सर्व शिक्षा अभियान
सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

Education of Disadvantaged

Distance Education Programme – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (DEP-SSA)

(An IGNOU-MHRD, Govt. of India Project)

Maidan Garhi, New Delhi – 110 068

IGNOU

Education of Disadvantaged for the Universalisation of Elementary Education

Distance Education Programme-Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (DEP-SSA)

(An IGNOU-MHRD, Govt. of India Project)

Indira Gandhi National Open University

Maidan Garhi, New Delhi – 110 068

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August, 2008

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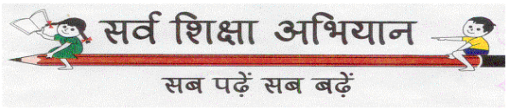

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Education of Disadvantaged for the Universalisation of Elementary Education

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Foreword

The Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) rightly emphasized in the Constitution of India, is one of the major goals of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The 86th Indian Constitutional Amendment Act provides for free and compulsory elementary education as a fundamental right of all children of 6-14 years age. This has given a new direction to the education of children who belong to Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Children with Special Needs (CWSN).

The disadvantaged children have to be enrolled and retained in regular schools and provided with adequate support as per their needs. The main objective is to bring all children in the age group 6-14 years into the school and retain them in the school till they complete minimum eight years of schooling. Therefore, it is in this regard that Distance Education Programme – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (DEP-SSA) IGNOU organized a National Seminar on "Education for Disadvantaged and Universalization of Elementary Education under SSA" during February 25-27, 2008 at IGNOU, New Delhi.

The main objectives of this seminar were (i) to bring together the academics, policy planners, functionaries of State Project Offices, SCERT, DIETs and other stake holders of elementary education to have a comprehensive and meaningful discussion on certain emerging issues and come out with practical and meaningful suggestions, (ii) Improving the education of disadvantaged children in regular schools and (iii) to achieve the target of education for all. The total number of papers presented during the three-day seminar was 19.Comprehensive discussions and interaction was made on various aspects pertaining to the development of innovative strategies to improve quality of education of disadvantaged.The feedback collected from the participants was quite positive and encouraging.

DEP-SSA is making constant efforts to cover all important themes for the benefit of the SSA functionaries. The selected papers presented in the three-day seminar are being published for the benefit of larger target population.

My thanks are due to the presenters for the effort they have made in providing evidence, which I believe, will be useful for teachers and other stakeholders working in the field of elementary education. Thanks are also due to the organizations for deputing their faculty for participation in the Seminar.

I would like to express my gratitude to Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, Govt. of India for sponsoring DEP-SSA to improve the professional competency of functionaries associated with SSA.

I am grateful to Prof. V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU and Chairman DEP-SSA for providing valuable guidance, necessary administrative support and cooperation to bring out this publication.

I am especially thankful to all the Chairpersons who conducted the different sessions of the Seminar and shared their rich experience with the participants. I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Sunaina Kumar for language editing of the present document.

I appreciate the efforts made by the faculty of DEP-SSA for conducting this national seminar and bringing out this informative document. I wish to put on record the support given by the staff of DEP-SSA in organizing this seminar and bringing out the publication for wider dissemination to stakeholders associated with Quality Elementary Education all over the country.

I hope this document will reinforce the professional development of teachers, teacher educators and other SSA functionaries who are actively engaged in achieving the flagship goal of "**Education for All**" and providing Quality Elementary Education.

Prof. M.L. Koul
Project Director

About the Document

One of the prime objectives of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is to achieve the target of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). The goal of UEE has been facilitated by the Indian constitution (86th Amendment Act) making free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. This has given a new direction to the education of certain special groups of children such as Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe, Other Backward Classes and Children With Special Needs. Inclusion of these special categories of children is very important for achieving the objective of UEE. SSA ensures that every child irrespective of any discrimination is provided meaningful and quality education. Keeping this holistic aspect in mind, SSA has adopted a zero rejection policy, which means no child should be deprived of the right to education and should be taught in an environment which is best suited to his/her needs. Therefore, a provision for EGS, AIE and home based education in some of the states, under SSA has been made to facilitate the education of disadvantaged section of the society. Experiences of a vast programme like DPEP and various other research findings have shown that inclusion is best determined by individual needs of the children. It is believed that the disadvantaged children can be enrolled and retained in regular schools provided adequate support as per their needs is provided to them. The main objective is to bring all the children in the age group of 6-14 years into the school and retain them till they achieve the quality elementary education.

In this direction, Distance Education Programme (DEP) is an important intervention under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which caters to the learning needs of children and training needs of elementary school teachers and other functionaries associated with SSA. It aims at providing quality elementary education to all children through active participation of SSA functionaries and training of elementary school teachers. Objective of SSA can be realized only if all children including children belonging to disadvantaged group are brought under the umbrella of elementary education.

Issues in Hand

What have been the parameters in the context of education of disadvantaged children to ensure their participation at elementary stage? How the target of enrolment in general and retention in particular be met under the National flagship programme of SSA? How various interventions like implementation of EGS centers, and AIE centers are more worth to improve enrolment and retention of children in regular schools? How does DEP-SSA through open distance learning

system contribute to the process of achieving the target of providing need-based education to children especially belonging to disadvantaged group? What has been the changing role of teachers, parents, community and other national and international agencies in providing quality education to all children including children of disadvantaged group in the age group of 6-14 years? How education and technology can bring a radical change in the performance of teachers at elementary level especially in rural India?

Keeping the above aspects in mind DEP-SSA, IGNOU organized a National Seminar on **"Education of Disadvantaged and Universalisation of Elementary Education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan"** during February 25-27, 2008 at IGNOU , New Delhi. This National Seminar aims at bringing the academics, policy planners, functionaries of SPOs, SCERTs, DIETs and other functionaries of SSA together to have a comprehensive and meaningful discussion on these emerging issues and come out with practical and meaningful suggestions to improve the education of disadvantaged and achieve the target of education for all. The responses of functionaries from all over the country were quite encouraging. 84 papers on different themes were received for this seminar but only 25 papers were selected by a duly constituted screening committee for presentation in different sessions. Attempt has been taken under DEP-SSA to publish the following papers in the form of an informative document.

Effectiveness of Interventions on Enrollment, Promotion, Repetition, Dropout and Completion of Education of Disadvantaged Children

The paper was presented by Dr. Rashmi Dudhe from Madhya Pradesh where Dr. Dudhe emphasized on implementation of certain special interventions to facilitate education of disadvantaged under various schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. She particularly focused on improving enrolment and retention of disadvantaged in regular schools.

Innovative Strategy for Strengthening EGS Centers

The paper was presented by Shri Uday Chandra Mishra from Orissa. Shri Mishra highlighted on effective functioning of AIE and EGS centers in remotest part of the country for facilitating education of disadvantaged particularly girls. He has specified certain constructive suggestions pertaining to improving the functioning of AIE and EGS centre.

Development of Primary Education in Punjab - Role of Community

The paper was presented by Shri Sushant Kumar Panda from Punjab. The paper particularly emphasizes on various policies, programmes and interventions under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to cater to the need of disadvantaged children. Shri Panda pointed on active participation of community in achieving the objectives of schemes and interventions for its fruitfulness.

Concrete – Representational – Abstract (CRA) Instructional Approach of Teaching Mathematics

The paper was presented by Shri D. Senivasagam from Tamil Nadu. The crux of the paper was need based approaches/strategies for developing cognitive aspects of children at elementary level. He has emphasizes on improving level of achievement of disadvantaged children and improving competencies of teachers in handling effectively inclusive environment.

Educational Status of Marginalized at Elementary Level: Role of Distance Education Programme

The paper was presented by Dr. M. K. Dash, Programme Officer on behalf of DEP-SSA, IGNOU. This paper highlighted the existing status of disadvantaged at national level and the corresponding status in the state of Orissa in general and KBK districts of the same state in particular. It also reflects the strategic effort made under Distance Education Programme to cater to the need of disadvantaged children in rural and marginalized parts of India.

Effectiveness of Group Techniques on Eliminating the Learning Disabilities of Learners

The paper was presented by Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi from Haryana. Dr Panigrahi pointed the need of learning by doing i.e; active participation of children in group. Dr Panigrahi focused on improving the participation of children with disabilities in teaching learning process is a way to foster their education.

Inclusive Schooling: aan Innovative Approach for Development of Communication and Social Interaction Skills of Children with Autism

The paper was presented by Ms Swarnalata Panda from Orissa. Improving communication skills and social interaction skills are of quite essential in early stage of development. Ms. Panda focused on some strategic efforts related to these aspects particularly for the children with autism. Is an essential requirement for facilitating inclusion of these categories of children in regular schools

Improving Teacher Education Programme for the Education of the Disadvantaged – A Study

The paper was presented by Sh. Remith George Carri from Karnataka. This paper focused on various aspects of teacher education programme pertaining to improving the education of disadvantaged under SSA. He has taken an attempt to highlight the perception of teachers with regard to improving the quality of pre service and in service teacher education programme in our country

Tapping Teacher Potential and Community Cooperation for Girls' Education in Tribal Areas

The paper was presented by Dr. Lakh Narain Pandey from Madhya Pradesh. Dr Pandey rightly emphasized on improving the potentials of teachers working in rural and remotest schools for improving education of girls and at the same time he focused on ensuring community participation and cooperation in tribal areas as well

A Helping Hand for Disadvantaged Children in Rural Areas – A Case Study

The paper was presented by Shri Pankaj Kumar M. Desai where he has taken an attempt to explain an innovative model for improving the education of disadvantaged in rural areas of South Gujarat. Dr. Desai has rightly pointed that this innovative model is the contribution pertaining to development of partnership with villagers and other personalities. This will definitely an encouraging step towards the education of disadvantaged and minorities in rural and remote places

Activity Based Learning (ABL) – A Paradigm Shift Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The paper was presented by Shri Balasubramanian from Tamil Nadu. This paper focused on a new dimensions of teaching learning process at primary level i.e. activity based learning. The author has taken an attempt to implement the same model in alternative and innovative education centres under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to facilitate education of children at primary level in an innovative way

Innovative Approaches to Train Tribal Children on Communication Skills

The paper was presented by Shri Y. John Richard from Andhra Pradesh. The paper focuses on communication skill as an important aspect and is pre-requisite for all round development of children. Teachers and teacher educators must give emphasis in the implementation of new strategies to deal with rural tribal children through their mother tongue to develop learning competencies in them

Improving the Language Skills of the Tribal Children by Adopting Link Language "Desia"

The paper was presented by Shri Bijaya Kumar Rath. This paper pointed on improving language skills of tribal children and gradually adopting to the teaching-learning process through tribal dialects. This is an important requirement to facilitate language skill and communication skill (reading and writing) in children belonging to marginalized area

Performance of Disadvantaged Children in Co-Curricular Activities - A Case Study

The paper was presented by Shri Kartikeshwar Behera. This is a case study where Shri Behera highlight various aspects of a model school functioning in rural area of Koraput district. He has taken an attempt to collect the perception of teachers, children and parents with regard to education of disadvantaged and marginalized children. Shri Behera focused on some strategic interventions pertaining to improving the educational standard of SCs, STs and other minorities

Education of Disadvantaged Under SSA : Role of Open Distance Education Programme

The paper was presented by Dr. M.K. Dash from DEP-SSA, IGNOU. This paper focused on conceptual analysis pertaining to statistical figure of the education of disadvantaged at National Level and three educationally backward states like Orissa, West Bengal and Bihar. This is an attempt to visualize the current situation pertaining to education of SC, ST, OBC and other minorities under SSA. Role of Distance Education Programme for facilitating education of disadvantaged was the crux of this paper

Attendance of Muslim Children at the Primary Level - A Study

The paper was presented by Shri Sudarshan Santara from Orissa. Through this paper an attempt was taken to highlight the education of children in a Muslim Dominated Village. The findings of the study based on observation made by the author of this paper. Shri Santara stated some strategic interventions for improving education of Muslim children under SSA to achieve the goal of Education for All

Emerging Role and Responsibilities of Parents and Community in Providing Quality Education

The paper was presented by Dr. Amrita Maheshwari from U.P. This paper explain the support service provided to the children from the family in rural and remote areas. Dr. Maheshwari basically focused on developing suitable environment in school and family to enhance education of children with special needs.

Empowering the VEC: A Step towards Quality Elementary Education for the Disadvantaged

The paper was presented by sh. Tapas kumar Nayak from Orisa Sh. Nayak focused on empowering the community and ensuring their participation in various aspects of school activities. It is time to empower the community members in general and the VEC in particular, so that they can collaboratively and actively

participate in the school activities. Status of the state of Orissa pertaining to community mobilization and participation are reflected in the paper of Sh. Nayak

Education of Girls at Elementary level- A Challenge to SSA

The paper was presented by Dr. M.K. Dash from DEP-SSA, IGNOU. Through this paper an attempt has been made to reflect the progress of Girls education at elementary level in India and the challenges in the way of improving quality of elementary education for girls. Dr Dash highlighted the importance of teacher education to sensitive to the emerging needs of girls' education at elementary level. In this context it was felt essential to provide contextualized quality training to teachers and other stakeholders of elementary education for the promotion of Girls education.

Dr Manoj Kumar Dash
Programme Officer
DEP-SSA, IGNOU

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EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS ON ENROLLMENT, PROMOTION, REPETITION, DROPOUT AND COMPLETION OF EDUCATION OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Rashmi Dudhe*

Abstract

Primary education is the cornerstone of social development and a principal means of improving the welfare of individuals. It promotes economic growth - thereby reducing poverty and enhances political, economic and scientific institutions. The benefits of primary education for development stem largely from the improved cognitive skills it imparts; literacy, numeracy and problem solving ability.What confronts us all is an enormous and unprecedented opportunity to develop the human resources of the nation to a broader and fuller degree than our most optimistic forebears ever dreamed of. The challenge presented by this opportunity is to develop human beings of courageous and independent minds, who can transmit and enrich our society's intellectual, cultural and spiritual heritage, who can advance mankind's eternal quest for truth and beauty and who can leave the world a better place than they found it. Only by pursuing these paramount goals of education can we insure a free society and a sane and peaceful world in which all individuals may live in greater dignity and achieve greater fulfillment.The main vehicle at present for taking elementary education to all children is a comprehensive program called 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' (SSA). SSA covers the entire country. The programme seeks to improve the performance of the school system through a community - owned approach with specific focus on the provision of quality education. It aims to ensure UEE and bridge gender and social gaps by the year 2010.

The present study made an effort to probe into the impact of intervention undertaken under SSA in the field of elementary education. This paper has been extracted from the comprehensive Cohort Study and based on qualitative data explored by different units of observation. In the present study attempt has been made to present the status of enrolment, Promotion, Repetition, Dropout and Completion of disadvantaged children (SC, ST), The researcher also describes the root causes presenting the achievement of the targets of quality education. However the socio-economic status and the environment were drawn as the main and the most effective causes which affect the positive impact of interventions undertaken.

Statement

Impact of various interventions undertaken under SSA on Enrolment, Promotion, Repetition, Dropout and Completion of Education of Disadvantaged Children

Objectives

1. To find out the status of promotion, repetition, dropout and the completion rate of disadvantaged children at elementary level.

2. To find out the root causes abstracting in achieving the targets of the quality education by the impact of interventions undertaken under SSA.

Research Questions

1. Do the provided interventions have a positive impact on enrollment, promotion, repetition, completion rate and reduction of dropouts?

2. Can an investigation look at the keen causes of low promotion rate, high repetition rate, and large no. of dropouts and the weak completion rate?
3. Can the gathered views of the parents and the causes be more helpful in giving solutions and plugging loopholes?

Methodology

Survey method was adopted to examine the utility and the effectiveness of the study.

Sample

The sample of the study focused on Burhanpur district with two blocks; viz. Khaknar (tribal) and Burhanpur (Non-tribal). Sample schools of rural and urban areas are randomly selected. A sample of 15 Primary and 15 Middle schools

adjoining or of the same village to trace out the completion rate. (Representing the whole district)

Units of Observations

1. By the investigator to collect the basic data.

2. Interview with the parents.

3. Interaction with the teachers to know the difficulties in achieving indicators for the disadvantaged children.

Tools and Technique

1. Data collection sheet containing the information related to the enrollment, promotion, repetition, dropout rate and completion based on different variables such as caste, gender.

2. Questionnaire for Headmaster to obtain the availability of human and physical resources and other information related to area-specific problems.

3. Interview schedule for the parents to find out the causes and explore the remedies according to the requirements for their children.

4. Observational comments of the investigators.

Analysis and Interpretation

A. Primary Level

Table 1: Promotion Rate

Group	Caste	I-II	II-III	III-IV	IV-V	V-VI
Boys	GEN	100.00	80.00	46.15	85.71	28.57
	SC	54.17	38.89	23.53	25.00	44.44
	ST	50.59	38.36	39.29	50.00	31.03
	OBC	78.67	57.35	32.61	48.89	44.44
Total		**65.33**	**49.43**	**12.88**	**48.15**	**38.27**

At a first glance statistical indicators appear to reflect a dim prospective picture of comparative analysis of promotion rate of SC, ST Boys and Girls and OBC students of BPL. The promotion rate of SC boys is lowest in class III to IV. The promotion of SC boys from III to IV and the percentage BPL OBC pupils is in declining order. The transition from III to IV particularly is lesser than the other classes.

Promotion and transition are also low from class V to VI due to poor perception of parents. The reasons given by the parents were that they go to work and the children used to go with them to accompany the younger ones. The whole family goes from one place to another for a month or two resulting in long absenteeism of children.

In class 1 and 2, with only three subjects to study and the percentage of oral test being 80% as they face the exam of class 3 with a new subject Environmental Science and the evaluation pattern slightly changes the ratio and is written as 40:60 respectively.

Table 2: Promotion Rate of Girls

Group	Caste	I-II	II-III	III-IV	IV-V	V-VI
Girls	GEN	85.71	57.14	68.75	46.67	46.15
	SC	81.25	60.00	69.23	38.46	30.77
	ST	46.15	40.91	48.48	42.31	38.89
	OBC	87.06	66.67	48.72	44.93	34.78

The statistical picture combined with emerging trends leads to the conclusion that the promotion rate of SC girls from class IV-V and V-VI is declining because of unawareness of parents, socio-economic status and the main problem being responsibility of during the sibling care, seasonal migration. The promotion rate of ST girls is seem to be declining in class II to III and V to VI.

Table 3: Repetition Rate

Group	Caste	I	II	III	IV	V
Boys	GEN	0.00	13.33	23.08	14.29	28.57
	SC	29.17	27.78	35.29	31.25	0.00
	ST	43.53	35.62	26.79	22.50	62.07
	OBC	18.67	33.82	52.17	22.22	11.11
Total		**29.15**	**32.18**	**36.36**	**23.15**	**29.63**

The repetition rate of SC boys is 29.17% and of SC girls is 12.50% in class I. The rate of boys is high because students are simply enrolled but not very regular in school. According to the mandatory instructions from state if -the child is absent in exam or is in D-grade 2 extra chances are given to get through but if he doesn't, he should be detained in that class only

Table 4: Repetition Rate of Girls

Group	Caste	I	II	III	IV	V
Girls	GEN	0.00	14.29	12.50	33.33	23.08
	SC	12.50	20.00	15.38	38.46	30.77
	ST	48.08	34.09	27.27	26.92	55.56
	OBC	9.41	19.75	38.46	39.13	21.74
Total		20.11	22.98	30.71	35.77	28.32

The repetition rate of ST boys is 43.53 and of girls is 48.08%, which is quite challenging. Teachers set out the reasons about their migratory way of living and unawareness towards education. Their local dialects affects their learning pace and becomes the one of the major causes of repetition in class 1. The repetition rate of ST boys and girls is highest in class V. The causes regarding ST girls are irregular attendance because they are engaged more in household work and poor perception of parents for education of girl child. While we cannot say that this is the only factor because when we talked to the patents they gave their consent for the girls education but they said that in their community it is not important to have an educated girl but one who is an expert in household work.

Table 5: Drop-out Rate of Boys

Group	Caste	I	II	III	IV	V
Boys	GEN	0.00	6.67	30.77	0.00	42.86
	SC	16.67	33.33	41.18	43.75	55.56
	ST	5.88	26.03	33.93	27.50	6.90
	OBC	2.67	8.82	15.22	28.89	44.44
Total		**5.53**	**18.39**	**28.03**	**28.70**	**32.10**

Dropout rate amongst SC and ST boys decline over the years but are still significantly large with marked poor participation of parents and community. Thus it seems that the drop-out rate of ST boys is significantly decreases in class V. This shows the better impact of interventions regarding to the boys given by SSA but the problem of drop-outs is still due to involvement of children in child labour and the unawareness towards the long term cost effectiveness of the education.

Causes of dropouts

15% Child labour- Fruit selling, work on tea stalls, work in garage, selling small things in fair, stitching of socks, cattle grazing, garbage picking, brick making. **13% Migration** - Seasonal, permanently shifted to other cultivating area. Due to social barriers and discrimination, deprived class, live away from the village, and also hand to mouth condition. Such children are admitted to missionary institutions.**27% Ill health** - Skin diseases, chronic cough and cold, seasonal chicken pox, learning disability, weak comprehensive power, fever, unhygienic environment causes many diseases.

Table 6: Drop-out Rate of Girls

Group	Caste	I	II	III	IV	V
Girls	GEN	14.29	28.57	18.75	20.00	30.77
	SC	6.25	20.00	15.38	23.08	38.46
	ST	5.77	25.00	24.24	30.77	5.56
	OBC	3.53	13.58	12.82	15.94	43.48
Total		**5.75**	**19.25**	**16.43**	**20.33**	**35.40**

The table shows that the dropouts in SC and ST girls are lower in class III, while it has improved in class V. Because of disinterest in studying due to learning disability, more interested in skillful work as clay pots making, rope winding, basket making etc., small girls work in brick making places. One of the major cause is that parents do not allow them to stay away from home; hesitation in wearing school dress rather than their traditional dress up (basically in ST girls). Interventions show that the problem of dropout is partially subsided.

Table 7: Completion rate of boys and Girls

Group	Caste	Enrolled in Class I	Enrolled in Class V	Passed in Class V	%	Compilation Rate
Boys	GEN	15	6	2	33.33	13.33
	SC	24	9	4	44.44	16.67
	ST	85	20	9	45.00	10.59
	OBC	75	35	16	45.71	21.33
Total		**199**	**70**	**31**	**44.29**	**15.58**
Girls	GEN	21	13	6	46.15	28.57
	SC	16	13	4	0.00	25.00
	ST	52	12	7	58.33	13.46
	OBC	85	67	24	35.82	28.24

Total		**174**	**105**	**41**	**39.05**	**23.56**
Total	GEN	36	19	8	42.11	22.22
	SC	40	22	8	36.36	20.00
	ST	137	32	16	50.00	11.68
	OBC	160	102	40	39.22	25.00
Gr. Total		**373**	**175**	**72**	**41.14**	**19.30**

It is evident from the table that the completion rate of SC boys is 16.67% at elementary level where as the completion rate of SC girls is 25.00%.

B. Middle Level

Table 8: Promotion Rate Boys and Girls

Group	Caste	VI-VII	VII-VIII	VIII-IX
Boys	GEN	50.00	66.67	100.00
	SC	66.67	66.67	100.00
	ST	48.00	61.11	46.15
	OBC	50.00	53.13	44.44
Total		**53.85**	**59.74**	**65.31**
Girls	GEN	71.43	40.00	100.00
	SC	45.83	50.00	80.00
	ST	64.71	73.33	70.00
	OBC	70.97	71.11	90.91
Total		**65.32**	**62.64**	**86.44**

Table No. 8 reveals the promotion rate of SC boys and girls in improving gradually in class wise. While in ST boys and girls the promotion rate is in uneven. These results are due to inadequacy of our of curriculum. At this age boys and girls need skill-based learning, which will be helpful in earning a livelihood.

Table 9: Repetition Rate of Boys and Girls

Group	Caste	VI	VII	VIII
Boys	GEN	28.57	16.67	0.00
	SC	23.33	28.57	0.00
	ST	48.00	16.67	53.85
	OBC	39.58	18.75	55.56
Total		**35.90**	**20.78**	**34.69**

Girls	GEN	28.57	40.00	0.00
	SC	50.00	37.50	20.00
	ST	29.41	13.33	30.00
	OBC	24.19	22.22	9.09
Total		**30.65**	**26.37**	**13.56**

According to the above table the status of repetition rate of SC boys shows more repetition in class VII and less in Class VIII. While in SC girl's repetition status is gradually decreasing class wise. In ST boys and girls the repetition rate came down than raised and again step-down. This shows the area specific interventions impacted positively.

Table 10: Dropout Rate of Boys and Girls

Group	Caste	VI	VII	VIII
Boys	GEN	21.43	16.67	0.00
	SC	10.00	4.76	0.00
	ST	4.00	22.22	0.00
	OBC	10.42	28.13	0.00
Total		10.26	19.48	0.00
Girls	GEN	0.00	20.00	0.00
	SC	4.17	12.50	0.00
	ST	5.88	13.33	0.00
	OBC	4.84	6.67	0.00
Total		4.03	10.99	0.00

Above results denote that the dropout rate of SC boys is gradually decreasing and the SC girls are in increasing and then decreasing. In ST boys and girls the dropout status is in a zigzag manner.

Table 11: Completion Rate of Boys and Girls

Group	Caste	Enrolled in Class VI	Enrolled in Class VIII	Passed in Class VIII	%	Compilation Rate
Boys	GEN	14	4	4	100.00	28.57
	SC	30	14	14	100.00	46.67
	ST	25	13	6	46.15	24.00
	OBC	48	18	8	44.44	16.67
		117	**49**	**32**	**65.31**	**27.35**

Total						
Girls	GEN	24	8	7	87.50	29.17
	SC	13	5	5	100.00	38.46
	ST	14	8	5	62.50	35.71
	OBC	67	37	33	89.19	49.25
Total		**118**	**58**	**50**	**86.21**	**42.37**

The table reveals that the completion percentage of SC boys is 46.67% and SC girls are 38.46%. Similarly ST boys and girls have shown 24.00% and 35.71% of completion rate respectively by which we can interpret that girls are more serious and conscious than boys and the impact of intervention is more on girls. So there should also be some priority planning and interventions for boys also to promote equality and the perception of parents to change societal attitude.

Findings

The promotion rate is lower down in class 3 while it increases in class 4 and 5. This shows the positive impact of interventions given to the boys. The repetition rate is higher in class 3 due to long absenteeism because of migration of parents. Due to the changed evaluation pattern, as the writing part increases the repetition also increases.

- The dropout rate is high in class V because of existing practice of child labour to support their family and also the lack of long term cost effectiveness feeling for education.
- Promotion rate declined in class IV and V because of long absenteeism of girls due to household work, sibling care and poor perception of parents towards girl's education.

The reason for the low promotion rate, high repetition rate and high drop out rate in class V, are irregular attendance, lack of awareness of parents, and lack of school effectiveness. Promotion rate comes down in class V due to gender disparity, poor community participation and difficulties in developing competencies on the part of learners. Again the reasons are: i) g ender disparity; ii) poor community participation; iii) not gaining of competencies according to the class; and iv) girls are involved in household work and sibling care.

Reason of high drop out in class VI are; child labour; parent's unawareness; and curricular gap.

In context to the repetition it is declining class-wise and the dropout rate is increased in class 7 while it decreased in class 8, which shows the positive impact of interventions undertaken. Rpetition rate is high in class 8 due to lack of interest in prescribed curriculum, which is more theoretical and less practical. Drop-out rate is low in class 8 due to regular attendance. Promotion rate is highest in class VII which shows the strong social mobilization as the result in positive manner of interventions especially for girls. Our poor condition is the cause as our children are not able to complete the elementary level. When we migrate it is our need to take them with us.Education is necessary but it doesn't gives instant profit because we need money for food and other needs. Family is large, more children more earning. Mothers take children with them for work. Parents say "Girls should be more expert in house hold work."

Response Teachers

Teachers were worried and critically answered as below: Whatever we get for free we do not value it. Government should assess the actual demand and than should supply things. Parents and children do not value free text books, dresses and also incentives given to promote universalisation of education. Parents used to come to school when raw grains were given. While we call them for PTA (Parent teacher association) meeting they avoid coming. Teachers boldly said -MDM should be available in those areas where it is needed and demanded. Syllabus should be lessened and more skill based. Long and irregular attendance is the major problem in achieving the indicators and quality.

When we go to their home to call them only 1% parents compel their children to go to school. Parents come to fight for false attendance to get the facility of provided incentives. In urban areas boys are involved in playing cards, selling tobacco gutkha in trains, picking up small things and sell them to get money, working in stalls in seasonal fairs. Teachers feel helpless in sustaining them in the schools. Unsupportive attitude of parents is the main problem to cope with. Community participation is only 2%. Head Masters said that the problem of long absenteeism is about 35%

Observation of Investigator

In rural and remote areas children sit in the class with torn clothes, dirty bodies, unoiled and uncombed hair, unbrushed teeth, without chappals, with leaking

noses, with crooked slate and torn books. In this condition they learn only as per their interest. Indiscipline is one of the problems. Teacher keeps calling them but they run away. Societal impact is more. Those children who are regular learn properly. Few teachers play the role of a constructivist by adopting different approaches. Problem of multigrade teaching is still there. Residential schools are more successful in retention and mainstreaming. With regard to socio-economic status, learners are more interested in physical labour.

Implications and Suggestions

The findings of the present study as summarized have implications for planning executing and development of strategies to achieve 100% targets set for the upliftment of disadvantaged children. The remedial suggestions drawn by using the tools are development of positive attitude in parents, awareness building at various levels, and ensuring community participation. As Community based planning needs effective academic indicators of hitherto out of school children in alternative education Centres and assurance of mainstreaming of disadvantaged children. The calls for child specific monitoring by local community are; i) mobilization of resources and its utilization; ii) strengthen of public relations; and iii) ice breaking workshops for teachers. Education should be linked to skills of livelihood. Government should provide raw material like development of social useful productive work. Article made by students should be sold in Laghu Udhyog Nigam. The incoming returns should be deposited in child's Bank account and paid to the child after the completion of Upper-primary and Higher secondary levels respectively.

Conclusion

Strengthen the alternatives to schooling particularly residential schools and the Ashram schools in thrust areas.Overhauling of planning and management in respect of both routine and innovative areas.Provision of economic incentives. (For example-One rupee for per day attendance. just to insure the attendance to attract them towards learning).Overhauling of planning and management in respect of both routine and innovative areas. Plan for livelihood to check the migration in special seasons. Development of the professional courses to prepare competent cadre of teachers. To update the knowledge, is necessary to give the facilities of Internet.

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INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING EGS CENTRES

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Abstract

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan aims to provide five years of primary education to all children by 2007 and eight years of elementary education by 2010 in a mission mode with community participation. The Govt. of India in order to achieve the goal (UEE) has made provision of Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and innovative Education (AIE) Centers in the habitations with at least 15-20 children where there are no schools within a radius of one Km to meet the educational needs of the disadvantaged groups of our society like girls, SC and ST communities. According to the Global report on Education released in New Delhi (06.11.2003), India is unlikely to have gender parity in Primary and Secondary Level even by 2015. India is one of the many developing countries where out of children not attending schools nearly 2/3 are girls of disadvantaged groups. It is a serious problem, which needs immediate attention of all the stakeholders of Primary Education.

The present paper reflects on innovative strategies (activities) to reduce the gender disparity in EGS Centres by which the tribal girls will attend in the center regularly which will lead to check their massive dropout at elementary level and provide quality education.

Introduction

Koraput is one of the predominately tribal districts of Orissa. Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes constitute 62% of its total population. According to the census 2001 the male literacy of the district is 45.58% and female literacy is 24.81%. The gender gap in literacy is very high. This gap is more high in the case of tribal population. Hence, the education of tribal girls needs special attention. EGS Centres are opened to provide elementary education to the tr1ibal children of age group 6-14, especially girls. As access to elementary education is provided through a number of EGS centres the gross enrolment of children at primary level increased to 99.66 percent in the district. But these Centres could not retain the enrolled children particularly S.T. girls. This resulted in massive dropping out of tribal girls i.e. 45.96%. The main reason of this huge dropout is the elements of gender disparity present in the EGS Centres. The girls child feels neglected and it

discourages her to attend the center regularly. Taking into consideration the above problem the researcher has devised innovative strategy (activities) to reduce the gender disparity in EGS Centre by which the tribal girls will attend in the center regularly which will lead to check their massive drop-out at elementary level and provide quality education.

Objectives

To prepare and work out better activity-based strategies for minimizing dropout rate of ST girls in the EGS Centres of the Tribal dominated and educationally backward areas of Koraput District and ensure their cent percent enrolment, retention, quality education etc.

To assess the effectiveness of the new strategy to minimize the dropout in the EGS Centres

Methodology

Sample

The researcher took up the EGS Center at Jhinkartota by random sampling and tried out the activities on 30 girls students. All of them were in the age group of six to eleven years.

Tools

Analysis (Comparison) of pre and post results of the study.

Procedure

The researcher worked out on certain activities to reduce dropout rate of the girls and ensure their quality education in the EGS center. These are; i) learning based on environment and community; ii) utilitarian education (life skill); iii)providing scope for girls to take leadership; iv) harmonious activities in the play ground; v) equal opportunity to the girl child in the classroom; vi) enrolment and Retention drive through Meena initiative; vii)motivation of Mothers through MTA; vii) special Reading materials for girls; viii) introducing the women achievers of the area; and ix) co-curricular activities

Description of the Activities

Activity – 1

Learning Based on Environment and Community

Experience indicates that child centered learning experience based on the life and environment of the community encourages girls enrolment and continuation in school. Though tribals constitute 62% of the total population of this district, their indigenous knowledge is not included in their school syllabus. Their language, folk songs, myths, narratives, festivals, mountain, rivers etc. are not included in the curriculum. So the child feels the school environment as foreign.

The Researcher collected the indigenous knowledge available in the locality and used it in the class-room situations. The girls have a special liking for the oral literature, traditions, etc. of their tribe and the use of those elements appealed to the girl child to attend the classes with out default.

