012-13	Numbers	248
7.	Roads	2009	Kms.	1,86,506
8.	Educational Institutions (up to Higher Secondary level)	2010-11	Numbers	1,24,056

Source: Department of Statistics, Government of Rajasthan.⁴

⁴ <http://statistics.rajasthan.gov.in/some%20facts%20final/sm/51.pdf> (Retrieved on 15/07/2017)

Table 2
District-wise Population of Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan

S. No.	State/District	Scheduled Tribes' Population in 2011			Percentage of Scheduled Tribes in 2011		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
	<i>Rajasthan</i>	92,38,534	86,93,123	5,45,411	13.5	16.9	3.2
1.	Ajmer	63,482	48,564	14,918	2.5	3.1	1.4
2.	Alwar	2,89,249	2,66,880	22,369	7.9	8.8	3.4
3.	Banswara	13,72,999	13,58,208	14,791	76.4	81.3	11.6
4.	Baran	2,76,857	2,64,327	12,530	22.6	27.3	4.9
5.	Barmer	1,76,257	1,72,185	4,072	6.8	7.1	2.2
6.	Bharatpur	54,090	48,554	5,536	2.1	2.4	1.1
7.	Bhilwara	2,29,273	2,14,584	14,689	9.5	11.3	2.9
8.	Bikaner	7,779	3,782	3,997	0.3	0.2	0.5
9.	Bundi	2,28,549	2,17,005	11,544	20.6	24.4	5.2
10.	Chittorgarh	2,01,546	1,92,752	16,315	13.1	15.3	3.1
11.	Churu	11,245	7,644	3,601	0.6	0.5	0.6
12.	Dausa	4,33,344	4,19,816	13,528	26.5	29.3	6.7
13.	Dholpur	58,594	55,842	2,752	4.9	5.8	1.1
14.	Dungarpur	9,83,437	9,67,086	16,351	70.8	74.4	18.4
15.	Ganganagar	13,477	2,989	10,488	0.7	0.2	2.0
16.	Hanumangarh	14,289	5,717	8,572	0.8	0.4	2.4
17.	Jaipur	5,27,966	3,93,865	1,34,101	8.0	12.5	3.9
18.	Jaisalmer	42,429	37,273	5,156	6.3	6.4	5.8
19.	Jalore	1,78,719	1,70,111	8,608	9.8	10.1	5.7

20.	Jhalawar	1,82,229	1,71,828	10,401	12.9	14.5	4.5
21.	Jhunjhunu	41,629	36,862	4,767	1.9	2.2	1.0
22.	Jodhpur	1,18,924	90,825	28,099	3.2	3.7	2.2
23.	Karauli	3,24,960	3,14,468	10,492	22.4	25.4	4.8
24.	Kota	1,83,816	1,26,725	57,091	9.4	16.4	4.9
25.	Nagaur	10, 418	9,061	1,357	0.3	0.3	0.2
26.	Pali	1,44,578	1,31,456	13,122	7.1	8.3	2.9
27.	Pratapgarh	5,50,247	5,45,422	5,005	63.4	68.5	7
28.	Rajsamand	1,60,809	1,49,991	10,818	13.9	15.4	5.9
29.	Sawai Madhopur	2,85,848	2,72,573	13,275	21.4	25.5	5.0
30.	Sikar	75,349	66,829	8,520	2.8	3.3	1.3
31.	Sirohi	2,92,470	2,72,916	19,554	28.2	33.0	9.4
32.	Tonk	1,78,207	1,73,948	4,259	12.5	15.8	1.3
33.	Udaipur	15,25,289	14,83,035	42,254	49.7	60.3	6.9

Source: Directorate of Census Operations Rajasthan, p. 36.⁵

⁵ http://www.rajcensus.gov.in/PCA_2011_FINAL/PCA_chapter_2.pdf (Retrieved on 20/07/2017)

Education of Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan

Education is an essential component in the overall development of an individual and a community at large. It enables to get awareness and comprehension on social, political and cultural environment and further enhances the socio-economic conditions of both the individual and the community at large (Rana and Verma, 2017). “Even after the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan only 88.46% of ST households are covered under primary school in a radius of 1 km. However, there is dip in the percentage of school dropouts among tribal groups but for furtherance, the school syllabus should be prepared keeping tribal groups in mind” (Brahmandam and Babu, 2016, p. 83). This section deals with the literacy and level of education among Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan.

Literacy Rates of STs (in per cent)

Literacy rate (LR) is defined, “as percentage of literates among the population aged seven years and above” (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013). According to the Census of India, 2011, Rajasthan has seen an upward trend in the literacy rate from 60.41 per cent (2001) to 66.1 per cent (2011).⁶ Similarly, literacy among STs in Rajasthan rose in comparison to literacy rate of total population from 44.7 per cent (2001) to 52.8 per cent (2011), therefore, avoiding slipping into the bottom five⁷ but Rajasthan is still lagging behind the nation’s average. A comparative literacy rate as given in Table 3 shows that the gap in literacy rates between total population of STs in the country and STs in Rajasthan has increased significantly from 2.40 per cent in 2001 to 6.16 per cent in 2011.

According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2013), some of the identified Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan with very low literacy (less than 30 per cent) are as shown in Table 4.

Table 3
Comparative Literacy Rates: Total Population of STs and Population of STs in Rajasthan (in per cent)

Category/Census Year	Literacy Rate	
	2001	2011
Total Population (STs)	47.10	58.96
Rajasthan (STs)	44.7	52.8
Gap	2.40	6.16

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016a, p. 2.

⁶ <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/rajasthan.html> (Retrieved on 21/07/2017)

⁷ <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/Rajasthan-among-bottom-five-in-literacy-level-for-SC/STs-Survey/articleshow/25079442.cms> (Retrieved on 19/07/2017)

Table 4
Scheduled Tribes with Very Low Literacy Rate

S. No.	Scheduled Tribes	Literacy Rate (%)
1.	Garasia (excluding Rajput Garasia)	25.4
2.	Kathodi, Katkari, Dhor Kathodi, Dhor Katkari, Son Kathodi, Son Katkari	27.5

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs.⁸

Percentage Enrolment of ST Students in Rajasthan

The enrolment in primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary of ST population in Rajasthan (2015–16) at different levels is on the higher side in comparison to the ST population of all States of India (Table 5).

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) – Total

“Gross Enrolment Ratio for different classes is described as percentage of enrolment in that class to the estimated child population in the respective age group” (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013, p. 16). According

Table 5
Percentage of ST Population and Enrolment (2015–16)

State		Rajasthan—ST	All States—ST
% ST population		13.5	8.6
Primary	Boys	15.90	10.62
	Girls	15.87	10.66
	Total	15.89	10.64
Upper Primary	Boys	14.28	9.84
	Girls	14.06	9.78
	Total	14.18	9.81
Secondary	Boys	13.14	8.32
	Girls	14.53	8.68
	Total	13.73	8.49
Higher Secondary	Boys	12.06	6.74
	Girls	12.92	6.81
	Total	12.41	6.77

Source: NUEPA, 2015a, p. 4.

⁸ [http://www.tribal.nic.in/ST/ListofScheduledTribes\(STs\)withVerylowliteracyrate.pdf](http://www.tribal.nic.in/ST/ListofScheduledTribes(STs)withVerylowliteracyrate.pdf) (Retrieved on 19/07/2017)

to the minutes of the Project Approval Board (PAB) on 7 April 2016, “GER for the State of Rajasthan decreased in the last two years for 78.68% in 2013–14 to 75.38% in 2015–16. Out of the 33 districts in the State, the GER for 17 districts is lower than the GER of the state.”⁹ According to the latest statistics (2015–16), enrolment of ST population has decreased in primary, upper primary, elementary, and higher secondary in comparison to the total ST population of the

country except the secondary level but is above the national average of Gross Enrolment Ratio. Comparative data on gross enrolment of ST population in Rajasthan against the total ST population of the country is given in Table 6.

Dropout Rates (DoR)

Dropout Rate is measured as “the proportion of pupils who leave school during the year, as well as, those who complete the grade level but fail to enrol in the next grade/year level

Table 6
Comparative Gross Enrolment of ST Population

Population		All States—ST	Rajasthan—ST
Year		2015–16	2015–16
Primary	Boys	107.78	105.81
	Girls	105.65	99.97
	Total	106.74	103.01
Upper Primary	Boys	95.36	92.55
	Girls	98.18	89.36
	Total	96.71	91.08
Elementary	Boys	103.41	101.29
	Girls	103.09	96.55
	Total	103.25	99.06
Secondary	Boys	73.74	78.30
	Girls	75.38	73.36
	Total	74.53	76.00
Higher Secondary	Boys	43.76	62.03
	Girls	42.44	49.30
	Total	43.12	55.92

Source: NUEPA, 2015a, pp. 65–66 and NUEPA, 2015b.

⁹ http://rmsaindia.gov.in/administrator/components/com_pabminutes/files/Rajasthan%20Minutes%202016-17.pdf (Retrieved on 21/07/2017)

the following school year to the total number of pupils enrolled during the previous year” (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013, p. 18). It is a sure sign of lack of educational development, degradation of educational system and lack of socio-economic measures due to which pupils fail to complete a specific level of education. The average annual dropout rate in school education for ST students in India for the period 2014–15, is given in Table 7. As reported by Jha, 2015, using U-DISE data, the Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan are the worst

affected in cases of school dropouts. The annual average dropout rate at primary level for Rajasthan was at 8.39% while that for ST communities were at 10.04%. Similarly, for the upper primary level, ST communities were at 7 per cent in comparison to the State average of 6.03 per cent. They have even the lowest transition rate of 86.38 per cent from primary to upper primary level and 69.23 per cent for secondary to higher secondary level of education in comparison to the State’s average of 92.02 per cent and 74.34 per cent (Table 8).

Table 7
Annual Average Dropout Rates of ST Population (2014–15) in comparison to Other Categories (in per cent)

Year		2014–15	2014–15	2014–15	2014–15
State (ST Population)		All States—ST	Rajasthan—ST	Rajasthan—SC	Rajasthan—OBC
Primary	Boys	7.02	5.38	4.60	5.50
	Girls	6.84	6.11	4.88	5.42
	Total	6.93	5.72	4.73	5.46
Upper Primary	Boys	8.48	4.12	2.68	2.60
	Girls	8.71	3.07	4.34	4.37
	Total	8.59	3.65	3.43	3.39
Secondary	Boys	24.49	16.47	17.56	13.32
	Girls	24.40	15.47	18.49	13.23
	Total	24.68	16.03	17.95	13.26
Senior Secondary	Boys	–	–	–	–
	Girls	–	–	–	–
	Total	–	–	–	–

Source: NUEPA, 2015, pp. 55–57.

Table 8
Transition Rate at Elementary, Secondary and Higher Secondary level
(2014–15) (in per cent)

Year		2014–15	2014–15	2014–15	2014–15
State (ST Population)		All States—ST	Rajasthan— ST	Rajasthan— SC	Rajasthan— OBC
Primary to Upper Primary	Boys	86.95	87.51	93.97	93.23
	Girls	87.15	85.06	92.61	90.99
	Total	87.05	86.38	93.34	92.18
Elementary to Secondary	Boys	85.02	96.19	97.66	95.83
	Girls	83.54	98.14	92.33	90.90
	Total	84.30	97.06	95.55	93.67
Secondary to Higher Secondary	Boys	59.64	69.82	68.55	73.39
	Girls	57.92	68.49	68.16	75.08
	Total	58.80	69.23	68.39	74.07

Source: NUEPA, 2015a, pp. 47–49.

Gender Parity Index (GPI)

“The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education to the corresponding number of male students in each level. Thus, GPI (based on GER) which is free from the effects of the population structure of the appropriate age group, provides a picture of gender equality in education” (MHRD, 2016a, p. A2). GPI of ST population for the period of 2014–15 is on the lower side specifically in primary, upper primary, elementary, senior secondary and higher education in

comparison to the nation’s average. GPI of ST students in comparison to total population for 2014–15 is given in Table 9. The detailed information on GPI is not available for ST students of Rajasthan. However, general population data is available for the period 2014–15 to 2015–16 (Table 10) for primary, upper primary, elementary, secondary, and higher secondary education, as per the report generated by National University of Educational Planning and Administration. This report also shows that GPI of ST population in Rajasthan has increased at every level but it still lags behind the nation’s average.

Table 9
Gender Parity Index (2014–15) of STs students in comparison to the Nation's Average

Level	National Average	ST-Average
Primary (I–V)	1.03	0.98
Upper Primary (VI–VIII)	1.09	1.02
Elementary (I–VIII)	1.05	0.99
Secondary (IX–X)	1.01	1.01
Senior Secondary (XI–XII)	0.99	0.95
Higher Education	0.92	0.81

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016a, p. 8.

Table 10
Gender Parity Index (2014–15, 2015–16)

State/India	Rajasthan	India
Primary	2014–15	0.86
	2015–16	0.87
Upper Primary	2014–15	0.81
	2015–16	0.83
Elementary	2014–15	0.85
	2015–16	0.86
Secondary	2014–15	0.72
	2015–16	0.74
Higher Secondary	2014–15	0.66
	2015–16	0.69

Source: NUEPA, 2015a, p. 38.

DISCUSSION

This review indicates that the literacy rate among ST population in Rajasthan has increased significantly during 2001–11 but it still lags behind the average literacy rate of ST population in India. It further shows that there are still many Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan, such as Garasia (excluding Rajput Garasia), Kathodi, Katkari, Dhor Kathodi, Dhor Katkari, Son Kathodi and Son Katkari, which have a literacy rate of less than 30 per cent. Enrolment of ST population in Rajasthan is higher in comparison to the ST population of other States in India. However, there is very less representation of ST population in higher education, teaching and non-teaching staff. According to the minutes of the PAB (Programme Approval Board) held in April 2016, GER of Rajasthan has decreased in the last two years. It is similar in the case of ST population in Rajasthan; there is a decrease in the GER of ST population in primary, secondary and elementary education. However, it has increased in secondary and higher secondary for STs.

In the case of Gender Parity Index, the average GPI for ST population in Rajasthan is lower in primary, upper primary, elementary, senior secondary and higher education in comparison to the national average GPI. Further, Rajasthan is in fourth place having the lowest GPI in India.

Despite several policies and programmes for the educational uplift of the ST population in Rajasthan, the condition of the STs remains vulnerable. The research through the critical analysis shows that the representation of ST population in the education sector is low in comparison to General, OBC and SC population in Rajasthan. Apart from this, many tribal groups are still far away from the national average. Conceptually speaking, there is an urgency for the Government of Rajasthan to rethink on the policies and programmes specifically on education to bring tribal groups of Rajasthan into the mainstream. Further, there is minimal information available on tribal-related issues in India. Researchers and practitioners have to work rigorously in this domain for the welfare of ST population.

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions can be useful for improving the educational status of the tribal population of Rajasthan.

Information Technology as aid for teachers in classrooms

Simple ideas or complex concepts conveyed through animation and pictorial depiction are easy to grasp for Grades 1 and 2. Similarly, this technique can be utilised in teaching-learning processes in higher education. As it has been said by

Fred R. Barnard “a picture is worth a thousand words.”

Success Story: An independent evaluation of the programme ‘Shiksha’¹⁰ Revealed that— “(i) Increased enrolment in schools and increase in attendance percentage; (ii) Average attendance increase from 30 per cent to 80 per cent in government schools and 90 per cent in private schools; (iii) Increased educational standards in Grades 1 and 2—Students are now able to write in Grade 1, not normally demonstrated by students even in Grade 3; (iv) increased level of confidence in students; (v) motivated teachers/students; and (vi) sharply increased scores in assessments” (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016b, p. 45).

Increase public expenditure on education

Despite several recommendations, the expenditure on education in India is around 3.5 per cent of the GDP. However, at the current state of development, at least 6 per cent of the GDP would be ideal for the education sector and it is not excessive in comparison to other developing nations. For example, Cuba’s expenditure on education is over 18 per cent; and other countries like Malaysia, Kenya and Malawi spend over 6 per cent of their GDP on education. Even the average of global spending on education is

4.9 per cent which is higher than India (Ibid.).

Structure and Delivery of School Education

“The focus of school education must now shift from physical expansion to consolidation of existing school system. Each state must undertake a detailed exercise of school mapping to identify schools with low enrolment and inadequate infrastructure” (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016b, p. 65). In addition to this, there must be provision of open mode of learning or schooling for school dropouts and working children to continue their education without being part of the formal education structure.

Teacher Management

The teachers should be competent and committed towards their profession. The State should focus on shortage of teachers, absenteeism, transparency in the recruitment process, salaries, infrastructural needs and conducting teacher training workshops time to time to meet the present needs of the educational institutions in the tribal belt.

Reservation for weaker sections and disadvantaged groups

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act has provided equal opportunities for

¹⁰ A private foundation has been implementing ‘Shiksha’, a project in 340 schools across 244 villages, mostly rural, covering 15,000 students of Grades 1 and 2, in different parts of Uttar Pradesh, since 2012.

weaker sections and disadvantaged groups to find representation in the mainstream of the society. The State should strictly implement RTE Act to provide opportunities to marginalised sections with added infrastructural support and financial assistance in order to support and continue their education.

Resident schools

The State should provide resident schools to the students, known as Ashram schools. These schools should have provision of free accommodation, food and education to the ST students. Teachers employed in these Ashram schools should have orientation of tribal culture and customs. They should be familiar with the native language and must teach students in their native languages to maintain their interest in education and learning process.

Success Stories: “Chhattisgarh has launched a massive programme for quality improvement and monitoring under *APJ Abdul Kalam Shiksha Gunvatta Abhiyan*. Nearly 8,000 Class I and II officers of the State Government periodically visit weaker schools, which are provided capacity building and other inputs. Hostels are started in district towns to enable tribal students to complete secondary education. The State passed the Right of Youth to Skill Development Act in 2013 under which a youth can demand to be provided within

90 days vocational training facility. Chhattisgarh also merged a number of schools with low enrolment with larger schools, thereby, reducing teacher shortages. Tribal Education which was part of Tribal Department has been now placed under the Education Department. In Odisha, textbooks and other learning material have been prepared for many tribal communities. In Gujarat, a number of model residential schools have been started in PPP with reputed NGOs in the education sector” (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016b, p. 94).

Curriculum

The State Government should include tribal culture, folklore and history to the curriculum so that they do not feel segregated from the mainstream population and the government can promote tribal culture by introducing games, literature fests and seminars on tribals of India.

Scholarships/Fellowship

Despite the provision of several scholarships, the enrolment rate is lower and the dropout rate among the tribal students is higher than the other sections of the society. They have very less representation in technical, engineering and medical courses. The State should deliver the services for the tribal students. The list of scholarships/fellowships for ST students has been given next.

Table 11
Scholarships and Fellowships for ST students

S. No.	Particular	Activity
1.	Scheme of Strengthening Education among Scheduled Tribes (ST) Girls in Low Literacy Districts	The scheme is for the promotion of education among tribal girls in the identified low-literacy districts of the country. The scheme also aims to improve the socio-economic status of the poor and illiterate tribal population through the education of women.
2.	Scheme of Construction of Hostels for ST Girls and Boys	The scheme is to provide hostels for STs including PTGs in an environment conducive to learning to increase the literacy rate among the tribal students and to bring them at par with the other population of the country.
3.	Scheme of Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas	The scheme is to provide one-time grant residential school infrastructure for STs including PTGs in an environment conducive to learning, to increase the literacy rate among the tribal students and to bring them at par with the other population of the country.
4.	Vocational Training in Tribal Areas	The schemes of vocational training in tribal areas are for self-employment or for increasing employability of ST boys and girls equally.
5.	Post-Metric Scholarship for ST Students	The scheme covers professional, technical as well as non-professional and non-technical courses at various levels including correspondence courses covering distance and continuing education.
6.	Pre-Metric Scholarship for ST Students	The scheme is intended to support education of children studying in Classes IX and X so that the incidence of dropout, especially in the transition from the elementary to the secondary stage, is minimised.
7.	Upgradation of Merit of ST Students	The scheme is to upgrade the merit of ST students by providing them remedial and special coaching in Classes IX to XII.
8.	Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for STs	To provide fellowship to ST students for pursuing higher studies such as M.Phil. and Ph.D.

9.	Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for STs	To provide financial assistance to meritorious students for pursuing higher studies in foreign university in specified fields of Master level courses, Ph.D. and Post-doctoral research programmes, in the field of Engineering, Technology and Science.
10.	Top-class Education for ST Students	The scholarship scheme for ST students was introduced from the academic year 2007–08 with the objective of encouraging meritorious ST students for pursuing studies at Degree and Post Graduate levels in any of the institutes identified by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the purpose.
11.	Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisation	Under this, residential, non-residential schools, computer training centers and knitting, weaving and handloom training centers run by NGOs for ST students are supported, apart from hospitals, mobile dispensaries, etc.

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013.

CONCLUSION

This study, though limited in scope, clarifies the educational status of ST population in Rajasthan. The highlighted issues in this study, i.e., Enrolment status, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Dropout Rates and Gender Parity Index present the threat to the educational status of the tribal communities in Rajasthan. It presents comparative analysis of the available data on ST population of Rajasthan with the total population of India. A critical scrutiny of the data revealed that inspite of high enrolment in all levels of education, the literacy is quiet low in comparison to the other categories. Despite several Central and State government initiatives, such as Scheme of Strengthening Education among ST girls in low-literacy

districts; Scheme of Construction of Hostels for ST Girls and Boys; Scheme of Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas; Vocational Training in Tribal Areas; Post-Metric Scholarship for ST Students; Pre-Metric Scholarship for ST Students; Upgradation of Merit of ST students; Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for STs; Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for STs, and Manda Yojana, tribal groups still remain unreached and vulnerable. The study proposes that the Government of Rajasthan should take initiatives to improve the educational status of ST population in the State by introducing some programmes on identification of education-related issues and mechanism to resolve them. First, the State Government

should recruit local eligible tribal members as teachers or counsellors specifically in schools situated in tribal belts. This will provide opportunities for pupils to communicate effectively with the teacher and it will give them the confidence to share their issues and help them continue their education. Second, to resolve the shortage of eligible, competent and committed teachers in the tribal belt, the government should take concrete

actions for recruiting competent teachers and to train those who are already working in the tribal areas. Third, there should be an efficient mechanism for implementation and monitoring of the tribal welfare schemes. Lastly, adopting inclusive methods of promoting tribal culture, folklore and history through literary festivals and seminars could help bring the requisite atmosphere for change.

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Revisiting Educational Development in Himachal Pradesh

SUMAN NEGI*

Abstract

Himachal Pradesh has witnessed tremendous progress in the educational development in a relatively short span of time. The State has achieved nearly 100 per cent universal elementary education and has one of the lowest dropout rates at the national level. The challenge at present is lower levels of participation at the higher education level, which could mainly be attributed to lesser number of institutions available. The impressive results in educational participation and access are mainly attributed to its efficiently run and managed government schooling system. However, the success of government schools seems to be losing its sheen as private schooling revolution is taking over the State-run schools rapidly. The share of government school participation has decreased sizeably over the decade, whereas the share of private school participation has increased. This is a serious concern and the government schooling system needs to be made more accountable and all stakeholders including teachers, administrators, policymakers, community and parents need to take active responsibilities.

INTRODUCTION

Educational development encompasses universalisation of access to education and equity in quality of education across different levels, sections of

society and regions in a country. Though India has made considerable progress in the area of educational development since Independence, it still needs to traverse a long path to achieve the set targets and bridge

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the large disparities that exist across regions, caste and gender groups; reduction in these disparities is one of the biggest challenges before us. This is discernible from the output indicators of educational participation, wastage and poor leaning levels amongst students.

Himachal Pradesh, a mountainous State of the Indian Republic, has come a long way in the field of education post Independence and ranks today amongst the most advanced in terms of educational development in the country.

Educational expansion in the State

Faith-based schools have been a characteristic feature of the educational set-up in Himachal Pradesh. Post Independence, the development problems in the State were largely akin to those in the other States, but the problems were accentuated due to its mountainous terrain with extreme climatic conditions. These factors further added to the State's backwardness and posed as a major challenge to the overall pace of development in the State. Strong political will and administrative intervention combined with societal support enabled the State to make impressive progress in the overall educational development. Therefore, these developmental efforts had multiple contributors, as Dreze and Sen (2009) in their essay on 'Putting Growth and Its Place' pointed out that Himachal Pradesh began this journey much later than Kerala and

Tamil Nadu, but is catching up very quickly. This is especially visible in the parameters relating to elementary education — Himachal Pradesh at the time of Independence had dismal literacy levels, at par with those in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, but it soon caught up with the high-performer Kerala in a span of few decades. This 'schooling revolution' according to them was based almost entirely on a policy of universal provision of government schools, although it must be noted that there has been a steady rise in private schooling during the last decade. A rise in enrolment and literacy does not alone signify educational development, therefore, it is germane to analyse the current situation. This paper tries to revisit the educational development scenario in Himachal Pradesh and identify some of the main challenges that the State is facing in relation to post-elementary education scenario given the fact that the State has almost achieved universal participation at the elementary level.

RIISING LITERACY LEVELS

Literacy is an important indicator to measure the socio-economic development of a region. The concept of literacy varies from country to country but at the bare minimum, it refers to the minimum levels of literacy skills. The Indian census document defines literacy as competence 'to read and write with an understanding in any language'. As a consequence, the umbrella category of the literate

population contains a whole range of people from those who can barely read and write to the highly educated.

At the time of Independence, Himachal Pradesh was considered to be one of the most underdeveloped areas of the country, both socially and economically (Dreze and Sen 2009). The literacy rate during the time of independence was about 8 per cent, which was below the national average of 18.33 per cent. However, over the years, the State has shown tremendous progress and is at present recognised as one of the most literate States with a literacy rate of 82.80 per cent. It also ranks second in the country in terms of literacy rates after Kerala, amongst the bigger States (2011, Census). A large part of this success can be attributed to the efforts of both the Central and State governments. The rapid expansion in educational facilities, free education in schools and emergence of middle class section of the society following rapid growth in service sector are the major factors responsible for this speedy rise in literacy rates (Bhardwaj, 1999).

District-wise Analysis

Table 1 shows the literacy rates at the district level, according to the 2011 Census. Hamirpur district had the highest proportion of literates with a literacy rate of 88.15 per cent, as compared to 63.77 per cent in 1981. This is closely followed by Una and Kangra with literacy rates of 86.53 per cent and 85.67 per cent,

respectively, in 2011, as against 59.75 per cent and 59.20 per cent, respectively, in 1981. Shimla with literacy rate of 83.64 per cent in 2011 came next followed by Bilaspur, Solan and Mandi having literacy rates of 84.59 per cent, 83.68 per cent and 81.53 per cent, respectively, in 2011, as compared to 53.80 per cent, 49.39 per cent and 49.00 per cent, respectively, in 1981. Comparatively higher levels of urbanisation and economic development along with a high number of educational institutions could be the reason for high literacy levels in these districts.

The districts of Lahaul and Spiti, Kullu and Sirmaur had literacy rates of 76.81 per cent, 79.40 per cent and 78.80 per cent, respectively, in 2011, and 41.05 per cent, 36.57 per cent and 38.59 per cent, respectively, in 1981. These districts are predominantly rural and backward in character with poor infrastructure and accessibility, which could be the contributing factors to low levels of literacy. The least literate district in 2011 was Chamba with literacy rate of 72.17 per cent, however it has shown remarkable improvement from a literacy rate of 32.15 per cent in 1981.

Looking at gender-wise literacy rates for 2011, it is apparent that males have 90 per cent literacy level which is considerably higher than the literacy level amongst females at 76 per cent. A time-series analysis of the gender-gaps shows a declining trend from about 23 point difference

to 18 point difference which further narrowed to 14 percentage points difference in 1991, 2001 and 2011, respectively. The district-level differentials also show a lower female literacy trend as compared to males across all the districts. The gap between the male and female literacy levels is higher in the backward districts of Chamba, Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur and Kullu indicating that access to education and its outcomes in the form of literacy is a bigger challenge for females in rural and rugged topographies.

It can be argued that Himachal Pradesh, with the exception of Chamba, and Lahaul and Spiti, has done considerably well in terms of improving its literacy rates. All the districts have shown improvement over the earlier decades. Good government policies and promotion of education at the village-level coupled with construction of primary schools even in the remote corners of the State has contributed to improvement in literacy rates. This underlines the progressive dimension of governance in Himachal Pradesh.

Table 1
Literacy Rates in Himachal Pradesh

Districts	Total	Male	Female
Himachal Pradesh	82.80	89.53	75.93
Chamba	72.17	82.59	61.67
Kangra	85.67	91.49	80.02
Lahaul and Spiti	76.81	85.69	66.84
Kullu	79.40	87.39	70.91
Mandi	81.53	89.56	73.66
Hamirpur	88.15	94.36	82.62
Una	86.53	91.89	81.11
Bilaspur	84.59	91.16	77.97
Solan	83.68	89.56	76.97
Sirmaur	78.80	85.61	71.36
Shimla	83.64	89.59	77.13
Kinnaur	80.00	87.27	70.96

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Growth in Literacy

Despite having a rugged terrain with inaccessible tribal pockets, Himachal Pradesh has taken a big leap in the development process. In the post Independence era, Himachal Pradesh has performed better on the literacy front than most other States in the country. An examination of the literacy rates given in Figure 1 reveals that the State showed a threefold growth in literacy during the period 1951 to 1961, from 7.98 per cent to 21.30 per cent. The 1971 Census showed a 10 per cent increase to 31.96 per cent and the trend continued—in 1981, it rose to 42.48 per cent. The period 1981–91 was an inflection point with literacy rate showing a marked improvement in 1991 at 63.86 per cent. It was during this period that various centrally sponsored policies and schemes, such as the National Programme for Non-Formal Education (1980), National Education Policy (1986), Operation

Blackboard (1987–88), the campaign on Universal Primary Education, etc., were introduced. These governmental interventions resulted in a higher growth rate in literacy levels. In the 1990s, the growth rate tapered and this can be partly attributed to the base effect.

