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Formulating Effective Higher Education Policies under Millennium Development Goals

Dawood Mamoon*

Abstract

A successful higher education reform in the South is not limited to improvement in quality and access to higher education but it has should directly and indirectly to cater to the millennium development goals by ensuring pro-poor pro-growth outcomes. Once we link higher education reforms with a development agenda or strictly speaking with millennium development goals, the reform process in higher education becomes much more than a mere pro-growth strategy. The purpose of this paper is to identify ways in which the reform process in higher education should be aligned with the larger development agenda of the South. To this effect, we discuss the issue that lies in the peripheries of higher education reform debate - which is to directly link up higher education policy to overall education policy formulation in the South. In the paper, we highlight that generally governments in the South promote higher education at the cost of primary education, and thus indirectly undermine the effectiveness of their development strategies. We have empirically analyzed the effects of higher education focus on economic welfare. As per decomposition, poverty can be either affected by economic growth or unequal distribution of income. In order to investigate whether higher education, as it prevails in the South, is good for the poor, we see the relationship of average years of higher schooling at age of 25 with economic growth and inequality. The paper undertakes regression analysis by utilizing 5 different proxies of economic growth economic development and 4 proxies for income inequality as basis for 14 separate IV regression models. Average years of higher schooling have been used as the common regressor. Our results do suggest that higher education is a significant determinant of economic development. However, our inequality regression models suggest that education policies in general and higher education policies in specific do not cater for the lowest income groups in the South and if anything higher education favors the more affluent. The study recommends that higher education policies should not be implemented in isolation with overall education

* Institute of Social Studies (ISS), PO Box 29776, 2502 LT, The Hague, The Netherlands
E-mail: mamoon@iss.nl

policy frameworks. As a first step to this effect the paper calls for more coordination between higher education commissions and education ministries in the South.

Introduction

Generally in most developing countries, human capital is unevenly distributed (Ravallion, 2003). Thomas, Wang and Fan (2000) and Domenech and Castello (2002) have found out that Gini coefficient of distribution of human capital in Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia respectively, is the highest in the world. Berthelemy (2004) came up with the same conclusion not only for Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia but also for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Furthermore, according to him, the unequal distribution of income in these regions is due to inequitable education policies of their respective governments who, on average, focus more attention on secondary and tertiary education compared to primary education. Chowdhury (1994) also suggests that there is misallocation of resources by the governments of developing countries that favor higher education, thus neglecting of primary education.

In many countries a considerable proportion of public expenditure for education goes to middle- and upper-income families, because richer groups are over-represented at all levels of education, particularly at the university level. Public expenditure per student increases by each level of education. In African countries, public expenditure per student on higher education is 28 (Francophone Africa) and 50 (Anglophone Africa) times that on primary education. Further, only a small number of people benefits from high public expenditure per student in higher education. For the developing countries as a whole, only 7 % of the school-age population enroll in higher education (Mingat and Tan 1985).

One reason for the bias in education policies in these developing countries towards higher education may lie in the belief that elementary education has a very limited direct role in determining growth rates. According to Barro (1999), the rate of economic growth responds more to secondary or higher education levels rather than elementary schooling. For example in developing countries, international trade, which is one of the key determinants of growth, favours either highly qualified university graduates or those who have at least finished their high school. So it is no surprise that in order to be competitive, many developing countries have a tendency to invest in higher education at the cost of primary education to achieve greater growth.

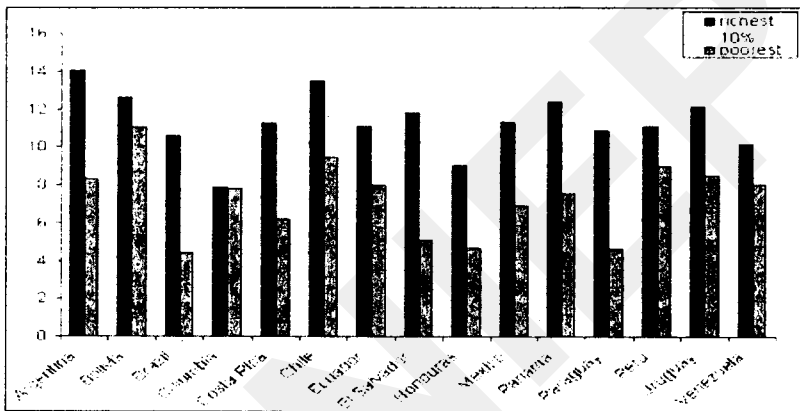
Unequal Education Policies Lead to Unequal Outcomes

Figure 1a, 1b and Appendix 1 show that large inequalities in education attainment exist in Latin America. Over time, there is an increase in educational inequalities as average years of educational attainment were more unequally distributed among the poorest and the richest in 1990s when compared to 1980s. Coincidentally, Latin America has a Gini coefficient (about 0.50 for the region as a whole) which is approximately 15 points above the average for the rest of the world. Londoño and Székely (1997) estimate that the low level of education of Latin American workers and the enormous inequality in educational

assets account for the largest portion of the region's excessive inequality, larger than other contributing factors -- lower physical capital accumulation, the relative abundance of natural resources, and a high concentration of land resources. In Latin America, only a relatively small proportion of the total population has completed secondary or higher education. These relatively small numbers of skilled workers earn a substantial wage premium due to their limited supply. Thus a poor distribution of education contributes to differentials in the returns to the different levels of education, magnifying the effect of education gaps on income inequality.

FIGURE 1a

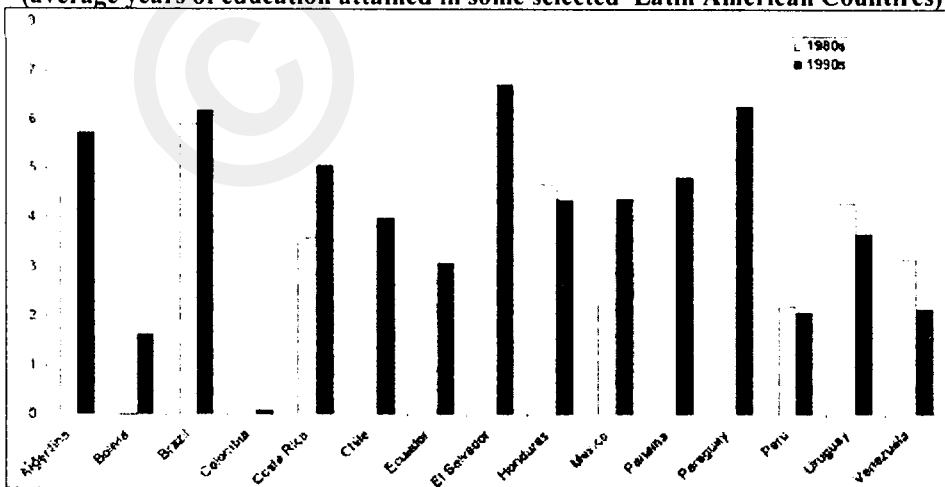
Education Attainment of the Richest and Poorest 21 Year Olds in the 1990s (average years of education attained in some selected Latin American Countries)



Source: Birdsall (1999).

FIGURE 1b

Education Attainment of the Richest and Poorest 21 Year Olds in the 1980s and 1990s (average years of education attained in some selected Latin American Countries)

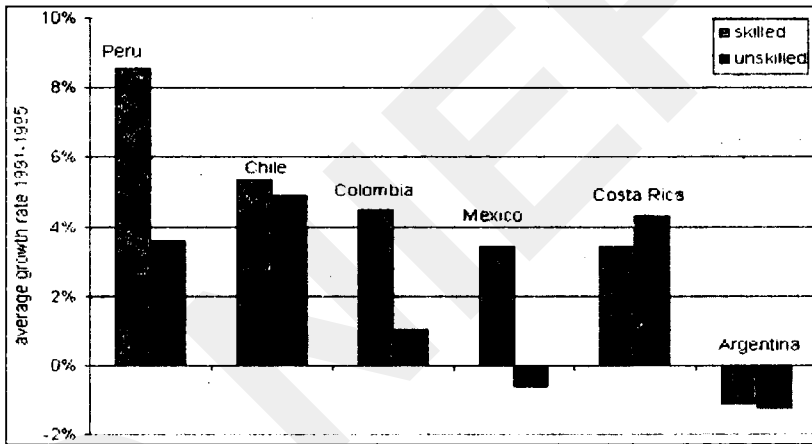


Source: Birdsall (1999).

During the 1990s, wage differentials between skilled and unskilled workers in Latin America increased substantially. Duryea and Székely (1998) show that wage inequality increased or remained high in Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia and Venezuela, slightly worsened in Brazil, and remained stable in Chile and Costa Rica (Figure 2). They find that changes in schooling widened education inequalities and the returns to different levels of education also become more unequal (returns to higher education rose relative to basic education.). Both factors contributed to the increases in wage inequality in the region. In short, though the supply of better educated workers increased, it failed to keep pace with the increase in demand as technological change took place as the region opened up.

Figure 2

Real Wage Growth for Skilled and Unskilled Labour in Latin America



Source: E. Lora and G. Marquez (1998) "The Employment Problem in Latin America: Perceptions and Stylized Facts?" cited in Birdsall (1999).

In order to show how income inequalities increase with education inequality, Gregorio and Lee (1999) worked with a traditional model of human capital where the level of earnings (Y) is accrued by an individual with S years of schooling:

$$\log Y_s = \log Y_o + \sum_{j=1}^s \log(1 + r_j) + u \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

where r_j is the rate of return to the j th year of schooling. The function can be approximated by:

$$\log Y_s = \log Y_o + rS + u \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Whereas the distribution of earnings can be written as:

$$Var(\log Y_s) = Var(rS) = \bar{r}^2 Var(S) + \bar{S}^2 Var(r) + 2\bar{r}\bar{S}Cov(r, S) \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

A sharp rise in educational inequalities, $Var(S)$, would unambiguously lead to higher wage inequality in equation (3) if other variables are held constant. By the same token, a rise in wage inequality is a clear outcome if $Var(r)$ is high. Here we know that returns to higher education are greater than returns to primary education in developing countries because there is excess demand of skilled labour as rapid technology diffusion amid trade liberalization takes place and skilled labour supply lags behind.

However, equation (3) also suggests that if the covariance between the return to education and the level of education is negative, an increase in schooling can reduce wage inequality. There is some empirical evidence that there is a negative relationship between the return to education and average years of schooling (Teulings and Van Rens, 2001). The negative value of $Cov(r, S)$ suggest that as the relative supply of highly skilled workers goes up and that of unskilled workers goes down, the relative wages of skilled labour decreases. Though $Cov(r, S)$ gives some useful information regarding wage inequality, the information is far from perfect and can very well be misleading because movements in relative wages are as much a function of skilled labour demand as it is of skilled labour supply. For example, through trade liberalization, there is a transfer of technology in developing countries which increases the demand for skilled labour as learning by doing takes place. If this increased demand for skilled labour is more than its supply, then the wages of skilled labour will rise. And if the wages of unskilled labour fail to rise because unskilled labour is in excess supply in developing countries, wage inequality is likely to increase, despite the negative relationship between the level of schooling and returns to education $Cov(r, S)$. This fact is recognized by Dur and Tuelings (2002) when they admitted that in the Tinbergen's (1975) famous race between technology (skilled labour demand) and education (skilled labour supply), technology has been a clear winner in recent times. So in developing countries the key to equality in relative wages may not lie so much in $Cov(r, S)$, but in the value of $Var(S)$.

Relationship Between Higher Education, Economic Development and Poverty

Apparently, the end objective of any economic policy devised to date is to generate welfare and wellbeing of the public. Same is true for growth which must also fall in the category of welfare generating strategies since the idea has always been that at the end of the day, growth should be good for poor. It makes sense because in economics, poverty decomposition identifies two channels through which poverty is affected. One is the growth channel and the other is inequality (Kakwani et al, 2000). Growth is good for poor whereas inequality is not good. Since pro-growth policies sometimes put an upward pressure on inequality, as it is in case of higher education focus in developing countries, growth itself is not sufficient for pro-poor outcomes. Now more relevant question is how to align growth with poverty alleviation? The simple answer is to sterilize any adverse distributional effects of pro-growth policies to make growth a 'chaste pro-poor experience'.

Recently, World Bank realize this fact: “For a given rate of growth, the extent of poverty reduction depends on how the distribution of income changes with growth and on initial inequalities in income, assets and access to opportunities that allow poor people to share in growthhow growth affects poverty depends on how the additional income generated by growth is distributed within a country” (2001:52).

To understand whether higher education policies in the South are pro-poor, we can decompose policy effects of higher education into two broader categories: (1) Growth effect, and (2) Income distribution effect. The discussion carried out in earlier section suggests that vigorous pursuit of higher education by the governments in developing countries, is carried out under the assumption that the dividends of higher education focus are positive and significant in terms of economic development. There is truth to the statement as we see in the case of China and India where high growth rates have been accrued partly because both countries, in 1970s and 1980s, have successfully transformed a portion of their population into skilled labor by generously allocating funds to higher education. Today the cheaper skilled labor force of India and China is the prime factor behind the flow of billion dollar worth of outsourcing and foreign investments into these economies. However, one may also note that such hot pursuit for higher education has resulted in an unequal education policy stance, whereby higher education has been promoted at the cost of primary education. As discussed before, such unequal education policies have been one of the significant determinants of increasing inequalities in the South, especially China, South Asia and Latin America.

In this section we will empirically test growth effect and inequality effect of higher education policies for developing countries by carrying out IV linear regressions on a set of 14 separate regression models (see Appendix 1 for details). Higher education (*h_{yr}*) is represented by average years of higher schooling in the total population at 25 for 1999. We have taken 5 different proxies of economic development and 4 different proxies for income inequality.

Our first proxy of economic development *Y_g* captures long run economic growth and is calculated as the growth rate of per capita income covering the period of 40 years from 1960-2001. *L_{ny}*, which captures the short term economic growth, is the natural logarithm of per capita income at purchasing power prices for the year 2000. Since institutions are considered to be the most important determinants of long run economic growth (see Rodrik et al, 2004), we have taken three different key institutional definitions namely rule of law (*RI*), political stability (*Ps*) and control for corruption (*Ctc*), proposed by Kaufman et al (2002).

To capture inequality, we not only take GINI income inequality index (*Gini*) from UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) but also we employ UTIP-UNIDO Theil measure (*Theil*) calculated by University of Texas Inequality Project (UTIP) which captures wage inequality between skilled and unskilled labour. Furthermore, we take income deciles and percentiles from UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) as other proxies of inequality. Higher education will be guilty of inequality if it has the negative impact on the incomes of bottom 10 percent

(*low10*) and positive impact on the income of the top 10 percent (*high 10*). We also take income groups divided into quintiles where the effect of higher education is anticipated to be negative for bottom 20 percent (*low20*) and positive for top 20 percent (*high20*), whereas the middle income groups (*Sec20*, *Thrd20* and *Forth20*) it might be either way depending on the severity of inequality existing in primary and higher education as well as outreach of higher education to the middle income groups. Each country observation for all inequality measures is taken for the latest year for which data is available and in most cases represent inequality in mid 1990s.

Please note that the economic development or inequality proxies will enter each separate regression model as dependent variables, whereas for each model the common independent variables are higher education (*Hyr*), basic level of education (*Sch60*), which will be calculated as average schooling years in the total population at 25 for the year 1960, and openness variable (*Open*) calculated as overall trade share (the ratio of nominal imports plus exports to GDP) for the year 1985, which has been extensively used in the literature (see Frankel and Romer, 1999; Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, 2001; Alcalá and Ciccone, 2002; Dollar and Kraay, 2002; and Rodrik et al, 2004). Both *Sch60* and *Open* are employed as independent variables for our economic development/economic growth equations and inequality equations because on the one hand economic literature suggests that countries which start out with better educational attainments grow faster as well as perform well against inequality (see Fisher, 2001; Tuelings and van Rens, 2002; Eiche, 2001; Bourguignon and Morrisson, 1990; Tilak, 1989). On the other hand, countries which are more open do grow faster (Dollar and Kraay, 2002), but they may witness inequalities as trade liberalisation favours affluent segments of the society over less affluent ones (see Chen and Ravallion, 2003; Cockburn, 2002; Friedman, 2000; Lofgren, 1999). In short *Sch60* and *Open* are important determinants of economic development as well as inequality. Here we need to isolate the impact of openness by finding a right instrument as *Open* is not a pure exogenous variable, and itself depends on income levels or institutions. The literature establishes the predicted trade share following Frankel and Romer (FR) (1999) from a gravity equation as an appropriate instrument for openness/trade policy (see, Dollar and Kraay, 2002; Rodrik et al, 2004; Acemolgu, Johnson and Robinson, 2001; Hall and Jones, 1999).

As far as the growth effect of higher education on the poor is concerned, it is indeed positive. Investments in higher education put a positive effect on long term growth Yg as well as short term growth LnY of the economy. Rule of law and political stability are considered as one of the most important determinants of long term economic development and growth (see Rodrik et al, 2004). Higher education is positively related with both the variables and the relationship is significant. We can also see from Table 1 that the developing economies also perform better with overall increases in general level of education. Especially more educated economies are not only more stable politically but they are also less corrupt.

TABLE 1
Higher Education and Economic Growth/ Economic Development

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Dependent Variables</i>				
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	<i>Yg</i>	<i>Lny</i>	<i>Rl</i>	<i>Ps</i>	<i>Ctc</i>
Hyr	0.76 (0.38)	1.71 (3.59)*	0.74 (1.66)***	1.06 (2.14)**	-0.12 (-0.32)
Sch60	0.12 (0.39)	0.24 (3.69)*	0.15 (2.38)**	0.14 (2.06)**	0.26 (4.72)*
Open	1.18 (1.63)***	0.34 (1.94)**	0.59 (3.75)*	0.39 (2.26)**	0.58 (4.23)*
F	1.27	29.70*	15.07*	10.81*	22.29*
N	53	65	65	64	64
R ²	0.19	0.59	0.41	0.35	0.50

Note: *, **, *** show significance at 1%, 5% and 10% level respectively.

In column 1, for *Yg* regression equation, GDP level at 1960 has been used as a control variable depicting the income level at base year.

Table 1 suggests that average years of schooling have a stronger impact on institution building than years of higher schooling. This implies that increasing overall levels of education is a superior policy choice than only concentrating on higher education.

TABLE 2
Higher Education and Inequality

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Dependent Variables</i>								
	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>
	<i>Gini</i>	<i>Theil</i>	<i>Low10</i>	<i>Low20</i>	<i>Sec20</i>	<i>Thrd20</i>	<i>Forth20</i>	<i>High20</i>	<i>High10</i>
Hyr	0.50 (0.06)	0.0006 (0.01)	-0.036 (-0.07)	-0.026 (-0.06)	0.029 (0.10)	0.040 (0.30)	0.038 (0.41)	0.007 (0.06)	-0.0034 (-0.02)
Sch60	0.64 (0.49)	-0.01 (-1.63)***	-0.03 (-0.38)	-0.01 (-0.073)	0.009 (0.19)	-0.007 (-0.34)	-0.009 (-0.83)	0.010 (0.53)	0.017 (0.65)
Open	2.3 (0.76)	0.039 (2.10)**	-0.132 (-0.63)	-0.139 (-0.80)	-0.112 (-0.94)	-0.030 (-0.55)	0.011 (0.41)	0.031 (0.67)	0.031 (0.49)
F	0.53	2.3**	0.36	0.34	0.33	0.23	0.23	-0.51	0.46
N	48	62	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
R ²	0.03	0.10	0.02	0.06	-	0.015	-	0.03	0.03

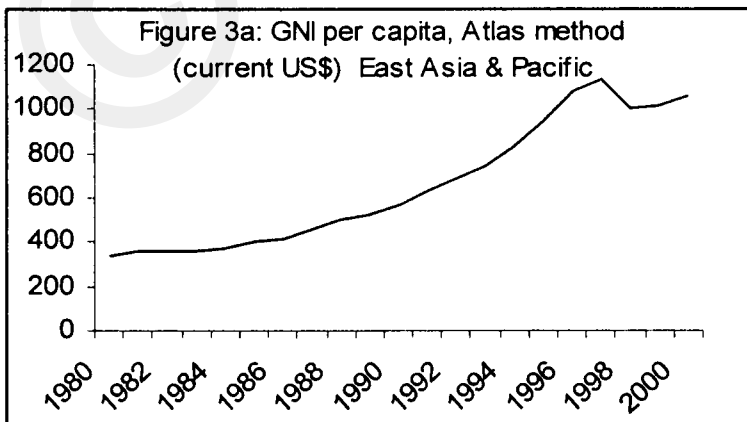
Note: *, **, *** shows significance at 1%, 5% and 10% level respectively.