Activity – 2

Utilitarian Education (Life Skills)

Education does not have the same meaning for the scheduled tribes that it has for the general people. The idea of taking education for its own sake does not interest them. The attitude of tribal people towards education is governed by the idea of immediate economic returns. The practical and utilitarian aspects of education appeal to them more. They look at it as means for getting more work and different kinds of work, and better living conditions.

It is the vocational rather than the academic aspects or education that appeal to them more.

The researcher utilized the various vocational education facilities provided to the center like tailoring are other life skill development work to the girls including S.T. girls. It is observed that the turnout of the S.T. girls in the center improved considerably.

Activity – 3

Providing Scope for Girls to Take Leadership

Under the guidance of the teacher, the students of the EGS center have formed a school cabinet. The aim was to make the students conscious about their rights and duties in a democracy. There are eight members in the cabinet looking into various school activities like sanitation works, sports and games, scout activities, cultural events, gardening, club activities, literary works, Celebrations etc. Out of the eight departments, four departments are reserved for girls to provide them enough scope to work in equal footing with boys. It has helped a lot to increase their self-confidence. It is observed that the girls excelled the boys in some activities. It encourages them to come to the Institution regularly, which resulted in their cognitive development too.

Activity – 4

Harmonious Activities in the Playground

Practices of gender discrimination are also visible in our school playgrounds. Girls play some traditional games like skipping, ring ball etc. They are never encouraged to play cricket, badminton or hockey. The teacher constituted a girls' cricket team to provide scope to them to play cricket. They are also encouraged to play games like football. This noble practice made them to understand that the girls are in no way physically inferior to the boys to play so called tough games. When girls began to participate in sports, they got public recognition and new community affiliation. It prompted them to come to the EGS center regularly.

Activity – 5

Equal Opportunity to the Girl Child in the Classroom

Generally the girls are asked to sit in a place exclusively earmarked for them inside the classroom. It is a glaring example of gender discrimination. Their free interaction with boys is never encouraged. The researcher attempted to bring reforms in this traditional system.

Today group activities are organized in the classroom during teaching-learning process.While formation of such groups the teacher ensured the presence of equal number of girls and boys in each group so that they can work together. It helped them to take active part in the deliberations with out any inferior complexity. The same practice is followed during morning assembly and mass drill class. Marking the attendance of the girls separately is totally abandoned in the school.

Activity – 6

Effective Use of Meena Club and Meena Manch

Taking the help of the model cluster school opened under NPEGEL scheme Meena Club and Meena March are established in our EGS center. The office bearers of these clubs monitor student absenteeism and dropouts by approaching the girl children and the parents of children who are out of school. The girls who attended 100% of working days in a year or specially awarded on the Meena fair organized in the center. This helped a lot to ensure regular attendance of girl children in the center. The ten-episodes of Meena Initiatives are regularly shown to the children. The message and characters are appreciated by the children and they are motivated to attend the school on most of the working days.

Activity –7

Motivation of Mothers through MTA (PRI Members)

Mothers play a crucial role in the education of their daughters. Very often a mother thinks the daughter is an additional support to her to run the house, because she helps her in house hold chorus like cooking, taking care of the babies etc., so she does not lay importance on her schooling. It causes high dropout rate among girl students which is an important factor of gender gap. Mother-Teacher Association had been formed in our school as per the guidelines of Sarva Shikya Abhiyan, but it was not active. The teacher took special interest to call meetings of the association regularly. The mothers were motivated in all possible ways to send their girl children regular to the school. This facilitated increasing of girls in the center.

Activity – 8

Special Reading materials for Girls

Our school library has one hundred books. There are thirty titles, which deal with the story of distinguished women like Rani Laxmibai, Sarojini Naidu, Mother Teresa, Indira Gandhi etc. The members of our readers club are encouraged to read about these distinguished women and open house discussions are organized to disseminate the knowledge that women are equal to men in every sphere of activity**.**

Activity-9

Introducing the Women Achievers of the Area

There are many women in our locality who have shown outstanding performance in the field of total literacy campaign, prohibition, Panchayat Raj institutions, NGO sector, social service, health care etc. These achievers are invited to the schools to interact with the students. They are presented as role models before the students**.**

Activity-10

Co-curricular Activities

In the last educational session our school had undertaken many co-curricular activities like debate, competition, essay competition, science exhibition, quiz programme, art competition etc. In each activity the girls motivated to participate in equal numbers along with the boys. The response was very encouraging and the result was positive.

Analysis and Interpretations

The percentage of dropout of the S.T. girls of each class of EGS center, Jhinkartota was collected from the 2004-05 records. After trying out the activities in 2005-06 the drop-out percentage of the year was also calculated at the end of the education session. Comparison between pre-study and post-study achievements was made to find out the results. The same procedure is also followed to assess their cognitive development too, based on their performance in the annual examination of both the sessions.

Table 1: Reduction in Dropout Rate

Class	Dropout Rate in 2004-05 before implementation of the strategy	Dropout rate in 2005-06 after implementation of the strategy	Reduction in Dropout rate
1st	45%	3%	42%
2nd	50%	5%	45%
3rd	70%	15%	55%

The above comparison shows that dropout rate of S.T. girls has decreased to a great extent after the implementation of the strategy.

Table 2: Cognitive Development

Class	Percentage of masters as per Annual examination results 2004-05	Percentage of masters as per Annual examination results of 2005-06	Increase in masters
1st	20	80	60
2nd	30	80	50
3rd	35	80	45

Findings and Educational Implications

Comparison of pre-study and post-study results show that substantial improvement has been achieved in every sphere of girls education i.e. attendance, retention and quality education of girls due to the implementation of the above activities. The strategy developed by the researcher has reduced the dropout rate of the ST girls to a great extent at primary level.

More participation of girls in classroom/school activity enhances regular attendance, retention and quality education of girls. It helps to reduce dropout rate to a great extent, which is a main problem in the field of girls' education. It leads to successful implementation of universalization of Elementary education, which is the main objective of SSA. It will bridge the wide gender gap present in our educational activities, which is one of the most important aims of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan introduced by the Govt. of India. Community Members can be involved in the school activities. It will develop parent teacher relationship, which is highly essential for school effectiveness.

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DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN PUNJAB - OLE OF COMMUNITY

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Abstract

There is a saying in Sanskrit, "Yatha Lokaaha, Tathhaa Shikshana Kramaaha"- i.e. 'As the people are, so is the education system'. If the community is indifferent towards its teacher, its school and education system, it has no reason to expect its children to get good education. If people want their children to be educated properly, they should be willing and ready to put in their own efforts towards the all-round development of the education system, beginning with their immediate neighbourhood. Keeping in view the crucial importance of community involvement for the popularizing and promoting (especially in reference to universalization and development of primary education), the present study was carried by delimiting its scope to the role of Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) in development of primary education in Punjab in terms of enrolment and phenomenon of dropout. It also studies the overall contribution of village education development committees for organizing educational and cultural activities in primary schools; identifying the problems being faced by the school and suggest ways and means to improve the situation; strengthening the different types of programmes viz. Non Formal Education and Anganwadies.

The findings of the study indicated that there is a need to strengthen community in improving the school system and achieving the set goal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Community involvement in the long run will prove a very effective measure not only in achieving the target of universalisation of primary education by making it relevant and related to the life but also by further encouraging the community to make constant and consistent efforts to bring quality in the field of primary education so that its very foundation could contribute further to bring about excellence in various fields of education.

Introduction

Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) is a Constitutional obligation. Article 21A of the Indian Constitution states that "the state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." 'Education for all' is the slogan of all the countries. But

financial constraints aggravated by population explosion, poverty and illiteracy of masses, large rural habitation, apathy of parents towards school, hilly and tribal areas and failure to promote adequate work ethics are among the major stumbling blocks in making elementary education free and compulsory in the Indian context. Very recently in India, education has been made a Fundamental Right (86^{th} Amendment). But merely making education a Fundamental Right will not serve its purpose unless efforts are made for improving the performance of the school system through a community-owned approach and by ensuring quality primary education. Further, education as a Fundamental Right will remain a shallow Fundamental Right of the children (just for the sake of legislative provision) unless and until certain conditions are fulfilled and the role and responsibility is fulfilled by the school, parents and community at large. Now, even after six decades of Independence we have been able to achieve only about 70 per cent literacy. It seems impossible to improve quality of education without the active involvement of the community in general and parents in particular.

For achieving Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE), after the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), now the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has come into existence. Its guidelines were formulated in 2001 by a centrally sponsored scheme seeking to operationalise the National Policy on Education (NPE)-Pogramme of Action (POA) strategies of achieving the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) by transforming, toning and accelerating the primary education system. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a home grown idea that intends to achieve the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) in a contextual manner with emphasis on participation and capacity building.
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has focused on Decentralization; Quality education; Universalisation of elementary education without any social or gender bias; and Community participation and ownership

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) can not be successful unless and until community participation is ensured and therefore, formation of the Village Education Development Committee (VEDC) under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is also one of the important concerns and positive steps towards the success of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) and improving quality of education.Village Education Development Committees have come into existence in Punjab in 2002 after the launch of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in the state. The major purpose of setting up of these committees is to bring about a partnership between the school and the community and to achieve the objectives laid down by the National Policy on Education-1986. Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) look after the educational requirements in the

village and also its qualitative and quantitative development at the primary school level.

Constitution/Formation of Village Education Development Committee (VEDC)

Under the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Bills, panchayats will be formed for a village or a group of villages. The panchayats will have elected representatives. Besides, each panchayat may constitute a Village Education Development Committee (VEDC), which would be responsible for administration of the delegated programmes in the field of education at the village level. The State Government may consider entrusting the following functions to the Village Education Development Committees:

- Generation and sustenance of awareness among the village community ensuring participation of all segments of population;
- Developing teacher/instructor and community partnership to oversee and manage the effective and regular functioning of the schools and centres.

It is also proposed to vest Village Education Development Committees with the appropriate statutory authority and necessary financial and administrative authority in view of their critical role (Programme of Action - 1992).

The transfer of primary education to Panchayat Raj Bodies will help in ensuring community participation in a more meaningful way. It is necessary that Panchayat Raj Bodies function as decentralized democratic institutions. There is also a need for ensuring cordial relations between the administration and people's representatives. Panchayats may provide an institutional framework for community participation.

Composition of Village Education Development Committee in Punjab

The Village Education Development Committee normally comprises eight members. The Punjab State Government in its guidelines for setting up village education development committees suggested the following composition:

1. Head of the primary school in the village will act as Member Secretary of the committee;

2. Two members nominated by Gram Panchayat (at least one member from Scheduled Caste preferable a woman);
3. Two parents of children to be nominated by Parent Teacher Association. (at least one member from a Scheduled Caste preferable a woman);
4. Sarapanch (President),
5. Retired Teacher/ Ex-Serviceman
6. Social worker

Functions of Village Education Development Committees

In its guidelines, the Punjab State Government has stated that the functions of Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) will be as follows:

1. To motivate and attract the out-of-school children in the age group 6-14 and their parents for school education;
2. To motivate the children engaged in labour, their parents and employees to send them to school;
3. To undertake the construction work such as additional classroom, sanitation Block repair etc with community participation;
4. To consider new plans for raising the educational level and betterment of the school;
5. To prepare progress reports;
6. To look after the school building; and
7. To provide the basic facilities in the schools such as water, electricity, furniture, black-boards etc.

Rationale of the Study

Since Independence, efforts have been made for the achievement of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). Over the years there has been a very impressive expansion in the provision of educational facilities and enrolment. However, the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE), which was envisaged in the Constitution of India to be achieved by 1960, is still an elusive goal and much ground is yet to be covered. Also the dropout rates continue to be significant, retention of children in schools is low and wastage is considerable and level of achievement of students is not upto the mark.

Government of India has adopted and launched many innovations to check the different problems of primary education and to accelerate the process of achieving the goal of Universalisation of Primary Education. Besides, in a landmark decision in the Golden Jubilee Year of Independence, the Government of India decided to make elementary education a Fundamental Right for children in the age groups of 6-14 years and this was also recommended in the 86th Amendment of the Indian Constitution. Simultaneously an explicit provision would be made in the constitution to make it a *Fundamental Duty* of every parent to provide opportunities for elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years.

It is a well-known fact that the primary education forms the foundation for further education. In order to make the primary education broad based and effective, there is a need for participation and mobilization of the community. In spite of the importance of community involvement for improving school effectiveness, it has not received the attention which it deserves particularly when the country has not been able to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE).

On the basis of the above discussion and keeping in view the importance of community participation in primary education, the present investigation has been undertaken to study the role of Village Education Development Committees in the development of Primary Education in Punjab.

Objectives

To study the role of Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) in the development of primary education with regard to: Enrolment; and The Phenomenon of dropouts. To study the overall contribution of Village Education Development Committees in Punjab with regard to; organization of Educational and Co-curricular activities in primary schools; provide infrastructural facilities and other inputs in schools;identify problems being faced by the school and to suggest ways and means to improve the situation; and strengthen the different types of programmes viz. Non Formal Education/Alternative Schooling and Anganwadies.

To obtain suggestions from members of Village Education Development Committees for effective functioning of VEDCs in the development of primary education at village level.

Methodology

In order to achieve objectives of the present investigation, the descriptive survey method was undertaken. The methodological details like sample, tool and procedure of data collection are given below.

Sample

In the first phase, out of nineteen districts of Punjab, one district was randomly selected. That district was Gurdaspur. Thereafter, two blocks were randomly selected from the same district. In the second phase, twenty Village Education Development Committees (ten VEDCs each from two blocks) were also selected randomly for the sample of the present study. Thereafter, for the selection of members of Village Education Development Committees, all the head teachers were selected from these 20 Village Education Development Committees and four members each from each Village Education Development Committee were selected on purposive basis. Thus, finally 100 members (20 head teachers 80 other members of Village Education Development Committees) of these 20 Village Education Development Committees constituted the sample of the present study.

Tool

For collecting the required data, an interview schedule was used for members of village education development committees by the investigator. Before preparing the final list of items of interview schedule, a pilot survey was also conducted by the investigator**.**

Collection of Data

First of all, the purpose of the research study was explained to the respondents (who were members of VEDCs) and an attempt was made by the investigator to establish rapport with those members of Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) so as to obtain correct and complete information from them. Thereafter, keeping in view the objectives of the study, the interview schedule was administered to each respondent (VEDC member) and his responses were recorded on a separate sheet.

Findings

The findings of the study have been presented under six sections.The section-I, II and III deals with the findings based on perception of head teachers of Village Education Development Committees.Whereas Section-IV, V and VI present the findings based on perception of other members of Village Education Development Committees.

Section-I

Findings based on perception of head teachers regarding the role of Village Education Development Committees in the enhancement of primary education with regard to enrolment and the phenomenon of dropouts.

Majority (75 per cent) of the head teachers had indicated that there was no child in the village in this age group who was not enrolled whereas some (25 per cent) head teachers indicated that about 1 per cent children were non enrolled in this age group. Majority (70 per cent) of the head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were not holding any enrolment drives in their village school whereas some (30 per cent) head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were holding enrolment drives such as door to door campaigning and holding meetings with villagers to increase enrolment in their village school.Almost all head teachers indicated that the rate of potential dropouts in primary schools was about 5 per cent.

All the head teachers indicated that the rate of dropout in primary schools was about 1 per cent and the main causes of dropout in primary schools were casual attitude of parents, illiteracy of parents and students engagement in household chores. Majority (80 per cent) of head teachers viewed that they had contacted the dropouts and persuaded them to attend the school again and persuaded to parents to send their children in school again whereas a very few (20 per cent) head teachers viewed that no efforts were made by them in minimizing the dropout in primary school.

Section-II

Findings based on perception of head teachers regarding contribution of Village Education Development Committees in the enhancement of primary education at village level.

Majority (75 per cent) of the head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were not organizing any educational activities in their village schools whereas some (25 per cent) head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were organizing educational activities such as exhibitions, essay competitions, debate, quiz competition and General Knowledge Test in their village school. Most (80 per cent) of the head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were not organizing any co-curricular activities in their village schools whereas a few (20 per cent) head teachers indicated that Village Education Development Committees were organizing co-curricular activities such as annual sports, inter school sports, inter school cultural activities and panchayat tournaments in their village school. Most (90 per cent) of head teachers indicated that there was no contribution of their Village Education Development Committees with regard to furniture for teachers, teaching-learning material, plantation in the school, maintenance of existing infrastucture and overall beautification of school complex whereas a few (10 per cent) head teachers indicated that their Village Education Development Committees had constructed classrooms/ school building; provided drinking water; toilet facilities, play ground and land for their school. Almost all the head teachers had indicated that preparation/distribution of Mid-Day Meal, lack of teaching-learning material, shortage of teachers and indiscipline among students were the major problems in their schools but a few (10 per cent) head teachers indicated that their Village Education Development Committees had helped in solving the problems pertaining to preparation/ distribution of Mid-Day Meal and also supplied utensils to school and construction of class-rooms in their village schools. All the head teachers indicated that there was no contribution of their Village Education Development Committees in strengthening different types of programmes like Non Formal Education/ Alternative Schooling and Anganwadies at the village level.

Section-III

Findings based on suggestions of head teachers for effective functioning of Village Education Development Committees.

Only those persons should be nominated as members of Village Education Development Committee(s) who are at least matriculate. An adequate

environment-building exercise should be carried out prior to setting up of Village Education Development Committee(s) so that committed and dedicated persons come forward to become member of Village Education Development Committees. It should be mandatory for all the members to attend the meetings of Village Education Development Committee(s) regularly. Village Education Development Committee should also take care of Centres of Non Formal Education/ Alternative Schooling, Anganwadies at village level. All the members of Village Education Development Committee(s) should be given training regarding their expected role as a member of Village Education Development Committee. Serious efforts should be made by all the members of Village Education Development Committee(s) to enroll the non-enrolled children in school, to bring the dropouts back to school, to ensure that all the enrolled children of age group 6-14 stay in school till they complete the desired level of education.

There should be sharing of responsibility between members of Village Education Development Committee and school staff for the qualitative improvement in the day to day functioning of school. For effective functioning of Village Education Development Committee(s), adequate funds should be allocated to Village Education Development Committee(s) so that the committees can provide necessary infrastructural facilities in schools including equipment, furniture, teaching-learning material, drinking water, sanitary facilities, play ground etc.Community leaders should extend their help and co-operation to the Village Education Development Committees and the schools for better functioning and co-ordination.

Section-IV

Findings based on perception of members of Village Education Development Committees about the role of Village Education Development Committees in the enhancement of primary education with regard to enrolment and phenomenon of dropout.

Most (81 per cent) of the members of Village Education Development Committees had indicated that there was no child in the village in this age group who was not enrolled whereas a few (19 per cent) members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that about 1 per cent children were non-enrolled in this age group. Most (81 per cent) of the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that Village Education Development Committees were not holding any enrolment drives whereas a few (19 per cent) members of Village Education Development Committees indicated

that Village Education Development Committees were holding enrolment drives such as door to door campaigning and holding meetings with villagers to increase enrolment in their village school. Almost all members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that the rate of potential dropouts in primary schools was about 5 per cent. All the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that main causes of potential dropout in primary schools were casual attitude of parents, illiteracy of parents, students' engagement in household chores, negative attitude of parents towards education of their wards and truancy. All the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that the rate of dropout in primary schools was about 1 per cent.

Section-V

Findings based on perception of members of Village Education Development Committees regarding contribution of Village Education Development Committees in the enhancement of primary education at village level.

Most (84 per cent) of the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that their Village Education Development Committees were not organizing any educational activities in their village schools. Whereas a few (16 per cent) members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that their Village Education Development Committees were organizing educational activities such as exhibitions, essay competitions, debate, quiz competition and General Knowledge Test in their village school. Most (84 per cent) of the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that their Village Education Development Committees were not organizing any co-curricular activities in their village schools whereas a few (16 per cent) members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that Village Education Development Committees were organizing co-curricular activities such as annual sports, inter school sports, inter school cultural activities and panchayat tournaments in their village school.

Most (89 per cent) of members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that there was no contribution of their Village Education Development Committees with regard to furniture for teachers, teaching-learning material, plantation in the school, maintenance of existing infrastucture and overall beautification of school complex whereas a few (11 per cent) members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that their Village Education Development Committees had constructed classrooms/ school building; provided drinking water; toilet facilities, play ground and land for their village school.

Almost all members of Village Education Development Committees had indicated that preparation/distribution of Mid-Day Meal, lack of teaching-learning material, shortage of teachers and indiscipline among students were the major problems in their schools but a very few (5 per cent) Village Education Development Committees had helped in solving the problems pertaining to preparation/ distribution of Mid-Day Meal and also supplied utensils to school and construction of class-rooms in their village schools. All the members of Village Education Development Committees indicated that there was no contribution of their Village Education Development Committees in strengthening different types of programmes like Non Formal Education/ Alternative Schooling and Anganwadies at village level.

Section-VI

Findings Based on Suggestions of Members of Village Education Development Committee for Effective Functioning of Village Education Development Committees

All the members of Village Education Development Committee(s) should be given training regarding their expected role as a member of Village Education Development Committee by the Government.Serious efforts should be made by all the members of Village Education Development Committee(s) to enroll the non-enrolled children in school(s), to bring the drop-outs back to school, to ensure that all the enrolled children of age group 6-14 stay in school till they complete the desired level of education.Adequate funds should be allocated to Village Education Development Committees so that these committees may provide necessary infrastructural facilities in schools including equipment, furniture, teaching learning material, drinking water, sanitary facilities, play ground etc.There should also be a budget for refreshments during Village Education Development Committee(s) meetings as there exists no provision of any for this purpose. Teachers should pay more attention towards irregular students. The Block Education Officers should visit at least once in a month to keep in touch with Village Education Development Committee(s) so that the problem faced by Village Education Development Committees/ School(s) are tackled in time.

Implications

Any research work can be considered effective only when the fund of knowledge generated through it can be applied to improve the existing practices of education. Therefore, keeping in view the above findings of the present study there is need to strengthen Village Education Development Committees. In order to ensure effective role of these committees in improving the school system, involvement of the community is required in primary education. The role of Village Education Development Committees assume more importance in the light of recent decision making of free and compulsory education which is a Fundamental Right given by our Constitution. Community involvement in the long run will prove a very effective measure not only in achieving the target of universalisation of primary education by making it relevant and related to the life but also further encourage the community to make constant and consistent efforts to bring quality in the field of primary education so that its very foundation could contribute further to bring excellence in various fields of education.

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CONCRETE –REPRESENTATIONAL – ABSTRACT (CRA) INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH OF TEACHING MATHEMATICS

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Abstract

CRA is an intervention for Mathematics instruction that research suggests can enhance the mathematics performance of students At-risk. It is a three part instructional strategy with each part building on the previous instruction to promote student learning and retention and to address conceptual knowledge. It provides a graduated and conceptually supported framework for students to create a meaningful connection among concrete, representational and abstract levels of understanding. Beginning with visual, tactile and kinesthetic experiences to establish understanding, students expand their understanding through pictorial representation of concrete objects and move to the abstract level of understanding. The present study aims at investigating whether CRA instructional approach enhances the achievement of At-Risk students in mathematics. Experimental method is adopted for the present study. The sample comprises a control group and an experimental group, which is tested after two month of teaching using CRA approach. Each group consists of 30 subjects. An achievement Test constructed and standardized by the investigator is used to measure the achievement of both control and experimental groups. The result indicates that the CRA instructional Approach does enhance the achievement of the subjects in the experimental group.

Introduction

Mathematics plays a crucial role in everyday life. The importance of mathematics is clearly realized in the world of technology. We are living in the computer era where mathematical knowledge is essential. For every student, at least minimum mathematical knowledge and skills are essential. Also, it is the duty of every mathematics teacher to see that all students do fairly well in mathematics.But mathematics is an abstract science. Each and every concept in mathematics is abstract in nature. Also it is well known fact that many students have negative attitude towards mathematics. They feel that the subject is difficult to understand and learn. It is found that invariably around 25 per cent of the students are getting low marks in every class in mathematics.

At-Risk Students

Students who are at risk of failing in Examination are called At-Risk students. Martha Maxwell states that in this group of students "skills, knowledge, motivation, and/or academic ability are significantly below those of the 'typical' student in the school or curriculum in which they are enrolled." Ender and Wilkie state that these students are likely to display a number of other characteristics such as "low academic self-concept, unrealistic grade and career expectations, unfocused career objectives, extrinsic motivation, external locus of control, low self-efficacy, inadequate study skills for college success, a belief that learning is memorizing, and a history of passive learning." Two groups of students in schools are learning substantially less mathematics than they should. They are entering the work force unable to use mathematics effectively.
The first group consists of the "typical or usual" potential school dropout and underachiever. The second group of students is the group "nominal mathematics students," who are in high school and may even go on to college, but their mathematics education is not adequate to allow them maximum educational and life choices. Both of these groups, the potential dropout and the nominal mathematics student, are at risk of not developing adequate mathematical knowledge and skills and contributing less than what they might to their own lives and to society.

Potential dropouts

Data have been accumulated and analyzed on the numbers and characteristics of potential dropouts. Recent data indicate that over 20 percent of the students who enroll become part of this group. In many urban and rural areas of India the percentage of students' dropouts is much higher than this percentage.

It is estimated that two-thirds of these students are from families at the poverty level. They frequently differ from their more successful peers in development of self-esteem, task performance, school achievement, and career and cultural aspirations. They often develop behavior patterns that create problems in school. These students may never fulfill their personal potential and they may become an economic burden on society.

Nominal Mathematics Students

Around 20 to 25 percent of the school population who complete high school do not perform at a satisfactory level on many basic test questions. Correlations from research studies indicate most of these students only complete the basic required mathematics courses. They usually have taken no mathematics elective courses at the higher level.Unlike the potential dropout, "nominal mathematics students" seldom cause mathematics teachers major difficulties in school. They do not manifest behavior problems and they are not viewed as potential problems for society. These students are at risk because their level of understanding and competence in mathematics is substantially below desired levels. These students are not likely to continue in mathematics beyond basic requirements in high school, nor are they likely to consider a career that uses mathematics. Many of these students also will not be able to use mathematics when needed in their daily lives.

Variable that Cause at – Riskness

There are several variables that tend to cause students to fall into the at-risk groups in mathematics. Several of these causes can be prevented, reduced, or modified to help make students more successful in school and in mathematics in particular.

Some students, especially minority students, are not able to see themselves and their backgrounds reflected in the curricula. The curriculum in many cases does not provide for cultural differences. Females have tended to be especially at risk in many mathematics courses or classrooms because mathematics has frequently been viewed as a male domain. Instructional materials, family and peer behaviors and expectations, and teacher behaviors and expectations have frequently reinforced this attitude. Some students develop anxieties that interfere with studying, learning, and using mathematics. These anxieties can interfere with learning and performance and cause the student to under perform and/or to elect to avoid mathematics courses and experiences. Some students have not succeeded in mathematics classes due to learning and behavior problems, sensory handicaps, and physical and health impairments. These conditions do not need to limit the

mathematical learning of these students. In many cases, mathematically related careers can provide these students with excellent employment opportunities.

For many students the curriculum is neither neither interesting nor relevant - the very structure of the curriculum serves to "turn off" students. The mathematics curriculum often lacks real world problems and applications, is repetitious, and focuses too much on product and not on process.

Mathematics instruction also frequently suffers from at least five problems namely; i) the usual classroom routine is not effective for developing new concepts; ii) the pace is wrong for many students; iii) drill and practice are ineffective ; iv) diagnosis and treatment of error are often superficial ; and v) instruction does not provide sufficient hands-on experiences

Correlates of students being at risk

1. Being a member of a low-income family;
2. Having low academic skills (though not necessarily low intelligence);
3. Having parents who are not high school graduates;
4. Speaking English as a second language;
5. Having negative self-perceptions;
6. Having low self-esteem.
7. Schools being located in high-poverty, inner-city areas. Compared to their suburban counterparts, these schools often have facilities that are outdated or in disrepair.
8. They also may lack broad curricular offerings, adequate instructional materials, and access to technology for their students.
9. Rates of student mobility and absenteeism may be high.

In the present study, the investigator has made an attempt to use CRA instructional approach for students At-Risk in mathematics.

Concrete Representational Abstract (CRA)

CRA is an intervention for mathematics instruction that research suggests can enhance the mathematics performance of students with learning disabilities. It is a

three-part instructional strategy, with each part building on the previous instruction to promote student learning and retention and to address conceptual knowledge.

Stages

The CRA instructional sequence consists of three stages: concrete, representation, and abstract:

- *Concrete:* In the concrete stage, the teacher begins instruction by modeling each mathematical concept with concrete materials (e.g., red and yellow chips, cubes, base-ten blocks, pattern blocks, fraction bars, and geometric figures).
- *Representational:* In this stage, the teacher transforms the concrete model into a representational (semiconcrete) level, which may involve drawing pictures; using circles, dots, and tallies; or using stamps to imprint pictures for counting.
- *Abstract:* At this stage, the teacher models the mathematics concept at a symbolic level, using only numbers, notation, and mathematical symbols to represent the number of circles or groups of circles. The teacher uses operation symbols ($+, -, \times, \div$) to indicate addition, multiplication, or division.

Method

The investigator has used the experimental method in this study. The investigator has adopted the following design for his study

O_1	C	O_2	X – Experimental Group
O_1	X	O_2	C – Controlled Group
			O_1 – Pre Test
			O_2 - Post Test

Subject

The investigator has opted for V standard students of Professor Annusamy Hr. Sec. School, Bahoor and National English High School, Thavalakuppam, Puducherry as his sample for the Study. The investigation was carried out on two independent groups of subjects. The control group consists of 30 subjects (18

boys and 12 girls). The second group (Experimental group) consists of 30 subjects (20 boys and 10 girls). The groups are matched for mean and SD based on the scores of pre test conducted by the investigator.

Treatment

At-Risk students in the experimental group are taught using CRA instructional approach for two months

Measure

The achievement test constructed and validated by the experimenter was used in the study.

Procedure

The investigator identified the At-Risk students in mathematics by using their cumulative record, by the suggestion of class teachers, previous examination marks and by interview. In the next step the reasons for the low achievement were found out. The investigator identified the common errors usually committed by students in solving the problems in mathematics. Based on the common errors student commit, a diagnostic test was prepared. The diagnostic test was administered to all the 60 At-Risk students. Accordingly, the CRA instruction is planned and adopted in the school for a period of two months. The students of control group are left as such without any special programmes. The achievement test constructed and validated by the investigator was used to measure the achievement in mathematics of both the groups.

Results and Discussion

The mean and Standard deviation of the pre test scores of experimental and control group on the achievement test that was administered on subjects in both groups were presented in table 1.

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation of pre test scores of control group and experimental groups

Category	Mean	SD	N	't'	Significance
Control Group	48.60	9.50	30	0.03	Not Significant
Exp., Group	48.68	9.44	30		

The groups are matched for mean and standard deviation. The difference between the groups is very small and insignificant as the calculated 't' value 0.03 is less than the table value at both levels. The mean and standard deviation of experimental and control group of posttest scores on achievement test that was administered on subjects in both groups are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and 't' value of post test scores of Control and Experimental group

Category	Mean	SD	N	't'	Significance
Control Group	50.60	10.46	30	6.96	Significant at Both levels
Exp., Group	67.30	9.84	30		

The subjects in the control groups have scored a mean of 50.60 in the achievement test with a standard deviation of 10.46. The mean score of the subjects in the experimental group who are taught through CRA Instructional Approach for two months were found to be 67.3 with a standard deviation of 9.84. The 't' value is found to be 6.96 which is found to be significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance.

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and 't' value of pre test and post test scores of control group

Category	Mean	SD	N	't'	Significance
Pre test	48.60	9.50	30	0.78	Not Significant
Post test	50.60	10.46	30		

The Mean, Standards deviation and 't' value of pretest and posttest scores of control group is given in table-3.The mean and standard deviation of pre test and post scores of control groups are 48.60 and 9.54; 50.60 and 10.46 respectively.

Table 4: Mean, standard deviation and 't' value of pre test and post test scores of Experimental group

Category	Mean	SD	N	't'	Significance
Control Group	48.68	9.44	30	7.54	Significant at Both levels
Exp., Group	67.30	9.84	30		

The calculated't' value 0.78 is not significant at both levels. On analysis of the Pretest and Post-test scores of Experimental group, the mean difference 18.62 is found to be significant at both levels (Table-4) This shows that the subjects in the experimental (At- Risk students) who are taught through CRA instructional approach for two months have performed better on the achievement test than the subjects of the control group. It may be said that Concrete Representational Abstract Instructional Approach has enabled them to overcome their deficiencies to an extent and enhances their achievement.