Between 1981 and 1991, Himachal Pradesh registered an average growth rate of 21.38 per cent. Lahaul and Spiti which was one of the least literate districts in 1981 with a literacy rate of 31.35 per cent, registered the highest decadal growth rate at 25.47 per cent in 1981–91. In comparison, the growth rates in the districts with higher literacy rates *viz.* Mandi, Bilaspur, Solan and Hamirpur stood at 22.62 per cent, 22.48 per cent, 22.23 per cent and 22.18 per cent respectively.

ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

At the time of Independence, the limited reach of our educational system was

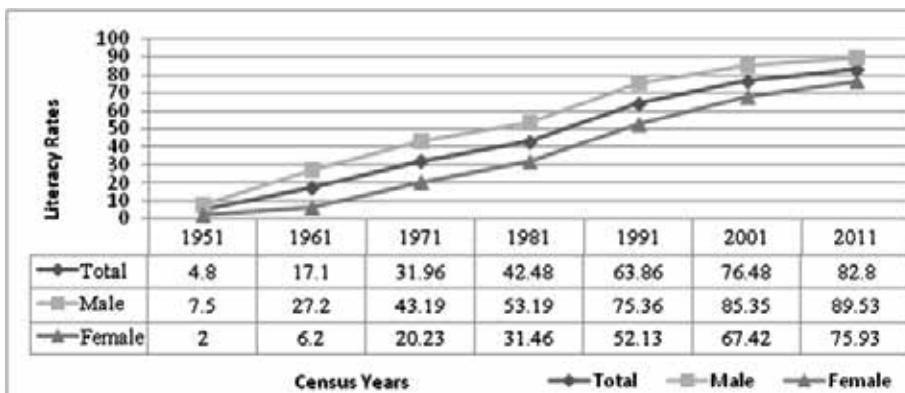


Figure 1. Growth of Literacy in Himachal Pradesh
 Source: Census of India.

its major weakness and this could be attributed to the lack of support and thrust by the colonial government. In 2002, the 86th Constitutional amendment was passed by the Indian Parliament that added Article 21A to the Constitution making education a fundamental right. Article 21A makes it mandatory for the State to provide free and compulsory education to all children from the age of six to 14 years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 was enacted by the Parliament to give effect to the Constitutional amendment and the Act came into force on 1 April 2010.

Universal elementary education is a pre-condition towards universal secondary education. Though the past six decades since Independence have witnessed an unprecedented expansion of education, yet the fulfillment of this constitutional commitment has remained elusive. Therefore, availability and accessibility of educational institutions play a key role in attaining the national goal of achieving education for all. The Constitutional commitment lies at the root of conception of major government initiatives, such as Right to Education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), etc.

By 'availability', we mean the physical existence of educational institutions according to the needs of the people, which is determined by the numerical strength of the student population in specific age-groups

(Raza, Ahmad and Nuna, 1978). The availability of these institutions proportionate to the requirements of the population is the foremost necessary condition for educational progress. The spatial pattern of distribution and the growth in the number of these institutes also have a significant role in the overall educational development of any region.

Accessibility to educational institutions is likewise an important criterion in considering their efficiency and availability to the population intended to be served by them. The attribute of accessibility flows directly from the decision to locate an institution according to the residential location of the population to be served. The decision to receive formal education, which is imparted in schools and colleges on a collective basis, implies daily movement of student population between the centers of residence and the institution. As such the movement may be unimportant in the urban areas where alternative modes of transport are available and schools are located within the settlement. However, the location of schools in the rural areas has a crucial bearing on their usability by the population intended to be served. There is an outer limit beyond which it is not physically feasible for the children of different age groups to travel (Raza, Ahmad and Nuna, 1978). Location of schools hence, in itself is a function of a number of factors. Here, topography,

age of students, size and density of population, size of area, distance and socio-political factors may be viewed as important factors influencing singularly or in association with each other upon provision and location of school infrastructure (Sinha, 1988).

Availability, as defined earlier, denotes the physical space for educational facilities in relation to its requirement. In this study, spatial distribution of total number of institutes is used as a proxy for availability and is calculated using the size of the student population in a particular age-group and the number of educational institutes available to them. This aspect is important in view of high spatial variations in the density of population. Though the role of accessibility (distance and location) in availing the educational facilities cannot be minimised, the level of the actual requirements cannot be ignored either. It is often noted that while in one locality, a primary school is available for 50 children, at another it is expected to serve more than 200 children (Sinha, 1988). Such anomalies are quite common and it may, therefore, be stated that the availability of educational institutions commensurate to the needs of the population is a necessary condition for educational development, as availability reflects the reach of the education system to the population in general.

In a predominantly mountainous State like Himachal Pradesh with low population densities, accessibility to

educational institutes assumes critical importance as distance and location of the schools to a large extent determine student participation, especially at the post-elementary level which further impacts higher education. Therefore, without the basic existence of these educational institutes, distance and location may be irrelevant and vice versa. In fact, both availability and accessibility are interlinked and together create conditions favourable for the spread of schooling facilities. Henceforth, we will examine the subject of availability followed by accessibility in this section of the study.

Though availability is an important aspect, but the mere existence of institutes may not alone serve the purpose, as location of the institute has a more significant role to play. This is because there are tracts particularly in mountainous and forest areas wherein physical access constitutes the crucial constraining factor in availing these facilities. It may, however, be noted that the areas with difficult terrain often have low population with a relatively smaller number of children per school.

Availability becomes central and crucial in areas having high population densities. Location of institutions facilities in such cases determined essentially by population size, distance occupying a less important position in decision-making. Considering the mountainous physiography and extreme climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh, the

meaning of accessibility is bound to acquire a more important significance, as average distance in the plains and hills has varying connotations. The availability and accessibility of the facility of educational institutes may be analysed with the help of the following approach:

1. Temporal Distribution of Educational Institutions
2. Growth of Educational Institutions
3. Spatial Distribution of Educational Institutions
4. Institution–Population Ratio

Temporal Distribution of Educational Institutions

A comparison of the period 2015–16 figures of the number of educational institutions in the State, with the figures in the preceding four decades, shows a healthy upward trend in the availability of educational institutions. Table 2 shows that the State had a total of 3,768 primary schools in 1970, which tripled to 10,499 by 2000 and in 2012, Himachal Pradesh had around 10,739 primary schools managed by the government. In 1970, there were 742 upper primary schools as compared to a total of 1,709 upper primary schools in 2000 and in 2012, the State had a total of 2,317 upper primary schools.

In case of secondary schools, there were a total of 435 schools in 1970, which rose to 977 in 2000, and in 2015 the State had 2,191 secondary schools. The senior secondary school

system was introduced in 1978 and prior to it, there used to be the intermediate level. Therefore, there were only three senior secondary schools in 1980, which increased to 536 in 2000, and in 2012 the State had 1,262 senior secondary schools, which rose to 2,487 schools in 2015–16.

Analysing the trend for distribution of schools over time, one can observe that the total number of schools at various levels of education have increased although the rate of change differs between different educational levels. It is understandable that it may not be possible to provide the same number of schools at each level but the gap in availability between these various levels of schooling needs to be narrowed in order to boost continuity in education.

The number of government-run colleges providing general education has increased from 15 in 1970–71 to 37 in 2000–01 which further doubled by 2015–16 to 87 colleges. It must be noted that the rise in the number of private colleges has been even higher in the last few decades with 67 colleges under private management for the same period.

Availability of higher and technical institutions in a State like Himachal Pradesh today has assumed greater significance than before, as the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at senior secondary level has risen manifold. This expansion indicates that the increase in the number of

Table 2
Number of Educational Institutions in Himachal Pradesh

Year	Primary/ Junior Basic	Middle/ Senior Basic	Higher/Higher Secondary	Colleges of General Education
1970–71	3,768	742	435	15
1980–81	6,093	1,032	585	25
1990–91	7,548	995	1,010	25
2000–01	10,499	1,709	1,513	37
2005–06	10,613	2,112	1,654	47
2013–14	10,650	2,321	2,191	67 + (66)*
2015–16	10,710	2,130	2,487	87 + (67)*

*Private colleges

Source: Statistical Abstract of Himachal Pradesh.

educational institutes at tertiary level is a consequence of the demand push emanating from higher enrolment at the preceding educational levels. Though tremendous efforts have been made over the years, availability is still low in relation to the demand. These were 15 government colleges, in 1970–71, which increased to 37 in 2000–01, and subsequently doubled (67) in number by 2013–14. There has also been a huge rise in the number of private institutions.

Looking at the availability of medical and technical institutes in the State, it shows meagre progress and most of the institutions are run by the government. As Table 3 shows, in 2008–09, Himachal Pradesh had two (2) medical colleges, three (3) engineering colleges, seven (7) polytechnics and 50 industrial training institutes—all of them were run by the State

government. Although there has been mushrooming of small technical institutes which offer diploma and certificate courses, their exact number not known as they do not offer recognised courses, hence is not registered with the government.

Due to vigorous efforts of the State government to set up and facilitate setting up of technical and medical institutions, their numbers have gone up phenomenally since 2000. For example, there was just one engineering college in 1992, which has increased during 2015–16 to four government engineering colleges and 14 private engineering colleges. Similarly, the number of polytechnics has increased from four to 15 during 1992 to 2016. The increase in number of medical colleges has been insignificant—there has been an addition of only two

Table 3
Number of Technical and Medical Institutions in Himachal Pradesh

Years	Engineering Colleges	Polytechnics	Industrial Training Institutes	Medical Colleges
1992-93	1	4	32	1
1997-98	1	6	34	1
2000-01	1	7	44	2
2002-03	2	7	44	2
2004-05	2	7	50	2
2005-06	2	7	50	2
2006-07	3	7	50	2
2008-09	3	7	50	2
2012-13	2+17*	10+18*	93+129*	3
2015-16	4+14*	15+18*	110+136*	3

*Represents the number of private colleges

Source: Himachal Pradesh Government Website for Technical Education, Statistical Abstract of Himachal Pradesh.

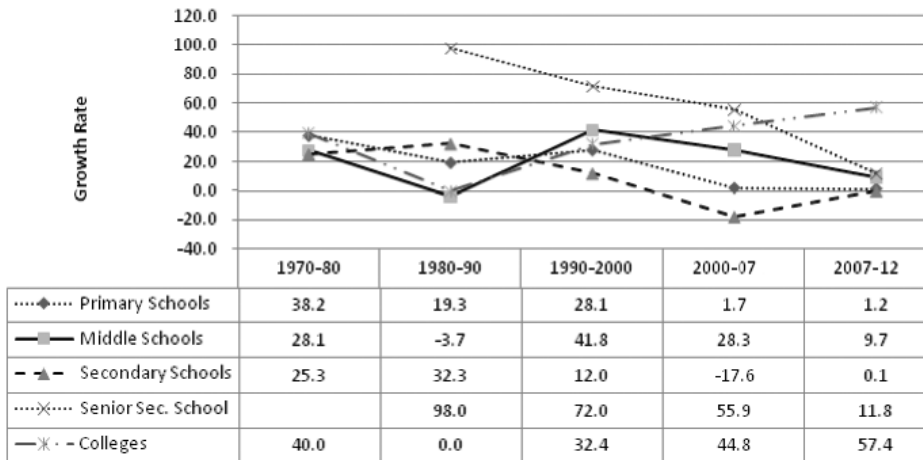


Figure 2. Growth of Educational Institutions in Himachal Pradesh (1970-2012)
Source: Annual Report, Directorate of Education Himachal Pradesh, 2013.

medical colleges in the last 20 years, from one in 1992 to three in 2015. This unfortunately underscores the lack of medical institutions in the State. Though there has been a mushroom growth in the number of private technical institutes, no such phenomenon is noticed in respect of medical institutes and this could be attributed to the norms being more stringent for setting up medical institutes.

Growth in Educational Institutions

Figure 2 shows the growth in the number of institutions in absolute terms. In this section, we attempt to explain the decadal percentile increase or decrease between 1970 and 2012 in availability of schools at different levels of education in the State. Efforts were made post-Independence and thereafter, at the beginning of the creation of the State to meet the demand for education and this led to a rapid growth in setting up of educational institutions, which gradually tapered off as supply increased in different localities, as is evident from the data explained below.

Primary Schools: The growth in the number of primary schools declined during 1970–80 (38.16 per cent) and during 1980–90 (19.28 per cent). Between 1990 and 2000, there was a 10 per cent increase to 28.11 per cent which can be attributed to a boom in the private institutions and government programmes, such as District Primary Education Programme, etc.; between

2000–07, the growth reduced to only 1.71 per cent which further declined to 1.2 per cent between 2007–12. This could be due to the fact that most of the villages had already been covered with primary schools in the earlier intervals.

Upper Primary Schools: At the upper primary school level, the growth rates show a varying trend. Between 1970 and 1980, there was a strong growth in the number of upper primary schools at 28.10 per cent which turned into a negative growth at -3.72 per cent in the subsequent period, i.e., between 1980 and 1990. This may be due to the diversification of the government's efforts in introducing the senior secondary school level during this period. In the decade 1990–2000, the trajectory changed to register a robust growth of 41.78 per cent. The growth rates were lower but still impressive between 2000 and 2007 at 28.76 per cent. The growth further declined to 9.7 per cent during the period 2007–12, this again could be attributed to increase and coverage of schools at the upper primary level.

Secondary Schools: The number of secondary schools in the decade 1970–80 showed a growth rate of 25.26 per cent, which further increased to 32.33 per cent during 1980–90. In the subsequent decade, i.e., 1990–2000, the growth rate declined but was still impressive at 11.98 per cent. A higher decline and a negative growth rate was observed for the period 2000–07 at -17.57 per cent, which

could be the result of the merging of the schools at this level with their respective higher and upgradation of the lower level schools. However, a marginal increase of 0.1 per cent in the following period 2007–2012 was witnessed for schools at this level.

Senior Secondary Schools: The secondary school system in its current form of 10+2 was only introduced in the late 1970s, therefore the growth rates have been calculated from 1980–90, when the growth rate was at 98 per cent. Such a high growth is mainly because this level was commenced during this period. Though there has been a considerable growth over the years, a declining trend is observed from 72.01 per cent in 1990–2000 to 55.92 per cent in 2000–07, which further reduced to a growth rate of 11.8 per cent during 2007–12.

Colleges: The number of colleges has grown almost five fold in the period 1970–2012. During 1970–80, a vigorous growth of 40 per cent was registered followed by a period of no growth between 1980 and 1990. Though the phase post-1990 has shown an increase in the growth of number of colleges as the base educated population has grown tremendously, resulting in a demand for this level. The growth rate during the period 1990–2000 was 32.43 per cent which further increased to 44.78 per cent in the period 2000–07. The five-year period between 2007 and 2012 further saw the highest growth at 57.4 per cent. These growth percentages do not

take into consideration the private institutions that came up during this period. Though the periodic growth figures are impressive, but there still seems to be paucity of good institutions especially at this level. The growth rates of privately managed institutions have not been calculated due to paucity in availability of data.

Spatial Distribution of Educational Institutions

To examine the access to educational facilities, the spatial distribution of educational institutions was analysed in relation to the total population and area of the districts. Table 4 shows that Himachal Pradesh has better access to educational institutions when compared with the national average. Within the State, the districts with low and sparse population like Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur and Chamba represented better levels of access to schools along with the district of Shimla which has a higher proportion of schools. The average population served by each school is also below the State average with one school available for a population of 304 persons in Shimla. All the remaining districts represented a higher number of population for every school, with the districts of Una (551) and Kangra (480) representing the lowest levels of access.

Kullu represented low levels of access for higher educational institutions with one institution available for 48,608 persons and Hamirpur represented the highest

level of access to higher educational institutions with one institution available for 15,665 persons.

Examining the area served by the available educational institutions, it is evident in Table 4 that the mountainous districts of Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur and Chamba that have sparse population represented a larger area covered by each institution as compared to the other districts that relatively represent better levels of access in terms of the area served by each school.

The spatial distribution of schools to determine the level of access to educational institutions represents that availability of schools is relatively high in most of the districts but there is a dearth of higher educational institutions. To determine the actual availability of institutions, an analysis of age-wise population with the levels of institutions becomes pertinent, which is examined in the following section through the institution-population ratio.

Table 4
Access to Educational Institutions in Himachal Pradesh

District	Total Population	Area in sq. km.	Educational Institutions Schools + HEI	Population served by each school	Population served by each HEI	Area served by each educational institution (sq. km.)
Bilaspur	3,82,056	1,167	1,028+(11)*	372	34,732	1.1
Chamba	5,18,844	6,528	1,748+(17)*	297	30,520	3.7
Hamirpur	4,54,293	1,118	990+(29)*	459	15,665	1.1
Kangra	15,07,223	5,739	3,137+(56)*	480	26,915	1.8
Kinnaur	84,298	6,401	313+(3)*	269	28,099	20.3
Kullu	4,37,474	5,503	1,179+(9)*	371	48,608	4.6
Lahaul and Spiti	31,528	13,833	284+(2)*	111	15,764	48.4
Mandi	9,99,518	3,951	2,836+(35)*	352	28,558	1.4

Shimla	8,13,384	5,131	2,676+(34)*	304	23,923	1.9
Sirmaur	5,30,164	2,825	1,575+(18)*	337	29,454	1.8
Solan	5,76,670	1,936	1,293+(27)*	446	21,358	1.5
Una	5,21,057	1,549	912+(24)*	571	21,711	1.7
Himachal Pradesh	68,56,509	55,673	17,971+(265)*	382	25,874	3.1
All India	1,02,86,10,328	32,87,240	15,16,892	678	NA	2.2**

*Figures in parenthesis represent Higher Educational Institutions (HEI);

**Only for Schools

Source: UDISE data for 2013–14; Census 2011 for population data; Himachal Pradesh Government website for Technical Education, 2013; Statistical Outline of Himachal Pradesh 2013–14.

Institution–Population Ratio

The institution–population ratio (IPR) gives the availability, defined earlier as the physical existence of educational institutions in accordance to the requisite strength of student population of a certain cohort. The indicator that is used in this context is the ratio of schools at a particular stage in relation to the population in the relevant age-group. This indicator manifests the education resource position in relation to educational demands and also the extent to which the provision of education facilities are being utilised (Sinha, 1988). The IPR in the study has been calculated using the number of schools at particular level to total students belonging to that required age-group. This factor reflects the availability of school facilities as per the actual requirement across various levels.

Table 5 shows IPR for the various levels of education across districts. The State's average shows that there is one school for every 57 students at the

primary level, which further declines to one school for every 163 students at the upper-primary level, and further to 234 students at the secondary and senior secondary levels. The ratio at the higher education level is one institution for every 2,730 persons in the age-group 18–25 years. These figures only reflect on the reach of our educational system and indicate a difficult scenario on accessibility for students, as the ratios decline as we move up the education level. Sparse spatial distribution can be inferred from the reduction in the number of institutions across levels, thereby indicating that many students are forced to move from one place to another to attend these educational institutions.

Primary and Upper Primary Schools: Table 5 shows the spatial variation in the availability of primary schools and population in the age-group 6–11 years within the districts. The districts of Una—one primary school for 95 students,

Table 5
Institution–Population Ratio in Himachal Pradesh

Districts	6–10 years population served by each Primary School	11–13 years population served by each Middle School	14–17 years population served by each Secondary and Senior Sec. School	18–25 years population served by each College*
Bilaspur	53	161	200	3,948
Chamba	48	134	249	5,106
Hamirpur	77	171	239	1,499
Kangra	75	203	260	3,190
Kinnaur	34	114	101	6,539
Kullu	51	199	303	9,003
Lahaul and Spiti	12	38	62	4,669
Mandi	51	148	222	2,580
Shimla	42	120	182	2,778
Sirmaur	52	160	250	2,971
Solan	67	192	280	1,599
Una	95	249	271	2,047
Himachal Pradesh	57	163	234	2,730

*College — *Statistical Outline of Himachal Pradesh 2013–14*

Source: Calculated using the UDISE data for 2013–14 and Population of Census 2011.

Hamirpur—one primary school for 77 students and Kangra—one primary school for 75 students, showed the lowest proportion of primary schools available, in relation to the population in this specific age-group. On the other hand, the sparsely populated district of Lahaul and Spiti had one primary school for 12 students followed by Kinnaur which had one school for every 34 students. The scenario with

regard to the districts was similar for the upper primary schools also. The School Population Ratio (SPR) was relatively low at both the primary and upper primary levels, representing a high level of access in almost all the districts of the state.

Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools: The SPR calculated for the secondary schools included the number of schools at this level and

population in the age-group 14–17 years. At this level, the accessibility to schools in Shimla district was good with one school available for 182 persons in the relevant age-group, this could mainly be due to it being the State capital, followed by the districts of Bilaspur and Hamirpur. On the contrary, the districts of Kullu (303 students/school) and Solan (280 students/school) had lower levels of access.

Higher Educational Institutions: This includes the number of higher educational institutions, such as degree colleges, Universities, engineering colleges, polytechnics, etc., available in a district in relation to the total population in the age-group of 18–25 years. The highest availability of colleges is for Hamirpur, Solan and Una districts. The lowest availability of higher educational institutions is in Kullu and Kinnaur districts with just one higher educational institution available for 9,003 and 6,539 students, respectively. Overall, the SPR too shows a tapering end with the availability declining as one progresses from one level of education to the other.

ENROLMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Participation in an educational system is a reflection of the reach of educational facilities that the government has provided for its people. The participation rates, therefore, denote the effectiveness and importance of education to the people

and society at large. This section tries to analyse the levels of educational participation at various levels of education in Himachal Pradesh. Although there are various measures of educational participation, the Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) has been used here, mainly due to data constraints.

Gross Enrolment Ratio at School Level

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school-year. Table 6 presents the GER from Class I to Class XII for the districts in Himachal Pradesh for the year 2013–14. At the State level, the GER for School education is 100.08 per cent, whereas it is 100.16 per cent for girls and 100.00 per cent for boys. According to Table 6, the district of Solan has the highest total GER (109.87 per cent), followed by Shimla (105.25 per cent) and Una (101.18 per cent). The lowest level of total GER is recorded in the far-flung and remote districts of Lahaul and Spiti (83.04 per cent) and Chamba (95.18 per cent), Mandi (95.50 per cent).

While comparing the GER for boys and girls separately, the highest GER for girls is recorded in Solan (107.69 per cent), Shimla (105.67 per cent) and Hamirpur (102.12 per cent); whereas for boys, the highest

Table 6
Gross Enrolment Ratio at the School Level

Classes I–XII			
District	Boys	Girls	Total
Bilaspur	99.89	100.91	100.37
Chamba	96.61	93.67	95.18
Hamirpur	102.12	102.12	102.12
Kangra	97.70	98.87	98.24
Kinnaur	96.07	98.2	97.14
Kullu	99.60	101.22	100.39
Lahaul and Spiti	78.74	87.39	83.04
Mandi	94.64	96.43	95.5
Shimla	104.86	105.67	105.25
Sirmaur	99.36	99.54	99.45
Solan	111.80	107.69	109.87
Una	101.35	100.98	101.18
Himachal Pradesh	100	100.16	100.08

Source: UDISE 2013–14.

GER is recorded in Solan (111.80 per cent), Shimla (104.86 per cent) and Hamirpur (102.12 per cent). The noticeable fact here is that out of the 12 districts in the State, the GER for girls is more than the GER of boys in as many as eight districts, which include Bilaspur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahaul and Spiti, Mandi, Shimla and Sirmaur. The enrolment has increased manifold over the years in the State with the post-elementary enrolment showing a phenomenal increase primarily due to the government interventions through schemes such as SSA and

RMSA which are intended to improve the participation and quality of education and minimise wastage.

Enrolment in Private Schools

The given statistics clearly highlight the impressive progress made by the State as far as enrolment into the schooling system is concerned in the past few years. One of the emerging trends that can be observed as far as the school enrolment is concerned is the rapid increase in enrolment in schools under private management in contradistinction to a decline in enrolment in schools run by the

government. This change in trend could be a cause of concern, as the success of schooling revolution can be mainly attributed to the efficiently run government schools of Himachal Pradesh. This reversal in school participation is also visible across all districts in both rural and urban areas.

The mushrooming of private schools is visible in many pockets of India and numerous studies suggest that many of these schools are of poor quality and this phenomenon seems to have engulfed Himachal Pradesh also. The State government in a study conducted to identify the issues of declining enrolment in government schools has cited low-quality government schools with lower levels of basic amenities and facilities, compared to its private counterparts. Other factors

include the age of admission, which is three years for private schools compared to six years for government schools. Although the government runs Balwadis which is the counterpart to the pre-primary level, these Balwadis fall under the ambit of the Directorate of Women and Child Development, as a part of the ICDS programme, therefore the study puts their coordination as one of the main issues. Rise in income and living standards, along with declining fertility rates are some of the causes identified in the report for rising private school participation.

Taking the DISE and UDISE data for the two periods 2002–03 and 2014–15 at the elementary level, it is evident that the private enrolment share has increased significantly. The share of enrolment in private schools

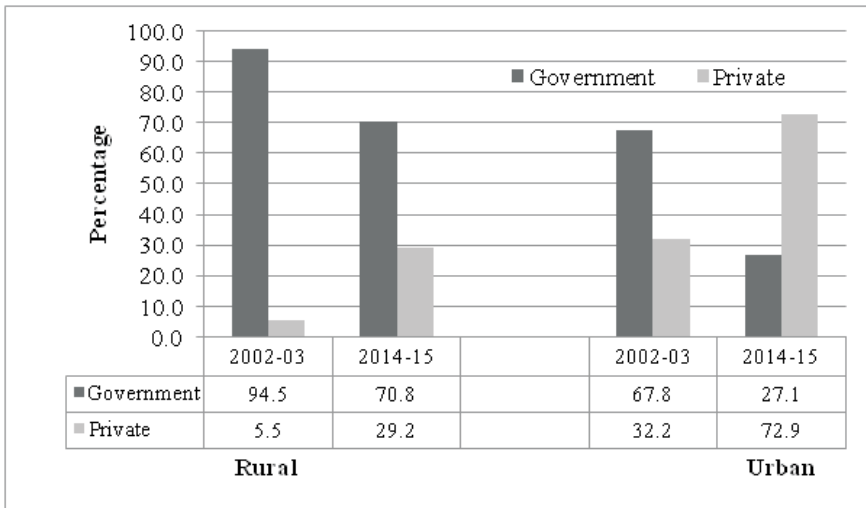


Figure 3. Percentage Share of Enrolment in Elementary Schools — Himachal Pradesh
 Source: DISE 2002–03 and UDISE, 2014–15.

was as low as 7.06 per cent in 2002–03 to the total enrolment, which rose to 37.39 per cent in 2014–15. On the contrary, the share of government schools drastically declined from 92.94 per cent in 2002–03 to 62.61 per cent in 2014–15. The share of enrolment in urban areas exhibits a phenomenal increase in a span of 12 years. The DISE data (Figure 3) for the elementary level clearly shows that the share in private school enrolment has increased from 32.17 per cent in 2002–03 to 72.94 per cent in 2014–15 in urban areas. On the contrary, there is a divergent trend with falling government school enrolment with only 27.06 per cent to the total share in 2014–15 as compared to a 67.83 per cent in 2002–02 in urban areas. The trend was also similar in rural areas as the share of enrolment in privately managed schools increased from 5.54 per cent to 29.23 per cent for the same periods.

Looking at the distribution of enrolment at the district level given in Table 7, it is apparent that the enrolment in schools managed by the

private sector have increased across all the districts. The percentage change between the two time periods has been relatively higher in the districts that have a higher share of urban population, as compared to those with a higher share of rural population. Kangra registered over 50 per cent of the total enrolment in private schools, whereas the figure stood at only 10 per cent in 2002–03. Likewise, the district of Hamirpur, which is considered to be an education hub, also saw a similar trend with almost 50 per cent of the total enrolment in the private schools. The predominantly rural districts of Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti and Sirmaur also demonstrated a sharp decline in enrolment in government schools. The highest decline was visible in the district of Kinnaur, followed by Sirmaur and Lahaul and Spiti.

Private school enrolment in Himachal Pradesh, akin to the trend observed in several other States, shows higher enrolment of boys as compared to girls in all the districts.

Table 7
District-wise Percentage Share of Enrolment in Elementary Schools

District	2002–03		2014–15	
	Government	Private	Government	Private
Bilaspur	93.30	6.70	85.71	14.29
Chamba	95.27	4.73	62.46	37.54
Hamirpur	89.67	10.33	50.24	49.76
Kangra	89.25	10.75	47.75	52.25

Kinnaur	98.03	1.97	69.47	30.53
Kullu	91.23	8.77	69.42	30.58
Lahaul and Spiti	95.14	4.86	74.62	25.38
Mandi	92.95	7.05	68.42	31.58
Shimla	98.01	1.99	61.33	38.67
Sirmaur	98.25	1.75	73.52	26.48
Solan	90.69	9.31	58.78	41.22
Una	92.64	7.36	60.27	39.73
Himachal Pradesh	92.94	7.06	62.61	37.39

Source: DISE 2002-03 and UDISE 2014-15.

This difference shows an increasing trend over the years, and also the gender gap in participation in enrolment is wider at the lower levels, mainly an outcome of mushrooming of private schools at the primary level across the State. Taking the DISE data for percentage share of enrolment from Classes I to XII for the year 2014-15, Figure 4 clearly shows the wide gender gap that exists

in enrolment. The districts with lower sex ratios, such as Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur and Sirmaur exhibited a higher proportion of female enrolment in government schools, as compared to the male students.

