

Minority Education and The Way Forward



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Foreword

I am delighted to write this foreword, because I believe intensely in the educative value where teachers inspire children to reflect on their learning and pursue imaginative activities. Inculcating creativity and imagination is possible if we perceive and treat students as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge, especially in a democratic society. I also believe that teachers at every level and stage of their career can enrich and strengthen their teaching by learning. Participating in discussions can help teachers and students alike learn to use their minds with power and pleasure. Instructors around the world face the challenge of consistently providing high quality products. Achieving this creates multiple challenges within an educational organization. The challenges here are both difficult and interesting. People are working on them with enthusiasm, persistence, and dedication to develop new methods of analysis and provide new solutions to keep up with the ever-changing threats.

Contributors have tried to address the topics by restructuring and reorienting knowledge with greater consideration and an attempt has been made to enhance this endeavour by providing priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering and discussions in small groups. The contributors lay emphasis on providing a variety of subjects and inputs to enable students' engagement in learning. Researchers have presented topics such as Cloud Computing, Outcome Based Educational Model, Accessibility of Institutions, Educating Muslim Women.

Minority Educational Issues, STEAM Pedagogy, Inequality in School Education, New Changes in Teacher Programme, Significance of Parental Involvement and Impact of Kanyashree Scheme. The mission is to provide academia with a venue for rapid publication of research papers,

allowing dissemination of innovative methods and applications to achieve a major breakthrough.

Giving, touching others' lives, expanding the circles of our concern to include others and being always open to receiving as well as giving- it's a good description of many of the most amazing people I've encountered. And while they may live and work in different countries and in different fields, they all share the same core giving philosophy. The topics capture that philosophy and shows that it is more than a fable, a fairy tale, a parable - Its real -a path that people can follow in their daily life.

Dr. Sadiq Ali Shaikh

About Shaheen Group of Institutions [SGI]

Dr. Abdul Qadeer is the founder of SGI, he is an educationist, a philanthropist and an activist who serves as source of inspiration for the young generation in the educational field. He has immeasurably contributed to the educational development of Bidar district through Shaheen Group of Institutions. In a district like Bidar, it is highly important and imperative to have substantive educational intervention and address the questions of accessibility of quality education for all, including those who have been otherwise been unable to access education for many reasons. Shaheen under the guidance of Dr. Abdul Qadeer has taken many path-breaking step to overcome the wide-spread socio-economic backwardness in Bidar district, which affects education the most.

Dr. Abdul Qadeer started his career as an engineer at Japanese Marobani Corporation and then moved to Saudi Arabia to continue his professional care, but in 1989 he decided to return to Indian. He established Shaheen group of institutions at Bidar in the year 1989 to educate the poor and marginalized masses of Bidar district. He started it as a visionary endeavour in a one room tenement accommodating 18 students, which has now evolved into a major centre of academic excellence touching the lives of more than 20000 students and 500 teachers engaged in creation of knowledge from KG to UG. He is an educationist par excellence and has adopted pioneering ideal of providing education in one's mother tongue.

Since 2014, Shaheen has attained 1000+ free government medical seats. Now Shaheen is one of the top 5 institutes in Karnataka, which is known for offering excellent education to those students who aspire to pursue medicine. In a region where expensive, inaccessible and exploitative medical education has led to a sharpening of inequalities with the education sector, Shaheen sets itself apart by making medicine as a field

accessible for many of those who dream to pursue it, and provides top quality education in that respect.

Shaheen started a pilot project, ‘Academic intensive care Unit (AICU), aimed to bring the drop-outs and madrasa students to the mainstream. This has borne tremendous fruit and been an innovative step forward. Started in 2003 with the involvement of all stakeholders, the project was aimed to help the school dropouts and madrasa students of age group 10–18 in appearing for class 10th and 12th examinations, along with NEET and other professional examinations. AICU has a composite curriculum from class 5th to 12th. Nearly 5000 dropouts and Madrasa student are admitted annually in AICU. Alumni of Shaheen AICU are now pursuing education in esteemed institutions like Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University. The success story of AICU project is tremendous. Parents seeking a blend of temporal and religious education also have the option of choosing another course which Shaheen offers, the ingenious and unique Hafiz and integrated study of modern subjects enabling the Huffaz to go for professional course which has ushered a new era for the people of North Karnataka.

Courses:

With 33 years of experience, Shaheen has created following successful and replicable model of Education:

Shaheen Kids [Pre-Primary School]

Shaheen Value School [Class 1 to 10th Std]

Shaheen Junior College [Senior Secondary Integrated with NEET + Competitive Exam Crash Course]

Academic Intensive Care Unit [AICU] (40-60 day's course for Drop-out and Madrasa Pass – outs)

Shaheen Degree College Integrated with UPSC: (BA, BSc and BCom)

Shaheen IAS: One Year Exclusive UPSC Course for Graduates

Hifzul Quran + Course leading to Professional education for students who had completed hifz

Shaheen Teachers Training Academy [Vocational Teachers Training Center certified by SEF India]

Shaheen Alim Plus [Senior Secondary School Programme for Madrasa Graduates integrated with CLAT-Law Entrance Examination]

Contribution of Shaheen Group of Institutions has not gone un-noticed. It has been extensively appreciated with awards and honors under the patronage of Government authorities and many non-government organizations.

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Efficacy of Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students in English Language in Sri Lanka

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Abstract:

The instructional strategies of Cloud Computing in Education have multifarious benefits to both teachers and students. They can employ Cloud Computing as a means of storing and sharing information valuable for teaching and learning and also for management. The major objective of the study was to assess the influence of Cloud Computing in Education in improving English among B.Ed students. In this study, 30 B.Ed bottom level performers were selected as sample by using purposive sampling technique. It was an experimental study with Single Group Pretest-Treatment-Posttest design. For implement in Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies, a Cloud Computing Based Instructional Package consisting of English language enhancement activities was developed and used as intervention. From the analysis of data by using “t” test, it was found that the Cloud Computing in Education has significantly enhanced English language of the B.Ed students in reading, speaking, listening and writing skills

Key Words: *Efficacy, Cloud Computing, Strategies, English Language, B.Ed Students.*

Introduction

Education plays a significant role in contributing to the economic growth of a country. Practices in education got reshaped with the advent of technology to suit the need present demands in education (Jazeel, 2016). Mode of Classroom teaching got changed and that students have become more technology oriented. It is true that it has become necessary to change the mode of leaning teaching process on a par with the change of technology and its uses. One of the latest technologies used nowadays is Cloud Computing. By sharing Information Communication services in the cloud, educational institutions can outsource noncore services and better concentrate on offering students, teachers, faculty, and staff the essential tools to help them succeed in leaning teaching process.

In Sri Lanka, students are encouraged to continue their study in schools. The various schemes make the students reach to the schools and colleges despite of lack of facilities, good teachers, lack of latest books and laboratory facilities. This situation seriously affects their studies most. One of the biggest challenges the government faces in providing education is the lack of infrastructure in schools and the maintenance of them. They spend a whopping amount of money on purchasing of a wide range of hardware and software requirements for leaning.

There comes Cloud Computing in Education which can help provide solutions to the above issues. It's a network of computing resources located just about anywhere that can be shared. By implementing cloud computing technology it is possible to improve leaning teaching process and manage the educational institutions easily with a centralized system where all activities can be monitored from each and every aspect. It can also help gain quality education to every student without worrying for the infrastructure issue.

Cloud computing is an extension of the concept of distributed computing which is the process of running a program or application over many computers connected by a network. The Internet makes this process easily achievable even for the general user. It is Internet-based computing in which shared resources, software and information are delivered as a service that computers or mobile devices can access on demand. It is already used extensively in education and Google Apps, YouTube, Twitter and Drop box are cases in point.

Cloud computing in Education enables the users to control and access data via the Internet. All users of the institution are connected to the cloud .Separate login is provided for all the users for their respective work. Teachers can upload their class tutorials, assignments, and test papers on the cloud server which students will be able to access all the teaching material provided by the teachers via Internet using computers and other electronic devices both at home and college.

Given the trend of the use of technology in education, majority of educational services will be hosted in the cloud and the educational institutions will no longer host their own data centers with expensive hardware, power bills, staff salaries and computing. This will not only make it possible for students to use online teaching materials during class but they will also be able to access these materials at home, using them to prepare for and review their lessons. The use of cloud computing systems will reduce the cost of operation as the servers and learning materials are shared with other colleges.

A review of related literature indicates that there is only little studies found in the area of cloud computing in education. These studies did not specify the cloud computing instructional strategies in Sri Lankan context. Therefore, this study is an attempt to fill this gap and that the problem of the study is stated as “Efficacy of Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students in English Language in Sri Lanka”

Objective of the Study

To find out the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies in enhancing English language among the B.Ed (Technology) students in Sri Lanka

Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Based Instructional Package in enhancing writing skill in English among the B.Ed students
2. To assess the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Based Instructional Package in enhancing reading skill among the B.Ed students
3. To assess the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Based Instructional Package in enhancing speaking skill in English among the B.Ed students
4. To assess the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Based Instructional

PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATION

Method of the Study

The investigator used an experimental study adopting single group experimental design (pre-test treatment post-test) in this study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study constituted all the B.Ed (Technology) students studying in the Department of Education and Training, University of Vocational Technology, Ratmalana

Sample of the Study

For this study, a sample of 30 bottom level performers of students in English was selected by using purposive sampling technique from among B.Ed students.

Tools for the Study

1. Diagnostic Test (Achievement Test) for identifying the difficulties in leaning language skills and selecting sample for the study. This test consists of items evaluating the four skills of language.
2. Scale for validating Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Package developed by the investigator.
3. Pre, post, and progressive tests (Parallel Achievement Tests) for assessing the effectiveness of Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies in enhancing of English by implementing the

Intervention of the Study

The Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Package was used as intervention strategies to implement Cloud Computing Instructional Strategies. The Package consist of a series of activities in English for enhancing all the four language skills with the support of cloud computing instructional strategies. The package was validated by two experts, Prof. P. Prema and Prof. S. Subbiah by using a validation Scale developed by the researcher.

Procedure for the Study

In this study, before the implementation of the package, a validated pre-test was administered for assessing the competency level of the sample in English. Then, the validated Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Package was implemented for a period of 06 months. The modules in the

package were implemented one after the other. While implementing the Cloud Computing Enabled Instructional Package, a progressive test was administered after 03 months from the implementation of the package.

After completing the implementation of the package, a post-test was administered assessing the competency level of the sample in these skills: reading and writing.

The scores obtained by the sample of the study were analyzed by employing the following statistical techniques, Test of Significance – ‘t’ test

ANALYSES OF DATA

Research Hypothesis -1:

There exists significant difference in mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students in English

Table-01: mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students in English

Sl. No.	Performance Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
1	Pre-Test	30	32.2	5.16	7.20	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Post-Test	30	62.7	7.51		

From the table it may be inferred that, since the value obtained 7.20 is more than the table value 2.89 the difference in performance between the Pre-Test and Post-Test is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the hypothesis of the Study has been confirmed. Thus, the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches have enhanced the English language of the B.Ed students in Sri Lanka.

Research Hypothesis-2:

There exists significant difference in mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students with respect to reading skill.

Table-02: Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students with Regard to Reading Skill

Sl. No.	Performance Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
1	Pre-Test	30	26.4	3.20	7.40	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Post-Test	30	66.8	3.10		

From the table it may be inferred that, since the value obtained is 7.40 more than the table value 2.89 the difference in performance between the Pre-Test and Post-Test is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the hypothesis of the Study has been confirmed. Thus, the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches have enhanced the reading skill in English among B.Ed students in Sri Lanka.

Research Hypothesis-3:

There exists significant difference in mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students with respect to writing skill

Table-03: Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students with Regard to Writing Skill

Sl. No.	Performance Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
1	Pre-Test	30	32.2	4.2	6.3	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Post-Test	30	65.3	6.4		

From the table it may be inferred that, since the value obtained is 6.3 more than the table value 2.89 the difference in performance between the Pre-Test and Post-Test is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the hypothesis of the Study has been confirmed. Thus, the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches have enhanced the writing skill in English among B.Ed students in Sri Lanka.

Research Hypothesis-4:

There exists significant difference in mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students with respect to speaking skill

Table-04: Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students with Regard to Speaking Skill

Sl. No.	Performance Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
1	Pre-Test	30	30.6	2.1	4.12	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Post-Test	30	54.4	3.3		

From the table it may be inferred that, since the value obtained is 4.12 more than the table value 2.89 the difference in performance between the Pre-Test and Post-Test is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the hypothesis of the Study has been confirmed. Thus, the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches have enhanced the speaking skill in English among B.Ed students in Sri Lanka

Research Hypothesis-5:

There exists significant difference in mean scores of pretest and posttest in enhancing the performance of B.Ed (Technology) students with respect to listening skill

Table-05: Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest in Enhancing Performance of B.Ed (Technology) Students with Regard to Listening Skill

Sl. No.	Performance Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
1	Pre-Test	30	46.3	2.1	5.32	Significant at 0.01 level
2	Post-Test	30	66.8	3.2		

From the table it may be inferred that, since the value obtained is 5.32 more than the table value 2.89 the difference in performance between the Pre-Test and Post-Test is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the hypothesis of the Study has been confirmed. Thus, the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches have enhanced the listening skill in English among B.Ed students in Sri Lanka.

DISCUSSION

From the analyses of the findings, it is revealed that the Cloud Computing

Instructional Strategies have significantly enhanced the performance of B.Ed students in English in Sri Lanka.

The results of the study carried out by Jazeel et al, (2012) showed that the ICT-Assisted Learning Approaches were more effective than conventional methods. Similarly, Geetha et al (2012) concluded that multi-media based approaches were more effective than conventional methods in developing written English for slow learners. The present study has highlighted the same results through Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Package implemented.

In other studies, Bartscher et al (2001), Bassett et al (2001), and Harrington et al (1998) designed intervention programmes to improve the components of writing skills through remedial packages. They found the remedial programs enhanced the spelling, grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary of the students. Similarly, Naeem (2007) found that ‘A Suggested CALL Program to Develop EFL College Learners’ improved the components of writing mechanics (punctuation, capitalization and spelling) among college learners. The present study strengthens the findings of these studies in developing English through the intervention of Cloud Computing Enriched Package.

On the other hand, Yunus et al (2013) recommends that the uses of ICT for teaching ESL is very low and that most of the teachers are still using the conventional methods in English classes. This implies that most teachers are not aware of the benefits of using Cloud Computing in their classes. To give awareness to the teachers, in this study, the appropriate Cloud Computing applications have been better utilized for improving the low performers in the English test.

From the review of many investigations, it was inferred that Cloud Computing in Education is mostly applied at the secondary level, college level and also in university level for not only teaching English, but also for teaching other subjects such as Maths, Science. This strategy has not been employed at the undergraduate level. Hence, the investigator experimented this new strategy in the B.Ed level and found that the performance of English was improved.

By and large, the various previous studies have strengthened the findings of the present study and vice-versa. Hence, this is an important attempt in use of modern technology in teaching of English.

CONCLUSION

The cloud allows us to access our work anywhere, anytime and share it with anyone. It frees us from needing a particular machine to access a file or an application. The following conclusions have been made from the analyses of the results of the study.

The study carried out on Sri Lankan B.Ed students to find out the influence of Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches is an effort in improving English. This kind of innovative intervention will bring a revolution in language teaching and get rid of the hindrances for learning English.

Most B.Ed students face a lot of difficulties in English. Specifically they make more errors in these skills. The chances for committing these errors could have been attributed to due to the lack of opportunities provided to them for doing enough activities in their previous classes.

By using the Cloud Computing Enriched Instructional Approaches, these difficulties can be minimized. The reading, speaking, listening and writing skills of all the students can be enhanced further. Even the writing of bottom performers can be enhanced.

The influence of instructional strategies for English is improved when the instructional techniques and approaches are mingled with appropriate Cloud Computing applications to meet learning objectives in the classroom. It may be due to their multi-sensory nature of instructions.

The method of mingling instructional strategies with suitable Cloud Computing applications instead of conventional teaching methods can also help the students learn the difficult concepts in English grammar easily. The students can share their activities with others easily. This motivates the students to use cloud for their learning.

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The Integration Of Outcomes Based Educational Model In Degree Programmes In Arabic And Islamic Studies: The Case Of Four State Universities In Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT:

Outcomes based education (OBE) is a trend in higher education and has been adopted by state universities in Sri Lanka. Arabic and Islamic studies are two study areas incorporated in the general and honours degree programmes in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities at state universities of Sri Lanka. The main focus of this article is to investigate the integration of OBE in Arabic and Islamic study programmes offered by the concerned faculties and departments at the four state universities, namely: University of Colombo, University of Peradeniya, Eastern University of Sri Lanka and South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. The article uses the qualitative design through review of the present curriculum and related documents and analysis of interview responses of stakeholders selected based on purpose sampling technique. The findings show that the outcomes-based education is, to a certain extent, integrated into the content driven Arabic and Islamic study programmes, in line with the Sri Lanka qualifications framework (SLQF). The outcomes, change process and implementation of the outcome-based approach are described. Variation in the extent to which each faculty/department has implemented outcome-based education is discussed and key points for implementation are highlighted. However, the stakeholders identify a range of challenges and obstacles in transitioning the study programmes and achieving the expected standards

implied by OBE model. Moreover, the curriculum design along with appropriate pedagogy and assessment strategies is to be enhanced in attaining the intended outcomes. This article provides the understanding which may help the policy makers and relevant authorities to make decisions on programme revision.

Keywords: *Islamic studies; Arabic Language; Islamic Education; OBE; University Degree programme in Sri Lanka.*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Sri Lanka is undergoing changes in terms of quality and relevance in recent past. The ministry of higher education implemented two World Bank sponsored projects namely IRQUE and HETC. IRQUE was aimed at improving the quality of education and enhancing the education to suit the national needs and global standards to produce competitive and employable graduates. HETC was aimed at preparing graduates who are equipped with the skills of the 21st century. Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF, 2015) is an important element of systems in higher education to improve vital aspects of education. SLQF framework infers outcomes based education is stated in two parts: a set of general abilities of the qualification holders expected to have developed by end of course or programme, and a set of specific outcomes of which the students are assessed on how they are able to demonstrate for the fulfilment of requirements of qualification. Moreover, the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of University Grant Commission (UGC) conducts programme review (PR) on undergraduate study programmes, where the PR manual and standards paves the way for the universities to adapt outcome-based education (OBE).

Sri Lanka is currently experiencing a shift to OBE at the tertiary level. Outcome-based education (OBE) is one of the most significant global developments in education today. OBE is a culminating demonstration of learning. It consists of a set of procedures to the education where decisions about the curriculum are driven by the exit outcomes, in terms of the complex abilities for students who will demonstrate them at their completion of the degree, and by the course outcomes on what students can do after they are taught. The educational outcomes are clearly specified and decisions about the content and how it is organized, the educational strategies, the teaching methods, the assessment procedures and the educational environment are made in the context of the stated learning outcomes. It attempts to embrace learning outcomes with the knowledge, skills, atti-

tudes and values that match the immediate social, economic and cultural environment of society and country. According to Spady (1994), there are three broad types of OBE: -Traditional OBE which measures the learning outcomes in terms of students' mastery of the established curriculum. - Transitional OBE which measures the learning outcomes of students in terms of generic or higher-order competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills and teamwork. - Transformational OBE which measures the learning outcomes of students in terms of broad category of disciplinary knowledge and skills generic competencies, attitudes and values required by the work place or society. Over the years of development, the paradigm of OBE has evolved from traditional OBE, through transitional OBE into the era of transformational OBE. The transformational or rigorous OBE is now a worldwide trend in education and has been adopted by the higher educational institutions. Concurrent to this, Spady (1994) also suggests the dimensions of four principles in OBE, which are: design down, clarity of focus, high expectation, and expanded opportunity.

Arabic and Islamic Studies in Sri Lanka

Muslims are a minority in Sri Lanka and they have a history of over a thousand years (Dewaraja, 1994; Mahroof, 1986, 1990; Mauroof, 1980; Vamadevan, 1999). It is observed by the researchers (Jazeel, 2010; Mahroof, 1988) that Muslims had indigenous madrasah system for their learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies. During the colonial rules by Portuguese, Dutch and British in Sri Lanka, Muslims depended on madrasah as the only source of education. By mid-19th century, Arabic and Islamic Studies has flourished as a result of the development of the madrasah education into a strong structure and its institutionalization owing to direct influence of Indian rich tradition. Second half of the 20th century marked great movement of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Sri Lanka with the establishment of madrasah in large numbers.

By this period, Arabic language was included in the subjects offered for the undergraduate degree programmes when the University of Ceylon was first established. Then, the department of Arabic was established in 1945 at the Faculty of Oriental Studies. It is noteworthy that the department commenced Master of Arts programme in 1956 and extended its study areas to include Islamic civilization as main subject discipline. Subsequently, the department was renamed as department of Arabic and Islamic Civilization and was moved to the Vidyalandara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka, at Kelaniya. In 1980, the department was relocated to

the University of Peradeniya (UPDN). In the following years, separate department was established for Arabic language and Islamic Studies at University of Jaffna and Eastern University of Sri Lanka (EUSL) respectively. Arabic language and Islamic studies were offered as main subjects in faculty of Arts and Culture at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL) which commenced in 1995. In 2005, SEUSL saw the establishment of the first faculty of its nature, the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic language (FIA). The faculty consists of two stand-alone departments for Arabic language and Islamic and related Studies. The university of Colombo (UCMB) started its unit for Arabic and Islamic Culture under the Faculty of Arts.

The history of Arabic and Islamic studies at the university level in Sri Lanka expands over seven decades. It was necessary that changes and periodical revisions in these studies were made in response to the guidelines which directs that the study programmes are to undergo major revision in every five years' cycle. Thus, effective from the early 2000s, the study programmes in Arabic language and Islamic studies adopted the semester system, in which, academic year consists of two semesters and each semester comprises 15 weeks of academic activities. The course unit system was also incorporated in the academic programme, where each course is assigned credits, a time-based quantitative measure. A credit is equivalent to 15 direct contact hours of teaching and tutorials out of 50 notional hours demarcated for students learning. The Course Unit System provides flexibility and choice to both the students and teachers to enhance the teaching and learning process. Moreover, courses are categorized into core, elective, optional and auxiliary. Another important development is the introduction of new courses in the curriculum and subject stream such as Islamic banking, Islamic finance, Islamic law, Arabic linguistic and translation.

However, the Arabic and Islamic studies programmes have generated considerable interest among Muslims and non-Muslims alike and has captured their attention in recent years. With its religious-based curriculum and exclusive enrolment for Muslim, it has been increasingly subjected to scrutiny and critique. Furthermore, these studies provoke criticism for its quality, national relevance as well as coping with global demands and standards.