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EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF MARGINALIZED AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL: ROLE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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Abstract

Elementary education is considered to be the building block of social development and reconstruction. Elementary education is the foundation for both order and progress of society, which not only provides basic education also, expected to promote political, economic, social development and change. Though our system of education in India today is the largest educational system in terms of students, teachers, and educational institutions but still we are yet to achieve the flagship goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) even after 60 years of independence. Even today at elementary level Gender Parity Index (GPI) is 0.89. There is a significant difference in GPI at primary level between rural areas (0.90) and urban areas (0.92). Enrolment of girls is much lower than that of boys both at primary (47.52 per cent) and upper primary (45.32 per cent) level of education. Percentage of enrolment in rural areas is significantly lower in comparison to other areas whereas out of 1.40 million schools imparting elementary education in the country 86.9 per cent are located in rural areas. At primary level the share of SC and ST enrolment is found to be 20.73 per cent and 10.69 per cent respectively, whereas at Upper Primary level it is 20.10 and 8.59 respectively ***(Analytical Report, NIEPA, 2005)****. It is surprised to note that large numbers of schools in the country are still single-teacher schools without buildings and there are a few schools even without a blackboard in the age of information and communication technology. It is believed that retaining capacity of the system is a major indicator of the quality. Today a gap of 17 per cent on survival rate is observed in case of boys between rural and urban areas and in case of girls, it is 22 per cent.* ***Similarly, there is a marked rural-urban and boys-girls difference with regard to various indicators of elementary education in the state of Orissa in general and in the KBK (Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput) districts of the state in particular which are the socially and educationally marginalized parts of the state****.*

Through this paper, an attempt has been made to analyze the status of education at elementary level in India and at the same time develop a comparative profile with regard to the current status of education at elementary level of one marginalized state "Orissa" with special reference to the KBK districts of that state. At the same time, this paper examines critically the scope of the Open Distance Learning (ODL) system and its effective implementation as a positive

intervention to supplement and sustain quality of teaching-learning process at elementary level with a vision to bring social development in the marginalized part of rural India. This will certainly reflect how education and information communication technology (ICTs) contribute in smoothening the alternative process of social development and empowerment of marginalized in the changing world. It is high time that a start should be made to concentrate whole-heartedly on providing elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life. If our vision is to make our society a developed and prosperous in the world by 2020, we shall have to strive to provide quality world-class education to all with emphasis on learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be ***(International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, 1996****).If we wish to improve our standard of living and cater to the industrialized and globalized world, ignoring the marginalized to some extent will definitely be more expensive. Hence we need to explore maximum possibility for effective implementation of ODL system to ensure availability of quality content through variety of access devices with a view to enriching the curriculum and pedagogy and to reach the unreached for social development.*

Introduction

One of the objectives of the flagship programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is achieve the target of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) and provide quality elementary education to all children of age group of 06-14 years. Providing free and compulsory education to all children is not only a constitutional mandate but also a fundamental right for all children as per the 86th Indian Constitutional Amendment Act. This has certainly given a new direction to all children who are socially and economically marginalized and are deprived of elementary education as well. For facilitating the education of disadvantaged children under the zero rejection policy, Education Guarantee Schemes (EGS), Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres and home based education programme have been implemented under SSA to facilitate inclusion of deprived section of the community. Inclusion is best determined by needs of individual children. It is essential to overcome exclusion of socially marginalized children through an inclusive approach in the field of elementary education. Partnership between parents, society, community and school is very important to help us achieve this target. With this aspect in mind, Mother-Teacher Associations (MTAs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Village Education Committees (VECs) have been formed under SSA with a view to developing perception of community ownership on education of children at elementary level. The scope of the distance education programme and its effective implementation is truly a

positive effort for providing access to elementary education to all children with quality input. Effective implementation of ICTs is crucial for sustaining the quality of programmes to eliminate social and economic barriers in achieving the target of Education for All (EFA).

Issues in Hand

In this paper an attempt has been taken to address the following important issues:

i) What has been the status of education of children at elementary level with reference to various parameters like child population, total number of schools, enrolment of children, number of out of school children, gross enrolment ratio, net enrolment ratio, total number of teachers, pupil-teacher ratio etc.

ii) What is the worth of various interventions like EGS centres, AIE centres, MTAs, PTAs and VECs to improve enrolment of children and their retention at the elementary level?

iii) What has been the role of information communication technology (ICT) and Open-Distance Learning (ODL) system for improving quality of elementary education in our country?

Overview of Educationally Marginalized in India

Education has been perceived as the key resource in bringing qualitative improvement in all aspects of life and at all levels as well. The quality of education, to a large extent, depends on the quality of teachers who need to be empowered through effective training strategies. In India, three-fourth of the total population is living in rural and marginalized areas, where access to quality education is a challenge for all stake holders even today. Orissa is no exception. In this section an attempt has been taken to reflect on the current educational status of people living in the state of Orissa and develop its comparative profile with regard to the national profile.

Table 1: Status of Literacy Rate in per cent

S.No	Level		Male	Female	Total
1.	India	1991	64.13	39.28	52.21
		2001	75.26	53.67	64.84
		2005	-	-	-
2.	Orissa	1991	63.09	34.68	48.88
		2001	75.95	50.97	63.61
		2005	-	-	-

On the perusal of Table 1, it is observed that 63.61 per cent of the population in Orissa was literate in 2001 which was nearly equal to national average (64.84 per cent). Similarly, with regard to literacy rate of males, 75.95 per cent of males were literate which was slightly above the national average (75.95 per cent) but female literacy (50.97 per cent) was below the national average of 53.67 per cent. In relation to the literacy rate of the country, corresponding figures of male literacy in the state of Orissa is at par whereas in the case of females it is 2.70 per cent lower than that of the national average.

Table2: Status of Total Child Population in Million

S. No	Levels		5-11 Years			11-14 Years		
			Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	India	2004-05	71.11	64.22	135.33	35.81	31.06	66.87
2.	Orissa	2004-05	26123711 (2.61)	2387461 (2.39)	5001172 (5.00)	1183374 (1.18)	1047941 (1.05)	2231315 (2.23)

On examination of Table 2, it is found that there are total 7.23 million children of age group 5-14 yrs in Orissa (3.79 million boys and 3.44 million girls) against the national figure of 202.19 million. (106.92 million boys and 95.27 millions girls). It is noticed that the number of children of age 6-11 yrs is nearly double than of 11-14 yrs both at national level as well as in the state of Orissa. It is found that total number of girls is lower than that of boys at all levels from state to national. This reflects the decrease in girl's population in the present situation.

Table 3: Status of Total Number of Schools

S. No.	Levels		Primary	Upper Primary	Primary with Upper primary
1.	India	2003-04	6907801	240690	931470
		2004-05	746293	291521	1037814
		2005-06	809178	314855	1124033
2.	Orissa	2003-04	38062	11001	49063
		2004-05	37744	13105	50849
		2005-06	37934	13947	51881

It is clearly evident from Table 3 that there is a gradual increase in number of primary and upper primary schools all over the country as well as in Orissa over a period of time. This clearly shows the effort made under Govt. to provide access to primary education to all children belonging to 6-14 years of age to achieve the target of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). In 2005-06, there were 51881 schools in the state of Orissa for providing elementary education whereas the figure was 1.12 million at the national level.

Table 4: Status of Total Enrolment and Enrolment Per cent of Boys and Girls

S. No	Levels		5-10 Years			11-13 Years		
			Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	India	2003-04	52.53	47.47	110394128	54.98	45.02	33141592
		2004-05	52.48	47.52	118296540	54.68	45.32	37717490
		2005-06	52.21	47.79	124615546	54.18	45.82	43667786
2	Orissa	2003-04	52.72	47.27	4824213	55.91	44.09	1181838
		2004-05	52.26	47.74	4964248	53.03	46.97	2054056
		2005-06	52.24	47.76	5253958	53.03	46.97	2054056
		2005-06	53.97	46.03	189950	56.21	43.79	56825

Table 4 presents data in respect of total number of enrolled children and enrolment per cent of boys and girls at different level. On examination of table 4, it shows that gradually there is an increase in enrolment of children of age 5-13 yrs over a period of three years since 2003-04 both at national and state level. Similar is the situation with regard to enrolment of boys and girls at primary and upper primary level. Gender gap at upper primary level (11-13 yrs) is found to be more than that of primary level (5-10 yrs) at all stages. From enrolment of children of 5-13 yrs age, it is found that in Orissa, 52.63 per cent are boys out of total enrolment whereas at national level, it is 53.19 In case of girls the figure in Orissa is 47.37 per cent of total enrolment which is higher than national average of 46.81 per cent.

Table 5: Status of Out of School Children

S. No	Levels		5-11 Years			11-14 Years		
			Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	India	2005-06	1985212 (2.79%)	1990976 (3.10%)	3976216 (2.94%)	1530686 (4.27%)	1511571 (4.87%)	3042268 (4.55%)
2.	Orissa	2005-06	19351 (0.73%)	17573 0.73%)	36924 (0.73%)	94143 (7.62%)	83116 (7.61%)	177259 (7.61%)

As we know retention of children in school is considered to be the most crucial determiner of quality of elementary education and effectiveness of various interventions under the flagship programme of SSA. An analysis of Table 5 shows that positive indications are obtained from the statistical figures available at national level related to dropout rate of children at various stages. About 3.75 per cent (6.02 million) of total children enrolled dropped out at the elementary level out of which 3.53 per cent (2.52 million) boys and 3.99 per cent (3.50 million) are girls. The percentage of dropout in the state of Orissa (2.96 per cent) is lower than that of the national level (3.75 per cent). The statistical figure obtained against the dropout rate of boys (2.99 per cent) and girls (2.93 per cent) in Orissa is even lower when compared to the national level.

In Orissa, the number of out-of-school children (0.73 per cent) of age 6-11 yrs is much lower than that of children of age 11-14 yrs (7.61 per cent). A large number of children of age group 11-14 yrs are out-of-school which posses a great challenge to the system of elementary education in our country. Hence, is the need and demand for an alternative mode to sustain quality of education at elementary level.

Table 6: Status of Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) Centres

S. No	Levels		Operational Centres (Primary)			Operational Centres (Upper Primary)		
			Govt.	NGO	Total	Govt.	NGO	Total
1	India	2005-06	--	--	--	--	--	--
2	Orissa	2005-06	10001	1595	17596	1402	11	1413

Statistical analysis given in Table 6 reveals that 1.46 lakhs Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centres are in operation all over the country. Out of this 19009 centres are in the state of Orissa. It is also revealed that very few EGC centres are

functioning for accommodating children at the Upper Primary level which is perhaps the main limitation to providing access to children at age group 11-14 yrs for education of upper primary level.

At the same time, the number of EGC centres working under NGOs is very less. No NGOs have been given the responsibility for running EGS centres for upper primary level.

Table 7: Status of Enrolment of Children in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) Centres

S. No	Levels		Enrolment of Children at Primary centres			Enrolment of Children at Upper Primary centres		
			Govt.	NGO	Total	Govt.	NGO	Total
1.	India	2005-06	--	--	--	--	--	--
2.	Orissa	2005-06	292960	257591	550551	24240	21535	45775

Table 7 reveals the enrolment status of children at primary and upper primary level in EGS centres. It is found that in the state of Orissa, 0.59 million children have been enrolled under EGS centres. It is concluded that more efforts need to be made to bring children of 6-14 yrs into the EGC Centres and consequently to mainstream them in regular schools to meet the goal of Education for All.

Table 8: Status of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) in Per Cent

S.No.	Levels		Primary Level		Upper Primary Level	
			GER	NER	GER	NER
1.	India	2005-06	103.77	84.53	-	-
2.	Orissa	2005-06	117.38	94.05	81.29	69.04

Table 8 provides a thumb nail view of the Gross Enrolment Ration (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at primary and Upper Primary Level. In 2005-06, the GER at national level is 103.77 per cent whereas in the state of Orissa it is found to be at a higher level i.e. 117.38 per cent. It is found that at upper primary level it is much lower in the state (81.29). The same is also revealed from the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) figure of Orissa. At upper primary level, the NER of the state is 69.04 per cent.

Table 9: Status of Teachers in Position and Pupil-Teacher Ratio

S.No.	Levels		Regular Teachers	Para Teachers	Total Teachers	Total Enrolment (I-VIII)	Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)
1.	India	2005-06	4187858	502318	4690176	168283322	35.88
2.	Orissa	2005-06	104247	37196	141443	5185561	36.66

Table 9 reveals the status of teachers (regular and para teachers) at elementary level and pupil teacher ratio at different level i.e. national level and state level. It is seen that all over the country, 4.69 million teachers are working at the elementary level (4.18 millions are regular teachers and 0.50 million are para teachers). In the state of Orissa 0.14 million teachers (0.10 regular teachers and 0.04 million para teachers) are working at different level of elementary stage education. As per the statistics of pupil teacher ratio, it is seen that PTR at elementary level in Orissa (36.66) is higher than that at national level (35.88).

Table 10: Status of Teachers Trained at Different Levels

S.No	Levels		Total Number of Teachers				Para Teachers	
			Male	Female	Total	Trained	Total	Trained
1.	India	2005-06	2798628	1891548	4690176	3319707	502318	240259
2.	Orissa	2005-06	114993	54239	169232	130986	11677	8973

Data presented in Table 10 reflects the ratio of Gender-wise status of trained teachers to total teachers. It is revealed that out of 4.69 million teachers in the country 3.32 million are trained which is about 70.78 per cent of total teacher. In case of the state of Orissa 77.40 per cent of total teachers are trained which is 6.62 per cent more than that of national average? It is noticed that at national level only 40.33 per cent of total teachers are male whereas in the state of Orissa it is found that the figure (32.05) is lower than that of national figure. It is observed that 76.84 per cent of total para teachers in the state of Orissa are trained which is at a much higher level in comparison to national level statistics i.e. in the whole country only 47.83 per cent of total para teachers are trained which is a serious concern with regard to providing quality elementary education to all children of age group 6-14 yrs age since quality education can not be provided without quality teachers

Table 11: Status of Village Education Committee and Mother Teacher Association

S.No.	Levels		MTA Formed	MTA Trained	VEC Formed			VEC Trained	
					Primary	Upper Primary	Total	No. of VECs	No. of Members
1.	India	2005-06							
2.	Orissa	2005-06	47273	35235	27187	10077	44527	16142	123962

It can be seen in Table 11 that in the state of Orissa 47273 Mother Teacher Associations (MTA) have already been formed for increasing enrolment and retention of children at elementary level and providing elementary education to children of age group 6-14 yrs. It is encouraging to note that out of total MTAs, 75.53 per cent are trained as on 2005-06.

It has been observed that in Orissa 44527 VECs are found as on 2005-06 out of which only 36.25 per cent are provided with training about their roles, responsibilities and duties in relation to Education for All and Universalization of Quality Elementary Education. In this regard, much need to be done for providing quality education to all children at age group 6-14 yrs age through active participation of the community and developing a perception of community ownership towards education of the school.

Distance Education Programme under SSA

Education for all (EFA) aims at providing elementary education to the large target group that is deprived of its benefits. In fact, it is a challenge to work for mainstream them in the social process so that they can contribute substantially towards the cause of social development and reconstruction. We need to supplement the traditional system of teacher education programme with some innovative and flexible strategies which is capable of providing quality education to children as per their needs. At the same time this system distance education programme is assured to be cost effective and of high quality. The potential and capabilities of distance education programme through open distance learning (ODL) system can contribute substantially towards realizing the flagship goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education(UEE) and Education for All (EFA). A distance education programme can handle a variety of target groups of learners on the one hand and teachers on the other to meet their multi dimensional requirements from time to time for providing quality in-service training

recurrently for developing competencies of all SSA functionaries all over the country.

Distance Education has to play an important role in the effective implementation of ICTs for training the human resources to support the growth and development of elementary education in general and improve the quality of education in particular. Emergence of DEP in the field of elementary education can definitely bring a revolution in the achievement of national goals. Being a dynamic system, it is able to meet the needs of the large target group which is deprived of education. The Distance Education Programme (DEP) under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims at meeting the needs and requirements of functionaries working at various levels like; DIETs, SCERTs, SIEMATs and SPOs etc; with a view to improving their professional competencies. This is a major intervention under SSA which focuses on strengthening training of in-service teachers through distance learning. The programme provides inputs and materials for the training and capacity building of functionaries working at elementary level in curricular, contextual and pedagogical areas. New dimensions of ICTs like teleconferencing, Audio Conferencing, EduSat and mobile cell usage are able to expand access and improve quality of interventions, for realizing the desired target.

Educational Implications and Suggestions

Even today in rural areas there is acute shortage of certain basic facilities like housing, drinking water, roads and basic education. We know that education has not been considered as a priority in the competing claims, as it stood at 16 in 20 point programmes. Three fourths of total primary schools are in rural villages, so village children must get priority to acquire the right type of education. There should be a separate plan, programmes, technology and mechanism for its implementation to achieve the ultimate objective of empowerment of rural people. A simple transfer of plans, programs, strategies and technology etc from urban to rural areas will not serve the purpose, but to achieve real targets there should be a separate and unique strategy/mechanism and technology for rural and village people.

Poverty, illiteracy and low educational achievement are common in the state of Orissa where a large percentage of people reside in rural areas. For realizing the success of various schemes and programmes, it is imperative to develop awareness on the need for improving the conditions of their existence. Hence, the need of knowledge through basic education and self awareness, for deriving optimum benefits from schools implemented by govt. and Non-Govt

organizations The need of specific educational packages for the rural population to achieve the goal of UEE cannot be ruled out. In the globalized world, this challenge needs to be addressed seriously with optimum priority for the social developmental and reconstruction. It is essential not only for economic well-being of rural people and communities but also for national development.

Another challenging aspect for UEE is the education of girls where the legal framework for elementary education is very weak and puts girls at a disadvantage. Early marriage and pregnancy are widespread in rural and under-developed areas. It prohibits girls from attending school or coming back to school after birth of their child. At the same time, issues related to safety and security in and around school affect girls in rural areas. Parents hesitate to allow their daughters to attend schools because of their risk to personal safety. Lack of female teachers creates a lot of hindrance since they feel less secure in the school environment. This perhaps is responsible for the school dropout rate among girls particularly at upper primary level, which leads to gender disparity in elementary education. Even today, the attitude regarding education of girls is not positive among rural people. Their social environment makes them feel that education is meaningless for girls. Parents feel that it is fruitful for girls to stay at home and help in their parental earnings and managing siblings. They are more concerned for their immediate economic gain rather than future prospects. Most of the parents are of the opinion that teachers are not performing their duties with responsibility. They most often remain absent in schools. Hence, they prefer to engage their children in household activities for their economic benefit. Reluctance of parents, participation of girls in domestic activities and financial constraints of parents are some of the major causes related to girls' dropping out.

Importance needs to be given on effective implementation of an extensive education programme in all the rural areas particularly related to use of various technologies. Attitudinal change on the part of rural people is essential for deriving optimum benefit from technologies. It can change their lifestyle and uplift their standard of living, which consequently help in developing awareness on the need of education as well. The illiterate and poor masses of our society, if educated, will protects them and their families and help them realize their rights as citizens and responsible members of society. Education and extension education is the most suitable technique to educate villagers who are the backbone of our country. In this regard Information Communication Technology (ICTs) is believed to play an important role in reaching the unreached for the social, economical, and educational upliftment of rural India in the 21st century.

It is high time that a start be made to eliminate all forms of child labour to save the greater part of humanity, to tackle the problem of education for all. It is essential to shape attitudes and morality of parents, family and society at large. Teachers working in rural areas, needs specific training programme to improve their competencies to deal with children in such areas. At the same time incentive package may be provided. It is also essential to ensure that the subjects taught are relevant to the needs of rural people. Availability of relevant teaching-learning materials and promotion of community involvement are essential to fulfill educational needs.

As per the estimate of the working group report on elementary adult education, there is a requirement of 10.66 lakhs additional teachers in elementary stage education and 9.98 lakhs classrooms in the country. With the implementation of various innovative measures under SSA like involvement of local community in construction, creating a child-friendly school environment and developing a sense of ownership in civil work etc, access is not a major problem in the present time. But still a lot need to be improved with regard to providing need-based quality education to girls, SC/STs and other minorities who are living in socially marginalized part of rural India.

Conclusion

Inspite of various efforts, policies, programmes and interventions, more than a crore of rural children are out of school and still many children are at the risk of dropping out of the system of elementary education at different levels. Most of the out-of school children are from village schools, which are mostly socially and economically marginalized. Initiatives like Education Guarantee Scheme (EGSs) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIEs) centres have been taken to bring them back to schools. But what is challenging is its effective implementation. There is lack of sincerity and dedication in implementing the programme for wider benefit on one hand and lack of coordination for execution of programme from top to grass root level on the other. We live in a global village, where new forms of technology are emerging for the uptliftment of socially, economically and educationally marginalized parts of our society. What we need today is a strong belief and commitment to achieve the target for realizing the national goals, with its effective implementation.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUP TECHNIQUES ON ELEMINATING THE LEARNING DISABILITIES OF LEARNERS

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Abstract

Children differ individually in the school but lead a community life with fellow feeling and this quality follow feeling can be transferred to classroom situation when they work in groups. But suitable group techniques need to be adopted for both co-operative and peer learning. In the context of minimizing learning disabilities the researchers thought it wise to apply grouping techniques for extending substantial treatment to students with learning disabilities. In order to achieve the objectives the investigator gave suitable treatment on the concepts over a project of two weeks on 15 learners through small group interaction. Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD),Team Games Tournament. (TGT), Team Assisted Individualize (TAI) techniques were adopted; work sheets were issued for repeated practice based on the assignment. It was found that Dyscalculia was eliminated in case of 8 (50%) students out of 16 and dyslexia was eliminated is case of 5 students (33%). In case of spelling, 4 students (25%) could improve well. Thus the group techniques worked well and results proved beneficial for the learning with Dyscalculia and Dyslexia.

Introduction

Various psychologists consider disadvantage/deprivation a negative state of life, which hinders the development of individuals' potential. In the Indian context, social disadvantage nationally is an adverse factor to child's cognitive development but, it also imbalances adjustment, aspiration levels and attraction for schools. Jerome S. Burners' (1971) interpretation on disadvantaged ness also applies to Indian situations. That is why the famous exponent of behaviorism has stated, that in order to develop the fullest potentialities of the children the first and foremost condition is that the child must be free from any ailment and be healthy. Then he would put the child in a conducive environment to keep him/her free from any unhealthy atmosphere. The investigator came across the teachers of old Faridabad Govt. Primary School who interacted with him about the children with special needs and particularly the children who are identified as LDs (Learning

Disabled). When the investigator asked them if children were tested psychologically, they replied positively. Then the investigator prepared a set of diagnostic test items in Arithmetic and Language taking the age and class into consideration.

Objectives

- To study the reading ability of children suffering from learning disability.
- To study the computational ability of children suffering from learning disability.
- To develop suitable strategies to over come the reading difficulties and computational ability of children suffering from learning disability
- To study the effectiveness of the evolved strategies in eliminating reading difficulties and computation skill in Arithmetic for students suffering from learning disability

Methodology

Scope

The study covers the following aspects in language and arithmetic only:

- Reading difficulties in pronunciation, relating to incorrect utterances, no omission of certain letters and spelling errors.
- Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division, Arranging numbers in ascending and descending order and Place Values

Sample

The sample consisted of 10 students from class IV Math and 8 students from class V English identified with such deficiencies from the Govt Primary School of Old Faridabad.

Design

It was a single group with pre-post test design.
Step-I Diagnostic Test followed by Remedial package

Step-II Interaction
Step-III Evaluation Strategies

Procedure

Primarily the investigator adopted the Cooperative Learning Strategies and Pair Learning Group Hearing strategy for this study.

Cooperative Learning Strategies

Four to five children worked in a group, but the task was performed individually. The student who was found deficient was helped by the team leader or monitor instantly. Worksheets, Abacus, and Bundles of sticks and pebbles were used during computation of simple arithmetic i.e. addition and subtraction.

Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)

In this approach, each student is given a common worksheet in a small group consisting of four or five children. It is an individual task to be accomplished within the given time. The benefit of this exercise is that the learner tries his best to come to the level of the other learners. As the failure group accounts for the response of the individual, the teacher keeps watch the individuals who are found deficient and their deficiencies are removed in the next exercise termed as Team Assisted Individualization (TAI). There are high achievers in each group under TAI exercise.

Teams Games Tournament (TGT)

TGT is as like an STAD. It is a competition among the group. Losers and gainers are identified; the losers try to gain in the next round. The clue materials (package) help the students to overcome their mistakes.

Peer Tutoring

Under this exercise, the high achiever acts like a tutor who helps the deficient learner(s) using the materials and helps him/her to pursue self-learning. The errors are eliminated through the assistance of a classmate.

It was applied during pronunciation drill (oral) and reading during pause

intonation and stress. Spelling errors were also eliminated through peer assisted learning using the remedial package prepared for language. After extending an intervention over a period of 48 days the learners were put to the final test. The rates of elimination were found out and compared between the three tests.

Result and Discussion

English Language (in per cent)

Difficult concepts	**Elimination after the First Round**	**Elimination after the Second Round**	**Elimination after the Third Round**
Pronounceable (No of words-100)	15	18	25
Reading using pause 15 seating	15	20	25
Reading with Intonation	5	10	15
Reading	5	10	15

The above table shows that in comparison to the first round, the there is considerable improvement in the last round of this practice. If it will be extended for two months more rest of the learners suffering from reading disorder will get rid of the same.

Arithmetic

Concept	**Elimination after the First Round**	**Elimination after the Second Round**	**Elimination after the Third Round**
Addition	12%	18%	25%
Subtraction	10%	15%	20%
Multiplication	10%	12%	15%
Place value	10%	10%	10%
As seen ding discussion order	15%	15%	20%

The above table shows that in comparison to the first round, the there is considerable improvement in the last round of this practice. If it is extended for two months more, the rest of the learners suffering from lack of computation skills in arithmetic will get rid of the same.

Suggestions and Conclusion

Diagnostic tests should be meticulously designed. The specific learning problems are to be identified and strategies are to be applied accordingly. Besides STAD, TGT, TAI and PTA (Peer Tutoring) other techniques may be developed for eliminating the learning disability of the learners. The same exercise should continue till the learning disabilities are eliminated to Zero level.If SSA functionaries adopt such techniques and strategies for the disadvantaged group and for learning disabled children in a global way then we can achieve certain levels of quality education.Various remedial packages should be developed centrally and/or through SSA functionaries (BRCs, CRCs, DIET) and State level for the disadvantaged group.Teacher educators, Teacher trainers and school teachers should be trained from time to time in the various types of innovative strategies and development of the remedial packages for the effectiveness of classroom teaching.

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INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH FORDEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION SKILLS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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Abstract

The present paper emphasizes the effect of inclusive school on development of communication and social interaction skills of elementary school aged children with Autism. The researcher describes three cases of (4-8 years) children with autism who are enrolled in regular nursery and elementary schools. The study highlights the teaching strategies, physical environment and support services in the schools for the development of communication, language and social behavior of children with autism. The background history of two cases with autism shows that they were enrolled in a mainstream school directly with speech therapy program. The other one was enrolled in a regular school with simultaneous support service in terms of individualized instruction from a preschool set-up meant for these children. Parents of these children were guided and supported to create a learning environment at home. In addition, mainstream school teachers and administrators were oriented and consultancy was given at intervals. The periodic evaluation of the children reveals that progress is comparatively slower in non- verbal autistic children in language and communication skills but social interaction skills are observed to have been developed in the same pattern as non-autistic childrens' development. Physical environment and group teaching learning strategies of the mainstream school system help much for significant development of communication and language and social interaction skills of these children.

Introduction

Disability is part of the common experience of human life and is a central issue in the planning of any human services. It is only with this shift in approach that people with disabilities and learning difficulties could enter the world as equals. For this reason "Inclusion" is a Human Rights issue. Inclusion assumes that living and learning together in a better way, one that benefits everyone, not just children or adults who could be considered to be different from others. Inclusive schools accept that community diversity is the reality and value each student as a unique

learner with unique contributions to make to the learning of others. This fundamental acceptance is evident in inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive Education

- Addresses the common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education, at least at the school level,
- Enhances access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all.
- Involves the provision of a framework within which all children – whatever their ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origin – can be valued equally, treated with respect and provided with real learning opportunities.
- Is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children.

Inclusive Education for Children with disabilities

The term 'children with special educational needs' now includes not just children with disabilities but all those who are in some way different: gifted and talented children; children with behavior disorders; at risk behaviors; learning difficulties; cultural disadvantages and socio-economic disadvantages. Inclusive education educates the children with disabilities in the mainstream schools they would attend if they did not have disabilities. It also provides services and support that parents and children with disabilities need in order to be in mainstream settings and supports mainstream education teachers and administrators having children with disabilities to follow the same schedule as for other children It encourages friendships between children with disabilities and their classmates/peers without disabilities. Hence, **Inclusive schooling** is the outcome of attempting to provide for all students, including students who have disabilities, in mainstream schools.

Policy at a Glance

The education commission in India (Kothari Commission, 1964–66) addressed issues of access and participation by all. It stressed a common school system open to all children irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic condition and social status. It drew attention to the education of children with

disabilities. In 1968, the National Policy on Education followed the Commission's recommendations and suggested the expansion of educational facilities for children with physical and mental disabilities, and the development of an 'integrated programme' enabling these children to study in mainstream schools. NPE (1986) programme stressed the 'removal of disparities' in education. The World Declaration on Education for All adopted in 1990 gave further boost to the various processes already set in motion in the country. The NPE underwent modifications in 1992 (MHRD, 1992) and made an ambitious commitment to universal enrolment by the end of the Ninth Five-Year Plan for both categories of children with disabilities, those who could be educated in general primary school, and those who needed to be educated in special schools or special classes in general schools. The "Persons with Disability Act, 1995" enacted early in 1996, provides legislative support and makes it mandatory to provide free education to children with disabilities in an appropriate environment until the age of 18 years. In 1999, the Government passed the "National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act". These Acts have been instrumental in bringing about a perceptive change / improvement in the attitude of government, NGOs and people with disabilities.

What is Autism?

Autism is a severe form of child psychopathology. It is a complex developmental disability. Autism is a wide spectrum of developmental disorders characterized by impairments in 3 behavioral domains: (a) Social Interaction (b) Language, Communication and Imaginative Play and (c) Range of Interests and Activities. Childhood Autism emerges in children at approximately age of three and is characterized by a triad of impairments that variably appear in different levels of severity.

Individuals with autism can vary widely from one another. However, all individuals with autism can progress and learn when their programming is designed around their unique, specific needs (Wagner 1999). In recent times, educational placement options for children with autism have expanded in response to changing theories of programming for all special needs children. The benefits of this type of placement are clear although the programming must be well defined and implemented in order to increase the likelihood of success.
There are two main aspects for the education of children with autism; One is that education is a treatment for autism. The goal is to reduce the autism, usually over a relatively short time of intervention addressing key areas of the impairments and the other aspect is that education is an entitlement, where the goal is to offer the

widest possible educational experience and choice that will enable equal participation, equal access to mainstream education opportunities and wider inclusion into society (Powell 2000)

Rationale of the Study

This is a research study on three children with autism (age 4-8 years). All of them are studying in mainstream education schools. The objectives of the study were to find the effects of Inclusive schooling on communication, language and social interaction skills of children with autism. This paper highlights the teaching approaches, physical environment and support services in the schools for the development of children with Autism.

Table 1: Entry Behavior of the Cases

Name of the Case	Age	Age of onset	Diagnosis	Typical characteristics	Language and communication	Social communication	Schooling
Case no-1 Sourav Das	4 years	3 years	Non-verbal Autism (Severe)	Lies on the floor, likes only shining objects i.e. polybags, needles, knifes etc. No temper tantrums	No verbal Communication Communicates through crying	Difficulties in Recognizing others,	No Schooling
Case no-2 Om Prakash Bal	5 years	2 years 8months	Semi-verbal Autism (moderate)	Screaming, temper tantrums	Speaks in one word sentences	Demands through crying, Mixes with family members, likes to play alone with his cycle, many times rejects mother's presence	Play school with speech therapy
Case no-3 Goutam Panda	7 years	5 years	Non-verbal Autism (Severe) High intellectual abilities	No temper tantrums Screaming, jumping, and throwing unwanted things likes to work everything with computer	No verbal communication. Pulls only mother's hand	Mother is the best friend in his world, does not allow others to near him. Impulsiveness presents	No schooling Only speech therapy taken for one year

Table 2: Intervention

Case no.	Intervention started	Parents Support and guidance	Schooling	Language and communication	Social Interaction
Case No-1	3 years 2 months	Acceptance, confidence building home schooling, creating language environment	Pre school support, Regular nursery school with professional support to teachers and administrators	Natural conversation, Picture card reading, rhymes, auditory training, music, speech reading, Multi-sensory training	Visit to public places, playground and temple regularly,
Case No-2	4 years	Acceptance, confidence building and home schooling, creating language environment	Regular Nursery school with professional support to teachers and administrators, additional speech therapy	Natural conversation, picture reading, number counting, rhymes, story telling, speech reading, multi-sensory training	Visits to public places and playground regularly
Case No-3	6 years	Acceptance, Confidence building, Home-schooling, Creating language environment	Regular School, Computer teaching at home, No speech therapy	Natural conversation, rhymes, story telling, text reading and mathematical calculation on computer, multi-sensory training	Visit to public places regularly

Table 3: Outcomes

Case	Language and Communication	Social Interaction
Case No -1	• Comprehends simple commands like take your bag, bring your chair • Responds to his name • Localizes the sounds and familiar voices • Responds to “good morning”, “bye-bye"	• Attends the school regularly • Recognizes familiar faces • Mixes with other students in the playground and

	• Takes interest in picture reading and text reading, finger counting • Participates in rhymes : likes to listen to stories • Holds crayon, pencil and scribbles • Uses voice for his needs, Calls Maa, Baba, Kaka • Tries to speech-read others	classroom • Sits in the group • Many times obeys the discipline of the school in mass prayer, rhymes • Holds other peer's hand • Likes to play with the teacher • Practices activities on his own in front of the mirror
Case No -2	• Comprehends command • Can tell his friends' name • Acts as per the instructions • Responds to "Namaskaar", "good morning", • "Bye-bye" • Takes interest in text reading, does number • Counting • Participates • in rhymes, likes to listen to stories • Copies out, writes dictation at word level	• Attends the school regularly • Mixes with other students in the playground and classroom • Sits and does activities in the group • Obeys the discipline of the school in mass prayer, rhymes and other group activities • Likes to play with one or two • Friends • Rejects restrictions, new faces

	• Demands his needs verbally (one / two word • level) • Answer in key words • Talks in two/three word sentences but suprasegmental features are not maintained.	• Self-possessiveness develops • Accepts family members
Case No-3	• Follows English language • Comprehends commands of his family • members • Responds the answer as per the instructions in • the computer • Responds “Good morning”, “Bye-bye". • Likes to listen to stories • Identifies YES or NO written on the paper • and does the work as per his wishes • Asks questions / answers on the computer • High mathematical and language ability • Can perform the tasks of std. V	• Attends the school regularly in Std-.I • Does not participate with other • students in the playground and classroom • Does not sit constantly in the group in the classroom • Likes to play with his teacher only • Rejects restrictions, new faces • Accepts family members only

	• Pulls mother's hand for his common needs	

Interpretation of the Outcomes

The results indicate that the peer support produced more frequent and longer social interactions for students with Autism. Also, peers without disabilities demonstrated a more frequent and greater variety of social support behaviors to students with Autism. Our results suggest that peer support may be preferred for students with severe Autism in mainstream education classrooms. The result also shows parents' empowerment for developing acceptance and understanding of the disability. Professional support for the mainstream teachers and administrators helps to create and maintain appropriate physical environment for development of language, communication and social gains of these children.