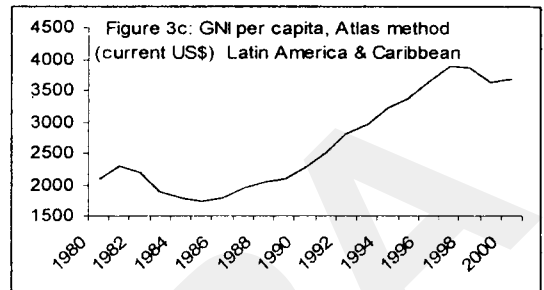
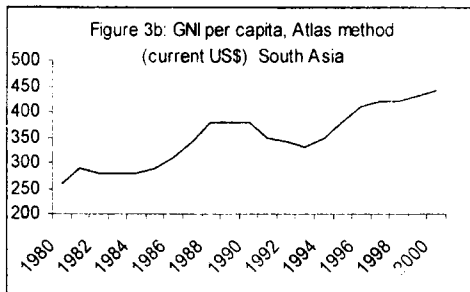
Our results in Table 2 suggest that relationship between higher education and inequality is less robust and insignificant in all the cases. However, the signs of the coefficients do

indicate that unequal education attainments in developing countries are cause of increasing inequalities. It may be true that for many countries in the South, the effects are not significant, but our debate in earlier sections does show that for some countries (i.e., Latin America) unequal education policies lead to monetary segregation of different strata of the population. Positive signs for *Gini* and *Theil* show unequal effects of unequal school attainments in the South. Furthermore, *Hyr* as well as *Sch60* are negatively related with the bottom 10 percent or bottom 20 percent of the population. This observation calls for an immediate attention to the stark reality that education policies in the South do not cater for the least affluent and marginalised groups. There is a real need to bring these socially excluded segments into mainstream by allocating resources to education sector as a whole and not concentrating only on higher education. If higher education is taking resources away from primary education, such policy has to be reconsidered with immediate effect in order to make education policy/higher education policy pro-poor and not mere pro-growth. Interestingly, the other four percentiles minus first one, have a positive relationship with years of higher schooling implying higher education generally benefits the rich or the middle class in developing countries. We know that in India and China, where higher education is more of an urban phenomenon and largely obtained by the middle or high income groups, the same groups are the immediate beneficiaries of economic growth, whereas for the poor and least affluent, growth has yet to trickle down.

Outline of a Pro-Poor Higher Education Reform Process

Economic literature suggests that inequality is not expected to be good for growth either (Aghion et al 1999; Kakwani et al, 2000). World Bank supports the notion that lower inequality can increase efficiency and economic growth through a variety of channels. The report says: “.....policies to improve the distribution of income and assets can have a double benefit – by increasing growth and by increasing the share of growth that accrues to poor people” (2001:56).





Recently, inequality has been on the rise in many countries of the South as seen in Figure 3a, 3b and 3c. Amid increasing inequalities, it becomes vital for education reforms to strike a balance between secondary, higher and primary education. Higher education should not be seen in isolation from overall education policy framework. Investments in higher education at the cost of primary education would not help the South to achieve its development goals. The higher education policy can be successful only after the allocation of sufficient funds to basic education as education for all will bring the socially excluded segments of the population into the mainstream and allow them to benefit from the processes of growth. Generally the governments in developing countries face budgetary constraints which force them to concentrate on higher education, whereas primary education is ignored because of its weaker relationship with economic growth. Enough budgetary allocation to development sector in general and education sector in particular is vital for the pursuit of balanced education policies in the South.

A higher education focus may bring fast dividends to the economy by boosting its growth in the short run, but if primary education is ignored as an outcome of a country's higher education focus, inequalities may rise in the society, whereas on the one hand, these rising inequalities may hamper the long run growth potential of the country. These will be a direct obstacle to country's development goals.

To sum it up, the issue of equality comes first in higher education reforms and only after ensuring equality in overall education policy, can the issues of quality and access in higher education be addressed in an effective manner as well as aligning the former with millennium development goals.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The paper attempts to outline a pro-poor higher education reform process in the South. The theoretical discussion as well as the empirical exercise carried out in the paper strongly suggests that higher education, as it is in the developing countries, does contribute to growth and economic development. However, the paper finds out that higher education has failed to cater the poor and if anything it is negatively related with the incomes of the lowest income groups and the poorest of the poor. The simple reason for unequal effects of higher education is the prevalence of unequal school attainment

between the poor and the more affluent groups. Unequal school attainment is a direct outcome of unequal education policies of the Southern governments who, in an effort to achieve higher growth rate, have been investing generously in higher education while at the same time have been ignoring primary education for being less growth retarding.

The paper proposes that higher education reforms should seek to neutralise the unequal effects of higher education because our empirical evidence suggests that a balanced education policy is a more effective policy choice than merely focusing at higher education. A balanced education policy, where primary education is promoted with the same vigour as higher education, is not only good for growth but the gains to welfare are greater with increasing possibilities of integrating socially excluded segments of the society into the mainstream.

In an effort to evolve more equal education policy framework in developing countries, the paper proposes that governments in developing countries should not isolate higher education from overall education policy frameworks. This is an important step for higher education reforms, because many developing countries have separate institutional arrangements for higher education and primary education who work mutually exclusively to each other. More coordination between autonomous higher education commissions and ministry of education can be stepping stone for the formulation of balance education policies in the South.

A key prerequisite for a balanced education policy is the provision of sufficient funds to education sector by the governments of developing countries. Generally governments under-invest in education sector due to other budgetary obligations i.e., debt or defence. However, one should note that there are no short cuts to achieve development goals. The development strategies or millennium development goals can be achieved only after the allocation of sufficient resources. The governments in developing countries need to revise their budgetary priorities. Heavy investment in higher education while ignoring basic education may carry short term growth dividends, but in the long run unequal education policies have serious ramifications for the success of poverty reduction strategies.

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2nd Stage Regression Models

Economic Growth / Economic Development

$$Lg_i = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 Hyr_i + \chi_1 Sch60_i + \delta_1 Open_i + \varepsilon_1 Gdp60_i + \varepsilon_{1i}, \quad \text{Model 1}$$

$$Lny_i = \alpha_2 + \beta_2 Hyr_i + \chi_2 Sch60_i + \delta_2 Open_i + \varepsilon_{2i}, \quad \text{Model 2}$$

$$Rl_i = \alpha_3 + \beta_3 Hyr_i + \chi_3 Sch60_i + \delta_3 Open_i + \varepsilon_{3i}, \quad \text{Model 3}$$

$$Ps_i = \alpha_4 + \beta_4 Hyr_i + \chi_4 Sch60_i + \delta_4 Open_i + \varepsilon_{4i}, \quad \text{Model 4}$$

$$Ctc_i = \alpha_5 + \beta_5 Hyr_i + \chi_5 Sch60_i + \delta_5 Open_i + \varepsilon_{5i}, \quad \text{Model 5}$$

Income Inequality

$$Gini_i = \gamma_1 + \lambda_1 Hyr_i + \varpi_1 Sch60_i + \zeta_1 Open_i + E_{1i}, \quad \text{Model 6}$$

$$Theil_i = \gamma_2 + \lambda_2 Hyr_i + \varpi_2 Sch60_i + \zeta_2 Open_i + E_{2i}, \quad \text{Model 7}$$

$$Low10_i = \gamma_3 + \lambda_3 Hyr_i + \varpi_3 Sch60_i + \zeta_3 Open_i + E_{3i}, \quad \text{Model 8}$$

$$Low20_i = \gamma_4 + \lambda_4 Hyr_i + \varpi_4 Sch60_i + \zeta_4 Open_i + E_{4i}, \quad \text{Model 9}$$

$$Sec20_i = \gamma_5 + \lambda_5 Hyr_i + \varpi_5 Sch60_i + \zeta_5 Open_i + E_{5i}, \quad \text{Model 10}$$

$$Thrd20_i = \gamma_6 + \lambda_6 Hyr_i + \varpi_6 Sch60_i + \zeta_6 Open_i + E_{6i}, \quad \text{Model 11}$$

$$Forth20_i = \gamma_7 + \lambda_7 Hyr_i + \varpi_7 Sch60_i + \zeta_7 Open_i + E_{7i}, \quad \text{Model 12}$$

$$High20_i = \gamma_8 + \lambda_8 Hyr_i + \varpi_8 Sch60_i + \zeta_8 Open_i + E_{8i}, \quad \text{Model 13}$$

$$High10_i = \gamma_9 + \lambda_9 Hyr_i + \varpi_9 Sch60_i + \zeta_9 Open_i + E_{9i}, \quad \text{Model 14}$$

First Stage Regression Equation for Open

$$OPEN_i = \omega + \psi FR_i + \zeta Disteq_i + Error_i$$

*Appendix 2***Data and Sources**

- Ctc: Control of Corruption, Year: 1997/98. Source: Kaufman et al (2002).
- Forth20: Fourth Income Percentile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- Gdp60: Gross Domestic Product, Year: 1960. Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), 2002.
- Gini: Coefficient in Percentage Points as calculated by WIDER. Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- High10: Highest Income Decile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- High20: Fifth Income Percentile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- Hyr: Average Years of Higher Schooling in the Total Population at 25, Year: 1999. Source: Barro R & J. W. Lee data set, <http://post.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/barro/data.html>
- Lg: Growth Rate of Gross Domestic Product from 1960 to 2001. Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), 2002.
- LnY: Natural logarithm of Per Capita Income at Purchasing Power Prices (PPP), Year: 2000. Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), 2002.
- FR: Natural logarithm of predicted trade shares computed following Frankel and Romer (1999) from a bilateral trade equation with 'pure geography' variables. Source: Frankel and Romer (1999).
- Low 10: Lowest Income Decile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- Low20: First Income Percentile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>
- Open: Natural logarithm of openness. Openness is given by the ratio of (nominal) imports plus exports to GDP (in nominal US dollars), Year: 1985. Source: Penn World Tables, Mark 6.
- Pk: Gross Capital Formation as a percentage of GDP, Year: 2000. Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), 2002.
- Ps: Political Stability, Year: 1997/98. Source: Kaufman et al (2002).
- Rl: Rule of Law, Year: 1997/98. Source: Kaufman et al (2002).
- Sch60: Average Schooling Years in the total population at 25, Year: 1960. Source: Barro R & J. W. Lee Data Set, <http://post.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/barro/data.html>.
- Sec20: Second Income Percentile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>.
- Theil97: UTIP-UNIDO Wage Inequality THEIL Measure - calculated based on UNIDO2001 by UTIP, Year: 1997. Source: University of Texas Inequality Project (UTIP) <http://utip.gov.utexas.edu>.
- Thrd20: Third Income Percentile, Year: 1995. Source: UNU/WIDER World Income Inequality Database (WIID) <http://www.wider.unu.edu/wiid/wiid.htm>

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Genesis and Perpetuation of Social Disparities in School Education in India

An Exploratory Analysis

Mohd. Sanjeer Alam*

Abstract

The development of school education in India right from its inception has taken place differentially among different segments of population. Under colonial rule, vested interests of the British regime coupled with the persistent social prejudices against the educational interests of certain segments of society gave birth to huge inequalities between and among different sections of society in education. Since the attainment of independence, India has witnessed vast expansion in educational opportunities, yet colonial mode of inequalities continues to persist. A wide array of factors do account for the perpetuation of such inequalities in the post-independence period but a closer scrutiny of facts seems to suggest that persistence of century old social psychology biased against access to education for certain sections have played major part. Given these facts the goal of universalization of elementary education surely cannot be achieved as easily and early as the educational planners expect to attain. Hence, unless social environment undergoes radical transformation, a vast section of our society is likely to continue to remain outside the educational system and will be deprived of having choices to lead 'valued and valuable life.'

Introduction

The foundation of 'system of formal schooling' in India was laid down by the British. Unlike the traditional system of education, which was meant for numerically very small upper crust of society, the new system of education was supposedly based on the principle of equity and openness. However, in practice, even the so-called new system of education was meant for few. It served, by and large, the interests of upper castes and classes. The British did not embark on a programme of mass education. In consequence, vast majority of population remained out side the educational system. What they were concerned with was evolving a small class of English-educated Indians who would act as interpreters between the colonial regime and the subjects (Sharp1965). Thus those who

were denied education under the traditional system continued to suffer educational disabilities during the British rule, which resulted in huge disparities in the sphere of education among different segments of population.

India won freedom in 1947. A fresh thought was given to education. Since the attainment of independence, educational planners in India have, among other things, tried to envisage and pursue programmes aimed at securing equality of educational opportunities. Efforts are made to ensure equal participation of hitherto educationally deprived sections in the available educational opportunities. However, studies reveal that social disparities in the utilization of and participation in educational opportunities continue to persist. Undoubtedly, these studies indicate that the magnitude of disparities between and among different segments of population has come down but they also point to the fact that educational development in India in the post –independence era has retained and perpetuated the colonial mode of disparity. The objectives of this paper are, therefore, (a) to analyze the evolution of social inequalities in school education in India and (b) to assess the trend of such inequalities since independence.

Forms of Social Disparities

The educational system has traditionally helped serve the interests of the privileged groups and maintained a self-sustaining circle of elitism (Dreze and Sen 1995). As a result, educational system of India is characterized by inequalities that have assumed various dimensions. The most obvious forms of disparities as well as inequalities have appeared as between regions; between rural and urban; between male and female; between Scheduled Castes and non- Scheduled Castes (Tilak 1979). Of late, some studies have revealed that vast disparity exists in educational attainment between religious groups also (Shariff 1995). However, this paper deals with and is confined to gender, caste and religious disparity in school education in India.

Gender Disparity

In India, gendered location has been one of the major axes of educational stratification. Traditionally, education meant learning to read sacred literature. Most women like *shudras* were not taught sacred literature, although some women from upper class Vashnivate families learned to read Puranic literature (Basu 1974). Muslim girls belonging to upper class families were expected to learn and read the Quran and some accounting skills but the strict seclusion observed by these families prohibited their daughters from attending school. In consequence, what they learned about their religion they learned at home, either from their families or through tutors (Frobes 1998). Also, there was a general feeling in majority of the Hindus, principally cherished by the women and discouraged by the man, that a girl taught to read and write would soon after marriage become a widow. The Muslims shared all the prejudices of the Hindus against education of women (Nurullaha and Naik 1943). Thus, before the 19th century, female education was informal and largely limited to practical matters.

Initially the colonial administration did not pay heed to women's education. It was argued that the policy of the Government was one of strict social and religious neutrality; that the strong prejudices against the education of women were so deeply rooted in their social and religious fabric that any attempt to educate women was sure to create a very great commotion. Thus the education of female segment was purposely neglected. This is why none of the general despatches relating to educational matters submitted to or received from the Court of Directors during first half of the 19th century had any reference to the education of Indian girls and women (Ghosh 1989). However, in the 19th century social reformers like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chand Vidya Sagar and David Hare advocated women's education and the issue of women's education caught the attention of the society and the administration (Borthwick 1985). The reform-minded Indian men were interested in developing India as a progressive society. They thought if women were educated Indian society could no longer be characterized as decadent and backward (Forbes 1998). The efforts of the social reformers resulted in the recommendation of the Education Commission (1883) saying that grant-in-aid rules should be more liberal for girls' school than those for boys' school.

However, it was in the early 1920s that the education of women came to be a public issue (Chanana 1996). The early 1920s witnessed the beginning of the activities of the Women's Indian Association for promoting women's agency in public arena which helped a lot to improve the educational status of women (Bhattacharya 2001). In 1921, dyarchy was introduced and education was brought under dual charge. This allowed greater Indian initiative in educational policy and facilitated its implementation. Women's education was made compulsory in Madras, Bombay, Bengal and United Province (Mathur 1973). On the other hand, by now, the British government had also changed its position towards women's education. As a result, the subject of women's education officially came to be viewed as one requiring special attention and funds. The Hartog Committee argued, "We believe that difficulties in the way of women's education are beginning to lose their force, and the opportunity has arrived for a great new advance. We are definitely of the opinion that priority should be given to the claims of girls' education in every scheme of examination" (Government of India 1930:11).

As the freedom struggle got intensified, the issues pertaining to women came to be discussed increasingly in public fora. Gandhi stressed the need for educating women. His call to women to join the political movement brought women out of seclusion and made them visible which had catalytic effect on the status of women (Mc Dougall 1943; Jain 1975). Thus from 1930s onward women's education and amelioration of their status received a great deal of impetus (Chanana 1996). Overall, the subject of females' education took much longer time to be a public issue than that of their male counterpart.

Table 1 presents the growth in enrolment during British period. It is evident from the table that as compared to boys, the growth in girls' enrolment took place at snails pace. The slow growth in girls' enrolment was not only the result of lukewarm response of the government, but equally responsible was the social prejudice against girls' mobility as well as education in general and in rural areas in particular (Naik 1975).

TABLE 1
Growth of Education in India

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
1891-92	1.7	2.3	0.2
1921-22	3.3	5.4	1.1
1926-27	4.5	7.3	1.5
1931-32	4.7	7.8	1.8
1937-38	5.2	7.8	2.3

Source: Progress of Education in India; relevant years.

Note: Figures indicate percentage of pupils to total population enrolled in all institution.

Although girls lagged behind boys throughout the colonial period, their deprivation varied from one province to the other. Their enrolment rate was comparatively high in the Presidencies. Again, Bombay stood out among the three Presidencies in terms of girls' enrolment and its growth throughout the British period, while Bengal ranked third (see Table 2). The uneven spatial spread of women's education was partly due to that fact that English education was first introduced in three Presidencies (Madras, Bombay and Calcutta) and later in other provinces; and partly due to socio-cultural factors like child marriage, purdah and social prejudices against girls' mobility (Basu 1974; Chanana 1996).

TABLE 2
Enrolment by Sex in Selected Province (in 000 population)

<i>Province</i>	<i>1891</i>		<i>1901</i>		<i>1911</i>		<i>1921</i>		<i>1931</i>	
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Madras	34	5	34	6	46	10	66	17	93	31
Bombay	41	6	51	9	69	14	71	19	88	27
Bengal	39	3	39	3	58	9	62	15	84	23
United Province	N.A	N.A	14	1	23	2	37	4	51	7
Assam	28	2	30	2	N.A	N.A	46	7	37	14

Source: *Progress of Education in India*; relevant years.

Note: N.A denotes data not available.