There is growing concern on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Arabic and Islamic studies programmes to achieve the educational objec-

tives of Islam (Jazeel, 2019). The mission of Islam is to build a peaceful and prosperous world in accordance with the will of the Almighty. As emphasized in the shariah objectives (Maqasid al-Sharia), the achievement of this mission predominantly depends on human resource development through knowledge and training, which occupies a substantial position within Islam. The entire conception of education is derived mainly from primary sources and interpretations reflects its concern on holistic development of human, who is made up of a dual nature of spirit and body. The spiritual faculty is known as the ruh (soul), aql (mind or intellect), qalb (emotion), or nafs (self) according to the function that is ascribed to it. The faculty of reason (aql), unique to human beings, elevates them above the rest of creation. Therefore, Islam has, from its inception, placed a high premium on education and has enjoyed a long and rich intellectual tradition. The Qur'an makes more than 800 references to education and repeatedly highlights its importance with frequent injunctions (Verses 58:11; 20:114; 2:269; 2:282; 58:11). Similarly, several hadith provide an idea of universal and compulsory education. The Prophet himself has decreed knowledge to be obligatory upon every Muslim male and female whom Qur'an considers as benchmarks for all humans (Verse 2:143). In the Islamic theory of knowledge and concept of education, the three Arabic terms used for education represent the various dimensions of the educational process and major domains of learning. The most widely used words for education in a formal sense are: ta'lim, from the root 'alima to denote knowledge, Tarbiyah, from the root raba implying skills development, and Ta'dīb, from the root aduba suggesting a person's attitude and development of sound social behavior (Zaman, 2001).

In Islamic education, the learning outcomes can be presented in many ways as a list of the abilities for graduates. They are a guide for the design and development of institutions to establish outcomes to suit its own vision and goal of its study programme. An agreement can be achieved on basic attributes that graduates require, in order to enable them to fulfill the described tasks in literatures about Islamic education and to meet aspirations of the community and the country where they live. The development of appropriate behaviours and attitudes is an essential component of the educational process in Arabic and Islamic study. In Islam, education aims to train the sensibility of the students in such a manner, that in their attitude to life - their actions, decisions and approaches to all kinds of knowledge - they are governed by the spiritual and deep ethical values of Islam. They are trained and mentally disciplined, in that their desire to acquire knowledge is not merely to satisfy an intellectual curiosity or for material

worldly benefit, but to develop themselves as rational, righteous beings and bring about the spiritual, moral and physical welfare of mankind.

It can be argued that OBE approach is appropriate for the educational attainments that are prescribed by Islam. There is a need for statement of the exit- outcomes for Islamic and Arabic studies to produce capable graduates through the study programmes offered. It is necessary to identify in advance the competencies and skills required of the graduates to undertake the responsibilities assigned to them. There are many advantages in adapting OBE in Arabic and Islamic studies. Most importantly, OBE will help to hold discussion to improve its relevance to suit the community needs and national educational aspirations. Use of OBE model can identify the gaps from national policy for the higher education for which Arabic and Islamic studies is criticized for its quality and relevance. The model can also ascertain capacity of graduates with skills and attitudes to contribute to the community and to meet global challenges while recognizing the traditional aspects. Moreover, it can help to incorporate measures to raise the academic standards of the faculties and departments thus increasing the economic prospects of graduates and employability.

The Islamic and Arabic study is suspected to be associated with conservatism, and stagnation of Islam. This was evident when the April 21st Easter attack on churches in Sri Lanka resulted in rise of doubt against Islamic related studies. It can be argued that OBE model can provide a concrete framework for components of social harmony and ethnic cohesion to be strengthened in these studies. Consequently, application of OBE may result in readily acceptance of this type of education by most of the critics. OBE model can be used to revise the study programme as it produces graduates for life in rapidly changing modernized world (Park & Niyozov, 2008; Steiner, 2011).

Unemployment of university graduates is a burning issue facing the government of Sri Lanka. Tracer studies done by MOHE, UGC and respective university indicates low percentage of employability among the Arts graduates. This percentage is even lower among graduates in Arabic and Islamic studies. Only a handful are employed upon graduation and the waiting time for a job for most of these graduates exceed 3 years. This has resulted in the quality of these graduates to be debated. Findings of studies on employers' feedback for Arts Graduates have been consistent, with most of these graduates found to be inadequate in career competence skills such as communications and language, critical thinking, problem

solving, decision making, and leadership. With the expectation to produce quality graduates and meet the demand of workforce changes, the success of OBE implementation is largely contingent on the pedagogy methods, learning environment, assessment strategy, teaching staff competency and students support system.

Thus, OBE is a curriculum design which moves away from the traditional content driven curriculum, with the expectation to produce job ready graduates and meet the demand of work-world changes.

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative study is mainly based on analysis and documentary review of curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies practiced at present by the faculty, departments, unit of four state universities of Sri Lanka. This review of the curriculum was supplemented by analysis of data obtained through interview with academics of the prescribed institutions, selected based on purpose sampling. The interview questions consist on the type of graduates intended to produce, graduate attributes, components of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment strategies, learning environment to attain the intended exit and course outcomes, major challenges to adapt OBE and suitability of OBE approach to Arabic and Islamic studies. A review of the related literatures was conducted to develop conceptual framework of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Programme Structure: The department of Arabic and Islamic civilization of Faculty of Arts at UPDN offers honours degrees in Arabic studies and Islamic studies to a relatively small number of students. Though this maybe the case, Arabic and Islamic civilization are offered as two main subjects in the general degree conferred by the faculty.

At SEUSL, both departments of the faculty (FIA) enroll large number of students annually who are directly admitted to both Arabic and Islamic studies subject streams by UGC. The honours degree programme of the department of Islamic studies is in three study areas: Islamic thought and civilization, Islamic banking and finance, and Islamic law and legislation (Shariah). The general degree programme of the department mainly covers courses in Islamic Studies. Similarly, the department of Arabic language conducts the honours degree in two study areas: Arabic language &

literature and Arabic linguistic & translation. Arabic language is the main subject for General degree programme of the department.

In EUSL, the department of Arabic language offers honours degree programme in Arabic language which is also a main subject in General Arts Degree programme of Faculty of Arts and Culture. Department of Islamic Studies of this faculty at the moment offers courses in Islamic studies as main subject of its general degree programme. UCMB's academic unit of Arabic and Islamic civilization, which functions under its Faculty of Arts, offers Arabic and Islamic courses for general degree programme as main subject and subject stream.

At SEUSL, UPDN and EUSL, the programme in Arabic and Islamic studies leading to honours degree is four years' duration. Interested students apply for this at the beginning of their 2nd academic year. In practice, based on their performance and results in first academic year, relatively limited number of students are selected. Registered students for this programme should complete a minimum of 120 credits. The curriculum consists of both core and other components. The curriculum comprises more than 70% core / main courses in Arabic or Islamic studies to enable students to pursue an in-depth study of one area. Foundation / compulsory courses, optional / elective courses and dissertation / internship training are included components in the curriculum. FIA include auxiliary courses as an extra requirement.

In all institutions, the programme leading to general Bachelor of Arts degree is three years duration. Arabic language or Islamic Studies are offered as one of the three main subjects and the registered students select from the listed courses based on their interest and future career plan. They must complete a minimum of 90 credits, comprising more than 70% of core/main courses, and other courses including Foundation/ compulsory courses, optional/elective courses. However, FIA has its own structure, in which the registered students must major in Arabic or Islamic studies and another main subject as a minor. Similarly, UCMB has a study stream for general degree, in which, Arabic and Islamic civilization is offered for the students who wish to follow it. Thus, the programme structure and student's workload provide the framework for volume of students learning and involvement in learning activities which the students are expected to complete in order to achieve the foreseen exit and learning outcome of the courses. The programme and curriculum structure is in compliance with SLQF that recommends OBE adaptation.

Curriculum Plan and Design: In OBE, Harden et al. (1999) suggest “product defines process. OBE can be summed up as results-oriented thinking and is the opposite of input-based education where the emphasis is on the educational process and we are happy to accept whatever is the result.” It is a key element in curriculum planning to conceptualize the type of graduate the programme intends to produce and what are the attributes they will possess. The programme planning and design involves a set of measures such as international and external stakeholder participation, employer and professional consultancy, willingness to act on feedback from alumni, employer and exit surveys etc. The analysis of data shows the institutions are to take these measures into consideration to identify realistic, deliverable outcomes for their graduates in Arabic and Islamic studies.

Traditional concept of curriculum development seems to be in place in these institutions as they include the content on what the students studied, and the examinations were designed to assess the extent to which the students had learned the content. Then only the learning outcomes are assigned to those contents. “Outcome based”, as Spady (1993) insists, “does not mean curriculum based with outcomes sprinkled on top. It is a transformational way of doing business in education.” The adoption of curriculum outcomes and OBE are different. In OBE, exit outcomes are a critical factor in designing the curriculum and the intended outcomes determine its content and its structure, where the content of curriculum must help learners to achieve the specified outcomes. Moreover, under the OBE model, many of the existing components of curriculum may be considered as irrelevant. Several approaches to curriculum evaluation need to be adopted to validate and make decision to continue with the identified outcomes. This would enable the institutions to further intervene or improve the programme outcomes, and subsequently the learning outcomes of the courses. The study programmes comprise of a list of core, elective and optional courses in Arabic and Islamic studies. These courses are designed with ILOs and they specify the credit value and workload in compliance with SLQF. However, it is questionable whether course outcomes are clearly aligned with the exit outcomes of the programme.

Graduate Attributes: Graduate attributes are foundation in OBE model to develop exit outcomes. SLQF (2015) suggests set of competencies in term of ‘level descriptors’ for general and honours degree programmes. The programme outcomes are grouped into four categories, namely knowledge, Skills (hard skills, soft skills), attitude and mind-set, as given in table below. The faculties identify some of the above competencies for their

degree programmes. For instance, FIA states that the study programmes at the faculty will endeavor to imbue in the graduates the following attributes: career competence, scholarship, good citizenship, lifelong learning and leadership. However, the study programmes in Arabic and Islamic studies need to identify the generic attributes for graduates according to the outcome-based mode. The interview data demonstrates that academic staffs are confused to specify the type of the graduates intended to produce and the competencies they will possess through the Arabic and Islamic study programmes. Unlike the professional study programmes, it is very challenging to respond when questioned on the type of graduates intended for in social sciences and humanities discipline. One academic stated that ‘By engaging in Arabic and Islamic studies, they are better able to apply the knowledge they gain. general abilities they developed to be success in their personal, community and career life’.

Table: Level Descriptors

Outcomes	Core Area
1. Subject / Theoretical Knowledge	Knowledge
2. Practical Knowledge and Application	
3. Communication	Skills
4. Teamwork and Leadership	
5. Creativity and Problem Solving	
6. Managerial and Entrepreneurship	
7. Information Usage and Management	
8. Networking and Social Skills	
9. Adaptability and Flexibility	Attitudes, Values, Professionalism and Vision for life
10. Attitudes, Values and Professionalism	
11. Vision for Life	
12. Updating Self / Lifelong Learning	Mind-set and Paradigm

Source: SLQF, 2015

Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Teaching, learning and assessment are inherently intertwined and this necessitates the holistic approach in OBE model. The course guide and interview data shows the shift from a teacher-centered toward a learner-centered teaching format in the institutions. Over the past years, a range of teaching and learning strategies is employed in the Arabic and Islamic study programmes, signifying the acclaimed benefits of the outcome-based approach. This indicates the transition from the tradition mode of delivery of lecture, which aims at simple knowledge acquisition and learners memorizing by rote, towards a more consequential knowledge construction with application of skills. The institutions employ discussion, group and individual activities, case studies, interactive lectures and directed self-studies and role play. This encourages blended learning as a way of maximizing the student's engagement in learning based on ILOs. Use of technology and modern equipment are also in place to some extent. However, smart classroom and lab-oriented demonstration are to be enhanced. Teaching and learning strategies, to a lesser extent, provide opportunities to work in study group to promote collaborate learning. All institutions need to improve the constructive alignment of teaching methods with stated outcomes in blueprint and course specification.

The assessment system must be capable of testing the students' achievement in all of the outcomes. The respondents agree that there is a clear relation between assessment tasks and the programme outcomes and thus, various assessment tools are to be employed. The programmes consists of continuous assessments that include open book examination, individual and group project, presentation, assignment etc. However, more emphasis is given to semester end examination. Having developed the programme outcomes and course learning outcomes, the Arabic and Islamic study institutions have to ensure that the assessment and evaluation processes are in place to demonstrate that the outcomes are measurable and thereby, allow for intervention. Moreover, the teaching, learning and assessment methods and learning outcomes are to be closely aligned (constructive alignment) for students to study the prescribed content, using an appropriate learning approach, thus achieving the educational outcomes specified. Innovative teaching and learning methods and the use of newer, non-traditional exams are required. Assessments are to be blueprinted on the outcomes and the course contents.

Learning Environment: A supportive learning environment is much needed for student's success in achieving the programme outcomes. Teaching,

learning and assessment strategies requires the use of appropriate facilities, amenities and activities to engage in active learning to attain the learning outcomes. The institutions plan to ensure a conducive learning environment and provide students and staff with ongoing training of common learning resources such as library, ICT, and OBE. Academic unit of UCMB has ICT based platform such as virtual leaning environment (VLE) and Learning management system (LMS) operated to facilitate its multi-mode delivery and learning. None of the institutions has language laboratories even though Arabic language is taught for the degrees. FIA has insufficient and inappropriate infrastructure facilities to suit its large number of students. Libraries at all institutions use ICT-led tools to facilitate the learners to access and use information for academic success. However, learning resources in Arabic and Islamic studies are insufficient in UPDN, EUSL, and UCMB. According to majority of the teaching staff, infrastructure of the institutions is most important to implement OBE model in the programmes. The competency of the incoming students, lack of training for staff in OBE approach and teaching strategies, and the commitment of administrative section are the complications in adopting OBE model.

Jansen (1998) discusses the negative impact of OBE on a content oriented programme of social science and humanities offered within the context of limited facilities etc. The academic staffs were questioned on the appropriateness of OBE to the study programmes in Arabic language and Islamic studies, which is mostly content oriented. The vast majority of them are of the view that OBE approach can create changes in producing competent and capable graduates, particularly in Arabic language study. There is minor view that OBE trivialises contents of the programme which is considered as crucial in the Islamic studies. Moreover, the fundamentals of Islam may be left behind in radical revision of curriculum required by OBE model.

CONCLUSION

All four institutions offering Arabic and Islamic studies attempt to adopt OBE model to produce graduates with the prescribed competencies. Their evolvment in the direction of implementing OBE shows the different stages, each institution is at. Some of them are at the initial planning stages. The institutions need to enhance the exit outcomes of the programmes through consultation and participation of the stakeholders. The alignment of course outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment strategies with the programme outcomes will support the instructions for an effective process

of OBE. The successful transformation of programmes to OBE model involves the realignment and installation of infrastructures of the institutions and competency of the staff. All of the institutions need to take serious consideration in practicing all four principles of OBE model namely design down, clarity of focus, high expectation, and expanded opportunity.

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Availability Of Schools, Teachers And Infrastructure Facilities At Elementary Level: A Study Of West Bengal

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Abstract:

Elementary school education, being the first stage of formal education, helps the individuals to achieve personal as well as social goals. Although there has been a massive expansion in elementary education of West Bengal in terms of enrolment of the students with the implementation of the 'Right to Education Act', But in terms of quality, it stands far away from the expected point. Past researches showed that to provide quality education, we must have the adequate number of schools and teachers. Good infrastructure facilities also play a key role in providing quality education. So, the researcher thinks that there is an urgent need to study about the availability of some selected quality indicators of elementary education of West Bengal. The paper examines the trends in the availability of schools and teachers of both government and private elementary schools of West Bengal from 2007-08 to 2015-16. The paper also examines the availability of infrastructure facilities in elementary schools of West Bengal. Secondary data has been used for this study. Data were collected from U-DISE: 2015-16. The study found that the total share of government schools has increased from 82.1 percent in 2007-08 to 89.45 percent in 2015-16. On the other hand, the total share of private schools has decreased from 17.9 percent in 2007-08 to 10.55 percent in 2015-16. The study also found that the total share of government school teachers has decreased from 92.9 percent in 2007-08 to 80.3 percent in 2015-16. On the other hand, the

total share of private school teachers has increased from 7.1 percent in 2007-08 to 19.7 percent in 2015-16. The study also found that only 75.6% of schools have library facilities, 43.5% of total schools have boundary walls, 40.4% of total schools have playground facilities, 97.7% and 98.3% of total schools have boys and girls toilet facilities respectively.

Key Words: *Elementary School Education, Right to Education Act, Infrastructure Facility, Quality*

Introduction:

Education is a process of development that aims to provide basic necessities for life. It helps to achieve different personal as well as social goals. The UNESCO (1975) International standard classification of education defines education as ‘organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning’. Indian school education system, controlled and funded by the state as well as central government, consists of three level of school education system- elementary (I-VIII), secondary (IX-X) and higher secondary (XI-XII). There are mainly two types of school in India (i) government run schools and (ii) private schools. Private schools are fully administered by private agency and government schools are run by the government. Unlike other states of India, in West Bengal, class I to IV is considered as primary education and class V to VIII is considered as upper primary education.

Elementary education, being a first stage of formal education is very important for the progress of any nation. It is a base for whole education system. No one can think about higher stage of education without completing their elementary stage. Although, after focusing on universalize of elementary education in India, there has been a massive progress in elementary education of West Bengal in terms of enrolment of the students, but in terms of quality, it stands far away from the expected point. There are so many indicators like availability of schools, availability of teachers, and availability of infrastructure which help to bring quality in elementary education. Much focuses has been given to these indicators by Government of West Bengal through adopting different programmes and policies. As school is known as the temple of learning, all the facilities should be provided in both the government as well as private schools. But unfortunately there is a huge gap between the private and government schools in terms of infrastructure facilities, availability of schools, pupil-teacher ratio, enrolment of the students etc.

Significance of the study:

The whole elementary school system of West Bengal is governed by school education department of West Bengal or by private organisation. Past researches revealed that although so many opportunities are given in the government schools, parents like to send their child to the private schools as they think that their child gets more quality education from private schools than the government schools. Government of west Bengal initiated a number of schemes for the progress of elementary education like education like free distribution of books, scholarship, bags, shoes, cycles etc. Although these schemes are applicable in the government run schools, the rate of enrolment of the students in the private schools is day by day increasing. So there is an urgent need to study about the comparison between different indicators of elementary education and trends in the quality indicators in government and private elementary schools of West Bengal and bring these issues before the policy makers, academic planners or education thinkers.

Objectives of the study: The main objectives of the paper are –

- 1) To study the availability of government and private elementary schools in West Bengal.
- 2) To compare the government and private elementary schools of West Bengal in terms of total number of teachers.
- 3) To examine the availability of infrastructure facilities at elementary schools in West Bengal.

Research Methodology:

To fulfil the objectives of the study, secondary data has been used which is obtained from the NUEPA statistics (U-DISE: 2015-16)

Result and discussion:

Objective I: To study the availability of government and private elementary schools in West Bengal

Table-I: Trends in the share of government and private elementary schools in West Bengal from 2007-08 to 2015-16

Year	Total Number of schools	Total number of govt. schools	Total Share of govt. school (%)	Total Number of Private Schools	Total Share of private school (%)
2007-08	70010	57461	82.1	12523	17.9
2008-09	70771	57344	81.0	13427	19.0
2009-10	88556	77181	87.2	11362	12.8
2010-11	87827	79119	90.09	8708	9.91
2011-12	89636	81363	90.77	8273	9.22
2012-13	91704	82259	89.70	9445	10.3
2013-14	91572	81915	89.45	9657	10.55
2014-15	92169	82444	89.45	9725	10.55
2015-16	92491	82737	89.45	9754	10.55

Source: U-DISE: 2015-16

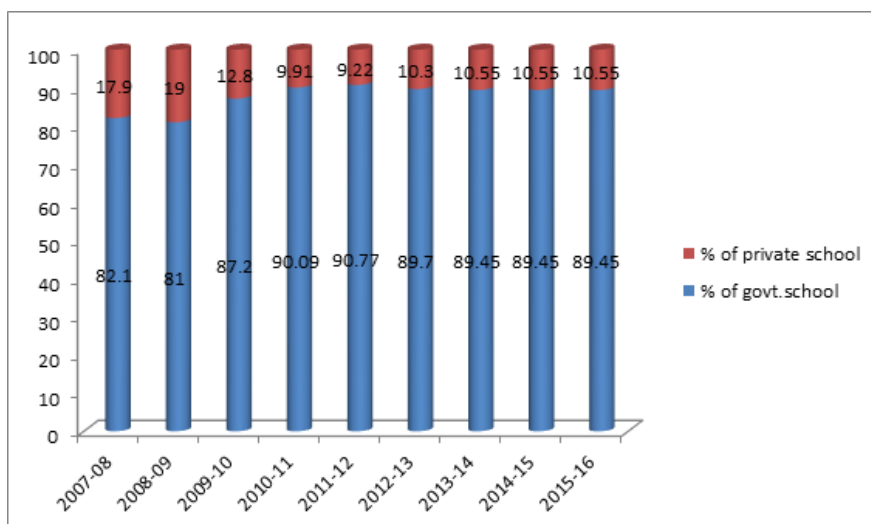


Figure I: Showing trends in the share of government and private elementary schools in West Bengal from 2007-08 to 2015-16.

Interpretation:

Table 1 shows that from 2007-08 to 2015-16, between the gap of 9 years, there has been continuous increased in the share of government elementary schools which constituted 82.1% in 2007-08 and 86.4% in 2015-16. On the other hand reverse condition has taken place in private elementary schools. Although the number of private schools has increased, there has been continuous decreased in the share of private schools constituted 17.9% in 2007-08 and 10.2% in 2015-16. Maximum increased in the share of government elementary school has been found in the year 2009-10. Within a year, almost six per cent government elementary school has increased from 2008-09 to 2009-10. This drastic change may be due to implementation of Right to Education Act (1st April, 2010). This is very unfortunate that after 2012-13, the increasing rate of both government and private schools is very slow. If this trend will continue, there will be questions on the accessibility of elementary education to the masses.

Objective II: To compare the government and private elementary schools of West Bengal in terms of total number of teachers.