In case no. 1 and 2, early start of the interventions, age appropriate enrolment in mainstream school, continuous support to parents by the professionals for home management of the child, support services to teachers and peer orientation for acceptance and sharing improves the progress in comparison to case no. 3. In case no. 3 early start of the interventions, age appropriate enrolment in mainstream nursery school would have been helped for verbal communication and better social interaction. Spoken Language stimulation could have shown better progress in him rather than the speech therapy program.

Conclusion

Every child with autism is unique in his pattern of learning. Parents and teachers must understand the unique pattern of learning of the child in order to develop effective intervention programs. Educational intervention of children with autism should start as early as possible soon after onset and most preferably in mainstream school that brings a remarkable change in young autistic children. However, the development of language, communication and social interaction skills of the children with autism in inclusive schooling is dependent on the appropriate provision of services and support of mainstream school teachers, involvement of the parents and abilities of the individual child.
"Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future"

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IMPROVING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED – A STUDY

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Abstract

Education dispels the darkness of ignorance and heralds the light of knowledge. A teacher can dispel this darkness if professionally well prepared. Teacher performance is crucial at all stages of schooling since the formulated policies and programmes of education are ultimately interpreted and implemented by teachers. The performance can be improved by giving them adequate professional support and proper in- service training. Teacher performance to ensure quality has an added significance for primary schooling while considering the age and developmental stage of the children. For an effective teaching learning process, the teacher should have competence, motivation and professional commitment. The role of teacher becomes more vital when the education of the disadvantaged children is considered. If their educational needs are not met, there is a chance for them to go back to their older conditions since they are coming from economically, socially and culturally poor backgrounds with hardly any motivation for education. Teachers should motivate themselves to motivate these children to learn.

The present study is based on the perception of teachers of Waynad district in Kerala. The perception data is collected and used to find out the ways by which the elementary teachers handle the disadvantaged children and their opinion about the effectiveness of the present training programmes. Their views about future training needs are also expressed.

Introduction

India is a country of diversities. In language, in culture, in tradition and in almost all walks of life we can see and feel this diversity. But the strength of India is the unity among this diversity. Among this diversity we can find various categories of people who are socially, culturally, economically, emotionally and physically sound on one hand and poor on the other hand. This group of people who are lagging behind the privileged citizen of India either economically, socially, culturally, physically or emotionally are termed as disadvantaged people. People

who are deprived of basic social rights and security because of poverty, discrimination, or other unfavourable circumstances are called as disadvantaged people. It is a generic term for individuals or groups of people who face special problems. Various categories of disadvantaged people are there in India. The tribal people are one among these disadvantaged groups. “A tribe may be defined as a community which has a name, endogamous in nature, lives in a common territory, has a common traditional with an unwritten language, is structurally and culturally distinctive, relatively homogenous, largely self governing with no specialisation of function and pervasively self- sufficient and has a consciousness of ethnic identity and of belonging together.” (Majumdar, 1958).

In spite of the various initiatives taken by governments to overcome the educational backwardness of tribal, a vast majority of tribal population in India have still remained outside the education system. These ethnic minority groups who are also deprived of education are referred to as scheduled tribes (ST) by the government of India. The ST has its own unique culture and has been cut off from the main stream for a long time (Shukla, 1997). The difference in their mother tongue and the medium of instruction make their schooling a bit difficult. Even among the relatively advanced tribal groups, the absenteeism and the drop-out rates are high. Free education, scholarships of various types, mid day meals etc. are some of the measures taken by the central government to increase the enrolment and retention level of ST and other disadvantaged students. The high absenteeism, large detention and alarming drop-out rates contribute to the slow progress of education among tribal (Sujatha, 2004). The education of tribal lag behind the general education because of four reasons categorised as external, internal, socio economic and psychological. The internal constraints are most important since these are related to curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, school system etc.

India has the single largest tribal population in the world compared to any other country with a population of 67.75 millions (1991 census). They constitute 8.1% to total population of the country. The scheduled tribe are one of the most disadvantaged groups in terms of educational development. Their educational development should be our major concern in this present scenario.

Review of Related Literature

The studies of Sujatha (1998), Shukla (1994), Prakash (1998) mentioned that the achievement of tribal students are lower than that of non tribal students in primary levels. The studies mentioned that the various factors related to school, location and society contribute to their lower level of achievement. Agnihotri (1991) suggested that there were more adjustment problems in the tribal group and so proper remedial measures need to be thought out and executed to improve their adjustment. Biswal (1991) found that the indifference of parents, lack of motivation in pupils, traditional customs and beliefs etc. hinders the progress of ST students. The above studies suggest the need for the proper academic support to the ST students to improve their achievement and motivation and to help them to become well adjusted individuals.

The study of Das (1991) revealed that co curricular activities had a lot of impact in ensuring ST students attendance. The study found that strictness and rigidity of timings and schedules and behaviour control were often detrimental to the performance of tribal children. The study also argued that the teacher's performance needs to be supported through regular and frequent information inputs and training. The study of Kumar (1989) found that the tribal students do not have a favourable attitude towards school and their interested subjects are agriculture, humanities and arts. The study also revealed their vocational interest. These studies suggest that the school curriculum should be modified to cater the needs of ST students. The importance of teacher training is also stressed.

Ekka (1990) found that the tribal students were not mentally deficient; they were capable of picking up complex knowledge, but their pace of assimilation was lower as their cognitive level was relatively lower due to historical reasons. Mohanty(1989) showed that tribal children were not found to be having lower intelligent score. The studies revealed that the ST students are capable of performing well and are intelligent also.

Need and Significance

From the above studies it is clear that the ST students are capable of doing things and are intelligent. But they are not motivated well and are having adjustment problems with the school curriculum. Co curricular activities and vocational training can help to improve their interest to come to school. Government can provide grants and aids for the progress of disadvantaged students, but the final

responsibility regarding the educational development of ST students are with the teachers and school authorities.

The survey of related literature suggests that there are two types of researches conducted in the area of education of ST. In- depth studies about the education of ST and comparative studies of ST and other communities. Much work is not yet done about the need for a teacher preparation programme which can help the teachers to deal effectively with the disadvantaged children in general and the ST students in particular.

Teacher performance is crucial at all stages of schooling since the formulated policies and programmes of education are ultimately interpreted and implemented by teachers. The role of teacher becomes more important when the education of the disadvantaged children is considered. If their educational needs are not met, there is a chance for them to go back to their older conditions since they are coming from economically, socially and culturally poor backgrounds with hardly any motivation for education. Studies related to the modification of teacher training programme which would help to cater the special needs of ST students are relatively less especially in the context of Kerala where almost 48 tribal communities are present. Waynad is a district in Kerala which is situated in the western ghat region with a large population of various tribal communities. In such a situation a study which tries to collect the perception of teachers about the ST students and the training needs would be important.

Objectives

To find out the perception of teachers about the following aspects;

1. participation of ST students in learning activities
2. appropriateness of curricular and co curricular activities to satisfy the needs of ST students
3. training needs to cater the education of ST students
4. parental participation and the adequacy of governmental support to ST students

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of teachers about the ST students in their schools?

2. What is the perception of teachers about the participation of ST students in learning activities?
3. What is the perception of teachers about the appropriateness of curricular and co curricular activities to satisfy the needs of ST students?
4. What is the perception of teachers about the training needs to cater the education of ST students?
5. What are the perception of teachers about the parental participation and the adequacy of governmental support to ST students?

Methodology

The study follows descriptive survey method to collect the perception of teachers. For this researchers prepared and administered different tools. One was an opinionaire, which contains statements for which the teachers have to respond in a 3 point scale. 28 statements were there in the opinionaire. Both positive and negative statements were given. Out of the 28 statements, nine were about the training needs whereas eight statements were about the perception of teachers about the participation of ST students in learning activities.

The second one was a questionnaire. The teachers were asked to respond freely to the given questions. Eight open ended questions were included in the questionnaire.A semi structured interview schedule was also prepared by considering the following aspects

- Problems related to the schooling of ST students
- teacher training needs to cater education of ST students
- parental support to ST students

The tools are validated by seeking expert opinion

Sample

The sample of the present study is 38 teachers from 4 different schools in Waynad who are teaching up to VIIth standard in government schools. The schools are selected by purposive sampling technique. The schools, where the strength of scheduled tribes is more than 30% of the total strength are selected. Teachers from each school are selected in such a way that they should have the overall charge of at least one class. From two schools 10 teachers each are selected and from the remaining two, 8 and 12 teachers are selected. The opinionaires are given to all of the selected teachers where as the interview is conducted only with

a set of 8 teachers randomly selected from the sample by keeping the fact that at least 2 teachers should be interviewed from each schools.

Analysis and Interpretation

What is the perception of teachers about the ST students in their schools?

Most of the teachers mentioned that ST students' intelligence level is not so low and they do not have more behavioural problems. They lack self-confidence and optimism. While majority of teachers agreed that proper education would help them to develop, the necessity for ST teachers to teach ST students is totally rejected.

What is the perception of teachers about the participation of ST students in learning activities?

Attendance of ST students is not satisfactory and the drop-out rate is very high. Most of the teachers mentioned that they do not have internal motivation to come to school. Teachers had the perception that these students are not isolated in the class-room. Even though the high achievers in the class help ST students in learning activities, it was found that the ST students hesitate to mingle with other students in learning activities. During the interview, one teacher told that the ST students and others are like oil and water. They will not mix with each other. Teachers considered the students as regular if they come to class at least once in a week. It was also observed that during the harvesting season they will never come to school.

What is the perception of teachers about the appropriateness of curricular and co curricular activities to satisfy the needs of ST students?

The figure 3 shows that the ST students are more interested in co curricular activities than the curricular activities. Most of the teachers disagree with the view that the assignments and activities in the text book are suitable for all groups of students, but the teachers themselves modifies the curricular and co curricular activities to cater the needs of all groups of students. Teachers suggested that the curriculum is not related to their living atmosphere and hence it would not be

interesting to them. Teachers mentioned that the teaching learning materials should be so selected as to cater the needs of ST students also.

What is the perception of teachers about the training needs to cater the education of ST students?

Most of the teachers have the opinion that the ST students need special help and care in various learning activities and the training which they got so far is not sufficient for this. Even though the teachers can understand the physical and emotional problems of these students, they wanted some orientation to provide special care to tribal students. Majority of the teachers agreed that the present teacher education programmes are not sufficient and recent developments should be incorporated in the teacher education programmes along with organisation of special training programmes. Teachers are not able to give special care to ST children because of the lack of time and facilities.

What are the perception of teachers about the parental participation and the adequacy of governmental support to ST students?

A slight majority of teachers mentioned that the parental participation in PTA meetings is less. The parental support to ST students in their learning activities was very low. Even though the government provide plenty of grants and scholarships for ST students, teachers suggested that it is still insufficient to meet their developmental needs. Teachers observed that these students would not come to school not even to collect the scholarships. They mentioned that the parents are not at all motivated to motivate the child to go to school.

The analysis of the data points out various facts about the educational needs of ST students. Most of the opinions of teachers were in tune with the earlier research studies. They do not have much behavioural problems and they are intelligent. But the major problem is their absenteeism. This could be due to the lack of motivation both internal and external. Also the curricular and co curricular activities may not be suitable to their developmental level. Then it will become the duty of teachers to motivate them properly and to modify the teaching learning activities in tune with the needs of ST students. For this the teachers have to change their old concepts about the tribal students. Teachers should motivate themselves to motivate these children to learn.

Kerala government is providing various facilities like hostel facility, grants to parents, assistance for study, organising programmes like Bharatha darshan and Kerala darshan, cash prize for athletes, provision for clothing, providing tuition and examination fee for collegiate education and even assistance to appear for interviews to SC/ST students. The teacher should be aware about these schemes and should be able to transfer this knowledge to students and to provide them guidelines.

Conclusion

For an effective teaching learning process, the teacher should have competence, motivation and professional commitment. The role of teacher becomes more important when the education of ST children is considered. Teachers should help them to develop interest in class-room activities by which the absenteeism and dropping out can be prevented to a large extend. To empower the teachers to do this work sincerely, they should be provided with proper training and orientation. There must be some components in the teacher education curriculum, both in pre-service and in-service, which would help to cater the educational needs of ST students. The background of major tribal people in their locality, their characteristics like their vocation and culture, the governmental grants and aids available for ST students, the ways of modification of curricular and co curricular activities which can help to develop their motivation and interest for learning etc. are some such components which can be added in teacher training curriculum. The school time table should also be modified so that the teachers would get enough time to give special attention to tribal students. If we can impart quality education to tribal students through our schools, it is certain that they can rise up to or even higher than the students from other groups.

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TAPPING TEACHER POTENTIAL AND COMMUNITY COOPERATION FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN TRIBAL AREAS

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Abstract

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is essential for strengthening the fabrics of democracy and for laying the foundation of the personality, self-confidence, general awareness, communication capabilities, learning skills and attitudes. Equalization of educational opportunities is a pre-requisite for success of democracy. Unless adequate facilities are provided for the weaker section (especially lower castes, tribes, women and slum dwellers) of the society, country cannot realize the goal of UEE. Education is essential for ameliorating the present condition of women in India. They have been given the equal rights as per the constitution. Girls, the future mothers and citizens of the country, are being provided with some special facilities and incentives at elementary level. In spite of all endeavour made for promoting girls' education today, it is still far from satisfaction. On account of a number of hurdles and handicaps standing on the way, girls' education in the present society has been unsatisfactory. Girls are born free but they are everywhere in chains. Urgent need is to promote girls education as a challenging task, which requires multipronged efforts for solution.

Supervision is a means to improve the efficiency and quality of education. Regular and effective supervision is the backbone of any scheme. Hence, monitoring and supervision of schools was performed to assist the teachers academically presenting practicable remedies and suggestions to their problems and to minimize communication gap between the community and school. The study reveals that academic monitoring of schools is supporting teachers for school effectiveness ensuring teacher motivation and community cooperation and participation for girls' education in tribal areas. Although the progress at present is low, its a good sign indicating the right path to follow for attaining the goal of universalisation of girls elementary education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Introduction

It has been well realized that the progress of a nation in the world today is more than ever before dependent upon the quantity and quality of education received by its people. As a basic human need, it gives mastery of the spoken word, which is used by an individual as a medium of communication and socialization. Article 26 of the universal declaration of human rights proclaimed by the general assembly of the United Nations in 1948 states “everyone has the right to education”. The national scenario as unfolded today reveals that women enter into the fields so far monopolized by men in political arena, science and technology, journalism and administration and like. In certain professions like medicine, teaching, nursing, social work and so on, they have proved to be better than men. Now they are venturing into higher places of administrative, scientific, academic and political significance. But those who have acquired such excellence are only a minority. It is the silent majority with whom both the government and the society should be more concerned otherwise their contribution to the national mainstream would be lopsided and socio-economic development of the country would be jeopardy.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 emphasized on education of girls/women for ensuring women’s equality. It has also been felt that empowerment of women can contribute immensely to the success of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). Such empowerment not only promotes girls’ education, but also boosts their morale through liberty and equality of sex. It is rightly said that “when a boy is educated an individual is educated, when a girl is educated entire family is educated”. The success of Education for All (EFA) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) largely depends on more enrolment and attendance of girls, less drop-outs and giving more facilities to the deprived classes. Women have been given the equal rights as per the constitution. Education is free to all children, both boys and girls. Rather some special facilities and incentives are given to girls at elementary level and tuition fee is made free even for the girls at the secondary and university levels in some states. Women education in Madhya Pradesh state as well as in the country is still far from satisfaction. Mostly the indifferences, inferiorities in the society, mass poverty, wrong cultural values, irrelevance of curriculum and the last but not the least is gender bias which contribute to this sad state of affairs.

Need and Importance

Umaria district is located in the north-east part of Madhya Pradesh state. It was formed in July 1998 by bifurcation of Shahdol district. The total literacy rate of the district is 60.26%. The literacy rate of males and females has been recorded as 74.11 and 45.57% respectively. The literacy rate of females in the district is alarmingly low which needs to be focussed if literacy of the district is to be improved. Following and implementing the instructions and programmes from Rajya Shiksha Kendra, Bhopal, Umaria district is trying hard for cent percent enrolment and retention of girls for education at elementary level, still quite a good number of girls have been found out -of- school including never enrolled and drop-outs as well. In all, 981 (Boys-434: Girls-547) out of 96695 children in 5-11 age group, and 142 (Boys-51: Girls-91) out of 42778 children in 11-14 age group have been reported as never enrolled for education. The strength of dropout (N:758) children at upper primary level has been found noticeably higher than that of (N:142) at primary level.

Teaching-learning activities are the core function and responsibility of teachers in the schools. Schools are regarded as a temple of knowledge and learning. Thats why parents enrol their children in the school for education. It was quite disappointing that in spite of attending a number of trainings and orientations, quite a large majority of teachers were found not doing justice with their profession. The main reasons lagging behind their duty were told as lack of devotion to the profession, lack of administrative control, always busy with works other than teaching and lack of professional competence.Access has been provided and efforts have been made to ensure the enrolment of girls in schools, yet a sizable number of girls are out of school. The investigator, therefore, carried out a study entitled, “Tapping Teacher Potential and Community Cooperation for Girls’ Education in Tribal Areas of Umaria District in Madhya Pradesh State.”

Objectives

The study has been carried out with the following objectives in view

1. To study the present state of access, enrolment and retention of children especially girls at elementary level.
2. To study the availability of physical as well as academic facilities for education of girls.
3. To assess the availability of resources under incentive schemes from the Government.

4. To find out the causes of indifference and carelessness of guardians for education of girls.
5. To suggest remedial measures to the teachers and guardians as well for more enrolment, retention and better learning achievement.
6. To suggest the measures eliminate gender disparity at elermentary level.

Methodology

Sample

The study has been delimited to 10 out of 59 Jan Shiksha Kendra of all the three Blocks of Umaria district. In all 25 teachers, 100 girls and 50 guardians (of enrolled as well as out of school girls) were included in the sample.

Tools

Data were collected with the help of different interview schedules for teachers, guardians and girls prepared separately for them.

1. Interview Schedule for Teachers

The tool consisted of 12 main questions alongwith a number of subquestions related to personal information, status of enrolment, number of children for schooling according to VER, availability of physical and academic facilities in the school, incentive schemes, their outlook for girls' education, hindrances and remedies for better enrolment, retention and quality education of girls in the school, etc.

2. *Interview Schedule for Guardian of Enrolled Girls*

The tool consisted of 14 main questions alongwith a number of subquestions related to personal information about the family and children, motivation for education of children, their attitude towards academic activities in shcools, community participation and cooperation, hurdles in schooling girls and their remedies and suggestions for better functioning of schools etc.

3. Rreview Schedule for Guardian of Out -of- School Girls

This tool was administered on the guardians of out of school girls including never enrolled, and drop-outs. The tool consisted of 7 questions related to personal information about the family and children, reasons for not sending their daughter(s) to the school, attitude to the education of girls and expectation of spcecial incentives and facilities from the Govt. etc.

4 Interview Schedule for Girls

The tool consisted of 9 questions alongwith a number of subquestions related to personal information about themselves and family as well, status of schooling, facilities available for education, their responsibilities at home, parental motivation, cooperation and encouragement, attitude to education, problems and difficulties on the way to education, their remedies and suggestions for more enrolment, retention and quality education of girls in schools. The tool was administered on the girls enrolled in the school as well as out -of- school including never enrolled and school drop-outs.

Procedure

As per the annual work plan for 2006-07 of Umaria district, several strategies have been adopted so far ensuring cent percent enrolment and better retention of girls at primary and upper primary level in the district. Some of these strategies are ; i) making the education system more responsive, rgular academic monitoring and supervision of schools; ii)Support school environment learner-friendly and classroom process effective; iii)making girls education a community agenda; iv) Strengthening of PTAs; v)discussion on girls' education, enrolment and retention in PTA meetings; and vi) empowering teachers academically and professionally through in service training and orientation programmes.

Community participation and mobilization are through; i) Maa-Beti mela; ii) Women's convention; iii) motivation camps for girls and parents; iv) bicycle riding campaign for girls at upper primary level; v) training programme for mahila panch and sarpanch; vi) awareness campaign through print and electronic media; and vi) special enrolment drive. Ensuring Retention through Special

retention drives specially in low retention areas in seasonal migration'; etablishment and running of ECCE; ensuring enrolment of all children into schools for SSK and Anganwadi Centres, regular contact and academic monitoring of schools; Sensitizing teachers; and flexible school timing.Special facilities like provision of separate toilets, model cluster schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalay, uniforms, text books, scholarships and special incentive for better performing girls

Findings

The majority of out of school girls was found larger in SC, ST and OBC in general and particularly in economically poor families. Excessive poverty, seasonal migration, agricultural operations with parents, collection of forest products, cattle grazing, looking after youngsters, etc. have been observed as some of the important causes responsible for drop-out in the district. A series of mobilization activities such as Mahila Saksharata Abhiyan (Women Literacy Campaign), motivation camps for girls and parents, Maa-Beti Mela, special enrolment drive for girls (especially SC and ST girls) etc. have helped in increasing the enrolment of girls in schools. Although the Gross Enrolment Ration (GER) of girls has risen from 86.36% in 2006-07 to 101.86% in 2007-08, which clearly indicates that there has been a rise in girls enrolment yet quite a good number of girls have been found out of school. Provision and distribution of free text books, mid-day meals, dress and scholaroship have been quite helpful in increasing enrolment, retention and attendance of children in the school. Illiteracy, low SES, and parents' indifference have been reported by the teachers as the main cause of problems to their daughters' education.

In all, 50 perecent of schools have toilet facilities and only 10 percent of them have separate toilets for girls.84 percent of the girls were found continuing their further studies at upper primary level in the district. 45 percent of the girls have the access of upper primary education in formal school situated within 2 to 3 kms. Followed by 15 percent more than 3 kms away from their residence/village. 88 percent of the guardians were motivated to send their daughters to school seeing their eagerness for education followed by their (guardians) self-willingness. Undoubutedly its a good indication towards the education of girls especially in rural areas. The main reasons behind irregular attendance of girls in the schools were found as casualties at home (35%), illness (25%), negligence (8%) and migration with their parents in search of wage earning (7%). There was observed behavioural change in 75% of the girls who were attending the schools regularly.

The change was observed in their way of talking at home and in the school as well, etiquettes, sense of responsibility etc. It was quite disappointing that in spite of attending a number of training and orientation programmes, quite a large number of teachers were found not doing justice with their profession. Most of the guardians (87%) of enrolled girls were satisfied with the availability of essential physical and academic facilities for children in the schools. Need was felt to utilize those facilities for overall development of children. Quite a large majority of guardians (80%) of out of school girls reported the main reasons for not sending their daughters to school as unsuitability of school situation and timings, long distance, co-education system, involvemnt in household chores, irregularity of teachers and teaching in the school, illiteracy and poverty of guardians, and lack of interest of girls in study etc.

All the guardians demanded to have financial support to very poor guardians, provision of mid-day meals up to upper primary level, free text books, and dress (especially for girls) for all, scholarship, availability of employment opportunities at the local surroundings etc. from the Govt. Quite a large majority (78%) of the girls expressed their willingness for further study. They wished to learn tailoring, drawing and painting, music and computer alongwith prescribed subjects. All the girls co-operate their families in doing household chores like brooming, fetching water from wells and handpumps, cooking and looking after young siblings etc. 46 percent teachers were of the view that VEC members and Panchayat Representatives emphasised on the regularity and punctuality of teachers in performing their duties honestly. 28 percent of teachers opined that these members and representatives stressed on maximum enrolment, retention and encouragement for education of children. 23 percent of the teachers accepted that community members co-operated them in imparting education to children. On the otherhand, 77 percent of them denied of any kind of co-oparation from them. No fruitful co-operation was perceived by teachers from the local community about the availability of teaching-learning and reading writing materials for the school and children as well. Most of the teachers (92%) were found unable to prepare the teaching aids, so worried about non-availability of readymade teaching aids. Moreover, lack of will power to make teaching-learning interesting utilising teaching aids and teaching through lecture method are accelerating the process monotonous and class inactive.

It was found that irregularity of teachers and students (especially girl students), lack of proper cooperation from community, VEC and panchayat representatives, and inactive participation of PTAs are affecting the goal of SSA. Involvement of VECs for overall monitoring, supervision and management of school functioning has proved to be very useful and effective. Some of the parents in community

were found very careless for education of thier children specially girls. Pointing out weaknesses of teaching –learning process and presenting solution of their problems through discussion with concerning persons and officials and interaction with VECs, PTAs, community members and panchayat representaties etc. have been found resulting higher enrolment, retention and better performance of children as well as ensuring quality education and teacher empowerment in the schools. Mostly all the teachers were found satisfied with the monitoring system as they were motivated, encouraged and suggested for facilitating children to learn rather than formal teaching, to do justice with the profession and regain self respect in the society.

Suggestions and Conclusion

Excessive poverty, seasonal migration, agricutlural operations with parents, collection of forest products, cattle grazing, involvement in doing household chores, looking after young siblings etc. have been reported as some of the important causes responsbile for drop-out in the district. In addition to these causes, illiteracy, and indifference of parents to girls education, long distance of schools, unsuitable school environment, lack of proper motivation, early marriages etc. have been observed as some of the main hindrances on the way to enrolment and education of girls in schools.

It is needless to say that community plays an important role in universalisation of elementary education. School, as a light house of the community, is a formal resource centre for education and disseminates knowledge, ideas, beliefs and inculcates values through education in children and the community as well. Both are interdependent for their worthy survival and dignified existence. Community, therefore, should provide all the essential facilities, cooperation and participation for better functioning of schools.

Provision and timely distribution of free textbooks, dress and mid-day meals should be extended upto upper primary level.Special incentives in the form of financial grant should be given to the girls of poor families. This grant may be @ Rs. 1000/- per class completed (e.g. 5000/- class V and Rs. 8000/- class VIII passed girls) and be released at the time of their marriage (after 18 years of age) verified through educational and age certificates from the concerning school. This incentive scheme may be of much help to the girls of poor families in motivating them to achieve elementary education and get married after the age of 18 years. The scheme will indirectly help to eradicate the social evil of child-marriage.The

chairperson (s) of the PTA should be the parent(s) of the child who has achieved the highest marks in that specific year (election year of the PTA) of the school.Discourage gender bias, and develop the spirit of respect and honour for all children without any discrimination of caste, creed, religion and gender.Regularity and punctuality of teachers in accomplishing their professional duties should be ensured. Teaching-learning process be made interesting and intelligible utilizing teaching aids and learning-centered approach as well. The process may be enriched with story telling, organizing curricular and co-curricular activities, games and sports etc.Teaching skills and competencies learnt during in-service training programmes should be utilized while teaching students in the class.

Conclusion

Teachers should develop friendly behavior and inter-personal relationships with students and their parents/guardians. Often teachers are kept busy with work other than teaching. They should be provided with more time for teaching, minimizing such paper work and survey work. Regular as well as surprise supervision and inspection of schools should be ensured. Teachers doing their duty well should be encouraged through public rewards and irresponsible teachers be forced to do their duty. Thus, the teachers will be motivated to utilize their energy and school hours for quality education of children, which must be their sole responsibility. Work opportunities for wage earning poor families should be made available in the local surroundings to avoid their migration with children so that their children could not be deprives schooling facilities. More and more employment avenues need be opened for the girls. Ample opportunities should be made available to educated women in various sectors of the society.

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A HELPING HAND FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS - A CASE STUDY

Pankaj Kumar M. Desai*

Abstract

The new breed of learners has brought about learning society in which learners are moving at uneven speeds, where developing countries are far behind the developed ones. Children and adults of the disadvantaged and vulnerable group of society form the darker side of the picture. As a result of 'Dakar World Education Forum (2000)' the developing countries in general and India in particular made efforts to attain literacy targets. This has resulted in exclusion of particularly disadvantaged groups, the remote area dwellers.The main objective of this paper is to understand the role of NGOs in the pacing of rural area educational process for disadvantaged children as well as to see how they can contribute to achieve the goal of EFA. For this study the researchers organized interview schedules, visits of the remote places where the activities of the organization are under process. Thus the data was collected with the help of observation, interview schedules and documentary survey. Nandigram is a non-governmental organization in a small village of South Gujarat working since 1987 in the district of Valsad. It focuses its activities in the direction of providing education to disadvantaged children.

Introduction

The new breed of learners have brought a learning society in which learners are moving with uneven speed, where developing countries are far behind the developed ones. Children and adults of the disadvantaged and vulnerable group of society form the darker side of the picture. In case of country like India, there are areas having difficult locations and geographically isolated locations in the context of education. Remote areas usually include mountains, deserts, forest areas or scattered ice lands. The areas are characterized by weak interaction with the outside world; even intersettelement contacts are poor because of poor means of transport and communication. Schools in these rural areas face difficult challenges in serving the needs of children and public education. Some NGOs are associated in the work of giving assistance to the attempts of providing education in those remotest areas. They actively support the development of programmes that recognize and deal with the particular needs of students, educators, schools and communities in the vast rural areas of the nation. Study of this kind of

institutions that are engaged in providing universal access to meet the challenges of education are necessary to gauge the real progress made in the field of education.

Background

At the First World Conference of Education For All (EFA), which was held in Thailand in 1990, a need was strongly articulated to provide access to basic education to all children, illiterate youth and adults all around the world. At the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal during 26-28 April-2000, it was resolved to commit all countries to the Education For All (EFA) goals into a global reality through effective country to specific action frameworks.

All countries are facing various problems in achieving the goals of EFA, and when it is the case of disadvantaged children, it becomes more difficult. People and schools from rural areas face multiple challenges related with getting or providing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children. The Governments and all their departments are regularly trying to reach the goal of EFA in every country and every corner of a country. This study is concerned with an organization trying to provide an alternative and supportive supplementary mode of education for rural and remotest areas those do not get better formal education and have no school within an approachable distance. This is the case study of the attempts made by an institution named 'NANDIGRAM' working specially for the remote rural areas of South Gujarat region of India.

Objectives

- To find out the contribution made by NANDIGRAM in the pacing of the educational process for disadvantaged children in the rural area of South Gujarat.
- To see how 'NANDIGRAM' can contribute to achieve the goal of EFA.
- To study the impacts of the attempts of NANDIGRAM in the enhancement of the educational process for disadvantaged children in the area of South Gujarat.

Methodology

In this particular study, mainly the Case Study Method was used in combination with the Historical Method of research.

Tools

In the present study data was collected by-

1. Checking the documents of the institution.
2. Verification of the data with the help of interview schedules.
3. Observation techniques.

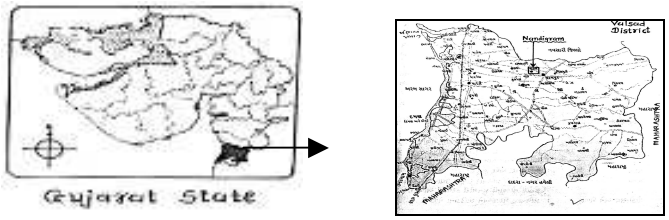
Sample

The sample for the present study was selected by two techniques. The employees of the institution were selected purposively while the selection of the respondents regarding the programmes was made by the random sampling technique. A trustee, seven employees and total 100 respondents were included in the sample of the study.

Analysis and Interpretation

About NANDIGRAM

NANDIGRAM is an organization established in 1987, situated 20 km away from Valsad city of the Valsad District of Gujarat State of India that can be seen in these maps.



Map 1 : Gujarat State and Location of NANDIGRAM

Nandigram's founders, a few like-minded friends, had a dream, a vision to leave the city of Mumbai and migrate to a small village in order to find the right aim of life through social and educational service. Big cities abound in riches, have all sorts of facilities and plenty of opportunities for development. Villages lack even the basic necessities and proper educational services. The gap is too wide to bridge, but the founders thought that whatever little they could do would be a step in this direction.

For this purpose, an organization was formed and registered as a non – profit charitable trust under the able guidance of (Late) Shri. Makarand Dave, an eminent poet of Gujarat. His wife Kundnika Kapadia, also a famous writer, is the managing trustee. The trust acquired 25 acres of land from the government at a subsidized rate, in a small village named Vankal. The eroded land at the time of establishment has now turned into a pleasant, peaceful, eco-friendly place known as 'NANDIGRAM'.

About The Project

In the villages, the level of education was very low. There are many schools in the interior remote areas but it was uncertain whether children would attend or not. Here, the education of parents and guardians is negligible and therefore they are not eager and vigilant regarding the education of their children. When the children grow up they are either engaged in labor or sent to tend the grazing animals. In some schools, there is only an empty building. The students or the teacher hardly ever come to the school. Thus there is neither an atmosphere for learning at home nor is there access to knowledge-enhancing media. Due to this, children's intellectual development remains quite impaired.

The above information pertains to villages in the interior, but the situation in the schools along the main roads is also not very encouraging. The only difference is that the attendance is slightly better, but the education itself is very much below the mark. To alleviate this situation, a project titled **'Rural Education Project for Disadvantaged Children'** was formed. This programme was in three parts:

1. School at Your Door-step: Reaching the Unreached
2. Support Programmes in Schools for Disadvantaged Children
3. Children's Club: Dostighar

School at your Door-step: Reaching the Unreached

Kaprada is a tribal taluka of Valsad district (south Gujarat). The inhabitants of this hilly region in the lap of the Sahyadri Mountain range are mainly tribals (of S.T. category). Most of them are farm labours. The farm production is so little that it hardly lasts for 3-4 months. This area abounds in rivers, streams and mountains. When these rivers overflow during monsoon, traveling becomes quite impossible. There were schools but the level of education was very low. Instead of going to school, children were either playing or tending to graze animals. Many school age children did not attend school. There was an urgent need to put in an effort so that

those children could get basic learning abilities. These areas are situated more than 40-45 km away from NANDIGRAM. So the project 'School at Your Door-step' has been started from November- 2003. The project was started with an ill-equipped vehicle (jeep). Then it was replaced by a well equipped mobile van as shown in the picture.