Since the attainment of independence, many of the impediments, if not all, to the education of women have been removed. A series of committees have been set up to suggest measures for improving the educational status of girls. As early as in 1958, the government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Durgabai Deshmukh to suggest *inter alia* the special measures necessary to equal access to education for girls. The Bhaktvatsalam Committee's Report (1965) on girl's education recommended for central assistance for training and employment of female teachers, grant of free books, writing materials and clothing to girls, etc. Almost all policy documents pertaining to education stressed on to take steps to reduce gender disparities in the available educational opportunities.

Tables 3 and 4 present the trend in enrolment ratio for boys and girls and the gender disparity¹ in elementary education respectively. It is evident from Tables 3 and 4 that since independence, the enrolment ratio for girls has increased remarkably. In the early decades of independence there was huge disparity between boys and girls at primary level. Even worse was the situation at upper primary level. But the gender disparities over the years have come down. No doubt, gender disparities seem to be narrowing; yet substantial gender gap in enrolment at elementary level still persists.

TABLE 3
Trends in Enrolment Ratio in Elementary Education in India

Year	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1950-51	60.6	24.8	20.6	4.6	46.4	17.7
1960-61	82.6	41.4	33.2	11.3	65.2	30.9
1970-71	95.5	60.5	46.5	20.8	75.5	44.4
1980-81	95.8	64.1	54.3	28.6	82.2	52.1
1990-91	114	85.5	76.6	47.0	100.0	70.8
2000-01	104.9	85.9	66.7	49.9	90.3	72.4

Sources: *Selected Educational Statistics; A Handbook of Educational and Allied Statistics; Education in India, Vol. 1, various years*, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

Note: Figures pertain to gross enrolment ratio.

TABLE 4
Trends in Gender Disparity in Elementary Education

Year	Disparity Index		
	Primary	Upper Primary	Elementary
1950-51	0.49	0.69	0.49
1960-61	0.43	0.52	0.42
1970-71	0.32	0.42	0.33
1980-81	0.29	0.35	0.3
1990-91	0.25	0.31	0.26
2000-01	0.17	0.18	0.16

Note: Derived from the data used in Table 3.

1. For measuring disparity in enrolment rate, the index offered by Kundu and Rao (1985) is employed. The index is expressed as:

$$DS = \text{Log} (X_2/X_1) + \text{Log} [(200 - X_1) / (200 - X_2)]$$

where $X_2 \geq X_1$;

where X_1 and X_2 are the literacy/enrolment rate for the two sets of population between which disparity is to be calculated. Higher the value larger is the disparity.

In brief, since Independence, India seems to have made great strides in getting larger number of girls to school but still the country has lower participation of girls than boys in the system of education. Girls continue to lag behind boys in utilizing educational opportunities in the present day India. In general, poverty, lack of educational facilities for girls and gender division of labour are described as major reasons for educational deprivation for girls (Dreze and Gazadar 1996; Bhatta 1998; Sengupta and Guha 2002). However, it should be noted that the social attitudes, particularly in rural areas, are still against the schooling of girls. Jeejeebhoy (1993) in a survey of rural Maharashtra observed that 50 percent of mothers were of the view that sons should receive as much education 'as they want', while only 32 percent gave the same response for daughters. Karlekar (1994) has also highlighted this fact in a study of West Bengal. Thus the son preference in education continues to persist, which acts as a major deterrent to girls' access to education.

Caste Disparity

In India, one of the most important factors that condition and determine one's access to educational opportunities, has been the caste to which one belongs. In ancient India, the philosophy of purity and pollution nurtured the idea that people who think should not work and those who work should not think (Raza and Premi 1987). The *shudras* being placed at the lower end of caste hierarchy were denied access to education and they remained virtually outside the pale of education (Das 1996). Thus the age-old rigid hierarchical system of caste acted as a major deterrent to acquisition of literacy and education for a vast section of the society (Betellie 1981; Nanchariah 2002; Satyanarayana 2002).

In the colonial period the British government remained silent on the subject of the education of depressed castes² until 1855 when schools were opened for the depressed castes in Bombay Presidency. Although time-to-time, the government declared the policies and measures for mass education, but in practice, mass education excluded the depressed castes or untouchables. The 'principle of openness and equality'³ of treatment for all castes admitted in the school, as enunciated by colonial educationists, was undermined by the vested interests of the British coupled with prejudices and resistance from the upper castes (Satyanarayana 2002). History is replete with examples showing hostile social attitude towards the education of lower castes. For example, Hutton notes that in one case 'the depressed classes at Surat had to withdraw their children from the school as a result of indirect pressure exerted on them by higher castes' (Hutton 1933:

2 Depressed class refers to those members of Hindu community who were/are believed to cause pollution by contact or presence and who in consequence find difficulty in obtaining admission in the ordinary schools. In different phases of social formulation in India they have been described as Shudra, Untouchables, Scheduled Castes, Dalits and so on.

3 The education policy of the government recommended 'no boy be refused admission to a government college or school merely on the ground of caste'. However, policy would simultaneously emphasize that 'this principle be applied with due caution.....' (Hunter 1882:516).

483). In the Multan division it was reported that 'boys of low castes such as Chamars, Musalis and Sansis occasionally attend ordinary schools but were seated apart from the children of higher castes' (Richley 1923: 206).

The issue of the education of lower castes got some space in the midst of other social issues when the national movement along with social movements⁴ intensified in the early decades of the twentieth century. The nationalist leaders by that time had become vocal in pushing forward the attention of the government to the need of spreading education among the masses, including the socially backward communities (Bhattacharya 2002). However, despite several efforts made by the government and freedom fighters as well, caste differentiation persisted throughout the British rule (Shukla 2002).

The social structure characterized by caste hierarchy thus resulted in caste differentials in educational attainment. The upper caste Hindus, Brahmins dominated the educational scene. For example in Bengal, three upper castes namely Baidyas, Brahmins and Kayasthas were far ahead of the rest of the society in terms of literacy and education. According to Census of India (1921), the number of literates in English per ten thousand males' population was of the order of Baidyas-5130, Brahamins-2774, Kayasthas-2560. Table 5 presents comparative picture of literacy rate for depressed classes and general population. It is evident from the Table 5 that the literacy rate for depressed classes was far lower than that of general population. Similarly the proportion of pupils of depressed classes to their population was much lower. Only Bengal had comparatively higher representation of depressed classes in school.

After India got independence, a number of constitutional and legal provisions were made to uplift the socio-economic life of the Scheduled Castes (ex-untouchables). In the first place, Article 17 of the Constitution decrees the abolition of untouchability. Article 46, says that the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker section of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Caste. Article 15 (4) states that notwithstanding Articles 15 and 29 (2), the state may make special provisions for the advancement of the Scheduled Castes. Along with these provisions, the most important provision is the reservation of seats (15 percent for the Scheduled Castes) in all educational institutions and jobs in organizations run by the central and state governments. *The National Policy on Education (1986)* stressed on the equalization of educational opportunities for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The revised NPE (1992) reiterated the commitment to equalize the educational opportunities for Scheduled Castes with the non-Scheduled Caste population.

4 There were many social reformers who took up the cause of depressed classes in general and of their education in particular. As early as in 1852, Mahatma Phule opened the first schools for student's from untouchable communities. In 1865, Shashipad Bandhopadhya, a staunch Brahmo, established a school for the poor labourers and the untouchables at Barnagar near Calcutta. In 1886, John Rathinam, an untouchable leader, set up a model school in Madras. In 1928, Ambedkar established the Depressed Classes Education Society to spread education among the untouchables. In 1941, the *Harijan Sevak Sangh* opened one Harijan Kanya Vidyalaya at Sabarmati. Also see Misra (2001).

TABLE 5
Literacy and Enrolment Rate of Exterior Castes and General Population (1931)

Province	<i>% of Exterior Caste* to Total Population (1931)</i>	<i>Literacy Rate for Exterior Caste**</i>	<i>% of Exterior Caste in School^p</i>	<i>Literacy Rate for General Population**</i>
Madras	15	1.5	4.8	10.8
Bombay	8	2.8	3.6	10.8
Bengal	14	5	5.4	11.1
United Province	23	0.5	1.1	5.5
Bihar and Orissa	15	0.6	0.4	5.3
C.P and Berar	18	1.5	1.5	6.6
British India	14	1.9	N.A	9.5

Source: Census of India, 1931, Vol.1, India, Part 1.

Notes: * The term 'Exterior Castes' was Substituted for Depressed Classes in the 1931 census

** Literacy rate is based on the population of age 5 and above.

^p Figures are from education department.

However, in spite of these policy measures, still a large gap in enrolment rate between Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes is observed. In 1981, only 35.7 percent of children belonging to Scheduled Castes in the age group 6-14 were attending schools as against 53.6 percent for non-Scheduled Caste children. Scheduled Caste girls were more deprived than boys. While 23.9 percent of Scheduled Caste girls in the age group 6-14 were attending school, the corresponding figure for non-Scheduled Caste girls stood as high as 43.7 percent (Aggarwal and Sibb 1994). Thus the attendance rate of Scheduled Caste girls was just half the non-Scheduled Caste girls. From Tables 6 and 7 it is evident that over the years the disparity between the Scheduled Castes and others is reducing primary stage but at upper primary stage, the magnitude of disparity has toned down only marginally and this has happened only recently. It indicates that in the transition from primary to middle, many Scheduled Caste children leave the schools.

TABLE 6
Trends in Gross Enrolment Ratio for Scheduled Castes

Year	<i>Scheduled Caste</i>		<i>General Population</i>	
	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Upper Primary</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Upper Primary</i>
1971-72	59.7	20.5	77.1	34.1
1991-92	102.9	52.8	102.7	61.1
1996-97	89.0	54.9	90.5	62.3

Source: *Selected Educational Statistics; A Handbook of Educational and Allied Statistics; Education in India*; Vol. 1; various years. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

TABLE 7
Trends in Disparity between Scheduled Castes and Others

<i>Years</i>	<i>Primary (6-11)</i>	<i>Upper Primary (11-14)</i>
1971-72	0.17	0.32
1991-92	0.00	0.38
1996-97	0.01	0.25

Source: Derived from data used in Table 6.

In the post-independence period, the reasons that account for their educational backwardness are primarily seen as poverty driven (Chalam 1987; NSSO 1989; Yadav 1991; Jabbi and Rajyalakshami 2001; Misra 2001). However, a number of empirical studies have revealed that the practice of untouchability in schools, more especially in rural areas, has not disappeared altogether. In his study, Desai (1976) mentioned the practice of untouchability with regard to the use of facilities for drinking water in schools. Sachidananda and Sinha (1989) in their study of Bihar observed that there was a general absence of mingling between the Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste students. In a very recent study, of some villages in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh, Jalaluddin (1991) observed that Scheduled Caste children were required to sit separately in one corner of the classroom. In a few villages they were made to sit at the door outside the classroom. It appears that social attitudes towards the education of Scheduled Castes or Dalits have not changed to the extent it was expected by the framers of the constitution when they provided certain safeguards, including declaring practice of untouchability as a punishable offence in order to mitigate the centuries old social disabilities of the Scheduled Castes.

Religious Disparity

The introduction of modern education by the British appealed different religious groups differently. It was the Christians who took the lead to utilize the educational opportunities as provided by the British government. Christian missionaries did a lot to educate the community. Other religious groups, namely Hindus and Muslims, took some time to adopt English education, because, initially both Hindus and Muslims had suspicion about English education and therefore offered resistance to it⁵. As a result of this, educational attainment varied in the colonial period by religious groups also. It is evident from the Table 8 that the representation of Christian pupils was much more than the proportion of Christian population to total population both in primary and secondary schools. The

⁵ The charter of 1813 which sanctioned one lac rupees meant for education generated controversies. One school of thought called 'orientalists' called for the preservation of oriental learning and advocated the use of Sanskrit and Persian as medium of instruction. Among Muslims, in response to English education, there developed two schools of thought. One school of thought represented by Darululoom Deoband totally discarded the British system of education. In contrast, Aligarh school of thought was in favour of British system of education (Khan 1990).

representation of the Hindu community in both primary and secondary schools was proportionate to the population it shared in total population. The Muslim community although had its representation in primary school in accordance with its percentage share in total population, but its representation in secondary schools was much lower (Table 8).

TABLE 8
Percentage of Pupils in Public Institutions by Religion in 1896-97

<i>Religion</i>	<i>% Population to Total Population</i>	<i>% of Pupil in Primary School</i>	<i>% of Pupil in Secondary School</i>
Christians	0.55	2.4	5.2
Hindus	71.2	71.5	72.2
Muslims	21.8	20.1	14.2
Others	6.2	5.7	3.7

Source: Progress of Education in India, 1896-97.

In the post-independence period, until recently dependable statistics on education by religion were not available. However, the available data seem to suggest that among major religious groups, while Christians are ahead in educational attainment at all levels and in both rural and urban areas, Muslims lag behind all (Table 9).

TABLE 9
Percent Distribution of Persons by Educational Levels, Religion, Sex and Residence

<i>Religion/Residence/Sex</i>	<i>Not Literate</i>	<i>Up to Primary</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>Secondary</i>
<i>Rural Male</i>	-	-	-	-
Hindus	36.8	25.5	18	10.8
Muslims	40.9	30.3	15.3	8.2
Christians	24.1	30.7	22.4	14.5
<i>Rural Female</i>	-	-	-	-
Hindus	65.8	16.9	9.6	4.8
Muslims	66.4	19.9	8.9	3.2
Christians	37	25.9	16.5	12.3
<i>Urban Male</i>	-	-	-	-
Hindus	12.9	18.7	19	19.7
Muslims	25.9	27.4	19.7	13.7
Christians	6	14	21.8	26.3
<i>Urban Female</i>	-	-	-	-
Hindus	30.6	18.8	16	14.5
Muslims	44.5	24.5	14	9
Christians	12.2	15.9	20	22.2

Source: *National Sample Survey, Employment and Unemployment Situation among Religious Groups in India. 1999- 2000. 55th Round, Report No.468, Table 7.*

Note: Figures pertain to persons of 15 years of age and above.

It can be observed that Muslims both in rural and urban set up lag behind Christians and Hindus. As the levels of education increase the gap gets widened. For example, in rural areas, about 22.4 and 16.5 percent of Christian males and females respectively were educated up to middle. As opposed to this, nearly 18.0 and 9.6 percent Hindu males and females were educated up to middle. The corresponding figures for Muslim males and females stayed at 15.3 and 8.9 percent respectively. Further, while 14.5 and 12.3 percent of Christian males and females in rural areas had attained education up to secondary level, the corresponding figures for Hindu males and females stood at 10.8 and 4.8 percent respectively. As against this the respective figures for Muslim males and females were 8.2 and 3.2 percent respectively. In urban areas also, religious differential in educational attainment is observed. As we move up in the ladder of educational attainment, religious disparity gets widened (Table 9).

The proportion of children attending school is one of the crucial indicators of participation in and utilization of educational opportunities. In Table 10, percentage of children attending educational institutions by religion, residence and sex is shown. The attendance rate for the Christian children is the highest of all within any age group and in both rural and urban areas.

TABLE 10
Percentage of Children Currently Attending School
by Religion, Age, Sex and Residence

Religion/Residence/Sex	Age Group		
	5-14	15-19	20-24
<i>Rural Male</i>	-	-	-
Hindus	75.0	44.6	11.3
Muslims	64.2	33.3	7.3
Christians	81.7	51.8	10.6
<i>Rural Female</i>	-	-	-
Hindus	64.2	26.9	3.8
Muslims	55.9	19.5	2.2
Christians	79.4	47.6	12.7
<i>Urban Male</i>	-	-	-
Hindus	86.4	61.7	25.3
Muslims	74.9	38	12.3
Christians	91.3	74.1	29.9
<i>Urban Female</i>	-	-	-
Hindus	82.9	55.2	18
Muslims	69.9	33.2	6.2
Christians	92.7	64.4	32.2

Source: NSSO: Employment and Unemployment Situation among Religious Groups in India, 1999- 2000, 55th Round, Report No.468.

In general the reasons accounting for the educational backwardness of Muslims proffered are: (a) *historical and religious factors* (Faridi 1965; Baig 1974; Sharma 1978); (b) *minority complex* including latent discrimination against Muslims by larger society (Smith 1963; Malhotra 1973); and (c) *socio-economic backwardness* (Ahmad 1981; Jain 1986; Hamid 1987; Mondal 1994; Ansari 2001; Engineer 2002). However, it should be noted that the literature dealing with educational backwardness of Muslims is by and large impressionistic and speculative, reflecting more the general impression of the observer. As a result, most of the writings on this subject in the post-independence period are not only inadequate but are also by and large polemical and one-sided (Phadke 1973). Very few empirical studies are undertaken to examine the educational status of Muslims and the causes of their educational backwardness. Again such studies are carried out in isolation and treating the Muslims as a monolithic community which is not true. (Ahmad 1973; Imam 1975; Saiyaid 1995). Thus it is difficult to say with certain degree of exactitude what it is exactly accounting for educational backwardness of the Muslims. However, there are many who hold the view that part of educational backwardness among the Muslims lay in practice of discrimination against the community by larger society as well as the government. In a study of Moradabad town, it was observed that most of the schools were located in the non-Muslim localities (Saxena 1983). The situation is no better in rural areas (Jeffery and Jeffery 2000). It is also argued that practice of discrimination against Muslims in the recruitment to public offices only discourages the demands for education among Muslims (Muzammil 1994; Hasan 1997; Harris-White 2003).

Concluding Remarks

Educational development in India has taken place differentially among different segments of population. The social inequalities created during the colonial period continue to persist even today, although the magnitude of disparity over the years in the post-Independence period has come down. Nonetheless, wider gap in education among different segments of population still exists in spite of the several constitutional/legal provisions to equalize educational opportunities, despite several serious attempts to reform the educational system. A closer scrutiny of facts grounded in different forms of social disparities in educational development of India seems to suggest that the failure of educational system to make complete departure from the colonial system of education and persistence of hostile social attitudes and prejudices against the education of certain segments of society, have played major part in perpetuating such disparities.

The discourse on equality of educational opportunities is and will continue to be mired by diversity of opinions. However, given the wide ranging personal and social roles of basic education, access to elementary education for all constitutes an essential pre-condition of social equity and justice (Dreze and Sen 2002) and the state has constitutional obligation to ensure it. Thus what is called for reducing/eliminating social inequalities at least in elementary education is a commitment to transform and radicalize the educational system and to intensify the process of social transformation. Strong


affirmative actions in favour of disadvantaged and under privileged need to be taken so as to offer all the people the choices what Dreze and Sen (1995) call “to lead valuable and valued lives”.

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Higher Education in Africa

A Case of Eritrea

Ravinder Rena*

Introduction

Education has long been recognized as a central element in development. It is a vital input in modernization where the developing countries, particularly in Africa, began their drive for social and economic development since their independence. Education is perceived as a means not only of raising political and social consciousness, but also of increasing the number of skilled workers and raising the level of trained manpower (Tilak, 1994; Rena, 2000:1). Ultimately, the human capital formation is receiving increased attention from policy makers and scholars interested in promoting economic development in Third World countries. Models of endogenous economic growth stress the importance of investment in knowledge, including basic education, as a critical factor in economic expansion. Specialists have long argued that education should form a principal component in any development strategy (Akkari, 2004: 144). In line with this, education is widely accepted as a leading instrument for promoting economic growth. For Africa, where growth is essential if the continent is to climb out of poverty, education is particularly important (Bloom, et al., 2006:1).