***Table-II:** Trends in the share of government and private elementary school teachers of West Bengal from 2007-08 to 2015-16*

Year	Total number of teachers	Total Share of Govt. Teacher	Total Share of Private Teacher (Aided and Unaided both)
2007-08	274052	92.9	7.1
2008-09	272923	91.8	8.2
2009-10	381018	82.2	17.8
2010-11	494297	83.9	16.1
2011-12	529703	84.6	15.4
2012-13	537047	82.8	17.2
2013-14	536830	81.6	18.6
2014-15	566484	81.3	18.7
2015-16	565646	80.3	19.7

Source: U-DISE: 2015-16

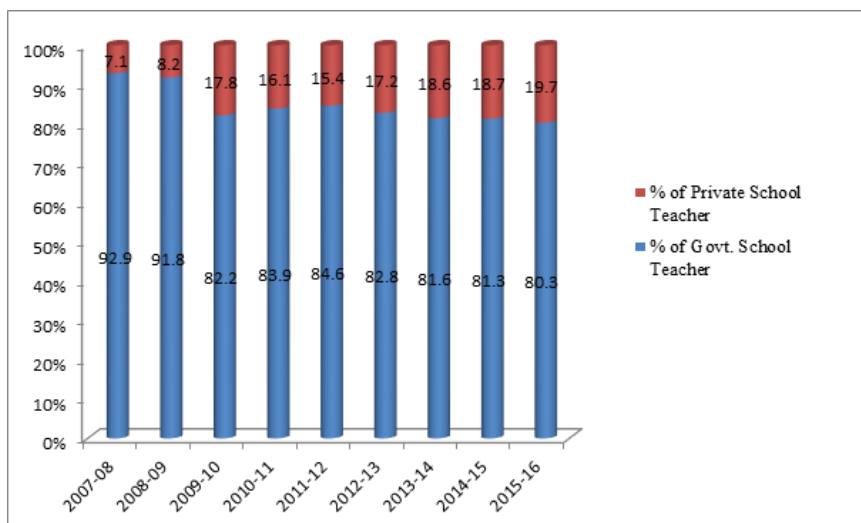


Figure- II- Showing trends in the share of government and private elementary school teachers of West Bengal from 2007-08 to 2015-16

Interpretation:

Table-II reveals that in 2007-08, the total number of elementary school teachers (including private and government school) was 274052 and this number has increased up to 565646 in 2015-16. This is very unfortunate that there has continuous decreased in the rate of government school teachers and increased in the rate of private school teachers. In 2007-08, the total share of the government elementary school teachers was 92.9% and it decreased to 80.3% in 2015-16. On the other hand, in 2007-08, the total share of the private elementary school teachers was 7.1% and it increased up to 15.1% in 2015-16 which is almost doubled. The table 1 also indicates that, in between 2008-9 and 2009-10, the percentage of government school teachers has decreased drastically from 91.8 to 82.3. In the same time, the percentage of private school teachers has increased from 8.2 to 17.8.

Objective III: To examine the availability of infrastructure facilities at elementary schools in West Bengal.

Table-III

Infrastructure facility	In Percentage (%)
Schools having Library facility	75.6
Schools with boundary wall	43.5
Schools having playground facility	40.4
Schools with boys' toilet	97.7
Schools with girls' toilet	98.3

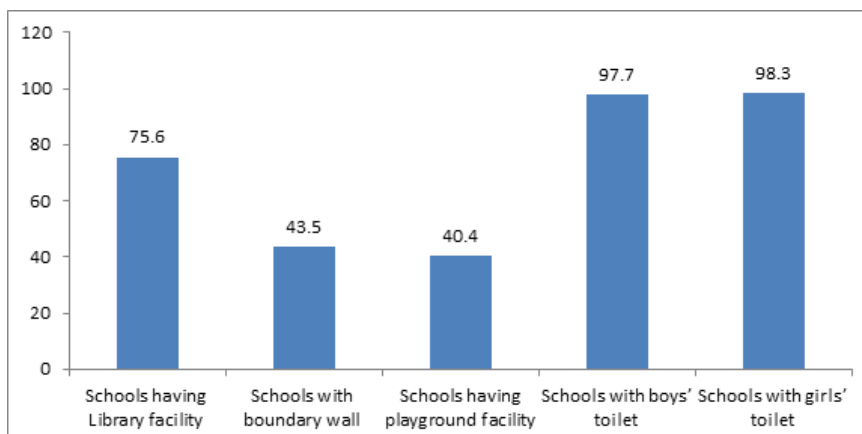


Figure III- Showing percentage of schools having infrastructure facilities
Interpretation:

Table 3 shows that about 75.6 percent elementary schools in West Bengal have library facility. It means that about 25.4 percent of the total schools do not provide the library facility to the students. The table 3 also shows that the percentage of schools with toilet facility for both boys and girls are 97.7 and 98.3 percent respectively. About 43.5 and 40.4 percent of the total elementary schools have boundary wall and playground facility respectively. It clearly indicates that most of the schools have no boundary wall and play ground facility.

Findings: The major findings of the study were:

i) Huge difference in the share of government and private elementary schools has been found

- ii) Maximum increased in the share of government elementary schools has been found in the year 2009-10.*
- iii) After the year of 2012-13, the increasing rate of both government and private elementary schools is very slow.*
- iv) In terms of elementary school teachers, Maximum change has been found in the year 2009-10 where the share of government elementary school has drastically decreased from 91.8 per cent in 2008-09 to 82.3 per cent in 2009-10 and private elementary school teachers has increased from 8.2 per cent in 2008-09 to 17.8 per cent in 2009-10.*
- v) About 75.6 percent elementary schools have library facility.*
- vi) Only 43.5 and 40.4 percent of the total elementary school of West Bengal have boundary wall and playground facility respectively.*
- vii) About 97.7 and 98.3 percent schools have boys and girls toilet facility respectively.*

Suggestions:

- i) Government of West Bengal should take necessary steps to setup more new elementary schools to provide basic education to the masses.*
- ii) Government should also appoint new teachers in the state-aided elementary school to maintain the pupil-teacher ratio.*
- iii) There is also need to supervise in a proper manner whether the students are really benefited by the government schemes or not.*
- iv) Private institutions should also focus more on the quality education rather than the enrolment of the students.*
- v) Government should also provide good infrastructure facilities to the elementary schools.*

Conclusion:

Availability of school, teacher and infrastructure facilities are the basic indicators for improving the quality of school education system. Although, the demand for education has gradually increasing, there is lack in the availability of government schools and teachers at the elementary level in West Bengal. Children learn better through play way method. So, schools are expected to provide all the facilities to the students through which they can easily get the chance to learn more. Moreover, much emphasise has been given to the enrolment of the students through different schemes. Effort should be made by Government of West Bengal to bring quality at elementary level.

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Informality And Educational Gap: Accessing The Role Of Education For Muslim Women Escaping The Informal Employment In India

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Abstract

Estimating rate of returns from education was an important paradigm in the neo-classical framework which developed during 1960s. The positive correlation between income and education was already established (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos 2004) and it led to evolution of investing in human capital for more economic returns. However, societal or labor force discrimination could undo the returns to education for certain social groups by forcing members of non-dominant groups into informal labor markets (UNDP 2013). It is a matter of debate whether education can counteract discriminations in the labour market and ensure equal wages even to the most marginalised group. The role of family endowments, financial background and high status in the society in influencing the income in labour market has been an issue of contest in past decades. Family background does influence the labour market and some part of their return to education arises from their backgrounds (Kingdon, 1999).

India is a land of various diversities and equitable allocation of resources has been a major policy concern. Education as a pure public good hasn't still been realised in the country therefore, its outcome also varies depending upon its availability as well as accessibility. Muslim women can be seen as most marginalised, least educated and lost in the narratives of feminism upsurge, India or abroad.

With this paper, I have tried to establish linkages between informality and level of education among the Muslim Women. More of 95 percent Muslims in India are engaged in informal sector. They also exhibit lower rate of returns at elementary and higher level of education. This paper explores the different dimensions which leads Muslim women prominence in home-based low-paying informal jobs. I have tried to discuss in details discriminations in labour market per se income, accessibility, and availability which they go through and tried to link it with their low level of educational qualifications.

Keyword: *Informal, Labor, Muslim, Women, Education, India*

Topic Interest: *Minority Educational Issues*

Introduction

Women in almost all communities across the globe face pervasive gender inequalities and discriminations in economic and social opportunities. They are still disadvantaged in the labour market in terms of their share in employment, remuneration and working conditions (ILO, 2018). It is still difficult for the women to mark their territory in the world of organised sector irrespective of their socio-economic development. ILO states that women are often found in more vulnerable categories of work like domestic or home-based jobs. Their vulnerability comes from the fact that it is statistically difficult to calculate the economic value of their actual labor therefore, in nearly all the cases they tend to earn low wages as compensation of their work.

In India, there is a high incidence of informality in nearly all forms of work. In the land of more than one billion population, 81 percent of population makes their living with informal sector (ILO, 2018). The NSSO data (2011-12) and ILO reports suggests that more than 90 percent of the agriculture sector and 70 percent of non-agriculture sector falls in the category of informal category. It is the backbone of the economy and the largest contributor to economic development.

There are many characteristics in the structure of occupations in the informal sector. Many of these occupations are guided by institutions of identities like gender, caste, religion, place, language etc. These gender and ethnic identities have influences in the labour market which also sometimes move beyond to public sphere like accessibilities to decent work, education, health and decent standard of living. India, being a diverse de-

mographic group is subjected to various discriminatory practices in the labour market. Muslims and Hindu lower caste in India earn slight less wages as compared to their upper-caste Hindu counterparts with varying locational extent (Mondal Shamim S, 2016). These discriminatory practices can be found in the historical trajectory of India and continues to determine access to economic resources (Bosher, Penning-Roswell and Tapsell 2007). The Census (2011) found out that out of 24.39 crore households in India, 17.91 crore of them are in rural areas where the primary earnings are less than Rs 5,000 a month. 84 percent of Muslims in India are sustaining their lives less than Rs 20 in a day (NCEUS, 2007). In the whole discourse of these wage and work discriminations, the worst sufferers are Muslim Women. The Sachar Report (2006) stated that uncouncted labor is highest among the Muslim women which is as high as nearly 70 percent.

Despite widespread economic activity since the last two decades, the benefits of growth have not reached to some marginalized communities of India (MF Alvi, 2016). The work participation rate among Muslim Women is as low as 14.1 percent against the national average of 25.6% women in India (Census, 2001). The Census 2001 also revealed the urban-rural gap of work participation among Muslim women which was directly linked to the lack of professional education among them. For rural areas it was 21.7% while for urban areas it was 12.9%. If we talk about the category of work among Muslim women, the percentage share of cultivators is 22%, for agricultural laborers it is 30.8%, the share of household industry workers is 5% and for other workers it is 27.9%. Majority of Muslim women workers in India are employed in the rural areas, primarily as agricultural laborers and cultivators. In the urban areas, a part of the Muslim women workers is employed in the unorganized sector, i.e. in household industries, petty trades and services, buildings and construction etc. (Nahid Sarikhani, 2009) In a study done by Hasan and Menon (2004) it was found that the rate of drop-out is quite higher among Muslim women which has a direct correlation with their presence in level of higher education.

Financial independence is one of the most important variables which gives an individual opportunity to access a life which is more dignified and better quality. Economic well-being is one of the basic rights of an individual and it is also duty of the state to ensure that well-being. Men and women are important economic agents and most important factors of production in the economic system. In this era of globalisation where men and women proved their equal credentials, there are still many societies

where women are openly discriminated in the labour market. There many social, cultural and economic factors, which pushes women below their productive capacities and their right to work with dignity and pride. In most of the developing economies, economic and social mobility among the women is far less as compared to men (Luke & Munshi, 2011). India is one of them. In most parts of rural areas in the country there are various social and cultural barriers which compels women not to indulge in economic activity. There are some communities where social and economic mobility among women is almost negligible, even in the case of extreme poverty. Among Muslims, there are very low visibility of women in the economic and political spheres. Hasan & Menon (2004) writes that majority of Muslim women are the most disadvantaged, economically ill, impoverished and politically marginalised sections of Indian societies. Most of the women in this community are put to various cultural and social restrictions which hinder their path to economic development. Their lives, morality, and movement in public spaces are under constant scrutiny and control (Sachar Report, 2004). Patriarchy controls their day to day activities as well as guides important decisions of their lives like education, children and marriage. In most of the rural areas, same condition prevails irrespective of their religion, however, intensity varies from community to community. This intensity can be viewed as more profound among the Muslim communities. Education, region and other opportunity structures differ for Muslim and Hindu women, and they may lead to differing outcomes in the labour market. Das, M. B. (2004) writes that there are two main reasons for the low participation of Muslim women in the labour market. In rural areas, it is due to their limited engagement in agriculture within the overall context of differential land ownership patterns by religion while in urban areas it is due to their exclusion from professional, technical and clerical jobs.

If we talk about discrimination and disparities, women being treated as subordinate to men is traditional perception across all the major religions. The patriarchy exists in one form or another and men always get a lead role vis-à-vis women. The religions dictate a very definite gender roles and there is designated pattern in a way men and women would be treated. Though Islam puts a high priority to the education and empowerment of girls, in the trajectory of cultural discourse guided by principles of patriarchy, Muslim women were left far behind both, educationally and economically.

Religious Communities	Female	Male	Total
Muslims	51.9	62.41	57.155
Hindus	55.98	70.78	65.38
Jains	84.93	87.86	86.395
Christians	71.97	76.78	74.375
Sikhs	63.29	71.32	67.305
Buddhists	65.6	77.87	71.735
Others	41.38	59.38	50.38

Literacy Rate Among the different Religions of India

Source: Census 2011, Govt. of India

The national literacy rate according to the Census 2011 was 74.04 percent. For male it was 82.14 percent while for female it was 65.46 percent. The above data shows religion wise literacy rate of India. As we can see literacy rate is lowest both for Muslim men and women however, it is lowest for Muslim women at 51.9 percent.

Percentage of Muslim Population in various educational levels in India

Total Muslim Literate-	Male	Female
Literate without educational qualification	2.81	2.24
Below Primary	13.47	11.35
Primary	15.18	12.88
Middle	9.66	7.32
Secondary	6.40	4.63
Higher Secondary	4.42	3.31
Non-Technical Diploma	0.16	0.12
Technical Diploma	0.35	0.12
Graduate and Above	3.05	1.75

Source: Census 2011, Govt of India

The Census 2011 says that 57.15 percent Muslim population in India is literate. If we talk about the percentage at different educational levels, we can see that through the successive level, the participation of Muslim women decreases gradually. Very few opt for courses like technical and non-technical diplomas. Most of the women don't go beyond graduate level. For post-graduate and above degree, their participation would be further low.

Work Participation Rate (WPR) amongst major religious groups

Major Religious Groups	WPR	Percentage Share of Non-working Population	Female Work Participation Rate	Female Work Participation Rate as Main Worker
Hinduism	41%	58.95%	27%	24.26%
Islam	32.6%	67.42%	15%	15.58%
Christianity	41.9%	58.09%	31%	31.73%
Sikhism	36.3%	63.67%	15%	18.40%
Buddhist	43.1%	56.85%	33%	33.12%
Jains	35.5%	64.27%	12%	10.02%
Other Religions And Persuasions	48.5%	51.50%	48%	
Religion Not Stated	31.3%			
All	39.8%			24.64%

Source: Census 2011, Govt. of India

Work Participation for women as compared to men is lower across all the religions. However, Muslim and Jains women have the lowest work participation rate. This doesn't mean that the women in Jain community are poor or marginalised, it is simply because their household income is substantially good and therefore, they withdraw themselves from labour market. For Muslim women, it is difficult to enter job market and work because of restrictions imposed on them to leave their home and work.

Per 1000 Distribution of Households for major religious groups by household type

Major Religious Groups	Self-employed in agriculture	Self-employed in non-agriculture	Sub total	Regular wage/ salary earning	Casual labour in agriculture	Casual labour in non-agriculture	Sub total	Others	All
Hinduism	356	143	499	95	217	131	348	58	1000
Islam	240	252	492	91	181	163	344	72	1000
Christianity	343	156	498	160	100	145	245	97	1000
Sikhism	355	131	487	138	143	157	300	75	1000
Other	369	151	520	77	272	76	348	53	1000
All	343	155	498	96	210	135	345	61	1000

Source: NSSO 68th Round

The above data surveyed by NSSO revealed that the percentage of Muslims in the regular salaried earnings is the lowest while their percentage as casual labour in non-agriculture activities is highest. Their percentage is also lowest as self-employed in agriculture activities. There are differential land ownership patterns by religion (Das, 2004) therefore, most Muslims get engaged in working as casual labours.

Religious Groups	Self Employed Women		Regular Employee Women		Casual Labour Women		All Employed Women
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Hinduism	581	411	53	439	366	150	1000
Islam	682	613	66	249	252	137	1000
Christianity	595	265	140	647	265	88	1000
Sikhism	790	508	62	482	148	10	1000
Others	540	317	49	560	411	123	1000
All	593	428	56	428	351	143	1000

Source: NSSO 68th Survey

According to the above data by NSSO, we can see that Muslim Women in rural areas are more occupied as self-employed and casual labours while their proportion is comparatively low as regular employed women both in rural and urban areas. Low level of education among the women can be one of the important reasons for the low participation. Their restrictive job mobility in the labour market doesn't let them have accessibility to more economic opportunities.

As Hasan & Menon (2004) write “occupationally, they are in the informal sector, self-employed in low paying often semi-skilled home-based work, casual labourers, and domestic workers, all of which would be categorized by poor working conditions and low wages. They also make a statement that “over 75 percent of women across communities report that they need permission from their husband to work outside the home. It is open to question whether husband's control over them and refusal account for low participation; or the lack of access to resources and work opportunities and discrimination that many women in the informal sector experience”.

Linkages between Education and Income

Education has a direct relation with income and rate of growth ((Psacharopoulos 1992). Robert E. LUCAS in his paper “the mechanics of economic development” (1988) discussed that the level of the education affects the level of productivity as educated people tend to innovate which leads the higher productivity. Education plays a major role in differentiating the labour in terms of quality which is reflected in their wage gap. Education not only increases the knowledge and skills but also makes them more productive for higher wages (Nadeera Rajapakse, 2016). Similarly, people with more educational skill will be paid more and vice versa. Therefore, for economy to progress it is important that they are educationally skilled. Especially for a developing country like India education plays an integral role in raising economic productivity both at individual and national level. Women, being a part of workforce have to be educationally equipped and qualified for better wage and economic productivity. In fact, it was also argued that educating girls and women is probably the single most effective investment a developing country can make, whether or not women work outside the home (Ilhan Ozturk, 2001). He emphasized that woman even if they are working from or not involved in any economic viable activities, still education creates multitude of positive remunerations for their families. In case of India, which is already categorized among the least literate country of world, education among Muslims is highly skewed towards the

bottom (S. kazi 1999). She asserts that “Muslim women are among the poorest, educationally disenfranchised, economically vulnerable, politically marginalized group in the country”.

Geetha Rani, P. (2014) writes that “from a national perspective education enriches the stock of human capital that serves as a production factor while from an individual’s perspective acquiring education yields economic benefits in the form of higher wages. As a result, education outcomes are interlinked with economic growth and inequality across different groups”. She also states that Muslims have the least returns in elementary and higher education. While the Other minorities group report higher returns than Muslims.

	Forward/ High Caste	OBC	Dalit/Ad- ivasi	Muslim	Other Minori- ties
Elementary	3.91	3.90	4.54	1.51	5.09
Secondary	6.39	8.30	6.83	7.78	4.59
Higher	26.10	28.30	-29.10	12.30	18.70

Major Source of Income	Levels of Education			
	No Education	Elementary	Secondary	Higher
Agriculture	-	-	-	-
Family Farm Work	1,117	1,961	3,300	8,813
Agriculture Wage Labor	9,535	6,836	4,216	-
Non-Agricul- tural	-	-	-	-
Salaried Posi- tion	5,083	13,760	42,592	1,22,987
Family Busi- ness	8	18,058	36,817	84,849
Non-agriculture wage labour	8,716	11,227	8,910	2,579
All	10,172	17,814	36,556	84,483

Source: IHDS, 2005

According to the data presented above which was done by Institute of Human Development we can see level of income increases gradually with successive levels of education. For a person having no education will be paid less, whatever be the source of income. Thus, we can see there is a positive correlation between income and education. Education helps individual in getting employable skills and increases their productivity in the labour market. In developing countries where labor informality is commonplace, education may prove to be a useful tool to align educated workers with the highly productive formal sector (Montes J. Delgado et al, 2016). In India, where informal sector forms the backbone of the economy, education can act as a catalyst for optimum human resource utilization.

Labor Market discriminations on the grounds of gender, caste, religion or location are not a new concept. Societal or labor force discrimination could undo the returns to education for certain social groups by forcing members of non-dominant groups into informal labor markets (UNDP 2013).

Private rates of return to education by Caste and religion (in %)

Elementary	3.91	3.90	4.54	1.51	5.09
Secondary	6.39	8.30	6.83	7.78	4.59
Higher	26.10	28.30	-29.10	12.30	18.70

Source: Calculation by Geeta Rani, P. (2014) with the help of IHDS data

From the above data we can see that for elementary education, both forward caste and OBC exhibits same rate of returns and post elementary level, it exceeds as compared to forward caste. It may be due to reservation policies in employment for OBCs. For Dalits and Adivasis rate of returns at elementary level is better than OBCs and Forward caste but drastically goes down at higher level. The negative returns accruing to Dalits and Adivasis in higher education indicate the reality of reservations in higher education and in the hierarchy of employment prospects continue to be met with a great deal of resistance leading to under-enforcement (Geetha Rani, P. 2014).

For Muslim rate of returns to education is comparatively low among all the minorities. Both at elementary and higher educational levels, rate of return is least among all the group except Dalits and Adivasis.

Education as a Catalyst in mainstreaming Muslim Women in labour Mar-

ket Regarding education of minorities National Policy of Education, 1986 states “Some minority groups are educationally backward or deprived. Greater attention will be paid to the education of these groups in the interest of equality and social justice. This will naturally include the constitutional guarantees given to them to establish and administer their own educational institutions, and protection to their languages and culture”. Prime Minister’s new 15-point Programme for Welfare of Minorities guaranteed equitable share in economic activities and employment and protective measures if one or more community lag and become increasingly marginalized.