Equipped mobile van for the project "School at Your Door-step"

Table 1: Project Features of School at Your Door-step

Project vehicle	**Mobile van**	**Work**
Equipment in this van	Computer, C.D.s, educational aids, games, audio cassettes, video films, scientific apparatus, text books, reference books, charts, maps, writing boards, chalks etc.	• Attempts to gather the students • Personal contact with parents and guardians • Provision of formal and informal education • Class wise teaching by different subject teachers • Use of computer and teaching aids • All round development • Provision of basic needs like stationary and clothes • Provision of nutritious snacks
Staff	Five teachers including one Co-ordinator	
Target areas	Disadvantaged children of remotest areas of Kaparada taluka of Valsad district	
Students and children	5 to 14 Years	
Timings	11.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.	
Schedule	Four days a week (Monday to Thursday)	

Table 2: The Beneficiaries of the Project: School at Your Door-step

S.No.	Name of Village (school)	Region (Taluka)	No. of Students	No. of Students
1	Kastunia	Kaprada	80	Std. I to IV and Std. V to VII
2	Takunia	Kaprada	83	
3	Jirval	Kaprada	65	
4	Vaddha	Kaprada	118	
5	Vaddevi	Kaprada	83	
Total			**429**	

From the Table 1 and 2, it is clear that the project was running with a planned infrastructure and with remarkable scope.

Support programmes in schools under SSA for Disadvantaged Children

Teachers from NANDIGRAM select four schools having major proportion of disadvantaged children every year and go there for four days a week in rotation and teach for an hour and a half. During these visits –

- Formal and informal education is given.
- Educational aids, games and newly formulated methods for this purpose are used.
- The teachers are helped to create a pleasant atmosphere so that the children who are usually shy and fearful were attracted to school and attend regularly and become open and cheerful.
- Meetings are arranged with the guardians to make them involved with their children's education.

During last two years, NANDIGRAM has started a new project by starting supporting educational programmes for the disadvantaged children who left the school after attending for few days and for those who have never visited the school. One great outcome of this was seen that the Government Authority (District Primary Education Office) was also convinced to enroll such children in the classes I, II, III and IV. For this purpose NANDIGRAM has administered a particular evaluative test for checking their eligibility to enter the particular standard. Table 3 shows the details of this attempt and its outcomes.

Table 3: Students Enrolled in Different Classes by the Teaching of NANDIGRAM

S.No.	Name of Village	Standard	No. of Boys Enrolled	No. of Girls Enrolled	No. of Students Enrolled
1	Veribhavada (Kaprada)	II	14	14	**53**
		III	06	08	
		IV	11	00	
2	Mendha (Harakhmal)	I	32	15	**47**
Total			**63**	**37**	**100**

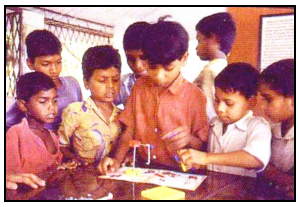
Remarks: Total educational kit and basic necessary facilities were provided to those children

Above table shows that these attempts got magical success in that 100 disadvantaged and out- of-school children have enrolled in the mainstream schooling. SSA office of the district offered special thanks to NANDIGRAM's for these attempts.

Children Club: DOSTIGHAR

Around NANDIGRAM, about 16 villages have a total of 18 primary schools, big and small. The number of students is nearly 1200-1500. Besides, there are other children who do not attend schools. For all these children and adolescent there is not a single meeting place or centre they can go to, on weekends or holidays, away from the daily routine, play and also increase their general knowledge.

NANDIGRAM's Vikramshila Educational Centre fills this void. It has several types of equipments, intellectual games, a library full of books suitable for children and adolescents, pictorial charts, apparatus for conducting simple scientific experiments, open space and a play ground equipped with swings, slope etc.



Study Creativity

VIKRAMSHILA Education Centre

Different aspects of the 'Dostighar'

Children mainly of disadvantaged groups go there and play, cultivate friendship with other children, develop their hobbies like music, drama, painting, handicraft etc. There is enough facility to bring out their potential and creativity. With the addition of a few more facilities like computer and C.D.s, it can become a good recreational and learning center for disadvantaged children and adolescents in the entire area.

Table 4: Structure of the Childrens' Club: DOSTIGHAR

S.No.	Criteria	Specification	Development
1	Age limit	6-14 Years	- Creativity - Science experiments - Encouragement - Expansion of knowledge - Hobbies - All round development
2	Age Groups	6-8, 9-11, 12-14 Years	
3	Timings	Saturday: 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. Sunday : 11.00 a.m to 6.00 p.m.	
4	Resource persons	Local and expert visitors	
5	Nutritious snacks	Snack is provided on both days. On Sunday lunch is provided to all children	

Table 5: Children Club: DOSTIGHAR's Achievements

Year	No. of Benefited Children	Target Area
2004-05	60	*Disadvantaged children of nearby villages*
2005-06	70	
2006-07	65	
2007-08(current)	65	
Total	**260**	

Above table clearly indicate that the DOSTIGHAR played a significant role as a supplementary source of education to disadvantaged children that motivate them to enter and sustain themselves in the mainstream schooling.

Achievements of NANDIGRAM (Evaluation)

As per the objectives of the study, the amount of success NANDIGRAM has achieved in the field of education of disadvantaged children has been studied. As stated earlier, the target users of the remotest areas, i.e. the students seeking formal education, the children seeking non-formal education, the parents and the local residents of the villages were interviewed. Their opinions and experiences were positive and quite motivating. Observation also revealed the same kind of results. The guardians and localities confessed that attempts of NANDIGRAM were not given positive responses by them initially, but its attempts have brought a change in their thinking. Now they are happy with the progress of their children by the attitude of the staff and the sincere attempts made by the institution to come to their doorsteps in spite of all hurdles. The children looked quite motivated and their active and regular participation also pointed to the success of the NANDIGRAM project. The school teachers of these remote areas also seemed encouraged because of the supplementary services provided by NANDIGRAM.

Findings and Discussion

Following findings and discussion on the basis of the data collected were analyzed for the case study:

Do more with less

As it was the intention of the founders to work with fewer resources and low finance, the institution works such that every single rupee is being utilized to achieve the target of helping the disadvantaged and EFA.

Good Support to SSA

The projects of NANDIGRAM like “School at your Door step”, Dostighar and Supporting Education Programmes are working hand in hand with the SSA Mission and its different aspects.

In the Direction of EFA

The institution is making steady progress by helping the SSA in achieving the goal of EFA. The one hundred new students enrolled in different classes by the attempts of the institution is the motivation for SSA as well as for the institution also.

All-round Development of the Disadvantaged

There is no doubt; NANDIGRAM has provided the disadvantaged children education bringing self-awareness better life style and strength. Children have gained basic education, social contexts, healthy environment, respect and a vision for a better future.

Work without Limelight

NANDIGRAM is working as a support institution of disadvantaged children in rural area. The staff and the governing body are dedicated and committed to their work. It is not an achievement for achievement's sake but facilitating education, improving standards, motivating those left out and providing them the basic needs like food, clothing and stationery.

Happy Recipients

The children benefiting from the educational activities of NANDIGRAM showed, through their smiling faces, positive attitudes and energetic responses the success of all the activities carried out by NANDIGRAM.

Conclusions and Suggestions

All educational activities are organized by keeping in the focus the target area of disadvantaged children. The organization is making a steady progress in helping the disadvantaged children and achieving the goal of EFA. Using fewer resources and low finance, more results were obtained. The activities of the organization support and enhance the traditional school education and its socio – cultural needs. Children's club, mobile van, the "School at your Door step" project and supporting educational programmes in schools are their key activities. The recipients show a positive attitude towards the activities.

More studies of this kind of NGOs should be carried out by the Government authorities to boost the process of helping the disadvantaged children and achieving the goal of EFA. More constructive co-operation from Government departments should be provided to this kind of organizations for easy functioning.

Government should come forward to establish more constructive linkages to strengthen the SSA Mission and to achieve the goal of EFA. Employees of these kinds of organizations should be encouraged by the schools, society or Government by providing them some incentives. It is then that one can expect more such organizations to come forward and provide support to the disadvantaged children for an all round development.

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ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING (ABL) –A PARADIGM SHIFT UNDER SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

S. Balasubramanian*

Abstract

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is the main objective of SSA. To reach the goal many interventions have been carried out by SSA right from 2002. One among them is AIE and EGS Centres. AIE and EGS Centres have played a remarkable role in facilitating education of Disadvantaged Children. ABL Strategy in AIE Centres particularly is really an effort towards Enrollment, Retention and Quality Education Activity Based Learning (ABL) is interpreted differently by different educationists in different States. Tamil Nadu put set a correct meaning to this strategy. In Activity Based Learning, activities are done by the children and for the Learning of the children. In all the AIE Centres, ABL has been introduced, Educational Volunteers are trained, ABL Cards are supplied, and Accessory Materials are also provided. This strategy helps Child Centered Learning. A Paradigm Shift has taken place in the AIE Classroom from the Conventional Method to an effective Alternative Strategy. Hence ABL provides the Alternative Education Under SSA. In ABL-AIE Classroom set-ups, textbooks are replaced by simple, colourful and laminated Activity Cards. All Competencies and covered by the Learning Cards. Systematically and Scientifically prepared Learning Cards and ladders play a dominant role in children's activity. This strategy ensures the competency attainment of children. Hence ABL in AIE Centres is an innovative Education Strategy. Moreover it is an apt strategy for Multigrade Management in AIE Centres. In order to facilitate and Enhance Mathematics Learning, a scientifically prepared kit box has been supplied with nearly about 25 sets of wooden materials for attaining Competency in Primary Mathematics. SLMs have got many advantages for children in Learning Mathematics through concrete materials with understanding and for applying to life situations. After the introduction of ABL in AIE Centres students interest in learning and retention have been enhanced. This has proved that the AIE can also be called as ABL.

Introduction

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is the main objective of SSA. To reach this goal, many interventions are being out by SSA right from 2002. One among them is AIE and EGS Centre. AIE and EGS Centres have played a remarkable role in facilitating education of Disadvantaged Children. Especially

ABL Strategy in AIE Centres in really an effort towards Enrollment, Retention and Quality Education.

About ABL……

Activity Based Learning is a strategy by which children perform some activities and learning with the help of systematically prepared cards and attain competency in each subject in the standards one to four. Colorful laminated cards have been given with various logos and sequential numbers. A ladder for each subject and each standard also given, which has been prepared as per the competencies. The ladder is equivalent to a text book. The child is trained to follow the ladder which has got many milestones, meant for the competencies. Each milestone has some logos. Children take the learning cards with those logos, do the activities and go to the next milestone. When a child completes one milestone, the child is attaining a competency.
The activity cards are for: Competency based introductory Activities, Reinforcement Activities, Exercising Activities , Remedial Activities, Enrichment Activities, Evaluation Activities

ABL-an Alternative Education

All the AIE Centres are attached with primary schools where the ABL strategy has been introduced, Educational Volunteers are trained, ABL Cards and Accessory Materials are provided. This strategy helps in Child Centered Learning. **A Paradigm shift has taken place in the AIE Classroom from Conventional method to an effective Alternative Strategy.** Hence ABL is the Alternative (form of) Education Under SSA.

ABL-an Innovative Education

In AIE-ABL Classroom set-up, textbooks are replaced by simple, colourful and laminated Activity cards. All Competencies are covered by the Learning Cards. Systematically and Scientifically prepared Learning Cards and ladders play a dominant role for the children's activity. This strategy ensures the competency attainment of children. Hence ABL in AIE Centres is an innovative Education. Moreover it is an apt strategy for Multi-grade Management in AIE Centres.

Classroom Arrangement

- Low Level Blackboard for board activities
- Wire Pandal to display the Work Sheets of children

- Trays pasted with Logos to keep Activity Based Self Learning Cards
- Achievement chart, Health Chart , Weather Chart etc. displayed on the wall
- Materials collected displayed
- Mats spread for the children to keep materials and cards and do activity and learn

Self Management by Children

Since it is child centered approach, children also practice to manage themselves in the classroom atmosphere for learning. Children are able to ; look at the ladder and follow their activity for learning, mark the information on the charts, take things from the right place, keep thing back on the right place, and Avoid unnecessary activities since they concentrate on the activity cards

Self Learning Materials (SLM) in AIE Centres

In order to facilitate and Enhance Mathematics Learning, a scientifically prepared kit box has been supplied with about 25 sets of wooden and bead materials for attaining Competency in Primary Mathematics. SLM have got many advantages for children in Learning Mathematics through concrete materials with understanding and for applying to real life situations.

Role of Educational Volunteers

The role of Educational Volunteers is important in AIE Centres. The Educational Volunteer facilitates children's learning, arranges all the materials properly in the class-room, looks at the achievement of each child, looks at the health habits of each child, and makes the child observe the weather and mark it on the sheet

Feedback of Educational Volunteers

Educational Volunteers have pointed out the improvement in the competency attainment level at present. Children are able to ; i) read the words and sentences in Tamil; ii)do Addition, Subtraction and Multiplication; iii)read and Write English alphabet and words; iv)read and write Numerals; v)do Matching Activities; vi)follow Health Habits; vi)draw Pictures; vii)demonstrate Oral Skills; viii)communicate Well; and read Pictures Cards

Children's Feedback

- Classroom atmosphere is interesting
- Teacher is friendly
- Teacher is helpful
- (They) like to come regularly
- Learning with cards and materials is interesting
- Learn health habits
- Observe the weather and marking on the chart
- Feel there is freedom in the classroom
- Like outdoor games

Merits of ABL

The main advantages of BL are: i)child Centered approach; ii)attractive learning cards; iii) helps for the individual pace of learning; iv)certainty of learning each competency; v)self Learning, Group learning - Peer learning strategies are possible; vi) scientific evaluation methods; vii)continuity is possible at any time; viii)individual attention is possible; ix)children can know their level in learning; x)teacher can facilitate the need of children; xi)builds confidence to children; xii) teacher children rapport is developed; xiii)freedom in learning; xiv)children can develop sociability and communication skills; xv)multi Grade situations are very well managed; and xvi)reduces burden on teacher

Conclusion

Though ABL is being discussed in the past few decades, its scientific and systematic practice has been possible only by now. Its significance it to be realized by every teacher. When teacher practices this approach in the class-room, every child would attain the competency. Since ABL has got so many favorable aspects to make the disadvantaged children to learn, it may be implemented as a national project in all AIE Centres.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TRAIN TRIBAL CHILDREN ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Y. John Richard*

Abstract

The various aspects of a language such as grammar, phonology, syntax, Morphology have to be well developed for a good cognitive function. In the dynamic requirements of today's job market, good communication skills are essential. These skills cannot be acquired through magic but through proper nurture from early childhood. The elementary education planners must have the vision to foresee the needs of the youth in our country in the decades to come. The effects of globalization on the developing countries like India, especially for the disadvantaged groups of people like tribes are unique. The teacher has to prepare an individual language evaluation strategy for various elements such as phonology, grammar, and semantics of that particular tribal language and compare them with the regional/English language. These will reflect problems at various levels. Developing communication skills among the tribal population is not an easy task for a language teacher. He must be ready to take up ethnographic research in the group where he is at work. The cultural differences, the remaining scars of oppression and the clouding vision of ignorance make the job more complex. This paper presents the changes required in the language Teaching. Different types of tests to asses various aspects of communication such as listening, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammatical structures and language readiness skills are explained in detail with examples. Innovative approaches that can bring in a faster change in the levels of communication among tribal population are discussed in detail in this paper.

Introduction

Good communication skills are the indicators of the culture and the value system of a person. Good expressive communication skills are important for a man to convey his thoughts to the world around him. For good communication, a good command over the language is very important. The world has become a village today and the communication circle of people has a very big radius. To keep pace with the fast flying world, one must equip oneself with English, the window language. Good communication skills cannot be acquired through magic but through proper nurture from early childhood. The elementary education planners must have the vision to foresee the needs of the youth in our country in the decades to come.

Education is the manifestation of the already existing perfection in man. Education has to kindle the thoughts of the children and foster the development of metacognition. Various aspects of a language such as grammar, phonology, syntax and morphology have to be well developed for a good cognitive function. All the children can learn if we teach them in a proper way through which they learn better. The effects of globalization on the developing countries like India, especially on the disadvantaged group of people like tribes are unique. Today's job market requires good skills of communication among its employees. Even though the communication skills are common to all the languages, good English speaking skills are the key to the employment. If the demographic dividend of the country has to reach the disadvantaged people like the tribes, it is essential to train them on the skills that would bring in greater economic benefits. Economic empowerment has the power to fetch other desired changes in these groups.

The crucial period for language development is 0-7 years. In a natural process human beings first acquire command of the spoken language. This helps children to acquire linguistic skills such as reading and writing. We usually speak of the development of language skills in language pedagogy, which consists of developing integrated skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in the learner. All these elements are required for each skill and are inter-dependent. One cannot have better listening comprehension without the knowledge of phonetics, vocabulary and structure of the language. The teacher has to prepare an individual language evaluation of various elements such as phonology, grammar, and semantics of that particular tribal language and compare them with the English language. These will create problems at various levels. This is inevitable because when children reach the school, they are already well versed in their mother tongue. Unlike other urban surroundings, most of the tribal people undertake education in their regional language, which further hampers their progress in the sphere of development.

Developing communication skills among the tribal population is not an easy task for a language teacher. He must be ready to take up ethnographic research in the group where he is at work. The cultural differences, the remaining scars of oppression and the clouding vision of ignorance make the job more complex. The two areas that are to be concentrated upon are vocabulary and fluency. In the traditional approach, the rules of grammar were stressed. Emphasis on the grammar hampers the expression of the child. Hence the teacher must allow the children to speak in broken English and be sensitive to bring in the required changes, which would help him to be more fluent. Boosting of confidence, self-esteem and motivation are the important keys to success. The tribal people still

have the myth that English is a superior language and feel as though speaking in English is impossible for the first generation learners. These psychological fears and a feeling of inferiority should be worked upon. The teacher must stress that it is also a language like any other language in the world and can be learnt with a little effort. Such energetic words would increase the mental strength and potential of the students. The pedagogy thus includes that the teacher understand the students and the factors that would motivate them. If the teacher is able to draw a clear picture of the linguistic background of the children and empathize with it, half the job is done. The various approaches that shall be used with these children are briefly outlined below.

Team work

It will be easy for the children to work in teams. The teacher shall give simple group work to help them gain self-confidence. Simple dictionary work, recitation of poems and exchange of dialogues are simple tasks that can be assigned.

Vocabulary Building

The teacher shall ask the children to find out English equivalents for the words that are in daily usage and also develop competition among them to find out the meaning of simple English words. Thus the level of complexity shall be increased with the progress.

Role playing

The teacher shall prepare small dialogues in English and prepare the kids for interesting role-playing. Then the teacher's role shall be gradually faded out.
Cultural programmes such as street plays should be planned in English. With proper rehearsals, it shall be conducted at the centre of the village. This would be an eye opener for the whole tribal society. The parents would gain confidence in the quality of the education their children receive and also help the children reach better heights.

Translations

Instead of teaching the poems from the text-books that are written by some aliens, the teacher shall try to translate the traditional works of the tribals and help the children feel at home.

Use of flash cards and picture cards

The teacher can prepare some picture cards that reflect their own surroundings and flash cards to match them. The children can be asked to match the pictures and the cards to help them express their personal experiences in English.

Composition

Instead of giving traditional composition exercises, these children can be asked to express their views about their culture in their own mother tongue first to help them have better skills of expression and the compositions can be prepared accordingly. The child will be surprised to see his views in English which in turn would boost his morale, motivate him to express himself, translate and learn English on his own.

Activity Based Learning

This particular project is successfully running in some of the states of the country and can be implemented for the tribal learners too. This method has a ladder of concepts and pictures for each step of the ladder. The student will have to look into the pictures and express the themes from his own perception in his own language.

Brainstorming

The students shall be given language exercises that are brainstorming. For example, the students shall be asked to find out the usage of a word at various contexts and also prepare a list of homonyms etc.

Ability Grouping

A mixture of abled and less abled students shall be assigned a group task and the progress shall be assessed not based on the individuals but the emphasis shall be laid for quicker progress in the task to build a competitive spirit.

Thus by taking the help of the culture and traditions to the language teaching, we would be able to bring about the desired changes. The paradigm shift is required not only in the teaching but also in the evaluation process. Teaching and testing are interdependent and shortcoming in one implies a shortcoming in the other. Testing is not merely for measuring or assessing performance of the individual tested, but also for its efforts on the objectives of the course, motivation,

credibility, teaching and learning strategies. Testing can make teaching more effective. Tests have to be constructed in view of the behavioural expectations. The teacher should be clear about what he / she is going to test.

Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting evidence of students' performance and achievement in the learning. It needs to be integrated with the process of teaching and learning. Evaluation must be so designed that the teachers and quality of learning can use it as an effective means of influencing the quality of teaching by the students. It should also provide constant feedback regarding the effectiveness of curriculum programme, its contents and transaction. The evaluation process has the following steps:

- Making a detailed evaluation plan
- Collecting materials and conducting investigation
- Analysis of results
- Making an evaluation report and giving suggestions
- Feedback of results and putting them into practice

High Quality Teaching is not possible without high quality evaluation. Evaluation should facilitate all round development of students. It needs to be continuous and comprehensive and should cover scholastic and non-scholastic domains of learning. The use of formative and summative evaluation in assessing comprehensively the performance of students on a continuous basis is viewed in three different ways: first, by assessing the students' progress with reference to their own selves (self- referenced); secondly, with reference to the standard criteria set by their teacher (criterion – referenced), and thirdly, with reference to the progress made by their peer groups (norm- referenced). The teacher should make use of various tools and techniques in assessing the performance of students. Their selection and use is dependent upon the nature of the area and grade level of the students. In addition to paper and pencil tests observation and oral techniques, should also form a part of evaluation. Cumulative records/anecdotal records have to be meticulously prepared for maintaining record of students' progress.

Conclusion

Where there is a will, there is a way. It is not too difficult for enthusiastic teachers to understand our brethren, who are at a disadvantaged position not because of their sin but because of our disability to understand their innate talents, capabilities/calibre. English teaching would become a very easy task if we take a

few steps to understand their culture and beliefs. If we work along the lines of their path, it is certain that we would reach our goal of quality education. The nation's development would be at a faster pace if we could mainstream the tribal children to set them on the paths of employment pools, which are the result of globalization.

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IMPROVING THE LANGUAGE SKILLS OF THE TRIBAL CHILDREN BY ADOPTING LINK LANGUAGE "DESIA"

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Abstract

The study deals with the difficulties faced by the tribal children in understanding Oriya during classroom transactions and techniques applied for removing the difficulties using the link language "Desia" which is considered as a "Lingua Franca". It is very helpful for understanding the contents of the text. Different dialects of the Adivasis of Koraput are a hindrance to understand the prescribed text by the learners who come from the S.T. Community. The children of class I of Hardali Ashram School run by SC and ST Development Department, Govt. of Orissa faced problems for comprehension, which the researchers felt they needed to address. As all the text books are written in Oriya and the medium of instruction is Oriya the tribal children can't acquire the required skills of language i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing unless special treatment is given to them. In order to develop the language skills the researchers used the Primers designed according to the prescribed syllabus for primary classes with special reference to local, specific issues and situations.

Only six primers out of fifty were used for the purpose. The themes of the primers are based on folk tales. The special attractions of the primer are prominent pictures and Desia language which is simple and lucid. Story telling techniques were used for better clarity of the theme through modulation of voice using intonation and stress. Role play activities were also under taken. Oral questions were asked to asses how far the learners comprehended the theme. They were also asked to carry on dialogues sticking to the characters of the story. It was found that 60% of the learners were able to speak correctly with comprehension of the subject matter against 30% in the beginning. This was the result of the link language and the techniques adopted the researchers are conversant with, to handle the classes. The results are encouraging and will be helpful for the Adivasi Learners in developing language skills in Oriya.

Introduction

The tribes of India constitute an important segment of Indian society known by various designations and appellations, such as Adivasi, Vanyajati, Adimajati, Girigana, Janajati etc. They are enlisted in Article 342 of Indian Constitution and designated as "Anusuchita Janajati" (Scheduled Tribes) The Government of India

has enlisted 630 tribal communities and 62 of them are found to be living in Orissa. Educational provisioning for the STs poses multi-dimensional concerns and requires the adoption of the most viable strategy for operationalisation. The factor, which impedes the spread of formal education, is the world view of the tribals which includes the attitude to work, leisure, health, sickness, economic development, attainment of formal education and the day-to-day items of life.

The National Policy of Education, 1986 (Revised 1992) in its policy documents gives a special place to the education of the Scheduled Tribes and clearly points out that "The Socio Cultural Milieu of the STs has its distinctive characteristics including, in many cases, their own spoken language. This underlines the need to develop the curriculum and devise instructional materials in the tribal language at the initial stages with arrangements for switching over to the regional language." The policy has very explicitly stated that there is a need to develop curriculum and instructional materials in tribal languages at the initial stages. This endorses the need for making education relevant to the community.

Rationale

The primary motive for learning a language is that it provides a means of communication with others. The extent of this skill depends upon the nature of the social community in which the person lives. The present system of language curriculum is one of the major reason for low educational achievement of the tribals. The dominant language of Orissa state i.e. Oriya is presented as the norm or standard value and presented as culturally superior, powerful and resourceful. It is also emphasized in so many ways that the tribal child must master this language in order to assimilate with the mainstream. This ultimately creates the feeling of inferiority among the tribal children towards themselves, their language, culture and their own parents and family.

Tribal children who go to non-tribal schools face a more severe the language problem . These children are forced to sit in the same class with Oriya children and usually the teachers do not understand their language. The majority dominant Oriya language becomes a threat to the tribal childrens' mother tongue. Similarly the tribal children in a tribal school do feel unmotivated to learn the new non-tribal language primarily due to cultural differences in learning tribal ways of learning is through co-operation and not through the modern concept of competition.

Operational Definition

Orissa is a highly tribal populated state and includes as many as 62 Scheduled Tribes constituting 22.21 percent of the total population of the State according to the 1991 Census. The literacy rate of ST population in Orissa is 22.31 percent of which 34.44 percent are male and 10.21 percent are female. There are almost forty-four tribal languages found in Orissa. These languages belong to the Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Munda family. "Desia" comes under the Indo-Aryan dialect. As many as 18 different tribal dialects are being used by the different Adivasi communities of Koraput District as per the 1991 Census. The Desia language has no particular community affiliation but functions at the inter-community level as a "Lingua Franca" As all the text books are written in standard Oriya language and the medium of instruction is also Oriya, the tribal children can't acquire the required skills of language i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. The Oriya language is alien to the tribal students joining Class I and so the use of "Desia" as the medium of instruction at this early stage is very helpful for understanding the contents of the Oriya text.

It is a fact that our students are not given much scope for oral composition. Soon after joining the school, they are supplied with pens, pencils, notebooks and prescribed text books in Oriya. Even after five years of schooling the students are neither strong in oral composition nor in written composition. The researcher studied the matter well and got stimulated by the idea of developing oral composition among the tribal beginners through the pictorial story books specially developed for the tribal children with all most all the colours of tribal living.

Developing the Primers

Regional consultations were held to develop 50 pictorial primers in Desia language by the selected key resource persons from UNICEF, Orissa, Academy of Tribal Dialects and Culture, Govt. of Orissa, ELTI, Orissa, DRG members from DPEP/SSA, ST and SC Development Department, Koraput, State and District level functionaries of SSA/ SSD Deptt./Representatives of NGO/PRI, members of ST community and research scholars in the field of Tribal Education were invited to develop the primers in which the Researchers were the members.

About the Primers

The pictorial primer were designed in accordance with the prescribed text book of class I. primers were developed basing upon the integrated text book for class I of Orissa state.

The Researcher has looked at the first six set of story books namely;

1. Jatia Samary – (Naughty Sambaru)
2. Chatur Kalia (The Cunning Jackal)
3. Khada Kachim (The Rabbit and the Tortoise)
4. Lobra Dakra (Greedy Old Man)
5. Bag Ari Kakda (The Crane and the Crab)
6. Bhakua Kalia (Stupid Jackal)

Theme of the Stories (Some Sample)

Story-1 : Jatia Samary – (Naughty Sambaru)

Sambaru, a boy of Mankdiguda use to take his goats for grazing to the hill side every day. One day he played a trick to fool the villagers. So he climbed up a tree and started shouting "please come… please come…. a Tiger has taken one of my goats". On hearing his shouting, the villagers came with lathis but Samaru just laughed at them for their foolishness. The villagers returned. One day one of his goats was actually attacked by a tiger and Sambaru shouted again, but this time no body came to his rescue so he sat under a tree regretting his behaviour.

Story-2 : Chatur Kalia

The king of the forest, the lion, was living in the Kadamali Jungle. Every day he killed one animal for his food. One day it was the turn of the Jackal but he was late in reaching the lion's cave. The lion asked "Why did you come late?" The Jackal answered that another lion who was bigger than him detained him on the way. The lion heard this and stretched his moustache and said "Lets go, I will see how big that fellow is". The Jackal took the lion to a well where the lion saw his own face inside the water but took it for another animal, and then he frowned at the lion inside the well. The Jackal thanked God and left the place

Story -3 : Khada Kachim (The Rabbit and the Tortoise)

There is the traditional story about the race between the rabbit and the tortoise.

Story – 4 Lobra Dakra (Greedy Old Man)

An old man and woman caught three fish from a pond one day. The old woman prepared delicious dishes. Each of them wanted to eat two out of the three cooked fishes.

They decided that they will shut their mouths and he/she who talked first will have only one fish to eat and the other will get another two. In the morning villagers entered the house of the old man forcibly. The old man shouted and told the villagers not to break the door of his house. Hearing this, the old woman said "I will take two… I will take two."

Story-5:Bag Ari Kakda (The Crane and the Crab)

This traditional story is about the Crab and the Crane. After the crane ate all the fishes by a cunning trick, the Crane was killed by the Crab.

Story-6 : Bhakua Kalia (Stupid Jackal)

A Jackal and big mud-Pellet became friends. One day while they were bathing together in a pond, the mudstone dissolved in the water. The Jackal told the pond to return his friend. The pond gave a fish to the Jackal. The Jackal put the fish outside and went inside his house. Meanwhile a kite took the fish away.

Objectives

1. To develop the speaking skill of the young learners using the link language Desia.
2. To provide a good number of guided activities to develop speaking skill through oral composition in the beginning using picture based stories.
3. To study the effects of the Desia language on the speaking skills of the learners in Oriya.
4. To assess the performance of the learners in conceptualizing the theme of the story through Desia language.

Action Hypothesis

1. The guided activities will have positive impact on the standard-I students of Hardoli Ashram school in enhancing the speaking skills.
2. The stories written in Desia language will help the learners to understand the theme of the story by listening and speaking.

Methodology

Sample

School run by ST and SC Dev. Deptt. Koraput for conducting the study. The sample consisted of 30 children of class-I of Hardoli Ashram

No. of Students	ST	SC	OBC	Total
30	22	5	3	30

Design

It was a single group with pre- and post- test design.

Tools

- Pre-Test and Post-Test.
- Pictorial primers in Desia language.

Procedure

The investigator adopted the following techniques to conduct the study:
The researcher evolved some guided oral activities. The first exercises identified high achievers in Oriya among the tribal children and these were put in charge of the groups for peer assisted learning. Description of pictures and objects formed an integral part of the activities. Dialogue practice, in the form of chain drill, was also stressed upon through proper guidance of the researcher. Open period "speak you must" exercises were undertaken and the researcher observed the activities of the children.

Learning Experiences Organized in the Class-room During the Transaction of the Pictorial Books.

The learning organized in the classroom are ; i) child centered activity based on learning by doing; ii) experiencing and active participation; iii) group work for enhancement of both social and communication skills; iii) questioning; iv) exploration / discovery; v) self learning; vi) dramatization; vii) story telling ; and viii) inter-personal relationship between the student and teachers through Desia dialects

Modalities of Execution

The researcher distributed the pictorial books to each of the students and told the stories in "Desia" language, pointing to the pictures. The students listened to the researcher. After that the pictorial story books of one story were distributed to each of the students to use as per their will. In order to strengthen the degree of understanding of the theme, the teacher used Desia language followed by the different aspect of the story in Desia language. The translated versions of Desia language words to Oriya were then repeated to the students. The process of telling stories in Desia-language continued for three weeks using the primers.

Method used for telling the stories in Desia language

Telling stories in the classroom makes the experience of listening to their own mother tongue (here the Desia language), pleasant and productive at the early stages. Students enjoy listening to stories; they experience emotions as they identify with characters. The listener is driven prodded by his curiosity, imagining what may come next.

Folk tales makes the best material so here the researcher has taken six stories out of the fifty pictorial books prescribed for the students of class-I. Stories have a deep relation to every aspect of a child's life. Using folk tales in the classroom is easy as the children have already had many much tales read to them in their native tongue. The story telling process serves as a vehicle for cognitive thinking recalling, learning and reviewing the stories. So imagination is also the key to reaching memories instead of merely describing what will be taught that day.

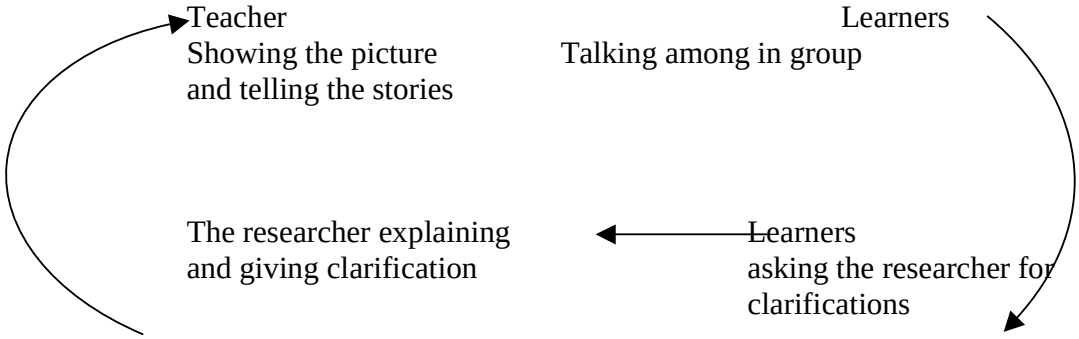
Comprehension: Presentation of the Primers

Name of the primer	Teachers activity	Learners activity	Time
1.Jatia Sambaru (Naughty Sambaru) 2. Chatur Kalia (The Cunning Jackal) 3. Khada Kachim (The Rabbit and the Tortoise)	Picture based books were distributed among the students. They were asked to study the pictures. The teacher told the story given in the primers according to the pictures. The teacher observed the activities of the students	The learners will read the pictures and discussion in pairs first and then in the group the teacher will lead the sessions. After listening to the story told by the teacher the learners will tell the story. The students proceeded at their own pace while telling the stories.	3 days 1st day picture study; 2nd day peer group discussion on the picture and explanation; 3rd day testing comprehension. Each learner was allotted fixed time so that all the learners would be covered within the time frame (i.e. 3 weeks for all the six

4. Lobra Dakra (Greedy Old Man) 5. Bag Ari Kakda (The Crane and the Crab) 6.Bhakua Kalia (Stupid Jackal)	without interfering in their activity. The teachers looked to the compaction of the primers according to the time, allotted, and the coverage of the content and asked the students to tell different stories without repeating the first one (old experience with new experience construction of knowledge) The teacher gave a chance to each learner to think of some thing new.	The learners tried to change the direction of the story with some differences and this was marked in case of all the stories told by the Teacher. Primers were exchanged among the students for looking to the picture and match the story for has some relevance with the picture. The researcher assisted the learners.	primers.) Each student was given 10 minutes.