Therefore, the investments in education are justified by the contributions which education makes to economic growth, poverty reduction and social welfare. Education contributes to economic growth directly by increasing the productivity of labour, the principal asset of the poor. It also facilitates the development of new technologies, and integrates these technologies into economic activity (Psacharopoulos, 1994). Education is also a welfare indicator per se, reflected in improved health and reduced infant mortality. Education also creates positive social externalities by promoting institutions of civil society, improving social equity, strengthening national cohesiveness, and lowering crime rates (Psacharopoulos, 1993; Tilak, 1994; Rena, 2000; Varghese, 2004).

Indeed, it is understood that higher education can lead to economic growth through both private and public channels. The private benefits for individuals are well established and include better employment prospects, higher salaries, and a greater ability to save and invest. These benefits may result in better health and improved quality of life, thus setting off a virtuous spiral in which life expectancy improvements enable individuals to work

* Department of Business and Economics, Post Box No: 7956, Eritrea Institute of Technology
Mai Nefhi, (Under the Ministry of Education), Asmara, Eritrea.
Email: ravinder_rena@yahoo.com , drravinderrena@gmail.com

more productively over a longer time, thereby further boosting lifetime earnings. Public benefits are less widely recognized, which explains many governments' neglect of tertiary schooling (Thompson, 1981; Tilak, 1992; Rena, 2000; Varghese, 2004). But individual gains can also benefit society as a whole.

Literature Review

A series of studies have taken into account the broader impacts of higher education. It is interesting to analyze some of those studies that were undertaken about higher education and its impact on economic growth. The inattention to higher education within development initiatives lies in the shortage of empirical evidence that it affects economic growth and poverty reduction (Tilak, 2003). After World War II, several economists, including Shultz, Milton Friedman, Gary Becker, and Jacob Mincer, developed the "human capital" theory to examine the benefits of education for individuals and society. Friedman and his wife Rose originally suggested that there was no evidence that "higher education yields 'social benefits' over and above the benefits that accrue to the students themselves." On the contrary, they hypothesized that higher education may promote "social unrest and political instability" (Milton and Rose, 1980).

In contrast to this early view, recent evidence suggests that higher education is a determinant as well as a result of income, and can produce public and private benefits (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006). Higher education may create greater tax revenue, increase savings and investment, and lead to a more entrepreneurial development. It can also improve a nation's wealth and health, contribute to reduced population growth, improve technology, and strengthen governance. With regard to the benefits of higher education for a country's economy, many observers attribute India's leap onto the world economic stage as stemming from its decades-long successful efforts to provide high-quality, technically oriented tertiary education to a significant number of its citizens (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006:1).

Conventional rate of return analysis shows higher education in a less favorable light than it shows primary and secondary schooling. Psacharopoulos and Patrinos reviewed 98 country studies from 1960-1997 and found that the typical estimates of the rate of return from primary schooling were substantially higher than those from advanced schooling. The average public rate of return for the former was 18.9 percent, while for tertiary education it was just 10.8 percent (Psacharopoulos, and Patrinos, 2002). Such studies have had a major influence on international development policy. More recent studies cast some doubt on the applicability of these findings (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006). Traditional rate of return analysis focuses solely on the financial rewards accrued by individuals and the tax revenues they generate. It neglects the broader benefits of advanced education manifested through entrepreneurship, job creation, good economic and political governance, and the effect of a highly educated cadre of workers on a nation's health and social fabric.

A study in Taiwan showed that higher education played a strong role in the country's economic growth (T-C Lin, 2004). It found that a 1 percent rise in higher education

stock¹ led to a 0.35 percent rise in industrial output, and that a 1 percent increase in the number of graduates from engineering or natural sciences led to a 0.15 percent increase in agricultural output. This work examined the effects of concentration in different disciplines and concluded that study of the natural sciences and engineering had the largest effect on output. In another study, Wolff and Gittleman showed that university enrollment rates are correlated with labour productivity growth. The number of scientists and engineers per capita is also associated with economic growth (Wolff, and Gittleman, 1993).

De Meulemeester and Rochat, in their study of six developed countries showed that higher education had a strong causal impact on economic growth in France, Japan, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, but no impact in Australia and Italy. The authors conclude that higher education is necessary for growth but not sufficient. "It is vital," they argue, "that the social, political, and economic structures and the technological level of the society to which the educational system belongs are such that graduates can actually make use of their accumulated knowledge" (De Meulemeester and Rochat, 1995).

Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky showed that workers in American states where the proportion of college graduates is high, earn significantly more than those in states with few graduates, whether or not they have received a tertiary education themselves (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006). The same study showed a positive correlation between higher education and entrepreneurship (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006:37). The authors used Babson College's Global Entrepreneurship Monitor's Total Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) Index, which uses information from 17 countries to measure the share of adults involved in new firms or start-up activities. Individuals with higher education levels were more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activity, and more educated entrepreneurs' created larger numbers of jobs than less-educated entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, there are no comparable studies investigating such spillovers in a developing country like Eritrea.

Another channel for improvement is through research and development, which can boost economic growth and enhance productivity. In a recent World Bank study, Lederman and Maloney conducted a cross-country regression analysis that showed that the rate of return on R&D was 78 percent (Lederman, and Maloney, 2003).

Bloom, et al., found a positive and statistically significant correlation between higher education enrolment rates and governance indicators, including absence of corruption, rule of law, absence of ethnic tensions, bureaucratic quality, low risk of repudiation of contracts by governments, and low risk of appropriation (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006).

¹ As defined by those who had completed higher education, including junior college, college, university, or graduate school.

Bloom and others in their recent study (2006) experimented with different combinations of primary, secondary, and tertiary education, for both the production function effect and the technological catch-up effect, but none of the alternative combinations showed an improvement in fit. No other component of education was significant in affecting technological catch-up. They analyzed whether Africa is close to the production possibility frontier. Africa can only benefit from technological catch-up if there is a gap between current production and the production possibility frontier. They also analyzed the GDP difference between the predicted level of GDP and the initial level of GDP to determine the extent of the production possibility frontier gap (Bloom, Canning, and Chan, 2006).

“In a speech in 2000, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan argued:

The university must become a primary tool for Africa’s development in the new century. Universities can help develop African expertise; they can enhance the analysis of African problems; strengthen domestic institutions; serve as a model environment for the practice of good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and enable African academics to play an active part in the global community of scholars”.²

Methodology and Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The information was obtained from various books and articles on education in Africa and the Ministry of Education, the State of Eritrea, bulletins and reports, the Asmara University Administration (Registrar), the World Bank reports and discussed. This assisted in the drawing of conclusions and recommendations. The Heads of some higher learning institutions in Eritrea are consulted and discussions are held with them.

An attempt is made in this paper to analyze the higher education and its impact in the economic development of Africa. The paper also provides some review of relevant literature. It mainly delves with the education in Eritrea. The paper is divided into five sections. The second part deals with the higher education in Africa along with a brief note on financing of education in Africa. Section three is devoted to explain higher education trends in Eritrea post independence period. Section four discusses some of the major challenges in Eritrean education and the final section ends with some concluding remarks and recommendations.

² United Nations Information Service (2000): “Information Technology Should be used to Tap Knowledge from Greatest Universities to Bring Learning to All, Kofi Annan Says.” Press Release No: UNIS/SG/2625. August 3, 2000.
Internet: www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/pressrels/2000/sg2625.html (Last accessed: February 21, 2006).

Higher Education in Africa

Enrolment rates in higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa are by far the lowest in the world. Although the gross enrolment ratio has increased in the past 40 years – it was just 1 percent in 1965 – it still stands at only 5 percent (Bloom, Hartley, and Rosovsky, 2006:3). Africa's recovery and sustainable development will therefore depend on many important factors, including the expansion – both quantitative and qualitative – of the continent's stock of human capital through education (Thompson, 1981; Rena, 2005b).

The key role of education, despite the economic and political difficulties in most African countries and concentrating on developing theories and fashions during the past decades, is now accepted as indispensable for any effective development. All African governments were certainly convinced of this key role of education in the early years of their independence. African governments have accordingly placed great emphasis on expanding educational opportunities from primary school to university in the two or three decades since their independence (Alexander, 1988; Abdi, 2003; Bloom, Canning, and Chan, 2006).

Financing Higher Education in Africa

Some African universities are beginning to take privatization initiatives. The University of Zambia and Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique have generated significant benefits in enhanced capacity, information and income by establishing internet nodes linked to local electronic networks, which sell subscriptions to non-university business, organizations and individuals. Ghana and Nsukka have been fairly successful in their initiatives. Ghana indicated a profit of 9% on a total income of US dollars 22,700 in 1991 (Saint, 1992). Its policies and methods of operating the consulting center are very popular and might prove to be useful model for other universities. Nsukka claimed a profit of US \$ 35,238 through its consulting activities over the period 1982-1991, on a turnover of US\$ 90,398, with the consultants receiving 50% of the profits and the university and department receiving 30% and 20% respectively (Anyona, Gravenir and Mse, 2005).

Higher Education in Eritrea

Country Profile

Eritrea is located in Africa bordering on the Red Sea and includes the Dahlak Archipelago. It has an area of 46,770 sq miles (121,144 sq km), population (2005 est.) of 4,670,000 (including about 350,000 refugees from Sudan). Capital: Asmara. It is bordered on the northeast by the Red Sea, on the southeast by Djibouti, on the south by Ethiopia, and on the northwest by Sudan. Eritrea also includes the many islands of the Dahlak Archipelago, which is located in the Red Sea. When we look at the educational profile, at tertiary level, there was one University, Eritrea Institute of Technology (3 colleges) and 4 other colleges located in different parts of the country. The total number of students at all levels was about 186,000 in 1991 and reached to about 700,000 in 2006. Eritrea places strong emphasis on education. The Macro Policy of Eritrea states, among

other things, that in the long term, Eritrea will be producing “knowledge intensive” goods and services able to penetrate the world market (Government of Eritrea, 1994). The emphasis on education is also reflected on the government’s policy on poverty eradication.

After the liberation of Eritrea, despite the scarcity of resources and the shortage of academic staff, the University of Asmara was re-established and it resumed its academic work on October 10, 1991 with a few hundred students and five faculties, including faculties of natural science, social science. It is now struggling to accommodate many more courses, including engineering, pharmacy, agriculture etc., and a greater population of students than it was originally designed to cater for. Table 1 provides the information on the university students and their enrolment during the period 1991-92 to 2002-2003.

The university’s total student enrolment in degree programs increased from 2,836 in 1995-1996 to 3,912 in 1999-2000, an increase of 28% in 4 years. In 1999-2000, total enrolment at the institution topped 4,500. The university awards comprised 1202 in 2006, out of which 948 degrees, 209 diplomas and 45 Masters Degrees in select fields. The university has graduated batches for the 14th time since independence with a total of 10,160 students of which 70% are in degree.

In the past, access to university level education was indeed very low. Of those who attended the Eritrean Secondary Education Certificate Examination, for example, only between 10%-15% managed to have access to university education. This has been a serious problem and had ramifications even at the high school level (it can be said that most of the high school students knew that they are unlikely to make it to the university and usually got disinterested in their studies). The most rational way of increasing access to university education is to increase university level facilities. As the reforms are required to be consistent with the educational policy of the country, the government adopted a strategy of decentralizing the tertiary education system. Accordingly, the decision was made to establish various colleges at different locations of the country (Ministry of Education, 2006).

The government has also opened many colleges in the country, such as, a college of nursing and a college of medicine in Asmara, agricultural Colleges at Hal Hale and Hagaz, a technical school in Massawa, a teacher training institute at Adi Keih, and the Eritrea Institute of Technology at Mai Nefhi. In 2005, a Cabinet Ministers meeting, underlined the need to strengthen the colleges of science and technology in the country but expressed no concern over the future of Asmara University. “We have tried to link the various colleges with the related development sectors. For instance, the College of Marine Biology has work relation with the Ministry of Fisheries and is located in Massawa, Northern Red Sea Region,” the Minister of education Osman Saleh stated on the eve of University graduation day in July 2006. So far College of Agriculture, College of Arts and Social Sciences, College of Marine Biology, College of Business and

Economics, College of Nursing and Health Technology and Eritrea Institute of Technology, have been established to provide college level education in the country.³

The number of degree and diploma programs that are offered by the colleges is given in Table 1. Dramatic increase in the diploma programs in the colleges is noted. In terms of student population, at its peak the UoA had a student population of about 6,000, while the current total number of students at the tertiary level is about 12,000. In just a period of four years, the student population has doubled (Rena, 2005, MoE, 2006).

TABLE 1
The Degree and Diploma Programmes in Various Colleges in Eritrea

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Degree</i>	<i>Diploma</i>
Eritrea Institute of Technology	12	16
College of Marine Science	3	3
College of Business and Economics	6	4
College of Agriculture	5	6
College of Health Sciences	5	7
College of Arts and Social Sciences	3	2
Total	34	38
University of Asmara	30	3

Source: Ministry of Education, 2006.

With the opening of the new colleges, access to tertiary education has increased to about 45%. This is in contrast to the corresponding figure of 10% - 15% before the opening of the colleges (MoE, 2006).

In 2003, the first batch of students who completed their 12th grade at the Sawa High School, were transferred to Eritrea Institute of Technology (EIT), Mai Nefhi. The University of Asmara did not enroll any fresh students in the academic year 2003/2004. In 2004 the University was again informed that all the students who were finishing high school in Sawa were sent only to EIT, Mai Nefhi (Rena, 2005⁶). In relation to this,

³ The eight new colleges in Eritrea, offering university level programs (Diploma and Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degrees) started to be established commencing from the 2003/4 academic year. The first was the Eritrea Institute of Technology (EIT) located at Mai Nefhi. The EIT has three colleges, that is College of Education, College of Engineering and Technology, and College of Science. The other new colleges are, the College of Agriculture, Hamelmalo (near Keren), the College of Health Sciences, and the Orota School of Medicine in Asmara, the College of Marine Sciences and Technology in Hirgigo (near Massawa), the College of Arts and Social Sciences to be located in Adi Kieh, and the College of Business and Economics to be located in Massawa. During the 2005/6 academic year, the programs that were being offered by the various colleges are given next.

President of Eritrea, Isaias Afewerki, made it clear during his visit to the University of Asmara in 2005 that the staff should not be surprised if they don't get any fresh students in the coming 4-5 years. The reason, he explained, was that "we are in a transition period".

In 1991, only 8 (12.9%) of 62 faculty members held doctorates. In 1994, the university recruited over 50 new faculty members, 37 of whom held PhDs. By 1998, this figure had increased to 85 (38.1%) of 223. A larger percentage of faculty members with doctorates are expatriates. In 1999, 210 faculty members taught at the university; 90 held PhDs. Of these 90, only 38 (42%) were Eritreans (Cheryl, 2003, Rena, 2005^a). Since, many faculty members are expatriates, their salary scale is not standardized. Teachers from India, for example, make up a large proportion of the expatriate faculty at the University. Many of them are provided with subsidized housing, in addition to higher salaries. In 2003, the government took over payment of all salaries from the UNDP. The University then came under the direct jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Ministry of Education. However, by all accounts, the University was completely closed in the academic year 2006. However, the enrolment trend in the Asmara University presented in the following Table 2.

TABLE 2
Enrolment of Students, by Gender and Type of Course from
1991/92 to 2002/03 in University of Asmara

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Degree</i>			<i>Diploma</i>			<i>Certificate</i>			<i>Total</i>		
	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>T</i>
1991/92	223	1619	1842	224	551	775	-	-	-	447	2170	2617
1992/93	348	1248	1596	173	391	564	-	-	-	521	1639	2160
1993/94	252	1824	2076	113	249	362	-	-	-	365	2073	2438
1994/95	338	2496	2834	59	186	245	-	-	-	397	2682	3079
1995/96	317	2526	2843	29	81	110	-	-	-	346	2607	2953
1996/97	252	2474	2726	37	329	366	15	52	67	304	2855	3159
1997/98	360	2304	2664	29	343	372	5	55	60	394	2702	3096
1998/99	471	2832	3249	32	537	569	37	139	176	540	3490	3994
1999/00	519	3074	3593	31	386	417	42	83	125	592	3543	4135
2000/01	596	3407	4003	20	422	442	45	138	183	661	3967	4628
2001/02	636	3897	4533	19	505	524	84	365	449	739	4767	5506
2002/03	613	4201	4814	74	515	589	86	445	531	773	5161	5934

Source: University of Asmara – Different Records.

In order to foresee better the challenges of tertiary education in Eritrea, the MoE estimated the enrolment patterns at the 12th grade level and also the corresponding enrolments at the tertiary level. The Ministry of Education has prepared these forecasts for the next 10 years for the 12th grade level. If the current levels of access are maintained, then assuming even a lower figure of 40% (15% degree and 25% diploma) access rate to tertiary education, the picture looks as is shown in Table 3. To obtain the

estimates of the total student population at the tertiary education institutions, degree programs are assumed to have durations of 4 to 5 years while the corresponding figures for the diploma programs are assumed to be 2 to 3 years (MoE, 2006).

TABLE 3
Forecast of Student Enrollment at the 12th Grade Level and at Tertiary Institutions

Academic Year	Students Enrolled in the 12 th Grade	Students Accepted for Tertiary Education	Total Number of Students Attending Tertiary Education
2006/2007	21,700	5,400	16,700
2007/2008	22,600	8,700	21,400
2008/2009	24,900	9,000	25,300
2009/2010	27,900	10,000	28,800
2010/2011	31,400	11,200	32,400
2011/2012	35,600	12,600	36,400
2012/2013	40,400	14,200	41,100
2013/2014	45,200	16,200	46,400
2014/2015	49,900	18,100	52,400

Source: Ministry of Education, 2006.

Financing of Education in Eritrea

It is a strong belief that by spending enormous amounts of money on educational development, the Government of Eritrea will enhance the physical, human, and institutional capacity of the system. In line with this, the government of is trying to develop the country to recover from the devastating effects of the war. Virtually all-critical government policy documents clearly emphasize *PEOPLE* as the most central resource that Eritrea has and on which the country can depend for its reconstruction and development. A document developed in 1999 for human resources development '*Our People Are Our Future*' summarizes this conviction. Although, still not adequate, the government has been steadily increasing expenditure on education. Between 1993 and 1997, expenditure on basic and secondary education increased by 15 percent annually and these levels has been maintained through to 2000. Between 2000 and 2001, the recurrent budget has increased by 8 percent, and the overall budget has increased by over 10 percent. As a percentage of GDP, spending on education rose from 4.9 percent in 1997 to 7.7 percent in 2000 and dropped to 5.0 percent in 2001 but remained close to the average for sub-Saharan Africa, The government recognizes the need to increase spending on education as a percentage of total government spending which still stands at an average of about 7.6 percent. The government's plans for the education sector are well articulated. The draft *Eritrea National Education Policy* (February 2003) clearly spells out the policies and strategies for the sector while the draft of the *Eritrea Education Sector Investment Program (EESIP): Framework 2003/04 - 2007/08* (April 2003)

prioritizes additional expenditures on basic and secondary education over five years (GoE, 2003; World Bank, 2003:20).