As Sekh Rahim Mondal (1997) puts educational backwardness of Muslims in India should be understood in the wider context of their socio-economic and political marginalization. Most of the Muslims have awareness as education only route to upward labour mobility however, poverty is the biggest setback which pushes them backward. Poverty, low educational level and lack of employable skills plunge them into vicious cycle which leads them more marginalized from rest of the community. Therefore, the only way to break this vicious cycle is to get education. Muslims women have to increase their capabilities both economically and socially, acquire more employable skills for upward mobility in the labour market. The community perception regarding Muslim going out for work has to be change and women must be given economic and social liberties. Rather than living as marginalized and forgotten, women must exercise their freedom and live a life with dignity and full of opportunities to grow and prosper. It is their basic human right for economic and social prosperity, and it is the duty of all the stakeholders to guarantee these rights to them. Only an inclusive society can prosper. If anyone is left behind, the purpose of development gets vanish. Therefore, a more comprehensive effort is required from all the parties to ensure more educational accessibility to Muslim women. From informality to formality and work with honor and dignity, women have to get education and explore new opportunities.

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Minority Educational Issues

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Introduction

Before addressing the educational issues in which the term “minority” has been widely used, I am trying to interpret what “minority” means. I would like to put forth the definition of the term “minority” first, and then go on deconstructing it and eventually try to convey how problematic it is. The concept of the term minority will be the ground to deal with educational issues in a more reasonable and proper way. , I have divided my article into two different sections. First, I will define, what should the term minority mean and how educational issues are relevant to it. What are certain issues of education that arise due to minority identity in India? In the second section, I will briefly cover the “Hindu majority theory” which has been nicely articulated and propagated, in fact one can say how beautifully it has been sold out to “Other Backward Hindus”; who are divided into caste and sub-castes, where they are historically, socially and economically discriminated; they are treated crueller than varminths. I will try to highlight some of my questions on the idea of “Hindu majority”-minority. In educational issues, I will examine with a specific focus on “Muslim educational issues”. I consider that the paradigm-shift of “Modi-Era” has created a lot of buzz and underlined more problems and issues to powerless communities. I will cover educational issues of minorities with aggregate relevance of today with past.

Diverse spirit of India; an introduction

India is known as a diverse country across the world. The diverse nature is its prime identity. A Hollywood actor named her daughter ‘India’ owing to India’s colourful nature where people live with harmony and peace.

Thousands of languages, different cultures, and practices, different religions, faiths, and beliefs, every state and every district or even every single region boasts its uniqueness. “Unity in diversity “ is a badge of honour especially given to the India or the slogan itself represents our country. With all its uniqueness and elegance there are many dilemmas and crises that need to be addressed strongly to preserve the beauty of this nation. We rose listening to the tales that Nehru, the first prime minister of India and Kalam, despite their religious differences they had worked together, for example. Once Nehru had visited the first education minister of Independent India Kalam, to discuss and collect ideas to unravel the national and international issues.

In India, one often sees a temple, a mosque, and a church within 10 meters of each other, peacefully coexisting without any problem whatsoever.

Minority/Majority Idea through the lens of the Indian constitution and worldwide

The constitution came into effect after prolonged and deep-rooted dialogues and discussions of the “constituent assembly”.

The concept of “Minority” has been distinguished by the Indian state in its constitution and academically, this exact definition (which will be concluded in last lines) is used to argue anything related to “minorities”. The bizarre thing is that a “secular” democratic state divides its population based on religion and recognizes a part of its population as “minorities” where the numbers are mainly deemed. The constitution of India doesn’t define the notion of “Minority”, but it furnishes certain rights to the communities that exist less or that are small in number comparing to other major or dominant groups. Article 30 of the Indian constitution commands that all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and regulate educational institutions of their choice. Article 29 protects minorities’ right to preserve their language, script or culture. Article 15 of the constitution forbids discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth. The Indian state indicates minorities based on religion, language, race, and caste in its context the number is extensively important, and the population had been disaggregated nationally. The question is that, if the disaggregation of people takes place nationally, does it identify all problems? If they separate them socially and state-wise, does the problem varies in socially and state-wise disaggregation?

In the article “Relativity of the minority concept” the definition of minority has been defined noting the reference of (SCPDPM) Sub-commission on the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities. “A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a state, in a none-dominant position, whose numbers -being nationals of the state- ... the show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity”¹ toward the preservation of its ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristic.

The idea of Minority-Majority primarily focuses on numerical inferiority. The Indian state defines the minority theory chiefly on a religious basis. In one term, we can conclude the idea of the minority in India as “Religious numerical inferiority”.

Deconstructing the idea of Minority-Majority

It doesn't have any single agreed definition and it creates controversies and disagreements as well. Recently, I have been through the news on television that some lawyers were demanding for disaggregation of Hindus on state-wise that it will help them to utilize the special provision of the minority. They said that the state-wise disaggregation will help Hindus in Muslim Majority places like Jammu and Kashmir. The supreme court of India issued a notice to the minority department to present the definition of a minority within 90 days. The social anthropologist Irfan Ahmed expresses the definition as, “The characterization of minority is not just numbers but their comparative, disempowered position vis-à-vis the majority community in a given polity”², in the same article he later quoted the Political analyst, Andre Liebich that, “two elements constituting a minority are “inequality and inferiority, not merely numerical but substantial inferiority”³. Sachar Committee Report also identifies that “Worldwide, minorities tend to grapple with three types of inter-related issues: issues relating to identity, security, and equity”⁴. If the identity is a concern then it could be different, but in a secular democratic country, religion should never be the matter of identity. In this context, the division of the Hindu community based on religion is a well-articulated and nicely propagated agenda of Brahmanical forces and for this agenda, the so-called “Hindu majority” exists only in electoral politics.

The first education minister of independent India Abul Kalam Azad, In his 1940 presidential address at the Ramgarh session of the Indian National Congress, defined the “minority” as, “In Political parlance the word minority... means such a weak community (Jamat) which because of both

its number and capacity (salahiyyat) finding itself incapable of protection itself in relation to a larger and more powerful community... Here the issue of capacity (nauiyat) is as important as that of number (tadad)". The social anthropologist Irfan Ahmed says that "lack of access and exercise of political power as central to the idea of the minority in a future democratic polity". With the partition of India in 1947, the Idea of Muslims as a minority was institutionalized in political and constitutional discourses through a clever act of disempowering them"⁵. A secular democratic country where its history representing freedom fighters from all major and minor communities has no right to divide people to identify based on their religious identity and give them special provisions to disempower from political exercise. Shefali Jha goes beyond that and sharply criticizes the constituent assembly, she says, "in the name of democracy, the constituent assembly of India adopted the certain individual and collective rights to religion. Democracy, however, is not just about rights; another integral component of democracy is a representation."⁶In her essay, she argues that "The granting of a range of individual and collective religious rights to the minorities was used, in the constituent assembly, to justify the refusal of their demand for the more adequate mechanism of representation or for reserved seats in the legislature"⁷

Minority identity is not mere religiously numerical inferiority, but it is a fear and feeling of insecurity from a politically influential and dominant group. This group can not be reckoned by its number, but it must be examined by its political, economic and educational, hegemony. Vokkaligas and Lingayat are small in numbers but these groups had been observed by famous sociologist M.N Srinivas as dominant castes. These small groups from Karnataka state have strong political influence. The division of Hindus on a religious basis would be our innocence because many a Hindus, despite their religious identity have been historically and socially discriminated against for their caste by Hindus themselves. Brahmanical forces always ruled them mercilessly and exploited their rights. Lower caste and thousands of sub-castes have always been regarded as worst than animals. In India, religion, (whether it is Hindus, Muslims or any religion) and on another side, the most importantly, Caste-based stratification of the population always remained and faced problems as minorities of this so-called secular country.

Educational issues of Muslim Minorities

In a country like India, the prime reason for minority educational issues is

the label of minority identity. This identity intensifies more when it comes to Muslims and it has become more complicated than ever, in complete paradigm-shift of the Modi era. There are no such studies available or conducted on how minority issues have taken new ups and downs. To relate this article, I will highlight some incidents and discriminative behavioural patterns insinuated in youth and being outspread in central universities. The Sachar committee report and counter-encounter analytical arguments and research papers perhaps have core relevance with the era before 2014. A Brief understanding of Muslim Educational status.

The study clearly shows that the educational status of Muslims is lowest among all SRCs (except SCs/STs) in India. The speed in increasing their literacy rates is not satisfactory comparing to other socio-religious groups. Rakesh Basant finds “Primary education and higher secondary attainment levels are also among the lowest for Muslims and inter-SRC differences”⁸primary education is the only base and foundation to continue the journey of education, so the GAR must be worse than this. Rakesh Basant says “graduate attainment rate (GARs) are also among the lowest and not converging with the average”.⁹The Kundu committee report evaluates the GAR among SRC after the recommendations of Sachar committee, it later says that GAR is lowest and equal to Hindu SCs “The completion of graduate or higher level education was quite low for all the SRCs in 2004-05 and 2011-12 (Figure 4.15). In 2011-12 (and in 2004-05) other Minorities and Hindus were way ahead of Muslims with respect to graduation or higher level of education. Among Hindus, General Hindus register highest rate of graduate or higher level of education in 2011-12, whereas SC/ST had the lowest rate (2.6%). OBC Muslims were also equal to SC/ST Hindus in this respect. Muslims general do slightly better with completion rate of 6 % in 2011-12. OBC Hindus were doing comparatively better than other subgroups among both Hindus and Muslims”.¹⁰ Later the Kundu committee was designed to evaluate the process of implementations recommended by the prime minister’s high level committee which is known as SCR. The post Sachar evaluation committee says that “Literacy levels have increased in all SRCs between 2004-05 and 2011-12 (Figure 1), the most among the Hindu SC & ST category, though they remained with lowest literacy level in 2011-12. Next was the OBC Muslim category, which saw improvement by 12 percentage points in 2011-12. In spite of these improvements, compared to other SRCs, Muslim OBC and Hindu SC & ST had lower levels of literacy.”¹¹

Communalism

The positioning of Muslims in India is very susceptible and sensitive. The identity of being Muslim and partition of Pakistan after independence on the religious basis made their existence hypersensitive. It is obvious that communal riots are a prime and successful policy for safeguarding political dominance. The statement of Home Minister Mr. Amit Shah frankly says in a political campaign, “I assure all Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh Jain refugees they won’t have to leave the country; they will get citizenship”¹² this is how political dominance sensitizes the insecurity among Minorities. India witnessed the history of massacres and genocide even after freedom from the colonial period. Author Rowena Robinson says “It has been suggested that the relatively better-off position of Muslims in south India is partly related to the fact that some of these states have remained largely undisturbed by communal rioting”¹³. Look at two different states of India how their social and educational predicament is completely different. According to the 2011 census of India, the total population of Muslims in Kerala is 26.56% and according to the same 2011 census total population of Muslims in Mewat is 79.20%. But Kerala is the most literate state in India with 94.0% which is higher than the national average 74.04%. At the same time, Muslims in Mewat are in majority and they are economically active but their educational status is extremely low comparing to all Indian states. The communal and hatred always takes the generation centuries back. Recently, in U.P the school headmaster suspended for allowing students to recite poems written by Allama Iqbal (lab pe aati hai dua) the same writer who had written (Saare Jahan se achcha) the patriotic poem. These incidents filled with hatred and strong communal feelings are highly alarming in a school atmosphere.

Discrimination

Identity carries a lot of weight in a diverse and post-imperialist world. India has a vast and old history of discrimination on the basis of religion, language, color, culture, and caste. The stories of discrimination among Hindus for their caste identity are highly humiliating and shameful. The bigotry and communal hatred took the nation to dark and undesirable paths. It is more threatening that discrimination takes place openly from nursery schools to central and prestigious universities. JNU, India’s most prestigious and world reputed university is also famous for “Najeeb Ahmed case”, who has been disappeared for three years and his mother is still wandering for Justice. Rohit Vemula, a Ph.D. scholar from Hyderabad

Central University, at the end of his educational life, why, did he chose to die, is still a mystery of Minority Identity. Recently, in Bhilla village U.P, The News click report says “In what comes as another instance of discrimination along the religious lines, a video of Muslim students being served mid-day meals on partial [leaf plates] while other students are using plates”¹⁴ the news headlines are filled with such incidents. Recently, The Print, the headline was more painful “Muslim school kids called names and told to “go to Pakistan”, mothers blame TV hate”. In an interview with the print Nazia Erum, author of the book, Mothering a Muslim, said “in the last few years, religious discrimination in schools had gone up drastically”¹⁵

Conclusion

I have highlighted the major external problems of the Muslim community. First, we need to overcome our internal issues, specifically with educational understanding enslaved by crony capitalism and post imperialism. Minority educational institutions become an active part of the Marketization of education. It is the first time in human history that education has now imparted as a commodity of the market and its rate too hike as other products. One more important aspect is the aim of education which has now become to earn money. The “Market profit” decides our future career not the need of society. We study in our institutions, and then get a degree and it sales with its market value. The need for our society and the major challenges that a community should have to overcome is not our priority or has no significance but what market asks us to do or how market demand needs to be served. For this, various streams and fields have a different value and our preferences in selecting streams depend on its market value. The Qur’anic view on philosophy of education and almost every educationist and philosopher believes that education is for social reform (samaji Islah) but we have gone out of relevance in this context of education. Our community is not only financially poor but our intellectual poverty couldn’t help us to question the politically created external crises. We are politically apolitical. Our institutions, involvement, priorities, and vision are totally decided by the market and if we are dreaming to change society so it is our responsibility to deconstruct the chained minds of our new generation and give them an attitude of free-thinking and thirst for sacrifice.

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STEAM Education for TPD

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STEAM Pedagogy as an approach for Teacher Professional Development

The ongoing in-service teacher learning or formal teacher professional development (TPD) is too conventional and de-escalating as the disciplinary skills and knowledge of teacher is insufficient to solve real world problems which are multi-disciplinary in origin. Thus, there is a critical need to explore and introduce multidisciplinary pedagogy with wise integration of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) concepts as an approach for TPD. This paper aims to explore the possible approaches of introducing STEAM pedagogy as an approach for TPD. This argumentative paper is prepared with the help of relevant and useful literatures. We argue the urgent need to integrate arts and technology in subject disciplines and design STEAM projects and training module as a neo-approach for TPD. This approach is equally useful for pre-service as well as in-service school teachers to develop multidisciplinary ways of knowing and solving real world problems.

Keywords: *Teacher Professional Development (TPD), STEAM approach, Pre-service and in-service school teacher, pedagogy.*

Introduction

Learning is an inherent part of being which enriches the individual with personal and professional development. The knowledge and skills one in-veterate during the professional role is akin to the professional development (PD) or success in his/her workplaces. Precisely speaking, “Teacher development is the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his/her teaching systematically” (Glatthorn, 1995). “Development of teacher in his/her profession requires examining the content of the experiences, the process by which the professional development will occur, and the contexts in which it will take place” (Ganser, 2000; Fielding & Schalock, 1985). To meet these new expectations, teachers should be critical in the on-going process of teacher development and examine the new approaches and standards being proposed. This prioritized plan of actions which prepares teachers in their job, on their job and for their job is called Teacher Professional Development (TPD). In context of Nepal, teachers are being asked to develop and reflect neo-approaches voluntarily or should be helped to develop. The new panorama of PD is a long-term, collaborative process based on constructivism and transformative model in which teacher is conceived as a reflective practioner.

Teacher Professional development in Nepal (Policies and Practices)

In the year 1971, National Education System plan (NESP) has put together the requirement of academic qualification and professional qualification as a legal provision in their policy. Teachers were required to enroll in at least ten months training course. Training was viewed as an important means of improving teaching and learning. It makes teachers highly competent at transforming skills they have acquired in their regular teaching practices at classroom. “Worldwide, professional development of teachers is increasingly seen as a career-long process, with continuous feedback loops between theory, practice and research” (DoE, 2018). Although, TPD includes such activities as life-long training, networks of learning teachers, action research, community relations, evaluation and accountability (Bhumi & Suwal, 2014, p.-66), NESP manifested training alone as vignette of TPD. In the year 1993, National Center for Educational Development (NCED) was formed under the Ministry of Education, Nepal with a fundamental role of organizing TPD programs for in-service teacher.

Through its Educational Training Centers (ETCs), NCED gave continuation to the earlier provision of taking ten months training courses for teachers in three phases. These three phases were completed in period of 2.5 months, 5 months, and 2.5 months respectively. And, also for secondary school teachers, in-service trainings of similar patterns were followed. By the year 2009, the ten months training course reached to 98.2% of permanent teachers of community schools (NCED, 2009). Thus, NCED felt needless to operate such trainings, however few programs under TPD has been running out. At present, NCED comes up with a 30-day professional development opportunity offered under TPD in 3 phases, each phase consisting of 10 days. The RP and roster trainers (Co-opted high school teachers) deliver professional courses containing face-to-face, self-study exercise and instructional counseling.

Critically observing TPD programs run by NCED, there are barely any follow-up training programs. Classroom level mentoring or support to teachers is also vacuous. Research by CERID (2009) has shown that the transformation of training into the classroom is around 50%. This miserable and tragic situation of existing professional development courses shows that numerous aspects of TPD programs should be unveiled.

STEAM approach for TPD

The conventional approaches of teachers professional development is guided by the notion of providing knowledge and skills by the trainers. This, in turn made our students good in lower level of cognitive abilities such as knowledge and comprehension. On the other hand, students were found losing cognitive abilities of higher strata such as transforming the knowledge in solving real life problems. “National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA), 2012 suggests, noticeably a higher number of students were able to solve only 15% or less of the practical problems” (NASA, 2012). In Mathematics, the open-ended questions that seek higher cognitive abilities were a far cry for students. Students tend to perform only basic calculations whereas task demanding use of higher cognitive faculties such as reasoning, problem solving, or in constructing figures are really doomed. “A similar situation is for science where students are good in recognizing the correct answer and in very fundamental knowledge such as choosing the facts and numbers, and writing the definitions, and also in language discipline such as Nepali, students performed well in the task requiring the recognition of the correct answer, recalling simple facts from the texts, fundamental thinking, and the basic interpretation of

the paragraphs (DOE, 2018). Nonetheless, they are less strong in exhibiting verbal-linguistic intelligence such as writing essays or abstracts from a text. The present notion of curriculum as a set of tasks to be mastered or to lead students to a pre specified ends is failing badly. “Research carried by NASA reveals that average score of students’ learning achievement varies across the subjects ranging from 35% in Mathematics, 41% in Science to 48% in Nepali” (NASA, 2012). Using only the disciplinary skills and knowledge of teacher as an approach of TPD proved to be insufficient to solve real world problems which appeared to be multidisciplinary and complex in origin.

A fundamental question before us is why our educational system not aware of the reasons behind schools’ consistently failing to foster desired higher cognitive skills in students. However, schools rarely teach cognitive skills but various researches suggest that it is also the disciplinary skills which promote cognitive skills if emphasize more in language, mathematics and science. Now, this is the high time for curriculum planners, teacher educators and training modules designers to take a shared responsibility to address the issues of low performance level in higher ability tasks and for this, we must initiate discussion on how to incorporate skills and competencies in teachers in order solve these real world problems. In the Nepali context, elsewhere, Luitel (2009, 2013, & 2019) consistently argued that mathematics and science curriculum, and pedagogy are decontextualized, and disengaged. So, to keep students and teachers engaged in task demanding higher mental ability, we have initiated discussion on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) as a multidisciplinary approach of professional development undertaking.

STEM: A Workforce Development Paradigm

Going back to the ideas of STEAM education, the credit for the inception of STEM ideas goes to National Science Foundation (NSF) of the USA. In 1959, NSF documented and discussed the needs of STEM disciplines by focusing its scope and necessity in the present context (Chesky & Wolfmeyer, 2015). The major focus of STEM education, at that time, was on developing competent and skillful human resources who can contribute as per the needs of any organization. To develop highly competent human resources, the disciplines (i.e. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) were considered as foundations.

The STEM Education Act developed by the USA in 2015 states that “more

support of STEM education is necessary to develop a STEM workforce for high-tech companies, and small businesses in all the sectors that struggle to find workers with necessary skills and knowledge to fill in-demand STEM jobs” (Guzdial & Morrison, 2016). The primary concern of this act was to improve how the future workforce is prepared to fill in-demand STEM jobs in the market. The purpose of selecting those disciplines was the scopes of the disciplines they provide skills for the market-oriented workplaces. The discipline, Science, has been acknowledged for scientific inquiry that demands hypothetico-deductive reasoning (Kaplan, 2017) which is very essential to promote economic rationality. Another discipline, Technology, as a cross-cutting skill for every job, helps to develop skills that are essential to maximize the individual’s performances in their workplaces (Jang, 2016). The discipline, Engineering, aims at developing design thinking skills among workforces who can develop a prototype of market-oriented products, test them, and finalize them for establishing high-rated products in the market (English, 2016).

For serving the conventional purpose of teaching mathematics and developing mathematical reasoning, the discipline mathematics was integrated as a part of STEM disciplines. As stated earlier, the major goal for introducing STEM discipline was to develop skillful human resources in the job market. This seems well in the industrial era where the use of technology in machine-based manufacturing companies was the major focus to increase the production for the economic growth in the USA (Hoeg & Bencze, 2017).

“The political discourse on education in the USA is, at its foundation, about competitiveness and economic dominance; this is the education for workforce development paradigm” (Martinez, 2017). This paradigm of education is necessary at one level, and has many advantages in the industrial era. But, this lacks many dimensions in school education. It delimits various perspectives that a human has to develop as a responsible citizen (Taylor, 2018). The strong glue that has made different discipline as STEM was the workforce development paradigm. We, as a researcher, acknowledge the initial attempt for bringing different disciplines under the umbrella of STEM, which is itself a rewarding. But, we believe that this view is very narrow, and needs to explore the other dimensions of STEAM education.

Technology in STEAM Education

The rapid growth of technology and the technological tools have contributed significantly to the ways we live and think in all the sectors. The long-rooted beliefs towards education and ways of educating people have been challenged due to the presence of technologically-rich societies. Here, we have discussed the presence of technology in education in general, and in school education in particular. While doing so, the needs, advantages, and also limitations of technology with different initiations need to be discussed. Also, we have asserted our position as a researcher in terms of using technology as a pedagogical tool, and as a process or as an approach of TPD.

The focus of school education, and the ways of dealing with school children have been drastically changed over the past decades. On the one hand, the different learning theories (such as cognitive, constructivist, cooperative, transformative) have assumed the roles of teachers, and students differently, and hence, proposed different modalities for teaching and learning approaches. On the other hand, the rapid growth of technology in the last few decades have drastically changed the views of education and pedagogy. UNESCO (2018) has argued that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that the prevalence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has a significant potential to accelerate progress, to bridge the digital divide and support the development of inclusive knowledge societies. The ideas of incorporating techno-pedagogy (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) is gaining popularity in education where teachers use different tools for maintaining the records, attendance, and grading of the students, and apply different skills in classroom teaching. Showing the important of technology in the STEAM field, Milner-Bolotin (2015) has mentioned, “Technology is viewed as a vehicle for exploration of science and mathematics ideas permeating the world we live in, a tool for engineering design, artistic expression, as well as a field of inquiry within itself” (p. 142).