Conceptual Framework

1ST ROUND



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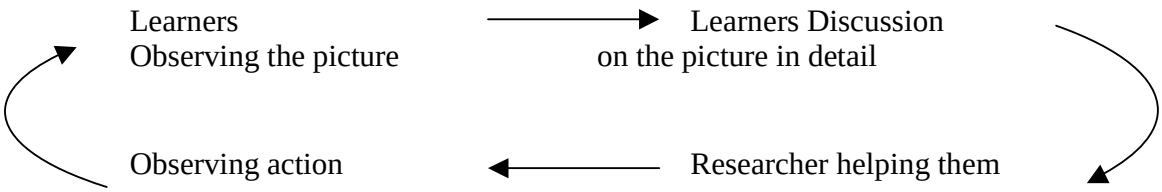

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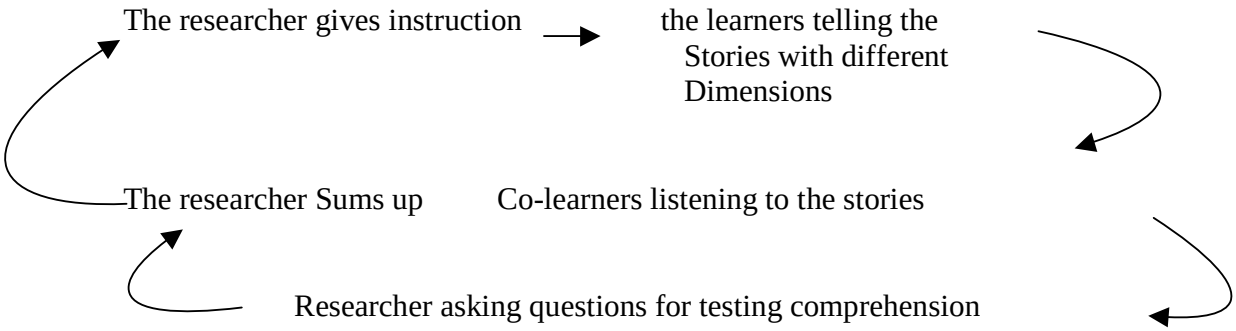

Results

Performance of the learners in understanding and speaking (N=30)

Period	**1st stage Picture comprehension**	**2nd stage speaking**	**3rd stage acting out the story**
1st Week	40% (understanding)	40% (telling the story)	40% (Activity with the speaking)
2nd Week	60% (Understanding)	60% (telling the story)	60% speaking with action
3rd Week	80% (understand the story)	80% (telling the story)	80% speaking with action

Oral questions were asked to asses how far the learners have comprehended the theme. They were asked to carry on dialogues sticking to the characters of the story. It was found that 40% of the learners in the first round, 60% in the second and 80% in the third round of learning activity were able to speak the stories correctly with comprehension. At the initial stage only 20% of the students were able to tell the story. Thus, exercises exerted positive impact on the learners.

Achievement of Learners in Listening Comprehension

No. of Students	Subject	Pre-Test Mean	Post- Test Mean	Gain in the Score of the Post Test
30	LANGUAGE	7	12	5

There is an improvement in the mean score of the pre- and post- tests of the study.

Findings

The psychological principles of language acquisition are given in story telling which develop the listening and speaking skills before the reading and writing one, in order to improve the speaking skills here the primers proved very effective. The themes of the primers are based on folk tales. The special attractions of the primers are prominent picture and use of Desia language which was used as medium of expression. The learners could comprehend the simple and lucid style of speaking. As the students used the primers at their free will, it removed the fear and shyness among the students. The story telling techniques in Desia language were used for better clarity of the theme through modulation of voice using intonation and stress. Role play activities were also under-taken for better understanding of the story followed by gestures and postures. The speaking skill improved to high level i.e. 80% of the learners could tell the stories with gestures given on the primers. It was the result of the link language and the techniques adopted in which the researcher was at home in to handle the classes. The results are encouraging and will be helpful for the tribal learners in developing language skills of listening and speaking in Oriya.

Educational Implications

The learners who were not well up in standard language can slowly but steadily acquire the language through the link language “Desia”. The conceptual framework applied under the study may be used in teaching language in the primary classes. Picture comprehension can be well learnt by applying the techniques used in this experiment. Peer learning, self learning and group activities can be practiced using these techniques. In similar situation where tribal children are pre-dominant, primers of their parent language will enhance the acquisition of language skills to a high level.

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PERFORMANCE OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - A CASE STUDY

Kartikeswar Behera* and Jugal Kishore Mishra**

Abstract

The investigators aimed at conducting a case study to examine the curricular and co-curricular activities undertaken by the Sundhiguda U.P.School in Jeypore block of Koraput district. In order to collect data, questionnaire interview schedules were used and focus group discussion was conducted with the members of the community. Relevant records of the school were used to collect information required for the study. It was revealed from the study that the performance of the ST and SC children are at par with the general category and in some events of the co-curricular activities they excel the general category of students. The mechanism adopted by the school is an eye opener to the other schools.

Introduction

The formulation of the Ninety-third Amendment to the Constitution of India (2001) proposing right to basic education a Fundamental Right (Article 21A) requires the State to make necessary provisions as an obligation. The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) and its Programme of Action (POA), modified in 1992, envisages improvement and expansion of education in all sectors, elimination of disparities in access, and stress on improvement in quality at all levels.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) implemented across the country has clear visions regarding the education of the children within age group 6-14, covering children with special needs, with special focus on education of the girl child, weaker sections and minorities. SSA specifically mentions bridging the gap in respect of all gender and social categories at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary education level by 2010 and universal retention by 2010. “Children belonging to S.C. and S.T. groups and other socially discriminated against groups such as sex workers, and parents with HIV, are often subjected to demand in the class-room not only by teachers but also by their peers. Girls are often subject to stereotyped experiences based on notions of their future roles as wives and mothers rather than enabling them to develop their capabilities and claim their rights. Children with disability often confront environments where their needs are completely ignored. Schools must be conscious of the importance of creating equitable class-room environments in which students are not subjected to unfair

treatment and denied opportunities on the basis of their sex, or membership of a caste tribe or minority group. On the other hand, the culture of the school must be one that highlights the student(s), identities as learners and creates an environment that enhances the potential and interests of the child (NCF, 2005).

Background and Context

Koraput is a tribal district inhabited by different tribes like Kandha, Vatra, Dorua, Paraja, and many others with their distinct socio-cultural features. Consequent upon the implementation of DPEP and SSA the education of the children of those tribes took a new shape. Facilities for them were specifically provided by the Government. Koraput district consists of 14 blocks and Jeypore block is one which has a total population of 99, 694 and it shares 47% of ST population, 19% SC population and 34% of general category and OBC (Other Backward Class). It is evident that nearly 50% of the population of the district and block constitute an S.T. population living in the midst of mountain ranges.

Out of a number of Primary Schools set up by the Government, Sundhiguda NUPS is one, which is situated 2 kms away from the N.H.43 close to Bariniput Panchayat of Jeypore block. The people of the area have different occupations like cultivation, labourers, selling forest products to earn their livelihood. Most of the people are BPL card holders. But it is remarkable that they have been duly motivated for the education of their children and their children are enrolled in the Primary school, which was converted to New Upper Primary School (NUPS), Sundhiguda in 2005. This is controlled by the Department of School and Mass Education, Orissa and it being a residential school, the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department of Orissa has provided hostel facilities accommodating 40 children of ST category.

The teachers and the headmaster, with the cooperation of the villagers, are able to bring about healthy changes in the school climate and the learning climate of the school. They have every commitment to break down the barriers to children's learning and the team spirit has resulted in endowing the school with distinct features of quality. As the investigators were made aware of it through the Block Resource Centre Co-ordinator (BRCC) and the Cluster Resource Centre Co-ordinator (CRCC) of the concerned cluster during sharing meetings, the investigators were interested in conducting a case study of the school.

Objectives

The study was conducted with the following objectives

- To find out the inputs and interventions provided to the learners belonging to ST and SC community;
- To examine the extent of involvement and performance of the learners in the curricular and co-curricular activities of the school;
- To know the perception of the teachers and the community for the improvement of the school programme; and
- To suggest appropriate measure for the enrichment of the school programme.

Methodology

Scope

The study covered the following dimensions

- Curricular and Co-curricular activities of the school;
- Involvement performance of the ST and SC learner in different activities of the school;
- Role of teacher in streamlining the activities; and
- Community participation in the school programme.

Sample of Respondents

- Students – 20 (from classes VI and VII)
- Headmaster -1, Teachers – 2
- Members of VEC – 5 , Member of MTA-5, Member of PTA-15

Tools

- Interviews with the Headmaster and teachers
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were with the members of VEC, PTA and MTA
- Students questionnaire
- School Records like Students Attendance Register, Teachers Profile, Register for Pupil Evaluation, Resolution Books concerning
  - *Staff members
  - *Resolution Book of member of VEC, PTA and MTA

Analysis Techniques

Statistical analysis of qualitative data and descriptive qualitative data were made in the following manner:

- Enrolment and attendance of the students sex and category wise in terms of percentage
- Average percentage of marks secured by the students in the annual examination and half yearly examination in Math and Language
- Frequency of VEC/MTA/PTA meetings and % of attendance of the members
- Recording the opinion of the respondents according to the questions asked

Results and Discussions

Table 1 Enrolment Position of Sundhiguda NUPS

Class	SC		ST		Others		Total		Grand Total
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
I	1	4	21	4	2		24	8	32
II	1	1	7	1	4	3	12	5	17
III	8	1	3	11	3	2	14	14	28
IV	2	1	2	2	2	1	6	4	10
V	1	1	6	2	-	1	7	4	11
VI	3	-	8	1	3	5	14	6	20
VII	3	2	9	1	7	6	19	9	28
TOTAL	**19 (13%)**	**10 (6.84%)**	**56 (38.3%)**	**22 (15%)**	**21 (14%)**	**18 (12%)**	**96 (66%)**	**50 (34%)**	**146**

The above table shows that in comparison to other categories of learners the number of children belonging to ST category is more. Which it has 53% of the total roll strength, the learners belonging to SC category are only 20% and all other categories are 26%. Thus the school attracts mare children belonging to ST.

Students' Attendance

Table 2 Average per cent of attendance, 2007-2008

Name of the months	CLASSES						
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
April 07	80	88	85	86	100	92	90
June 07	82	86	88	85	100	95	88
July 07	75	78	76	80	85	80	80
Aug 07	75	76	80	82	86	85	88
Sept 07	80	85	90	88	93	92	90
Oct 07	80	88	85	90	90	95	95
Nov 07	82	88	88	90	88	95	95
Dec 07	85	86	86	95	100	98	98
Jan 08	86	86	85	95	100	98	95

The above table shows that in all the classes the attendance is above 80% except in the months of July and August. The fall in attendance in the above two months is due to natural barrier like overflowing brooks in the rainy seasons. The regular attendance of the students in the school is a significant feature which adds to the learning climate of the school.

Teacher Profile

Table 3 Profile of the Teachers

S. no.	Name of the teacher with designation	Educational Qualification	Years of Teaching Experience
1	P. Haris Chandra Rao, Head master	B.Sc. (Hons) M.Ed	28 years
2	Smt. S. Lata	H.S.C.C.T.	29 years
3	Smt. Bhab Chandrrika	Inter mediate C.T.	26 years
4	Smt. Anjana Mishra	B.A. B.Ed	16 years

It is evident from the above table that the Headmaster has desirable qualifications and other teachers have essential qualifications. All have good experience of handing the classes by adopting appropriate methods of teaching. The Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) is 1:36.

Achievement Level of Students

Table 4 Average % of Marks of the Students in Maths and Language in Class-VII

Year	Subject	ST	SC	Others
2005-06	Math	37	45	47
	Language	32	41	36
2006-07	Math	46	61	54
	Language	39	44	41
2007-08	Math	50	65	58
	Language	46	47	46

Source: Examination Register

The above table shows that the performance of students belonging to SC and ST is at par with the general category. This is a clear indication of their progress, which became possible because of a good academic climate in the school. The performance of the students has proved to be much better than the previous year. It also indicates that the teachers have taken required steps to improve the standard of the SC and ST learners. There is 7% increase in language marks and 9% increase in Maths in the year 2006-07 if compared to the performance in the year 2005-06. It is worthwhile to note that in 2007-08 the average percentage of marks in case of ST category increased due to the committed and persistent effort of the teachers. The performance of the SC students excels the performance of the general students in the subjects. The performance in mathematics is better than in language.

Curricular Activities

- A conducive learning and teaching environment (Multi-grade teaching techniques)
- Monitoring pupil's progress and continuum assessment.
- Peer assisted learning is in practice.
- Remedial teaching is provided by the subject teachers.
- Learning corner activity is conducted, low cost and no cost materials are kept and used by the teachers and the learners.
- Wall activities are well organized due to good sketch drawing drawn on the class-room walls.
- Small group interaction is done, and there are puzzle and quiz activities, carried on even if the teacher is not present in the class.
- Students are given practical work.
- Correction work is being done regularly.

- Sums are worked out by the students regularly for enhancement of mathematical competencies.
- It is felt that adequate number of maps and charts are available and science operation for the students of Class VI and VII was felt.
- Two unit tests before the half yearly examination and two unit tests before the Annual Examination are in practice.

Participation of the Students in Co-Curricular Activities

Students as Child Reporter

Table 5 Social and Gender Wise Partipation

SC		ST		OTHER		
BOYS	**GIRLS**	**BOYS**		**GIRLS**	**BOYS**	**GIRLS**
-	5 38%	3 23%	-	-	-	5 38%

The Table records the performance of students (SC and ST) at Sisusambadik i.e. Child Reporters selected by the KFA (Koraput Farmers Association) to collect news of the area where the child lives and its peripheral areas and report weekly in a weekly named the Ankurodgama. The children of the school are trained in the art of reporting in Oriya language through short Orientation Programmes imparted to them. It is evident from the above table that the students from class V to Vii in different categories have been given felicitation as child reporters. The number of ST students in the activity is at par with the SC and general category.

Participation of the Students in Parab Activities

Table 6 Performance of This Students Belonging to ST In Panchyat and Block Level Competition 2006-07

Occasion	Event	Position	Level
Parab (The famous festival of the district)	Folk Dance Girls Folk Dance Girls Folk Dance Girls	2nd 3rd 2rd	Block level Block level Panchayat level

The students exhibited their skill in folk dance, securing 2nd position at the block twice and once at the panchyat level competitions.

Performance in Meena Mela Year 2007-08

Duration of the Mela 3 Days (11.04.07 tO 13.04.07)

Table 7 Category Wise Achievement of Students

SL.No.	Name of the girl students	Event in which participated	Position held	Category
1	Sharmistha Rath	Memory Test	2nd	General
2	Damai Jena	Memory Test	3rd	ST
3	Dalimba Paraja	Shipping race	3rd	ST
4	Damai Jani	One Minute Show	1st	ST
5	Dhanai Jani	One minute show	2nd	ST
6	Dhanai Jani	Fancy dress	1st	ST
7	Damai Jani	Fancy dress	2nd	ST

Meena Mela is a function organized at the panchayat level where the girl students show their talent. Five girls from each school under the Gram Panchayat are short listed and sponsored to participate in the programme. Sundhiguda bagged the maximum number of prizes at the Panchayat Level and most of the girl students belonging to the ST category won the prizes.

Sports Meet Held in the Year, 2007

Table 8 Performance of the Students

S.No	Name of the Students	Event in which participated	Position held	Category
1	Ganesh Paik	Running	1st	General
2	Gupta Jani	Running	2nd	ST
3	Laichan Chetty and Gupta Jani	Three legged race	2nd	SC
4	Gupta Chalan + Purna Dani	Three legged race	3rd	ST
5	Rasmita Chety +Dalimba Paraja	Three legged race for Girls	3rd	ST

It is evident from the above table that performance of the Students belonging to ST category (boys and girls) is better than the. the SC and general category. While 3 students of S.T. category have own prizes only one SC and one general category candidate have got prizes.

Performance in the Block Level Science Exhibition 2007-08

Table 9 Category Wise Participation and Achievement

S.No.	Name of the Student	Event	Position	Category
1	Gitarani Jena	Preparation of Science Project	1st	General
2	Laichan Chetti	Science Project	Special Prize	SC
3	Gupta Chala	Science Project	Special Prize	ST

The performance of the ST and SC learners stand at par with the general category of learners.

Community Participation

Table 10 Frequency of Meeting and Participation of VEC, MTA, PTA.

Year	Frequency of meeting			Average % of attendance		
	VEC	MTA	PTA	VEC	MTA	PTA
2004-05	quarterly	half yearly	yearly	80	75	75
2005-06	quarterly	half yearly	yearly	90	80	70
2006-07	quarterly	half yearly	yearly	90	80	75

N- VEC:05,MTA:05, PTA:15

The attendance of the member is evident from the Resolution Book and it is quite satisfactory in a tribal pocket. It indicates that they are conscious about the education of the children of the school.

Table 11 Participation of Students' In School Programmes

S.No	Activity	N=20	Students Participation in %
01	Participate in cultural programe	18	90
02	Assist in preparation of mid day meal (MDM) when required	16	80
03	Participated in block level and panchayat level competition	16	80
04	Games and sports activities	18	90
05	Garden work	17	85
06	Assist in preparation of TLM	18	90
07	Peer tutoring	12	60

08	Serve food in hostel	18	90
09	Take part in Sishusambadika activities	12	60
10	Cleaning the campus	12	60

Findings

Curricular Activities

It is affirmed by the member of VEC, PTA and MTA. It was found from student evaluation records of the school that unit tests are regularly conducted in every class, Maths Quiz, and Maths fun activities are also conducted by the teachers. The teachers use child-centered activity-based approach in the teaching-learning process. They use improvised teaching strategies for students. Dictation, writing and copying the paragraphs of the text is in practice, which help the students in eliminating errors in spelling and use of punctuation marks. The Headmaster and the teachers have keen interest in this regard because of which all the students are accustomed to the process. Peer-assisted learning and cooperative learning techniques are practised in the school.

Co-Curricular Activities

The students belonging to ST and SC categories take active part in the games and sports because of which, in competitions, the ST students have performed better than the other category of children. They have won prizes securing commendable positions in competitions like Science Exhibition, One Minute Show, Song Competitions (Antakshari) Folk Dance, Exhibition etc. The girls belonging to ST and SC category are also found to be very active and sporting which is proved in the Meena Mela competition. The Mela which is exclusively for girls, where they exhibit good performance in various competitions like memory test, one minute show, and fancy dress. The latent potential of the students is brought to the limelight because of the conducive learning climate prevalent in the school. While analyzing the performances of the students in co-curricular activities, the contribution of the teachers and support of the community is well appreciated/recognized.

Implications and Conclusion

The members of VEC/PTA/MTA are of the opinion that the teachers pay door-to-door visits to discuss with the parents issues regarding regular attendance of the students and making them aware of the low performance of their children in any subject, if there is any. They are of the opinion that the teachers take extra classes

to raise the level of achievement of the students in the subjects.They never hesitate to contribute in shape of cash or physical labour for the welfare of the school inspite of their poor financial status. The female members are of the opinion that they motivate the mothers to send their daughters to the MCS (Model Cluster School), which is running in the premises of the UP School. They feel proud when the co-curricular activities are performed by their children with credit before them during Annual Day of the school and in other functions of the school. They have positive views regarding the SisuSambadika Activity organized in the school. The community participation is a model for other schools of the block. "Sisusambadik activities help the learners in developing skill in language and general knowledge which promotes the reading habit and the self learning habit.

The mechanism adopted by Sundhiguda U.P.: School can be adopted in other schools in the way of providing opportunities to children for participating in various competitions in curricular and co-curricular areas. Thus, Sundhiguda is not only an eye opener to other tribal school but also to the general schools of this district.

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EDUCATION OF DISADVANTAGED UNDER SSA: ROLE OF OPEN DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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Abstract

Government of India is committed to improve professional competencies of teachers and other functionaries working at elementary level to provide quality elementary education to all children of age group 6-14 years age and contribute substantially towards the Millennium Development Goals. This has also been reflected in the flagship programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) that envisages achieving the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010. This has certainly given a new direction to the education of children of certain special groups (Disadvantaged and Marginalized) irrespective of any discrimination to provide meaningful and quality education. To materialize the Provision of Zero Rejection Policy under SSA, special efforts has been taken through opening of Education Guarantee Schemes (EGSs), Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) Centres and Home Based education programmes etc. It is believed that adequate support must be provided and innovative strategies need to be operationalised to achieve the goal of retention of children (by reducing of drop-outs) of disadvantaged groups in regular schools and provide them meaningful education.

Distance Education Programme (DEP) under SSA is an alternative mode for education functioning all over the country to caters to the learning need of children's and training needs of elementary school teachers with a vision to improve quality of elementary education by effectively supplementing the Conventional System. This paper addressed certain important issues like; i) What has been the status of education of disadvantaged particularly SCs, STs, OBCs, Muslims, CWSN etc.; ii) What are the main issues in the present context for meeting their needs to retention them in regular schools; iii) What would be the role of distance education programme to caters top their needs; and iv) Critical discussion and implications related to improving quality of elementary education through Distance Education Programme. As one of the issues of this National Seminar was how education and technology can bring a radical change in the performance of teachers at elementary level in India, ***this paper aims at exploring certain innovations and strategies for its effective implementations of ICTs to contribute substantially in supplementing the face-to-face mode towards achieving the goal of UEE.***

Introduction

One of the objectives of the flagship programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is to achieve the target of Education for All (EFA) and providing quality elementary education to all children of age group of 06-14 years. Providing free and compulsory education to all children is not only a constitutional mandate but also a fundamental right for all children (86th Indian Constitutional Amendment Act). This has certainly given a new direction to all children who are socially and economically disadvantaged, marginalized and are deprived of elementary education as well. For facilitating the education of disadvantage children under zero rejection policy, schemes liked education guarantee schemes (EGS), alternative and innovative education (AIE) centres and home based education programme have been implemented under SSA to facilitate inclusion of the disadvantaged. Inclusion is best determined by needs of individual children. It is essential to overcome exclusion of the socially disadvantaged children through inclusive approach in the field of elementary education. Partnership between parents, society, community and school is very important to achieve this target. With this aspect in mind, mother-teacher association (MTAs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Village Education Committees (VECs) have been formed under SSA with a view to developing perception of community ownership on education of children at elementary level. The scope of the distance education programme and its effective implementation is truly a positive effort for providing access to elementary education to all children with quality input. Effective implementation of ICTs is very important for sustaining the quality of various interventions to eliminate social and economic barrier in the way of achieving the target of Education for All (EFA)

Issues in Hand

In this paper an attempt has been taken to answer the following important issues.

i) What has been the status of education of disadvantaged particularly SCs and STs, OBCs, Muslims and CWSNs under SSA?
ii) What are the main issues in the present context for meeting their needs to retain them in regular schools?
iii) What would be the role of distance education programme to caters to their needs? and
iv) Critical discussion and implications related to improving quality of elementary education through distance education programme?

Overview of Educationally Disadvantaged/Marginalized

Table 1: Enrolment of Children (Million)

S. No	Level	Year	Primary (5-11yrs)	Upper Primary (11-14yrs)	Total (5-14yrs)
1.	India	2004-05	118.29	37.71	156.00
		2005-06	124.61	43.66	168.27
		2006-07	131.85	47.48	179.33
2.	Kerla	2004-05	2.07	0.89	2.96
		2005-06	2.05	1.24	3.29
		2006-07	2.10	1.29	3.39
3.	Orissa	2004-05	4.67	1.13	5.80
		2005-06	4.61	1.22	5.83
		2006-07	3.72	1.20	4.92
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	9.39	3.47	12.86
		2005-06	9.00	3.58	12.58
		2006-07	9.51	3.82	13.33
5.	Bihar	2004-05	10.91	1.93	12.84
		2005-06	11.23	2.16	13.39
		2006-07	12.55	2.56	15.11
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	3.23	0.58	3.81
		2005-06	4.49	0.81	5.30
		2006-07	5.31	1.04	6.35

Table 1 reflects the status of enrolment of children at primary and upper primary level in the States of Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Kerala and at the same time the same status at the national level. It is evident from Table I that at all levels the status of enrolment increased from 2004-05 to 2006-07 both at primary and upper primary level. But it is clearly seen that enrolment at upper primary level is much lower than that at the primary level. In case of Bihar and Jharkhand, the status of enrolment at Upper Primary Level is very poor. This shows that special emphasis needs to be paid to improving quality at elementary level so that the drop-out rate can be reduce and enrolment at upper primary level can be increased. The figures as revealed from Table I are not satisfying at the national level as well. Implementation of the innovative state specific mechanism is essential to tackle the needs of disadvantaged groups at various levels.

Table 2: Enrolment of Girls Children to Total Enrolment (in percent)

S.No	Level	Year	Primary [I-V] (5-11yrs)	Upper Primary [VI-VIII) (11-14yrs)	Total (5-14yrs)
1.	India	2004-05	47.52	45.32	46.42
		2005-06	47.79	45.80	46.79
		2006-07	48.09	46.51	47.30
2.	Kerala	2004-05	49.30	48.37	48.83
		2005-06	49.40	48.25	48.82
		2006-07	49.46	48.25	48.85
3.	Orissa	2004-05	47.98	45.76	46.87
		2005-06	48.17	46.17	47.17
		2006-07	47.64	46.39	47.01
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	49.47	48.40	48.93
		2005-06	49.55	48.97	49.26
		2006-07	49.30	49.56	49.43
5.	Bihar	2004-05	43.79	37.72	40.76
		2005-06	44.36	38.87	41.62
		2006-07	45.89	41.66	43.78
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	46.22	41.98	44.10
		2005-06	47.50	44.08	45.79
		2006-07	58.59	45.24	51.92

Table 2 shows the enrolment status of girls at primary and upper primary level over a period of three years (2004-05 to 2006-07). The enrolment status of girls in the four backward states (Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand) are close to national average. But in case of the state of Kerala the figure is on the higher side, even higher than that of the national average. In the year 2006-07, the enrolment of girls in the state of West Bengal is highest (49.56 per cent) whereas it is least in the state of Bihar (41.66 per cent). It is clearly seen that girls' enrolment is a major aspect for achieving the target of education for all and the universalization of elementary education. But unfortunately the status of girls' enrolment is very poor in all states and needs to be improved.

Table 3: Status of Children with Special Needs (in million)

S.No	Level	Year	% of CWSN covered under SSA	CWSN Identified	Elementary Level (I-VIII)
1.	India	2006-07	71.99	3.03	1.99
2.	Kerala	2006-07	100.00	0.13	0.12
3.	Orissa	2006-07	100.00	0.12	0.11
4.	West Bengal	2006-07	100.00	0.14	0.11
5.	Bihar	2006-07	94.45	0.18	0.15
6.	Jharkahnd	2006-07	77.49	0.03	0.02

On perusal of Table 3, it is noticed that all over the country under SSA though 3.03 million children with special needs have been identified, only 1.99 million have been enrolled at elementary level i.e. 71.99 per cent of CWSNs are covered under the flagship programme of SSA. In order to achieve the millennium development goal of Universalization of Elementary Education, we need to focus more on providing access to all children including CWSNs under special interventions. In case of the state of Bihar and Jharkhand the CWSNs covered under SSA are 99.45 per cent and 77.49 per cent respectively, which is even higher than the national average (71.99 per cent). Education of CWSNs in general and disabled in particular constitutes a major aspect under SSA which needs specific long term interventions for providing quality elementary education to the disabled category.

Table 4: Enrolment of SC and ST Children to Total Enrolment (in percent)

S. No	Level	Year	Total ST Children (I-VIII)	Total SC Children (I-VIII)
1.	India	2004-05	10.19	20.58
		2005-06	9.02	18.64
		2006-07	10.69	19.87
2.	Kerala	2004-05	2.12	12.17
		2005-06	2.06	11.01
		2006-07	2.07	11.45
3.	Orissa	2004-05	23.52	20.18
		2005-06	24.46	20.04
		2006-07	23.13	21.54
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	6.04	26.79
		2005-06	6.15	27.67

		2006-07	6.20	26.70
5.	Bihar	2004-05	1.15	15.87
		2005-06	1.28	15.44
		2006-07	1.69	16.85
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	29.03	13.62
		2005-06	32.67	14.30
		2006-07	30.78	14.60

On the basis of the statistical data presented in Table 4, it is seen that enrolment of ST children over a period of three years (2004-05 to 20006-07) is fluctuating in all states except West Bengal and Bihar. In these two states, though the figures are low but increase steadily over the three years, which is a positive sign with regard to improving status of enrolment of ST children. In Jharkhand and Orissa the enrolment of ST children is lower in the year 2006-07 as compared to the previous year 2005-06. This needs to be taken care of seriously for achieving the target of UEE and UFA. Even at the national level, the figure is very poor and requires special focus to improve the status all over the country.

As far as the enrolment of SC children is concerned, it is much higher than that of the corresponding figure of ST children. The status of enrolment of SC children is highest in the state of West Bengal (26.70 per cent) and least in the state of Kerala (11.45 per cent). At the national level, the enrolment of SC children and ST children are 19.87 per cent and 10.69 per cent respectively of total enrolment stats. Improving the status of this disadvantaged group is a challenge to all functionaries working at elementary level under SSA.

Table 5: Enrolment of OBC Children to Total Enrolment (in percent)

S.No	Level	Year	Primary (I-V)	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	Total (I-VIII)
1.	India	2004-05	40.64	41.87	41.26
		2005-06	41.72	40.82	41.27
		2006-07	42.18	41.23	41.70
2.	Kerala	2004-05	60.72	84.82	72.77
		2005-06	60.29	57.99	59.14
		2006-07	61.36	58.94	60.15
3.	Orissa	2004-05	33.54	36.73	35.13
		2005-06	34.77	38.77	36.77
		2006-07	40.76	46.89	43.83
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	4.04	6.92	5.48
		2005-06	4.51	8.43	6.47

		2006-07	4.54	8.50	6.52
5.	Bihar	2004-05	60.05	54.88	57.46
		2005-06	62.06	58.10	60.08
		2006-07	59.35	58.38	58.86
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	45.86	49.09	47.47
		2005-06	42.32	46.63	44.47
		2006-07	44.16	46.11	45.14

On examination of Table 5, it is concluded that enrolment of OBC constitutes an integral part of total enrolment at primary and upper primary level. In all states, the enrolment of OBC children increases over a period of three years except Jharkhand and Kerala. The figure is more than fifty per cent in Bihar and Kerala and less than 10 per cent in West Bengal. It is visualized that the status of enrolment of OBC children also decreases from primary to upper primary level only in the state of Bihar but in all other cases it is in the increasing trend even at the national level. It is a positive indication with regard to enrolment of OBC and their retention for completion of elementary education.

Table 6: Enrolment of Muslim Children

S.No	Level	Year	Primary (I-V)	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	Total (I-VIII)
1.	India	2006-07	9.39	7.52	8.46
2.	Kerala	2006-07	10.13	9.59	9.86
3.	Orissa	2006-07	7.26	6.48	6.87
4.	West Bengal	2006-07	27.92	19.63	23.76
5.	Bihar	2006-07	8.95	6.60	7.76
6.	Jharkahnd	2006-07	7.29	6.30	7.79

Table 6 gives the status of enrolment of Muslim children at various level of elementary education. In case of West Bengal the figure is highest (19.63 per cent of total enrolment) but in other states even at national level the figure is less than 10 per cent of total enrolment at upper primary level. Similar is the stats of Muslim enrolment at primary level, excepts Kerala (10.13 per cent) and West Bengal (27.12 per cent) the stats of Muslim enrolment is less than 10 per cent). In spite of various efforts, the enrolment status of Muslim has not improved under SSA to the appropriable level. This must be seriously taken care of.

Table 7: Status of average Drop-out and Retention of Children (in per cent)

S.No	Level	Year	Average Drop-out at Primary Level (I-V)	Retention Rate in 2006-07
1.	India	2003-04	10.64	70.26
		2004-05	9.96	
		2005-06	8.61	
2.	Kerala	2003-04	2.30	98.66
		2004-05	1.34	
		2005-06	1.80	
3.	Orissa	2003-04	11.80	71.74
		2004-05	6.95	
		2005-06	21.02	
4.	West Bengal	2003-04	11.78	61.39
		2004-05	11.55	
		2005-06	9.44	
5.	Bihar	2003-04	9.36	44.16
		2004-05	11.36	
		2005-06	9.34	
6.	Jharkhand	2003-04	6.99	71.28
		2004-05	16.98	
		2005-06	8.09	

Table 7 shows the status of average dropouts at primary level and retention rate of children in 2006-07. It is noticed that the average drop-out rate is highest (21.02 per cent) in the state of Orissa in 2006-07 in particular and is least in the state of Kerala (1.80 per cent). The figure at national level was 8.61 per cent in 2006-07 in all other states except Kerala, where the average drop our rate is higher than that of national average. This is a great shock to millennium target goal of UEE and EFA.