An important feature that emerges from the facts just discussed is the increase in private enrolment combined with a decline in government school enrolment, also a

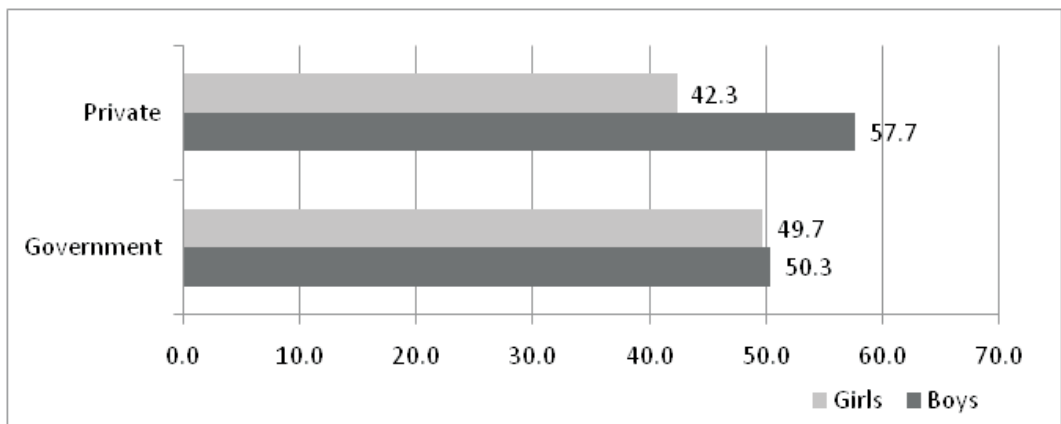


Figure 4. Gender-wise Percentage Share of Enrolments in Schools — Himachal Pradesh
Source: UDISE 2014-15.

wide gender gap in the participation with higher male enrolment within the private school. This is a serious cause of concern as it dilutes the efforts made by the government and also has implications for the overall development. Deeper focus needs to be given to this changing scenario especially when a lot of emphasis is being given to improve the access and facilities in schools run by the government; fresh initiatives and efforts need to be taken by the government to deal with these issues. Although the State government has taken initiatives, such as introducing English from Class I, opening model government schools to stimulate enrolment, but these steps need to be pursued with great vigour. Since there is demand for private schooling, the quality of the same can be enhanced through government partnership, which may resolve multiple issues provided it is planned, managed and executed in the most desired manner keeping in view the local context and demand.

Enrolment in Higher Education

One of the biggest challenges of researching higher education is the paucity of data. Scarcity of data comes as an even bigger challenge when we look at participation levels, mainly because wide variety of courses for various streams of technical, professional and general education are offered by diverse institutions. Therefore, an attempt has been made in this section to examine

the participation levels in higher education using the baseline data recently collected by Directorate of Higher Education, Himachal Pradesh Government for Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), under the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the State Higher Education Plan, 2014–15. Looking at Table 8, it is evident that the number of those enrolled in different courses at the higher education level has increased manifold in the recent past and the number of participants has more than doubled in a span of eight years. An interesting observation that can be made from Table 8 is that the number of females enrolled in higher educational institutions is relatively higher than the males—there were 54 per cent females enrolled as compared to 46 per cent males.

Gross Enrolment Ratio at Higher Education Level

The gross enrolment ratio for higher education in Himachal Pradesh was 24.4 per cent in 2011–12, which is slightly higher than the national average of 20.8 per cent. Looking at the district-wise GER, most of the districts are below this average. The highest GER is observed for Shimla district (43.4 per cent) and this can be primarily attributed to a greater concentration of higher education institutions in the State capital of Shimla as compared to other districts and also the presence of the State University. The other districts

Table 8
Number of Students Enrolled in Higher Educational Institutions in Himachal Pradesh

Year	Total Enrolment	Male	Female
2006–07	95,663	47.53	52.47
2007–08	95,900	47.44	52.56
2008–09	1,09,425	47.15	52.85
2009–10	1,55,891	49.71	50.29
2010–11	1,81,310	52.90	47.49
2011–12	1,92,847	50.30	49.70
2012–13	1,81,052	48.80	51.19
2013–14	1,90,934	46.01	53.99

Source: Himachal Pradesh State Higher Education Plan–RUSA, 2014–15.

with higher GER are Una, Hamirpur and Solan—these districts also have a larger concentration of higher education institutions. The lowest GER is recorded in Lahaul and Spiti (1.6 per cent), Kinnaur (5.1 per cent) and Chamba (7.8 per cent) districts, which are also the most backward and far-flung districts of the State. The districts of Kullu, Sirmaur, Bilaspur, Kangra and Mandi have GER below the state-level average. These low levels of enrolment rates represent that a large proportion of those who graduate from the schooling system do not enroll themselves into higher education, and those who do mainly move towards urban areas where there exists a concentration of educational facilities, like Shimla, Solan and Hamirpur. The gap in participation

at the school and higher education levels raises some very pertinent issues of why students discontinue. Issues pertaining to access, low learning outcomes and other social factors are common causes which need to be investigated.

Undergraduate Courses

Table 9 summarises the course-wise break-up of students in the undergraduate courses across various disciplines for 2012–13. It can be noted that among all the disciplines, the number of students pursuing Arts as their undergraduate course is much higher than those pursuing Science or Commerce. Veterinary Science and Agriculture had the lowest number of students enrolled. One significant trend that can be noted in the course-wise break-

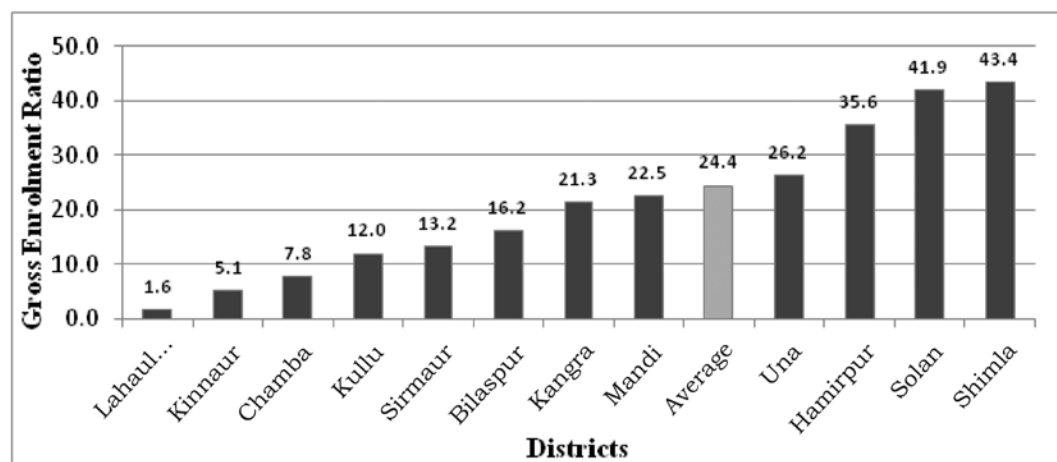


Figure 5. Higher Education Gross Enrolment Ratio–Himachal Pradesh, 2011–12

Source: Himachal Pradesh State Higher Education Plan–RUSA, 2014–15.

Table 9

Students Enrolled in Undergraduate Courses in Himachal Pradesh, 2012–13

Faculty/Discipline	Total Enrolment		
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total
Arts	37.74	62.26	50,725
Science	40.89	59.11	22,124
Commerce	53.62	46.38	18,395
Management	61.01	38.99	2,724
Agriculture	39.71	60.29	685
Medicine and Allied Health Science	23.47	76.53	10,449
Engineering/Architecture/Technology	78.67	21.33	36,232
Law	62.42	37.58	2,102
Veterinary Science	51.49	48.51	235
Others	35.84	64.16	14,156
Total	49.07	50.93	1,57,827

Source: Himachal Pradesh State Higher Education Plan — RUSA, 2014–15.

up for undergraduate courses is that the number of female students is higher than the male students. Table 9 also shows the percentage-wise break-up for girls and boys for different courses. It can be noted that while Arts, Science, Agriculture and Medicine are the favourite options for girls, the popular courses for boys are Commerce, Management, Engineering and Veterinary Science.

Postgraduate Courses

A similar trend can be observed in postgraduate courses wherein a higher proportion of students opt for Arts discipline, as compared to other subjects. A similar trend of more

females being enrolled than males is visible at the postgraduate level. Veterinary Science and Law had lower enrolment as compared to Arts, Commerce, Sciences and Management in the period 2012-13. The number of females opting Commerce and Law at postgraduation level is more than the males, which shows a reversal of the trend for undergraduate courses.

CONCLUSION

The distribution of educational institutions is largely based on the population size of an area, which further has a huge bearing with the physical setting. Himachal Pradesh with such a setting has

Table 10
Students Enrolled in Postgraduate Courses in Himachal Pradesh, 2012-13

Faculty/Discipline	Total Enrolment		
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total
Arts	43.25	56.75	6,028
Science	32.57	67.43	3,061
Commerce	30.69	69.31	3,193
Management	55.79	44.21	2,287
Agriculture	50.18	49.82	279
Medicine and Allied Health Science	53.13	46.88	640
Engineering/Architecture/Technology	68.83	31.17	770
Law	28.38	71.62	74
Veterinary Science	58.33	41.67	36
Others	49.30	50.70	1,710
Total	42.90	57.10	18,078

Source: Himachal Pradesh State Higher Education Plan — RUSA, 2014-15.

shown a tremendous growth in the availability of educational institutions over the last few decades. In spite of this growth, there are some pockets that face shortage of institutions, especially after the elementary level. The availability of higher and technical educational institutions is the lowest and this makes accessibility more difficult for students as school graduation rates have increased. Participation across all levels has increased in totality, but the backward and far-flung districts of Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur and Chamba show lower levels of participation, which is the lowest for higher education level.

Problems of access to schools seem to have been met with, but the challenge of quality seems to plug the system, evident in the low learning outcomes of children in assessment studies. The role of the rising private sector needs to be tapped so that the benefits of different management can be maximised for the students coming from different socio-economic backgrounds. The government schooling system needs to be made more accountable and all stakeholders including teachers, administrators, policymakers, community and parents need to take active responsibilities.

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Pre-service Teacher Education Rethinking the Engagement with Schools in the Two-year B.Ed. Programme

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Abstract

This paper is a reflective piece on enhancing the pre-service teachers' engagement with schools, which, it is argued, will help them arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the school system while developing connections between theory and practice. It is proposed that this requires the pre-service teacher education institutions to re-envision the school observation and school internship programmes spread over two years of the B.Ed. curriculum in order to ensure that teachers entering the school system are ready for the myriad demands they are likely to face in schools.

INTRODUCTION

The teacher education programme is currently in the process of transformation. The two-year B.Ed. curriculum forwarded by National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) is designed with the objective of grooming teachers as reflective practitioners, premised on the hope that these

teachers will be instrumental in leading quality enhancement at the school level. The school' is central to this scheme of things—both as the final sphere of transaction for the pre-service teachers once they have successfully completed the B.Ed. programme, and more significantly because the engagement with schools ought to form the

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basis of understanding that the pre-service teachers acquire as part of the B.Ed. curriculum. Therefore, it is imperative that the interface with schools, as part of the two-year B.Ed. programme is optimised. The switch from one-year B.Ed. programme to a two-year mode calls for re-envisioning the B.Ed. curriculum including the interface with schools. The two-year window offers enough scope for utilising this interface for theory building, while establishing the much-needed connect between theory and practice. This paper is an endeavour to examine the need for modification and suggest possible processes that can help in sending out teachers who are better geared to engage with the challenges of the contemporary education system.

EXPECTATIONS FROM IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

Teachers are called upon to access a variety of knowledge in the various roles that they assume at school. As teachers are responsible for negotiating the discipline-based understanding with their learners, they need the content knowledge from the discipline of their choice, the knowledge related to the pedagogy of the disciplinary areas to arrive at the appropriate method of engaging the learners with each new topic/theme being transacted, knowledge of the principles of psychology to address motivational/reinforcement issues, along with factoring in individual differences. An understanding and

application of this knowledge would optimise the learning environment in the class. Along with this, teachers need to access knowledge pertaining to philosophical basis of education to negotiate the working of the school curriculum, relevance of the methods adopted, nature of discipline being negotiated, and its implications for the pedagogic choices being made. Teachers while transacting in a classroom need to constantly engage with the sociological underpinnings and implications of contexts in order to situate the learners in their respective contexts while striving to make them more equitable and neutral as individuals. Further, the teacher needs to situate the processes related to school education in a larger socio-historical context in order to identify the actual goals that need to be met.

This tall order is made even more complex by the multiple roles that the teacher is called upon to assume—this includes the roles of the subject expert, a facilitator of knowledge construction for each learner present in the class, a role model, who is human, yet comes across as an ‘ideal’, a guide, a counsellor, a surrogate parent who would look out for each learner as an individual, analyse their strengths and weaknesses and help them facilitate the process of self-actualisation in the best possible manner, to the best of their individual abilities. All these roles call upon the teacher to access knowledge pertaining to a variety of disciplines,

and need to be undertaken within the ambit of the school system—a system which is constant, and yet fluid.

The 'constant' aspects of the school system are those, which are a part and parcel of every school (i.e., constant across schools)—principal, department heads, timetable in charge, administrative staff, parents, co-curricular activities and other such processes that are synonymous with the school system. The aspects which add fluidity to this are usually related to the nature and type of organisation, the school philosophy, the larger goals that define its working, the work ethics being followed and reinforced, the processes being adopted and fostered, the nature of such processes, the working styles of the individuals at the helm along with the organisational ethos that has emerged and is being nurtured.

Teacher education institutions have their task cut out as teacher preparation almost calls for a magic wand that would bring about this almost magical transformation in those seeking to become teachers.

SCOPE OF ROLE PREPAREDNESS IN THE TWO-YEAR B.ED. PROGRAMME

The first year of the two-year B.Ed. programme engages the pre-service teachers with a range of foundation courses *viz.* Education in Contemporary India, Human Development, Diversity and Learning, Conceptual Foundations of Education, Gender, School and Society, and Knowledge, Disciplines and School Subjects, along with

detailed pedagogy courses. Therefore, theoretical preparedness in terms of what must be 'known' to a teacher before entering the classroom is a definite possibility.

However, the readiness of teachers to utilise this knowledge instantly in the class is dependent on the connections they are able to draw between theory and practice, along with the internalisation of the concepts learnt. Therefore, mere familiarity with the educational implications of theories and concepts may only be the first step in acquiring the much-needed efficacy as a teacher. The above discussion calls for devising means to ensure that the pre-service teachers develop a nuanced understanding of the variegated school contexts and juxtapose theory-based learning with this. Though most teacher educators refer to the context when negotiating theory, it misses the target audience, who seem to view it, at best, from the lens of their own personal experience. This gap could possibly be bridged through a careful negotiation of the interface with schools.

It is expected that the in-service teachers would need to develop an insight into the functioning of 'school as a system' in order to function effectively. For this, one cannot rely only on the pre-service teachers' own experiential reality as a learner during the school years. It is surprising that the organisational aspect of schools does not find a mention in the NCTE curriculum framework for the two-year

B.Ed.—especially in terms of course work and scheme of examinations, thereby indicating that the school-based intervention (observation and internship) perforce must lead to an understanding of the school system, as it would be extremely difficult to function as a teacher without this understanding. In the light of this, it is imperative that the interface with schools is structured and undertaken in a manner to facilitate a nuanced understanding of the school system.

As per the NCTE curriculum framework, the pre-service teachers are to engage in—

- School observation programme for a period of at least four weeks in the first year.
- School experience programme for a period of 16 weeks, where the pre-service teachers need to visit the schools for four days each week and engage in different school activities, including teaching.

It follows then, that this component spread over two years needs to provide enough scope to the pre-service teachers to derive an understanding of the school system, which at one level is constant and yet incorporates variations/modifications in different set-ups. This interface with schools can prove to be the bedrock of the pre-service teachers' entry into the field of education and it needs to be undertaken in a cohesive and comprehensive manner so as to feed into the process of theory-building/theorisation as well as the praxis thereof. This paper posits that

there is a need for scheduling the school observation and the school experience programmes with the objective of qualitatively improving and maximising the output for the pre-service teachers while weaving in components of the foundational and pedagogic aspects of the two-year B.Ed. curriculum. It is contended that this experience would facilitate a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the school system along with a conscious effort to recognise and pragmatically analyse the various roles that teachers are called upon to play.

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE SCHOOL OBSERVATION PROGRAMME

It is my contention, in the light of the above discussion, that the school observation programme, to be undertaken in the first year of B.Ed. as outlined by NCTE may be organised in two parts. The first segment comprising four to six days could essentially engage the pre-service teachers in comprehending the school as a system. This could gradually lead to their engagement with interactions within the realm of the school (comprehending the tiers within the school/nature of leadership and possible means of exercising authority; ways of disseminating information, home-school continuum and other such aspects of a school) and finally, the pre-service teachers need to engage with the transactions within the classroom and their implications.

As mentioned earlier, teachers are called upon to access knowledge from different realms at any given point, therefore it is imperative that the school observation programme guides the pre-service teachers in drawing the needed connections. This may be undertaken by getting them to initially observe classes guided by either open-ended questions or checklists that orient them to nuances of the discipline being studied by them. The observations based on these are likely to precipitate discussions in classes and lead pre-service teachers to the theoretical concepts being undertaken. The second part of this can be negotiated during the staggered/deferred part of the school observation programme, where the pre-service teachers assimilate the reality in the light of the principles/concepts that have already been negotiated in the class.

This can be achieved through thoughtful planning and execution of the school observation and internship programme. A few considered suggestions follow.

- Teacher education institutions usually orient the pre-service teachers on the anvil of the school observation programme and then leave them to their own or the school's resources to negotiate their understanding of the school system. The practice of leaving pre-service teachers to observe on their own needs to give way to juxtaposition of guided observation with the process

of critical reflection in order to facilitate their understanding of the school system. An illustrative example of the pre-service teachers' understanding regarding the functioning of the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) body of a school is given here.

If left to their own devices, only a fraction of the pre-service teachers are likely to arrive at this nuanced understanding on their own. Therefore, a shared understanding among teacher educators needs to be arrived at about the constant components of the school system; a study of the variation of these will yield an understanding of the fluidity inherent in the system.

- Pre-service teachers can be asked to draw the general profile of learners coming to the two schools from a sociological perspective. This can be drawn on the basis of an observation schedule, along with structured/unstructured interviews of the learners from different classes. This could be honed to develop an understanding of the issues faced by the school learners on an everyday basis, and could be further utilised in the teacher education classrooms to develop a perspective on the multiplicity of learner profiles of urban Indian school learners. An insight into their day-to-day travails could yield information on efficacy of current policies, schemes, epistemological and pedagogic assumptions and a range of such issues.

Respondent: _____
 Schools you have been to _____

Given below are certain aspects of the Parent Teacher Association of a school. Answer the following based on your interactions with the school coordinator, teachers and students with respect to the two schools you visit as part of the school observation programme.

1. Is the PTA body nominated or elected?
2. What is the composition of the PTA body?
3. How frequently does it meet?
4. What spheres of school does it have a bearing on?
5. Scope of interface with:
 - The school management
 - School teachers
 - School children
 - Other parents
6. What role does it play?
7. How does it function?
8. How is it different from the PTA body of the school that you studied in?
9. How is it different from the other school visited by you as part of the school observation programme?

- Detailed discussions and focussed interviews of teachers could lead them to comprehend the diversity of each school context, as also the possible processes adopted by teachers to address these. This could pave the way to a critical understanding of the school system.
- Pre-service teachers can be asked to observe the conduct of teachers *vis-à-vis* the different groups represented in the class—boys, girls, EWS (economically weaker section), learners from different socio-cultural groups and so on—and observe exactly what are the underlying messages being given and how do these affect the personality of individual learners. These observations can become the take-off point for the discussions when negotiating gender, socialisation and allied

phenomena and even individual differences.

- In order to understand boys and girls as learners, the pre-service teachers could be given a set of open-ended questions, the answers to which would facilitate an understanding of the gender differences and the attitude of significant others when responding to everyday issues. This may also facilitate an understanding of the possible role played by the school in reinforcing/neutralising views regarding stereotypes.
- In order to help them appreciate the differences in the nature of disciplines, checklists could be developed, the responses to which would also help them arrive at the appropriateness of the pedagogic choices made.
- Usually the peer observation schedules engage the learners with relatively surface-level observations, without focusing on the underlying assumptions behind the choice of pedagogy and the nature of the discipline. It is imperative that these, along with other intricacies, are aspects that get the attention of the pre-service teachers.

Therefore, the school observation programme can be used to initiate reflection as well as to consolidate debates initiated in the class. This would ensure internalisation of concepts on the basis of

critical observations. Unstructured observation towards the beginning of the course may leave their vision blinkered to perceive beyond the limitations of their own context and experiences.

This first phase of guided observation ought to prepare them for the prevalent discourses on education, which may lead to several questions, some of which may be negotiated in different classes, while some may require a more concerted effort once they come back to school, in the shape of projects—integrated or otherwise. A few sample projects could be:

- Based on your observation of the practices in the two schools that you were a part of, what understanding have you been able to develop *vis-à-vis* issues related to equity/work education as being taken up in the schools. What suggestions would you give in order to improve the situation?
- Observing and interacting with school learners and teachers to identify barriers to inclusion in all respects; suggesting ways to improve the situation.
- Develop a profile of girls as learners based on your observations and interactions with them. Try to identify if there is a difference in the profiles of girl learners studying in single gender and co-educational schools.
- Based on your understanding of NCF–2005, identify processes

and practices adopted by schools that were informed by the recommendations of the NCF. How effectively are these being practiced?

- What were the underlying assumptions in the grammar plans observed by you? Discuss on the basis of the ESL (English as a Second Language) theory negotiated by you.
- List your observations regarding the teaching of English as practiced in the two schools you went to. What suggestions would you give to each one in order to optimise language learning? Cite reasons situated in ESL theory for each of your suggestions.
- Develop a detailed profile of an ideal teacher on the basis of the theory negotiated by you. Critically analyse through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of your personality, exactly what modifications do you need to effect in order to be effective in the current scenario.

A glance at these sample projects indicates that an engagement with these would enhance the understanding, giving greater scope for internalisation and integration of concepts. At times, such projects and even guided observation may give rise to a sense of dissonance between reality as it should be and as it is, thereby egging the pre-service teachers to find solutions to such issues. At other times, it may

lead to insights that strengthen the negotiated concepts. This would yield greater scope for critical reflection of processes and phenomena within a theory-based frame of reference.

RECONCEPTUALISING THE SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The school observation programme leads to the school internship programme in the second year, which is of a duration of 16 weeks approximately, where the pre-service teacher has the scope of engaging with all the aforementioned roles that teachers often are called upon to flow into almost indeterminately. This needs to be conceptualised afresh, with a re-negotiation of the role of the school as well as that of the pre-service teacher. For this, there needs to be a closer liaison with schools that are a part of the internship programme, with greater sense of trust and a much more responsible attitude on part of the pre-service teacher. The previous understanding of engagement of the pre-service teacher functioning in limited capacities needs to give way to a much more dedicated and involved engagement, where their role calls upon for much more than the negotiation of discipline-based knowledge through adoption of the 'right' pedagogic means. They can be attached to at least one subject teacher and a coordinator in order to comprehend and practice the intricate roles. The current status of the pre-service teachers is that of

an interloper who is being tolerated because of the compulsions of the B.Ed. curriculum. At times, the regular subject teachers renegotiate even the concepts transacted by them. The pre-service teachers need to be given more holistic roles and be held accountable for the processes they are mediating. They need to arrive at a critical understanding of the multiple roles that each teacher is performing; beginning with the responsibilities of a class teacher of preparing learners for competitions to organising events in the school, to sharing the conflicts that teachers are often faced with when trying to modify learner attitudes and so on. At the same time, they need to engage with the intricacies involved in engaging with learners as a group/class and engaging with them at an individual level, without rocking the boat. They must be given a taste of interacting with the parents in order to get a nuanced understanding of their future roles as teachers. This could be facilitated by being attached to a specific teacher so that the pre-service teachers are able to identify the multiple roles associated with each individual functioning as a teacher. This experience, on the part of the pre-service teachers, needs to be further augmented by their association with the school counsellor, examination incharge, resource room coordinator and activities/sports coordinators to help them arrive at a more complete picture of school as an organisation and the possible roles they can be

called upon to assume. In fact, they ought to feel as significant a part of the school as the regular teacher is.

Examining closely the responsibilities of subject teachers, one realises that effective teaching incorporates the completion of the learning cycle, which would comprise pedagogic planning in the light of the complexity of the subject matter and the status of their learners' understanding *vis-à-vis* the subject, facilitating an understanding of the concept, providing enough scope to learners for internalisation and application of the concept, assessing through multiple means the extent of their knowledge, identifying learning gaps, building bridges in order to help them arrive at a fuller understanding and integrating that segment of knowledge with other concepts and disciplines. It is this completeness of experience that all pre-service teachers must engage with. This process is likely to bring to the fore their own limitations—pedagogic and otherwise. This, when viewed through the prism of reflection, would take them in the direction of self-improvement.

The pre-service teachers' perception of their role may be further reinforced through the creation of a portfolio of their own as teachers, which includes a record of all that they have been called upon to do, their perceptions of the assumed roles along with a critical self-assessment of these. There could be segments where they come up with suggestions

for the self and a record of efforts made by them in this regard. This could lead to the pre-service teachers becoming more responsible and accountable.

CONCLUSION

Modifying our perspective to view pre-service teacher education programmes in sync with the demands posed on the in-service teachers can lead to the evolution of teachers who are prepared for the multiple roles that the contemporary school education system seeks of them. One way of achieving this could be developing the pre-service teachers' comprehension of school as a system through

juxtaposing guided observation and critical reflection during the school observation programme. A thoughtfully organised intervention with the schools can pave the way for improved connections between theory and practice. Therefore, this component of the two-year B.Ed. programme can prove to be the bedrock of experiences, resulting in maximising the learning that pre-service teachers accrue and can go a long way in transforming them into sensitive and reflective professionals, who are the future hope of a country that needs to harness the human resource optimally.

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Teacher Education in the North-eastern Region of India

An Evaluation

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Abstract

In this descriptive research study, an attempt has been made to investigate into the organisation of secondary teacher education programmes w.r.t. physical facilities, admission and selection procedures, curricular and co-curricular activities, methods and aids used, practice teaching, research facilities, finance, innovative practices, core staff, evaluation procedure and overall assessment of the programme in the North-eastern region of the country. This follows identifying the difficulties faced while organising such programmes and at the end, suggestions have been given for the qualitative improvement of the secondary teacher education programmes in this region.

INTRODUCTION

North-east India refers to the easternmost region of India consisting of seven sister states (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura), Sikkim, and parts of North Bengal (districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri

and Koch Bihar). North-east India is ethnically distinct from the rest of India and has strong ethnic and cultural ties with East Asia and South-east Asia. Linguistically, the region is distinguished by predominance of Tibeto-Burman languages. The States are officially recognised under

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North Eastern Council constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for the development of the eight states. The North Eastern Development Finance Corporation was incorporated on 9 August 1995 and the Ministry of Development of North-eastern Region was set up in September 2001. The Siliguri Corridor in West Bengal, with an average width of 21 km to 40 km, connects the North-eastern region with the mainland Indian sub-continent.

The region shares more than 4,500 kilometers of international border (about 90 per cent of its entire border area) with China (South Tibet), in the north, Myanmar in the east, Bangladesh in the south-west, and Bhutan to the north-west. During British colonial period in India, north-east India was ruled as a part of the Bengal Province. After the Indian Independence from British rule in 1947, the north-eastern region of British India consisted of Assam, and the princely states of Manipur and Tripura. Subsequently, Nagaland in 1963, Meghalaya in 1972, Arunachal Pradesh in 1975 and Mizoram in 1987 were formed out of Assam. Manipur and Tripura remained as Union Territories of India from 1956 until 1972 when they attained full-fledged statehood. Sikkim was integrated as the eighth north-eastern Council State in 2002. The city of Shillong acted as the capital of the Assam province created during the British rule. It remained as the capital of undivided Assam until the formation of the State of Meghalaya in 1972.

In 1947, the first teacher training institute of its own kind was established in Arunachal Pradesh at Sadiya. It was called Buniyadi Shiksha Bhawan. It was to prepare teachers taking into account the needs and problems of the tribal pupils at primary and upper primary schools of the territory. Its curriculum was need-based in nature. The first batch of ten trained teachers was produced in August 1948. In 1952, this teacher training institute was shifted to Marghereta and finally it was taken and located at Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh. However, there was no teacher education programme for secondary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh till 1987. In 1988, the Department of Education was created in Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) at Rono Hills Campus with one professor, two readers and four lecturers. The B.Ed. programme was launched in the same year with an intake capacity of 20, out of which 16 candidates were deputed by the State government for the B.Ed. course and four candidates were fresh graduates. There is only one college for teacher education that is the Department of Education in Rajiv Gandhi University and ten private colleges in Arunachal Pradesh with an intake capacity of 100 students each affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University. The course duration is one year with a semester system in place. It is true that, there is a need

to improve the infrastructure of these training institutions and to look for qualitative teacher education. Hence, serious efforts are to be made for the qualitative improvements of teacher education programmes in the State.