In case of Nepal, the government and non-government sectors have made a significant initiative in terms of promoting ICT in Education, and ICT-integrated pedagogy. National Planning Commission (2007) focused on ICT skilled human resource development and management by establishing ICT in all aspects of education and infrastructure development. In the same spirit, Ministry of Education (2009) stated ICT assisted teaching and learning as a core program in all schools in School Sector Reform

Plan (SSRP) (2009-2016). The groundbreaking document in terms of ICT initiatives, in Nepal, is a comprehensive ICT in Education Master Plan (MoE, 2013). The plan has envisaged using ICT as an enabler for all students to reduce the digital gap, and ICT as a teaching and learning tool, as part of a subject and as a subject by itself. This provision has made a significant contribution in school education to promote ICT-integrated pedagogy. Another important plan in school education sector, SSDP 2016-2023, has focused “ICT as an important tool to improve classroom instruction, increase access to learning materials, and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of educational governance and management” (MOE, 2016). UNESCO (2018) prepared ICT competency framework for teachers with a high priority on ICT-integration in teaching and learning. In this document, UNESCO has proposed three levels of knowledge (acquisition, deepening, and creation) with five different aspects (understanding ICT in Education policy, curriculum and assessment, pedagogy, application of digital skills, organization and administration, teacher professional learning). Nepal government has also developed a framework for teachers’ competencies. Out of eight domains under teachers’ competencies standards, one is related with the use of ICT in their professional life (MoE, 2016).

In our paper, using ICT in pedagogy is a part of teachers’ professional development. As a researcher in the field of STEAM Education, our entry point would be using some ICT tools (such a geogebra, mathematica) for visualizing mathematical ideas. This will, in turn help to move ahead for developing STEAM projects by incorporating the components of technology. The dynamic mathematical software opens doors to using mathematical modeling in order to explore the relationships between art (e.g. paintings, patterns, architecture) and mathematics (Milner-Bolotin, 2015). ICT has multi-purposes in educational field, broadly categorized as tools and as process. “Our purpose of using ICT-integrated pedagogy in TPD is aligned with the ideas of Bidarian and Davoudi (2011), who proposed the application of ICT in three forms: a) it may involve all learners in learning process; b) it may increase the interests of learners, and c) it may provide variety in presenting manner of learning in a pleasant and non-boring situation.”

An Integration of Arts in STEM Disciplines

The major idea raised in this paper is to incorporate arts in STEM disciplines. In this section, we have discussed arts integration as a construct,

the scholars' view on this idea, and our position in using different facets of arts in TPD.

Generally, in all subjects of school education in Nepal, and mostly in Science and Mathematics, it is widely discussed that the roles of arts (i. e. using poem, stories, painting) in teaching and learning are not well acknowledged (Pant, 2015). This could be one of the reasons behind students' low motivation, and low performance in school mathematics and science. In the recent years, many educators (Dietiker, 2015; Eisner, 2002; Goldberg, 2016) around the globe have strongly advocated the needs of arts integration in school education. The fundamental reason behind the integration of arts is to create, "aesthetically-rich learning environments as those that enable children to wonder, to notice, to imagine alternatives, to appreciate contingencies and to experience pleasure and pride" (Sinclair, 2001, p. 26). For that, to begin with, the incorporation of paintings, poems and stories in different subjects such as Science and Mathematics, could be an effective point of department. "Hunter-Doniger (2018) has defined an empowering model for arts infusion in education by employing three strategies: (a) all disciplines are regarded equally in pedagogy, content, and assessment; (b) collaboration exists between art and generalist educators; and (c) students are encouraged to delve deeper into subjects through art". The most important aspect for me is to the third strategy that makes students explore different subjects deeply through the integration of various forms of arts. Art infusion allows students to do more than just memorizing the content and process of solving particular problems. It encourages learners to search alternative ways of viewing the problems, make their own meaning out of it, and apply this to update their knowledge and skills. The important feature of school education in Nepal, mainly in Mathematics, is developing procedural knowing where students memorize the steps to be followed to get the correct solutions (Manandhar, 2018). More specifically, the overemphasis on procedural knowing, knowing the steps required to attain the goals, has been given rather than on conceptual knowing in school mathematics, which is also known as a relational knowing (Rittle-Johnson & Schneider, 2015). This could make student as machines rather than critical human beings. We are very much impressed with the idea of Eisner (2002), who declares his preference for aesthetic ways of knowing and learning. Eisner (2002) has drawn the idea of aesthetic from John Dewey, who describes aesthetics as an individual's response to an experience rather than an attribute of an object. Dewey notes that aesthetics is not an object's attribute but the individual's perception and interaction that is the path of aesthetics

Arts have been discussed as tools for critical pedagogy, more than that as a social pedagogical process (Peters, 2016). More specifically, the visual arts are central to public attentions and critique, and have the power to illuminate social injustices and inequalities, which is the main aim of critical pedagogy. The critical pedagogy puts efforts to understand the world through different subjects such as mathematics, science, technology, language. It aims to develop critical consciousness (Freire, 1970). “Arts has also been viewed as a public pedagogy, as discussed by Giroux (2004), which focuses on the study of media, popular culture assuming society as an educative force for learners”. The projects school teachers design can be borrowed from the media, cultural and local traditions that can possibly make strong connections between school-subjects and out-of-school practices. Those projects are always public, and have the power to create rich discussion in the learning process. “Schuermans, Loopmans, and Vandenabeele (2012) have viewed public pedagogy that scrutinizes the educational processes involved when issues and interests are made ‘public’ for social interactions and to promote the notions of living together in the society”.

Conclusions

The STEAM Education in a broad sense and STEAM pedagogy particularly has different focuses, and intentions (such as focused on technology, workforce development, integrated learning). The major intention of this paper is to transform pedagogical practices towards more human-centric from content-centric teaching through inquiry-based approach. Self-reflection can be one of the important entry points towards transforming our practices where teachers examine their deep-rooted personal values and beliefs, question on the assumptions about human potential and learning for envisioning the better alternatives in teaching and learning (Larrivee, 2000). Normally, school level mathematics teachers are interested for ready-made tips, tricks and techniques for solving various mathematical problems (Pant, 2017) which are easy to apply in the classroom teaching. We believe that effective teaching is much more than compilation of skills and techniques. For us, inviting students, teachers and school leaders to reflect on their own practices is a great beginning towards transformation. STEAM education also engages students in Transformative Learning. “STEAM education enables students through making exposure with the interconnected ways of knowing such as cultural self-knowing, relational knowing, critical knowing, visionary and ethical knowing, knowing in action” (Taylor, 2015).

We should onset discussion for making mathematics and science curriculum more contextual by incorporating cultural heritages of different communities, and making teachers and students feel that the knowledge we are discussing are from our communities, and for our communities. One of the major entry points could be exploring mathematics and science from students' localities through different perspectives (such as stories, paintings, and other cultural artifacts). To envisage the better teaching and learning approaches as pedagogical innovations and to transform the existing teaching and learning practices, the transformative lens of STEAM education could be one of the major hallmarks in the Nepali context.

Finally, we ascertain that besides teachers, we need to work collaboratively with policy makers and curriculum developers if we have appetency to advance STEAM education and measure adequacy of changes in our students in solving real world problems. And for the change to take effect it takes effort in real time. We hope this paper serves to start the conversation on STEAM education towards that effort.

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Inequality In School Education In India: A Study On Regional Disparities In Access And Participation

Raj Gaurav

Introduction

Education and Empowerment of girls and boys is one of the most important areas for a country to prosper and development in right direction. Education has a transformational and empowering role and Schools are important places where interaction of students from various communities and culture interact. Important question is how egalitarian these classes are in terms of equality not only in institutional terms but also considering dignity aspect of equality. Reports and studies which tried to look at equality education have focused on qualitative aspect of equality and based their research on that but behavioral aspect of teachers, manager and stakeholders are also important to get clear picture of equality and discrimination. Empowerment could be seen into different spheres like social, economic and political. We have not yet achieved a satisfactory level of provision of empowerment. Girls and boys are yet unable to stay into the education sector and we have seen the dropout and inaccessibility of education till date in many parts of our country.

Table 1: Progress in Facility Indicators of Education in India form 2005-06 & 2015-16

Facility Indicators	India(2005-06)	India(2015-16)
Pupil-teacher ratio (PTR)	36	24
Student-classroom ratio (SCR)	39	27
% Sch. with drinking water facility	83.1	96.8
% Schools with ramp	17.1	82.6
% Schools with girls toilets	37.4	97.6

Source: U-DISE

Above table shows some of the progress in facility indicators of education in India from year 2005-06 and 2015-16 stating the positive trend towards accessibility and participation in search of equity at elementary level. So basically, state-wise data Provision of basic elementary schooling has been targets from decades in our country. Planning in regards to universalization of elementary education (UEE) dates back even before independence. There have been several changes made in different planning time to leave a positive impact on education system in India. But even after so many decades of planning country is even now facing several kinds of issues in relation to education. Accessibility and participation in education has been a part of the hot topic since the very first five year plan introduced in the country and even today we are in search of same, along with the inclusion of several others targets with changes in strategies and programmes introduced within several years. So, it's really important to understand its value and inclusion in order to bring in equity and quality into education in depth.

As per Samagra Shiksha draft document equity, accessibility and quality in education has been explained as:

“Equity will mean not only equal opportunity, but also creation of conditions in which the disadvantaged sections of the society – children of SC, ST, Muslim minority, landless agricultural workers and children with special needs, transgender children etc. can avail of the opportunity in an inclusive environment free from discrimination. Access will not be confined to merely ensuring that a school becomes accessible to all children

within specified distance but implies an understanding of the educational needs and predicament of the traditionally excluded categories – the SC, ST and other sections of the most disadvantaged groups, the Muslim minority, girls in general, transgender children and children with special needs. Equity will be seen as an integral part of the agenda on improving quality and will therefore encompass not just looking at issues pertaining to teacher training and education, curriculum, language, educational planning and management”(MHRD, 2018).

Regional Disparities in Access and Participation at elementary level

As per the recent NEP 2019, access is a major part of the scheme as to universalize school education with expansion of school facilities to those areas which are still lagging behind in several educational infrastructural accessibility. Since independence, overall infrastructure in elementary Schools in the country has gone through tremendous improvement over the years and especially after implementation of SSA (2001), but major share of schools in the country are yet to achieve RTE basic criteria in regard to classrooms, teachers and various other facilities. There are various approaches that would enable universal access in the country likewise by ensuring Equity. As per OECD book titled “No More Failures Ten steps to equity in education” (Field, 2007).

“Defining equity in education has two dimensions. The first is fairness, which implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances – for example gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin – should not be an obstacle to achieving educational potential. The second is inclusion, which implies ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all – for example that everyone should be able to read, write and do simple arithmetic. The two dimensions are closely intertwined: tackling school failure helps to overcome the effects of social deprivation which often causes school failure” (Field, 2007).

Addressing school accessibility should include all exclusionary practices, especially based on religion, gender, caste and special needs etc. in school. It is not that access can be confined just as ensuring that school is accessible to all children within distance norms but includes the need and understanding of education of socially excluded categories like the SC, ST, Muslim minority, children with special needs and girls in general as per the recent NEP 2019.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This paper examines the interstate disparity in the performance in regards with accessibility and participation growth in education. The growth performance has been computed during the period 2006-2007 to 2016-17. The relevant data are collected from the Unified District Information System for Education (U-DISE). The analysis has been carried out in two points of time. There have been several indicators taken in to consideration to analyze the inter-state accessibility and participation at elementary level of education in India on two time frame data provided by U-Dise, NIEPA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first part analysis deals with accessibility of schools facilities and amenities and during the period 2006- 2007 to 2016-17. The second part of the analysis examines student's enrolment, participation in school during the 2006-2007 to 2016-17. The third part of the analysis deals with progress in accessibility and students' enrolment as in participation covering the period 2006-2007 to 2016-17. The area coverage of all states is taken under consideration as to look into the regional disparities at elementary level in the present study.

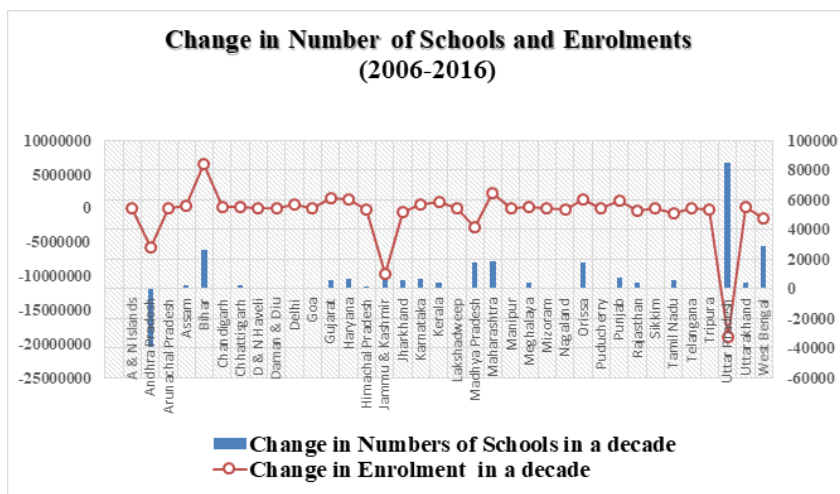
Table 2: Total Numbers of Schools and Enrolments in Elementary Education: 2006-07 & 2016-17

State Name	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (2006-07)	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL ENROLMENT (2006-07)	TOTAL ENROLMENT (2016-17)
A & N Islands	350	411	52426	49145
Andhra Pradesh	100932	61514	11306819	5560720
Arunachal Pradesh	3412	4021	276457	278544
Assam	63996	66286	5216762	5543842
Bihar	54884	80897	15120547	21719464
Chandigarh	178	201	25123	156398
Chhattisgarh	48968	51185	4195222	4350251
D & N Haveli	276	321	46383	59280
Daman & Diu	86	120	20858	28651

Delhi	4742	5727	2344914	2988501
Goa	1420	1452	141853	193584
Gujarat	38472	44545	7540484	9012169
Haryana	16180	22743	2492009	3824902
Himachal Pradesh	16614	18196	1081599	940674
Jammu & Kashmir	20711	28714	11328930	1693059
Jharkhand	40618	46629	6355016	5789141
Karnataka	55364	62002	7722524	8363839
Kerala	12183	16466	3003815	3976143
Lakshadweep	30	41	6980	7278
Madhya Pradesh	125858	143584	15182309	12386708
Maharashtra	86430	104971	13825940	15985712
Manipur	3869	4854	462190	462608
Meghalaya	9268	13258	528563	716463
Mizoram	2782	3077	226923	201946
Nagaland	2537	2806	471439	294118
Orissa	51198	68977	4857311	6198025
Puducherry	668	725	179739	168731
Punjab	20950	28717	2702272	3894228
Rajasthan	100965	105436	12462231	12152105
Sikkim	1226	1317	121995	94781
Tamil Nadu	52423	57992	9776589	9108892
Telangana	-	41337	-	4817972
Tripura	3679	4861	697525	548075
Uttar Pradesh	168969	254204	32162514	13197745
Uttarakhand	19161	23675	1413068	1679295
West Bengal	67265	96418	13342492	11934022
INDIA	1196664	1467680	186691821	189887015

Source: U-DISE

As mentioned earlier too, Goal is to universalize the education by enabling more of accessibility and increase participation of different social/ethnic groups. Access to schools is the first step, to provide the accessibility new schools were opened. This lead to a substantial increase in number of schools. There were 1196664 schools in India as per 2006-07 data of UDISE which increased to 1467680 in the year 2016-17. New schools were opened throughout the country though the change is not uniform throughout the country. Few states such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal shows a great increment while few states and UTs like Andaman and Nicobar, Chandigarh, Daman and Diu, Goa, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and Sikkim, shows less no. of new schools opened during the decade. But this doesn't mean these areas have not progressed, the reason behind could be Geographical as the size of these areas are considerably smaller than many other states, political reasons could also dominate the plane as in the case of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh shows a decrement in no. of schools, and the reason behind is division of state into two Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the year 2014. So the data without background context could turn misleading.



With passage of years and regular involvement in data collection has shown an increment in school coverage under U-DISE, and so have the enrolment at primary level and upper primary level of education shown an upward trend over the years. Increment in enrolment from 101.16 million (2002-03) to 124.62 million (2005-06) and further to add on after a decade to reach enrolment to 189887015 till 2016-17 at elementary level of education.

**Table 3: state-wise Facility Indicators
of Education in India (2006-07)**

State Name	Pu- pil-teach- er ratio (PTR)	Stu- dent-class- room ratio (SCR)	% Sin- gle-teacher schools	% Single- classroom schools	% Sch. with drinking water facility	% Schools with ramp	% Schools with girls toilets
2006-07							
A & N Islands	15	19	2.6	2.9	84.3	6.3	63.4
Andhra Pr adesh	22	27	7.8	25.2	80.0	9.1	42.5
Arunachal Pradesh	22	23	48.4	17.5	72.3	3.2	12.2
Assam	25	41	29.5	54.0	61.8	13.1	10
Bihar	64	91	5.1	8.6	90.2	17.7	16.2
Chandi- garh	23	26	0.0	0.0	100.0	33.1	93.8
Chhattis- garh	27	33	13.1	5.1	85.0	21.5	13.3
D & N Haveli	45	45	29.0	13.0	88.8	2.9	25.7
Daman & Diu	33	42	1.2	2.3	90.7	8.1	41.9
Delhi	25	30	0.2	0.2	99.9	71.7	89.0
Goa	24	25	25.6	17.3	95.8	5.8	42.3
Gujarat	35	36	4.5	3.8	85.6	61.9	61.4
Haryana	32	27	8.6	3.0	93.9	47.2	76.2
Himachal Pradesh	18	17	7.3	4.3	92.9	17.0	36.6
Jammu & Kashmir	16	18	4.8	10.5	71.4	8.2	20.0
Jharkhand	48	65	17.3	4.2	69.5	4.9	15.5
Karnataka	32	30	12.6	9.5	80.0	17.7	46.4
Kerala	27	25	0.3	0.5	96.7	52.2	76.9
Lakshad- weep	19	25	0.0	0.0	90.0	46.7	60.0
Madhya Pradesh	38	44	22.1	10.0	88.2	22.0	26.4
Maharash- tra	28	33	5.2	6.7	84.7	61.1	53.0
Manipur	20	21	12.1	2.0	74.0	4.9	17.9
Megha- laya	18	21	11.6	20.3	43.3	3.2	8.8

Mizoram	14	19	2.4	1.5	79.2	11.6	21.3
Nagaland	22	28	2.4	0.2	68.4	5.2	30.9
Orissa	33	28	12.0	3.5	83.2	20.6	28.0
Puducherry	24	24	1.3	1.5	96.9	35.8	84.9
Punjab	32	26	10.8	3.1	98.0	29.9	80.9
Rajasthan	31	28	26.1	4.4	82.6	17.4	41.3
Sikkim	12	15	0.5	1.7	83.4	4.4	36.2
Tamil Nadu	27	25	2.4	0	100.0	37.7	60.1
Tripura	22	35	1.0	6.4	76.5	35.8	21.1
Uttar Pradesh	53	46	5.0	0.7	97.7	30.3	78.2
Uttarakhand	26	21	16.7	3.0	83.7	20.5	51.7
West Bengal	51	54	2.7	10.3	78.4	45.4	31.5

Source: U-DISE

Pupil teacher Ratio and Student Classroom Ratio have been one finest indicators in order to identify the right perspective approach to be followed up for the Quality school Education. A contained pupil teacher ratio is always helpful for a quality pedagogical process whereas a definite school classroom ratio has to be definite for a healthy pedagogy. Many states are trying hard to remain in a healthy pedagogical process.

Learning can't happen in an uncomfortable environment. Not just learning, availability of proper infrastructure in School partly determines various aspects like health, well-being of children and performance in classroom. So besides establishing a school, there are various other infrastructural requirements that need to be considered for ensuring accessibility. Drinking water and sanitation are the most fundamental. Data about these infrastructural facilities have been given in Table 3 & 4 for the years 2006-07 and 2016-17. It could be analyzed from the table that in 2006-07; only two states had 100% of schools with drinking water facilities, Chandigarh and Tamil Nadu. Other states are lacking in varying degrees. Till 2017, Andaman and Nicobar, Himachal Pradesh, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Delhi, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Gujarat, Goa, Punjab and Puducherry, also made drinking water facilities accessible to all schools. Other states are also showing good progress except Meghalaya, which has still miles to go.

Sanitation is the other facility; lack of toilet facilities also leads to various health issues as well as a huge dropout rate. Though the toilet facility is important for all but girls are more prone to this problem. Going back to data in Table 3 and 4, we could analyze in 2006-07 there was no state having 100% of schools with girls toilet facilities. There are 22 states and UTs having less than 50% of schools having girl's toilet facilities, there are few which even have less than 15% of schools with Girls toilet. Though clear improvement can be seen in the year 2016-17 data, (Andaman and Nicobar, D&N Haveli, D&D, Delhi, Lakshadweep, Puducherry have attained 100% accessibility of girl's toilet in schools) but still many still have to make efforts to achieve sanitation for all. This data was just about availability of the structure, their functioning and maintenance are still under question.