At the same time, the retention of children at the primary level is lowest in the state of Bihar (44.16 per cent) against the national average 70.26 per cent. In case of Orissa (71.74 per cent) and Jharkahand (71.28 per cent) the retention rate is higher than national average but not at the satisfactory level in comparison to the stats as revealed from the state of Kerala (98.65).

Rate of retention is the real indicator of the quality of elementary education. Even today the average drop-out rate is nearly 30 per cent which must be checked to improve the qualitative status of elementary education in the country.

Table 8: Status of Teachers

S.No	Level	Year	Elementary Level (I-VIII) in million	% of Female Teacher	% of Trained Teachers
1.	India	2004-05	4.17	39.78	73.06
		2005-06	4.69	40.33	70.78
		2006-07	5.21	41.86	78.21
2.	Kerala	2004-05	0.11	72.08	92.87
		2005-06	0.11	72.31	91.19
		2006-07	0.12	72.54	96.97
3.	Orissa	2004-05	0.15	32.63	83.00
		2005-06	0.16	34.05	77.40
		2006-07	0.15	33.61	89.74
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	0.23	26.61	72.45
		2005-06	0.23	27.73	70.34
		2006-07	0.26	29.78	71.02
5.	Bihar	2004-05	0.16	19.57	56.38
		2005-06	0.20	26.21	47.02
		2006-07	0.23	27.91	62.78
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	0.07	28.24	77.57
		2005-06	0.11	29.29	70.46
		2006-07	0.13	28.41	67.14

It is revealed from Table 8 that there are 5.21 million teachers working at elementary level all over the country. Out of this only 41.86 per cent are teachers. In case of Kerala, 72.54 of teachers working at elementary level are female. But status of female teachers in all other state is lower than that of national average. In Orissa there are 33.61 per cent female teachers whereas in states like West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand the status of female teachers at elementary level is less than 30 per cent as on 2006-07.

Training of teachers working at elementary level is a major constraint on the part of providing quality elementary education. Till date there are 78.21 per cent trained teachers working at elementary level. But in case of Orissa (77.40 per cent), West Bengal (71.02 per cent), Bihar (62.78 per cent) and Jharkhand (67.14 per cent) the number of trained teachers is less than that of national average. In

case of Kerala, it is 96.97 per cent. With regard to achieving the target of SSA, perhaps the secret is that Kerala's appointment of more female teachers (72.54 per cent of total teachers) and percentage of trained teachers (96.97 per cent) which contribute significantly towards retention of children and providing them quality education at elementary level.

Table 9: Status of SC, ST and OBC Teachers (in per cent)

S.No	Level	Year	SC Teachers	ST Teachers	OBC Teachers
1.	India	2006-07	12.20	8.82	32.00
2.	Kerala	2006-07	3.60	3.05	40.53
3.	Orissa	2006-07	11.17	11.14	28.23
4.	West Bengal	2006-07	19.92	4.42	6.48
5.	Bihar	2006-07	13.93	2.71	43.62
6.	Jharkahnd	2006-07	8.96	28.34	38.88

Table 9 reveals the status of SC, ST and OBC teachers at the elementary level. It is noticed that 12.20 percent of total teachers are SC at the national level. The status is highest in West Bengal with 19.72 per cent and least in Kerala with 3.60 per cent. Similar is the status of ST teachers. But the corresponding percent of ST teachers is less than of SC teachers at all levels. All over the country 32.00 per cent of total teachers are OBCs. The status of OBC teachers is highest in the state of Bihar (43.62 per cent) and least in West Bengal (6.48 per cent).

Table 10: Distribution of Teachers who Received In-Service Training

(in percent)

S.No	Level	Year	Elementary Level (I-VIII)
1	India	2004-05	36.11
		2005-06	40.02
		2006-07	31.45
2	Kerala	2004-05	66.11
		2005-06	76.32
		2006-07	59.71
3	Orissa	2004-05	21.71
		2005-06	43.10
		2006-07	52.11

4	West Bengal	2004-05	28.62
		2005-06	33.11
		2006-07	35.62
5.	Bihar	2004-05	39.88
		2005-06	40.37
		2006-07	42.64
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	35.93
		2005-06	37.35
		2006-07	38.08

Table 10 indicates the percent of teachers who received in-service teachers training programme under SSA during 2006-07. In-service training of teachers is important for improving professional competencies of teachers on one hand and improving the quality of elementary education on the other hand. Keeping this in mind, a 29-day teachers training programme is made mandatory for all teachers in an academic session.

Statistics revealed that all over the country only 31.45 per cent of teachers received in-service training during 2006-07. It was highest in the state of Kerala with 5971 per cent and lowest in West Bengal (35.62 per cent). From the National Statistics, it is seen that the percentage of teachers who received in-service training is not consistent over a period of three years, which definitely affects the quality of education at elementary level in our country. Similar is the status in all states except West Bengal and Jharkhand. Special focus must be given in improving the strategies of in-service teacher education programme, for realizing the target of quality elementary education.

Table 11: Status of Para Teachers (in percent)

S.No	Level	Year	Elementary Level (I-VIII)	Trained Para Teachers
1.	India	2004-05	9.05	42.47
		2005-06	10.71	47.83
		2006-07	9.86	44.88
2.	Kerala	2004-05	1.79	90.55
		2005-06	2.15	93.25
		2006-07	2.57	97.89
3.	Orissa	2004-05	7.77	80.03
		2005-06	6.90	76.84
		2006-07	-	65.82
4.	West Bengal	2004-05	1.22	29.17
		2005-06	3.94	19.72
		2006-07	8.78	22.24
5.	Bihar	2004-05	15.01	29.46
		2005-06	33.56	27.98
		2006-07	15.09	51.51
6.	Jharkhand	2004-05	14.19	46.03
		2005-06	22.44	42.33
		2006-07	38.67	36.19

Table 11 indicates the detail status of para teachers. 9.86 per cent of total teachers are para teachers all over the country, out of which only 44.88 per cent are trained. This is definitely a great setback in realizing the target of SSA in a meaningful way. The status of para-teachers is highest in the state of Jharkhand (38.67 per cent) and least in Kerala (2.57 per cent). It is to be noted that in Jharkhand out of the total number of para teachers deployed, only 36.19 per cent are trained. At the same time, in West Bengal though the status of para teachers is 8.78 per cent, only 22.24 per cent of them are trained. But it is a good indication from the state of Kerala that there are not only few para teachers (2.15 per cent) at the same time 93.25 per cent of them are trained teachers.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) System

The prime goal of Education for all (EFA) is to provide elementary education to the large target group of those who are deprived of the benefits of elementary education. It is essential to work hard for mainstreaming them in the social process so that they can contribute effectively towards the cause of social development. It is believed that we need to supplement the traditional system of elementary education with some innovative and flexible strategies which is capable of providing quality education to children as per their needs and demands. At the same time this system is proved to be cost effective and of high quality. The potential and capabilities of distance education programmes through open distance learning (ODL) system can contribute substantially towards realizing the flagship goal of EFA. The system of ODL is capable of handling a variety of target groups of learners in one hand and teachers on the other hand to meet their multi dimensional requirements from time to time, in providing quality in-service training recurrently for developing competencies of all SSA functionaries all over the country.

Distance Education has to play an important role with the effective implementation of ICTs for training the human resources to support the growth and development of elementary education in general and improve the quality of education in particular. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai has rightly said that "We are to play a meaningful role not only", and in the community of nations, we must, second to none in the application of advanced technologies to the real problem of man and society" Satellite communication which is an important aspect in the field of ODL system aims at providing access to quality education at all levels including education at elementary level. The Open Distance Learning system is capable of accommodating advanced technology to improve quality of teaching learning process all over the globe. In this regard, ISRO successfully designed, developed and launched a dedicated satellite "EduSat" on September 20, 2004, which is believed to support us achieving our constitutional mandate of Education for All. In the light of this remarkable achievement, former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam pointed out "democratization of knowledge indicates knowledge for anyone, anytime, any place. EduSat will be extremely helpful in making this shift possible and decreasing the digital divides". These capabilities are quite important for the ODL system to reach the unreached over the length and breadth of our country with quality inputs.

Emergence of ODL system in the field of elementary education can definitely bring a revolution in the achievement of national goals. Being a dynamic system,

it is able to address the needs of the large target group deprived of education like those of the KBR district in Orissa. The concern of the Distance Education Programme (DEP) under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims at meeting the needs and requirements of functionaries of DIETs, SCERTs, SIEMATs and SPOs with a view to improve their professional competencies. It is a major intervention under SSA, which focuses on strengthening training of in-service teachers through distance learning. The programme through distance education provides inputs and materials for the training and capacity building of functionaries working at elementary level in curricular, contextual and pedagogical areas. New dimensions of ICTs like teleconferencing, Audio Conferencing, EduSat and mobile cell are able to expand access and improve quality of interventions, for realizing the desired target.

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) is an autonomous organization under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India which caters to the educational needs of out-of-school children in general, drop-outs from formal schools, socially and economically marginalized part of our population in particular. It has more concerned with the occupational need and life skill needs of learners at secondary and higher secondary stage. At the same time, it has made an attempt to reach the socially and geographically disadvantaged groups through suitable learning materials and excellent delivery mechanism. In this way, it contributes significantly towards the target of UEE with an implementation of new technologies to improve teaching learning process, increasing access and ensuring quality.

Critical Discussion

Even today in rural areas like KBK districts, there is acute shortage of certain basic facilities like housing, drinking water, roads and education. We know that education has not been considered as priority in the competing claims, as it stood at 16 in 20 point programmes. Three fourths of total primary schools are in rural villages, so village children must get priority to acquire the right type of education. There should be a separate plan, programmes, technology and mechanism for its implementation to achieve the ultimate objective of empowerment of rural people. Simply transfer of plans, programs, strategies and technology etc from urban to rural areas will not serve the purpose. But to achieve the real target, there should be separate and unique strategies/mechanism and technology for rural and village people.

Poverty, illiteracy and low educational achievement are common in the state of Orissa in general and its KBK districts in particular where a large percentage of

people resides in rural areas. For realizing the success of various schemes and programmes, it is quite imperative to develop awareness on the importance of improving the conditions of their existence. Hence, the need of knowledge through basic education and self awareness, for deriving optimum benefits from schools implemented by govt. and non-govt organizations. The need of specific educational packages for the rural to achieve the goal of UEE cannot be ruled out. In the globalized world, this challenge needs to be addressed seriously with optimum priority for the social developmental and reconstruction. It is essential not only for the economic well being of rural people and communities but also for national development.

Another challenging aspect for UEE is the education of girls where the legal framework around elementary education is very weak and puts girls at a disadvantage. Early marriage and pregnancy are widespread in rural and under-developed areas of KBK districts. This prohibits girls from attending school or coming back to school after birth of their child. At the same time, issues related to safety and security in and around school affect girls in rural areas. Parents hesitate to allow their daughters to attend schools because the risk to their personal safety. Lack of female teachers creates a lot of hindrance in this regard as well. So they feel less secure in the school environment. This perhaps is responsible for the dropouts among girls particularly at the upper primary level, which leads to gender disparity in elementary education. Even today the attitude regarding education of girls is not positive among rural people. Their social environment makes them feel that education is meaningless for girls. Parents feel that it is fruitful for girls to stay at home and help in their parental earnings and managing siblings. They are more concerned with their immediate economic gains rather than future prospects. Most of the parents are of the opinion that teachers are not performing their duties with responsibility. They often remain absent from schools. Hence, they prefer to engage their children in household activities for their economic benefit. Reluctance of parents, participation of girls in domestic activities and financial constraints of parents are some of the major causes leads to girls dropping out. Importance need to be given to effective implementation of extensive education programmes in all the three KBK districts particularly the use of various technology. Attitudinal change on the part of rural people is essential for deriving optimum benefit from technologies. It can change their lifestyle and uplift standard of living, which can consequently help in developing awareness of the need of education as well.

It is high time that a start be made to eliminate all forms of child labour to save the greater part of humanity, to tackle the problem of education for all. It is essential to shape attitudes and morality of parents, family and society at large.

Teachers working in rural areas, need specific training programmes to improve their competencies to deal with children in such areas. At the same time incentive package may be provided. It is also essential to ensure that the subject taught is relevant to the needs of rural people. Availability of relevant teaching-learning materials and promotion of community involvement are essential to fulfill educational needs.

As per the estimate of the Working Groups' Report on Elementary Adult Education, there is a requirement of 10.66 lakhs additional teachers in elementary stage education and 9.98 lakhs classrooms in the country. With the implementation of various innovative measures under SSA like involvement of local community in construction, creating a child friendly school environment and developing a sense of ownership in civil work etc access is not a major problem at the present time. But still a lot needs to be improved with regard to providing need-based quality education to girls, SC/STs and other minorities who are living in socially marginalized parts of rural India.

The most important aspect related to quality elementary education is that resource persons, trainers, master trainers working at Block, district, and state level are not adequately trained. There is no specific training/orientation for the administrators and implementers. Even at the national level, people from diverse backgrounds without requisite academic and professional qualifications have placed themselves at positions of national importance, and there is lack of resources for providing training and orientation to lower level functionaries. This is definitively disheartening with regard to professional improvement and competencies of lower level personnel under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and a great deterrent to provide quality elementary education and sustaining quality at elementary level all over the country.

Conclusion

Inspite of various efforts, policies, programmes and interventions, more than crore of rural children are out of school and still many children are on the list of drop-out i.e. out of the system of elementary education at different levels. Most of the out-of-the school children are from village schools, which are mostly socially and economically marginalized. Initiatives like Education Guarantee Scheme (EGSs) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIEs) Centres have been taken to bring them back to schools. But what is challenging is effective implementation. There is lack of sincerity and dedication in implementing the programme for wider benefit on one hand and lack of coordination for execution of programme from top to grass root level on the other hand. We live in a global village, where new forms of technology are emerging for the uptlift of socially, economically and educationally marginalized part of our society. What we need today is a strong belief and commitment to achieve the target for realizing the national goals, with its effective implementation.

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ATTENDANCE OF MUSLIM CHILDREN AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL - A STUDY

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Abstract

The present case study entitled, "Causes of Irregular Attendance of Muslim Children at the Primary Level" was conducted in the district of Mayurbhanj, Orissa. The objectives of the study are: ***1.*** *To find out the causes of irregular attendance of Muslim children at Kalikapur Urdu primary school.* ***2.*** *To suggest remedial measures to enhance their regularity in attendance. One Urdu primary school of Baripada municipality was purposively selected for study. Two teachers, one of them is Urdu teacher, 20 students and 10 parents of irregular children were brought under study. They were interacted with through interviews and focused group discussion. The findings of the study are- i) 16(80%) students faced difficulties in acquiring competencies and lack of parental support. ii) 2(100%) teachers opined parents' illiteracy, non-involvement and lack of required support from SSA for teachers and students. iii) 6(60%) parents have no trust over the quality of teaching learning process carried out in the school. iv) School climate and supply of textbooks, reading/writing materials also influence the learners regularity adversely. v) Parents' poor financial status also influences the learners' regularity as they are engaged to earn many days in a week. vi) Non functionality of Urdu teachers influences the learners' irregularity. vii) Non-inclusion of Muslim women proportionately in the VEC affects learners' regularity.*

Introduction

After sixty years of independence, the concept of universalisation of primary education is far from reality. Even if it is the constitutional obligation to provide quality education to all the children irrespective of caste, creed, sex and religion through universal access, enrolment and retention of the children, we are yet to achieve this. From time to time, various projects like DPEP and SSA are being undertaken, considering the grassroot realities for Planning, Execution and Evaluation of the projects. Quality Education is the primary concern of SSA of Orissa which is one of the backwards and poor States of India. Most of the districts of the state are dominated by tribal and minority communities. Mayurbhanj is one of the backward tribal districts of the state wherein most of urban pockets, Muslim communities are playing a predominant role for the success and failure of SSA in the district of Mayurbhanj.

Learning of the child has direct linkage with his regular attendance at the school basically at the primary level. Regular attendance of the child not only enthuses him to learn but also forms a habit of continuous and sustained learning. But it is found in most of the Urdu primary schools of Mayurbhanj where there is dominance of children of Muslim community, the regularity of attendance is very poor. If the learners' irregularity continues then they become desperate and disinterested in coming to school on the next day. That is why learners' regularity should be strengthened to achieve success in quality education resulting in the success of SSA of Mayurbhanj, Orissa.

Rationale of the Study

In spite of continuous effort made under SSA in the district of Mayurbhanj, Orissa for quality education, learners' irregularity is a question mark in most of the Urdu Primary schools of Baripada municipality. Again, the achievement of the Muslim children is becoming poorer day-by-day. As a result, children are becoming disinterested in attending school. Hence both parents and teachers are blaming each other for the irregularity and non-achievement of the Muslim children. In most of the observed situations during survey and monitoring, attendance was seen to be very poor in Kalikapur Urdu primary school. Teachers and parents have been interacted with informally, to identify the causes and solution of the problem.

Hence the researcher felt the need to find out the causes of irregular attendance of the Muslim children of Kalikapur Urdu Primary School and suggest a strategy to combat the causes and to enhance the attendance of Muslim children.

Background of the School

The Kalikapur Urdu Primary School was set up on 11th November in 1987. Since 1987, the School with five classes is continuing in one room where the office, store and classes are running. The present status of the school is that there are 87 children in all 5 classes and three teachers, one is male and other two are female teachers. Adjacent to this school there is a Madrasa Primary School, which is also covered under SSA Mayurbhanj. The Madrasa School is the owner of the property where the Urdu Primary School, having all classes in one room is running. The environment is not so conducive for Urdu Primary School as Madrasa School having different vision is running in the same closed compound.

Objectives

1. To find out the causes of irregular attendance of Muslim children at Kalikapur Urdu primary school.
2. To suggest remedial measures to enhance their regularity in attendance.

Sample

1. 20 students of class IV and V children.
2. 10 parents of irregular children.
3. 2 teachers of one school.

Delimitation

The study limits to kalikapur Urdu primary school in Municipality of Baripada, Mayurbhanj district, Orissa.

Tools

1. Interview schedule for parents to collect their views regarding causes of irregular attendance of their children and give opinion to enhance their regularity. This tool is based on

    - Learners' achievement.
    - School environment.
    - Attitude of parents towards education of their children.

2. Interview schedule for teachers to collect their views regarding causes of irregular attendance and opinion to enhance their regularity.

This tool is based on a study of

- **School environment :** Building, Class-rooms, Water facility, Latrine, and Playground

- **Home environment of the child :** Financial support, and Educational background

- **Child's Interest:** Language problem, Social problems of adjusting with others

- **Self problem :** Support from community, Support from SSA, Support from monitoring agent, and Support form Administrative agency

- **Role of Urdu Teacher:** Enrolment, Students' regularity, and Language Problems

3. Interview schedule for the students to collect information and opinion for the solution.
   This tool is based on: **At home -** Parental support and Home climat

   At School - Classroom learning climate and School Environmental problem

Procedure

Data were collected directly by the researcher through the interview schedules meant for the teachers, parents and students. The attendance records of the school for class IV and V were verified and students having less then 60% attendance were selected. Accordingly the irregular students' parents were interacted with to ascertain the causes and seek solutions of irregularity of their children to school. Out of three teachers, of the school, two teachers were brought under study and interacted with for solutions. One of them is the Urdu teacher The irregular students of class – IV and V, all Muslim children were interacted with individually and in a group to know the causes of irregularity and possible solutions. Parents were interacted with to know the causes of their children's irregularity (both directly and indirectly) by asking about the irregular children of their neighbors. Students were also interviewed and asked the causes of their friends' irregularity to school. To verify the achievement level of the students' oral questions on mathematics and language based on simple multiplication and division principles and simple grammar on language questions were asked.

Table 1 : Unit Test Records

Subject / Class	No. of students scored less than 40%		More than 40%	
	Language	Mathematics	Lang.	Math
Class-IV	80%	76%	20%	24%
Class-V	79%	78%	21%	22%

It is seen from the table that more than 80% are poor performer both in mathematics and language so far as their unit test result is concerned.

Table-2: Result of Oral Test

	No. of Students Responded Correctly			
	Class-IV		Class-V	
	Languages	Math	Lang.	Math
Multiplication table	20%	10%	20%	10%
Language oral question	10%	20%	10%	20%

It is seen from the table that very poor % of students responded correctly.

Table-3: Indicators (causes)

Indicators	Teachers	Students	Parents
Parental support	100%	80%	30%
Class-room process not effective	50%	60%	100%
Parents illiteracy and non-involvement	100%	80%	30%
School climate and role of VEC (Participation of Muslim women)	100%	100%	80%
Learners are playing on the ground in the name of school going	100%	60%	30%
Urdu Teacher is not functioning effectively	50%	70%	80%

It is seen from the table that School climate, teaching learning process, parental support, role of VEC and the role of Urdu Teachers are not attractive for learners' regularity..

Table-4: Indicators (Solution)

	Teachers	Parents	Students
School monitoring	100%	100%	80%
School building	100%	100%	100%
Support to the poor students	100%	100%	80%
Effective teaching learning process	50%	100%	80%
Supply of textbook/grants in time	100%	100%	80%
Supply of reading writing materials	100%	100%	80%
Water and sanitation facility	100%	100%	100%
Women from Muslim Community from VEC with priority	100%	80%	80%
Urdu Teacher should act as teacher and promoter of learners regularity	50%	100%	80%

It is seen that parents are interested for good teaching learning process resulting in children achievements. School building and environment along with the support from the SSA to teachers and students are highly essential to ensure the regular attendance of the children.

Findings and Conclusion

16 (80%) students faced difficulties in acquiring competencies and lack of parental support. 2 (100%) teachers opined that parents' illiteracy, non-involvement and lack of required support from SSA for teachers and students were causes. 6(60%) parents have no trust in the quality of the teaching learning process carried out in the school. School climate and supply of textbooks, reading/writing materials also influence the learners' regularity adversely. Parents' poor financial status also influences the learners' regularity as they are engaged to earn many days in a week. Non functionality of Urdu teacher influences the learners irregularity. Non-inclusion of Muslim women proportionately in the VEC effecting learners regularity. The school should be monitored by the functionaries of SSA to provide on site academic support to the teachers. Free textbook and reading writing materials should be supplied to the children coming from poor families. School bulling and climate along with water and sanitation facilities should be ensured on priority basis.Remedial classes

should be taken for those whose pace of learning is slow. Daily learning of the children should be consolidated at the end of half-day sessions or at the end of the day. Regular PTA/MTA meeting are required urgently with concurrence of SSA. Urdu teachers should be specially trained to interact with parents and community and motivate the learners to be regular. More Muslim women should be included in the functioning of school committee

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EMERGING ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY IN PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION

Amrita Maheshwari*

Abstract

Education is a powerful instrument of social change, and often initiates upward movement in the social structure. Thereby, helping to bridge the gap between the different sections of society According to the International Standard classification of Education (ISCED-97) (UNESCO, 1997), the term Special Educational Needs (SEN) means educational intervention and support designed to address SEN. The term "SEN" has come into use as a replacement for the term "Special Education."On the whole, the focus has remained on learners with specific disabilities. The Education of children with Special Needs never received such amount of consideration and special efforts by Government and Non-Government agencies in past as in present days. The attitude of the Community in general and Parents in particular towards the Education of disabled has undergone change with the development of society and civilization. Nowhere is the impact of a child who is Special felt more that in the family of which he is a part. The birth of an infant with disabilities may alter the family as a social unit in a variety of ways. Family and the society at large react with shock, disappointment, guilt, anger and even depression, further debilitating the individual by making him feel unwanted and uncared for the family being the most important institution in one's life can help provide him with an emotional insulation-a buffer to safeguard his self concept and enable him to realize his potential. Parents of children with Special Needs worry about the capacity of childcare programmes to adequately meet their child's special needs. Parents have demonstrated that they can function effectively in a number of roles that have been traditionally reserved for the professionals such as educational decision-maker, advocate, teacher, case manager, and programme evaluator. Education of Children with Special Needs is a very big challenge and the need of the hour, and for this optimum utilization of families resources can be made by providing them whole hearted support, encouragement and systematic training on scientific lines as they are the most vital and potential human resources for educating children with disabilities.

This paper analyze the gravity of the problem of Education of Children With Special Needs, wherein an attempt is made to examine issues related to role of parents and ways of empowering them. It also takes a broad overview of the salient features of family support system; community partnership and challenges faced by community and parents, interventions to special children, educational

approaches for these family and objectives of national family network in Indian context

Introduction

Every society consists of children with special educational needs, such as, socially deprived (S.C, S.T., girl child), Visually Impaired (V.I.), Hearing Impaired (H.I.), Mentally Retarded (M.R.), Orthopedically Handicapped (O.H.), Cerebral Palsy (C.P.) and Multiple Disabilities. According to the Planning Commission, Govt. of India (2001), there are 44.1 million children with disabilities among which ten percent children are in the age group of 6-14 years. It means 44.1 million children with special needs, need special educational services. Only 14.1 million, i.e., 32% of 44.1 million have access to some form of educational services. This reveals that 30 million (approx 68%) children with special needs have no access to educational services.

Education is a powerful instrument of social change, and often initiates upward movement in the social structure, thereby, helping to bridge the gap between the different sections of society. Literacy is an essential aspect of human dignity and a window of apprehension and comprehension. No economic measure can restore the dignity of a person, if he is illiterate. Education empowers a person to face the challenges of life and thus it liberates him. About 80 percent disabled children in the world are living in developing countries with scarce resources. Despite such large numbers, the disabled children are one of the most neglected and mistreated groups of children in almost every society. Very few receive good health care and education, and less that two per cent of disabled children in developing countries receive special services of any kind. Children with disabilities are often marginalized within the Indian education system, or, indeed sometimes excluded from it. As a result, there has been a perennial problem of dropouts in India ever since its independence. According to the Census of India (2001), there are 2.19 crore persons with disabilities in India who constitute 2.13 percent of the total population. In the Indian context, achieving education for all is not promising considering all the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental aspects.

Children with Special Educational Needs (CWSEN) and the Family

Though parents are the key to the future of their children, yet the same disability that impairs the functioning of a child may drain the whole family, creating stresses that wear down strengths and resources of families of children with special needs during the course of raising their children. Apart from bearing the trauma and coping with the initial crisis that may ensure immediately after the

birth of a child with a disability, families may also experience stresses in respect of the following: (a) learning to implement specialized care routines; (b) meeting appointments with doctors for frequent consultations; (c) spending lots of time, money and energy to obtain appropriate services; (d) being excluded by professionals from participating in decisions about their child; (e) having almost no time to devote to their other children, to their spouses, or to meet their own needs. One parent narrated his experiences as follows:

"All I wanted was a baby and now I

Have got doctors' appointments,

Therapy appointments, surgeries,

Medical bills, a strained marriage,

No more free time… When you

Have a handicapped child, you have to

Adjust to a whole new way of life.

It's a double whammy".

New parents of a special child are often temporarily plunged into a frightening, unknown world. For many, the first contact with other families is a turning point. It is a source of comfort and strength to know that they do not have to blame themselves, there are other people who have the same experiences with a bewildering new world of professionals, service providers, assessments, etc.

Family Reactions and Intervention to CWSEN

Nowhere is the impact of child who is exceptional felt more that in the family of which he is a part. The birth of an infant with disabilities may alter the family as a social unit in a variety of ways. Family and the society at large react with shock, disappointment, guilt, anger and even depression, further debilitating the individual by making him feel unwanted and uncared for. Family being the most important institution in one's life can help provide him with an emotional insulation-a buffer to safeguard his self concept and enable him to reach above, realize his potential and touch the stars as it were

INTERVENTIONS

Shock, disbelief and denial ↓ Anger and resentment ↓ Bargaining ↓ Depression and discouragement ↓ Acceptance	Empathic understanding +active listening ↓ Open communication ↓ Positive parent – child relationship ↓ Honest acceptance ↓ Encourage comfort from other parents ↓ Awareness at a societal level

Table: Possible Interventions and Potential Family Reactions to Special Children
Interventions in the social support system of an SEN individual aim to provide a network with professionals who train them, enhance the care giving capacity of the family, bring about attitude reconstruction of the extended family, concerned neighbours and friends, deal effectively with the stresses of having an exceptional individual in the family and develop a support network with better quality of life for all family members**.**

Educational Approaches for Families of CWSEN

Current family intervention practitioners advocate a family-focused or family-centered approach in which the professionals work for families, helping them to obtain nonprofessional (friends and families) as well as general sources of support. Two educational approaches for families to consider are:

Family systems approach

This model suggests that the disability as well as the impact of the family on the individual are determined by the complex interaction between factors such as the type of problem, severity of the problem faced, socio-economic and educational status of the family, emotional stability of the family, psychological hardiness and cohesiveness of the family and which determine how the family deals with disability.

The social support systems approach

It stresses the importance of broader societal influence on family functioning. It emphasizes the role of informal sources of social support like extended family, religious groups, friends and neighbors upon family dynamics.A particularly effective social support is that of parent support groups - groups made up of parents who have children with similar special needs Today, the Internet has also grown into an excellent resource for parents as well. A social systems program is built on the assumption that it's better to enable families to help themselves than to provide only direct services to them. Yet, another approach to dealing with special child in the family is the IFSP or the **individualized family service plan** – a plan for services for young children with disabilities under three years of age and their families drawn up conjointly by professionals and parents. It is similar to an Individualized Educational plan (IEP) for older children.

Community Partnership and Families

Families are a valuable resource to each other and to the community as a whole. Individuals with disabilities are a part of the community and as a part of the community have valuable gifts and contributions to make. All people with disabilities have fundamental rights, which are protected by the Disability Act, 1995 of the Government of India, and we have a normal obligation to ensure that these rights are exercised. People affected by policies should have a major say in the development of those policies.

Families should be accorded status. Families are the first and foremost providers for the child. Parents have the right to receive information that will assist them in solving their problems. They are the first and foremost decision makers on behalf of the child. Therefore, to best meet the interests of the child, a partnership needs to be formed between families and professionals. Families have a right to full information about their child and any choices that are posed. Help, support and training should be available to facilitate their decision-making and to enable them to enter a full partnership with the professionals. The professionals need to be trained to take on the role of facilitator, supporter and mediator in their work with the parents. Families should be encouraged to take an active part in the development of policy and the building of services. The families are a fundamental source of strength and energy in advocating for change towards more inclusive communities. Who fights harder for change than a mother who sees her child's years slipping away without opportunities? The urgent need to provide a good start in their child's life is the fuel that drives parents. There has been a dramatic shift in the last three decades with regard to parent involvement in

programmes for the children with intellectual disabilities. This viewpoint led to an important recognition of parental rights and a positive step towards increasing the standpoint of parents' needs but also from the standpoint of professionals' responsibilities.

Parents have demonstrated that they can function effectively in a number of roles that have been traditionally reserved for the professionals such as educational decision-maker, advocate, teacher, case manager, and programme evaluator. Several other researchers reviewed research pertaining to parent involvement in programmes for the children with handicaps. Traditional and 'new' roles for parents in decision-making, advocacy, case management, structured teaching, and programme evaluation were presented. The pros and cons of increasing parent involvement in each of those areas were discussed. They stated that the pitfalls of parent 'professionalization' must be recognized and that the nature and degree of the parent's involvement must occur as the result of the parent's initiative and not merely to relieve professional responsibilities. Once the professionals commit themselves to provide family support services, their concern often translates into the following questions: (a) What types and amounts of family-related services should be offered, (b) How should family-related services be administered?

How does one go about empowering and meeting their needs? The first step is to develop service models on the assumptions that families are potentially capable of making responsible decisions; that families want the best for their children; and that most family members want sufficient opportunities to acquire needed competencies. Since India has inadequate special educational facilities, training of parents to educate the mentally retarded at home can be considered as an alternative. The formation of self-help groups of parents of mentally retarded children is the need of the hour to solve the problems even in the remote areas. It has been universally accepted that parental involvement is essential in education, training and management of mentally retarded children of all ages. To encourage parental involvement, group parent training programmes need to be conducted on regular basis throughout the country. We are hopeful that parent-training programmes would go a long way, especially in rural India, where there is an acute shortage of human and financial resource Parents revealed that they needed information oriented education. Information oriented education is the most important to make people *'information conscious'* which will lead to rapid economic development.

Parents further revealed that such parent training programmes help in enhancing child's development, reducing stress in the family, increasing family coping and also leads to improving relationship within the family. The observance of

International Days, International Years and International Decades for the cause of the disabled played a very vital role in human resource development by the governmental and non-governmental organizations in India, but we have yet to go a long way ahead as the efforts made so far may be just a drop in the ocean.

Family Support System

Most family support is still provided through informal, personal systems made up of relatives, friends, neighbours, and acquaintances from community organizations. Such natural support systems may provide emotional help, information services, guidance, and some other assistance, but may be insufficient to help a family overburdened with care demands, or where the child with disabilities has extraordinary habilitative or health related needs. In some families, the natural support networks may be very weak and limited. In India also, the family linkages and support services are gradually becoming weaker due to fast industrialization, migration of families to urban sector from their native villages, and emergence of nuclear families. Many Indian families are unable to cope with heavy responsibilities of bringing up a child with mental retardation without adequate support from governmental and nongovernmental agencies. In the western countries, many family support programmes, viz. case management, respite care, parent education, home adaptations, special equipment, transportation, etc. exist. Other services often defined as family support services include information and referral, parent/family counseling and peer support groups, homemaker services attendant care, chore services, in-home nursing services, cash assistance, etc.