Unlike other parts of India, educational expansion in the context of teacher education could not be started earlier in Assam. It was the Christian missionaries who were pioneers in establishment of a few primary teacher training schools in the State as early as 1888–89. To provide training to the teachers of the State, the then government established a few normal schools in the early part of the 20th century. The duration of these in-service normal schools' course was three years and policy was such that teachers were appointed after completion of the training in normal schools. The provision for providing training to then in-service teachers teaching in secondary level of school education was imparted at St. Edmund's College in Shillong which was later on shifted to St. Mary's College. In the post-Independence Assam as per the Basic Education Act of 1954, a number of Basic Training Centers were established through the State to train in-service teachers teaching in primary schools. Pre-service training along with in-service training for middle school teachers was introduced in the State in the already established normal schools. But it was discontinued in 1970s because of problem related to

jobs for such trained teachers. Upon realising the need for providing pre-service teacher education and also to clear the backlog of untrained teachers, the Government of Assam re-introduced the pre-service teacher training of two years' duration, for elementary level school teachers in the year 2000 in 15 DIETs (District Institutes of Education and Training). However, this course was discontinued from 2001 onwards. Since then no fresh enrolment in this course has been made. For training of secondary level teachers, Guwahati University and the Government of Assam established B.T. colleges under its direct management. At present, there are altogether 62 institutes of education, out of which 13 are government colleges of teacher education and two are university departments, and the rest are private colleges. To be able to face the challenges of the new millennium, the teacher education requires a new approach. The existing teacher training institutions in the State has yet a lot to do for themselves in order to articulate innovations in terms of approach, pedagogy for qualitative improvement of school education so that they can respond to the various demands of the student community.

As early as in 1906, the need for training the teachers was felt in Manipur. During that time, the Department of Education organised a training course for teachers for the improvement of methods of teaching which was of four months' duration.

Twenty primary school teachers attended the course. This was the beginning of teacher education in Manipur. Imparting training to secondary school teachers began in the year 1928. Training of secondary school teachers was done by opening a BT section in the DM College in 1959. The BT course was intended for graduate teachers and certificate in teaching course was for the undergraduate teachers. The secondary teacher education programmes, at present are provided by eight privately managed colleges of teacher education, two government colleges and one university department. In order to develop professionalism among teacher trainees, the duration of B.Ed. training programme may be extended to two academic sessions.

In Meghalaya, the first ever secondary teacher education institute was established in 1997 at Tura (Rongkhon). At present, there are six institutes providing teacher education programme at the secondary level, out of which, one is a government college, one is a university department, and the rest four are private colleges. All these institutes have an intake capacity of 100 student-teachers each. Although there has been a steady expansion of these institutes, yet their quality remains to be ascertained, as no in-depth empirical studies have been carried out on the organisation of secondary teacher education in the State.

In Mizoram, there are three government secondary teacher education institutions, out of which one is affiliated to Mizoram University, one is affiliated to North-eastern Hill University and the third to the Central Institute of Hindi with their intake capacity as 100, 150 and 50, respectively. The overall scenario of teacher education at the secondary level in this State is neither quantitatively nor qualitatively encouraging. This, in fact calls for an in-depth analysis of the organisation of teacher education for secondary school teachers.

Nagaland is the 16th State of Indian Union with its first school established in 1878. Most of the students of this school later became teachers. The Nagaland College of Teacher Education, being the first of its kind, was established in 1975 by the State government in Kohima. In 1995, Salt Christian College, Dimapur, started its Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) course, followed by Bosco College of Teacher Education, Dimapur in 2003. These two are private institutions. The Indira Gandhi National Open University began offering B.Ed. course in 2002 and Certificate course in Primary Education in 2005. In fact, the number and types of teacher education have risen in recent times to eight. But, there is still no M.Ed. course in the State. The government institutes have the most number of teacher educators with B.Ed. and Ph.D. qualifications as compared to other

six privately managed institutes. The number of B.Ed. trainees in all eight institutes ranges from 76 to 100 student trainees in a class. Most of the institutes are understaffed with only five teacher educators.

The first ever teacher training institute was established at Temi, South District of Sikkim in 1955. There are two private training institutions for training of teachers for secondary schools. Loyola College of Education, Namchi and Harka Maya College of Education, Tadong. These colleges are affiliated to North Bengal University, Siliguri. At present, the college's one-year B.Ed. course has an intake capacity of 100. During 2009 a Sikkim Government B.Ed. college, affiliated to Sikkim University has been established. In fact, teacher education in Sikkim is relatively of recent origin.

There are eight secondary teacher education institutes in Tripura. An Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, one college of teacher education and Tripura University, managed by the government, have an intake capacity of 150, 100 and 50, respectively. Similarly, three private colleges, namely Bhavan's Tripura College of Teacher Education, Bhavan's Tripura Teacher Training College and Holy Cross College have an intake of 100, 100 and 50, respectively. The intake capacity of rest two institutes of secondary teacher education, namely constituent unit of ICFAI University and Deemed University is 100 and 50, respectively.

The teacher education programmes at the secondary level in the north-eastern States of India completed 19 years. But, unfortunately, for the reasons difficult to list, no in-depth research on the organisation and management of teacher education programmes in these institutions has been undertaken to find out the quality and relevance of the programmes. Therefore, there is a need for fresh look in the light of emerging concerns of quality education and contemporary issues.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

A well-organised and systematic teacher education programme is essential for the efficiency and the promotion of any profession, but it is much more important for educational workers because of the unique and strategic position which education occupies in the task of human and national development. The strength of any nation depends upon the quality and amount of education of its people. According to the Education Commission (1964-66), "upon schools largely depends the nurturing of the nation's human resources. Hence, these institutions should be very effective. The most vitally significant elements in the education institutions are the teachers of children. It is they who influence by their conduct and example, the thought and behaviour of every child. It is they who develop and man the curriculum. The quality of teachers therefore is a matter of

the deepest social concern.” This indicates that the training of teachers is a very important task because on the quality of teachers we have today, will depend the quality of our next generation. To equip the teacher to discharge his duties effectively, he is to be provided with a well-rounded training programme. The place and importance of both pre-service and in-service education merit special attention in such programmes. Pre-service education serves to provide an insight into the profession including general psychological, sociological and philosophical principles concerning education, whereas in-service education enables the teachers to reinforce their faith in these principles, after applying them in practice. Pre-service education helps the teacher to begin to teach and in-service education provides opportunities to grow up in the profession.

Pre-service education seeks to produce a person ready to launch on a teaching career. It deals mainly with fundamentals and basic professional skills. The education of teachers does not end with graduation from teacher training institutions. Education is a continuous process. It is essential to find ways and means to provide facilities and an environment in which the teachers will find new significance and new understanding and wherein they will develop new insights into their work and programme. The creation of such an environment conducive to professional growth is in-service

education at its best. Pre-service education, however rich in quality and enough in quantity it may be, can never be a substitute for continuous in-service education programme. In the north-eastern region of India one finds a variety of teacher education institutions, such as government, private, university departments and affiliated colleges located mostly in hilly and backward areas with poor road connectivity. These institutions offer both pre-service and in-service training programmes to secondary school teachers. As regards trained teachers, the situation in the north-eastern region is very depressing. At the primary stage, it varies from 19 per cent to 38 per cent. Likewise, at the middle, high and higher secondary stages, the situation is quite alarming. The present study has attempted to make an in-depth analysis of the organisation pattern of secondary teacher education programmes in this region and has opened a new horizon in an area neglected so far and has helped to remove the bottleneck that comes in the way; improve the quality of teacher education and help modernise this very vital but neglected sector of education.

THE PROBLEM, ITS SCOPE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The provision of secondary education programme for secondary teachers in most of the north-eastern States is very meagre, if not negligible. The development programmes of teacher

training and research in secondary teacher training institutions demand serious attention from educational administrators in this region. Keeping in view the picture of the present teacher training programme in this region and the urgent needs of the secondary teachers, the study attempts to find out the organisational patterns and the working procedures at the teacher training institutions so as to find out answers to the following questions.

- i. What are the aims and objectives at the secondary teacher education programmes in the north-eastern region?
- ii. What is the curriculum for secondary teacher education programme?
- iii. What are the facilities available for organising teacher education programmes at different levels?
- iv. What is the nature of staff responsible for organising teacher education programmes?
- v. What methods are generally used during the training programme?
- vi. How are candidates selected for the training programmes?
- vii. What are the procedures adopted to plan the programme?
- viii. What specific measures are generally taken during the organisation of the training programmes to get maximum benefit from them?
- ix. How is the programme evaluated?
- x. What is the place of research in secondary teacher education?
- xi. How are the training programmes at different States financed?
- xii. What are the difficulties faced in organising training programmes?
- xiii. What can be the implications of the findings of this study to improve the secondary teacher education programmes in this region?
- xiv. What are the overall assessments of the programmes?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the objectives of the secondary teacher education programme.
2. To study the organisation of the secondary teacher education programme with respect to:
 - i. Physical facilities
 - ii. Admission and selection procedure
 - iii. Curricular and co-curricular activities
 - iv. Methods and aids used
 - v. Practice teaching
 - vi. Measures adopted for undertaking research
 - vii. Financial aspect
 - viii. Innovative practices adopted
 - ix. Nature of the core staff
 - x. Evaluation procedure, and
 - xi. Overall assessment of the programme.

3. To study the difficulties faced in organising the programme.
4. To draw implications for the improvement of secondary teacher education programmes in the north-eastern region.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

(a) Method: The Descriptive Method was employed to study the organisational patterns and procedure of secondary teacher education programme in the north-eastern region of the country.

(b) Coverage and Sample: At present, there are 112 secondary teacher education institutions in this region. Of these, there are 62 institutions in Assam and 11, 6, 8, 8, 11 and 3 each in Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim, respectively. However, at the time of undertaking this study, there were 59 secondary teacher education institutions in this region. Of these, 40, 5, 4, 2, 3, 2, 2 and 1 are in Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim, respectively. A list of these institutions was obtained from the NCTE, Regional Office and 10 per cent of the institutions from Assam and 50 per cent each from Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram were selected randomly, and as there was only one secondary teacher education

institution in Sikkim, the same was included in the sample. Thus, a total number of 15 secondary teacher education institutions were finally selected for the study.

(c) Tools: Keeping in view the intensive nature of the study, reliance could not be laid on single technique. Varieties of techniques were used as tools in gathering data and information to realise the objectives of the study. A description of the techniques which were used in the study are given below.

- i. *Documentary Analysis:* Documents, such as departmental publications, reports of the conferences and seminars, annual reports and periodicals, were consulted for obtaining necessary background for preparing the questionnaire, conducting the interview and for attending conferences.
- ii. *Questionnaire:* This technique was developed and used to collect pertinent data which could be gathered by other methods. The data gathered through the questionnaire was utilised as the basis for the interview.
- iii. *Interview:* This technique was mainly used for two purposes.
 - (a) To clarify the replies in the questionnaire.
 - (b) To gather the data which called for opinion and judgements to the extent of success of the secondary

teacher education programme, the major hurdles in the successful running of the programmes and suggestions to improve them.

(d) Statistical Techniques: Mostly, frequencies, percentages and rank were computed to analyse data and interpret the results.

(e) Procedure of Data Collection: In order to collect data, a list of total number of teachers including heads and principals working in university departments, government and private colleges were procured from the 15 heads and principals of the selected institutions. After establishing a rapport and explaining the purpose of the study in detail, the organisation of secondary teacher education programme questionnaire was administered on the heads, principals and teacher educators working in the selected institutions. Only regular teachers with at least a Master's degree in their respective disciplines with a B.Ed. degree were interviewed. In order to validate the responses provided by heads, principals and teacher educators, the investigator cross-questioned and interviewed the respondents and examined the official documents pertaining to the organisation of the programme. At the time of data collection, the investigator observed classroom teaching, demonstration lessons,

microteaching sessions, practice teaching and work experience. However, the questionnaire was mailed to those heads, principals and teacher educators who could not be contacted during the second field visit. After having collected the required data, the responses were tabulated systematically for analysis.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This section presents analysis of data and their interpretations as per the objectives of the study, as given below.

Duration of the B.Ed. Programme

An inquiry into the present duration of B.Ed. programme, at the time of data collection, reveals that all the secondary teacher education institutions in the north-eastern region follow one-year training programme (Das, 2012). As shown in Table 1, 50 respondents observe that the present duration is adequate whereas 41.38 per cent believe that the duration is inadequate and 8.62 per cent did not respond. Those who believe that the present duration is inadequate, say that it should be for a duration of two years. In respect to total number of working days in a year, it is found that there is no uniform working days among the selected institutions, as it varies from 150 working days to 277 working days. Apart from these, 34.48 per cent,

Table 1
Showing the Duration and Organisation of Teacher Education Programme
N=58

		No (%)	Yes (%)	No Response (%)
1.	Is the present duration adequate?	50	41.38	8.6
2.	Does your institution organise training for teachers of cooperating schools?			
	i. Content enrichment	34.38	-	-
	ii. Methodology of teaching	62.07	-	-
	iii. Classroom management	41.38	-	-
	iv. Use of teaching aids	63.79	-	-
3.	Criteria of Admission			
	i. Eligibility	25.86	-	-
	ii. Admission test	38.46	-	-
	iii. Interview	69.23	-	-
	iv. Merit in qualifying examination	76.92	-	-
	v. Reservation	69.23	-	-

Source: ICSSR Project, B.C. Das, 2012.

62.07 per cent, 41.38 per cent and 63.79 per cent respondents state that their institutions organise content enrichment, methodology of teaching, classroom management and use of teaching aids, respectively, for teachers of cooperating schools. Further, this section also tries to identify the admission criteria followed by these institutions. Around 25.86 per cent, 38.46 per cent, 69.23 per cent, 76.92 per cent and 69.23 per cent follow eligibility, admission test, interview merit in the qualifying examination and reservation, respectively, as criteria for admission in their respective institutions. At the end, various problems related to organisation

of secondary teacher education programmes, as perceived by the respondents have been identified.

Problems related to Organisation and Management

The respondents report that, pay cut, irregular increment, poor socio-economic conditions, financial problem, teaching-learning material hardly provided by the institutions, transportation problem, lack of technology-based classroom, inadequate human and material resources, lack of proper coordination among the staff and the authority, inadequate staff, non-availability of schools for teaching practice, lack of opportunities leading to Ph.D.

work, no permanent principal, post of professors lying vacant, unprofessional attitude of local teachers, insufficient number of library books, non-availability of qualified teachers/staff, shortage of classrooms and absence of language laboratory are major problems related to organisation and management.

Curriculum and Co-Curricular Activities

The mark distribution for curricular and co-curricular activities as revealed by the respondents are as follows.

For theory papers, 7.69 per cent said that total is 800 marks, 30.77 per cent said that total mark is 700, 7.69 per cent responded that the total mark is 640, 23.08 per cent said the total is 600 and 30.77 per cent responded that the total is 100. The respondents assigned 30.77 per cent to practical works with total marks of 200, 46.15 per cent out of 100, 7.69 per cent out of 50 whereas 15.38 per cent remained silent. Similarly, the respondents assigned 15.38 per cent out of 300 to practice teaching/internship, 7.69 per cent out of 250, 23.08 per cent out of 200, 23.08 per cent 100, 7.69 per cent out of 80, 7.69 per cent out of 40, whereas 15.38 per cent remained silent. Theory papers constitute the following.

(a) Core Papers

(i) Philosophical and sociological foundation in education, (ii) Psychological foundation of education, (iii) Issues and problems of secondary education, (iv) General methods,

school organisation and school hygiene, (v) Educational psychology, (vi) Two method subjects and (vii) One optional paper (EMM/SO/SH).

(b) Optional Paper

(i) Mental hygiene and child guidance, (ii) Educational and mental measurement, (iii) School organisation and school hygiene and (iv) School organisation and management.

(c) Teaching Subjects

(i) Contents and methods of teaching english, (ii) Contents and methods of teaching geography, (iii) Contents and methods of teaching history, (iv) Contents and methods of teaching assamese, (v) Contents and methods of teaching mathematics, (vi) Contents and methods of teaching social studies, (vii) Contents and methods of teaching life science and (viii) Contents and methods of teaching science.

(d) Other Specialisation

(i) Computer education and (ii) Environmental education

With regard to distribution of marks, in the internal theory paper, 8.62 per cent of the respondents said 100 marks weightage, 1.72 per cent said 75, 20.69 per cent said 25, 34.48 per cent said 20, 5.17 per cent said 10, and 29.31 per cent remained silent. In the external theory paper, 1.72 per cent of the respondents said 100 weightage, 5.17 per cent said 90, 34.48 per cent said 80, 51.72 per cent said 75 and 6.70 per cent of the respondents remained silent. In the theory paper, regarding pass percentage, 17.24 per cent said 50, 48.28 per cent said 40, 17.24 per

cent said 35, 8.62 per cent said 26 and 8.62 per cent remained silent. In practical work, internal in percentage, 5.17 per cent 100, 13.79 per cent said 40, 25.86 per cent said 25, 10.34 per cent said 20, 10.34 per cent said 10, and 34.48 per cent remained silent. In practical work, external in percentage, 6.70 per cent said 90, 3.45 per cent said 80, 1.72 per cent said 40 and 87.73 per cent of the respondents remained silent. In practical work, regarding pass percentage, 1.72 per cent of the respondents said 50, 1.72 per cent said 45, 46.55 per cent said 40 and 3.45 per cent said 35 and 46.55 per cent of the respondents remained silent. In internship internal in percentage, 1.72 per cent of the respondents said 80 and 8.62 per cent said 50 and 1.72 per cent said 25 and 3.45 per cent said 20 and 84.48 per cent remained silent. In internship external in percentage, 5.17 per cent said 80, 8.62 per cent said 50, 1.72 per cent said 20 and 84.48 per cent remained silent. In internship pass percentage, 5.17 per cent said 50, 1.72 per cent said 45, 6.90 per cent said 40, 6.90 per cent said 35, whereas 79.31 per cent remained silent.

With respect to co-curricular activities, 70.69 per cent the staff of the selected institutions reported in favour of drama and cultural activities, 82.76 per cent said sports and games, 79.31 per cent said debate and other literary activities, 6.90 per cent said other extension activities and local areas field trip to important landmarks of the cities. In response to another question pertaining to co-curricular activities, the respondents were asked: how are co-curricular activities organised? It was found that 72.41 per cent of the respondents said pupil teachers are divided into different houses, whereas 36.21 per cent said that pupil teachers have their associations. In order to ascertain whether teachers teaching at secondary teacher education institutions participate in curriculum development renewal programme, a question was asked to them. Around 72.41 per cent of the respondents said yes, teachers participate, 12.07 per cent said No, and 15.52 per cent of them remained silent. It is encouraging to see that a majority of teachers participate in curriculum development renewal programmes. Faculty members were

Table 2
Distribution of Marks for Internal and External Examination

	B.Ed. Course	Internal	External	Pass Percentage
i.	Theory	8.62	1.72	17.24
ii.	Practical Works	5.17	6.70	1.72
iii.	Internship	1.72	5.17	5.17

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

asked a question as to how do they integrate the education of the disabled students. In response to this question, 8.62 per cent said through outreach programme, 8.62 per cent through college admissions, 3.45 per cent of the respondents said through special care/class, 1.72 per cent said through teachers appointed for disabled students, 5.17 per cent said through special individual attention, 5.17 per cent said in an inclusive manner, 3.45 per cent said combined class/extra activities, 1.72 per cent said co-curricular activities/demonstration, 1.72 per cent said admission through reservation and other consideration, 1.72 per cent said sensitive to the feelings and needs of the disabled students and 33 per cent of the respondents remained silent.

In order to know when was the syllabus of the secondary teacher education institutions in north-eastern region revised, a question to this effect was asked to the teachers. The study reveals that, five respondents said that the syllabus was last revised in 1992, one respondent said in 2003, four

respondents said in the year 2004, two respondents said in 2006, five respondents said in 2007, five respondents said in 2009, eight respondents said in 2010, one respondent said in 2011 and 27 of them remained silent. It appears that, in a few secondary teacher education institutions, the syllabus has not been revised for a pretty long time, whereas in case of others, the same has been revised recently.

Physical Facilities

In order to study the physical facilities of teacher education institutions, it is encouraging to observe that, 100 per cent of the respondents involved in this study said that they have adequate classrooms, whereas 82.76 per cent said they have staffroom/cubicles, 17.24 per cent have music room, 27.59 per cent have craft room(s), 63.79 per cent have teaching lab, 79.31 per cent have laboratories, 84.48 per cent have principal's office, 50 per cent have students' common room, 75.86 per cent have bathroom, 82.76 per cent have boys bathroom, 81.03 per cent have girls bathroom, 79.31 per cent have male

Table 3
Showing the Organisation of various Co-curricular Activities

	Activities	%
i.	Drama and Cultural Activities	70.69
ii.	Sports and Games	80.76
iii.	Debate and other Literary Activities	79.31
iv.	Any other	6.90

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

staff bathroom, 72.41 per cent have female staff bathroom, 43.10 per cent have assembly hall, 82.76 per cent have playground, 10.34 per cent have gymnasium, 72.41 per cent have computer room, 60.34 per cent have hostel and 31.03 per cent have staff quarter. The results of analysis show that, almost all the teacher education institutions in this region have adequate physical facilities for running teacher education programmes.

With regard to the use of educational technology, it has been found that, teacher education institutions in this region use a variety of electronic gadgets in transacting curriculum. Although a variety of technological aids are used, the number of institutions which make use of the same are found to be very

few. For example, Over Head Projector is used by 10 per cent institutions, Liquid Crystal Display (7%), Films (7%), Internet (3.45%), Conferencing (1.72%), printed material (1.72%), use of teaching aids (1.72%), PowerPoint presentation (12.07%), White board (5.7%), Loudspeaker (1.72%), Educational video (10.34%) and EDUSAT (1.72%).

In order to find out the total number of books and journals available in various teacher education institutions, as less as two (3%) out of 58 respondents say that they have 20,000 books in their library and as many as 10 (17%) respondents say that they have 4,000 books in their library. Similarly, 9 (16%), 9 (16%), 8 (14%), 4 (7%), 4 (7%), 9 (16%), and 3 (5%) respondents say that they have 2,000, 5,000, 325, 10,000, 8,000,

Table 4
Percentage of Use of Educational Technology

Items	%
OHP	10
LCD	07
Films	3.45
Internet/Computer	12.07
Mobile technology	1.72
Printed materials	1.72
Use of teaching aids	1.72
PowerPoint presentation	12.07
Whiteboard	5.07
Loudspeaker for lecture	1.72
Educational Video	10.34
EDUSAT	1.72

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012)

400 and 14,000 books, respectively, in their library. It appears that almost five institutions out of the 13 selected in the sample have less than 500 books in their libraries, which is a matter of serious concern. As regard professional/educational journals, it is found that, the minimum journals available in secondary teacher education institutions is five, whereas the maximum number is 24. This means that till today, majority of secondary teacher education institutions in this region are not adequately equipped with professional/educational journals.

Mode of Transaction

It is evident from Table 5 that, 91.35 per cent, 58.62 per cent, 84.48 per cent, 43.10 per cent of teachers teaching in these institutions make use of lectures, interactions, discussions/seminars, and computers in curriculum transaction. No teachers make use of CCTV and psychological or geographical apparatus in transacting curriculum.

After identifying the methods and aids used by the teachers in transacting curriculum, a question was asked to the respondents regarding the weightage given to each of the method and aid used. The study shows that 25.86 per cent, 22.41 per cent, 20.60 per cent, 6.90 per cent and 20 per cent weightage is given to lecture, classroom interactions, discussion/seminar, use of computer and project method, respectively. It is clear from the analysis that the secondary teacher education institutions across north-east region assign highest priority to the lecture method followed by classroom interactions and give least priority to the use of computer in their classrooms.

Practice Teaching or Internship

Practice teaching or internship are important components of teacher education programmes at the secondary level. In order to carry out such practice, teacher education institutions need practicing schools. In order to find out what types

Table 5
Methods, Aids and Interaction in Curriculum Transaction and Weightage

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Weightage
Lecture	53	91.35	25.86
Classroom interaction	34	58.62	22.41
Discussion	49	84.48	20.6
Computer	25	43.10	6.90
CCTV	0	0	0

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

of schools are available for such purpose, the investigator asked the respondents as to what types of schools are available for practice teaching and internship. The results show that, 8.62 per cent, 84.48 per cent, 79.31 per cent, 58.62 per cent and 15.52 per cent respondents say that own demonstration schools, government schools, private schools, aided schools, and a combination of all these are, respectively, available for practice teaching or internship. It is not encouraging to observe that majority of secondary teacher education institutions in this region do not have their own demonstration schools for the purpose of practice teaching or internship. In respect to a question as to how many teaching subjects a student has to offer, 27.58 per cent, 51.72 per cent and 20.69 per cent respondents state 20, 15 and 30 lessons, respectively. It

appears that majority of respondents (51.72 per cent) state that a student has to deliver 15 lessons in each subject. With regard to the duration of teaching practice or internship, the responses varied from institution to institution.

Research Activities

With regard to research activities undertaken by the secondary teacher education institutions, it is found that 44.83 per cent teachers are of the opinion that they have the provision of research activities in their institutions, whereas 41.38 per cent state that they do not have such provision and 13.79 per cent remain silent on this matter. It is unfortunate to observe that, research has not yet been considered as an important component of teacher education programme by many secondary teacher education institutions.

Table 6
Details of Organisational Practice Teaching

Types of School, Practice Teaching, No. of Lesson, Duration of Practice Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Own demonstration schools	5	8.62
Government schools	49	84.48
Private schools	46	79.31
Aided schools	34	58.62
A combination of all the above	9	15.52
Teaching subject (Any 2 out of 11)	58	100
No. of lessons to deliver (15–30)	30–12	51.72–20.69
Duration of practice teaching (15–50)	4–1	6.90–1.72

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

Institutions having provisions of research activities, 27.59 per cent teachers teaching there state that 16 projects have already been completed by them, 18 are ongoing, 10 students have already been awarded Ph.D. degree, it shows that although the quantum of research activities is very low, yet there is a trend of research activities among them in the right perspective.

In response to promoting research activities, measures, such as competition, reward and incentives are being encouraged among teachers. Encouraging action research with incentives, teachers are being encouraged to go for further study and research work, cooperation from authorities for higher studies with financial support and case studies are being undertaken, and study leave is granted to teachers for undertaking research activities.

Finance

There are three major breaks up with respect to fee charged. Tuition fee, Library fee, Donation and Capitation

or Development charges. All the three categories of fee charged by the institutions vary with little deviation in the sense that some of them have the same fee structure. The minimum tuition fee charged is ₹100 only, whereas the maximum is ₹6,000 as reported by the teachers. Similarly, the libraries fee vary from ₹25 to ₹1,000 and capitation or development charge vary from ₹500 to maximum ₹40,000. It appears that the amount of fee charged annually by teacher education institutions in this region greatly vary from one institution to another. However, it is good to observe that at least 24.14 per cent of teachers state that although they charge some amount of fee from the students, yet they provide fee concession to their students. But it is not encouraging to see that 34.48 per cent respondents state that they do not provide any such concession to students and it is equally discouraging to note that a majority of them (41/38 per cent) do not respond either.

With respect to annual budget of the institutions, most of the teachers

Table 7
Status of Research Activities

Research Activities	Yes (Number)	F (%)	No (Number)	F (%)
Is there any Provision of Research Projects	26	44.83	24	41.38
Project completed	16	27.59	-	-
Project undergoing	18	31.03	-	-
Ph.D. Degree Awarded	10	17.24	-	-

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

Table 8
Tuition Fee Concession for Students

Tuition Fee Concession	F	%
Yes	14	24.14
No	20	34.48
No response	24	41.38

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012 (B.C. Das, 2012).

including principals/heads refused to give the relevant data. However, on repeated request, data from few teachers of the institutions across north-east reveal that the annual budget pertaining to salary, pension benefits and other heads vary from institution to institution. For example, the highest annual budget of one institution during 2009–10 with regard to salary was stated to be ₹1,00,00,000, whereas the lowest being ₹1,66,000. Similarly, many institutions do not have the provision of pensioning benefits, whereas only IASE, Agartala has the provision of ₹10,00,000 as pensioning benefits. Moreover, only three institutions out of 13 selected in the study do have annual budget other than salary and pensioning benefits approximately 5 lakhs, 10 lakhs and 13.55 lakhs. Thus, it is not encouraging to observe that most of the institutions in this region do not provide pensioning and other benefits to their teachers which is a matter of great concern. Four criteria corresponding to the sources of revenue/income were placed before the teachers. It was found that 50 per cent respondents state that their

major source of income/revenue is fee collected from the students, 41.38 per cent state that it is government grants, and 22.41 per cent and 3.45 per cent mention that the source is donations and endowments, respectively. It appears that, the major source of income/revenue of teacher education institutions even today is the fee collected from students followed by grants received from the government.

With respect to developmental grants received by the institutions, the study reveals that merely 20.69 per cent teachers state that they received developmental grants in the last three years, whereas 43.10 per cent say No and 36 per cent remain silent on the matter. It is evident that very few institutions received developmental grants, which is a matter of great worry, because in the absence of developmental grants many institutions might have difficulties in the process of development of infrastructure and related areas. Institutions which received developmental grants state that the grants received were used for the purpose of infrastructure

Table 9
Sources of Revenue/Income of the Institutions

Sources	F	%
Donations	29	50
Endowments	02	3.45
Government grants	24	41.38

Source: Report of the ICSSR Project, 2012.

development, purchase of library books, science and psychological equipment, computers and Xerox machines, furniture, teachers' salary, construction of boys' and girls' hostels, renovation of old college buildings, organising in-service education programmes and installation of EDUSAT.