**Table 3: State-wise Facility Indicators
of Education in India (2016-17)**

State Name	Pu- pil-teach- er ratio (PTR)	Stu- dent-class- room ratio (SCR)	% Sin- gle-teacher schools	% Sin- gle-class- room schools	% Sch. with drinking water facility	% Schools with ramp	% Schools with girls toilets
2016-17							
A & N Islands	9	17	0.0	3.2	100.0	23.8	100.0
Andhra Pr adesh	19	20	14.1	13.0	94.8	22.8	99.7
Arunachal Pradesh	13	13	26.8	3.1	82.3	16.9	94.6
Assam	18	25	7.2	18.5	87.7	40.5	79.8
Bihar	45	45	4.4	1.8	94.8	29.3	87.3
Chandi- garh	17	38	0.0	0.0	100.0	68.7	100.0
Chhattis- garh	20	22	5.6	2.2	99.3	35.4	99.5
D & N Haveli	23	31	0.0	0.3	100.0	69.5	100.0
Daman & Diu	24	33	2.5	1.7	100.0	40.8	100.0
Delhi	21	37	0.1	0.1	100.0	72.8	100.0
Goa	17	26	20.9	10.9	100.0	26.0	100.0
Gujarat	27	27	2.0	1.1	100.0	53.3	99.9
Haryana	18	23	3.9	0.8	99.9	32.4	99.4
Himachal Pradesh	10	13	6.7	3.3	100.0	57.8	99.9

Jammu & Kashmir	10	12	6.3	6.9	92.5	14.0	93.7
Jharkhand	32	23	17.1	0.8	96.1	28.6	97.9
Karnataka	27	23	8.3	3.3	98.5	32.1	96.1
Kerala	16	23	2.2	1.9	99.7	39.0	97.9
Lakshadweep	8	18	0.0	0.0	100.0	39.0	100.0
Madhya Pradesh	23	20	13.3	3.1	96.4	35.0	95.0
Maharashtra	22	29	3.1	6.8	99.6	62.0	98.2
Manipur	12	17	7.3	0.8	96.9	35.2	98.3
Meghalaya	16	17	7.3	14.6	63.0	22.5	84.5
Mizoram	11	14	2.2	0.3	93.1	27.9	97.8
Nagaland	9	15	1.1	0.1	82.4	22.0	97.7
Orissa	19	24	2.4	9.2	99.8	41.2	95.8
Puducherry	13	25	0.0	0.8	100.0	46.6	100.0
Punjab	15	22	3.2	1.8	100.0	18.2	99.4
Rajasthan	18	20	12.4	2.7	97.5	30.3	99.0
Sikkim	6	10	0.2	0.8	96.2	8.7	97.3
Tamil Nadu	16	24	1.9	0.0	100.0	39.7	99.7
Telangana	21	21	12.6	9.3	99.2	28.2	96.3
Tripura	12	22	0.0	2.4	89.9	16.5	99.9
Uttar Pradesh	31	27	5.6	0.7	98.7	24.8	99.6
Uttarakhand	15	17	8.2	1.2	96.2	20.0	95.4
West Bengal	21	26	4.2	5.1	98.4	35.4	97.6
INDIA	23	25	7.2	4.3	97.1	34.0	96.5

Source: U-Dise

Though availability of schools with a proper infrastructure makes school accessible but that doesn't ensure participation. Enrollment as an indicator of participation has been discussed to show the participation rate, further GER and NER has been discussed to analyses the disparities more clearly. GER stands for Gross Enrollment Ratio. Many states have surpassed 100% marks in GER and even till 2016-17 there are many states which are still to achieve 100% GER. But in current Scenario NER stands much

above it in its importance to analyze the real participation. Net Enrolment Ratio indicates the exact population in classes to be meant for under the system within the whole age group (6-14 years of age for class I- VIII as at elementary level).

Table 4: State-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio at primary and upper primary level (2006-07 & 2016-17)

State Name	GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (2006-07)		GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (2016-17)	
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary
A & N Islands	78.5	79.2	86.87	83.06
Andhra Pradesh	99.9	77.5	82.79	82.13
Arunachal Pradesh	175.1	81.9	106.18	119.85
Assam	129.6	61.1	107.39	96.69
Bihar	105.5	36.0	98.08	103.86
Chandigarh	78.0	68.5	80.07	95.60
Chhattisgarh	119.3	72.8	97.07	100.81
D & N Haveli	147.2	58.5	82.87	91.57
Daman & Diu	81.2	53.3	83.96	81.13
Delhi	98.5	86.5	109.19	128.96
Goa	56.4	61.1	101.33	97.07
Gujarat	105.4	54.2	94.97	97.20
Haryana	68.2	52.4	93.90	94.40
Himachal Pradesh	114.4	109.1	97.91	102.99
Jammu & Kashmir	97.6	77.4	77.09	66.2
Jharkhand	149.6	47.8	96.64	91.81
Karnataka	107.1	67.2	103.71	92.90
Kerala	78.6	80.2	95.14	93.63
Lakshadweep	73.1	68.4	70.02	81.37
Madhya Pradesh	143.6	83.4	92.13	89.73
Maharashtra	100.7	81.9	97.50	98.69
Manipur	141.3	75.7	120.57	119.27

Meghalaya	169.4	58.9	129.07	128.04
Mizoram	176.0	80.0	115.68	127.50
Nagaland	152.0	91.7	81.67	90.44
Orissa	96.4	49.3	100.22	94.64
Puducherry	98.0	99.9	85.57	84.79
Punjab	72.2	66.2	99.31	97.72
Rajasthan	119.5	71.8	97.80	91.99
Sikkim	148.6	81.3	91.98	136.79
Tamil Nadu	118.2	109.9	102.01	93.42
Telangana	0	0	914.90	1079.21
Tripura	137.4	88.2	11.04	10.18
Uttar Pradesh	112.9	47.2	87.16	72.74
Uttarakhand	90.2	62.4	96.41	86.73
West Bengal	113.4	71.5	96.27	96.34
INDIA	-	-	95.12	90.73

Source: U-Dise

Based on the U-DISE data, GER at primary level is estimated as 110.86 %, corresponding to 92.75% NER. There are few states which are near to achieve the goal of universal primary enrolment. Over the years, enrolment in upper primary classes had shown an increase consistently as 37.72 million in 2004-05, increasing to 47.49 million in 2006-07 and further eventually after a decade GER has changed to 92.15 for primary and 90.73 for upper primary level for the year 2016-17 as shown in Table 4. Whereas the NER has shown an upwards trend since 2006-07 to 2016-17 among most states except few states like Tripura, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Puducherry & Tamil Nadu.

Table 5: State-wise Net Enrolment Ratio at primary and upper primary level (2006-07 & 2016-17)

State Name	NET ENROLEMENT RATIO (2006-07)		NET ENROLEMENT RATIO (2016-17)	
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary
A & N Islands	62.4	51.4	75.45	66.73
Andhra Pradesh	78.1	55.2	68.97	60.56

Arunachal Pradesh	-	57.8	84.11	83.44
Assam	-	49.8	-	80.32
Bihar	99.5	32.7	91.80	93.56
Chandigarh	63.7	49.6	71.75	77.14
Chhattisgarh	98.7	46.7	89.03	82.75
D & N Haveli	-	42.7	77.95	68.83
Daman & Diu	64.0	35.4	73.04	64.79
Delhi	72.4	59.4	92.55	99.25
Goa	49.7	44.0	96.02	87.09
Gujarat	84.0	39.9	80.67	74.55
Haryana	53.7	37.3	75.63	69.77
Himachal Pradesh	91.7	75.5	83.65	80.31
Jammu & Kashmir	80.5	56.9	62.92	49.76
Jharkhand	-	38.8	83.34	70.69
Karnataka	98.6	58.1	96.95	85.94
Kerala	66.6	61.2	85.81	79.69
Lakshadweep	67.7	39.4	69.51	67.57
Madhya Pradesh	-	57.6	78.62	70.29
Maharashtra	84.0	61.9	86.07	79.54
Manipur	-	62.6	-	94.65
Meghalaya	-	32.4	89.01	68.68
Mizoram	-	59.7	89.65	88.64
Nagaland	-	70.4	66.84	65.34
Orissa	71.7	31.1	88.47	75.48
Puducherry	80.3	75.8	79.14	74.24
Punjab	55.5	44.0	82.70	73.36
Rajasthan	84.6	50.3	78.84	68.93
Sikkim	90.7	30.1	54.78	54.05
Tamil Nadu	96.6	82.6	89.47	74.17
Telangana	-	-	-	-
Tripura	-	66.7	10.44	9.30
Uttar Pradesh	-	37.5	78.58	58.43

Uttarakhand	76.6	45.0	81.71	66.29
West Bengal	84.5	51.1	82.44	71.89
INDIA	-	-	83.62	72.69

Source: U-Dise

As per data available at various level, the universal enrolment in many parts has seemed to be achieved nearly to some extent, as indicated by Gross Enrolment Ratio statistics. As per the data of Selected Educational Statistics by government of India (2007a), the number of children in schools as enrolment has increased to 189,887,015 in 2016-17.

Gross Enrolment Ratio for elementary group has shown an increment as 96.3% for the year 2001-02 to 108.6% for the year 2004-05 at primary level whereas an increment has been seen as 52.1% in year 2001-02 to 70.5% in year 2004-05 at upper primary level. However, after examining age specific data, there have been still sizeable gap found in Net Enrolment Ratio (NER). Enrolment Scenario is not same all over country as low enrolment ratio has not been a problem in all parts of the country. There are various states that show NER to be more than 80. But there are various other states as well such as Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Nagaland which are facing a serious problem demanding an immediate attention for the improvement of educational scenario of the states in specifics with increase in numbers of enrolment to a healthy level.

CONCLUSION

Education is that cornerstone which can be considered as a major paradigm shift in this growing India. But this change is somehow unable to reach some parts of India specially the rural and remote parts of India. Many states are primitive part of India which shows a poor literacy in a persistent manner in comparison to not only Kerala but to other states as well. If we look at the female literacy rate of many states it is in a tragic position. It could be seen from above interpretation that the various indicators under accessibility and participation indicates a widespread inter-state disparity. The multiplication of number of schools is quite remarkable Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odhissa, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh. Significant improvement has been witnessed in availability of drinking water and girl's toilet but this should be available to one and all. Along with improving accessibility, participation has also increased which could be seen by GER and NER changed rates of all states. And so have several

other indicators have shown regional disparities existing in India.

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NEW CHANGES IN TEACHER PROGRAMME IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

After identifying the importance of teacher education programme in India, the Government has set up many committees and commissions for improving the teacher education programme after Independence. The first commission after Independence, The University Education Commission (1948), suggested that theory and practice of pre-service teacher education programme must support each other. The Kotari Commission (1966), suggested that the quality of training colleges, how teacher education programs should be implemented. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) also suggested that, the adoption of new techniques of evaluation and intelligent candidates should be attracted to the teaching job. The important landmark was the setting up of the State Institutes of Education (SIEs) in 1964 for providing greater coverage of the programs in-service education, and training of teachers and other educational personnel concerned with primary education. The Government of India GOI (1973) constituted the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), to act as a national advisory body on all matters, relating to ensure adequate standards in teacher education. The National commission on Teachers (1983-85), was suggested five-year integrated courses and internship. The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA) (1992) suggested the overhaul of teacher education to impart it, a professional orientation. Acharya Ramamurti Committee of 1990 and the Yashpal Committee Report of 1993 made very useful recommendations. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) was established as

a statutory body in 1993, by an Act of Parliament, for maintaining the norms and standards of teacher education programmes in the country. After resuming the NCTE is in its office, in 1998, it brought out the Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education; this provides guidelines for the curriculum development in different stages of teacher education. During 2004, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) also worked out for teacher education curriculum. The National Curriculum Framework, NCF- 2005 suggested that, teacher education programs should be recast to reflect professionalism, in the process of teaching and training. Government of India constituted a committee (Justice Verma) to submit a report on the teacher education. The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi also expressed his view on teacher education on the occasion of foundation stone laid at Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Mission, BHU, Varanasi on 25th December, 2014. He emphasised the four or five years integrate teacher education programme after 10th or 12th class. He also suggested one has decided to take up teaching profession at 10th or 12th standard. Based on the recommendations of verma committee, the NCTE has been modified the rules and regulations of B.Ed. Programme to ensure the quality teacher training. The major changes in the Programme from the academic year 2015-16 onwards the increasing duration of B.Ed. Programme from one year to two years with major changes in the curriculum. The GOI constituted a National Policy on Education under the chairmanship of TSR Subramanian. In continuation to this report, the GOI (2018) constituted committee to draft a National Policy on Education, 2019 under the chairmanship of, Dr. K Kasturirangan. NPE - 2019, is under discussion and yet to pass the bill in the parliament. In this report NPE-2019, the committee mentioned that, the main objective of the teacher education programme is to ensure that, teachers are given the highest quality training in three major areas i.e., content, pedagogy, and practice, and moving the teacher education system into multidisciplinary colleges and universities, and establishing 4-year integrated Bachelor's Degree the minimum qualification for all school teachers. Recently, The NCTE Amendment, 2019 also Amendment the (Recognition, Norms and Procedure) Regulations, 2014 in the Official Gazette is that the Norms and Standards for 4 Years Integrated Teacher Education Programme (from Pre-Primary to Primary) and (from Upper Primary to Secondary) both Arts and Science Stream. Keeping, these changes in teacher education programme in the Country from One Year to Two Years, and then from two years to Four Year Integrated teacher education programme. This paper focuses on, the recent changes in teacher education programme in National Policy on Education, NPE- 2019.

Keywords: *Teacher Education programme, Committees and commissions on Education, Policies on Education, Changes in Teacher Education Programme, Different levels of Education*

Introduction:

Rabindra Nath Tagore rightly pointed out that, “A teacher really cannot teach unless he is still learning himself. Just like a lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.” The Kotari Commission (1964-66) stressed, “The destiny of India is now being shaped in the classrooms”. The National Policy on Education, NPE-1986 emphasize: “The status of the teacher in the society reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society”. Teacher education programme starts molding since the ancient education system taking shape according to the global and local needs of the Indian society. The development of a country depends upon the quality of human resources i.e., its teachers. Therefore, this is reason why teaching profession is the noblest profession among all professions. Almost all commissions on education said that, teaching has been one of an oldest and respected profession in the world. But, the role of the teachers, functions of the teachers, competence and preparation of teachers have undergone a dramatic change from time to time. The change is dynamic, the changing times as well as the requirements of the society were necessary for changes in the ways of teacher preparation. Keeping this in mind, Government of India, GOI has set up many committees and commissions for strengthening the teacher education programmes after Independence.

Committees and Commissions on Teacher Education after Independence: The University Education Commission (1948-49)

The University Education Commission was the first commission in free India; in 1948 this commission critically examined the existing courses in teacher training programmes in the country and suggested that the courses must be flexible and adaptable to local circumstances. In this context, the commission suggested that, the courses should be redesigned, suitable schools to be used for practice teaching and sufficient time is to be given to school practice. In this commission ‘Teacher Education’ name was given in place of ‘teacher training’.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)

The Secondary Education commission recommended that, complete reforming of secondary education. It is also recommended that, during one year of teacher training, teacher trainee should be trained in at least two subject's methods of teaching. The teaching practice (practicum) should not focus only of practice teaching, but it also focus on observation, demonstration and criticism of lessons, and construction and administration of scholastic achievement tests, supervision community studies, conducting library and tutorial periods and maintenance of cumulative records.

The Kotari Commission (1964-66)

The Kotari Commission (1964-66), observed that, a sound professional teacher education programme was essential for the qualitative improvement in education at all levels of teacher education, to meet the requirements of the national development.

According to National Policy on Education, NPE- 1968, teacher is most important for the quality education and for the national development. Therefore, teacher should be honored place in society. The salary and service conditions should be satisfied with respect to their qualifications and responsibilities.

National Commission on Teachers (1983-85)

National Commission on for school teachers, recommended a 4- year training course after senior secondary, or preferably a 5-year course leading to graduation and training. A two year training course after 10+2 for elementary teachers. The integrated 4-year degree curriculum should be consisting of general education and professional preparation. For elementary teachers, the training curriculum should emphasize on communication skills and language skills. The teacher education colleges should have the teacher educators from disciplines of various school subjects and educational studies like philosophy, sociology, psychology etc. The eligibility for a teacher educator, one must have post-graduate degree in the school subject and a B.Ed., preferably a M.Ed. degree. The eligibility for a teacher educator, for the elementary training institutions, one must have post graduate degree in the school subject with B.Ed. degree. This commission changed the name from 'practice teaching' to the word "Internship".

The National Policy of Education, NPE-1986

This policy suggested that teacher education is a continuous process, and it has two faces just like coin pre-service and in-service are inseparable. The National Policy of Education, NPE-1986 and its Programme of Action, POA-1992 made a strong recommendation is that, to improve the quality of school education it must improve the quality of teacher education first. The NPE -1986 looked in-service and pre-service teacher education as a continuum; it visualized, the establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) in each district, for preparing the elementary level teachers and up gradation of 250 colleges of education as Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), and establishment of 50 Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) in the Universities, and strengthening of the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs).

Acharya Ramamurthy Committee -1990

NPE-1986, in its review pointed out that the importance of internship model for teacher training and it adopted because the internship model mainly based on the field experience in real situation, to development of teaching skills by practice over a period of time. The Acharya Ramamurthi Review Committee suggested that refresher courses for in-service teachers should be designed to the specific needs of teachers, valuation of the programme and follow-up should be part of the scheme.

The Yashpal Committee - 1993

Yashpal Committee pointed that, the quality of learning in schools depends on the quality of teacher education programmes. Inadequate teacher education programmes leads to unsatisfactory quality of learning in school. Therefore, the B.Ed. programme should offer in various levels. Teacher education programmes specialization in secondary or elementary or nursery education. The duration of the programme should either be one year after degree or 4-years after 10+2. The curriculum should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing need of school education. The main emphasis in these programmes is enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for independent thinking and self learning. The statutory body for teacher education, the NCTE came out with a Curriculum Framework -1998 to provide guidelines with respect to methodology and content of teacher education. Based on this, many universities and state governments in the country revised the courses of teacher education.

National Curriculum Framework, NCF- 2005

Chattopadhyaya Commission 1983-85 suggested that, there must be radical steps to be taken to recent trend towards the dilution of professional norms. Pre-service training programmes need to be lengthy and more comprehensive, by incorporating the adequate opportunities for observation of children and integration of pedagogic theory with practice through school internship. In elementary and secondary pre-service teacher education courses should have subject areas, consisting of yoga, physical education, health education. Peace education also recommended for inclusion in the teacher education curriculum. Teacher education must meet the demands from the school system. To do this teacher must encourage, supportive, facilitator in teaching learning process to enable the learners to identify their potentialities and talents, realize their physical and intellectual capabilities to the optimum, to develop character and desirable human and social values as future responsible citizens. In this context, teacher education must be an integrated model of teacher education for developing the professionalization of teachers.

Teacher education must be multidisciplinary in nature within the context of education. To understand theoretical and practical aspects in a more integrated manner rather than as two separate components the teacher education must provide adequate actions, tasks, efforts, processes, concepts and events. Therefore, now the role of the teacher as a facilitator, transforming information into knowledge, as a supporter in enhancing learning through multiple exposure, and encourage the learner continuously to achieve their educational goals.

National Knowledge Commission, NKC - 2007

Since Independence, the NKC has made considerable progress in school education with respect to overall complete literacy, infrastructure, universal access, and enrolment in schools.

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE - 2009
During last decade NCFTE took number of initiatives to improve quality of teacher education program. To foster the quality assurance it joined with the National Assessment and Accreditation (NAAC). It is responsibility to look after the implementation of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, in the country. To enhance quality of school education several steps has taken such as Teacher Eligibility Test

(TET) for Teachers and Principal Eligibility Test (PET) to be conducted at both level at central and at State level. For teacher education UGC conducts National Eligibility Test (NET) at national level, and State Level Eligibility Test (SLET/SET) at state level.

Justice verma Committee (JVC-2012)

Justice verma Committee was set up by the Supreme Court of India in view of regarding granting of recognition to 291 private teacher education colleges in Maharashtra “to examine the issues which have a bearing on improving the quality of teacher education as well as improving the regulatory functions of the NCTE” (Ministry of Human Resource Development 2012: 3).

After the submission of the JVC Report, the Supreme Court constituted a committee to develop an action plan that outlines the processes and timelines required for the implementation of the recommendations. Following this action plan, NCTE constituted various subcommittees, including subcommittees for designing curriculum frameworks for various teacher education programmes, to work on the different recommendations. This resulted in the NCTE’s Regulations (Norms and Standards), 2014 (NCTE 2014a). A summary of the major reforms suggested in NCFTE and JVC Report, which were also pursued by the NCTE sub-committees, is presented below.

Broad Contours of Reforms

In spirit, both NCFTE and JVC Report envision professionalization of teacher education programmes in the country. There is also a fair degree of overlap in the recommendations of the two documents, particularly with regard to curriculum for teacher education programmes. In fact, JVC Report recommends that NCFTE be taken as the guiding framework for curriculum reforms. This correspondence between JVC Report and NCFTE (and RTE and NCF) has been analysed as an outcome of the overlap in the members constituting the committees or/and the academic networks among the committee members (Verma 2015). As a result, both the documents broadly suggest the changes that have been described below.

Reform in the curricula: NCFTE describes its aim being to facilitate “directions related change in the structural aspects of teacher education, at elementary, secondary and post-graduate levels” (NCTE 2009: iv). The

framework visualises a change in profile of teacher education programme in the country by proposing reforms in contents, teaching-learning and professional rigour of the curricula. These reforms have been contextualised by NCFTE in the problems of the “conventional” teacher education that are seen as being of abysmal curricular quality (2009: 52). The main principles of curriculum reforms that were proposed included the following: (i) A holistic approach to curriculum; (ii) an emphasis on engagement with theory and foundational perspectives on education; (iii) preparation for future teachers to be reflective, humane and professional practitioners; (iv) longer and intense internship/school experience; (v) preparing would-be teachers to organise teaching-learning in a child-centred manner; (vi) stage specificity in training for various school levels; and (vii) location of teacher education programmes in interdisciplinary environment (2009: 23-24 and 52-55). The details and modalities of these curricular ideas were operationalised by different NCFTE subcommittees in the context of their respective mandated areas of curriculum design. To a great degree the constitution of these sub-committees represented or retained the academic networks or coalitions seen in JVC and NCFTE.

Increased duration of teacher education programmes: From NCFTE possibilities of two kinds of initial teacher education programmes emerge: (i) 2-year second bachelor’s degree for initial teachers preparation at the elementary and secondary school levels; and (ii) four-year (or longer) integrated first bachelors model for both the levels. In addition, JVC also points towards the need for two-year Master of Education programmes and NCFTE recommends sandwiched postgraduate courses of three years’ duration towards developing a specialised cadre of teacher educators and senior secondary school teachers. Before these regulatory changes, the durations of Bachelors and Masters of Education programme were one-year each. After 2014, the duration of these programmes was enhanced to two-years each across the country. This recommendation is based on the assumption that longer duration programmes will provide sufficient time and opportunity for rigorous engagement of the future professionals—in view of a larger objective of professionalising teacher education.

Reformulation of the regulatory mechanism: The changes recommended in JVC covered a broad range so as to reshape the way NCFTE functions. These included amendments in the NCFTE Act, 1983, establishing a vigilance cell within NCFTE, tenure of the chairperson and appointment of the NCFTE Council, and changing the norms and standards. These regulatory changes as well as those introduced through the norms and standards for

different teacher education programmes designed by different subcommittees of NCTE also became the centre of debates and discussions. While these debates were not resolved, they brought out the complexity of the regulatory structure, changes and decision-making process. An overview of these debates is presented in the next section of this paper. Upgrading teacher education programmes: JVC and NCFTE both recommended that to address pre-service quality issues, teacher education (especially elementary level) be upgraded to the level of degree programmes as against largely being offered through diploma programmes. The stated rationale of NCFTE and JVC for this was that since a large number of current institutions are stand-alone institutions they remain isolated from an interdisciplinary ecosystem that can only be provided in a university. This recommendation put forth an uphill task for both the NCTE and the central and state governments as such upgradation of programmes (mostly offered by private institutions) calls for structural changes.