The development costs include capacity building of system management at center, Zoba, as well as school levels. The coverage will extend to areas of budgeting and planning, teacher development, curriculum development and management, supervision, assessment, etc. In addition, the capacities for financial management, education management information system, etc, also need to be further strengthened. The development cost of education was estimated between 2003 and 2007 and reported that under EESIP, additional US \$18 million would be needed to finance teacher development and training, temporary expatriate teachers at secondary level, curriculum development, national assessment and examination reforms, and computer classrooms at secondary schools. IDA finances \$15 million of the total cost. The unit cost for classroom construction is estimated at \$15,000 per classroom at elementary and middle level, and at \$20,000 per classroom at secondary level, including ancillary facilities. These unit costs in Eritrea are very high compared to other sub-Sahara African countries. For example, in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, the average cost of classrooms is around \$5,000. High unit cost in Eritrea is arguably due to the imported construction materials, as well as the current construction mode of using contractors with little community involvement and contribution in kind. High unit cost is a major factor that delays the solution of the classroom over-crowding issue. Given the current limited resources, the moderate target for the following 5 years would still require double-shifting of classroom utilization. However, the double-shifting ratio is expected to reduce gradually: from 60 percent to 35 percent at elementary level, from over 100 percent to 40 percent at middle level and secondary level (World Bank, 2003 GoE, 2003 Rena, 2005^b). The development costs also include textbooks printing and provision. Free provision of textbooks up to 1:1 book-pupil ratio covers all subjects at elementary and middle level. The current 1:3 book-pupil ratio at secondary level is also assumed to be maintained. The unit cost of book-printing is low in Eritrea.

It is believed that the government expenditure on education is expected to provide economic benefits in (i) providing the basis for poverty reduction, overall human capital development, and accelerated economic growth; and (ii) rationalization of public expenditures for the welfare of the people in Eritrea.

Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth

Education is a key element of the government's strategy to reduce poverty. Weak system capacity, including inadequate physical infrastructure, insufficient numbers and untrained teachers, and limited management capacity for service delivery, have been the key factors responsible for unsatisfactory education sector performance, reflected in low enrolment ratios and poor education quality. Hence, the Government of Eritrea focuses on capacity enhancement for education service delivery at elementary, middle, secondary, and tertiary levels. Thus, strengthening Eritrea's education system capacity is important from the perspective of economic growth.

Rationalization of Public Expenditures

The government's total spending on basic and secondary education was US dollar 33.9 million, 34.9 million and 26.8 million in years 1998, 1999, and 2000.⁴ As stated earlier, between 2000 and 2001, MoE's recurrent expenditure increased by 8 percent. Social and economic progress requires a broad-based education and training sector reform with the establishment of sustainable sector financing, accompanied by an adequate planning and budgeting process. Furthermore, it is envisaged that the education sector development program is also incorporated in the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and integrated into the Medium Term Expenditure Framework prepared in 2004.

Recently, the World Bank estimated that a total of US\$159 million is needed to support the basic and secondary education system during the period 2003-2007 inclusive: US\$74 million in recurrent costs and US\$85 million in development costs. It assumes a 6 percent increase in government financing for recurrent expenditures in education during the first 3 years, and 7 percent during the following 2 years. The achievement of this growth depends on the economic prospects as well as on fiscal conditions. The Bank also assumed that the domestic resource for investment financing in education is constant at the 2000 level of US\$8 million (Government and NGO). The total recurrent cost of education is fully financed under these assumptions. The financing gap is largely in development costs, estimated at \$45.3 million. The Bank viewed that the International Development Agency (IDA) credit is critical to ensure that the program is fully funded over the five years period i.e. 2003-2007 (GoE, 2003; World Bank, 2003:20-21).

Like most African countries, higher education in Eritrea is free, with the government supporting both tuition and living allowances for students (Rena, 2005^a). The rationale for free higher education in Eritrea was based among other things, on the country's desire to create highly trained manpower (GoE, 1994). In turn, graduates were bound to work in the public sector for a minimum of one and half years under national service. Among other factors, economic difficulties and the high increase in population, coupled with rising oil prices of 2004-2006, changed this trend, first resulting in the reduction of the recurrent budget allocated to higher education, and then, paving the way for the introduction of user charges in higher education in Eritrea. The performance of higher education in Eritrea is contestable both on equity and efficiency grounds. Austerity in the public budget for higher education, coupled with the poor performance of the sector in promoting access and equity, has led the Government of Eritrea to intensify the mechanisms for cost-sharing and user charges in higher education. Asmara University has launched Masters programme in 6 disciplines and began to charge enormous fee like about US\$ 10,000 which is exorbitant when we look at the earning capacity of the people. Unless and otherwise the Master programme is supported by the organizations

⁴ See *Eritrea Education and Training Sector*. It is to be noted that spending for basic and secondary education includes spending by the MoE and all other line ministries who are involved in education activities.

per se, where that particular student is working, it would be literally impossible for an individual to pay for their Master's study. This has also led to the introduction of Eri-British – a private university⁵ in that, as more students began to pay for their cost of education, they began to choose between institutions. This way, private educational institutions began to attract students. Among the 45 Master's graduates in 2006, 27 did their postgraduate studies at Asmara University, while the rest followed a correspondence course with Stony Brook in the United States and UNISA in South Africa. They followed courses in Sustainable Livestock Production, Agronomy, Horticulture, Applied Soil Science, Development Economics' and Organic Chemistry.

It is obvious that the GoE cannot afford to provide free higher education including university education indefinitely. It's essential to introduce the student loan or other similar schemes as practiced in other countries, including the rich and developed countries, where students would repay their debt, plus interest, in monthly installments after graduation when they obtain employment. This is the most economically feasible and sensible way forward.

Challenges for Education in Eritrea

Education in Eritrea has seen several challenges before attaining its present status. The Italians, the British and the Ethiopians, all have left their respective marks. The extensive educational reforms currently taking place at all levels are aimed at structuring education to respond to the developmental needs of the country and to enable Eritrea to participate appropriately in the 21st century characterized by globalization and widespread knowledge based activities (MoE, 2006). The Eritrean education system faces challenges that are fairly common to other education systems in Sub-Saharan Africa. These are limited access; low quality; doubtful relevance; inefficiencies; inadequate financial and non-financial resources; and poor delivery capacity. The government's vision for addressing these pressing challenges is well-articulated across key policy documents (Government of Eritrea, 2003:8).

Over-crowding of classrooms is a very serious issue currently. It is observed that the pupil-classroom ratio is 1:90 in EIT. Although these higher learning institutions function in double-shifts (morning and afternoon), but still they do not accommodate many aspirants who seek higher education.

There is no specific focus for the training of middle school teachers and there is also no clear articulation of demand by the Ministry of Education and the supply of teachers from the University of Asmara. Government projections of teacher requirements are

⁵ This Eri-British Institute was started in mid-2004 and is accredited by the Edexcel in UK. Financial aid to students who cannot meet their educational financial requirements is an essential contribution towards achieving equity of access, especially in private universities where the fees charged are quite high.

posited on the development of new colleges at Adi Keyh⁶ (with financing from the African Development Bank) and at Keren. Although some of these institutions (like College of Education and College of Social Sciences and Arts) are functioning in EIT but no graduates (both Degree and Diploma) have come out till 2006. Hence, severe shortage of teacher supply will remain in the coming years. To some extent, this gap has been filled by about 250 Indian expatriate secondary school teachers working at different zobas of the country for the last 10 years. Phasing out these expatriate secondary teachers is another urgent challenge for the MoE. Currently, these cover 19 percent of the secondary teaching establishment and cost on average eight times the cost of an Eritrean teacher (World Bank, 2003, GoE, 2003).

The same is the case with other higher learning institutions in the country where more than 70 percent of the faculty are Indian expatriates, particularly in EIT and other colleges in the country. This problem would continue at least for a few more years. There are no post graduation courses⁷ offered in the country to produce teachers for higher learning institutions. It is surprising to note Graduate Assistants handling the regular classes in some colleges (MoE, 2003; World Bank, 2003).

The institutions should diversify their courses by introducing more science and technology courses, like the Eritrea Institute of Technology – Mai Nefhi and other colleges in the country that may attract qualified applicants. In order to do this effectively, the institutions should effect equity monitoring and evaluation systems to assess and improve equity and access.

Further on educational finances, the Government of Eritrea can set up an Educational Bank that can consider pegging student loan ceilings to fees charged to enhance affordability of private university education in Eritrea. There is need to spearhead the formation of a consortium of private universities in Eritrea or in the region as a way of pulling or sourcing development capital. The government should also encourage and continue supporting the establishment of private universities by providing the necessary infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, offering tax rebates, or land grants.

⁶ The proposed college in this town is College of Social Sciences and Arts, currently existing in EIT. Not started till September 2006 but it is officially declared that the college will be shifted soon in early 2007, whereas the Agricultural College, in Hamalmalo (Keren) has been started in the academic year 2005.

⁷ As stated earlier in this article, Asmara University (and other distance learning programmes from outside) produced about 45 Post-Graduates in 2006. However, this programme was temporarily stopped in 2006. If this trend continues, it would be difficult for Eritrea to attain development of its own teachers for higher education development and it will take much longer time than expected.

Conclusion

Educational investment is an engine of economic development in Eritrea. Educational investment is one of the important economic activities that can play a major role in boosting a country's economy (Rena, 2006:73). Past studies linking education to economic growth have focused predominantly on the effects of primary and secondary education. Tertiary education also has an important role in promoting economic growth. This study examines the impact of tertiary education on economic growth. The analysis suggests that increasing tertiary education may be important in promoting faster technological catch-up and improving the country's ability to maximize its economic output. Therefore, investing in tertiary education in Eritrea may accelerate technological diffusion, which would decrease knowledge gaps and help reduce poverty in the country and the same is applicable to the African continent.

Despite over 15 years of political independence, Eritrea's aspirations and hopes remain still largely unfulfilled. This has not been, however, a period of mitigated failure in the history of the country. It is generally believed that while the investment the government has made in the higher education sector since its independence seems to be quite commendable, the trend will not continue (Rena, 2005C). Current development of an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy and reforms of economic policy should provide the basis for accelerated economic growth in the future. Accelerated poverty reduction and economic growth will, however, only be achievable and sustainable, if an adequately educated workforce is available. The ever increasing pressure for structural adjustment by the World Bank and other donors aside, the tertiary education sector itself is being questioned internally for its limited capacity to provide access to most eligible applicants. Worse, this limited participation in higher education is compounded by gender, socio-economic status, and regional disparities (Rena, 2005b). Therefore, the situation in Eritrean education sector needs a systematic study. To do this, the Eritrean educators and scholars have special responsibility in the national effort. They must also deploy all their resources, talents, imaginations, the goodwill and hard work that are necessary for the success of educational development in Eritrea.

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RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS

Incentives in Elementary Education Do They Make a Difference? *

Vimala Ramachandran **
Nishi Mehrotra
Kameshwari Jandhyala

The issue of incentives and subsidies has been part of the debate on ensuring educational access in almost all the countries. In India we continue to grapple with the issue in a context where vulnerable poor children in rural and urban areas do not have access to a regularly functioning and a child-friendly school, which means that they remain outside, drop out or are pushed out of the school system. In such a scenario then where do incentives come in?

Right up to the mid-1990s, a welfarist approach dominated the development and educational arena. It was believed that the situation could be turned around by providing monetary and other benefits to poor children and their families or through targeted incentives in the form of uniforms, school supplies and mid-day meals. The assumption was that the problem lies in the abject poverty of families and that providing relief or support could enable them to pull themselves or their children out of a difficult situation. There was also an unspoken belief that the problem is with the 'people' and not the system.

In the Indian context, the caste based reservations that are part of affirmative action policies also influenced the manner in which support to poor children's education was addressed. The burden of non-participation shifted to the poor, turning the gaze away

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** Educational Resource Unit, YA-6, Sah Vikas, 68 IP Extension, Delhi-110092. Email: erudelhi@gmail.com. The state teams led by Nishi Mehrotra and Rajni Patni (Maharashtra), Vidhya Das and Vimala Ramachandran (Orissa), Dr. Shobhita Rajagopal (Rajasthan), Vani Periodi (Karnataka) and Kameshwari Jandhyala. (Andhra Pradesh) Dr. Rajni Patni and Disha Nawani did an extensive literature search and annotated bibliography. Vimala Ramachandran was the principal investigator of this study.

from the systemic challenges of creating a level playing field for all in a newly independent country. Repeated demands by educationists for a common school system and ensuring that every single school be endowed with basic facilities and infrastructure fell on deaf ears.

The decade of the 1990s saw renewed interest to improve access to primary and upper primary schools in India through the mobilisation of national and international resources. Though by 2003, 86.96 percent of habitations had a school within 1 km and 78.11 percent had an upper primary school within a 3 km radius, significant inter-state differences yet persist (Table 1). While expansion of schooling led to tremendous increase in enrolment across the country, it did not address the needs of all children of the school going age.

TABLE 1
Percentage of Rural Habitations Having Primary and Upper Primary Schooling Facilities (1993 and 2002)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Primary				Upper Primary			
		Within Hab.		Up to 1 km		Within Hab.		Up to 3 km	
		1993	2002	1993	2002	1993	2002	1993	2002
1	Andhra Pradesh	69.73	78.49	88.57	93.91	13.82	24.49	65.40	74.73
2	Karnataka	60.36	67.44	83.75	88.41	24.71	30.66	85.32	88.26
3	Maharashtra	64.70	67.64	84.22	91.17	25.37	28.95	78.42	78.18
4	Orissa	48.96	51.54	82.42	82.93	13.41	19.77	77.24	73.55
5	Rajasthan	51.11	53.41	74.58	79.84	14.59	21.07	64.43	78.26
	INDIA	49.79	53.04	83.36	86.96	13.87	18.45	76.15	78.11

Source: 6th and 7th Educational Survey (2005). NCERT, Government of India, New Delhi.

Even though the total number of girls and SC children who enrolled in schools rose substantially, several girls and children from deprived communities (working children, those in urban slums, residents of far flung habitations, SCs/STs and nomadic groups) never enrolled. Severe social barriers to meaningful participation of children from some communities continue to exist.

With the UN sponsored Child Rights Convention (CRC) formulated in 1989 and India signing it in 1991, we saw the introduction of a rights-based framework to educational access and children's participation in education. From the mid-1990s, many international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) who raised resources through child sponsorship, turned their attention to the schools and adopted a holistic approach. They focused on improvement in infrastructure, facilities, teachers and supplies coupled with individual incentives like uniforms and books to children – addressing both supply side (school) as well as demand side (children) issues. Subsequently, school health and sanitation and other family/community focused inputs were added on. Yet,

notwithstanding these new/fresh approaches, there was a realisation that a significant section of the population continued to live in abject poverty and struggled to feed, clothe and educate their children.

The turn of the century witnessed a critical shift in the approach of donors from child-centred to community development programmes with sponsored communities. They realised that well administered individual incentives worked up to a point, but had little impact on the overall environment of children. There was also a realisation that in the absence of livelihood security and a caring/supportive environment, the gains of individual sponsorship remain limited. Nevertheless experience with an integrated approach threw up new concerns in that often the focus on the child got diluted, and in many instances the poorest continued to be left out of the beneficiary frame. Once again there was a return to the child-centred approach to ensure a child's right to education.

Study Sites

This study tried to bring together the experiences of different approaches to incentives followed by six NGOs in the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. These NGOs are partners with an international child sponsorship based charity and have been working in the field for over 25 years. All the NGO partners started off with individual child sponsorship programmes – providing a range of incentives (cash and kind) to identified children. There was a growing realisation by 2000 that individual sponsorship did not yield the desired impact on the overall health and well being of children. As a result, the NGO partners were encouraged to move from an individual approach to group incentives or school based incentives. It is indeed interesting that NGOs in educationally relatively forward states readily adopted a more holistic approach and started working with mainstream government schools. However, this was not the case in Rajasthan and Orissa. The NGOs in these states either continued with individual scholarship/sponsorship programmes or continued to run parallel educational programmes and did not engage with the formal school system.

Perhaps the reasons for the difference in approach between NGOs in the two sets of states could be attributed to certain characteristics. Rajasthan and Orissa are poor where the overall situation with respect to education is quite bleak. Notwithstanding over 15 years of intensive educational programmes like DPEP and now the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (*Lok Jumbish* and *Shiksha Karmi* in Rajasthan), rural villages and hamlets do not have a well functioning school system. Despite provision of schools and teachers, there is no guarantee of learning, nor are all children enrolled. In such a situation, the NGOs experimented with other mechanisms/channels to enable children to access education. They consciously created alternative channels for the education of sponsored children like *balika shikshan shivirs (BSS)*, NFE centres (full time and half-time), hostels, admitting children to private schools taking care of all the expenses, running residential schools and so on.

Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh present a different picture. The NGOs here have gradually withdrawn individual incentives and worked (at different levels of

intensity) with the formal school system and the community, and have organised children's groups/community groups, created a community fund, provided remedial education/coaching classes, run bridge courses, organised camps for children during holidays and so on. This was (perhaps) made possible because the formal school system has improved a great deal in these states over the last 15 years.

The strategies adopted by the NGOs in these diverse regional environs are to a large extent determined by the larger social and political environment and the importance given to meaningful access to education. We are actually dealing with different generations of issues in different states and also different districts/locations within a state – even though the macro-educational indicators are not dramatically different (Table 2).

TABLE 2
Dropout Rates Among SC and ST Boys and Girls

	<i>AP</i>	<i>Karnataka</i>	<i>Maharashtra</i>	<i>Orissa</i>	<i>Rajasthan</i>
Dropout SC Boys I-V	44.09	6.12	17.02	44.99	53.07
Dropout SC Girls I-V	46.12	14.03	18.21	42.36	36.29
Dropout SC Boys VI-VIII	63.41	27.19	30.03	63.73	69.65
Dropout SC Girls VI-VIII	68.87	51.61	38.22	67.17	80.07
Dropout ST Boys I-V	63.29	4.88	34.42	59.58	52.19
Dropout ST Girls I-V	68.47	4.96	42.82	63.19	38.31
Dropout ST Boys VI-VIII	76.80	53.81	59.12	76.49	70.42
Dropout ST Girls VI-VIII	82.49	56.80	65.14	76.56	79.63

Source: Select Education Statistics (2006), Government of India, New Delhi.

TABLE 3
Key Indicators from NFHS III (2005)

	<i>AP</i>	<i>Karnataka</i>	<i>Maharashtra</i>	<i>Orissa</i>	<i>Rajasthan</i>
% Women aged 20-25 married before the age of 18	61.4	49.4	48.9	38.7	65.7
% Women whose Body Mass Index is below normal	37.5	38.2	43.0	43.7	36.5
% Children aged 6-35 months who are anaemic	72.0	79.4	76.8	75.8	80.1

Source: Fact Sheet, NFHS III. (2006). Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi.

There are many things that are common to all the five states. The poorest of the poor – be it the last 10 percent or the last 25 percent of the population – continue to struggle for survival and most of the adult women are illiterate and many of the fathers have never been to school beyond the primary level. Dropout rates among SCs and STs remain very high and evidence from the field suggests that this is also the case with Muslims (girls and boys) and some very deprived OBC communities. Age of marriage in the very poor SC and Muslim communities in all the states is around 13 to 15 years for girls. Malnutrition and anaemia among the poorest quartile remains higher than the general population and many more children are malnourished (Vimala Ramachandran and ERU Research Team 2004). The different approaches adopted by established NGOs could perhaps be attributed to the overall administrative culture and also the awareness level among the population.

Insights From the Study

This study is not an evaluation or an assessment of NGO programmes studied. We have tried to explore issues dealing with incentives and the hidden cost of education with a view to gaining some insights and exploring some possible ways forward in such a diverse and challenging situation.