Students' Welfare

In response to students' welfare, such as hostel facilities to the students, medical facilities and guiding pupil teachers for employment, 53.44 per cent teachers state that hostel facilities are provided to the students, whereas 29.31 per cent state that there is no such facilities in their institutions and 17.24 per cent remain silent in the matter. With respect to medical facilities, 32.76 per cent teachers state that there are medical facilities available to the students, whereas 43.10 per cent and 24.14 per cent observe that they do not have such facilities and the rest remain silent. However, with respect to guiding pupil teachers towards employment opportunities, study depicts that 53.45 per cent teachers opine that their institutions do

guide the pupil teachers for availing employment opportunities, whereas 22.41 per cent do not feel so and 24.14 per cent prefer to remain silent in the matter. Those institutions which guide their students for availing employment opportunities state that they do so through campus interview, establishing contact with students of other States, counselling classes on employment opportunities and organising career guidance and placement workshops.

Staff Development and Staff Welfare

The study shows that, all the institutions have got one sanctioned post of principal/head. Very few institutions, particularly, university departments and government colleges have sanctioned posts of professors and readers, which is not the case in private colleges. However, besides university departments/government colleges, private institutions, to a large extent do not have sanctioned posts of lecturers and senior lecturers. Besides science and art instructors, there are craft teachers, lab assistants, LDCs (Lower Division Clerks), and peons in these institutions. Besides the

regular staff, there is part-time staff under imposition to cater to various requirements of the institutions. Institutions, which do not have sanctioned strength attribute the reasons to lack of adequate funds, communication problems, particularly in rural areas, vacant posts not filled up by the government, no promotion of staff for a long time, post of principals lying vacant for a long time. It was further found that the availability of suitable staff for teaching vocational subjects, for teaching differently abled and students with special needs have been found to be inadequate.

With regard to teachers' qualifications, it was found that there are principals/heads in each institution with M.A./M.Sc./M.Ed. with B.Ed. degree. Most of them however lacked research degrees like Ph.D./M.Phil. Moreover, there are lecturers, readers, selection grade lecturers with B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees. Majority of teachers specialise in mathematics, home science, guidance and counselling, history and life sciences. It is encouraging to find that almost all the teachers including principals/heads as the case may be, both in school and teacher training institutions have adequate teaching experiences ranging from minimum four years to maximum 35 years. Thus, it is quite satisfactory that teachers working in selected institutions fulfill the norms of qualification as laid down by the statutory organisations like the NCTE.

Sometimes, due to inadequacy of funds available at the disposal of the private colleges, private institutions do not pay salaries to their staff at par with their counterparts in government colleges. However, professors, readers and lecturers working in government colleges and university departments are paid as per UGC norms, whereas lecturers working in private colleges are very poorly paid and there is no fixed salary as such. In most of the private colleges, lecturers are paid about ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 8,000 per month. It is unfortunate to observe that there are some institutions that do not send their teachers to attend seminars, workshops and conferences which are essential for the professional growth of the teachers. A corollary to this, many of the teachers have attended refreshers and/or orientation programmes organised by Academic Staff Colleges. However, it is encouraging to find that, as many as 64 per cent teachers state that they participated in the development of instructional material/teaching aids. In order to find out whether there is a provision to orient teachers on operation blackboard, minimum level of learning, and building relationship with the community, the study reveals that all the training institutions casually orient teachers on these three aspects and do not pay much importance to the same. Around 48.27 per cent, 22.14 per cent, 22.41 per cent, 31.03 per cent, and 10.34 per cent teachers state that they

have provisions for provident funds, house building advance, vehicle advance, medical reimbursement and leave travel concessions, respectively. It appears that the provisions of staff development and staff welfare among the institutions in this region are marginally available. Moreover, it is a matter of concern that more than 50 per cent teachers and administrative staff working in secondary teacher education institutions in this region are deprived of staff quarters. Most of the training institutions do not have alumni associations. A few institutions which have alumni associations organise seminars and are engaged in writing manuscripts. Around 56.90 per cent respondents state that teachers and heads/principals participate in programmes organised by participating schools, whereas 22.41 per cent do not feel so. It is somewhat encouraging to observe that teachers and heads of the institutions participate in academic programmes organised by participating schools at least once a year.

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation is an important aspect for determining the success or failure of a programme. In this regard, teachers, principals/heads of the respective institutions state that the mechanisms adopted by them to evaluate the course are—internal and external assessments, unit tests, class tests, oral tests, progressive tests and summative evaluation.

Difficulties and Drawbacks

In order to organise teacher education programmes at the secondary level, the institutions come across numerous problems, such as poor management, acute resource crunch, communication problems particularly in rural areas, lack of laboratory facilities, teaching-learning material, cooperation from the practicing schools, sufficient time, seriousness of the deputed teachers, hostel facilities, innovative teaching aids and casual attitude from the government. Similarly, the drawbacks involve lack of human resources, coordination, organisational set-up, inadequate time to complete the course, vacant posts not filled up, poor coordination between State Council of Educational Research and Training, Board of Secondary Education and College of Teacher Education.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Almost all the secondary teacher education institutions in north-eastern region have adequate physical facilities for running teacher education programmes. However, the number of institutions which make use of educational technology in the classroom is very less and only five institutions out of 13 have less than 500 books. Majority of them are not adequately equipped with professional journals. Most of the teachers use lecture method in curriculum transaction, whereas very few use interactions and

discussion approach in delivering the content to the students. No teachers make use of CCTV and computers in the classrooms. Majority of the institutions do not have their own demonstration schools for practice teaching. Half of the institutions state that a student-teacher delivers 15 lessons in each method subject. Almost all the institutions use microteaching as a viable mode of preparing student-teachers for practice teaching. Research has not been considered as an important component of teacher education programme by many institutions. The major source of income/revenue of teacher education institutions even today is the fee collected from the students. Unfortunately, a few institutions have not received developmental grants. The university departments and government colleges have sanctioned posts of professors and associate professors which is not the case with private colleges. In private colleges, no promotion of teachers from one scale to another is made and the post of principals is lying vacant in some institutions. Availability of suitable staff for teaching vocational subjects and for teaching students with special needs has been found to be inadequate. Most of the teachers teaching in these institutions lack research degrees, such as M.Phil. and Ph.D. No private colleges pay salary to its staff at par with the government institutions. It is unfortunate to observe that some institutions do not send their

teachers to attend professional development programmes. More than 50 per cent of the staff is deprived of staff quarters. However, it is encouraging to state that teachers and heads of the institutions participate in academic programmes organised by participating schools. Majority of the institutions state that the procedures adopted for evaluation are not innovative. Lack of human resources, finance, research and coordination among SCERT, CTE, and the NCTE in organising teacher education programme adversely affect the spread of innovation in teacher education institutions in this region.

Based on the above-mentioned findings of the study, it is recommended that, in order to assure quality in teacher education institutions in this region, both internal and external, the policies and practices of teacher education should be in accordance with the global standards and must be considered as the benchmark for all institutions and individuals working within teacher education. The teacher education policies should be undertaken simultaneously in various areas, such as physical infrastructure, human capital, policies towards faculties, administration and staff development, and intellectual policies for improving research and curriculum. Adequate, continuous and timely availability of physical, human and financial resources to these institutions would assure proper implementation of various

policies that are essential to achieve quality objectively. The educational curriculum needs to be devised so as to involve the cognitive, affective, spiritual, societal and psychological traits of the students and practicable in diverse pedagogical settings inside the class and the workplace. Quality in education heavily depends on the quality of the curriculum, its objectives and outcomes, contents and credits, material and assessment. Incorporating the theory and practice of career development, the teacher education curriculum should incorporate the national objectives while addressing the local and global needs. The changing trends within the subject domain should remain major influences affecting

the curriculum. Teachers should be encouraged to engage in their growth and development activities. Besides opportunities for further education and research engagements, both pre-service and in-service training could be arranged to work on professional development of faculty. Last but not the least, teacher education system should have open system thinking that will enable it to cope with emergent challenges and changes in educational leadership and management, subject domain, teaching and learning models and educational technologies. This would bridge the gap among national demands, academic policies, social and environmental needs and students' choice towards a specific career.

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Applying ADDIE Model to Evaluate Faculty Development Programme

ATUL BAMRARA*

Abstract

We exist in a technology era where everything is controlled via electronic devices and education is also highly impacted from ICT (information and communication technology) tools. The present study is an attempt to highlight the training need analysis approach and its applicability. Further, it focuses on the application of ICT tools to analyse the data patterns during training need. ADDIE approach has been chosen to explore the correlation between techniques/approaches of training need analysis and evaluation of training programme.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human right and since Independence, there have been various attempts at improving the status of education in India. The significance of education has been enshrined by the founding fathers in the Indian Constitution, and Article 45 of Indian Constitution states—

“The State shall endeavor to provide, within a period of ten years

from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years (MHRD, 2017).”

The Constitution of India provides various constitutional provisions with reference to education and equity under Articles 15, 16, 19, 25, 28, 29, 46, 146, 244, 330 and 335. In spite of these constitutional and legislative provisions, the outcome is not as

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healthy as it must be. The child is the focus of our whole education system and teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the child's ideology. The quality of education depends largely on the quality of its teachers, but this observation has not been expanded to the intention that quality teachers come out from the institutions where high-quality teacher educators exist. A significant contribution of teacher preparation in its development of teachers' aptitude to examine teaching from the learners' point of view brings diverse experiences and analogies to the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Although there are serious drawbacks in teacher preparation programmes either in-service or pre-service, formal teacher education persists to have low 'ecological validity', and emphasises tensions in the selection and technical expertise of DIET staff, and in their attitude towards basic teachers, that confine engagement with local contexts (Dyer et al., 2004). According to Anurag Behar, CEO, Azim Premji Foundation, there are four methods to improve our education system—

- In order to perform better, the faculties must be paid better, which will then lead to improvement (Ballou and Podgursky, 1997).
- Government should attempt to attract scholastic fraternity to become teachers. Coherent salary packages, high standard recruitment practices and

conditions to support professional satisfaction are some key areas which should be kept into consideration.

- There is no alternate of a good teacher and the capacities of teachers must be developed to perform better via high-quality teacher trainings.
- Professional development of existing workforce is a must to improve the education system.

The teachers who are more prepared for teaching are more confident and successful with students than those who have had little or none (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The research also indicates that the reforms in teacher training programmes (e.g., integrated/professional programmes) resulted into more effective teaching fraternity who wish to stay in this profession. The policies implemented by States regarding teacher training and professional development may create a significant difference in the qualifications and capacities that teachers bring to their profession (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Policy recommendations comprise the development and upgrading of teacher training programmes in India as well as other developing countries, along with thorough research into the demographic, structural and cultural framework for each programme and focusing on the advancement of teacher knowledge and aptitude in specific subject areas.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The ADDIE Model was first developed by Florida State University for in-service training of military personnel and was further extensively applied for other relevant areas. The most extensively used style for developing new training programmes is Instructional Design (ID). This approach offers a sequential system to evaluate the learners' requirements, the design and development of training objects, and the evaluation of the usefulness of the training programme (Kruse, 2002). Instructional designers believe that the use of systematic design procedures can make instruction more useful, well-organised and applicable than less precise approaches to planning instruction.

The system approach entails an analysis of how its constituents interrelate with each other and requires synchronisation of all activities. Nevertheless, a multiplicity of systematic ID processes (Dick, Carey and Carey, 2005, Kemp, Morrison and Roos, 1998, Ragan and Smith, 1999) have been illustrated, but all descriptions comprise the core components of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation (ADDIE) to ensure analogy among goals, strategies, evaluation as well as the efficacy of the resulting instruction (Gustafson and Branch, 2002). The ADDIE model is a practical and easy framework for ID. The process can be applied in a multiplicity of settings, because of its methodical and generic structure.

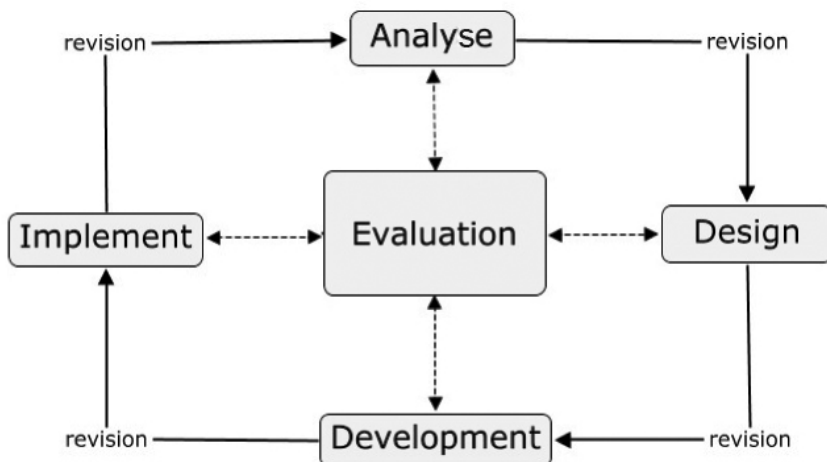


Figure 1. *ADDIE Model*

The structure provides trainers by recognising the trainee needs and applies this information to the design and development of the training programmes (Petersen, 2003).

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

The objectives of this research are to—

- explore the correlation between the various approaches of training need analysis and evaluation of training programmes;
- explain the relationship between the data analysis techniques and evaluation of training programmes and
- explore the ADDIE Model with the help of appropriate data sets.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Techniques of Training Need Analysis and Evaluation of the Training Programme

H₁: There is no significant relationship between Approaches of Training Need Analysis and Evaluation of the Training Programme

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

ADDIE Model has been used for the purpose of research. A questionnaire has been developed using the various components of ADDIE Model, *viz.*, Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation. Demographic profile of the respondents has been sought in the

form of their age, work experience, designation and qualification, which will further assist the study. Respondents were supposed to supply their views on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1—Strongly Agree (SA), 2—Agree (A), 3—Neutral (N), 4—Disagree (D) and 5—Strongly Disagree (SD). The collected data has been analysed using R Programming to explore the necessary statistic (Chi Square Value and Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation) to relate various variables identified in the study.

Sampling

For the sampling purpose, the faculty members of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in Uttarakhand have been selected randomly using Stratified Random Sampling Method, because it provides a better estimate of the whole and it results in more reliable and detailed information. DIETs¹ act as nodal agencies to provide academic development and literary support at district level to all the elementary level teachers and it is their prime responsibility to strengthen the teaching aptitude among teaching fraternity. There are 13 DIETs functioning in the State, Tehri, Gauchar, Ratura, Roorkee, Charigaon, Barkot, Dehradun, Almora, Didihat, Lohaghat, Bageshwar, Bhimtal and Rudrapur and there are approximately 215 faculty members working in various departments (In-service Programmes Field Interaction

¹DIETs act as lighthouse in the field of education, as stated by MHRD.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Designation	Lecturer	88	88
	Senior Lecturer	12	12
Highest Qualification	Masters with B.Ed.	42	42
	Masters with M.Ed.	42	42
	Ph.D.	16	16
Experience (in Years)	<10 Years	24	24
	11–20 Years	24	24
	21–30 Years	40	40
	>30 Years	12	12
Gender	Male	42	42
	Female	58	58
Age (in Years)	25–35	16	16
	36–45	47	47
	46–60	37	37

Innovation and Coordination, Pre-service Teacher Education, District Resource Unit, Planning and Management, Educational Technology, Work Experience, Curriculum Material Development and Evaluation, Administrative Branch, etc.) of the institute, so the calculated sample for the study becomes 100^2 . The information has been sought from the respondents either personally, or through e-mail or Google forms. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Data Analysis

It is quite evident from Table 2 that the Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_1 and E_1 is 0.004, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 8.456, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting Training Need Analysis using observation method and

² $n = \frac{z^2 - p - q}{e^2(N-1) + z^2 - p - q}$, where $p = 0.02$, $q = 0.98$, $N = 215$, $e = 0.02$, z value at 95% Confidence Level

Table 2
Cross-tabulation

I have conducted the TNA (Training Need Analysis) using Observation Method (A₁)	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	26.3%	57.9%	15.8%	–	–	$\chi^2 = 8.456$
	A	33.3%	41.7%	25.0%	–	–	
	N	11.1%	33.3%	55.6%	–	–	R = 0.004
	D	36.6%	36.7%	26.7%	–	–	
	SD	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%	–	–	df = 8
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	21.1%	21.1%	15.8%	42.1%	$\chi^2 = 25.3$
	A	8.3%	13.9%	25.0%	27.8%	25.0%	
	N	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	R = -0.11
	D	0.0%	23.3%	13.3%	50.0%	13.3%	
	SD	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%	33.3%	df = 16
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	10.5%	26.3%	26.3%	36.8%	$\chi^2 = 16.02$
	A	2.8%	2.8%	19.4%	38.9%	36.1%	
	N	0.0%	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	R = 0.016
	D	3.3%	13.3%	13.3%	26.7%	43.3%	
	SD	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	df = 16
	The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	31.6%	47.4%	21.1%	$\chi^2 = 5.78$
	A	–	–	47.2%	38.9%	13.9%	
	N	–	–	55.6%	44.4%	0.0%	R = -0.069
	D	–	–	50.0%	40.0%	10.0%	
	SD	–	–	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	df = 8

feedback collection from trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_1 and E_2 is -0.11 which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 16 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 25.3, whereas the tabulated value is 26.296. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using observation method and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_1 and E_3 is 0.016, which shows a positive correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 16 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 16.02, whereas the tabulated value is 26.296. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using observation method and post-training behaviour of trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_1 and E_4 is -0.069, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.78, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using observation method and improvement in teaching/learning.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_2 and E_1 is 0.151, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 0.151, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using interview method and feedback collection from trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_2 and E_2 is -0.09 which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 16 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 12.6, whereas the tabulated value is 26.296. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using interview method and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_2 and E_3 is -0.006, which shows a negative correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 16 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 10.91, whereas the tabulated value is 26.296. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using interview method and post-training behaviour of trainees.

Table 3
Cross-tabulation

I have conducted the TNA using Interview Method (A₂)	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%	–	–	$\chi^2 = 6.6$
	A	41.7%	41.7%	16.7%	–	–	
	N	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%	–	–	R = 0.151
	D	26.7%	41.7%	31.7%	–	–	
	SD	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	–	–	df = 8
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	42.9%	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	$\chi^2 = 12.6$
	A	4.2%	16.7%	12.5%	29.2%	37.5%	
	N	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	57.1%	28.6%	R = -0.09
	D	8.3%	18.3%	21.7%	31.7%	20.0%	
	SD	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	df = 16
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	$\chi^2 = 10.91$
	A	0.0%	12.5%	20.8%	20.8%	45.8%	
	N	0.0%	14.3%	28.6%	57.1%	0.0%	R = -0.006
	D	3.3%	6.7%	21.7%	28.3%	40.0%	
	SD	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	df = 16
	The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	42.9%	57.1%	0.0%	$\chi^2 = 7.8$
	A	–	–	37.5%	45.8%	16.7%	
	N	–	–	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%	R = 0.014
	D	–	–	45.0%	40.0%	15.0%	
	SD	–	–	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	df = 8

Table 4
Cross-tabulation

I have conducted the TNA using Discussion Method (A₃)	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	40.9%	36.4%	22.7%	–	–	$\chi^2 = 4.84$
	A	22.0%	41.5%	36.6%	–	–	
	N	37.8%	43.2%	18.9%	–	–	R = -0.039
	D	–	–	–	–	–	
	SD	–	–	–	–	–	df = 4
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	36.4%	13.6%	22.7%	27.3%	$\chi^2 = 15.16$
	A	12.2%	7.3%	17.1%	43.9%	19.5%	
	N	2.7%	21.6%	21.6%	24.3%	29.7%	R = 0.047
	D	–	–	–	–	–	
	SD	–	–	–	–	–	df = 8
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	0.0%	9.1%	31.8%	31.8%	27.3%	$\chi^2 = 14.33$
	A	2.4%	14.6%	26.8%	14.6%	41.5%	
	N	2.7%	2.7%	10.8%	45.9%	37.8%	R = 0.142
	D	–	–	–	–	–	
SD	–	–	–	–	–	df = 8	
The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)							
	SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics	
SA	–	–	40.9%	40.9%	18.2%	$\chi^2 = 4.42$	
A	–	–	51.2%	43.9%	4.9%		
N	–	–	37.8%	43.2%	18.9%	R = 0.051	
D	–	–	–	–	–		
SD	–	–	–	–	–	df = 4	

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_2 and E_4 is 0.014, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 7.8, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using interview method and improvement in teaching/learning.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_3 and E_1 is -0.039, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 4.84, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using discussion method and feedback collection from trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_3 and E_2 is 0.047, which shows a positive correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 15.16, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore, null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using discussion method and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_3 and E_3 is 0.142, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 14.33, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using discussion method and post-training behaviour of trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_3 and E_4 is 0.051, which shows a positive correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 4.42, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using discussion method and improvement in teaching/learning.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_4 and E_1 is 0.156, which shows a positive correlation (Table 5). The calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 4.09, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using questionnaire method and feedback collection from trainees.

Table 5
Cross-tabulation

I have conducted the TNA using Questionnaire Method (A₄)	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 4.09$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	37.0%	44.4%	18.5%	–	–	R = 0.156
	D	33.3%	46.7%	20.0%	–	–	
	SD	27.9%	34.9%	37.2%	–	–	df = 4
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 7.31$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	0.0%	22.2%	18.5%	22.2%	37.0%	R = -0.51
	D	10.0%	23.3%	16.7%	30.0%	20.0%	
	SD	7.0%	14.0%	18.6%	39.5%	20.9%	df = 8
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 5.73$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	0.0%	3.7%	18.5%	29.6%	48.1%	R = -0.098
	D	3.3%	13.3%	23.3%	36.7%	23.3%	
	SD	2.3%	9.3%	23.3%	25.6%	39.5%	df = 8
	The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 5.01$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	–	–	40.7%	51.9%	7.4%	R = 0.70
	D	–	–	46.7%	46.7%	6.7%	
	SD	–	–	44.2%	34.9%	20.9%	df = 4

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_4 and E_2 is -0.051, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 7.31, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using questionnaire method and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_4 and E_3 is -0.098, which shows a negative correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.73, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA using questionnaire method and post-training behaviour of trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_4 and E_4 is 0.070, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.01, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between conducting TNA

using questionnaire method and improvement in teaching/learning.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_5 and E_1 is -0.131, which shows a negative correlation (Table 6). The calculated value of χ^2 for 6 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.4, whereas the tabulated value is 12.592. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through MS Excel and feedback collection from trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_5 and E_2 is -0.109, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 12 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 4.66, whereas the tabulated value is 21.02. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through MS Excel and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_5 and E_3 is 0.049, which shows a positive correlation. Calculated value of χ^2 for 12 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 9.23, whereas the tabulated value is 21.026. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant

Table 6
Cross-tabulation

<p>I have analysed the collected data using MS Excel (A₅)</p>	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	-	-	-	-	-	$\chi^2 = 5.4$
	A	18.2%	45.5%	36.4%	-	-	
	N	19.0%	57.1%	23.8%	-	-	R = -0.131
	D	38.9%	33.3%	27.8%	-	-	
	SD	35.7%	42.9%	21.4%	-	-	df = 6
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	-	-	-	-	-	$\chi^2 = 4.66$
	A	0.0%	18.2%	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	
	N	4.8%	19.0%	9.5%	28.6%	38.1%	R = -0.109
	D	7.4%	18.5%	22.2%	31.5%	20.4%	
	SD	7.1%	21.4%	14.3%	35.7%	21.4%	df = 12
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	-	-	-	-	-	$\chi^2 = 9.23$
	A	0.0%	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	18.2%	
	N	0.0%	4.8%	19.0%	28.6%	47.6%	R = 0.049
	D	1.9%	9.3%	24.1%	27.8%	37.0%	
	SD	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%	42.9%	35.7%	df = 12
	The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	-	-	-	-	-	$\chi^2 = 6.35$
	A	-	-	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%	
	N	-	-	28.6%	61.9%	9.5%	R = -0.086
	D	-	-	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	
	SD	-	-	50.0%	42.9%	7.1%	df = 6

relationship between analysing data through MS Excel and post-training behaviour of trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_5 and E_4 is -0.086, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 6 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 6.35, whereas the tabulated value is 12.592. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through MS Excel and improvement in teaching/learning.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_6 and E_1 is 0.003, which shows a positive correlation (Table 7). The calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 9.21, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is less than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through SPSS and feedback collection from trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_6 and E_2 is 0.05, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 3.79, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data

through SPSS and demonstration of acquired skills by trainees.

The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_6 and E_3 is -0.31, which shows a negative correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 8 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 6.66, whereas the tabulated value is 15.507. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through SPSS and post-training behaviour of trainees. The Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation for the variables A_6 and E_4 is 0.071, which shows a positive correlation. The calculated value of χ^2 for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 4.59, whereas the tabulated value is 9.488. Since the calculated value is lesser than the tabulated one, therefore null hypothesis is accepted, or it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between analysing data through SPSS and improvement in teaching/learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The quality of education is abysmal and it is the onus of the government and the various bodies which plan the whole education system from school level to higher education. From the present study it has been identified that most of the faculty members who use Observation Method (55%), Interview Method (31%), Discussion Method (63%) or Questionnaire

Table 7
Cross-tabulation

I have analysed the collected data using SPSS (A₆)	Feedback forms have been collected from the trainees (E₁)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 9.21$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	38.5%	28.2%	33.3%	–	–	R = 0.003
	D	33.3%	38.5%	28.2%	–	–	
	SD	18.2%	68.2%	13.6%	–	–	df = 4
	Presentations and demonstrations have been given by each participant (E₂)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 3.79$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	5.1%	20.5%	20.5%	30.8%	23.1%	R = 0.05
	D	7.7%	15.4%	17.9%	38.5%	20.5%	
	SD	6.0%	19.0%	18.0%	32.0%	25.0%	df = 8
	Post-training behaviour of the trainees has been observed (E₃)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 6.66$
	A	–	–	–	–	–	
	N	5.1%	2.6%	23.1%	28.2%	41.0%	R = -0.31
	D	0.0%	12.8%	23.1%	30.8%	33.3%	
	SD	0.0%	13.6%	18.2%	31.8%	36.4%	df = 8
	The teaching/learning of teacher/kids has been improved after training (E₄)						
		SA	A	N	D	SD	Statistics
	SA	–	–	–	–	–	$\chi^2 = 4.59$
A	–	–	–	–	–		
N	–	–	46.2%	46.2%	7.7%	R = 0.071	
D	–	–	38.5%	48.7%	12.8%		
SD	–	–	50.0%	27.3%	22.7%	df = 4	

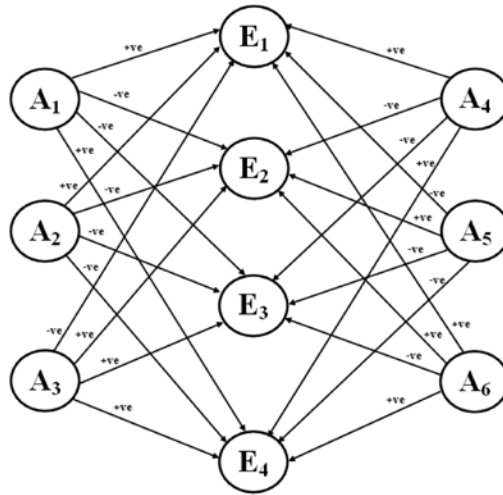


Figure 2. Correlation between Training Need Analysis and Evaluation of Training Programme

Method (0%) for Training Need Analysis take feedback of the training programme from the participants, but do not measure the post-training behaviour of the participants. Further, a significant change has not been identified in the teaching and learning behaviour of the faculties and students. It is observed that there is a significant relationship between approaches to Training Need Analysis (Observation, Interview, Discussion and Questionnaire) and evaluation of the training programme (Figure 2). There is a need to apply quantitative techniques to capture data from the teaching fraternity about what sort of training needs is required (Bryman and Cramer, 1994; Allison, 2002). Qualitative methods of data analysis—Observation, Discussion or Interview have some drawbacks in the sense that there might have been errors in collecting the information and

further its interpretation, whereas Questionnaire method records data in a sequential manner and is easy to analyse, which provides deep insights into the data patterns. For the analysis of the collected data using any of the method, 11 per cent of the faculty members apply MS Excel for synthesising information, whereas nobody applies SPSS or any other software package. It is quite evident from the study that very few faculty members use ICT tools like MS Excel/SPSS for data analysis which shows a significant relationship between techniques of Training Need Analysis (MS Excel and SPSS) and evaluation of the training programme. There is a need to put ICT tools into teaching/learning practices which offers the coherent analysis of information and easy elucidation (Tondeur Van Braak and Valcke, 2007; Wastiau et al., 2013; Drent and Meelissen, 2008).

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The E-demon of Cyberbullying among Teens

SURABHI NEGI* AND SUNITA MAGRE**

Abstract

This paper explores the phenomenon of cyberbullying among teens. The main purpose is to understand the problems encountered by adolescents due to cyberbullying and how the victim and others can play a key role in this combat. The paper also focuses on how cyberbullying is different from the conventional bullying and mentions the practices that can be taken up to prevent and minimise incidents involving cyberbullying. Opportunities for future research in this area are also outlined.

INTRODUCTION

Engrossed in the virtual world, we disregard the real. Today, communication through hands has surpassed our mouths, tapping keyboards and touchpads provide route to our thoughts. Our offline life has become an active part of the online universe. This is the way we communicate in the 21st century. Right from checking the scores of a cricket game during office hours, to getting the delivery of your favourite pizza in time and even

to get information about a school project, our lives revolve around the use of the Internet. Neuroscience research has begun to examine how this technologically driven communication is altering our brain. These studies have found that the brain of individuals who spend a lot of time on the Internet resembles those of drug addicts in significant ways. Every time an individual responds to the ping of an instant message or text message, a small amount of dopamine is secreted in the brain

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as a reward, similar being under the influence of drugs (Dokoupil, 2012). Consequently, humans are becoming addicted to these rewarding pings, just as an addict gets a high with every dose of drug. This has hampered our normal socialisation process wherein, now we spend more time on the Internet than being face-to-face with family and friends.