National Policy on Education, NPE-2016

The country education policy was last revised in 1992. It outlined equitable access to quality education, with a common educational structure of 10+2+3. By keeping this, The Ministry of Human Resource and Development setup a committee under the chairmanship of TSR Subramanian and asked to draft a Policy to address the challenges in the education sector. The draft Policy 2016 aims to create an education system which ensures quality education and learning opportunities for all. The focus areas of intervention of the draft Policy are: access and participation, quality of education, curriculum and examination reforms, teacher development and management and skill development and employability.

National Educational Policy 2019

The Ministry of Human Resource and Development constituted a Committee called ‘New Education Policy’ under the Chairmanship of Shri T.S.R Subramanian, and committee studied all aspects of education and submitted its report in May, 2016. Based on this report, the Ministry prepared “Some inputs for the Draft National Educational Policy, 2016”. The Ministry constituted a Committee to Draft “National Education Policy” under the Chairmanship of eminent scientist Padma Vibushan, Dr. K. Kasturirangan to examine all inputs/suggestion and submit a Draft Policy by December, 2018. The policy is identified on the guiding goals of Access, equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability.

The objective of teacher education is that, ensure that teachers are given the highest quality training in content, pedagogy, and practice, by moving from the isolated teacher education system into multidisciplinary colleges and universities, and establishing the 4-year integrated Bachelor's Degree as the minimum qualification for all levels of school teachers.

Based on the recommendations of the Justice J. S. Verma Commission (2012) constituted by the Supreme Court, the National Education Policy felt that there is an urgent need of revitalisation through radical action, in order to raise standards and restore integrity, credibility, efficiency, and high quality to the teacher education system.

In order to improve the quality of teacher education to reach the levels of integrity and credibility and restore the prestigious of the teaching profession and thereby improve school system, the substandard and dysfunctional teacher educational institutions must be shut down.

This can be done with strong political will, positive administrative intent, and an effective implementation strategy. This effort will be launched by Ministry of Education (MoE). All teacher education institutions will be held accountable to maintain the standards and norms of the apex body. If any teacher institution is not maintaining the norms and rules of the recognizing body such institutions will be given one year for remedy. If such institutions not remedied will be shutdown and there must be a sound legal action will be initiated. By 2023, India will have only educationally sound teacher preparation programmes in function, for developing professionally competent teachers.

Because, the teacher education requires multidisciplinary inputs and a high-quality content and pedagogy, all teacher preparation must be conducted within composite multidisciplinary institutions. To meet this, all large multidisciplinary universities- including all public universities as well as all Model Multidisciplinary Colleges – will need to establish, develop, a department of education to carry out research in various aspects of education, will also run B.Ed. programmes to educate future teachers, in collaboration with other departments such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, neuroscience, Indian languages, arts, history, and literature, as well as various other specialized subjects such as science and mathematics. By 2030, all independent and isolated teacher education institutions will be required to convert to multidisciplinary institutions, then they will have to offer the four year integrated teacher preparation programme.

By 2030, the four years integrated B.Ed. will become the minimal degree qualification for school teachers. By 2030, every Higher education institution offering a teacher education programme will be multidisciplinary and offer the four years integrated B.Ed. programme. The four years integrated B.Ed. will be a dual-major liberal Bachelor's degree, in Education as well as a specialized subject (such as a language, or history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, etc.). Each higher Education Institution, HEI offering the four years integrated B.Ed. may also offer a 2year B.Ed. on its campus, for outstanding students who have already received a Bachelor's degree in a specialized subject and wish to pursue teaching. Scholarships for meritorious students will be established for the purpose of attracting outstanding candidates to both the four years and two year B.Ed. programmes. A one year B.Ed. may be designed for particularly outstanding candidates who have received a four years (Bachelor of Liberal Arts/ Bachelor of Liberal Education) B.L.A. / B.L.E. undergraduate degree in a specialized subject.

To achieve this, in establishment of high quality education departments and teacher education programmes in multidisciplinary higher educational institutions needs strong and financial assistance from the government. Every higher education institution needs to see the availability of experts in education and related disciplines as well as specialized subjects. Each HEI will have a wide network of government and private schools to work with such as community service, adult and vocational education etc. each higher education institution need to develop holistic teacher education programmes based on their academic subject strengths related to education as well as in specialised subjects. All the teacher education educations will also see that beyond the teaching of pedagogy will include grounding in sociology, history, science, psychology, early childhood education, foundational literacy and numeracy, knowledge of India and its values/ethos/art/traditions, and more.

Admissions to pre-service teacher preparation programmes will be carried out through subject and aptitude tests as conducted by the National Testing Agency, just like all higher education institutions admissions.

The faculty should be diversified profile in department of education. It is not compulsory everyone should have Ph.D. but teaching experience and field research experience will be given weightage. To strengthen multidisciplinary education, faculty areas such as psychology, child development,

linguistics, sociology, philosophy, political science as well as mathematics education, science education, social science education, language education programmes will be attracted retained in teacher education institutions.

Ph.D. programmes at universities throughout the country need to be modified, because every Ph.D. students need to assist faculty as teaching assistant for this a fresh Ph.D. student, irrespective discipline, will be required to have take 8-credit course in teaching/education/pedagogy related to their chosen Ph.D. subject during the doctoral training period. Many research scholars will go on to become faculty, therefore every Ph.D. Scholar need exposure to pedagogic practices, designing curriculum, evaluation practices.

Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs) earlier these are Academic Staff Colleges will organize programs for in-service professional development for college and university teachers. At present these Centres being seen external entities, and these centers will be integrated completely into universities. These centers are also be incorporated in the Regional Institute of Education (RIEs) of NCERT. These HRDCs will merge in department of education if one already exists or it becomes the seed for creating a department.

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Significance Of Parental Involvement In Char Chapori Areas Of Assam

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Abstract:

It is well established fact that parental involvements in education help improve student's performance, reduce absenteeism and restore parents' confidence in their children's education. These children whose parents were involved have better social skills, show improved behavior and positive attitudes. Parental involvement provides children with a support network as well as contributes in the reduction of crime and poverty, regardless of their background. The study revealed that there is very less parental involvement in education in the Char Chapori areas of Assam. It was found that less than 20% of parents are involved in the education of their children. The study also discovered many reasons behind this negligence from parents such as illiteracy, poverty, migration, ignorance of parents, child marriage, annual floods, lack of skills to help students in learning, ignorance by educational institutes, large families etc.

It is observed that this ignorance has a deep impact not only on the child's education but also on the community as a whole. When children see that their parents have not given importance to education then they too do not understand the importance of it, this result in lack of quality education and ultimately leads to lack of development in the area.

Different measures can be taken for increasing the parental involvement in education of these areas. This includes the role of educational institutes, NGO's, governmental organizations and lastly the educated people themselves.

Introduction

Parental involvement refers to several different forms of participation of parents in education and with the schools of their children. According to Hornby and Lafaele (2011) parental involvement can be attained through home-based participation like listening when their children read, assisting them with their homework as well as participating in school activities like attending parents teacher meeting, functions and workshops held in school. Basically children should feel that their parents are interested in their education so that they too develop interest in learning. This should start from a very young age. And its importance does not diminish even in college.

Parental involvements in education help improve student's performance, reduce absenteeism and restore parents' confidence in their children's education (Garcia and Thornton, 2014). It has been observed that students whose parents were more involved secured higher grades. These children also have better social skills, show improved behavior and positive attitudes. Children are likely to bunk school less when they see their parents are observing their school attendance and this also motivates children to keep trying while struggling to understand a particular topic (Lemmer, 2007).

Parent's involvement works as reward for the child. Getting involved with the children shows that their parents care about their education and schooling. Therefore, this can make children appreciate the importance of education. We should remember that children tend to model adult behaviors so, when they see parents being actively involved with their schooling, children learn through attention, retention, symbolic representation of the observed behavior and subsequently will try to reproduce those behaviors from their parents. Children who receive help from their parents also feel more competent.

Parental involvement even leads to enhancement of the mental health of children. It boosts communication between children and parents and provides a support network for children when they experience academic hurdles as well as challenges in their everyday life. This is really important as it can contribute to the reduction of crime and poverty.

The involvement results in higher self-esteem, more self-motivation, better grades and more discipline in children, regardless of their ethnic, so-

cial or racial backgrounds. This also results in parents being able to know where the child's educational journey is going and to be part of the thick and thin along the way.

Parents should remember that their involvement is good but should be done in the right way. They should remember that balance is always the key. The relationship can deteriorate if parents focus only on the school-work of their children (Mc Neal, 2001). Parents should also have conversations about their everyday life and not just school and grades. The child should not feel pressurized just to get good grades and be good at every co-curricular activity. Instead the child should feel free to communicate with his or her parents and have an open space where they can grow. The aim of parental involvement should not be just to score better but the overall development of the child.

Char Chapori Areas

Char Chapori is an area formed by the sediments of Brahmaputra River and its tributaries in the Indian state Assam. The Char Chapori covers 3,608 km² of the Brahmaputra basin (as per Assam Government reports). It has a population of approx. 24.90 lakhs (Socio Economic Survey 2002-03). The Char areas are distributed all along the Brahmaputra's course, across 23 sub-divisions of 14 districts of Assam.

Educational background of Char Chapori

It is a harsh fact but the literacy rates of these areas are quite low. There are various reasons like poverty, illiteracy, annual floods, erosion and migration due to this, lack of basic infrastructures like roads, schools and mere lack of awareness among people about the importance of education. All this is a largely result of its unique geomorphology and has a major impact on education of the Char areas.

The government has also yet not taken any major initiatives to improve the literacy rate of the area or making the people aware about its importance. In fact, the last socio-economic survey of the Char areas was conducted in 2002-03 by the Directorate of Char Areas Development, which is over a decade ago. The survey data is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Table showing the literacy rate of Char Chapori in 1992-93 and 2002-03 in all the districts of Assam (Socio-Economic Survey Report, Directorate of Char Areas Development, 1992-93 and 2002-03)

District	No of chars	Literacy rate 1992-93	Literacy rate 2002-03
Darrang	121	10.12	12.34
Barpeta	351	12.90	17.63
Kamrup	148	16.85	15.16
Nalbari	58	7.90	16.24
Bongaigaon	150	12.85	12.46
Goalpara	187	8.38	13.65
Dhubri	313	19.06	14.60
Morigaon	41	8.02	18.50
Nagaon	29	9.44	17.59
Dhemaji	95	14.44	15.69
Lakhimpur	182	14.01	18.50
Sonitpur	118	12.63	16.93
Tinsukia	86	14.20	14.00
Jorhat	210	31.90	60.55
Tinsukia	86	14.20	14.00
Jorhat	210	31.90	60.55

It is evident that the literacy in the Char areas has not improved much since 1992-93. In fact, the literacy rate of four districts – Kamrup, Bongaigaon, Dhubri and Tinsukia – has fallen in the 2002-03 survey from 1992-93 survey.

According to the 2002-03 survey, there are 1,852 lower primary schools, 574 middle schools, 218 high schools, 8 higher secondary schools and 18 colleges in the Char areas. This is quite less for a population of about 25 lakhs and especially in the case of higher secondary schools. Along with this the male dropout rate at the primary school level is also very high.

Problems faced by the people of Char Chapori

The Char dwellers live an uncertain life here. They lose their lands, homes, cattle and even lives almost every year. Due to constant erosion they are forced to shift their settlements frequently. The pattern of migration is very atypical. As there is erosion on their upstream and deposition on the downstream, the Char dwellers migrate downstream during floods almost every year. The landmass is segregated and cut-off from each other and also there is threat from flood and erosion, therefore, no mega developmental schemes can be taken in these areas. There has yet not been any significant development in the Char Chaporis. Still 80% of the Char population is below poverty line.

There is an uneven distribution of land in these regions, with 10% of the population owning about 80% of the land. 30% are landless and most are small farmers. The outcome of this skewed land distribution is feudalism and deteriorating literacy is adding up to this social evil.

There are findings which reveal that an illiterate woman in India bears 1.2 children more than a literate woman (average 2.2). The lower the literacy rate the higher is the fertility rate. This has led to high population density in the Char areas— 690 per sq. km against the state's average of 340 per sq. km. The population growth and lack of basic amenities has led to poor healthcare and are forcing people more into poverty.

To know the significance of parental involvement in education of Char Chapori areas of Assam this study examined how much parents are involved in their children's education, the reason behind their lack of involvement and what is its impact on the child and society as a whole. The Char Chapori areas of Sonitpur district was selected for the study. As per the Census of India 2011, the population of Char Chapori areas of Sonitpur district is 145729 and the literacy rate is 16.93%.

Method

The aim of this study is to know the significance of parental involvement in education of Char Chapori areas of Assam. For the purpose of this study interview was taken from the parents of Char Chapori areas of Sonitpur district, Assam. This district has 145 Char villages. A sample of 100 was selected from the population. Only after taking the consent from the participants, interview was taken from them. The interviews purpose was

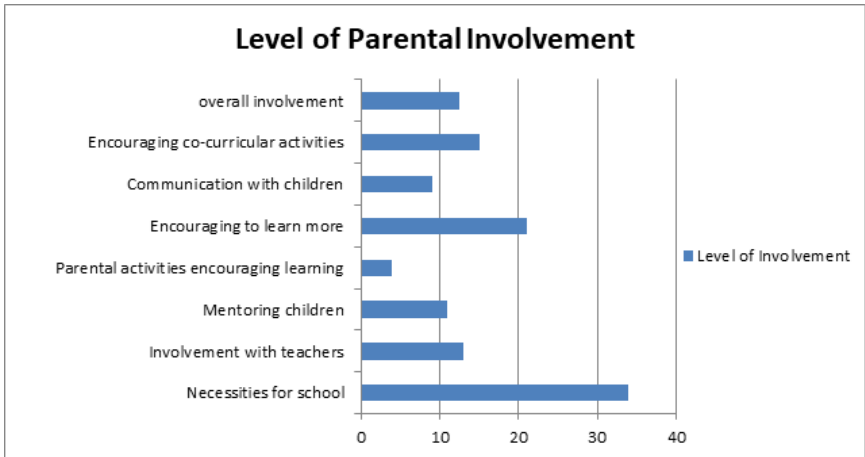
to reveal information for our study. Therefore, the questions asked were about the parent’s involvement in their children’s education as well as the reasons, if there is a lack of involvement. The level of involvement was studied in seven areas. These are:

- i. Parents providing their children with all the necessities for school and their personal development.
- ii. Parent’s involvement with teachers and school.
- iii. Mentoring their children.
- iv. Parental activities that can encourage learning.
- v. Encouraging children to learn more and develop themselves.
- vi. Talking with children about their everyday life and struggles.
- vii. Encouraging their children to take part in co-curricular activities and helping them in it.

In the interview it was observed if parents engage in these activities or not. The answers given by the participants were analysed to find the result. The results were calculated simply by finding the percentage of people who responded ‘yes’ to the questions asked in the interview. After this, the responses were analysed to see the major reasons behind the lack of involvement.

Result

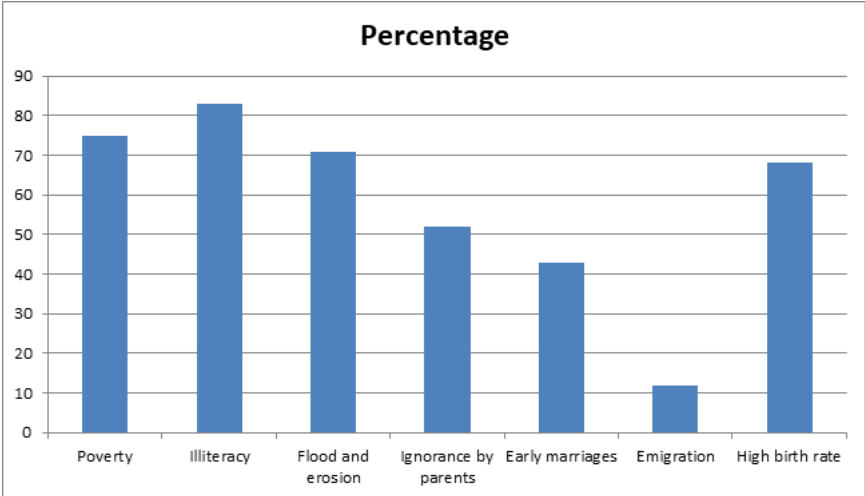
Figure 1: The level of involvement in the different areas concerning parental development in Char Chapori areas of Sonitpur district, Assam.



The overall involvement is only 12.5% and this is very low. In addition to this the level of involvement in different areas is also not quite high. Like it is observed that the percentage of parents providing their children with all the necessities for school and their personal development is 34%, parent’s involvement with teachers and the school is 14%, parents encouraging children to learn more and develop themselves is 21% and parents encouraging their children to take part in co-curricular activities and helping them in it is 18%. The lowest involvement is in the areas such as parents mentoring their children with 11%, parental activities that can encourage learning with 4% and parents talking with children about their everyday life and struggles with 9%. This observation shows that parental involvement is drastically low in these regions.

While conducting the interview the parents were asked about the reason behind their lack of involvement with their children’s education. The answers when analysed revealed many factors and these are represented in the graph below.

Figure 2: The factors that influence parental involvement.



Illiteracy is found to be the main factor behind parent’s lack of involvement. 83% of parents reported that due to illiteracy they cannot engage with their children’s education. Other factors include poverty with 75%, flood and erosion with 71%, ignorance by parents with 52%, early marriages with 43%, high birth rate with 68% and emigration by literates to mainland with 12%.

The lack of parental involvement has a major impact on the children as well as the society. The most common impact is that children do not develop interest in learning and at the same time they do not well understand the significance of education. This leads to high rate of drop out, absenteeism and teachers not performing their responsibilities properly. This influences the career of the children, can lead to their exploitation, poverty and ultimately hinders the development of the community and the region.

Discussion

The results clearly reveal that the level of parental involvement in the Char Chapori areas is considerably low. The area which has highest involvement is providing children with the basic necessities for school and that too is merely 34%, which is not quite high. The lowest is the area of parental activities like reading (newspaper, books), discussing among themselves about socially relevant issues, discussing with their children about their career that can encourage learning. This is seen to be only 4%. Another area with very low involvement is communication with their child, which is only 9%. The overall involvement counts to 12.5%, which is very low. It is really important to have a better percentage of parental involvement, therefore, this study also tried to understand the major factors influencing low level of parental involvement. This revealed some fascinating and thought provoking factors. It is important to understand that many factors can influence the person at a time. These factors are:

i. Illiteracy is found to be the most important factor influencing parental involvement. Most parents replied that when they are not literate how they can help their children. From the sample, 83% of people said that due to illiteracy they cannot show any form of involvement.

ii. Another very important factor is poverty. 75% of people replied that due to poverty they are not able help their children in their learning and schoolwork. Many other factors are also related to it. They do not have adequate monetary resources to provide their children with all the necessities for schooling and personal growth. At the same time, people from lower socio- economic section indulge in more labour intensive work, therefore, they are not left with enough time and energy to engage with their children.

iii. The problem of flood and erosion is specific to these areas. 71% of

people reported that due to annual flood and erosion they have to migrate very frequently. This affects children's education adversely as sometimes schools get eroded or they have to settle in a new area and take admission in a new school. At the same time, parents have to invest their time in rebuilding their houses as well as look for new livelihood.

iv. The sheer ignorance by parents towards is education is also a common factor. 52% of the parents reported that they think it is the school's duty to teach the children and not theirs.

v. Early marriages have also contributed towards low parental involvement. 43% of parents have reported that they were married at a very young age and could not complete their education. Due to this they do not have the confidence to teach their children and help them with the schoolwork. More mothers have stated this than fathers. This obviously has a huge impact as in Indian society it is seen that mostly mothers are the ones who help children with their schoolwork.

vi. 12% of people have also reported that those children who are literate migrate to the mainland in search of a better livelihood and a better standard of living. This leaves the illiterate and downtrodden people behind in the Char Chapori. This has an impact as those who can help others understand the importance of education and how parental involvement can boost it are not present in the region.

vii. High birth rate is also a factor as parents are not able to provide proper care to each and every child. 68% of parents reported that due to a large family they cannot pay attention to each and everyone. In addition to this due to a large family they have to work more to make the ends meet.

The factors that emerged are deep rooted in the community. It is not easy to eradicate these issues. Parents have to understand the importance of education and how their involvement can facilitate learning. According to Kwatubana & Makhalemele (2015) when learners see parents involved in their education, they become more focused in their schoolwork. Therefore, if parents do not engage themselves in education it will be very difficult for the students and also for the community to prosper. The people indeed are facing many problems but there is a major problem which they are well not aware of. This is the lack of education in these regions. Parental involvement can improve the literacy rate.

When parents do not show interest in education it leads to many problems like absenteeism. Children miss school frequently and sometimes they might ask the children to miss school and work in the fields or take care of their younger siblings. Another problem associated is that this has led to high rate of dropout. At same time, as parents are not much concerned about as well as aware of significance of education and their involvement, the teachers take advantage of this and do not deliver quality performance as well as frequently miss school. Due to these reasons the students never get the quality education that they deserve. The other problems associated with this are mostly seen in the later phases of the child's life. Firstly they do not receive quality education. Due to this they mostly work in the un-organized sector. At work they are mostly exploited. They do not get fare wages, eventually being trapped in poverty like their parents. Also due to the lack of education these people also do not know about their basic rights. They hardly know anything about family planning leading to high birth rate and due to poverty there is poor healthcare. And as a result there is barely any development in the region. And ultimately it is seen that they cannot move out of the troubles their parents were trapped in.

Conclusion

Parental involvement is a very important tool for improving a child's academic performance. This also facilitates self-confidence, social skills, positive attitude, mental health and boost motivation to develop oneself to their full potential. Parental involvement also make children active, persistent, responsible and punctual from young age, as children would see parents are interested in their progress and would not like to upset them. These children show qualities of being organized as they plan ahead and work according to the schedule (Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014).

Char Chapori are generally small and remote villages in the riverine islands of Bramhaputra. These areas are mostly backward and have many issues which contribute more to its backwardness. These areas are subjected to annual floods, erosion, migration, poverty, illiteracy, population growth, lack of basic infrastructure etc.