Goals of Family Support System

- Enhancing the care giving capacity of the family
- Giving parents and other family members respite from the demands of caring for the individual with a disability
- Assisting the family with persistent financial demands related to the individuals disability
- Providing valuable training to families concerned, neighbors and friends
- Improving the quality of life for all members of the family

National Family Network

During the International Year of the Family (1994) the National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad had brought out an important publication

entitled Directory of Parent Associations for the Welfare of the Mentality Retarded Persons in India. This compilation attempts to document information of 43 registered Parent Organizations. These organizations are now gradually gaining strength and are becoming more knowledgeable and vocal with regard to the needs of children with mental retardation and their families. Families of the children with mental retardation deserve an information system that provides information services to them; a system that meets with their individual and unique needs; a system that that is comprehensive and well-coordinated; a system that recognizes the financial strain that many low income families experience in caring for the children with mental retardation at home and that provides ways to ease this strain; and a system that supports the mentally retarded children to lead a dignified life and protects their human rights. More and more parent organizations need to be established throughout India and these groups of mothers, fathers and siblings of family members with a disability from all states, union territories and districts should launch a National Family Network with the following objectives:

1. To establish a Family Network in each state and district
2. To make the Network work as a team-My cause becomes our cause
3. To guide parents on how to guide what they need
4. To build awareness and confidence among families
5. To educate the pubic about the functions of National Family Network
6. To provide a safety net of mutual support for families in every state and district
7. To raise the profile of Network as a source of mutual support
8. To end the isolation of families by providing linkages with the Network
9. To provide a dignified life to children with mental retardation in their families and community
10. To celebrate family life through sharing of accomplishments and experiences
11. To provide a forum for families to develop and influence policies that affect them
12. To connect families around issues of common concern

Conclusion

Education of Children with Special Needs is a very big challenge and the need of the hour and the requirement is provision of support for and optimum utilization of families. This can be done by providing them whole-hearted support, encouragement and systematic training on scientific lines as they are the most vital and potential human resources for educating children with disabilities. The role of the family, as it tries to deal with the exceptionality of a child is of

immense importance. The attitude of the family determines whether exceptionality is seen as stressful and humiliating, or a potential to be realized or a challenge to be overcome. As is rightly said – "It's All in the Mind that Matters".

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EMPOWERING THE VEC: A STEP TOWARDS QUALITY ELEMENTARY EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

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Abstract

SSA is a holistic and convergent programme targeting Quality Elementary Education in all the districts of the country. It is an opportunity for promoting social justice through basic education. One of the important goals of SSA is to bridge all social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010. To achieve this stupendous task, SSA reiterates the community ownership in all the school activities.Quality education at elementary level is still a mirage. The situation of the disadvantaged groups like SC, ST, CWSN, minorities is on the backfoot in comparison to others. Education has successfully served as a key instrument of change and emancipation for the SCs and STs. It has brought them self respect and socio-economic advance, raised political consciousness and empowered their identity struggles. However, educational disparities between the SCs and STs and the rest of the population, in terms of quantity, quality and learning outcome have been far from eliminated. The inequalities reflect the fact theirs has scarcely been an equal integration into dominant societies. Rather, in a society characterized by growing polarization, their inclusion has been governed by relation and process of exploitation, discrimination and oppression. Enrolment, retention, attainment and participation of such category of children are at an alarming low stage, which implies the non-attainment SSA goals. Though various factors contribute to these long standing problems, the non- participation of the local community in the education process makes the situation more cloudy and complicated. Participation of the community in their educational activities can bridge the gap and helps in mainstreaming the disadvantaged group children.

Need and Relevance of the Study

Community plays a significant role in the field of education, socializing the new generation. It also make a direct contribution to the child's style of living, development of ability, gives definite direction to the child's attitude, interests and aspiration. In case community is motivated for performing these functions, it would be an ideal partner for managing useful and relevant quality education leading to better quality of life.For achieving the objectives of SSA through involvement of the community in management of the school system, the urgent requirement is of equipping communities with knowledge and skill required for managing schools and making them *schools of the community, by the community and for the community.*

Orissa has a 15% population belonging to the SC and 22% of population to the ST category. The community is not so educated and empowered to take care of their schools and participate in school management activities, which is one of the important factor obstructing quality education for the disadvantaged group. It is time to empower the community members in general and the VEC in particular, so that they can collaboratively and actively participate in the school activities.

Objectives

To find out the perception the VEC members towards quality education and functioning of elementary school of their locality

- To empower the VEC members for planning and implementing different activities regarding imparting quality education for the disadvantaged children
- To identify an out effective training strategy for the capacity building of the VEC Presidents

Sample

- Thirty (30) VEC presidents of Chhatrapur block of Ganjam district of Orissa.
- The schools were selected on the basis of having majority SC dominated habitations/population.

Tools

Opinionnaire for VEC presidents – The tool consists of items on

1. Whether they are happy as VEC Presidents
2. Three major problems of the school in achieving UEE
3. Problems faced by SC children in quality education

Procedure

The 30 VEC presidents of the SC dominated village primary schools were oriented for two days on the functioning of their village schools and education of the disadvantaged group children.

Discussion points / activities undertaken in the training programme

DAY:1	**DAY:2**
• Introduction and objectives of the programme	• Visit to a model primary school to observe the steps taken towards education of the

	disadvantaged children (Tareipatpur Prim.school)
• Filling up of the opinionnaire by the VEC presidents (individual work)	• Filling up the checklist by the VEC members (individual work)
• Major problems faced by the schools (individual work)	• Problems of the disadvantaged children in their education and probable solutions (group work)
• Causes of satisfaction/dissatisfaction level : working as VEC president (individual work)	• Role of the VEC presidents in quality elementary education of the disadvantaged children (Individual Work)
• Knowing one's strengths	• Consolidation
• Concept of a good school (group work) • Preparation of check list • Discussion with the VEC Presidents individually	

Results and Discussion

Out of the thirty (30) VEC Presidents, ten (33.3%) belong to SC category while 20 (66.6%) are of general / OBC category.

The discussion leads to the satisfaction level of VEC president towards their work.

Satisfied with own work	*Partially satisfied*	*Not satisfied*
24 (80%)	6 (20%)	-

Causes of satisfaction of VEC presidents towards their work

Causes	Frequency
Utilizing plenty of leisure time	10
It is a noble job	12
Teacher are co-operative	0 6
Took the profession as challenge	08
Village people has trust on me	24
Positive attitude towards development of education of the locality	21
Impressed by the rapid growth of the school	16
Scope for interacting with other VEC members	07
Working as President being a member of deprived group	02
Scope to work for the cause of education	14

Perception of the VEC presidents regarding the problems in achieving quality education for SC children

S. No.	Causes	No. of VEC Presidents responded
1.	Irregularity in attending class	10
2.	Parents not taking care of education	14
3.	More children – less teachers in school	20
4.	Irregular teacher attendance	12
5.	No UP schools to continue study after Class V	6
6.	No vocational activities in school	4
7.	Unattractive school environment	4
8.	Teachers not engaged teaching activity	16

From the above table, it is seen that a) less numbers of teachers in the schools (as most of the schools are single teacher and two teacher schools) b) teachers not engaged in teaching activity and parents not taking care of education of the children are three major problems in achieving quality education for the disadvantaged children.

Concept of good school for the quality education of SC children

	Good school	• Regular meeting with parents

		• Maximum students secured 50% or more marks • Neat and clean environment • Active School community relationship • Teachers coming and leaving school in time. • Teacher utilizes school hour purposefully • Availability of toys and materials • TPR is according to norm • Free Uniforms • Children coming to school regularly • Text book and notes with every child. • More tests apart form Half yearly and annual exam.

Suggestions and Implications

The meeting of VEC members may be held after school hours so that the teaching activities will not be hampered. Self esteem of SC children should not be hampered. No discrimination against children on the basis of caste / class / ability in all the school activities. VEC members will attend the schools on rotation basis for regular monitoring of school activities. Teachers will inform the VEC members about the name of the irregular SC children.Teachers will come to school in time and utilize his / her school hours effectively in teaching learning activities and leave the school in time.Number of holidays in the school may be

reduced as it creates a gap for continuing education.Immediate steps may be taken for providing teachers to the school. In absence of teacher, the VEC members will engage children in different learning activities.Teachers should not be engaged in any other activities apart from teaching

Role of VEC Presidents in Imparting Quality Education

- The president should inform other members of the VEC regarding his visit to any professional work place and should share the ideas after his visit
- The members of the VEC will finalise the quality parameters for their school and work jointly with teachers and pupils to achieve the standards
- VEC members will motivate the parents particularly mothers for regular attendance of the children
- The VEC president may visit good schools from time to time and have discussions with school functionaries. All the issues will be shared with teachers and VEC members.
- The VEC President along with the Headmaster will meet the SC category community leaders and educated persons to discuss the problems of the children and their education.

There is an urgent need to empower the community in general and VEC in particular for effective school management. Monthly meeting of the VEC members may be organized in true spirit. The meetings may be held preferably after school hour

enabling the Sc members to attend the meeting (as most of them are daily wagers). Effective capacity building activities for VEC members

1. Giving respect to their voice during interaction
2. Creating a conducive environment where they feel valued
3. Listening patiently to their views
4. Visioning exercise in a collaborative way (gives insight about a good school)
5. Experience sharing among the VEC members of other schools may be organized
6. Exposure visits to good schools
7. Giving scope to community members to plan freely
8. Consolidation after each activity in the training programme

- Highlighting their strengths so that they are chosen by community to be in the VEC.

Conclusion

School education must be provided to all. This necessarily also requires that children of the disadvantaged must also be integrated.For effective and successful integration of the disadvantaged group children along with others, the community must too be empowered. An empowered community can plan , implement and sustain the educational activities for quality education for the disadvantaged. The school authorities should come forward with a positive attitude to include the

community members in school activities, thus empowering the VEC as the representatives of the community is definitely a milestone to achieve UEE.

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EDUCATION OF GIRLS AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL – A CHALLENGE TO SSA

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Abstract

Through this paper an attempt has been made to reflect the progress of Girls education at elementary level in India and the challenges in the way of improving quality of elementary education for girls in the new paradigm shift. It is the right time to reconsider our educational system and rejuvenate our school programmes so as to meet the needs and demands of all girl children. Statistical evidence revealed that the number of primary schools in our country increased from 1.69 million in 1994-95 to 1.85 millions in 2005-06. The number of upper primary schools has increased from 1.56 million to 0.71 million during the same period. It was also noticed that the female literacy has increased from 39.3 per cent in 1991 to 65.2 per cent in 2001. The quantum of female teacher attended in-service training programme is more than that of their male counterparts. Teacher education has become more sensitive to the emerging needs of girls education at elementary level. It is essential to provide contextualised quality training to teachers and other stakeholders of elementary education for the promotion of Girls education. It is in this context an attempt has been made to highlight the challenges in the way of education of girls' children at elementary level in India and role of various stakeholders thereto. That is this paper reflects the present status of girls education at elementary level and the rate of progress. The target behind special measures in education of Girls children is to promote "Education for Women's Equality and Empowerment". The thrust of education of Girls children at elementary level is to uplift the status of women belonging to disadvantaged section of the society. In this regard community participation is considered to be a potential instrument for improving girls' education by sensitising the community and actively involving the community in the way of accelerating education of girls' children.

Introduction

Education of women is an important aspect for boosting the social and economical development of a country. In 1909, women literacy was as low as 0.6 percent but in the year 2001 it has been recorded 53.7 per cent. Though female literacy has been increased to 27 times (from 1909 to 2001) but the number of illiterate women has increased to 27 crores, out of which 22 crores are in rural areas (MHRD, 2002-03 and NIEPA, 2005). Statistics reveals that most of the illiterate women are in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Still there are 46 such districts where female literacy is below 20 percent (NIEPA, 2005). The status of women belonging to schedule castes and schedule tribes is miserable. This situation is alarming us to put more and more efforts to boost female literacy and bringing all out of school girls to the main stream of education.

India the second largest educational system in the world (after China) with a total enrolment of 114.6 million at primary and 41.3 million at upper primary level; out of which 47.52 million and 18.72 million are girls at primary and upper primary level respectively.One of the major goals of SSA is to promote social justice by bringing all gender and social category gap at primary level by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010. Elementary education is a fundamental right of all the children in the age group of 06-14 years (Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002). Universalization of Elementary Education is the target set by Govt. of India to be achieved by 2010.

Indian Overview

According to census of India literacy rate has increased from 18.3 percent in 1951 to 39.3 percent in 1991 and this percentage rose to 65.2 percent in 2001. Despite these gain much need to be done to improve the educational status of girls children particularly in rural India. During 2002-03 the enrolment of girls at primary level was 38.09 million, upper primary level 24.31 million, and at secondary/higher secondary level it was 28.59 million. At all level enrolment

status of girls children is lower than that of boys and this difference goes on increases as we move towards higher level. Though participation of girls at all stages of education has been increasing steadily since 1951 to 2003 (primary level from 28.1 per cent to 46.8 per cent, middle level from 16.1 percent to 43.9 percent and secondary/higher secondary level from 13.3 percent to 41.3 percent) but the girls participation is till below 50 percent at all stages of education. It is also reported that drop out rates among girls are at higher side than that of their boys counterparts. However, the rate is steadily decreasing over a period from 1861 (78.3 percent) to 2002 (54.6 percent) at elementary level of education (MHRD, Govt. of India, 2001-02).

Female Literacy

Table 1: Literacy Status in India

Year	Population (in million)	Literate (in million)	Rate of Literacy			Male-Female Difference
			Male	Female	Total	
1951	361.1	60.1	27.2	8.9	16.7	18.3
1961	439.2	105.5	40.4	15.4	24.0	25.0
1971	548.2	161.5	46.6	22.0	29.5	24.0
1981	665.3	241.0	56.4	29.8	36.2	27.4
1991	836.6	362.2	63.1	39.3	43.3	23.8
2001	1028.6	666.94	75.3	53.6	64.84	21.7

***Exclude J&K; Source: Selected Educational statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India.**

Data in presented in **Table 1** shows that there has been a considerable increase in the rate of literacy of female in last two decades. It was noticed that during 1951-2001, the rate of female literacy has been increased by 6 times where as in case of male it is 2.8 times (MHRD 2002-03). Again it was observed that since 1981, the male-female difference is getting closer which is a positive indication on the part of the education of women in our country.

Female Teacher

Table 2:Distribution of Female Teachers by School Category – 1994-2005

(in million)

Year	Primary			Upper Primary		
	Total	Female	% of Female	Total	Female	% of Female
1994-95	1.69	0.53	31.36	1.16	0.41	35.35
1995-96	1.74	0.56	32.18	1.18	0.42	35.59
1996-97	1.75	0.56	32.00	1.20	0.43	35.83
1997-98	1.82	0.59	32.42	1.23	0.59	47.96
1998-99	1.91	0.66	34.55	1.27	0.46	36.22
1999-2000	1.93	0.69	35.75	1.30	0.47	36.15
2000-2001	1.90	0.68	35.79	1.33	0.51	38.35
2001-2002	1.93	0.72	37.31	1.47	0.55	37.41
2002-2003	1.92	0.75	39.06	1.59	0.65	40.88
2003-2004	1.59	0.55	34.59	2.20	0.52	23.64
2004-2005	1.67	0.60	35.93	2.62	0.64	24.43
2005-2006	1.90	0.71	37.37	2.81	0.72	25.62

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA.

It is revealed from **Table 2** that there is an increase in the recruitment and deployment of female teachers during 1994-2005, since the special campaign of in-service training there is a steady increase in the trend with regard to percent of female teachers undergoing in-service training at upper primary level than at primary level. (NIEPA, 2004-05).

In-service Training of Female Teacher

Table 3: Percent of Female Teachers provided in-service Training.

Year	No. of Female Primary School Teachers			No. of Female Upper Primary School Teachers		
	Total (in million)	Undergone Training (in million)	%	Total (in million)	Undergone Training (in million)	%
2002-03	0.75	0.37	49.90	1.59	0.19	12.20
2003-04	0.55	0.23	41.98	2.20	0.29	13.32
2004-05	0.60	0.26	43.48	2.62	0.54	20.80

Source: Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05 (NIEPA)

There are various categories of elementary school teachers who need to be trained and empowered in one or more areas; namely (i) untrained teachers; (ii) new entrant teachers; (ii) working teachers (trained); and (iv) para teachers. The total number of female teachers in primary schools increased from 0.53 million 1994-95 to 0.71 million in 2005, approximately 1.4 times. The number of female teachers in upper primary schools increased from 0.41 million in 1994-95 to 0.72 million in 2005-06, nearly 1.8 times. (NIEPA, 2004-05 and MHRD, 2002-03). 43.48 percent of primary school female teachers have undergone in-service training during 2004-05 in comparison to 41.98 percent in 2003-04. As noticed from **Table 3**, 20.80 percent of upper primary school female teachers underwent in-service training during 2004-05 whereas it was 13.32 during 2003-04 (NIEPA 2003-04). Data revealed that though more percent of female teachers from the primary school level underwent in-service teacher education but the rate of enrolment and retention of girls at primary level has not been improved appreciably. Girls education has been perceived as one of the key issue in bringing qualitative education and as well as one of the important aspect of national development and reconstruction. Developments of nation thus depend on the quality of women education that needs to be empowered through effective and innovative strategies.

Enrolment of Girls

Table 4: Enrolment of Girls by School Category 1994-2005

(in million)

Year	Primary			Upper Primary		
	Total	Girls	% of Female	Total	GIRLS	% OF Girls
1994-95	105.1	45.1	36.4	14.3	14.3	39.29
1995-96	107.1	46.2	37.5	14.8	14.8	39.47
1996-97	108.2	46.8	38.1	15.2	15.2	39.89
1997-98	110.3	48.0	39.5	15.9	15.9	40.25
1998-99	110.9	48.2	40.3	16.3	16.3	40.45
1999-2000	113.6	49.5	42.1	17.0	17.0	40.38
2000-2001	113.8	49.8	42.8	17.5	17.5	40.88
2001-2002	113.9	50.3	44.8	18.7	18.7	41.74
2002-2003	93.4	44.1	30.5	13.48	13.48	44.20
2003-2004	108.02	51.27	36.3	16.29	16.29	45.02
2004-2005	114.6	54.52	41.3	18.72	18.72	45.32

***Provisional**

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India;ii)Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

Enrolment of Girls is a crucial aspect of universalization of elementary education and Education For All as well. Data from **Table 4** revealed that number of Girls enrolment increased from 42.91 percent in 1994-95 to 47.52 percent at primary level. In case of Upper Primary Level, there is an increase in the number of Girls from 39.29 percent to 45.32 percent during 1995-2005.

Gender Parity Index (GPI)

Table 5: Gender Parity Index in Enrolment

Year	Primary	Upper Primary
1995-96	0.82	0.73
1998-99	0.82	0.75
1999-2000	0.82	0.74
2000-2001	0.82	0.75
2001-2002	0.83	0.77
2002-2003	0.89	0.78
2003-2004	0.90	0.82
2004-2005	0.91	0.83

Source: i)Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

GPI computed for the period of 1995 to 2005 revealed (**Table V_1**) that there is consistent improvement within GPI and girls share in primary classes had a GPI of 0.82 in 1995-96 and 0.91 in 2004-05 where as in case of upper primary classes, it was 0.73 in 1994-95 and 0.83 in 2004-05 (NIEPA, 2004-05 and MHRD, 2002-03). Analysis of data clearly shows that boys out number girls both at the primary and upper primary level of education which is also reflected in the share of girls enrolment. Less number of girls in upper primary classes than in primary classes shows the higher dropout rate of girls at the upper primary level of education. Similar is the situation with regard to the comparison of girls share in enrolment at rural areas with that of urban areas.

Area Wise GPI

Table 6: Area wise GPI Enrolment

Year	Primary		Upper Primary	
	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	Rural Areas	Urban Areas
2003	0.89	0.94	0.76	0.92
2004	0.90	0.93	0.79	0.93
2005	0.90	0.92	0.80	0.91

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

Table 6 revealed that the rate of enrolment of girls at rural areas is less than that of urban areas. Hence special attention need to be paid at rural areas so as to attract the attention of parents and community for improving percent of girls enrolment and retention as well for accelerating the mission of Education for All.

Enrolment of SC Girls

Table 6: Percent of SC Enrolment to Total Enrolment and Percent of SC Girls Enrolment to Total SC Enrolment

Year	Primary		Upper Primary	
	% of SC to total enrolled	% of SC Girls to total SC Enrolled	% of SC to total enrolled	% of SC Girls to total SC Enrolled
1994-95	17.5	42.9	14.2	13.4
1995-96	17.8	44.4	14.4	13.2
1996-97	18.6	44.9	14.9	14.1
1997-98	18.6	46.2	15.4	14.9
1998-99	17.5	48.0	15.1	15.9
1999-2000	17.9	48.0	14.9	16.1
2000-2001	18.6	48.9	15.6	16.7
2001-2002	18.9	49.2	16.7	17.4
2002-2003	19.5	46.8	18.20	43.49

2003-2004	21.30	47.31	19.33	43.92
2004-2005	20.73	47.43	20.10	44.73

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii)Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

With regard to the enrolment of minority as revealed from **Table 6** that 17.5 percent of children were SC out of total enrolled in 1994-95 at primary level where as it was only 14.2 percent at upper primary level with regard to total SC children. There were 42.9 percent SC girls at primary level and 13.4 percent at upper primary level. The number of SC girls increased from 42.9 percent during 1994-95 to 47.43 percent during 2004-05 at primary level. There is no appreciable improvement in enrolment of SC girls at primary level whereas rate of enrolment of the same at upper primary level is quite appreciating i.e. it increases more than three times from 1994-95 to 2004-05. Similar is the situation with regard to the rate of increase in enrolment of ST girls in both primary as well as upper primary level over a period of ten years

Enrolment of ST Girls

Table 7: Percent of ST Enrolment to Total Enrolment and percent of ST Girls Enrolment to Total SC Enrolment

Year	Primary		Upper Primary	
	% of ST to Total enrolment	% of ST Girls Enrolment to Total ST Enrolment	% of ST to Total Enrolment	% of ST Girls Enrolment to Total ST Enrolment
1994-95	8.6	41.86	6.0	15.0
1995-96	8.8	43.18	6.1	13.8
1996-97	9.1	45.05	6.2	14.4
1997-98	8.7	45.9	6.3	14.9
1998-99	8.3	46.9	6.5	14.8
1999-2000	9.3	44.08	6.9	15.9

2000-2001	9.5	49.47	7.2	16.7
2001-2002	10.2	49.0	8.0	16.3
2002-2003	11.78	45.97	8.55	39.80
2003-2004	10.20	46.61	8.08	42.02
2004-2005	10.69	46.76	8.59	42.58

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

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As noticed from **Table 7**, as far as the total enrolment of SC children at primary and upper primary level is concern it was not at all encouraging rather the percent was nearly half as comparison to SC children (MHRD, 2002-03 and NIEPA, 2004-05).

Area wise Enrolment

Table 8: Area Wise Enrolment of Girls (in %)

Year	Primary		Upper Primary	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
2003-04	46.98	48.41	43.08	47.97
2004-05	47.31	48.22	44.03	48.12
2005-06	47.45	47.87	44.54	47.78

Source: Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

Table 8 indicates that though rate of enrolment of girls at urban areas is more than that of rural areas but the differences are not much more (NIEPA, 2004-05). It reflects the community sensitization towards education of Girls children, through various ways and mean under the mission of SSA

Drop out of Girls

Table 9: Dropout Rates of Girls to Total Drop Outs

Category	General		SC Students		ST Students	
Year	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1995-96	42.1	43.0	45.7	48.5	56.6	58.9
1996-97	40.2	40.9	42.7	45.2	56.5	60.0
1997-98	39.2	41.5	44.7	46.6	55.1	58.1
1998-99	42.4	44.7	44.3	46.6	44.3	46.6
1999-2000	40.3	42.3	-	-	-	-
2000-2001	40.7	41.9	-	-	-	-
2001-2002	39.0	39.9	45.2	47.1	52.3	54.1
2002-2003	34.9	33.7	41.5	58.2	51.4	52.1

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

As observed from the above **Table 9** that the rates of drop out of Girls have decreased from 43.0 percent in 1995-96 to 33.7 percent in 2002-03 at primary level. In case of SC girls, the rate of drop out is fluctuating from 1995-96 to (48.5 percent) to 2004-05 (58.2 percent). Similar is the situation with regard to drop out rate of ST girls (MHRD, 2002-03) as well.

Transition Rate

Table 10: Transition Rate Primary (Gr V) to Upper Primary Level (Gr VI)

Year	Total	Girls	Boys
2003	64.48	62.73	65.96
2004	74.15	71.98	76.01
2005	78.01	75.78	79.96

Source: Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

Transition rate presented in **Table 10** improves over 2003. It is revealed that more than 75 percent of girls in 2005 transited from primary to upper primary level of education against 62.73 percent over 2003. There is no much variation with regard to transition of boys and girls. Though transition rate shows an improvement, yet 24.22 percent of girls still dropout which is a significant factor with regard to education of girls and achieving the goal of universalisation of elementary education/Education For All. Transition rate of Girls in Uttar Pradesh is found to be lowest (55.74 percent). Other major states which need immediate attention are Bihar (61.61 percent), Chhatisgarh (66.82 percent), Haryana (66.69 percent), Jharkhand (68.71 percent), Madhya Pradesh (64.37 percent) Maharashtra (73.61 percent) and Orissa (76.22 percent). Transition rate need to be improved to realize the goal of universalization of elementary education in these sate in the near future. It is high time to assess the reasons of low transition in these states and state specific strategies need to be adopted to tackle the situation. Again in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, significant differences are noticed in case of transition rate of boys and girls. Immediate attention need to be paid to reduce this difference in transition and make the education of Girls children at par with boys children.

Girls Toilet (Basic Facility)

Table: 11: Percent of Schools Having Toilet

Year	Common Toilet						Girls Toilet					
	Primary School			Upper Primary School			Primary School			Upper Primary School		
	All areas	Urban	Rural	All areas	Urban	Rural	All areas	Urban	Rural	All areas	Urban	Rural
2003	29.06			39.18			15.64			28.14		
2004	36.16			44.25			20.61	18.63	18.91	32.91	53.31	30.87
2005	41.43	56.83	39.97	48.52	64.02	47.02	24.27	43.74	22.38	36.91	54.79	35.19

Source: i) Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, MHRD, Govt. of India; ii) Elementary Education in India, Analytical Report 2004-05, NIEPA

From the above **Table 11** it is revealed that Percentage of schools having common toilet as well as separate toilet for girls has been increased from 2003 to 2005. In 2005, 41.43 percent schools are equipped with common toilet at primary level and 48.52 percent at upper primary level. With regard to availability of separate toilet for girls, the number of school is 24.27 at primary level and 36.91 percent at upper primary level. There are more schools with common toilet and Girls toilet in Urban areas than in rural areas. In case of privately managed schools, 69.23 percent schools are equipped with such facilities where as it was only 42.82 percent in Govt. managed schools. Similar is the situation with regard to schools with girls toilet.

In case of Chhattisgarh only 9.15 percent schools have common toilet and 3.43 percent have girls toilet where as in Kerala 78.37 percent primary schools have common toilets and 57.17 percent schools have separate toilet for girls. Not a single state has been provided with common toilet and toilet for girls to all of its schools. From this we can judge status of Girls education and our preparation for quality of education at elementary level in 21st century. This gives us the answer where do we stand?

Constraints to Girls Education in India

Reasons are many for the lower level of Girls education in our country. The important concerns related to education of Girls at elementary level are:

- High level of family poverty is a barrier to education. One third of the Indians are living below poverty line (World Bank, 1997). Poor families can not afford direct costs of schooling (clothing, books, shoes, transportation etc.). At the same time it is difficult for them to bear the indirect costs of schooling (loss of home income, labour contribution of girl children, caring younger siblings at home) as well. Under such situation, usually choice is made to send boy to the school, not girl i.e. negative parental attitude towards education of girls children. Prents take the education of boys as better long-term investment. It may be due to traditional, cultural or religious belief or deterioration of the standard of education such that it could not attract the attention of parents and other members in the society. Parents are not at all aware about the early childhood education of their wards. They value the education of Girls as waste

of money and will likely to have problems in marriage of their daughter in future.

- No substantial school/classroom facilities to accommodate all school going children.Each school is associated with problems of sanitation, water and other essentials. There is no toilet for girls. There is no school close to home. Quality of school environment is very poor which neither attract the attention of children to come to school nor parents to send their wards to school.
- Our existing curriculum is not free from gender bias. It create major problem in developing rational attitude in the mind of parents and children. At the same time, our learning material is not at all adequate and textbooks are not enriched with quality content. There is a great question to the process of learning and there is challenge for the teachers on the part of process of assessment, use of teaching technique in the classroom. Activities of school hardly be able to accommodate needs of child and reflects domestic responsibilities of girls children.
- Number of female teacher is also a major problem in our country. The magnitude of this problem is more and more in rural areas than urban areas. Again there is lack of properly trained and committed female teacher to accelerate the education of girls Children. The in-service as well as pre-service teacher education programme is not up to the expected level even today with regard to promotion of education of girls.
- Social stigma related to education of girls children is one of the major concern in our country, particularly in rural areas more specifically in rural areas i.e. perception of parents as well as Girl Change drastically immediately after menarche. As there is no school close to home, there is fear of being sexual harassment, which forces them to drop out from school. Mothers create a nurturing environment for their girl children. It develops psychological discomfort in the mind of girl children. In one side, there is restriction from family in other side there is no facilities at school related to minimum sanitation. These are major concerns, which need immediate attention to provide quality education to girl's children.

Discussion

Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010 is one of the major objective of SSA for universalisation of quality elementary education/education for all. Through this present discussion, an attempt has been made to reflect strategies and interventions needed for improving the education of girls at elementary level in our country. Education of girls plays an important role in national development

and reconstruction. It is high time not only to undertake a variety of policy implications but also developed variety of strategies for its effective implementation at school level so as to alleviate problems of girls education.

Every school must be provided with adequate sanitary facilities for the girls. It can serve variety of purpose i.e. increasing enrolment, reducing dropout of girls children, developing positive attitude of parents towards education of girls children as well as motivation and enthusiasm in the mind of tender hearted girls to join and continue in schools.

Environment of classroom and school must be made attractive with relevant pictures, diagrams and events related to girls' education to increase girls' enrolment and their active participation in schools. It is essential to ensure safety of girls both in school as well as on the way to reach the school. Issues of safety and security in and around the school block the girls' attendance in school. Personal safety of girl is a major concern, so parents do not allow girl child to attend school which is far away from home. Community need to pay a major role in protecting girls from violence. Women organization must come forward to contribute in this regard. Community must be empowered through variety of ways. Active involvement of community is the need of the time. Society needs to be sensitised and mobilized for providing quality elementary education to girls children. Even girl child do not feel themselves secure in school environment, it is because of the absence of female teacher or lack of female teachers in school. It is the community who needs to watch, to protect girls from abuse and harassment.

Again activities (Curricular, cocurricular and extra-curricular) must be modified so as to accommodate girl child with comfort in our local schools. Teachers must be trained exclusively to develop new methodologies and implement health and sex education on variety of waysto make teaching learning process attractive. Assignment related to homework may be reduced to allow the girl child to attend school as well as do their responsibility at home. More and more local female teacher needs to be appointed so as to attract girl child. Special guidance cell may be opened with specially trained female guidance worker/or by providing special orientation to female teachers to deal with problems of grown up girls at school and provide necessary guidance to tackle those issues.

Besides curriculum training on variety work education programme, handicrafts and other works related to household duties and responsibilities should be provided in school as additional components. Content related to health education, nutrition, growth and development, reproductive health may be included in the curriculum with family oriented education.

Pre-school training centres need to be opened in rural areas to attract the attention of parents and community towards education of girls children, developing and strengthening morality of girls children and prepare them for primary level with strong will and motivation for strengthening their foundation. It is essential to make them ready for primary schooling. Improving the nutritional status of child is the essential requirement on the part of education of girls' children as well as their mother. It should be followed by health care activities to develop the confidence of girls' children in particular.

Short term orientation programme for the mothers should also be organized during the local holidays and festival periods in the school campus or in village community centres to provide information/awareness related to primary health, education of girls and role and responsibilities of girls and importance of girls education as well.

Efforts have already been taken in various parts of the country on effective implementation of ICT through multimedia packages for providing education to girls as well as developing awareness in community towards need and importance of girls' education. It has the potential to generate dialogue between the teachers and taught. Aspects of multimedia like print material, audio, video, radio broadcast, TV broadcast, teleconferencing etc. can effectively be used for reaching the unreached with quality support system. This can be used for developing positive parental attitude and community participation on educational programme for reducing gender disparity.

Early marriage and pregnancy are widespread and common in many parts of our country. It prohibit the girls from attending school or returning to school after the birth of their child, so provision may be made (laws and policies) for establishment of school/alternative centres for such group of children to bring them back to school for educating them. It can develop self esteem and psychological comfort in them to continue in their studies. Statistics revealed that majority of children who are not registered at birth are girls. Parents find it difficult to admit their child without birth certificate. This is another case for not being able to enrol girl child in school. Though reasons are many relating to girls drop out in rural areas but major concern relating to it are: i) unfavourable attitude of parents; (i.e. parents are not interested to send their grown up girls to schools), ii) involvement of girl children in domestic activities (i.e. they need to look after

their siblings at early stage and work to supplement their family member at later stage of life) and iii) poverty of parents. Because of the above reasons parents develop negative attitude towards education of their girls children.

Though there are many national and internal goals/commitments relating to education of girls and even legal frame work/laws but due to certain real difficulties and fear parents/children denied their right to education. Laws relating to EFA particularly education for girls through exists but may not be enforced. At the present time to achieve the target of gender equality in education by 2015 focus should be laid on strategic interventions relating to; i) development and improvement in school facilities with special focus on basic necessities like sanitation and water; ii) improvement of school environment with regard to flexible school timing (timing must be set what is suitable to them particularly when they are free from domestic chores); iii) security of girl child (represents particularly bear of sexual harassment of their girl children; iv) hostel arrangement for girl children (partially beyond middle level);v) middle school and secondary schools are for away from villages. So it do not allow the rural girl children to attend the school as there is lack or no transport facilities (So like primary education , secondary education need to be accessible to children living in rural areas); and vi) It is essential to make the girl children more and more comfortable in school, so it is essential to focus in appointment of more and more female teachers in rural village schools.

Conclusion

Constitution of India though provides free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years, illiteracy is the major problem of India, particularly in rural India even today. Although there are many barriers to overcome this problem but gender disparity and gender equality need to be addressed through special packages to tackle the issue in India. There are dozens of causes which keep the children away from school and the quantum of this causes are more and more for girls than that of boys. Problems of illiteracy among girl child varies from place to place and region to region and across the groups as

well. Current status of girls education in India particularly in rural India draws the attention of all stakeholders to serve for rural development and reconstruction in 21st century which in one way or other influence the social and economic development free India as well as pave a path for the achievement of the historic goal of education for all and the target of SSA.

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