Internet has become a nearly indispensable tool used in business, education, government and in the entertainment world (Smith, 2008). This reliance on Internet and its services has not only influenced the adult lives but has also influenced the daily lives and activities of our children. Today, growing up for a child is very different from his parents, children and young people are able to use and understand technology and can communicate with greater ease and sophistication (Agatston, Kowalski and Limber, 2007). Methods of technology such as text messaging and social network sites have refined the meaning of social interactions for adolescents (Rivers and Noret, 2009).

Historian Howard Segal suggests that all technological developments are mixed blessings, presenting us with tremendous benefits, as well as unexpected burdens (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009). Campbell (2005) states that there is a 'dark side' to using technology as it can be used to harm others. It is possible, because of the lack of ownership of social networking sites, for people to set up an account and create fake profiles of

themselves or others. Research into the field of actual and potential harm that technology can cause is largely in its investigation stage since the growing trend of young people using it to interact is relatively recent (Smith et al., 2008).

The popularity of these new adolescent communication tools has created some new challenges as well as some negative adolescent behaviour. Traditional bullying persists but middle and high schools are now facing the explosion of electronic communication and technologies which has brought to young people a new means of bullying called cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying — An E-route for Traditional Bullying

'Cyberbullying' is a term first used and defined by Canadian educator Bill Belsey around the turn of the millennium (Campbell, 2005). Belsey defines it as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Butler, Campbell and Kift, 2008). Belsey's definition of cyberbullying is widely used in academic and government literature (Li, 2006; Smith et al., 2008; DCSF, 2009).

Bullying that takes place in cyberspace, in the virtual social sphere, is sometimes much more powerful than the conventional bullying that occurs in and around school, due to the Internet's unique

Table 1
Characteristics of Cyberbullying

Aspect	Characteristics
Wide audience	Through the circulation of video clips on the Internet, although the bully may not be aware of the audience's reactions.
Anonymity	Cyberbullies are relatively protected by the anonymity of electronic forms of contact, which can safeguard them from punishment or retaliation.
Total access	Students who are victimised have no place to hide, and can be targeted anytime and at any place.
Complex roles	Individuals often play multiple roles at once, such as cyberbully, target and observer.
Lack of immediate gratification	Students who cyberbully do not usually see the response of the victim, changing the satisfaction or inhibition normally generated by traditional bullying.

features (Huang and Chou, 2010). It can be more devastating than traditional forms of bullying due to the much larger audience online (Strom and Strom, 2005) and because children now cannot even escape their bullies by going home to a safe environment. Several characteristics distinguish cyberbullying from conventional bullying. Table 1 shows the characteristics of cyberbullying.

THE DYNAMICS OF CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying entails a systematic abuse of power, through information and communication technology (ICT) by the cyberbully. A cyberbully is someone who uses technology to harass, embarrass, intimidate or stalk someone else. One instance of cyberbullying is enough to generate an immediate snowball effect that can be unstoppable because it is controlled

through technology (Slonje, Smith and Frisé, 2013). As represented in Figure 1, an episode of cyberbullying would usually have a bully (perpetrator), a victim (target) and observers who can stay silent and perpetuate the bullying by being bystanders or they can act to stop cyberbullying and become upstanders. The phenomenon of cyberbullying cannot be fully understood without addressing all of these groups and their combinations.

Anyone can become a victim of cyberbullying. Girls and boys appear to be equally likely to be sufferers of harassment done online. Some people who become cyber bullies may be the victims of bullying and are taking out their anger and frustration in cyberspace.

The third piece of the cyberbully puzzle is an observer who can play

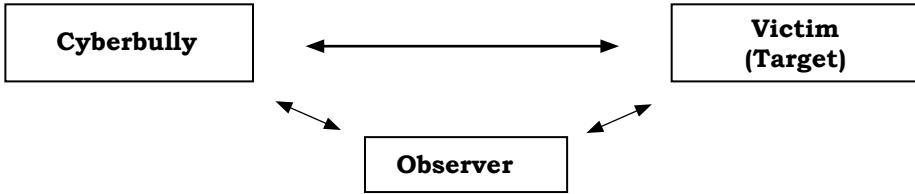


Figure 1. Individuals involved in cyberbullying

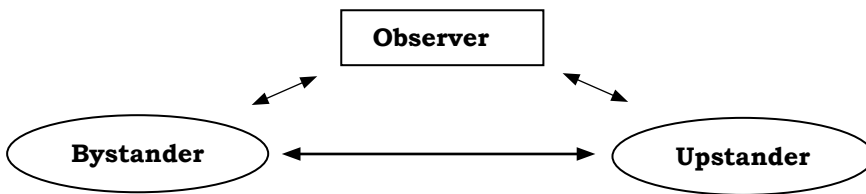


Figure 2. Duality in the role of an observer

dual role depending on the choice she or he makes, as seen in Figure 2. An observer chooses to be a bystander when she/he witnesses cyberbullying happening, but does nothing to help the victim. Some bystanders also might get involved in the bullying, and spread the disaster further by recruiting even more bystanders and in turn developing themselves into cyberbullies.

Opposite to a bystander is an upstander. When an observer begins to feel a sense of empathy about the injustice the person is witnessing and takes action, the person becomes an upstander. These are individuals who do something that prevents or reduces the bullying they see, or come to the aid of another child who is being bullied.

Impact of Cyberbullying on Teens

Cyberbullying can impact youth in a harmful way. Almost 30 per cent of adolescents reported they were victims of online bullying, meaning they were ignored, disrespected, called names, threatened, picked on, made fun of, or had rumours spread about them to others (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). Life in cyberspace is often intertwined with life in the real world. In other words, what all happens during the day is thrashed out online at night and what takes place online at night is often discussed during the day, so cyberbullying as defined above, spreads like wildfire at school (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). It is plausible that loss of self-confidence, self-esteem, depression, anger, frustration and

public humiliation could definitely be possible responses to cyberbullying (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006; Sontag et al., 2011).

A study published by *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, quotes that one in every four Indian teenagers has been a victim of cyberbullying (*The Times of India*, 2014). Bangalore-based psychiatrist, Aruna Sikdar in her interview with *The Times of India* (2014) has mentioned that cyberbullying is one of the main reasons behind the increasing rate of teen suicide in India. "It not only undermines the child's confidence but also affects his or her psyche. In most cases, the child becomes very timid and self-conscious," she informs.

Older teens seem more likely to be involved than younger teens. Tokunaga (2010) argues that, despite inconsistencies in data, literature indicates the greatest number of cyberbullying incidents occurring from 13 to 15 years of age (Burton and Mutongwizo, 2009; Hinduja and Patchin, 2008; Kowalski and Limber, 2007; Von Solms and deLange, 2011; Ybarra and Mitchell, 2008). Hacking, publication of obscene content and banking frauds among other cyber crimes have registered an annual increase of more than 40 per cent in the country. According to Home Ministry statistics, as many as 71,780 cyber frauds were reported in the year 2013, while 22,060 such cases were reported in 2012 (*IBNLive*, 2014). Concerned over 40

per cent annual increase in cyber crimes, the government wants to take steps towards a secure and safe cyberspace.

Children are often victims of cyber crime right in their homes. On an average, five cases of cyber crime and sex are reported in metropolitan cities. Dr Purnima Nagraja, a psychiatrist says, "victim of such crimes usually suffers a lengthy psychotic episode and is unable to normalise". She adds, thousands of teenagers are trapped through cyber sex. Your child who is 10 inch away from you on the Net can be a victim. There are above 4,50,000 porn sites in the world of which 1,73,000 are Indian. If one does not use it safely, it can turn into a dangerous or death trap.

Studies and research by Wong-Lo and Bullock (2011), has evidences suggesting that victims of cyberbullying suffer prolonged emotional or behavioural difficulties prior to and during victimisation. Victims seem to report similar feelings as victims of traditional bullying, such as depression, low self-esteem, helplessness, social anxiety and alienation. As the frequency increases, Ybarra and Mitchell (2007) report that mental health problems increase. These equate to depressive symptoms, anxiety, excessive psychosomatic symptoms and increased substance abuse. Ybarra, Diener-West and Leaf (2007) conducted a study where almost two out of every five (39%) reported emotional distress as a result.

Patchin and Hinduja (2010) reported that victims tend to have lower self-esteem. Of youth who had been harassed online, almost one-third (32%) reported at least one symptom of stress as a result of the incident. Furthermore, 31 per cent reported being extremely upset, 19 per cent were very or extremely afraid, and 18 per cent were very or extremely embarrassed by the harassment (Raskauskas and Stoltz, 2007). Hoff and Mitchell (2009) reported that cyberbullying is causing students to experience feelings of anger, powerlessness, fear and sadness, similar to traditional bullying.

In addition to the personal responses to bullying, victimisation can also affect a student's ability to learn at school (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009). Patchin and Hinduja (2006) suggest victims of cyberbullying may be at risk for other negative developmental and behavioural consequences, including school violence and delinquency. School behaviour problems including ditching school, bringing weapons, detentions and suspensions are significantly more frequently reported by youth harassed online (Ybarra et al., 2007)

Cyberbullying has raised concerns as it has also been linked to cases of suicide (Brown, Jackson and Cassidy, 2006; Patchin and Hinduja, 2010). For example, in 2014, a 17-year-old girl from Kolkata, India, killed herself following a cyberbullying attack, where one of her friends uploaded a morphed picture of her on

a social networking site. In another incident, an Indian-origin boy in UK committed suicide after cyberbullying by classmates in November, 2016 (*India Today*, 2016). The electronic nature makes it less likely to attract the attention of parents and school personnel and, moreover, victims may have a more difficult time gaining a reprieve from the cyberbully, given the fact the students can be exposed even when physically removed from the bully. Kowalski and Limber (2007) stated that, "the enemy we know is often less frightening than the enemy we do not know" (p. 28). Victims feel helpless because they are not equipped to handle the bullying and do not know what to do to make it stop. They generally do not seek help because of the fear of retribution or embarrassment and they assume adults will not act (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009). The victims who choose to fight back generally wait until the bullying reaches an intolerable level and becomes very dangerous for both the victim and the bully (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009). Social acceptance is critically important for adolescents' identity and self-esteem and cyberbullying can possibly result in permanent psychological, emotional and social issues (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006).

A Call for Safety

Unfortunately, there is no magical pill that will protect all adolescents from cyberbullying, but there are steps that can be taken to reduce

its frequency and impact (Patchin and Hinduja, 2009). Given the fact that the majority of teens do not feel that adults are capable of stopping cyberbullying from occurring, educators need to begin by communicating an awareness of the problem, a willingness to help, and by showing some action and fostering the self-esteem of youth (Feinberg and Robey, 2009; Cassidy, Jackson and Brown, 2009). Schools are not able to reasonably solve the problem by merely blocking all access to technology, so such an approach would not be an appropriate course of action (Brown et al. Cassidy, and Jackson, 2006; Patchin and Hinduja, 2009). Instead, it is recommended that schools take a proactive, educational approach towards dealing with cyberbullying. It is not necessarily a lost cause to provide Internet education to juniors or seniors in high school, but since students begin exploring life online around the 6th or 7th grade, Internet education needs to begin at a very early age (Patchin Hinduja, 2009; Dowell, Burgess and Cavanaugh, 2009).

Some studies have suggested that setting up anonymous means of reporting and punishing aggressors are effective, but providing education remains the key factor in reducing the prevalence of cyberbullying (Cassidy et al., 2009; Patchin and Hinduja, 2009; Dowell et al., 2009). Beran and Li (2007) assert that cyberbullying intervention plans require the efforts

of administration, teachers, students, parents and community members alike. Students should be exposed to a climate that actively identifies cyberbullying as a behaviour that is not tolerated, and they should be exposed to curricular enhancements and assembly programmes that support the school's belief towards appropriate use of technology (Patchin and Hinduja, 2009). An aspect of this recommended initiative for schools to remember is to teach students how to respond to experiences when they do not have school personnel who can immediately provide them with assistance. Since students will eventually be exposed to inappropriate content at some point while online, it makes sense to provide them with the tools to properly address those situations before they occur (Patchin and Hinduja, 2009). Some popular strategies that students have identified include blocking instant messages, changing e-mail addresses, changing phone numbers, ignoring minor instances, not responding to the bully, and logging all evidence of bullying (Smith et al., 2008; Patchin and Hinduja, 2009; Feinberg and Robey, 2009).

An additional suggestion is to identify student leaders who can provide peer mentoring where they teach younger students about reacting to and preventing cyberbullying. According to Diamanduros, Downs and Jenkins (2008), "it is important for parents and teachers to educate

their children about the impact that online chats, instant messaging, text messaging and social networking sites, such as MySpace, can have on their social lives”.

Both schools and homes should create online agreements or contracts for computer use, with input from students. Make sure your agreement contains clear rules about ethical online behaviour. Research has shown that bullying rates drop when kids know that it is against the rules and how to report it (Tannenbaum, 2010). Some of the strategies are discussed as follows—

- Students who visit games sites, rules should deal with online interactions—should never provide personal information.
- Do not share passwords with friends.
- Never post or say anything on the Internet that you would not want the whole world including your parents to read.
- Reach out to an adult at the first sign of a threat.
- What goes on online is everyone’s business. The action must be taken when cyberbullying is encountered. Not reporting it is equivalent to approving it.
- Popular sites like Facebook and YouTube provide tools to report inappropriate content, and the ‘comments’ features associated with individual pages can provide opportunities for witnesses to speak out.

For the victim

- **Do not fight back:** A lot of times bullies are looking to get a rise out of their target, and fighting back just gives them what they want.
- **Save the evidence:** Make sure you have a record of what happened if somebody is mean to you online. If it is something that was sent directly to you, make sure you save it. If it is something that can be deleted (a tweet, a status update, etc.), get a screenshot (<http://www.take-a-screenshot.org/>).
- **Report it:** Talk to somebody. If there’s no one you can talk at home, then approach your school teachers or counsellors.
- **Being cyber bullied is not your fault:** Most of the victims go on a guilt trip and stress themselves as they start believing that they are the sole reason for getting cyber bullied.

Opportunities for Further Research

It is apparent that cyberbullying has negative effects on victims’ emotions, but no research has been found that considers the relationship between attendance, academic performance and being a cyber victim. By considering these relationships, a better understanding of the effects and impacts of cyberbullying can be gained. Content analysis on what cyberbullying messages actually say, and not merely what effect they have on the victim, would be useful in order

to understand the mindset of the bully and to raise awareness amongst students about specific instances of cyberbullying, which can lead to a greater understanding of its causes. Furthermore, the findings of these studies can be used in framing policies and programmes. A disparity between what students say they will do and what they actually do has been

highlighted in few researches, the reasons for the disparity have not been considered and could be a topic of research. These suggestions demonstrate a significant amount of research is yet to be completed in this field, further illustrating the infancy and lack of width in cyberbullying studies, especially in the Indian context.

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Active Learning as an Effective Tool to Enhance Cognition

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Abstract

Children need to be encouraged to explore alternative thinking, multiple view and creative insights. The capacity for abstract thinking begins around the age eleven. At this stage, of adolescents reason much like a scientist searching for solutions in the laboratory. They come up with new, more general logical rules through internal reflection. So, the teaching methodology used should be designed in such a way that it satisfies the cognitive need of the adolescents. The highest value that all methods should try to inculcate is love to work and desire to do it with the highest measure of efficiency of which one is capable of. Research indicates that active involvement is an additional characteristic that increases student's interest in an activity. An attempt has been made through this article to give an insight regarding the significance of active learning strategies in enhancing the information processing activities of human brain.

INTRODUCTION

The challenge of education is to design learning environments and processes where students' way of thinking and learning are manifested in active, collaborative, self-regulated and self-directed learning. The visibility of students' cognition is a prerequisite

for effective mediation and facilitation. Modern society demands that schools be asked to teach thinking and problem-solving skills. "An effective learner is a resourceful, adaptable person, able to use what he knows in new situations and to discover for himself solutions to problems that he

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has never faced before. Emphasis upon insightful learning, rather than upon rote learning or mechanical skills, encourages such problem solving behaviour” (Ernest Richard, 1953).

If we analyse the history of theories of learning, the three trends in education can be summarised as behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism. Once upon a time good pedagogy was about making content knowledge visible to students. Behaviourist psychology, as a science of learning, provided for the basis for effective teaching and learning in the first half of the 20th century. The behaviourist establishment led by Skinner continued its influence and contributions through the 1960s and 1970s. The behaviourist school interpreted learning in terms of connection or association between stimulus and response. The learners start as a clean slate (*tabula rasa*) and their behaviour is shaped through positive or negative reinforcement. Behaviourism does not take mental process of learning into consideration, which disregards the activities into the mind.

Cognitivism

Dissatisfied with the approach of behaviourists, the cognitive psychologists tried to see learning as a more deliberate and conscious effort of the individual rather than a product of mere habit formation or a stimulus response machine like mechanism. The school of thought arising from this approach is known

as cognitivism which is interested in how people mentally represent information processing. Cognitivism focused on the inner mental activities—thinking, memory, knowing and problem-solving. Knowledge was seen as schema or symbolic mental constructions. Learning is defined as change in a learner’s schemata. It has found its actions in the work of Wilhelm Wundt, Marx Wertheimer, Koffka, Kohler and Lewin and in the work of Jean Piaget who provided the theory of stages/phases that describes children’s cognitive development.

Gestalt psychologists in their investigation of perception, learning and thinking, first emphasised cognitive learning. The Gestalt school of thought believed that the learner understands the relation among the different elements of the situations through insightful learning. Insight involves a perceptual reorganisation of elements in the environment such that new relationships among objects and events are suddenly seen. It is described as the sudden and new way of looking at the problem and solving it. The cognitive theories emphasised the role of purpose, insight, understanding, reasoning, memory and other cognitive factors in the process of learning. Like a computer, the brain takes in information, processes it and gives back an answer. In human the processing of information is called cognition (Robert, 1977).

In the 1960s, recognition of Piaget’s work gained momentum.

Piaget addressed the internal world of the individual in relation to intelligence and questions pertaining to the structure of the mind (Piaget, 1956, 1959; Piaget and Inhelder, 1969). His work was based on three inter-related conceptions—(i) the relation between action and thought, (ii) the construction of the cognitive structure, and (iii) the role of self-regulation. Piaget's work on cognitive development is truly monumental. He is probably best known as the principal spokesman for the view that cognitive development evolves a series of qualitative changes in a child's thinking. The qualitative shifts in thinking are described by Piaget as a sequence of developmental stages.

Piaget believed that logical thinking and reasoning about complex situations represent the highest form of cognitive development. Contrary to the behaviourist and Gestalt psychologists, Piaget did not study animals but children. Piaget researched in developmental psychology which centered on the question of how knowledge developed in the mind. Piaget approached the problems of thinking and learning by focusing on the mental and cognitive processes that make them possible. This focus became the defining element of the cognitivist theory.

Next came the constructivist learning theory which believed that the knowledge gained by the learners is constructed by the learners themselves.

Constructivism and Active Learning

Just as cognitive learning psychology began replacing the predominant behavioural psychology constructivism replaced cognitivism. Constructivist learning theory came as a challenge to cognitivism. This is a new learning theory that attempts to explain how learners learn by constructing knowledge for themselves. Central to constructivist theoretical perspective is the belief that knowledge is constructed and not transmitted and that the learners play an active role in the learning process (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996; Johnson and Johnson, 1996; Jonassen, 1999). To foster the construction of knowledge, learners should have opportunities for exploration, interaction and manipulation within the learning environment. Since learners have more control in the learning process, the learning environment must provide scaffolding to foster learners (Hannafin et al., 1994).

The constructivist stance maintains that learning is a process of constructing meaning; it is how people make sense of their experience. In other words learners, the active creators of knowledge, can learn by observing, manipulating and interpreting the world around them as they make sense of their learning experiences (Alessi and Trollip, 2001).

Constructivism is an eclectic view of learning that emphasises on four key components—(i) *Learners construct*

their own understanding rather than having them delivered or transmitted to them, (ii) New learning depends on prior understanding and knowledge, (iii) Learning is enhanced by social interaction, and (iv) Authentic learning tasks promote meaningful learning (Donald and Paul, 2007). As opposed to passive recipients of information, learners become active meaning makers, building on their current knowledge. To facilitate the process, teachers design learning activities in which learners can work with others on meaningful learning tasks. Constructivist vision of teaching emphasises that teachers look not for what students can repeat, but for what they can generate, demonstrate and exhibit (Brooks and Brooks, 1994). Constructivist theories see knowledge as a constructed entity.

Constructivists believe that meaningful learning or purposeful knowledge may be promoted by a learning environment that has three main features. First, one should use authentic problems that are tasks having the contextual feel of the real world. Second, the learning environment should represent the natural complexity of the real world and avoid oversimplification of the task and instruction. And third, a constructivist learning environment should support collaborative knowledge construction through social negotiation.

The overriding goal of constructivist educator is to stimulate thinking in learners that results in meaningful learning, deeper understanding and

transfer of learning to real world contexts. To accomplish this goal, a constructivist framework leads teachers to incorporate strategies that encourage knowledge construction through primarily social learning processes in which students develop their own understanding through interactions with peers and the teacher.

Cognitive constructivism focuses on internal individual constructions of knowledge. This perspective is derived from Piagetian theory which emphasises individual knowledge construction stimulated by internal cognitive conflict, as learners strive to resolve mental disequilibrium. Cognitive constructivists focus on the active mental construction struggling with the conflict between existing personal models of the world, and incoming information in the environment.

Dialectical constructivism or social constructivism views the origin of knowledge construction as being the social intersection of people, interactions that involve sharing, comparing and debating among learners and members (Brown and Duguid, 1989). This view is a direct reflection of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning which accentuates the supportive guidance of mentors as they enable the apprentice learner to achieve successfully more complex skills, understanding and ultimately independent competencies. The fundamental nature of constructivism is collaborative social interaction in

contrast to individual investigation of cognitive constructivism. Socio-cultural constructivists emphasise the process of enculturation into a community of practice, in which learners construct their models of reality as a meaning making undertaking with culturally developed tools and symbols and negotiate such meaning through cooperative social activity, discourse and debate. Vygotsky was the main proponent of the social constructivist approach to learning. His theoretical framework supports that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition.

Constructivist approach to teaching influenced by constructivist principle provides opportunities for children to develop skills in critical and creative thinking and to explore new phenomena through which meaningful learning can happen. In a context where power is perceived to be shared, students are encouraged to challenge each other's ideas and those of the teacher (White and Mitchell, 1994). The basic premise in constructivism is that meaningful learning occurs when the learner strives to make sense of the presented material by selecting relevant incoming information, organising it into a coherent structure and integrating it with other organised knowledge (Mayer, 2003). Constructivism is a theory about how we come to know what we know. In a constructivist point of view, the learner constantly filters incoming information based on

his or her existing conceptions and preconceived notions to construct and reconstruct his or her own understanding. Thus, the meaning of knowing is an active, adaptive and evolutionary process. In short, constructivism is a view of learning suggesting that learners use their own experiences to create understanding that makes sense to them, rather than having understanding delivered to them in already organised forms.

Research indicates that active involvement is an additional characteristic which increases the student's interest in an activity. Children need to be encouraged to explore alternative thinking, multiple view and creative insights.

According to Marilla (1998), active learning produces the following benefits.

- (i) Activities focus your attention on the key ideas that are being examined.
- (ii) During active learning you are required to draw on your prior knowledge to construct your response to the activity. This results in deeper processing of the material. Deeper processing means looking at the material beyond mere memorisation. Information that is processed deeply is more easily recalled later because it has more connections with your specific prior knowledge.
- (iii) Active learning participation provides an opportunity to get early feedback on your understanding.

- (iv) Active learning opportunities result in an 'episodic memory' which is a type of memory specific to an event. With episodic memory, if you cannot remember the idea you can reconstruct it from your memory of the event. This type of memory is practical, long-lasting and can serve as the key to recall information.

Philosophical Background of Active Learning

As a philosophy of learning the beginning of active learning thought can be traced back to the 18th century and the work of the great philosopher Giambattista Vico who maintained that humans understand only what they have themselves constructed (Yanger, 1991).

Traces of active learning can be seen in the educational literature from Socrates to present day. Aspects of discovery principles date back to the works of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates asked direct questions that led his followers to realise for themselves the weaknesses of their thinking. Socrates roamed Greece asking questions in such a way that students were able to generalise themselves. He believed that once a man was stirred by the teacher, he was able to see new meaning in life. Man was guided by curiosity and took pleasure in intellectual inquiry. This method was often known as Socratic Method.

The traces of active learning can also be seen in the theories of philosophers like Comenius in the

7th century to Dewey in the 20th century. We can see its direct link in the pragmatist theory of Charles S. Pierce and William James. Similar types of school can be found in Maria Montessori's philosophy of teaching, Froebel's Kindergarten concept, Heuristic method and Playway method. All of them reflect the principles of discovery-oriented teaching environment. Other educators related to this theory of learning include Jacqueline Brooks, Catherine Fosnot, Linda Lambert, Joseph Novak, Von Glaserfeld, Robert Yager and many others. According to Van Hiele (1986), true learning is that in which students achieve through their own efforts which causes them to experience what he terms a 'crisis of thinking'.

Many great philosophers and educationalists have worked with these ideas, but the first major philosophers to develop a clear idea of what active learning consists were Rousseau, John Dewey and Pestalozzi. Rousseau's statements are of special significance for the present-day interpretation of discovery learning. According to Rousseau, et.al. (1977), "Put the problem before him and let him solve them himself. Let him know nothing because you have told him, but because he has learnt it for himself. Let him not be taught science, let him discover it. If ever you substitute authority for reason in his mind he will stop reasoning, and become the victim of other people's opinions". According to him, the child

should be made to learn, he should not be taught. Rousseau considered a child to be the centre of teaching-learning process. His 'Emile' is an exemplary treatise on education and he advocated natural methods for teaching.

Dewey believed that information became knowledge only when it was understood. Understanding or comprehension resulted when various parts of the information were grouped in relation to one another. Therefore, understanding was dependent upon arranging or rearranging of information gained through concrete experiences. In the words of Dewey (1910), only by wrestling with the conditions of the problem at hand, seeking and finding his / her own solution does one learn. Dewey (1916) described learning as an action where knowledge and ideas emerge as learners interact with other learners in a community and build their knowledge by applying conclusions from past experiences that had meaning and importance. He believed that children were naturally motivated to actively learn and that education only served to make more learning possible. According to Dewey, knowledge is an outcome of inquiry and a resource in further inquiry. He felt that posing problems of significant interest that draw upon the student's prior knowledge activates the learning process. His strategy involved the lure of outdoors and providing problems for students to solve. Inquiry as a method of

learning was of course, central to all Dewey's teaching and writing. In his *How We Think*, he developed the theoretical concept of nature of inquiry and of reflective thought. He identified learning with thinking and thinking with active discovery of relationships and organising principles. He considered the quality of searching to be the prime motive power of thinking and therefore maintained that the problem-solving process is essential to active learning.

The psychological principles of known to unknown, simple to complex, concrete to abstract all had their origin in the mind of Pestalozzi which reflects the principles of active learning. Pestalozzi believed that abstraction was possible only after concrete ideas had been mastered (Mayer, 1970). His theory also conveys the idea of discovery. According to Herbert, the aim of all instruction is to cultivate clearness, definiteness and continuity of thought. Similar types of thinking can be found in philosophies of Montessori, Froebel, Kilpatrick, Armstrong, Parkhurst, etc., which reflects the principles of discovery method. All philosophers from the ancient time to the modern era, both western as well as eastern philosophers, claimed that knowledge exists in man. It is through education that we rediscover the knowledge.

Psychological Background of Active Learning

The psychological background of active learning has its roots in the theory of cognitivist theory of learning.

The advent of Gestalt psychology introduced a new stream of interest in learning by discovery. Another great advocate of discovery learning principles can be found in the learning theory of Jean Piaget. It was Piaget who first articulated mechanisms by which knowledge is internalised by learners. In his book, *To Understand is to Invent*, Piaget (1973), he wrote that understanding comes from discovery and that without understanding production and creativity are lost and the individual is caught in only repetition. Piaget was the first to show that children were not empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, but active builders of knowledge. Piaget saw children as constantly creating and testing their understanding of the world, in other words active participatory learners.

One of the fundamental underlying principles of discovery is the concept of socio-cognitive conflict. This mechanism for learning derived from the work of Piaget and his followers who proposed that cognitive conflicts leads to higher levels of reasoning and learning (Webb and Palinscar, 1996). According to Piaget (1956), children shape their own conception of reality through continuous interaction with their environment. Cognitive development therefore occurs as children adapt to their environment thus building their sense of reality. Piaget regarded knowledge growth as something that happens continually in a sequential process consisting of logically embedded structures

(schemata) succeeding one another throughout an individual's lifetime. This is divided into stages of development (pre-operational stage, concrete operational stage and formal operational stage) and children move from one stage to the next by maturation and exploration.

During all developmental stages, the child experiences his/her environment using whatever mental maps he/she has constructed so far. If the experience is a repeated one, it fits easily into the child's cognitive structure (that is, assimilated into the existing cognitive structure) so that the child maintains mental equilibrium. If the experience is different or new, the child loses equilibrium (have disequilibrium) and alters his/her cognitive structure to accommodate the new conditions. In this way, the child builds more and more adequate cognitive structures. According to Piaget (1971), intelligence is an adaptation. Life is a progressive balancing of adaptation and organisation to cope up with the environment. Piaget conceived of human cognition as a network of mental structures created by an active organism constantly striving to make sense of experience (Laura, 1994). His concept denotes the importance of activity as a central ingredient of intelligence. Active learning experiences tend to promote cognitive growth while passive and vicarious experiences tend to have minimal effects.