One of the major issues which contribute to the regions backwardness is its low literacy rate. Educating the people of these areas can immensely benefit the community. Getting education is not just about going to school, it is important that these people also get quality education. Getting quality education will be possible when parents will involve themselves in their

children's education and with the educational institute. It is also observed that educational institutes in these regions do not encourage parental involvement much. A good level of participation by parents with school can lead to improvement in the academic performance of the educational institute. It is also the duty of the institute to encourage the parents to collaborate with the educational system to achieve its goals (Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014).

From the study it is observed that parental involvement is very low in these regions and this had a great impact on the literacy rate of the area. When parents are not able to demonstrate to their children the importance of education, the children develop no to little interest in learning and never quite well understand the opportunities it has for them. This mostly leads to lower level of academic performance by the child. Hence, they are not able to explore their potentials to the fullest and lead a life with very less opportunities like their parents. These children like their parents do not get proper education and when they will be parents they are likely to showcase a similar attitude towards education and hence, their children too will not know the importance of education. Thus, the community is ultimately trapped in the vicious circle where the backward remains the backward. Therefore, it is very important to increase the literacy of these regions. And to increase the literacy it is important to create awareness and also engage parents in it. Until parents show their concern towards improving the education of the area it is difficult to achieve it. Therefore, parents must involvement themselves in their children's education. This will not only lead to increased literacy rate but will also help to develop the community. Ways to increase parental involvement in the Char Chaporis.

There is lack of awareness towards education and parental involvement in these regions. It is the duty of different agencies to create awareness here. First of all, the government has to take initiatives to create awareness in these regions. They should implement different programs in schools to increase the parental involvement with school. The NGO's can also work towards creating awareness. They may set up different awareness camps which showcases the benefits of parental involvement its impact on their children's education and finally how can it benefit the community as a whole. In addition to this they can also appeal the government to act on the issue of parental involvement. The educational institutes should also encourage parental involvement. They should organize workshops for parents highlighting importance of parental involvement and strategies on how to engage themselves. And lastly it is the duty of the educated

population of these areas and the nearby areas to create awareness. The educated population must take a step towards educating these people. It is also important to remember that all these agencies have to work together for best results.

Increasing parental involvement can be challenging in these areas as the majority of population is illiterate here. People here have the belief that when they are not literate how can they teach their children. But parental involvement is not just about mentoring children. Research reveals that positive contribution can be made even by disadvantaged parents if they obtain adequate encouragement and training. Even more noteworthy is the fact that irrespective of their own educational level parents can make a difference in their children's education through their involvement (Cotton and Wikelund, 1989).

The psychology of parental involvement is that when children see that their parents are keen towards their education they try to perform well. And when they get praise for their performance it becomes reward for them and they try to get the reward again. In this process they eventually develop interest in learning. Therefore, the illiterate population can engage themselves by just showing interest in education. They may engage by asking children how their day was in school, what new they learnt today or if they have any homework. They must also go to school on parent teacher meeting to know their child's progress. They can encourage them to take part in co-curricular activities and attend different workshops and programs held in school. They should also have discussion with their children about their future and if they are facing any challenges in academics and life in general. All these measures will have lasting impact on the child's education. This will be a great resource for the community. As in future these children can avail better jobs which will help them overcome their poverty. This finally will resolve many of the other issues prevailing in these regions.

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Impact of Kanyashree Scheme on Enrolment and Retention of Muslim Girls at Secondary Level in West Bengal

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Abstract:

Education is the most powerful tool for the social and economic development of a country .It is also an important tool to create a pool of skilled, responsible and resourceful citizens. Education in our country has become a fundamental right, by the Act of Parliament, in the form of Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. The Indian Constitution has given several provisions for the development of women who constitute almost half of the population of the country. But practically they are far behind than their male counterparts and are one of the most excluded groups in the country so far as access and retention to school education is concerned. The female literacy rate in 1901 was just 0.6%, and it increased to 65.46 in 2011. Though there is literacy gap of almost 17% between male and female at national level, in the context of West Bengal the gap between male and female literacy rate is quite low (11.51). West Bengal is the state with 9,13,47,736 population with sizable number of Muslims. The literacy rate among the Muslim is 69.5, where 72.5% male and 64.8% females are literate. Thus, if in the overall population the gender gap is 11.2, then it is 7.7 among the Muslims. However, overall situation of girls were not good. West Bengal government has taken several welfare schemes for the women, girls and in education field. One of the most important and effective schemes is Kanyashree-2013, aims to bringing down the child marriages

and keep young girls in school. The scheme won several global and national awards for the service to the public sphere. This is a Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme that concentrates on girls currently most at-risk for dropping out of school i.e., the adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. This scheme, along with some others, has tremendous impact on secondary and higher secondary education of girls especially Muslim girls. The retention rate of Muslim girls increased, dropout rates decreased and the enrolment rate increased at the secondary and higher secondary level after finishing the elementary education after its launch in 2013. This paper critically analyses these impacts in detail.

Keywords: *Kanyashree, Secondary Education, Muslim girls.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most powerful instrument for social and economic transformation. The development of a country depends on its growth of education in society because education is the only tool which helps to create skilled, responsible, resourceful citizen. In the development of any country elementary education helps to create the foundation while higher education helps to make human intelligence, decision making efficiency, planning, management skills and power of imagination and secondary education is the bridge between these two segments etc. Considering the importance of education the framers of the Indian Constitution have inserted Article 45 that deals with provision for free and compulsory education for children. It says, “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”. In the year of 2009, this is made as the fundamental right of every child under Article 21-A ‘The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009’.

Girls in the Indian Society

In Indian society theoretically women have been given the status of Goddess (Devi) in many religious texts of Hindus. But in practical they are far behind than their male counterparts. Even females are counted in the category of backward sections of the society.

After Independence, women of India took to education in a relatively large number. For example, in 1901, the literary level of the females in

India was just 0.6%, it increased to 54.1 in 2001 to 65.46 in 2011. Various benefits such as free-ship, scholarship, loan facility, hostel facility etc are being given to women who go for higher education in many towns and cities, educational institutions meant only for female children have been established. According to the latest census 2011, the literacy rate of India is 74.04%. Where the male literacy rate is 82.14% and the female literacy rate is 65.46%. The Female literacy is highest in Kerala 91.98% and Mizoram 89.40%. Lowest male literacy is in Bihar 73.39% and lowest female literacy is in Rajasthan 52.66%.

Though there is a literacy gap of almost 17% between males and females, this slightly decreasing year by year. Economically they are getting strong as they doing different businesses and jobs in different sectors. They are openly competing with their male counterparts in all kinds of jobs, even in defence like Army force, Air force and Naval forces. They are performing excellently in the sports area also. We have witnessed that in the last Rio Olympic 2016, girls of India (P. V. Sindhu and Sakshi Malik) have saved the pride of India by winning two medals. We can commonly recall the names like the Iron Lady of India, Indira Gandhi; Pratibha Patil, Sonia Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee, Sushma Swaraj, Jayalalithaa, Mayawati, Smriti Irani, Vasundhara Raje and many more. Sitharaman.

But this only one side picture of the coin. There are a lot of atrocities among girls and women. Women are being suppressed by their very family members and society for many reasons. The crimes against women have increased to 338954 in 2016, over 329243 in 2015. It is the failure of the law and order system of different state governments. Cruelty by husband and relatives, in 2015, accounted for 34 percent of cases, rising 6 percent over the last four years. However, females are now coming out of the silent zone and more vocal for their rights and space. This shows a positive sign for women's development.

West Bengal: A state with sizable Muslim Populations

West Bengal is the 13th state of India in accordance with its area. But it is amongst the largest states in the country in terms of population with sizeable population of the Muslim community. The percentage of Muslims in West Bengal is 27.01 according to the 2011 census and it is projected to increase up to 28.5% till date. According to the census 2011, the population of West Bengal is 9,13,47,736), an increase from figure of 8.02 crore in census 2001. The total population of West Bengal as per census 2011

is 91,276,115 of which male and female are 46,806,027 and 44,467,088 respectively. The three districts Murshidabad, Malda, and Uttar Dinajpur consist of 33.47% Muslims of the state.

Table-01: Muslims in West Bengal by districts (2011)

	District	Total popula- tion	Muslim pop- ulation	%
1	Murshidabad	7,103,807	4,707,573	66.28%
2	Malda	3,988,845	2,045,151	51.27%
3	Uttar Dinajpur	3,007,134	1,501,170	49.92%
	West Bengal	9,13,47,736)	24,654,825	27.01

Various Schemes run by West Bengal Government

The Government of West Bengal has introduced several welfare schemes for the people. Among them, there are several educational schemes for the students, especially for the girls. And these schemes worked out very successfully. A few of the schemes are Kanyashree, Rupashree, Sabooj Sathi, Yuvashree, Utkarsha Bangla, Shikshashree, Aikyashree etc. Due to the huge significance in the field of girls' education, on June 2017, United Nations honours Kanyashree with highest public service award. Her other two projects 'Utkarsha Bangala'- the state's flagship skill development programmes aim to provide vocational training to school dropouts and 'Sabooj Sathi'- a bicycles distribution scheme to the students from class 9th to 12th also won global WSIS Prizes 2019.

1. Sabooj Sathi

This key scheme in the field of education is well-known was coined by the Chief Minister of West Bengal herself. The Finance Minister of West Bengal, in his Budget Speech of 2015-2016, made it public to distribute around 40 lakh bicycles to the students studying in class 9th to 12th grade in Government and Government Aided Schools and Madrasahs of the State.

The scheme has been introduced to keep in mind to enhance the access of Secondary Education to the students to. It was also expected that the scheme will further

- increase the retention rate in secondary level,
- encourage students for the higher studies after the schooling,
- inculcate sense of confidence among the girl students by promoting mobility,
- promote environment-friendly and healthy means of transportation.

Generally girls are getting more cycles than the boys in number. Out of the total 3,423,004 number of recipients in the first two phases, the ratio of girls and boys stands at 51 and 49. While among the total recipient girls outnumber boys (51 girls to 49 boys), and indicate towards higher girls' participation at the high school level, disaggregation of district wise, standard wise and social identity wise data underscore certain important problems.

After its launching in 2015, more than 73 lakh students already have received bicycles under the scheme. Around one crore students are being covered. This scheme is more beneficial for girls than and thus the participation of girls is more in the secondary level of education. Due to its importance on the social welfare distribution of bicycles to students have won the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) awards of the United Nations. (Source: <https://wbsaboojsathi.gov.in/v2/>)

Table-02: Percentage of Sabooj Sathi Beneficiaries- Girls and Boys.

District	Total	Females	Males
Murshidabad	165436	50.1	49.9
Maldah	158864	53.2	46.8
Uttar Dinajpur	128038	56.4	43.6

Source: Department of Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal

2. Shikshashree

This scheme has been launched for the students belongs to the Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribes day scholars studying in classes V to VIII implementation during 2014-15 by merging the existing schemes of book grant, maintenance grant. To be eligible the maximum family income should not exceed the Rs. 2.5 lakh. Each of the Scheduled Castes students of Class V to Class VII will get a grant of Rs. 750/- per annum and those of Class VIII will get a grant of Rs. 800/- per annum, while Scheduled Tribes students studying from Class V to Class VIII will get a grant of Rs. 800/- per annum. The main objective of the scheme is to provide monetary help to the SC/ST students of classes V to VIII to improve their participation in pre-matric stages and minimize the incidence of drop-out especially in case of girl students. (Source: <https://wbxpress.com/sikshashree-scholarship-scheme/>, <http://anagrasarkalyan.gov.in/Bcw/page/10>)

3. Aikyashree

To address the growing aspiration for education in the minority communities of the state and with a view to providing them more avenues for socio-economic and educational mobility by extending financial support and encouragement to the meritorious students belonging to the minority communities, the State Government has decided to set up the “Aikyashree”. Actually this is West Bengal State Scholarships for Minority Students in West Bengal to be fully funded from the State budget from the financial year 2019-20 onwards under the West Bengal Minority Development and Finance Corporation. Pre-matric, post-matric and merit cum-means scholarships are given in different category from the class 1st to the PhD scholar studying within the country. The primary objective of the pre-matric Scholarship is to encourage the minority communities to send their children to schools and to prevent drop-out. The Post-matric scholarship intends to encourage students to continue their pursuit of higher education. While the objective of Merit-cum-Means scholarship for professional and technical courses is to support their studies for consequently increasing their employability potential. (Source: <https://wbmdfcscholarship.gov.in/main/guidelines> on 29.09.2019)

4. Kanyashree

Kanyashree Scheme seeks to improve the status and wellbeing of girls; specifically those belong to the socio-economically backward families through directly through Conditional Cash Transfers by:

- Incentivizing them to continue in education for a longer period of time,

and complete secondary or higher secondary education, or equivalent in technical or vocational streams, thereby giving them a better footing in both the economic and social spheres.

- De-incentivising marriage till at least the age of 18, the legal age of marriage.
- It was also decided that the Scheme should confer more than just monetary support; it should be a means of financial inclusion and a tool of empowerment for adolescent girls.
- To reinforce the positive impact of increased education and delayed marriages, the scheme also works to enhance the social power and self-esteem of girls through a targeted behaviour change communication strategy. (Source: <https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/> on 28.09.2019).

Present Study

The present study deals with the impact of the Kanyashree schemes on the Muslims girls' education at secondary level in West Bengal. Basically the study covers three districts namely, Murshidabad (MSD), Maldah (MLD) and Uttar Dinajpur (UDP) of West Bengal where the majority of population belongs to the Muslim community. In these three districts people are marginalised and educationally, economically and socially backward. This needs to be addressed by the authorities to bring the people of these districts in the mainstreams. When the scheme was launched initially the implementation was not as per the expectation in these districts. But from the second years onwards it took the momentum.

Rationale of the Study

As mentioned earlier West Bengal is the state with a sizable Muslim population. West Bengal government launched various welfare schemes to improve the social and educational conditions of the people and Kanyashree Prakalpa is one of them. It aims to improve the educational status of the girls in the secondary level and make them confident for the higher study by provide monetary cash transfer directly to the bank account of the girls students. This scheme has immense effect on the enrolment, drop-out and retention of the girl's students, particularly Muslims Girls. The females of the study area are downtrodden. Muslim girls can be more empowered further through scheme. Therefore it was an urgent need to critically study the impacts of the scheme on girls education and society. This study was conducted to serve the above mentioned purpose.

Impact of Kanyashree on Girls Education

West Bengal is one of the most important states of India in different as-

pects like, historical, cultural, social, educational. The modern education in India started verily from the Bay of Bengal with the arrival of Britishers. With the passage of time Bengal reached at the peak of cultural and educational development. The Bengal Renaissance saw the rise of extraordinary personalities and visionaries from the Bengal province in the 19th and 20th century. Free thinking was encouraged among students, caste discrimination was condemned, and literature and science were seen as the agents of progress.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the 'Father of modern India', was the pioneer of the renaissance. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose, Satyendra Nath Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Rabindranath Tagore propelled the movement forward and made Bengal the face of progress and culture in India.

After the partition of Bengal huge migration of take place and the demography of West Bengal drastically changed. After the Independence several new cities and universities were established and progress in the fields of education. The university education could not maintain the pace after 1977 though in the field of school education the number of school increased many fold since then.

New initiatives were launched in West Bengal after 2011 like establishment of more schools, building up additional classrooms, upgrading of junior schools to high schools, and high school to higher secondary schools, establishing new universities, vocational colleges and new ITI's etc. The government took serious note about the girl's education as there was almost 11.2% literacy gap between the males and females in the state. West Bengal shows the fifth highest prevalence of child marriage among all the states with 54.7% currently married women (age 20- 24) being married before 18. The incidence is even higher in rural areas (57.9%) every second girl in high prevalence child marriage districts of West Bengal Murshidabad (61.04%), Birbhum(58.03), Malda(57.07%) and Purulia (54.03) were married off before they reach 18, the legal age for girls to get married. Due to early marriage education, health of girl child above all our national development is hindered. This led to the one of the most disastrous situation of girl's secondary education as the girls are compelled to leave the schools and thus dropout rate increases. Under this circumstance, the government of West Bengal launches Kanyashree Prakalpa to get the girl child relieved from extreme condition of suffering. Government of West Bengal decided to follow in the footsteps of epoch-making Bengal social

reformers and conceived the Kanyashree Prakalp in 2013, a project that will work towards bringing down the cases of child marriage and keep young girls in school.

This conditional cash transfer scheme is exactly what young girls in Bengal need to fully enjoy their childhood. According to the government data, out of total number of 1.73 crore adolescents (10-19) years in the state – incidentally, they make up 20 percent of the population - 83 lakh, or 8.3 million are girls while children in this age group have a tremendous potential for physical and mental growth. When the Kanyashree Prakalpa scheme was being conceptualized, a couple of factors were taken into consideration; it was felt that the greatest obstacle to girl's education was child marriage, domestic responsibility and early pregnancy.

The impacts of the Kanyashree Project are very much visible in the context of girls education specifically and overall education generally.

Table-03: Enrolment of Minority Children in Surveyed Schools in Selected States during the Years 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17

Dis- tricts	BOYS			GIRLS		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
MSD	50.83	48.50	49.50	111.00	134.17	122.67
MLD	137.83	141.17	233.00	250.00	271.33	361.83
UDP	30.67	32.83	32.33	30.17	31.50	31.50

Source: Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India

The scheme has immense impacts on the enrolment the Muslim girls. From the table-03, we can easily observe that after the launching of the Kanyashree Prakalpa in 2013, the enrolment Muslim girls in took its speed and goes on to increase in the successive years from 2014-15 to 2016-17 and so on. The difference is clearly visible as girls do comparatively better than the boys. This will surely led to decrease the drop-out rates and increase the retentions of the girls at the secondary level of education.

Table-04: Percentage of Minority Drop-Outs to Enrolments 2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17

Districts	BOYS			GIRLS		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
MSD	0.37	0	0	0.43	0.40	0.19
MLD	0.73	0.71	0.64	0.27	0.68	0.51
UDP	8.15	4.06	3.09	9.94	6.35	5.29

Source: Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India

Table-04 presents the data of drop-out rates of three districts namely Maldah, Murshidabad and Uttar Dinajpur representing West Bengal. The data shows that the drop-out rates of the Muslim girls surprisingly lowered down after the launching of the Kanyashree Prakalpa in 2013. The data shows that the drop-out rates at the secondary level of education of female students.

The following two tables (Table- 05 and 06) comprising both the primary and secondary education in West Bengal compare the girls and boys GER. In the year of 2013-14, the Gross Enrolment Ratio at secondary level was 81.34 and it rose up to 86.05 and up to 92.65 in 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. In case of boys the number has increased but not the rate in comparison to the girls.

Table-05: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) -
Level of Education- Secondary

YEAR	2013-14			2014-15			2015-16		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
W.B.	68.62	81.34	74.82	70.67	86.05	78.17	74.92	92.65	83.56

Source- Educational statistics at a Glance- 2018

But in the case of primary education the GER is arbitrary (Table-06). Though there is a trend of increase in the enrolment ratio, but the rate is very slow. In some years its growth rate is even lower. Where there is positive trend of increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio in the case of

secondary education, there is very slight changes or even negative trend is found in primary education sector. The GER is positively related here in the case of secondary education is due to the Kanyashree Prakalpa. After its launching in 2013, the scenario of girls education including Muslim changed.

Table- 06: Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) -Level of Education- Primary

YEAR	2013-14			2014-15			2015-16		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
W.B.	103.16	104.88	104.00	101.78	102.91	102.33	103.13	104.26	103.68

Source- Educational statistics at a Glance- 2018

Table-07 and 08 shows the overall enrolment of the minority students in West Bengal and in India. In the table it is clearly visible that the enrolment is raised in the following successive years. The boys and the girls have the difference in the secondary education due to the Kanyashree scheme that benefited only girls.

Table-07: Percentage of Muslim Enrolment in the Secondary Level

States	Boys	Girls	Total
W.B.	23.06	30.97	27.34
INDIA	9.34	11.23	10.24

Source: U-Dise Flash Statistics 2016-17 (Nuepa)

Table-08: Enrolment of Muslim minority students at Secondary Education (IX-X) Level

States	Year/ Category	Boys	Girls	Total
W.B.	2014-15	278315	423088	701403
W.B.	2015-16-	292425	461860	754285
W.B.	2016-17	283023	466963	749986

Source: U-Dise Flash Statistics 2016-17 (Nuepa) Pg-256

The department of school education in West Bengal is committed to implement the scheme of Kanyashree and other schemes to get the maximum benefits and accomplishment of the objectives. The government has passed orders to the different executive authorities to look in to the matter seriously so that the girl's education can be ensured. Because of this the number of Kanyashree beneficiary increased in many fold. At present there are 57,98,095 girls are enrolled under this scheme and 13,88,210 girls have been awarded the (K1) scheme that is almost 24% of the total enrolled girls. Year by year the number of Kanyashree enrolment is increased specially in three districts, Murshidabad, Maldah and Uttar Dinajpur where the concentration of Muslims are 66%, 51% and 49% respectively. This trend of increase in the number of Kanyashree girls, directly impact on the Muslim girls education. Girls are defending themselves in context of early marriage and drop-out from the school in middle of their study at the secondary level. They are getting monthly scholarship of Rs. 500 (K1), now Rs. 750 and after the completion of the study they will one time grand of Rs. 25000. This one time grant has multipurpose use for the girls. They can continue their education in the colleges after the 12th grade, can support their education themselves, can make it deposit in the bank, can support the family or even it can be used at the time of marriage and so on. The details of the beneficiaries from this scheme has been mentioned in table-09:

Table-09: Kanyashree: Status from 2013-14 & 2018-19

SI No		2013-14		2018-19	
		Annual Scholarship (K1)	One Time Grant(K2)	Annual Scholarship(K1)	One Time Grant(K2)
	Districts	Sanc-tioned Ap-plication	Sanc-tioned Ap-plication	Sanc-tioned Ap-plication	Sanc-tioned Ap-plication
1	MSD	152250	10367	246408	45520
2	MLD	93436	6069	152030	26507
3	UDP	67923	4470	98972	16893

Source: https://www.wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp_4.0/index.php

Conclusion:

The scheme of Kanyashree has significant impacts on the education and early child marriage. It helps in improvement of the social condition of the girls and empowerment. The scheme supports the girls to continue their education in monetary terms and hence, also support their families. Because of its importance the scheme has been awarded by the UNICEF but there are some problems in its implementation. It has also been observed that the teachers are overloaded due to the clerical work related to different schemes run by the government which hampers the teaching learning process. The government should take serious steps in this direction. However, such schemes are required to be introduced by the other state governments in the country as well and the central government should give wholehearted financial support on the basis of their merits.

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