Most of the children who received individual incentives in the past and also in the present in the five states come from families where one or both parents are illiterate. We also came across field workers/*anganwadi* workers who were themselves sponsored children and are now working in the NGO or in government programmes. We met first generation sponsored children who were now leaders in their communities and we also came across sponsored children whose lives remain unchanged. Also evident in the five states was that despite incentives at school level by both government and NGO/INGO, parents had to bear some costs of their children's education. Parents were willing to pay for exam fees, bags, footwear, stationary, uniforms etc. Not all children in a family were fortunate to receive incentives. Parents spent not only for the sponsored child (on hostel fees, exam fees, schooling peripherals, health etc) but also for the non-sponsored siblings when they wanted them to attend school. At the primary level, parents reported spending a minimum of Rs 500 -1000 per annum for a child. The majority of parents said that they should be relieved of the burden of purchasing textbooks (in some cases all textbooks are never available to all children), stationery and uniforms. Many parents with four or five school going children found it difficult to spend equally for the schooling needs of all the children, so the variations of choices emerged, namely educate one child, withdraw the girl child, push the better performing child to another level or let the girls continue in the government school and move the boys to the hostel. These extra costs are among the factors that deter the poorest from accessing schools even if they are in the village.

But the bottom-line is that the poor are eager to get their children educated. The question is whether the providers of education – the government, the NGO or the donor – are able to meet their demand for quality education.

Incentives Not Sufficient to Enhance Access to Quality Education

The first and perhaps the most important insight is that incentives, be they to individual or to the school, may be necessary and useful in some situations (especially for first generation learners) but are not sufficient in themselves to enhance children's access to quality education. In particular, individual incentives may change the life of a few sponsored children, but in the absence of a functioning school as also a larger literate environment, these do not go a long way.

In Rajasthan, the alternative NFE centres and *Balika Shikshan Shivirs* (BSS) have given children access to education for a few hours a day or a few months a year. However, the absence of a functioning primary, upper primary and high school severely inhibits access beyond a point – as these non-formal streams at best prepare children up to the primary level. It is worrying that in Rajasthan, out of a total of 2,843 children in the 5 sample villages (1,310 girls), 583 children (267 girls or 49 percent) in the 6-14 years age group are not attending any school. The short BSS camp was the only educational experience of the girls as participation in the formal school was not possible for those from very poor families. Also, and more importantly, parents were willing to send their daughters to a short-term camp condensing five years of education into seven or eight months but were not ready to send them to an upper primary school. Persistence of co-educational schools and lack of women teachers were cited as reasons.

In Orissa, 90 percent of the primary schools in tribal hamlets are single-teacher schools with all the attendant problems of poor teacher motivation, absenteeism, lack of knowledge of the tribal language and so on. A baseline survey conducted by the NGO in 1999 showed that only 23 percent children (17 percent girls) were attending school. A more recent (2005) survey revealed that the percentage has now gone up to 85 percent (71 percent girls). A local NGO runs bridge courses as also provides hostel facilities for some children to pursue their education in the block or district headquarters or gives children scholarships to study in residential schools. Sponsored children and some of their siblings have been able to study beyond the primary level and even complete high school. However, the children who are left behind in the village continue to struggle with a dysfunctional school system with hardly any teaching and no mid-day meals.

In one village, we came across two families that did not send any of their children to school – they said they were too poor. One family said they did not have any link or relationship with the local NGO, though 58 children from this village received scholarships to study in a hostel or a residential school. In sharp contrast was another sample village where the VEC was active, the government primary school functioned regularly and almost all the children were enrolled. The contrast between villages with a functioning school and an active VEC and those with a dysfunctional school and inactive VEC is marked.

Often one assumes that the provision of TLM will energise the teaching learning process. In both Orissa and Andhra Pradesh in several schools the teaching material and school equipment supplied by the NGO or the government were lying unutilised with little visible impact on either the school or ICDS centre. The question earlier was

whether there was any way to remedy this situation? One possibility was to make the CBOs, the community, VECs and the children themselves more aware of what is being provided and work through them to ensure better utilisation of these in the classroom.

Field experiences from Maharashtra and Karnataka reveal that creating a conducive environment for children's education through active VEC/PTA or MTA, children's clubs, Bal Panchayats and other village level forums for collective action gave teeth to the right to education of every child and promotes child participation. We found that as a result almost all the children up to the age of 14 years were enrolled and attending school, the mid-day meals were regular, the teachers were more responsive and perhaps more regular because of a strong community group. The incentive here was in the form of remedial teaching/tuition classes. Equally, field workers and teachers reported (there was no hard evidence to back this) that pre-school education (in Andhra Pradesh) exerts a positive influence on school participation.

Individual Incentives Accentuate Disparities

One of the most disturbing findings of this study was that individual incentives could increase disparities. We came across girls in two states whose sponsorship did not prevent early withdrawal from school and child marriage. We met one child who was not only married but had given birth to a child before she turned 17. We met siblings of children who were studying in hostels or residential schools who were struggling to cope in the village school. We met one family that persuaded the NGO to shift the sponsorship from their daughter to their son. Sponsorship in the form of scholarships or an opportunity to study in a residential camp definitely benefits the concerned child but it also increases the distance between the child and his/her siblings in some cases and definitely between the sponsored family and other poor households in the village. It creates a sort of divide in the community.

The Most Deprived and Marginalised Were Left Out

A related issue in almost all the areas has to do with the selection of beneficiaries. While a public community based selection process is certainly desirable, we noted that extremely poor/marginalised households in most of the villages visited were invariably left out. People/families with a voice, with clout or those who hold leadership positions within the community based organisations (CBO), seem to have greater representation among the sponsored children.

There needs to be a more conscious intervention in the selection of beneficiaries. For example, the selection in both the districts of Andhra Pradesh is done through CBOs. Discussions with community leaders revealed that many more inputs are required for CBOs to go out of their way and select the most deprived in the village. This was also the case in other states as well. Given the limited resources, prioritisation is crucial.

Parallel Educational Programmes Deflect Attention from Mainstream Schools

In December 2006 a group of 30 NGOs came together in Hyderabad for a workshop on quality education. Many of them ran supplementary education centres/tuition classes, short-term accelerated learning programmes/camps or provided additional teachers to local primary schools. Though NGOs had been working in their areas for 10 to 20 years they admitted that despite sponsorships the children they sponsor rarely go beyond the primary stage. Several NGOs found it difficult to work with mainstream schools and were content with running parallel centres. Funds from international donor agencies were utilised to create parallel systems.

We found that while such programmes benefit a number of children, they do not reach all the children. Equally, most village based interventions – be they in the form of a non-formal centres or camp-based accelerated learning programmes – rarely go beyond Class IV or V. Opportunities to access upper primary or high school facilities are done through scholarships for children to enrol in private/mission schools or to live in a hostel and study in a nearby town/block headquarters.

This raises a serious concern. Bypassing the system is an attractive option, especially for NGOs that have alternative sources of funding. Yet, evidence from across the country demonstrates that there is really no alternative to working with the mainstream schools, as these cater to the poor.

The Key is to Turn the System Around and Make the School Vibrant and Responsive

Since 2002, the NGOs in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have gradually withdrawn individual incentives and turned their focus on school-based and community level activities, teacher support and training, providing additional teachers, activating and motivating the statutory school committees and on remedial education. They now also work closely with the local education department officials and school teachers to ensure the proper functioning of the school and regular provision of the mid-day meals. In addition, they support children's learning through remedial education classes, school/village library, pre-school education and children's clubs/Bal Panchayats. They focus on all the children in the village at the elementary level. Some of the NGOs also provide scholarships to enable children to go beyond the elementary stage.

They supplement the inputs provided by the government and do not duplicate them. However, it is also important to note that while the schools were functioning – not all of them were using the TLM provided by the government or the libraries supported by the NGOs. The impact of their work was visible though, the schools were well kept and clean and most importantly they were functioning regularly.

Mobilisation Essential for a Rights Based Approach

A clear message coming through discussions in the sample villages with NGO partners and through the extensive literature survey is that incentives, individual or school based, are only as effective as the level of awareness about them.

We came across a popular saying that if we throw money, only the strongest will pick it up! In this context, a careful analysis of the families that have availed of individual incentives and those who are excluded is instructive. While such an exercise was not carried out as a part of this study, in some of the sample states we came across extremely poor families in the sample villages who were not aware of individual or school level incentives; they rarely participated in village level meetings and had almost no contact with the Panchayat. Conversely, we also met poor families (not the poorest but several steps removed from abject poverty) that had benefited enormously – young girls/boys were part of *kishori sanghas* or youth clubs; their mothers or grandmothers were members of SHGs and the children were in school, in clubs, in Bal Panchayats and so on.

Andhra Pradesh presented an interesting contrast where the local NGO had made an effort to reach out to the most deprived. Out of the 50 households/children we interviewed in one district, 36 of the fathers and 45 of the mothers were illiterate. In another district, 19 fathers and 27 mothers were illiterate. However, we also came across a few extremely poor families who had not received any benefits. Conscious selection of the most deprived can send a message that individual or collective incentives are meant for the most deprived.

An important lesson from Karnataka is that building a strong people's organisation/women's organisation, ensuring participation of the poorest of the poor in the village and disseminating information to all social groups, is essential for the effective utilisation of either individual or group incentives. While women SHGs do not always include the poorest of the poor, the children's cooperative is open to all children as savings was not a pre-condition for participation.

The Maharashtra model is also very interesting. *Bal Jatra* (children-led daylong programme) educated the parents on what the children should learn in different classes, the inter-linkages between health, nutrition and education, the roles and responsibilities of the VEC and the rights of children. Focusing on the learning outcomes of children made parents aware of what and how much they were learning in school. The *Bal Jatras* are followed with remedial classes run by volunteers (older boys and girls) to help children with their studies.

Children-led campaigns against child labour/employing children as bonded labour have made a big difference in Andhra Pradesh. Active community education on issues of child rights has been able to create an environment where children and those who are working for children can assert and demand their participation in schooling.

Create Structures for Participation and Active Engagement

Another important insight is that mobilisation alone is not enough. Community mobilisation or children's mobilisation has to be followed up with institutional structures that facilitate effective participation. Here too there are some thorny issues that need to be addressed.

While people's organisations or CBOs are seen as a crucial institutional structure for sustaining the processes, there seems to be little understanding of what the relationship

between the CBO, the VEC, the Panchayat and other groups in the village should be. Possibly each NGO needs to ask if there is a need for a separate structure and whether competing structures in the same village could be counterproductive and dilute focus on children's educational needs. Even if one were to continue with the CBO/people's organisation, it is fairly evident that a lot more inputs are necessary in order to address critical social issues such as child labour, early marriage and child abuse. This was quite obvious in Rajasthan where child marriages continue in the villages covered by the NGO even after two decades of work. There is a silence on these issues.

In Maharashtra, the NGO has created local level associations / children's groups and resource agencies (academic support to teachers). Creating sustainable community based organisations ensures that the interventions initiated by the NGO are sustained beyond the project phase. In Karnataka, a children's cooperative has been formed where all the stationery required by all the children is purchased in bulk at wholesale rates and sold in the school. Very poor/needy children are given free books out of the small profit made.

The CBO in Rajasthan plays an important role in all the activities initiated by the NGO in the state. It decides who will receive the benefits (like fee for coaching classes for Navodaya Vidyalayas and the National Open School), who will be sent to BSS, setting up a grain bank for food security and so on. CBO leaders play an active role in supervising NFE classes. However, it is noteworthy that the CBO is not as active in the formal school system. We also met families that had received no support or benefit because they were not members of CBO and others who had accessed a range of benefits because of their prominence in the CBO. Most importantly, the CBO is not actively working towards ensuring the rights of children – especially the right of every child to eight years of elementary education and the right not to be forced into marriage before 18.

In Andhra Pradesh, the interventions in the form of children's clubs seem the most promising, enabling what most of us see as the overall development of children. We noted that the children were active and alert to their surroundings and as a result gained a better understanding of their lives and the barriers to their education and development. They demand better schooling and services such as MDM. Therefore, strengthening children's clubs and enabling children's forums across villages could perhaps be one of the ways to build solidarity across villages.

The Virtuous Triangle

The NGOs studied in the five states present interesting variations of the three sides of rights triangle of a child, namely *the community* (parents/Panchayat), *the children* (as a group), and the *government school*. The key to the effectiveness of the Maharashtra and Karnataka models is that there is a close link through formal institutional structures for participation and interaction between the children, the community and the local school. In Andhra Pradesh the NGO works closely with the school and with the community and children but direct community-school linkages are not strong and are mediated by the NGO. In Rajasthan the community is linked to the NGO and the parallel educational

programmes run by them and not the government school system. In Orissa there is no such community structure that is actively engaged in education in four of the five sample villages. Sponsored families/children primarily have a direct link only with the NGO.

A structured relationship between the three – community, school and children - could enable the community to both access government services/incentives (textbooks, uniforms for SC and ST children, girls; scholarships/stipends, monitor quality of the mid-day meal and the functioning of the school with the children playing a key role in their education and empowerment. In the absence of a three-way channel, the community may not be in a position to assert its rights nor can the children articulate their needs or make their voices heard. Again, ensuring that the children get their textbooks, uniforms and mid-day meals and making sure that statutory bodies like VEC/MTA or PTA (as the case may be) are not just paper committees have to become a priority with NGOs, especially in the educationally backward regions of the country.

Access Existing Government Services and Incentives

All the five states visited have programmes with a range of incentives targeting at the very poor, specific communities like SCs, STs, children with disabilities, nomadic communities and so on. In addition, the states are committed to providing free textbooks to all children, all girls or specific groups. Scholarships and stipends are also available for children to study in residential schools run by the Tribal Welfare or Dalit Welfare Boards. Millions of rupees have been invested since 1991 to ensure universal elementary education. The Rajasthan government has created special schools known as Rajeev Gandhi Pathashalas and declared that any village/habitation with 25 or more children without a school would be eligible for a RGP school. However, a recent study of the education system in Rajasthan reveals that the location of these schools has been problematic and the most deserving habitations are not able to access them (Rashmi Sharma and Vimala Ramachandran, December 2005). Equally, in larger multi-caste villages, Dalit or tribal children are often told to stop coming to the regular government school when a RGP is opened in their village. Ensuring the regular functioning of these schools has not attracted the attention of local NGOs as many of them dismiss these schools as being beyond redemption.

A part of the reason for this indifference may lie in the perceived capacity and outreach of the NGOs. It is somewhat easier to run separate/parallel programmes that can be monitored internally. Indian NGOs come under a strict FCRA regime where their registration is likely to be revoked if they confront the official machinery. This sense of insecurity compels many of them to look for easier options like running a few parallel centres or sending sponsored children to private schools or hostels. Not only that, NGOs can not substitute the formal system, all children cannot have access to quality education through parallel streams. The solution lies in promoting a rights based approach in empowering communities to access their entitlements and enable the poor to access resources meant for them – especially nutrition, healthcare and schooling.

Responsibility of Donors

Donors/funding partners also need to share some of the responsibilities. For instance, child-sponsorship programmes continue to be monitored on the basis of individual report cards on sponsored children. Thus even as many donors have moved from an individual child sponsorship approach to a community empowerment approach, the monitoring mechanism has remained unchanged over several decades. Donors expect NGOs to file progress reports by the name of the child and also provide letters and other necessary documentation to the sponsors.

Long-term and sustainable change is possible only when both the NGO and the donors realise that working with mainstream institutions may require alternative monitoring systems and also more time to facilitate change in the community for long-term impact. They also need to recognise that such a strategy may entail direct confrontation with local vested interests that do not have a stake in the education of the poor and the most deprived.

Insights Have Raised More Questions!

Quality has always been an elusive and daunting goal and ensuring good quality education for all children is even more difficult. If measurement of learning outcomes is accepted as a key determinant of quality, then efforts have to be made to go full circle and ensure that the measured results are shared with children and parents, the outcomes analysed by teachers with resource persons at the cluster and block levels and the entire experience fed into the planning process at the local level.

Short-term camp based programmes can at best provide a head-start – short-term bridge courses, camps or accelerated programmes to help children ‘catch-up’ can inject energy into the system and be a good starting point. Similarly, parallel non-formal education centres also do not add much value if children have nowhere else to go after they complete the primary cycle. While tuition classes have become a popular substitute for ineffective learning in schools, there are no short cuts and learning has to be a continuous and sustained process throughout the academic year and for at least eight years.

Public activities like science fairs, reading and writing competitions, mathematics puzzles, excursions, libraries and children’s clubs could help create a positive/creative environment for education. Such activities would also help turn the spotlight on the value of education in the overall development of children. Coupled with sports and cultural activities, such periodic events could enable children to explore their creativity and also hone their managerial/organisational skills.

Accountability and transparency go together. Village and child-wise data though collected has not been used creatively. If shared in the public domain like the Gram Sabha (general body of the community at the village level) there is some hope of forging closer linkages with the community of parents and other interested people in the immediate environment of the school and has the potential to turn around a difficult

situation. For instance, having a display board outside the school with basic information about the school, the children, the teachers and availability of government incentives and mid-day meals not only adds to transparency, it also help parents to ask questions to clear their doubts and problems.

What is required is a systemic approach and not to make do with piecemeal inputs. A virtuous process needs to be set in motion where an innovation, even if limited, demonstrates tangible outcomes and encourages the formal school system to adapt and change to meet the challenge of universal access to quality education. Discussions with people in the government and outside reveal that the factors that inhibit effective teaching and learning in schools have a lot to do with broader systemic and governance issues like an indifferent administration, low teacher morale, teacher availability, actual teaching time, assessment processes and overall monitoring mechanisms. Efforts of government, INGOs or NGOs need to adopt a multi-pronged approach to address all these issues simultaneously if the provision of incentives to poor children is to have any effect at all.

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National University of Educational Planning and Administration

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Status of NAAC Accreditation in Madhya Pradesh Higher Education

Deepti Shrivastava*

Abstract

The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 to help all participating institutions to assess their performance vis-a-vis set parameters, the rating agency for academic excellence across India and the country's first such effort. The vision of the NAAC is: To make quality, the defining element of higher education in India through a combination of self and external quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance initiatives. Thus NAAC is a process of assessment towards holistic, systematic, objective, data-based, transparent and shared experience for institutional improvement.

There are many critical challenges before Madhya Pradesh higher education. Small number of colleges which have a rather good reputation, have already gone for this assessment, but this number is quite low as compared to the states of Maharashtra, Haryana and Punjab. Research evidence reveals that only 120 colleges are NAAC accredited in Madhya Pradesh. Existing grades of universities highlight the low status of Madhya Pradesh higher education. In this situation, the Madhya Pradesh state university thinkers and officials of higher education are confronted with so many challenges, concerning practical approaches to administration of institutes of higher education by means of a high level of professionalism, proficiency and excellence.

Present paper attempts to examine that why Madhya Pradesh has minimum number of NAAC accredited institutes and what are the causes of this low status. The paper also highlights consequences for non-accredited institutions and government's steps to tackle this problem.

* H-3, Sterling Green View II, Chunna Bhatti Kolar Road, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
Email: devi2kids@yahoo.co.in

Statement of the Problem

“Education is the process of the individual mind, getting to its full possible development.....It is a long school which lasts a life time”. - *Dr. Zakir Hussain (UNESCO, 1998)*.

The 21st century has witnessed significant changes in the educational system in India. These changes have their origin in the evolution of the educational system during the post-independence era and are in response to the economic and social development policies ushered in during the last two decades. In the past few years, the country has witnessed rise in enrolment at all the stages of education, decline in dropout rates, move towards gender parity, substantial increase in the number of teachers in all types of institutions and considerable expansion in the number and spread of educational institutions. The National Policy on Education 1986 had highlighted the constitutional resolve to provide quality education to all (International Conference on Education, 2004).

The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. At present there are 343 universities in India including the institutions of national importance like the IITs, IIMs and AIIMS. Of these, 98 are deemed universities. Within the system, there are over 17,000 colleges, of which 1,800 are women’s colleges. The number of teachers is 4.57 lakhs and students enrolled are 99.54 lakhs (Government of India, 2006).

However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management, including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics, and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st century (UGC, 2003).