Cognitive development theory put forward by him provides the important conceptual basis of active learning.

In the words of Piaget (1964), “The question comes up whether to teach the structure or to represent the child with situations, where he is active and creates the structures himself....the goal of education is not to increase amount of knowledge but to create the possibilities for a child to invent and discover. When we teach too fast, we keep the child from inventing and discovering himself....teaching means creating situation where structures can be discovered, it does not mean transmitting structures which may be assimilated at nothing other than a verbal level.”

Jerome Bruner had been a key player in the development of psychology over the past five decades. As one of the founders of cognitive psychology, he was instrumental in revolutionising the thinking of the day from a strictly behaviouristic stance to a more cognitive approach. His work emphasised mentalism and the ways in which people make sense of the world by going beyond the information given. Bruner’s contribution to cognitive psychology was particularly significant in his ability to demonstrate unobservable mental process in an empirical framework. His was the first systematic attempt to apply an experiment approach to this difficult area of psychology.

Jerome Bruner is thought of as one of the founding fathers of constructivism and his theory of constructivism was influenced by the earlier theoretical research of Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget. A major

theme in the theoretical framework of Bruner is that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current/past knowledge. The process of learning is active and involves transformation of information, deriving meaning from experience forming hypotheses and decision-making. Through his work he presented the idea that children could be active problem-solvers and were capable of exploring more difficult subjects of instruction. Learners are considered to be the creators and thinkers through the use of inquiry and the role of experience in learning.

A major theme in the theoretical framework of Bruner is that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and past knowledge. The learner chooses and permutes the knowledge, constructs hypotheses, makes decisions and while performing these, he relies on his cognitive structuring. His cognitive structure caters for grasping the meaning and organisation of the experiences and enables him to go beyond the given information.

When the instruction is considered, the instructor should try and encourage the students to discover the principles themselves. This should be achieved through engagement of learners and teacher in an active conversation. Teachers should be able to transform the material to be learned in such a way that it suits the learners’ cognitive level.

The way of presenting the material should be spiral, not linear so that it allows both learners to contemplate and construct gradually upon what they have learned. A theory of instruction should specify those early experiences which would be more likely to produce a predisposition to learning. Predisposition influences include cultural, motivational and personal factors. Learning depends upon exploration of alternatives, the three aspects of which are activation, maintenance and direction. Therefore, instruction must facilitate and regulate the exploration of alternatives on the part of the learner.

Active learning includes what may be called metacognition: a capacity to understand not only particular content but also the psychological or intellectual processes and strategies one uses in acquiring the content. In teaching problem-solving, one must structure situations where students are required to face a new question, define it in specific terms and evaluate potential solutions to the problem, what comes out of an approach of this kind is an emphasis on process rather than on substance. Rapidly evolving work and life and citizenship in 21st century requires a more comprehensive approach to educating young people. Content knowledge remains critical but a growing body of research suggests students' attitude and beliefs about their education and their learning strategies they deploy can have a powerful influence on their ability to succeed.

CONCLUSION

Active learning has become a way to describe the types of pedagogy that are rooted in constructivism. It calls for student participation that is not just social, but involves meaningful cognitive engagement with the content, both individually and collectively. New and dynamic problems in the 21st century require constant attention, controlled execution and strategic interaction. Active learning equips students with these skills to confront and overcome complex, non-routine challenges in order to succeed.

Children learn best when they are engaged in their learning, when it matters to them, when it is contextualised in meaningful ways and when they have a sense of ownership and agency. When students are engaged in learning, there is movement and laughter and sometimes lots of noise. They are up and out of their seats involved in activities that promote thought, creativity, and discovery. When students actively participate in the learning environment, they take more responsibility for their performance in the course. Similarly, when they have an opportunity to make decisions about what they learn and how they use that knowledge, students see a course as more valuable and more directly related to their goals. Students are busy, self-disciplined, and best of all, willing to take responsibility for their own learning because they understand that what they are doing is important.

We need to provide our students with activities that are innovative and challenging as well as purposeful if we want them to be engaged in learning. In active learning environment, students learn by doing, and activating the brain's perception. It makes memories more deeply embedded in the brain and more easily retrievable. Modern world needs complex cognitive abilities to lead a successful life. Active learning gives training to learners to tackle the problems they face in their life. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills utilised in active learning empower students' life skills. It is high time that active learning be made an integral part of school curriculum.

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Emergent Comprehension and its Significance in Early Years

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Abstract

Various contemporary reading theories favour the view that literacy is developmental in nature. Hence, children's early experiences of reading and comprehension are equally valuable in the development of reading comprehension before they begin going to schools. The present paper builds this view by reviewing and reflecting on various related researches and practice relation. The paper also discusses the quality of early reading and comprehension practices in the Indian context in the light of related theories.

INTRODUCTION

“In every enterprise the beginning is the main thing, especially in dealing with a young and tender nature (Mason, 1984, p. 505).”

In the light of this statement, understanding comprehension in early years of one's life is of great significance. The quest for meaning based reading instructions is not new. The great Indian thinkers like Tagore and Gandhi also stressed upon reading with meaning. The

construct used to understand comprehension in early years of life by modern researchers is 'Emergent Comprehension'. This paper presents researches about the importance of young children's early experiences with comprehension.

Smith (1977) argued that reading is not a matter of decoding but consists of bringing meaning to print. Reading comprehension consists of two cognitive insights that written language is meaningful and that

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written language is different from spoken language. For a long time, comprehension was the focus of studies on higher grades. Emergent literacy researchers started focusing on meaning making by children while studying primary grades and the period even before that. However, early comprehension was not overtly studied by them. According to Morrow and Tracey (2002), Duke and Carlisle (2011) and Dooley and Matthews (2009), very little effort was made to understand the development of comprehension in young learners prior to their entry into formal school settings. Therefore, it is clear that comprehension was a neglected area in the studies on early years of life which is a matter of concern because the roots of reading comprehension are laid very early.

Early experiences play a crucial role in children's progress towards effective literacy learning including comprehension. Heath (1991) also described how children involve in functional aspect of literacy in their communities without any access to books or stories, they just learn from one's personal experiences of using language. Yet, the first years of schooling break these patterns of using language for functional purposes and instead present simplified language in the form of lessons. Most successful readers are those who acquire the strongest literacy foundation during early childhood years. Dooley (2010) shared the view that comprehension emerges along with other literacy skills

and should not be ignored. Therefore, it is significant to understand what comprehension means in early years of life; how young learners make meaning and how early experiences of comprehension contribute to their literacy development. To transact with written texts, readers integrate language cueing systems—the semantic /pragmatic system (meaning cues), the syntactic system (grammar cues) and the graphophonic system (graphic and sound cues)—with their knowledge of the world to infer and predict meaning.

Historically, progressive thinkers like Tagore and Gandhi emphasised upon reading with meaning. They believed that literacy development is a route to human emancipation; therefore it has to be based upon meaning making. However, researches in the Indian context reveal that reading is primarily taken as decoding (Aggarwal, 2001, Kaushik, 2004; Sinha, 2010). Comprehension instructions are often disregarded in primary grades in India. Focusing on the skills related to decoding at the cost of comprehension has led to severe consequences like poor comprehension in content area literacy. A similar point was raised by the National Focus Group paper on the 'Teaching of English'. It states that the burden of language is the burden of incomprehension. When language is taught as a set of forms and rules and not introduced as the carrier of meaning, "it becomes another subject to be passed" (p. 5). Understanding

reading in early years is of great significance and comprehension is a crucial aspect of reading.

According to Dooley and Matthews (2009), “Emergent Comprehension is the period when young children prior to conventional reading, engage in meaningful experiences that stimulate the development and use of meaning making strategies with potential to affect later reading comprehension” (p. 269). This paper focuses on the questions like what is comprehension, how emergent literacy theorists view comprehension and its significance, what is Emergent Comprehension, and how is it linked to the conventional reading comprehension and whether comprehension should be focused upon in early grades or not. This paper is divided into five sections. The first section explores the term ‘comprehension’ wherein ideas of various theorists regarding comprehension are reviewed. The second section explores the term ‘emergent’ with the help of Emergent Literacy perspective. The third section is about Emergent Comprehension, what it means and how researchers have studied comprehension in early days. The fourth section focuses on the debate on role of comprehension in early years of life. The last section explores comprehension within the Indian context.

Understanding Comprehension

To understand the construct ‘Emergent Comprehension’, it is important to understand the two terms involved in

it — Emergent and Comprehension, separately. This section discusses comprehension and is further divided into three sub-sections — reading process; changing definitions of comprehension and comprehension through the lens of Reading theories.

Reading Process: the Reader, the Text and the Context

Ruddell and Unrau (1995) provide an explanation of how the reading process occurs in the classroom context from a sociological model. In this model, the reading process consists of three major components in the classroom context—the reader, the teacher and the text. These three components are in a state of dynamic change while meaning construction takes place. The ‘Reader’ means previous life experiences, beliefs and knowledge. It can further be divided into two parts — affective conditions (all the factors affecting the motivation to read) and cognitive conditions (areas, such as background knowledge, language, text processing strategies and understanding of a classroom). The ‘Teacher’ includes teachers’ beliefs and knowledge. This also has two parts — affective conditions (based on life experiences) and cognitive conditions (teaching strategies, personal knowledge). The third component is the text and the classroom context. It accounts for the learning environment in which meaning negotiation processes occur. This process represents a fusion of meaning between a reader, a

teacher and classroom contexts. The text and the classroom context are important as it is this where students and teachers initiate the process of meaning construction.

Anderson (1994) helps us to understand the role of schema in comprehending the text. In order to remain engaged with the text, a reader has to constantly connect the text to his/her prior knowledge. Also, a reader should be aware whether they are comprehending or not and take corrective measures when they fail to comprehend (Brown, 1980). Duke and Carlisle (2011) assert that comprehension is truly a dynamic constructive process. They provide three characteristics of comprehension development which are as follows.

- Comprehension as a growth construct rather than being a mastery construct. This means that as a growth construct, comprehension can never be mastered, we can always become better at it.
- They distinguished between strategies (more deliberate actions) and skills (more automatic, smooth running processes). It is suggested that more experienced and effective comprehenders employ skills more often and strategies less often than developing comprehenders.
- Some aspects of comprehension change gradually. However, instructions can influence comprehension development.

Now, it is a widely accepted fact that comprehension is a complex process that develops over time. Comprehension is a complex “interplay between the knowledge and capabilities of the reader, the demands of the text, the activities engaged by the reader and the socio-cultural context in which the reading occurs” (Wilkinson and Son, 2011, p. 359). It also differs from other reading competencies. For example, decoding skills can be mastered through highly effective teaching instructions. But the ability to comprehend can never be achieved just by mastering a basic set of skills. It keeps developing with more focused attention and self-guided thinking through every reading experience.

Comprehension through the Lens of Reading Theories

Transactional Theory of Reading—Rosenblatt

Sinha (2009) shared views on Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading. The transactional theory provides the foundation to understand literary meaning making. It explains how the reader transacts with texts to create meaning. It proposes that readers approach texts with unique purposes and knowledge, hence, no reader creates exactly the same meaning with the same text. Interpretations of experienced readers generally overlap because they have shared assumptions, common cultural perspectives and similar experiences

with texts. They may construct text meanings that vary widely from more experienced readers. Due to insufficient experience with texts, with literacy events and social activities around texts, young readers' responses to texts and retellings may vary widely from the interpretations of mature readers. Thus, alongside providing instructions for strategic meaning making, it is equally important to show trust that young readers' responses are tentative and developmental.

RAND Heuristic for Comprehension

The RAND reading study group provided a detailed work on comprehension in 2002. It was an

extension of Rosenblatt's theory of reading, wherein the socio-cultural context of reading was added. It provided a heuristic for describing the comprehension process of conventional readers. As shown in Figure 1, the RAND group explained that readers construct meanings in ways unique to their background knowledge, experience, beliefs, motives and dispositions. It presents the socio-cultural context influencing all dimensions of comprehension. Scholars are in agreement that comprehension is influenced by the cultural and social contexts in which it occurs (Vygotsky, 1978 and Heathe, 1991).

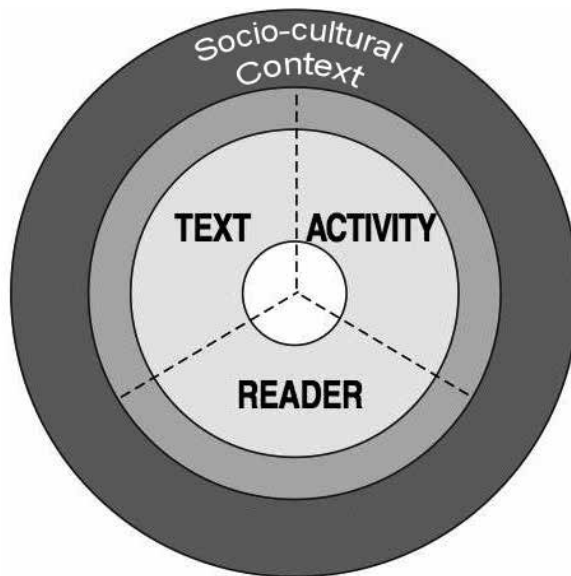


Figure 1. RAND Heuristic for Reading Comprehension

Source: Dooley (2011, p. 170).

There are three dimensions of this heuristic, the reader, the text and the activity. The 'reader', as the RAND model describes, are the reader's discourse, linguistic knowledge, knowledge of vocabulary and topics. They are important tools for comprehension. The 'Text' means all kinds of objects, especially narrative texts, which are symbols of meaning for children. The third dimension, the 'Activity', refers to the readers' goals and purposes for reading event. This dimension provides an insight into how the immediate context of reading can guide the purpose for how meaning is

constructed. When readers advance in ability and experience, "they self-monitor and choose strategies most likely to accomplish personally set purposes for reading" (Dooley and Matthews, 2009, p. 285).

As stated earlier, these dimensions are useful to describe the meaning making process of conventional readers. Dooley and Matthews (2009) used and modified this model to describe the meaning making process of young pre-conventional readers who are in the process of becoming conventional readers, as shown in Figure 2.

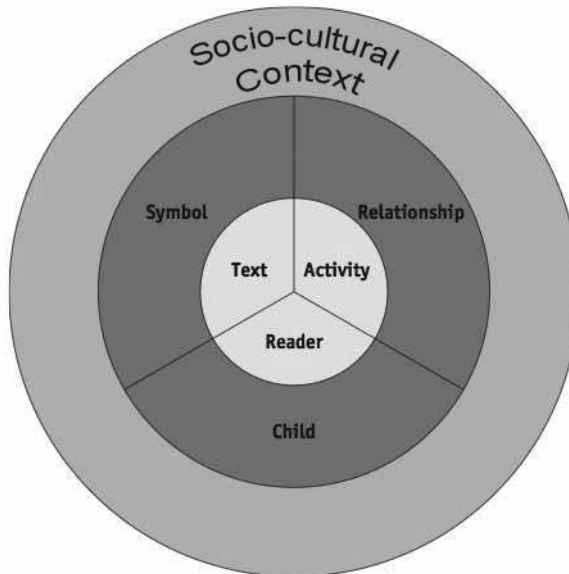


Figure 2. Emergent Comprehension
 Source: Dooley (2011, p. 171).

This adapted framework identifies the child's cognitive, relational and symbolic interactions from which meanings are made. It shares three principles of Emergent Comprehension:

1. Children transact with text in ways different from adults.
2. Young children's symbolic understanding (symbols like objects, events, actions) develop across time, with experience, via interaction with significant others.
3. Meaning construction is influenced by the presence of and interaction with primary caregivers and other important adults in young children's lives.

According to Dooley and Matthews (2009) and Dooley, Matthews and Champion (2009), young learners engage with significant others to interpret their intentions. When these relationships develop, they begin to include text objects (books, phones) in interactions. Gradually, young learners learn socially acceptable ways to interact with objects and construct meaning through shared interaction with the object (text) and an adult, in the case of printed text. Therefore, the comprehension development of young children depends upon aspects like their relationship with significant others, their unique approaches to learning and their potential yet developmental understanding of cultural symbols (Dooley and Matthews, 2009).

Understanding the Term 'Emergent'

In the Indian context, the NCF-2005 cognizes the fact that children begin constructing knowledge before entering a formal school. This fact was first given attention by emergent literacy theorists with regard to reading and writing (Teale and Sulzby, 1996, Clay; 1991). The Emergent Literacy perspective provides the view that literacy development follows a continuum, as opposed to the Reading Readiness Perspective which held the maturational view that children need to wait to read until they are mature. Emergent literacy perspective considers a child as knowledgeable about the ways in which print works. The term Emergent Literacy means all the processes, knowledge and skills which are exhibited by young children and are related to later development of conventional reading (Teale and Sulzby, 1996).

Dooley and Matthews (2009) suggest bridging the early real world experiences of young meaning makers to the desired outcome of becoming effective constructors of meaning. Marie Clay (1991) in her pioneering research studied the young learner's progress from non-readers to readers. According to Clay, young children develop various language processing systems (syntax, semantics, pragmatics and graphophonemics) as a consequence of their early life experiences. Clay believes that children's early non-print related interactions and systems

are important starting points for the development of print related systems and to understand print. Therefore, we need to acknowledge the significance of children's early experiences related to non-print and print forms of texts. Teale and Sulzby (1996) believe that "these behaviours and knowledge are not pre-anything. It is not reasonable to point to a time in a child's life when literacy begins. Rather...we see children in the process of becoming literate, as the term emergent is indicative" (p. 19).

Thus, there is ample evidence that comprehension abilities develop shortly after birth. Early age exposure to rich language experiences in the home and other environment serve an important function in that person's ability to comprehend the text. A literacy rich home environment shows advantage in comprehension ability. Large number of books available, parents frequently reading to children, frequent visits to a library and book stores and access to written material help children develop concepts about print (in the case of printed text, reading goes from left to right, top to bottom, books have titles and so on).

Children build various concepts and their perspectives about literacy while participating in literacy practices with significant others. Such personal engagement with reading and writing results in literacy learning. But their literacy learning is not limited to this. They also develop attitudes and beliefs about what counts as literacy and

who is considered literate. Goodman Flurkey and Goodman (2007) stated that 'becoming literate' is the result of social literacy experiences (p. 10).

To sum up, it can be said that emergent literacy experiences enable rich and multimodal comprehension experiences in early years of life. Such experiences lay the foundation to literacy development which reading comprehension is a crucial part of.

Understanding Emergent Comprehension

After a brief overview of the two terms 'emergent' and 'comprehension', one gets an orientation about what emergent comprehension could be. In the term 'emergent comprehension', 'Emergent' means same as when applied to emergent literacy—a continuum of development, progressing towards a known point (Teale and Sulzby, 1996). According to Dooley and Matthews (2009), emergent comprehension is taken as meaning making, not just limited to print but also includes other domains, such as play centers, dinner preparation or morning greetings. Therefore, emergent comprehension is "unfolding of a child's understanding first of her tangible world of people, places and objects as well as intangible values, norms and learning processes" (Dooley and Matthews, 2009, p. 291).

Early meaning experiences are essential to comprehension development, children's early experiences and strategy use are

considered as the foundation upon which text comprehension can be supported later. Emergent comprehension explains the relationship between personal experiences and reading. These early engagements with objects within contexts represent young children's initial movements into understanding their world. The phrase 'emergent comprehension' demonstrates the intent to tie the early, meaning-construction experiences of these young children to later more familiar print-based experiences (Dooley and Matthews, 2009). The three studies described in the following section, investigated emergent comprehension with respect to children's approaches to books.

Sulzby (1985) studied young children's favourite storybook reading. She found that at age two, most children refused to read but would talk about the stories in an oral language like form. At age three, children used more oral language to narrate the storybook. Eventually around age four, these children narrated with more written language like inflections and storybook reading (like, "once upon a time"). Dooley (2010) studied young children's approaches to books. He found that at age two, children approach books as props and treat them like other playthings. At age three, they approach books as invitation wherein they attend to content, images and recognise print in a limited way. At age three to four, they treat the book

as a script, attend to content and image, mimic read aloud gestures and intonation and use image to guess parts of the script. At age four, they approach the book as text, where concepts of print begin like some indication of word by word recall.

These studies investigated what meaning children construct when they encounter books. These meanings demonstrate their emergent comprehension of print material. Yaden, Smolkin and CONLON (1989) inquired about preschoolers' questions about pictures, print conventions and story text during reading aloud at home. It was found that most children's first questions were about pictures. Then, most questions were inquiries about story meaning followed by questions about word-meaning. Questions about graphic form occurred least frequently for most of the children. The research concluded that story reading provides the child with a wide range of information about processes and functions of the written language and meaning making was central in all these questions. Also, story reading aids in developing children's awareness of various aspects of print. It was also concluded that there was a developmental change in the question types, like by age four, children started asking more questions on the main content of the story than pictures, hence children started paying more attention to the story itself.

THE GREAT DEBATE: PLACE OF COMPREHENSION IN EARLY YEARS

For years, researchers have debated about when reading comprehension instruction should begin with young learners. Researchers earlier believed that decoding skills should be the prime focus in early grades and comprehension instructions should be started once decoding skills are mastered. There are researchers like Clay (1991), Teale and Sulzby (1986), Dooley and Matthews (2009) and Dooley, Matthews and Champion (2009) suggesting that comprehension should be the focus shortly after birth as it begins before formal schooling starts.

Before the rise of the cognitive revolution, scholars used to believe that comprehension skill needs to be practiced separately within balanced scope and sequence. Many emphasised the importance of phonics instruction as a precursor to comprehension instruction based on the belief that early literacy is most dependent on phonemic understanding. Brock and Van (2009) examined the development of oral language and decoding skills from preschool to early elementary school and their relation to beginning reading comprehension. The findings extend the view that two clusters of skills develop early in a child's life and are sole predictors of successful reading ability in later years of life.

Emergent Literacy researchers disagree with such views, like

Dooley and Matthews (2009) believe that comprehension develops simultaneously with other early reading skills. They place primacy on encouraging young readers to search for meaning. Pearson and Duke (2002) shared that the terms 'comprehension' and 'primary grades' do not often appear in the same sentence. Comprehension instruction is not considered an important part of primary grade education by many educators. 'Phonics' and 'word identification' are considered the only priority in primary grades to be able to decode the text. The acceptable belief is that it is not wise to focus on comprehension at this time. On the contrary, Pearson and Duke (2002) believe that comprehension instruction in primary grades is not just wise and beneficial, but 'crucial to overall development'. They claim that 'comprehension and decoding can exist side by side as instructional goals'. Similarly, Ivey (2002) also shared that most of the reading programmes emphasise decoding over reading for meaning specially the ones targeting young learners. Ivey (2002) calls our attention towards the fact that limited decoding ability is not equal to limited ability to think deeply about texts.

A fresh logic for why researchers should focus on comprehension in early years of life was provided by Dooley (2010). He provided a crucial issue whether comprehension should be viewed as a conventional print reading or as a process that allows

for unconventional textual cues (like, social interaction, print concepts) to shape meaning. According to Dooley (2010), “elements of comprehension stem from interaction with texts, such as story books, songs, computer games, prior to conventional print reading. From early interactions, children develop knowledge about how to comprehend in ways that are essential to conventional reading comprehension development” (p. 120). Since reading takes place in a socio-cultural context, comprehension is influenced by this context from the text used to approaches of reading. Now, literature-based reading is considered essential in early years of life for engaging young learners with reading and construction of meaning.

COMPREHENSION IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Researches done to understand reading comprehension in the Indian context are very few in number. Researchers like Sinha (2010), Saxena (2010) and Kaushik (2004) have used the term ‘Emergent Literacy’ in discussing the reading writing of young learners in the Indian context. The term ‘Emergent Comprehension’ is still looking for its place amongst researches within the Indian context. Comprehension in primary grades was focused in researches conducted by Sinha (2000, 2010) and Aggarwal (2001). This section is further divided into two sub-sections—Classroom Practice and Literacy Programmes.

Classroom Practices and Comprehension

The Yashpal Committee report (1993) describes the status of comprehension in classroom setting by saying that burden of incomprehension is much greater than the gravitational burden of school bags. According to Sinha (2010), literacy teaching is primarily traditional. She further said that “the pedagogic practices in the school also unwittingly push students towards non-comprehension” (p. 121). Sinha (2000) focused on the unique case of early primary grades. In India, comprehension instruction is often disregarded in primary education. Further building her argument, Sinha (2010) observed that a ‘Layered approach’ to reading is practiced in Indian classrooms (p. 23). First ‘sounding out the words’ is practiced, less then meaning is given less attention. Sinha (2000) conducted a study wherein 10 primers were analysed. The findings suggested that the lessons were constructed around particular sounds and not themes. Such a constraint of using the words of a single vowel sound (*matra*) ends up with meaningless exercises of sounding out the words. Such reading material lack flow, coherence and are not readable.

The study done by Kaushik (2004) revealed that teachers believe that the most important goal of early reading programme is to get a sequential mastery of letters and learn how to blend them to words. Decoding was

conceptualised as the main goal of reading. Such an approach sacrifices meaning. Although, children's literature is slowly taking the place of primers, but the pedagogy and classroom practice is still a major concern. Engagement with print material does not take place because the entire focus is devoted to explaining the text by the teacher and learning the new words. Saxena (2010) also shared her observations while working with a literacy project, Jan Shikshan Abhiyan in Madhya Pradesh. Classroom observations revealed that literacy instructions adhere to behaviouristic paradigm, learning require drilling and rote memorisation as opposed to engaging with processes of meaning construction.

Aggarwal (2001) also presented the results of quality of the reading instructions in Indian classrooms. The study revealed that there was no separate reading lesson which form part of the language classes. In language lesson, most time is spent in reading aloud either by the teacher or by the learner. Teachers made attempts to make meaning of the texts or difficult words, students do not get chance to construct meaning. Loud reading is just a mechanical affair without a connection with reading for meaning. Classroom practices, which isolate skills from meaningful reading, make learning to read difficult. Children are not helped to develop inner control and strategic functioning as readers.

NCERT textbooks for early grades provide the text wherein meaning is kept intact, but they are not taught in classes in the manner to aid comprehension (Sinha, 2010). Stories are used to teach various language skills like finding nouns. The focus is again not on comprehension. Either the focus is on reading aloud with correct pronunciation or developing an understanding of phonological awareness. As a consequence, children are forced to shift their attention from the meaning of the text to learning grammar concepts. Wherever meaning making activities take place, one finds teachers as single players in constructing meaning. Children are given readymade explanation of the text without engaging them with comprehension activities.

The quality of reading instruction given in schools, where focus is not on meaning construction, is definitely a matter of concern. According to Sinha (2010), such practices have a link with pre-service training of teachers and its curriculum. Bahuguna (2011) further investigated about the status of reading in various teacher education programmes. She found that none of the programmes have a separate course on reading. In fact, the major teacher education programmes continue to be based upon teaching pedagogy approaches that are influenced by traditional bottom-up approach of reading. Listening and reading skills are considered passive skills. The theoretical foundation of reading is

missing in many such programmes (Bahuguna, 2011). Pupil teachers are imparted the view that fluency and decoding are the main factors responsible for effective reading.

DISCUSSION

The construct 'Emergent Comprehension' is in cognizance with the developmental nature of children's reading abilities. Emergent comprehension is clearer when children are observed in informal and formal meaningful encounters with print. The notion of linear progression from letters to sounds to words to sentences is full of flaws. Unfortunately, the development of comprehension is not given instructional priority until students become fluent readers, rather fluent decoders. This focus on decoding and fluency distracts attention from students' developing comprehension capabilities.

Mason and Sinha (1993) critique the understanding of reading that has long been viewed in a dichotomous manner with 'all' or 'none' phenomenon. It implies that children can either read or they cannot. As a consequence, reading is defined in terms of the ability to decode. Several other activities influence children's language development, literacy development and consequently their comprehension development. For example, language interaction in the home setting, parental teaching of letters and words, parent-child talk while book reading, extending talk during free play and exposure

to print material. All the pre-reading experiences, such as interest in books, observing people to read, shared reading with children and read aloud by parents, all of this contributes to development of literacy and emergent comprehension. The construct 'emergent comprehension' demonstrates the connection between early meaning construction experiences of the young children with later more familiar print-based experiences. The young learners depend on others to provide access to the world. Significant others assist young learners in constructing the understanding of their world.

It is also clear that early reading instruction in India is still closer to the traditional model of teaching learning and is unaffected or partially affected by the research based on constructivist approaches to reading. Observations of classroom practices reveal that children are not given opportunities to engage with literacy. Such poor literacy practices remain unquestioned on a massive scale due to negligible research work done to understand comprehension in the Indian context. Such mechanical knowledge of literacy does not translate into empowerment.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that real reading takes place when comprehension is achieved and encouraged. It is equally significant to note that young learners are motivated to read and comprehend the world. Emergent

comprehension acknowledges the fact that children are capable of reading and constructing meaning in the initial years of learning as they engage in various activities meaningfully. The construct emergent comprehension signifies that comprehension needs to be emphasised in early years of children's lives. The route to meaning construction lies within the child and the actions taken up by the learners. When children read and make

meaning, they come to know various ways of getting the meaning of texts. They need support and opportunities to become independent. As they read along with significant others, they notice more things about print. Such opportunities and efforts are more required in settings like India where classrooms are filled with first-generation learners to make their initial experiences of reading meaningful.

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Public Libraries

Institution of Mass Education

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Abstract

The paper explicates the process of establishing public libraries in the remote villages of Uttar Pradesh as an attempt to strengthen the fundamental democratic institutions of rural India. Village library is relatively a newer public sphere where villagers could sit together, read, learn and discuss on various issues in a democratic environment. It is our empirical perception that standard books and literature are not available in remote villages. There is a huge gap between rural and urban educational infrastructure. Opening village library was an effort to bridge the aforesaid gap. It has been argued that opening village library would strengthen democratic processes and ensure empowerment of marginalised and deprived village dwellers. After seven decades of our Independence, it is a grim situation that villagers are not even familiar with the concept of library. This work of opening village libraries was initiated by a team of administrative officers who strongly believe in the concept of paying back to the society.

INTRODUCTION

Public libraries exist to serve the need of the entire community from school children to elderly. It is a place where people from different backgrounds join together in reading and learning process irrespective of age, caste

and gender. Apart from its intended functioning, public libraries have the capacity to strengthen democratic spaces. The purpose of the public library is to provide for every person the education obtainable through book reading and many other activities involved in the learning.

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Inherent within the concept of public library is the access to knowledge field created at the mass level and aimed at the welfare of the social group as a whole. The integrative intent adds to its significance. Public libraries were established worldwide along with the growth of education, literacy and publication. In a flourishing democracy like India, public libraries work as an apparatus to enrich and strengthen the process of democratisation. The UNESCO public library manifesto defines “the public library is a practical demonstration of democracy’s faith in universal education as a continuing and lifelong process in the appreciation of the achievement of humanity in knowledge and culture. Public library is a real democratic social institution, which is by the people, for the people, and of the people, the purpose of which is to provide information, entertainment, and inspiration. It is *People’s University* and has a great role to play in formal and informal education, economic, cultural and social development” (Chaubey et al. 2011). Academic libraries are different from public libraries in the sense that they serve the objectives of formal educational institutions with up to date research and the availability of most technical information in certain fields. Whereas public library is open for free and equal use by all the members of the community, regardless of caste, class, creed, race, religion, age, sex, language, nationality and status or level of educational attainment. This idea of access to knowledge in

an uninhibited and uninterrupted manner is quite significant. Kumar (1985) has rightly pointed out that “public library is available for use to all who are capable to use it. This feature makes it different from other libraries. A public library can also be distinguished from other libraries because it provides liberal and comprehensive service performing a wide range of functions providing for information, education, recreation, entertainment and inspiration”.

PERSONAL JOURNEY TOWARDS THE LIBRARY MOVEMENT

Realising the importance of public libraries as an institution of mass learning, an initiative was taken by a team of district administrators including the author. Therefore, the paper is partly a description of PAR (participatory action research) as well as ethnographic account of the whole process since its inception. Being a member of the team of public library movement, I was part of every step taken for this work. Imagination, improvisation, designing and preparation were done by the team. Book donation and monetary donation camps were organised by with the help of media and villagers. This whole process of preparation took around two months’ time till the inauguration of two village libraries. Further, the team members attended functions and activities organised at the libraries to facilitate its functioning. Activities were story reading, discussion on current

issues, counselling of aspirants for competitive exams, etc. Perceptions of participants about village libraries and activities were collected to understand the relevance of public libraries in the process of designing and launching this programme. We were part of every step in this movement of mass education, thus, facilitating an intensive engagement to understand the nuances of the system and its functioning. As a participant team member, I also got the opportunity to observe this work very closely. Data and description for this paper are the outcome of intense participation and observation.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN INDIA: A BRIEF HISTORY

Every country has its own public library history with influential leaders and champions. Monarchs, wealthy people and philanthropists have made their contribution to the development of public libraries and India is no exception. "Libraries were established in ancient India mainly by the patronage extended by emperors, major capitalists and scholars. Indian king and emperors supported scholars and scholarship. In India well-equipped libraries with vast, choicest, collections of manuscripts and other materials of ancient wisdom attached to the internationally renowned Indian Universities like Takshila, Nalanda, Vikramsila, Valabhai, Benaras and Ranchi in ancient India were solely organised and functioned with a

view to advancing the traditional, philosophical, ecclesiastical and classical education for its own sake" (Wani, 2008). Well-known scholar on libraries, Khanna (1987) writes about the development of libraries in India "the libraries in Medieval and Mughal India were created of, by and for the elite. Public library system has not taken roots even in independent India. The Advisory Committee Report, 1958 is a great milestone in the history of library movement in India which recommended that every state should have a library legislation to ensure a perennial source of income. The Ministry followed this up by circulating model Public Library Bill to all the State Governments in 1962" (Khanna, 1987). To stimulate and support the Library Movement in India, the Department of Culture, Government of India, has set up the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) in Calcutta. The RRRLF has also been given the responsibility of resource mobilisation for modernisation of the State and district central libraries, the development of infrastructure and training of personnel (Goswami, 2011).

If we evaluate personal contribution in the development of public libraries in India we find that Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III, Maharaja of Baroda, was a great visionary. He pioneered the development of Public Library System in India as early as 1910. He carefully devised a compulsory programme of mass education in one district in 1893, and

extended it to the entire State by 1907, and also made elementary education compulsory for all boys and girls in the State. His Highness also realised that universal education required a network of free public libraries, which would keep literacy alive, and enable men and women in rural areas to have access to the source of knowledge not hitherto open to them.

The Maharaja insisted that “libraries should not limit their benefits to the few English knowing readers, but should see to it that their good work permeates through to the many”, and that “the vernacular libraries should be encouraged” so that every citizen of the State “may enrol himself as a pupil in the peoples’ university—the library” (Khanna, 1987). With this noble idea, he set up free public libraries in the State beginning in 1910. For this purpose, he established a separate Library Department with W.A. Borden as the first full-time Director of State Libraries. The next step was to establish a Central Library at Baroda with a nucleus collection of 88,764 volumes which included the Maharaja’s private collection of about 20,000 books. A full-time Curator of Libraries with staff strength of around 50 was appointed to manage it (Khanna, 1987).

It is very interesting to learn that even a century ago the Maharaja launched publication of a quarterly journal called *Library Miscellany* in English, Gujarati and Marathi with Shri J.S. Kodalkar as its first editor, started Library Associations from Taluk level, organised *Mitra Mandal* (friendly groups in the libraries)

in the town and village libraries and organised regular library conferences. Mobile library service was organised to cater to the book need at remote villages. The Maharaja also established an Oriental Institute and Library with 6,846 printed books and 1,420 manuscripts in Sanskrit, Gujarati and other languages. This was the first public library system in the country (Khanna, 1987).

The year 1972 is a significant year in the history of library movement in India. The country was celebrating the silver jubilee of Independence. It was the bicentenary year of the birth of Raja Rammohun Roy, a pioneer social reformer who had stressed the need for modern education for the progress of the nation. The year was also being celebrated as an International Book Year with the slogan ‘Books For All’. Emphasis was laid on promotion of reading habit among the masses for betterment of their lives. It was in this auspicious year that ‘Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF)’ was established in May, 1972 by the Department of Culture, Government of India, to spread the library services all over the country in cooperation with the State Governments, Union Territories’ Administration and organisations working in the field. Chaudhary (2011) has rightly pointed out the objectives of RRRLF in the following words: “the main objective behind RRRLF being to take the development of public library service and promotion of library movement not only to small towns and villages, but also to the remotest corner, in cooperation with the State Governments, Union

Territories' Administration and other organisations engaged in the promotion of library services and mass education for the progress of the nation". RRRLF is an autonomous organisation fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. It is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961. Here in this paper, we would like to focus on Gram Panchayat or village public libraries in the villages of Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh.

Public Libraries in Uttar Pradesh

The present State of Uttar Pradesh was formed in 1956. Its capital is Lucknow and it has 75 districts with an area of 2,94,411 sq km. Uttar Pradesh is famous for its manuscript libraries. Manuscripts were collected and housed in the Rampur Library. Beyond that many libraries were established here and few of them are—The Allahabad Public Library was established in 1864, Carmicheal Library, Benaras, was set up in 1872, the Lyall Library and Reading Room were founded in Meerut in 1866. A good number of public libraries were started and maintained by voluntary organisations. The Uttar Pradesh Library Association was founded in 1949. A Hospital Library service is being run at Lucknow and Kanpur under the auspices of the Association (www.nmlindia.nic.in). "Dr. S.R. Ranganathan drafted the Uttar Pradesh Public Libraries Bill in 1949 and published it in the form of a book. He was an Indian Pioneer

of library and information system (LIS). Dr. Ranganathan advocated for the development of effective public library systems to reach India's masses. Inspired by the ethics of spreading knowledge and providing 'books for all' he had a vision based on his five laws of library science, to spread knowledge far and wide through India's public libraries" (Pyati, 2009, p. 2, Kumar, 1985, pp. 10–15). Further Dr. Sampurnanand, wrote the introduction for this book titled *Library Development Plan* with a draft Library Bill for the United Province. The Bill was submitted to the Government and circulated to all the members of the legislative assembly. Despite the Education Minister's keenness in putting the Public Libraries Act into the statute book, his efforts did not materialise. Ultimately, the State Government issued an ordinance in 2006 for Library Legislation. However, no further development took place after the formation of public library ordinance. Reasons may be lack of willpower or priority of government to this work. Consequently, neither separate department nor directorate was established by the State Government to expand public libraries at the grassroots level. Lack of vision, priority and willpower are basic hindrance in the development of public libraries (Shah and Sonkar, 2010).

Village Libraries in Kheri Lakhimpur

Kheri is the largest district of Uttar Pradesh and it comprises 995 village

panchayats and 10 urban bodies. Kheri is predominantly rural in nature. As per the Census of 2011, only 11.46 per cent population live in urban areas, rest 88.54 per cent population live in 995 villages. Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and Kishanpur Bird Sanctuary with rich diversity of flora and fauna provide an important status to Kheri district at the national level. Sharda and Ghaghra are two important rivers of this district. Sharda-Ghaghra link canal and its branches irrigate thousands of acres of Kheri and its neighbouring district. They also bring flood during monsoon period every year and millions of people get displaced and lose their agricultural land. The economy of the district is dependent on the sugar industry, and therefore it is known as the sugar bowl of Uttar Pradesh. Eight sugar mills and many small Khandsari units produce maximum quintals of sugar here. Because of dependence on agriculture, pace of life is slow and people are less mobile. Awadhi, the dialect of Hindi language, is spoken in the region.

As per the Census of 2011, literacy rate of Kheri is 60.56 per cent (male–69.57 per cent and female–50.42 per cent) while the national literacy rate is 74.04 per cent. The sex ratio is 894 against 940 of the national ratio. These facts prove that Kheri is a backward district with poor developmental parameters performance, as shown in Table 1. Education is the basic element to enhance the knowledge of the people

about different aspects of life and world. The literacy rate of the district is lower than the national average. It is also lagging behind on other parameters. To provide quality books and awareness about education and knowledge, a movement was initiated *Gram Panchayat Pustakalaya*, with a hope that it would bring positive change in the life of villagers. It would help them to come out of their backwardness.

Accepting the importance of village public libraries, eminent sociologist, Desai (1969) writes, “the library adequately equipped with books scientifically dealing with varied subjects; with newspapers and magazines of local, national, and even international significance; and with charts and maps; can be a rich reservoir of variegated knowledge, social, political, technical, economic and cultural. It can also enable the village to follow decisive national and international happenings. The library when properly made use of, will help him to broaden his outlook, enlarge his vision extend the frontiers of his knowledge and to visualise local developments as an integral part of, one single organic world development. He will thereby steadily build up a national and even international consciousness”. Data of district Kheri given in Table 1 helps to develop an understanding about this region.

Efforts to decentralise the power, authority and resources are continuous process in a diversified democracy like India where major and minor differences create many types of discrimination. The caste

Table 1
Census Data of 2001 and 2011 of Kheri District

S. No.	Census data	2011	2001
1.	Actual Population	40,21,243	32,07,232
2.	Male	21,23,187	17,13,908
3.	Female	18,98,056	14,93,324
4.	Population Growth	25.38%	32.57%
5.	Area (Sq. Km)	7,674	7,674
6.	Density/km ²	524	418
7.	Proportion to Uttar Pradesh Population	2.01%	1.93%
8.	Sex Ratio (Per 1,000)	894	871
9.	Child Sex Ratio (0–6 Age)	921	943
10.	Average Literacy	60.56	48.39
11.	Male Literacy	69.57	59.50
12.	Female Literacy	50.42	35.38
13.	Total Child Population (0–6 Years)	6,62,296	6,36,038
14.	Male Population (0–6 Years)	3,44,806	3,27,349
15.	Female Population (0–6 Years)	3,17,490	3,08,689
16.	Literates	20,34,044	12,44,189
17.	Male Literates	12,37,157	8,25,048
18.	Female Literates	7,96,887	4,19,141
19.	Child Proportion (0–6 Years)	16.47%	19.83%
20.	Boys Proportion (0–6 Years)	16.24%	19.10%
21.	Girls Proportion (0–6 Years)	16.73%	20.67%

(Census 2001 and 2011, www.censusindia.gov.in)

and regional imbalances necessitate efforts to mobilise the grassroots level structures. To fill the gap and eliminate caste class and regional imbalances, a lot of work has yet to be done. When the Union Government of India introduced the 73rd and 74th

amendments in Article 243 of the Constitution to empower local bodies (urban and rural) in 1993, along with other issues there was a provision of public libraries. Purpose behind that provision was to lessen the gap between rural and urban education

scenarios and to provide villagers quality books to enhance their stock of knowledge in their own locality. Gram Panchayats and urban local bodies like Nagar Panchayats, Nagar Palikas and Nagar Nigams could establish public libraries. Article 15 (20) of U.P. Panchayat Raj Act directs the village representatives to establish public libraries in their Gram Panchayats. However, neither the concerned officers nor the Gram Pradhans took any initiative to set up public libraries. On 22 August 2014, two Gram Panchayat libraries were inaugurated by the Chief Development Officer (CDO) of the Kheri district. Idea and inspiration came from the CDO, and he started working with two team members including Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) and Block Development officer (BDO). This team of three Officers took resolution to begin two model libraries in defunct Gram Sachivalaya (village secretariat) buildings, which are located inside the villages, and are easily accessible for village dwellers.

Once we discussed and decided to open village libraries, we started working on different aspects of a library, for instance, fund, furniture, maintenance of buildings, selection and purchase of books and magazines. To acquire monetary support, participation of villagers and to generate awareness among them, we organised membership and book donation camp with the help of local media. Textbooks, storybooks, novels and religious books were donated by concerned villagers. Staff of block and Tehsil Mitauli extended

their support to these activities. Rules, regulations, and mechanism of functioning of the libraries were designed and prepared during pre-determined period. Subsequently, on 22 August 2014, when in the presence of village headmen, villagers, print and electronic media two libraries in Mitauli and Kasta villages were inaugurated by the CDO with great fanfare. After the successful initiatives of opening two village libraries in Mitauli and Kasta, around 23 libraries were also opened in Kheri district. One basic element, which is the most important feature of this movement, is that these libraries were not imposed like other government schemes. Rural development officers worked as a catalyst and guide, steering the programme from its inception. We lead the whole movement by providing necessary suggestions, technical support and coordination to the community.

As a part of bureaucracy and the opportunity to steering the movement the success of any programme requires empathy towards the social cause, as well as, the approach to work together with the community. Joint efforts have the possibility to remain durable and sustained without much governmental interference. With our combined effort and to convert our dream into reality we have made 23 public libraries functional till 30 September 2014. Each library has a collection of 500 books on various subjects, including Panchayati Raj, environmental awareness, stories and novels on village life, poems and *shayari*, textbooks, *Employment News*, weekly and monthly magazines, etc.

Some of the details of public libraries is given below.

Inspired by our library movement, six secondary schools and community organisations like Patel Sansthan, Gola have started libraries at their campus in Kheri. Details of those colleges and institutions that started libraries at their campuses are given in Table 3.

We created an environment and the media disseminated the message to the whole district about the village libraries. Managers, principals and other people started approaching us

to open libraries in their institutions. It was very positive and encouraging experience for us. We provided them list of books and suggestions and also attended inauguration ceremony to inspire them. These institutional libraries brought accession and issuing registers and started issuing books to their students and members. Manager of Kanhaiya Lal Inter College, Behajm informed that students of his college are very interested in new books and they are issuing books regularly which will possibly promote the reading habit among them. The same thing happened

Table 2
Name of Villages, Blocks and Tehsils where Village Libraries were Opened

S. No.	Name of the Village	Name of the Block	Tehsil
1.	Mitauli	Mitauli	Mitauli
2.	Kasta	Kasta	Kasta
3.	Paila	Behajm	Mitauli
4.	Tharia	Behajm	Mitauli
5.	Ibrahimpur Grant	Mohamdi	Mohamdi
6.	Sahjana	Mohamdi	Mohamdi
7.	Karaunda	Mohamdi	Mohamdi
8.	Aliganj	Bankeganj	Gola
9.	Kakori	Bankeganj	Gola
10.	Ajan	Gola	Gola
11.	Marua Paschim	Palia	Palia
12.	Ludhauri	Nighasan	Nighasan
13.	Chhauchh	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
14.	Pahadapur	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
15.	Rajapur	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
16.	Fattepur Saidri	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur

in Zila Panchayat Inter College, Kasta, where I addressed a gathering of students to convey them about the importance of books and library.

When we were campaigning for library movement, we came to know about the existence of library books in every government primary and junior high school of Kheri district. Books were bought under the non-recurring funds of ₹5,000 provided to each school by the government. The core purpose of providing books facility to every school seemed to be non-functional as most of these books were lying redundant or locked in the book shelves/boxes. It was very shocking and disappointing that books were not being read neither by teachers nor by

students. We directed head masters and Block Education Officers to encourage the children to read books. Besides opening village libraries, we tried to connect fragmented moorings among isolated institutions. Developing reading habit and visiting libraries, organising regular activities and ensuring participation of students and villagers at the libraries to avail the benefits is must for continuance of the institution of library in future.

Village libraries could be dynamic centres of knowledge and information for 68.84 per cent Indian population residing in rural areas. Establishing village library could also promote public sphere for children, students, for job seeker aspirants, farmers and

Table 3
List of Institutions where Libraries were Established
Following the Movement

S. No.	Institution	Place	Tehsil
1.	Raja Lone Singh Inter College	Mitauli	Mitauli
2.	Zila Panchayt Inter College	Kasta	Mitauli
3.	Kanhaiya Lal Inter College	Behajm	Mitauli
4.	Adarsh Janta Inter College	Devkali	Lakhimpur
5.	Dr. Kaushal Kishore Ucchta Madhyamik Vidyalay	Atkohna	Lakhimpur
6.	Krishak Samaj Inter College	Fattepur	Lakhimpur
7.	Vilobi Memorial Library	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
8.	Nagar Panchayat Building Oya	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
9.	Gandhi Balodyan Junior High School	Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur
10.	Patel Sanstahn	Gola	Gola

Source: Data collected from fieldwork

village women where they could study, learn and share their views and ideas among their fellow, library visitors. Our experience informs the possibility of establishing gram panchayat libraries with the combined effort of officers, political representatives, members of different organisations and villagers themselves. Though we accept that electronic media like television channels, CD, DVD, android mobile phones have curtailed the possibilities of sustenance of all kind of public spheres including libraries. Although a village library could be a possible mechanism of empowering the villages, it has not been tested yet in the Indian scenario. Developing habits of regularly visiting village library and reading habits among villagers is a serious challenge for the founders of such libraries. We have a plan to develop these libraries as 'Multiple Activity Centre' where staff and officers of different departments like agriculture, veterinary, health, soil conservation, development, panchayati raj, social welfare, revenue, primary and secondary education, etc., visit and make the villagers aware about their schemes at definite interval. Published literature of these departments would also be put there so that people can read and get information for their knowledge upgradation. A direction letter has been issued in this regard to the concerned departments from the Chief Development Officer.

DECENTRALISATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Decentralisation is an ecological process in which business, industry,

and other service agencies tend to move away from the centre of a city when land and costs become too high and congestion becomes too evident. The movement is towards secondary centres or sub-centres, located in outlying areas where there is more space and costs are generally lower (Scott, 2005). From this definition it becomes very clear that opening a village library is a process to divert centre of knowledge from cities to rural areas, or from the centre to the periphery. As we have mentioned in the beginning that public library is a practical demonstration of democracy, when we open public libraries in remote villages, we put forward a step to decentralise the power of knowledge along with decentralising political power through Panchayati Raj, and both these issues are introduced and incorporated in the Indian Constitution by the 73rd and 74th Amendments. We are quite sure that both these processes of decentralisation will strengthen our young democracy. As we know knowledge is power and we get it from books and libraries. Establishing village libraries as centres of knowledge by Gram Panchayats is a positive move for strengthening power of knowledge through political power.

CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

In his inaugural speech for the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) in August 2005, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

acknowledged that public libraries are an “extremely important element of the foundation of a knowledge economy” (Chitralkha, 2014). Knowledge is power and powerful people change the discourse of the time. To acquire the power of knowledge, books and libraries are basic prerequisites. Establishing public libraries in the villages is an effort to construct a society which is up to date with knowledge and current information. Providing city-centric amenities like public library in the remote villages will eliminate relative deprivation among villagers and will provide them a chance to get high standard knowledge with quality books. Even today, a majority of Indian villages are far from basic infrastructure to live a quality life, therefore the rate of rural to urban migration is very high. Due to lack of basic amenities, students are forced to move to cities for higher education and employment. Gram-Panchayat libraries would reduce relative deprivation and exploitation of the village dwellers to some extent, which is the main purpose of this movement.

There is a huge difference between rural and urban amenities in our country. Many efforts are being made by the States and the Union Government to bridge the gap between rural and urban centres. Availability of high standard basic amenities is characteristic of cities (though it is not the reality of our cities) and expansion of such amenities in rural areas is

the expected goal of the governments through various schemes. Beyond these efforts the grassroots picture is not satisfactory. People are aware about the physical and infrastructural development like roads, drainage, etc., but unaware of the human and social development. To bridge the gap, there should be a feeling of relative deprivation among villagers and simultaneously a strong thirst for knowledge and other amenities of rural India. We hope slowly village libraries will create reading habit and regular attendance at libraries. Social and inclusive development and improvement of skills and knowledge among villagers is the motive of this movement. If villagers learn to use the libraries and benefits, we can ensure the success of the movement. The thought behind the initiation of village libraries was to provide village students standard literature for higher education as well as for competitive exams, because sustenance in big cities, persuasion of higher education and preparation for competitive exams for many years is not affordable for a common villager therefore establishing a public library with all necessary items will help aspirants definitely.

COMPOSITION OF BOOKS

The kind of efforts we made to revamp and promote public libraries includes the selection and procurement of reading material to be provided to the villagers. This task we found little tricky but the active support of the villagers made it easy. We prepared the list of books while considering

the age-group, interest and need of library visitors. Each village library has stock of 400 to 500 books. The collection of books comprises textbooks from NCERT and U.P. government syllabus. Hindi literature books, storybooks, novels, poems, literature for children, from National Book Trust (NBT) and Children Book Trust (CBT) are also included. Books on life and works of great personalities of India and the world were included to enrich the domain of knowledge of villagers. Atlas, weekly and monthly magazines, English to Hindi and Hindi to English dictionaries, Employment News, and India yearbooks like India 2014, etc., are purchased for each library. Monthly magazines for competitive exams and weekly magazines to update current events are also managed at each library centres. Unique collection of such books was made available keeping in consideration the interests of students from Classes I–XII, graduation and above for competitive examinations. The reason to select such a diverse composition of books was to provide all necessary literature to remote village students which are otherwise only available in college and universities situated in big cities.

MECHANISM OF FUNCTIONING OF VILLAGE LIBRARIES

To sustain the proper functioning of the village libraries as a resource centre, a detailed module was prepared in consultation with the villagers. The guidelines were

prepared in such a style that it could live long and help to improve the knowledge the villagers. To achieve the expected goals, it was proposed that primary and junior high schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), secondary schools and degree college teachers and students visit and organise weekly, fortnightly and monthly activities and programmes. These activities may include story reading and writing, debate and discussion on current issues, lectures and speech on different subjects to help aspirants. Since it is a self-sufficient institution, therefore a graduate student or a retired teacher or any serviceman who loves reading books should be appointed as the honorary librarian (retired government staff) by the Gram Pradhan to maintain all these activities at the village libraries. It would be the duty of the in-charge librarian to prescribe details of the organised programmes and preserve books and all such documentary records. To maintain the stock of books, accession register could be used in the libraries. Membership register, issuing register and visitors' diary are the other important registers which need to be kept in all the village libraries. Gram panchayat are the main agency to provide funds for the smooth functioning of the village library. Membership fees, donation from people, visitors and dignitaries are other monetary resource to help the library.

Different government departments like agriculture, veterinary, child and

women health and welfare, banking, revenue and police and other envisages to organise their programmes at these libraries to create awareness among the villagers about various government-driven policies and programmes. These departments would also display their magazines, booklets, pamphlets and newsletters at these libraries which could help the students and farmers. Combined efforts of villagers and government officials make libraries vibrant, lively and relevant. There is well established district library at each district headquarters of Uttar Pradesh; further we would open libraries at Tehsil and Block Headquarter to support village libraries. District library would work as, nodal agency to govern and administer all public libraries. Trained librarians posted at each library from village to district level. Categorized books on different subjects could be circulated from one library to another from village to district and vice versa. Interdependence and interconnectedness help in better functioning of the village libraries. CDO Kheri met and presented a booklet to the Chief Secretary Uttar Pradesh and requested him to extend his support to cover all villages of the State with public libraries.

Impact on Rural People

As political institutions become more formal, primary and informal relations among villagers are decreasing day by day, consequently traditional gathering places like *Chaupals* have withered away. Panchayat Ghars constructed by the government agencies neither attract traditional

Panch-Parmeshwar nor common villagers, therefore are left abandoned and defunct. Establishing public libraries in such unused Panchayat Ghars is an effort to create modern *Chaupal*, a new public sphere where village dwellers of all age-groups come together to learn to share and to get something in favour of their common concern. Conversation with books and their fellow villagers may enrich their stock of knowledge and will enhance interaction which will also strengthen mutual relationships among them.

Challenges before Village Libraries

Neither opening nor functioning of village libraries properly is an easy task. To develop the reading habit and motivation among villagers to visit the libraries is a serious challenge. For instance, after opening first library in village Mitauli, the author was engaged in opening of another library at Kasta village for nearly one week. During that period, nobody went to open and function the first village library. When I enquired from the village headman, he called a third-year student and appointed him as the caretaker on a stipend of ₹ 500 per month. He discharged his duties very responsibly. I used to visit and attend the activities at that library regularly until I got transferred to another Tehsil. I was satisfied with the functioning of my first village library. But in the case of other libraries my experience remained unsatisfactory because of various reasons which are discussed next.

Generally, villagers like to spend their leisure time playing cards, listening to the radio, watching television and likewise for amusement after completing their daily work. Diverting to libraries and developing an interest in books is a challenge. Therefore, mushrooming interest of reading and visiting library regularly is a tough job. That was in our consideration before inaugurating the libraries.

Management of funds and using them for the betterment of the libraries by future leadership and concerned villagers is also matter of concern. If residents visit and extend their care to libraries, they will become everlasting institutions and slowly enriched also, otherwise they would see slow demise like other government institutions. Combined efforts of villagers and officers are necessary for the sustainability of the village libraries. We need to change the public perception that libraries are 'nice to have' to the perception that 'libraries are essential for learning and essential for life'. No institution could survive in isolation and village library is no exception. Its interrelation with other libraries, schools, colleges and experts is unavoidable. And maintaining cooperation and coordination among institutions instantly is another big challenge.

CONCLUSION

Ethnographic writing is an experience-driven work in which writers seek to draw directly from their fieldwork in the cultural space of their studied universe. As we were outsiders

(government officers) and insiders (beginners of the movement), we got the chance to observe the needs of library in the village and seek the response of the villagers. This paper is an outcome of the amalgamation of various events, challenges, restrictions and responses. Overambitious politicians, jealous and incompetent senior colleagues, their combined discouraging efforts and comments gave us mixed experiences which we have mentioned above.

The present status of the public libraries in India is not good enough. All the States and UTs have their own public library systems, structure and pattern of funding and administration. Only 12 States have enacted library legislation which shows ignorance towards this important institution. In Uttar Pradesh, the scenario of public libraries is unsatisfactory. In such circumstances, opening public libraries in interior villages is really a visionary and futuristic effort.

In this paper, we mentioned a brief history of the library movement in India and the status of public libraries in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Further, we discussed about the library movement in the villages of Kheri district. Preparation for opening, selecting and composition of books and management of funds have been discussed in detail in this paper. We have also analysed the impacts of book on villagers. Along with opening village libraries, we were instantly concerned about the challenges of village libraries, and future prospects were also explained in detail.

There is a desire to acquire knowledge among villagers and especially students who were very keen to visit and study at the library. Villagers donated books, provided monetary support and sent their children to libraries. They took it very positively. I am regularly in touch with our libraries and a few of them are functioning very well and we are hopeful that these institutions will live long.

The initiative of library movement in the villages of Kheri district was introduced and led by us (administrative officers) keeping in mind the very concept of 'pay back to the society'. The facilities that we have in premier institutions like Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Pilani and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, we want to generate such facilities in remote villages of our locale of posting. Being part of the district administration, we had the privilege to initiate and carry forward

this movement. We hope that most deprived and marginalised village dwellers could gain their due access to standard knowledge through these libraries.

Last but not the least, we would like to say that if people keep the library updated and carry forward this institution carefully, their forthcoming generation would become more educated about worldly knowledge. We would also suggest that governments should plan and manage a well-designed library building; sufficient furniture and trained library staff for each village library to develop them as full-fledged institution. A separate directorate at the state level is also required for the successful functioning of public libraries. Interconnected and interdependent system of libraries from the capital city to remote villages would definitely become a medium of mass education. This is an unexplored aspect of our democratic nation which could make remarkable difference in the life of our villagers.

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