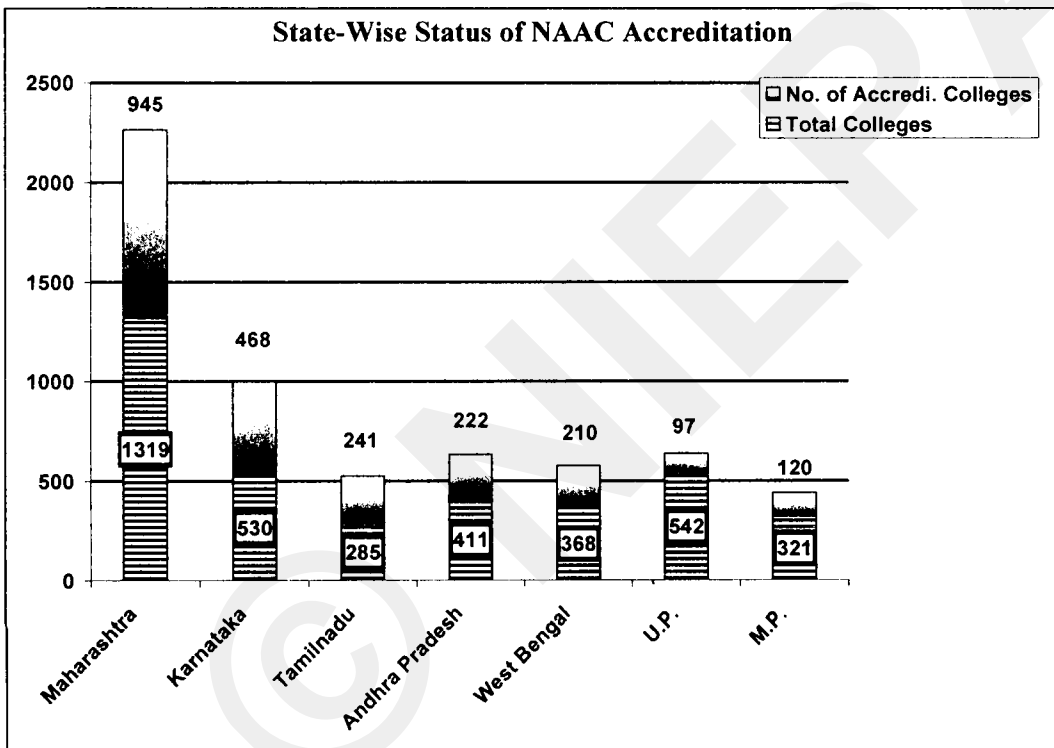
Even the incorporated regulatory system that ensures reasonable heights of excellence in the performance of higher education institution, there have been disapproval that the nation has allowed the escalation of institutions of higher education with many programmes and inferior amenities and resulting in deprived level of higher education. To tackle the issue of worsening quality, the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Plan of Action (POA-1992) spelt out the strategic plans for the policies and advocated the establishment of an independent national accreditation body.

So, with this intention the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 to help all participating institutions to assess their performance vis-à-vis set parameters, the rating agency for academic excellence across India and the country's first such effort. The vision of the NAAC is: To make quality, the defining element of higher education in India through a combination of self and external quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance initiatives. Thus NAAC is a process of assessment towards holistic, systematic, objective, data-based, transparent and shared experience for institutional improvement (*NAAC, 2006*).

Regarding the issue of quality assessment and accreditation of colleges/higher education institutions, as of September 2004, 4 central universities, 86 state universities, 21 deemed universities, 1,838 affiliated colleges and 72 autonomous colleges in India have got into the NAAC's fold. Maharashtra leads the country with highest number of NAAC accredited colleges (*The Hindu, 2004*).

On the other hand, by 2007, the number of NAAC accredited institutions of higher education has increased remarkably, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1



Source: NAAC, Bangalore as on June 2007; & UGC 2006.

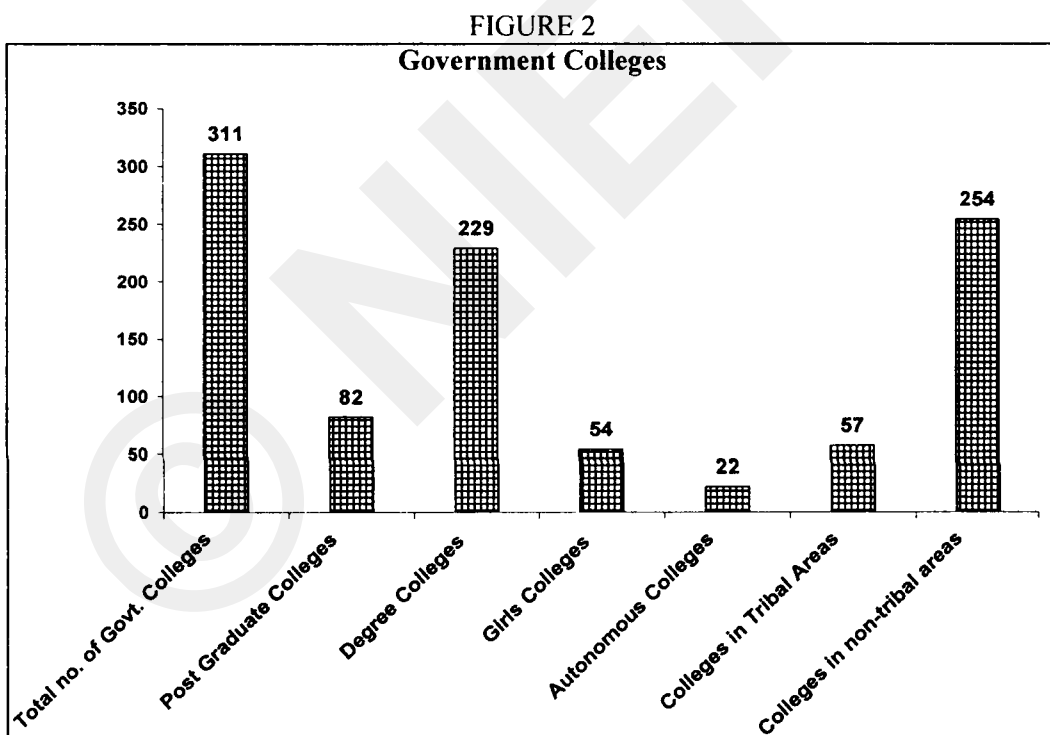
Present paper attempts to examine that why Madhya Pradesh has minimum number of NAAC accredited institutes and what are the causes of this low status. The paper also highlights consequences for non-accredited institutions and government's steps to tackle this problem. Keeping in view the above scenario, it focuses mainly on the following objectives:

1. To know the nature and magnitude of the problem.
2. To ascertain the causational factors working behind low NAAC accreditation in Madhya Pradesh.
3. To identify the consequences for non-accredited institutions.

4. To ascertain government policies to tackle the problem and to suggest remedial measures.

Nature and Magnitude of the Problem

Similar to many other states, Madhya Pradesh too has observed an exceptional increase in the number of educational institutions of advanced learning over the preceding years. Higher Education in Madhya Pradesh has faced pressures such as increasing numbers of scholars and demographic alterations, demands for answerability, re-evaluation of the societal and financial function of higher education, and the impact of new technologies, among others. At present, there are 22 affiliated colleges in Madhya Pradesh (all Government Colleges), which are autonomous. This afforded a very good opportunity to consolidate their infrastructure and improve the quality of education much better than before (Figure 2).



Source: Deptt. of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Annual Report 2004-05.

Out of the total, there are 76 colleges which are receiving grants from the Government, whereas 371 colleges are self-financing, most of which have come up only recently. In fact some of the colleges affiliated to Barkatullah University did not have enough infrastructural facilities to properly run new courses with quality education (*Higher Education, Madhya Pradesh, 2004-05*).

As we know, UGC started schemes for enhancing access and equity by facilitating special development grants to universities and colleges located in backward areas. Majority of universities in Madhya Pradesh were categorized under sections 2(f) and 12 B of UGC Act as institutes physically located in identified backward districts to enable them to strengthen their infrastructure. Table no.1 shows distribution of universities and colleges of Madhya Pradesh are coming under the scheme of 2(f) & 12 (B) of UGC scheme.

TABLE 1
Number of Colleges of Madhya Pradesh Recognised under 2 (f) & 12 (B)

<i>Name of University</i>	<i>Govt. Colleges 2(f), 12(B)</i>	<i>Non-Govt. Colleges 2(f), 12(B)</i>	<i>Govt. Colleges only 2(f)</i>	<i>Non-Govt. Colleges 2(f)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>No. of Inst. Accredited</i>
Awadhesh Pratap Singh University Rewa	28	13	11	---	52	1
Barkatullah University Bhopal	45	16	6	2	69	12
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Indore	39	15	1	2	57	7
Dr. Harisingh Gour University, Sagar	29	10	14	1	54	1
Jiwaji University Gwalior	35	21	1	---	57	6
Rani Durgawati Vishwavidyalaya Jabalpur	36	32	---	---	68	11
Vikram University Ujjain	34	12	1	2	49	4

Source: Directory of Colleges – Recognized under Section 2(f) & 12(B) of the UGC Act 1956; 31st March '04

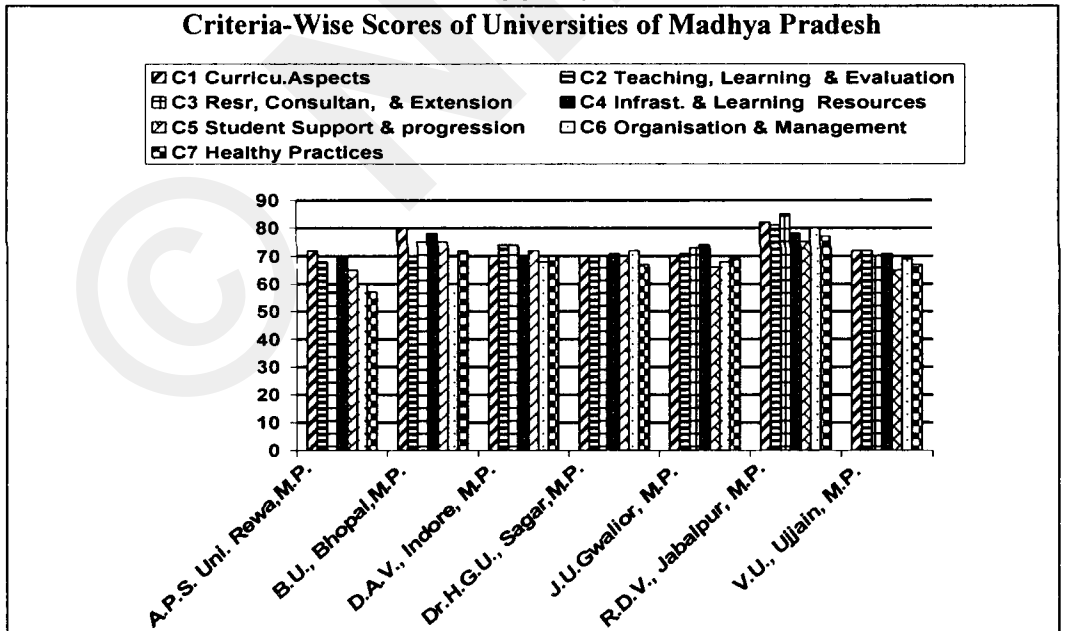
Apart from this there are other critical challenges before Madhya Pradesh higher education. Small number of colleges which have a rather good reputation, have already

gone for this assessment, but this number is quite low as compared to the states of Maharashtra, Haryana and Punjab. Research evidence reveals that only 120 colleges are NAAC accredited in Madhya Pradesh Existing grades of universities highlight the low status of Madhya Pradesh higher education. Description of criteria coding is as below:

- C1 – Curricular Aspects
- C2 – Teaching, Learning & Evaluation
- C3 – Research, Consultancy & Extension
- C4 – Infrastructure & learning Resources
- C5- Student Support and Progression
- C6 –Organization and Management
- C7- Healthy Practices

All the universities of Madhya Pradesh have been assessed by NAAC on the basis of different gradings. On the basis of total scores, the highest grading was five star status. The second highest grading of four-star status was achieved by universities of Indore, Sagar, Gwalior and Ujjain. The Rani Durgawati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur and Barkatullah University, Bhopal, were assigned with B++ and B grades, according to the new grading system. Figure 3 highlights those criterias which are fulfilled by different universities of Madhya Pradesh and also those which higher education Madhya Pradesh fails for NAAC accreditation.

FIGURE 3



Source: NAAC Bangalore

Figure 3 reveals criteria-wise scores of all the universities of Madhya Pradesh and in way explains that why some universities of Madhya Pradesh have failed to score “A” grade in NAAC accreditation process. For example Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa fails to fulfill criteria C3, C6 and C7 i.e. for research consultancy & extension, organization and management, for healthy practices. Similarly Barkatullah University, Bhopal, fails to fulfill the criterion C6 for organization and management. Other universities also lag in fulfilling criteria C6, i.e. for organization and management of all universities of Madhya Pradesh.

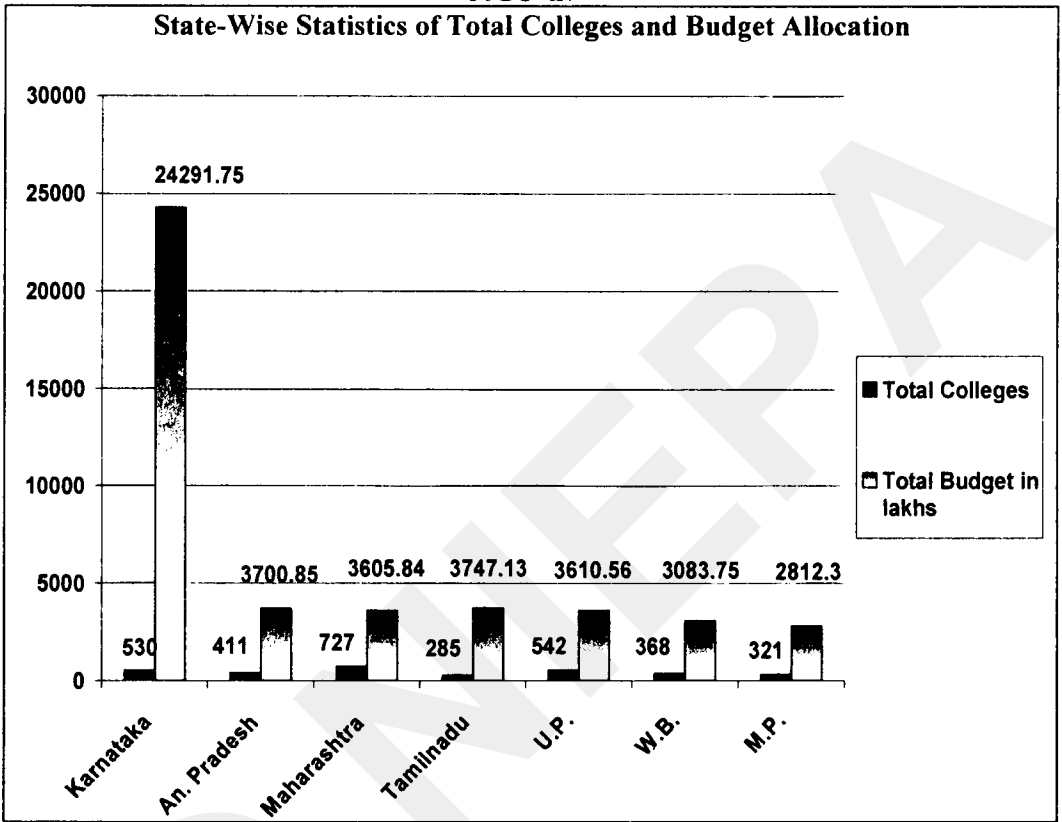
Causational Factors for Low NAAC Accreditation in Madhya Pradesh:

As we know, under the Constitution, education is a subject of concurrent list that is why responsibility for education is shared between central and state governments. The central government sets policy, stimulates innovation and plans frameworks. The state governments are responsible for running the education system on the field. It is the inadequacy of resources that has recently become the most pressing and central issue. In higher education, differing availability has itself contributed to the economic differences (Marie Lall, 2005).

In such a distorted and demanding situation, the Madhya Pradesh state university thinkers and officials of higher education are confronted with so many challenges, concerning practical approaches to administration of institutes of higher education by means of a high level of professionalism, proficiency and excellence. They are duty bound to get over the challenges on the front of organization and convey value supplies and services to the scholars and users devoid of any cloudiness, fascination or discrimination. The major challenge before Madhya Pradesh higher education system is to bring quality education across the extent and wideness of the state. Several social, economic and political reasons seem to act as drawbacks to access and equity in Madhya Pradesh higher education. Hence, following are some major causational factors responsible behind low NAAC accreditation in Madhya Pradesh.

Lack of Appropriate Budget: According to NSS data, the government’s share in overall education expenditure has been declining steadily, from 80 percent in 1983 to 67 percent in 1999. For states like Kerala, the decline is steep, from 75 to 48 percent, while for Madhya Pradesh it is from 84 percent to 68 percent. Indeed, while private expenditure on education has risen 10.8 times in the last 16 years (Kapur & Mehta, 2004). Figure 4 shows the state-wise budget allotment in comparison to the number of colleges of different states.

FIGURE 4

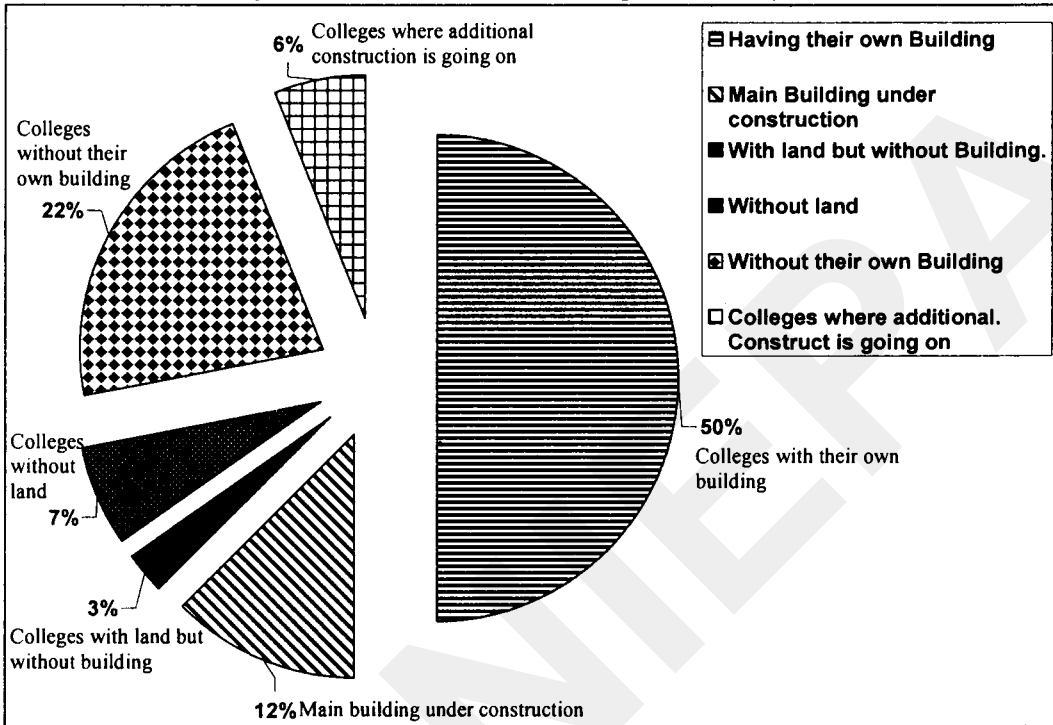


Source: University Grants Commission; 2004

Data reveals that different states like Karnataka, M.P., Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have huge difference in total number of colleges and the budget allotted to these states. Thus lack of sufficient budget should also be considered as one of the major causational factor creating hurdles in the path of NAAC accreditation of M.P. higher education. Lack of sufficient budget is also a problem for M.P. higher education.

Lack of Infrastructure Facilities: On the whole academic infrastructure of M.P. higher education needs significant enhancement. Figures show that department of higher education, lack of numerous facilities.

FIGURE 5
Building Status of Government Colleges of Madhya Pradesh



Source: Department of Higher Education, Madhya Pradesh 2006-07.

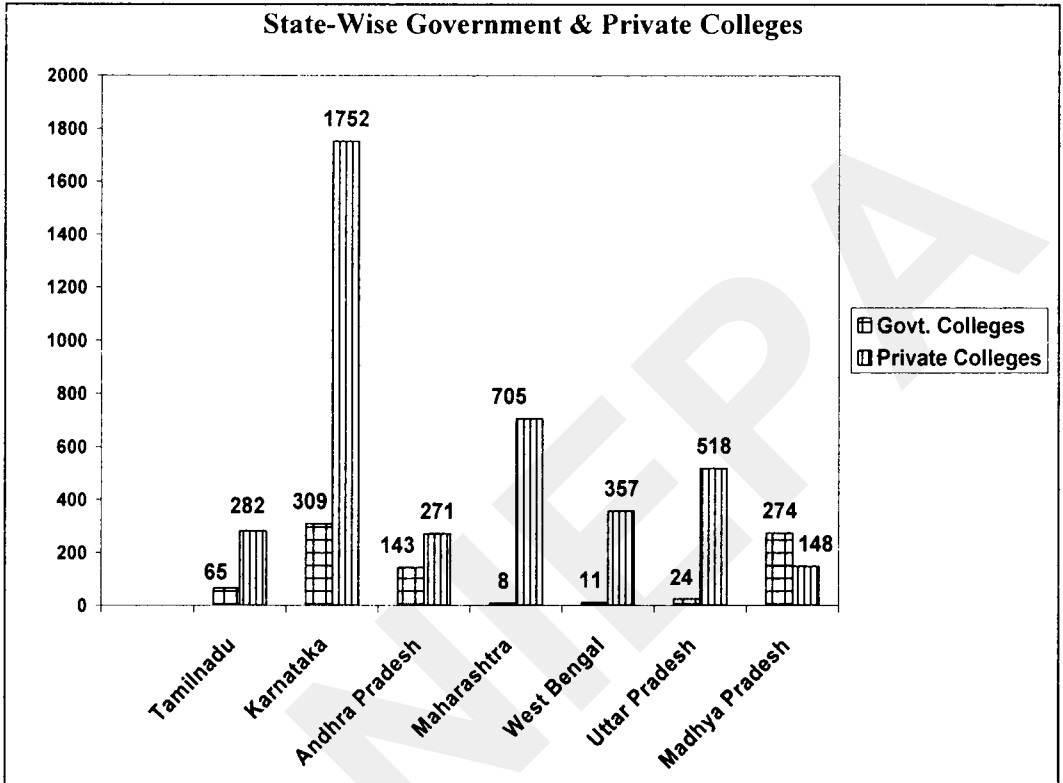
Figure 5 reveals that out of total number of colleges, only 50% have their own buildings, 22% are without their own building, 12% colleges have their main building still under construction. Thus lack of infrastructural facilities can also lead to various other problems and create hurdles in the path of fulfilling criteria like infrastructure and learning resources.

Undue Political Interferences: Political interference is also a major causational factor behind the low status of Madhya Pradesh higher education for NAAC accreditation. This interference affects organizational management.

Requirement of Research Support Division at Directorate Level

Majority of Government Colleges: From figure 6 we can understand the status of good accredited states. Maharashtra is known to have the highest number of accredited institutions, followed by Karnataka where majority of the institutions are private and self financed, whereas in Madhya Pradesh only 148 institutions are private.

FIGURE 6



Source: UGC, 2006 & State-Wise Analysis of Accreditation Reports; Maharashtra, 2004.

Consequences of Low status of Accreditation

The importance of accreditation may be understood in the form that grading has been proven as a motivating factor in higher education systems where the quality of providers varies between extremes, from below average operators to world-class institutions. Accreditation also helps to know your level on the quality scale. It can help institutions and students plan for the future (*World Education Services, 2006*). A low status of accreditation as a consequence, down grades the institute from others on entire quality considerations; it leaves an impact on the entire faculty, students and the institute with the negative feeling that they belong to an institute which has failed to fulfill criteria of a qualitative education. Apart from this, following are some major consequences of low status of accreditation.

The particular consequences of a non accreditation, however, are left to the key stakeholders — management, government, funding agencies and the public at large. Non accreditation of higher education institutes can also affect student's progress. Lack of quality educational services also fail to aim at maximum profit, discouraging the equality

of access to higher education, lack to protect interests of students, including the cognition of qualifications. As a result the prospects leading to better employment and placement are diminished and also non accreditation leads the institutes to be excluded from public financing. Non-accreditation and low grading also leaves a negative impact on the overall development of the institute, the faculty of the institute as well as the future of the students as a consequence.

Government Remedial Measures to Minimize the Problem

Knowledge is not only going to be the driver of Indian economy, but also, it is going to permeate into all strata of Indian society for a better quality of life and living conditions. Therefore, India has to rise to the occasion urgently and reorient its higher education system to make it vibrant, competitive, meaningful and purposeful, because excellence in higher education has become the primary agenda of nations universally. This can be made possible by several initiatives taken by the Government of India. Keeping in view this aspect, the Government of India is armed with various steps to improve the negative aspects of higher education and face the challenges of NAAC accreditation by adopting following policies:

- The University Grants Commission has been providing financial assistance for the development of universities and colleges, by making budgetary provision for various programmes during different plans, including the Tenth Plan.
- Even the Ministry of Higher Education in Madhya Pradesh has been very concerned about the quality of education being provided to the students of the state. As a token of encouragement, they rewarded several well-known colleges of repute and declared them as “Colleges of Excellence”. This provided them some additional grants for the library, laboratories, sports and other infrastructures.
- At the national level, the University Grants Commission, has a scheme to identify good colleges throughout the country and give them “autonomous status“ (NAAC;2005). Madhya Pradesh Government took advantage of this scheme of UGC and encouraged its colleges to apply for autonomy to their respective universities who were also asked to give autonomous status to as many deserving colleges as possible.
- The department of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh has issued instructions that all the colleges affiliated to various universities of the state should undergo accreditation process by NAAC as soon as possible.
- Hundreds of seminars and academic interactions were organized with various groups of academia, at the national level, familiarizing them with the concept of assessment and accreditation.
- Keeping in view the NAAC criterion for student support and progression, most of the better colleges of Madhya Pradesh higher education have successfully started vocational/job-oriented courses recommended by the UGC, New Delhi,

and are running them to the advantage of students. (*State-Wise Analysis of Accreditation Reports – Madhya Pradesh, 2005*)

- Government emphasized that autonomy and redesigning of courses are a must along with support for quality research, with better teaching methods and state level councils to keep a close watch on standards, and take urgent steps to protect the system from degradation.
- In spite of this, government organized various orientation programmes having objectives which provide an understanding of the current changes in Higher Education System in general and their implications for planning and management of colleges;
- Also the higher education department requires that the management and the principal of the college should encourage college teachers to take advantage of the Faculty Development Programmes like TRF of UGC to enhance their qualifications by way of doing M. Phil and Ph. D.
- More career-oriented and vocational courses suggested by the UGC or by private initiatives need to be incorporated into the regular BA/BCom/B Sc courses by department of Madhya Pradesh higher education.
- The general awareness about various funding agencies for grants and research projects needs to be improved further. The Vice Chancellors may take personal interest to ensure greater activities on this front.
- Facilities for educational loans have to be given substantially to all the deserving and meritorious students for pursuing professional and higher educational courses.
- The State Council of higher education conducted refresher courses in various disciplines for the college teachers working in government and for other sector teachers in the ratio of 50:50 as part of curriculum development activities as per the guidelines of the University Grants Commission.
- In addition, training programmes were conducted for the college teachers on the new technology and learning materials.
- A critical review of activities of higher educational institutions as well as their budgets needs to be conducted to phase out obsolete activities and create the necessary space for new activities. The shifting from traditional incremental budgeting to performance based one, it is necessary to arrest the erosion in quality in spite of the resource crunch (*UGC, 2003*).
- In order to operational quality measures, the NAAC advocates institutionalization of quality concerns in the form of establishment of Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) in all higher educational institutions. These “quality cells” may prepare action plans and, in collaboration with all the constituencies of the institution, operationalize them. This action-orientation will help in developing work ethics within the institutions because a high-level work ethic is an essential to achieve quality (*NAAC, 2006*).

Remedial Measures

Reassessment: The scheme of autonomy to the colleges should be continuously assessed to check and control according to the performance and outcome of college and views of faculty & students.

Stability in Curriculum: Frequent playing with the syllabus/curriculum should be stopped.

Competent Academician: At the helm of the education system, competent academicians should be deployed from the department of higher education on attachment basis instead of incompetent persons with high approach.

Self-financing Institutions: The government should permit new colleges with the responsibility that they will bear the cost of salaries of the staff employed for newly started professional courses. The new courses should be permitted only on a self-financing basis with no commitment of any government grant. It will give a positive result and the number of educational institutions will grow substantially in the coming years.

Commendable Inventiveness: The process of assessment and accreditation was voluntary till the year 2001, and only about 100 institutions in the entire country were accredited up to that period.

- Madhya Pradesh higher education should concentrate on satisfactory resource mobilisation which is not quite satisfactory right now.
- There should be fund raising drive through donation, alumni involvement etc (*State-Wise Analysis of Accreditation Reports – Madhya Pradesh; 2005*).
- The university should take step for creating more awareness towards a formal mechanism of internal quality check and academic audit to ensure high standards of academic performance.
- The interaction with other universities in India and abroad should be institutionalized by building sustainable interfaces on a reasonably long term basis.

Job Oriented Courses: Traditional courses should be converted into job oriented courses like social work instead of traditional sociology and criminology, public administration and human rights instead of political science.

Hence the chief underlying concern of the government is to make higher education more relevant and purposeful and also to see that higher educational institutions impart skills and knowledge which are in tune with to the emerging job market, with a strong emphasis on appropriate technical and professional courses. In the globalized world, the state-protected educational system cannot withstand the pressure without making itself competitive. The state funding for higher education is insufficient and private sector benefits the most from higher education. However, institutions should also know how to make an optimum use of the available resources.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Hanindra KUMAR, and Padma, M. SARANGAPANI (eds.) (2005): *Improving Government Schools: What has been Tried and What Works*. Bangalore; Books for Change, pp. xxi+191, ISBN 81-8291-061-1, Price: Rs. 300; US\$ 19 (Paperback)

The book under review is the outcome of a documentation project initiated and managed by 'Sutradhar', a Bangalore based educational service centre. The 23 essays profiled in the book have appeared in an abridged form in the Deccan Herald. The interventions are designed to improve the teaching of curricular areas, such as languages, science, mathematics, and social studies as well as areas like health, environment and peace education. Some interventions have focused on textbooks, radio and computer in the classroom, while others on mobilizing communities and energizing teachers. These narratives inform the reader about how interventions are nurtured, implemented and spread. Government schools serve majority of children in our country. These schools have witnessed a decline in their services and are accessed by the poor and the marginalized. Across India, some committed individuals and organizations have made efforts to improve the schools, with a belief that could bring an enduring change in the system.

In the 'Foreword', Prof. Krishna Kumar writes that Kishore Bharati, the mother of Eklavya in the early 1970s, was perhaps the first attempt by a voluntary agency to engage with the system with the conviction that such an engagement would have a transformative effect on the system. Kumar urges that times are ripe for interventions to receive everybody's attention to the dawn of new partnerships. We pay a high price for maintaining an unreformed system. We need to have transformations to deepen our understandings and strengthen our resolve. In the 'Introduction', editors point out that implementation of intervention is constrained by teachers' limited knowledge of the content that they are to teach and of pedagogy. This has implication for the pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers. They stress that political will and well formed government policy are required to keep alive the space within the system for innovations. It is desirable that prior to introducing an intervention, the concerned NGO has to work with school administrators, principals, and teachers to learn about its utility and its operation in the system.

In the introduction piece, Amrita Pradhan writes about the functioning of Vigyan Ashram started by Dr. Kalbag as a centre for learning and innovation. It introduced a rural technology programme that includes both living and non-living aspects. In the programme, mastering the skill, understanding the concept, as well as ability to teach that skill are important. The programme runs in 25 government schools in Maharashtra. It is a step towards vocationalisation of education to make it more productive and employment oriented. Next, Prakash Brute writes about PRISM (Project in Science and Mathematics) that was initiated by Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) along with Homi

Bhabha Centre for Science Education. It aims to strengthen the teachers' understanding of fundamental principles in science and mathematics. The programme helped both in teachers' professional work and the students' learning. In 'Learning with Maths Lab', Padma M. Sarangapani points out that the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) provided an opportunity to Suvidya – a NGO and education resource centre to popularize Maths learning through concrete material in government schools in Karnataka. During the implementation of the programme in four districts, the feedback indicated that it was quite popular.

Some interventions deal with the teaching of reading and writing. Sherna Gandhi describes the involvement of Centre for Learning Resource (CLR), Pune, to teach English to Class V students through Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) technique. The CLR experience shows that educational media is effective when the teacher is also involved. The programme has much to offer to children. Next, Prakash Burte writes that Pragat Shikshan Sanstha's (PSS) project is a landmark in the field of language teaching. It makes use of three-tiered methodology used in the reading improvement project. In 'I Can Read and Write', Vinalini Mathrani informs that Pratham Mumbai education initiative was launched to achieve universal primary education in Mumbai. It was found that in 21 days, children's reading ability improved. In 2004, Pratham initiated 'Read India Books' to provide low cost and attractive reading material for children. In 'Placing the Text in Context', Faridi Abdullah Khan points out that Prashika textbooks have an abundance of illustrations, games, riddles, poems and puzzles that incite children to learn. Moreover, text books and learning material have made use of local materials and familiar situations so that children would find them meaningful. The team is actually involved in the programme implementation and is receptive to feedback from the teachers.

In 'Windows Between Schools and Society', Ira Saraswat writes about Eklavya's Social Science Teaching Programme (SSTP). This is an educational innovation that is being tried out in eight schools of Madhya Pradesh. The contents of the textbooks in social science are structured around the environment and the life of the learner. There is reluctance on the part of the government to take this programme forward. It implies that many students are deprived of the good material and learning opportunities.

Three interventions pertain to Delhi schools. Two of these were initiated by Central Institute of Education (Department of Education, University of Delhi). Padma M. Sarangapani writes about the activities of the Maulana Azad Centre in the Department of Education. Its focus is on the professional development of elementary school teachers; and to forge links with and work for the educational needs of underprivileged groups. Initial activities took the form of child labour study and preparing diagnostic tests to analyze students' achievement and learning problems. But, later community became the focus. Parents perceived the problems of teacher absenteeism, of neglect of their children and also the poor quality of teaching-learning process. They were interested in the benefits that schooling can give to children, and seemed willing to play an active role in ensuring this. It was felt that empowering the community enables them to convert their anger and frustration into a systematic perseverance and willingness to dialogue. In

retrospect, the author points out that Jehangirpuri seemed more as a common site for activity rather than an integrated project. Keeping a sustained connection with the field was far more time and energy consuming and less glamorous than many participants thought. Nargis Panchapakesan describes the school adoption programme of the CIE Experimental Basic School. The programme covered students from Class I through till they reached Class V. The intervention was an attempt to enhance the quality of teaching-learning process by redesigning curriculum and providing support to teachers through action research. It is pointed out that action research with classroom observation, record keeping and teachers' meetings supports the process of school reform. Teachers felt that the programme had provided an opportunity, and in their perception, children had also benefited from the intervention, becoming more articulate, expressive, creative and confident. However, the initial momentum in the school could not be sustained, with the older and conventional teachers resisting the programme. Yet the teachers have decided to retain the focus on qualitative evaluation initiated during the programme. In 'Quite Transformation' Sharmila writes about the role of Principal of a Navyug School started by New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC) to provide quality education to promising children from the weaker sections of the society. The congenial atmosphere at school and open communication with both authorities and colleagues helped teachers in giving their best. The idea was to make learning child-centered and create a solid foundation for further learning. The Principal has an important role to play in facilitating the process of learning and coordinating the activities of the teachers. Navyug experience demonstrates that if the government is committed to quality education, it can provide resources and create structures that promotes better functioning of schools.

Archana Khandelwal writes about the interest of many industrial foundations of introducing computers in schools. For this there is a need for training of teachers and software development. The states like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh are encouraging the involvement of private bodies in social sector. However, there is a note of caution. It was found that some same sets of teachers have undergone training in Microsoft applications through various agencies. So there is a need for coordination to avoid the wastage of resources. Another development has been the work of Akshara Foundation, who launched a performance monitoring and measurement project in the Corporation schools of Bangalore.

Two interventions deal with the issue of multi-grade schools. Anjali Noronha emphasizes that self-directed learning and group work are effective ways of meeting the challenge of multi-grade classrooms without compromising on learning. Each child moves at his own pace, and the teacher moves with the group where needed. The curriculum is built around issues of environment and can offer a solution to social conflicts of our times. Children learn well and are emotionally secure in multi-age groups. The Rishi Valley Education Centre (REC) team is also supporting state governments to develop effective multi-grade schools. Archana Mehendale describes the work of the NGO "The Concerned for Working Children" (CWC) and looks at the relationship between child labour and educators. The children wished that the dream

school of the working children would be a school where learning would be activity based and which looks beyond the prescribed textbooks and provides an education relevant to their lives. The Appropriate Education Programme (AEP) of CWC was implemented in 50 government schools of Karnataka. Children are happy with the programme, and in these schools there is hundred percent enrolment and retention.

Two interventions deal with the issue of environment education. The environment education programme is based on an alternative paradigm of development in which the focus is on peoples' basic needs and the effective strategies of fulfilling these. The education programme is based on sustainable agricultural and forestry practices. The course builds up conceptual and practical skills of children of Classes VI, VII and VIII and is integrated into the curriculum of about 600 schools in Uttarakhand state. The Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Environmental Education and Research (BVEER) has been involved with school environment education (EE) programme in 62 schools of Maharashtra. It has developed a Manual on Environment Education, and it has been linked to textbooks. The programme has stimulated children to think and talk about environmental issues, and it offers promise for broad based adaptation.

Sonal Zaveri writes about two interventions on health education. SOHAT began in Municipal schools of New Delhi, a project on oral dental care. It later expanded its work to Mumbai. It aims to teach children preventive health and health promoting behaviour. The pilot phase of the project suggested that there was marked improvement in knowledge and awareness of health issues among students. Both the teachers and parents appreciated the programme. The SOHAT experience has potential, but for this it needs the support of curriculum planners and policy makers. The Foundation of Research in Community Health (FRCH) initiated a school health programme. It covered the training of teachers and the curriculum included a comprehensive perspective on the etiology of disease and the knowledge and skill to prevent the disease. This programme presents a case to make health education an integral part of the curriculum.

The Sewa-in-Action (SIA) pleads for inclusive education for the disabled where teachers adopt their teaching methods to suit different learners, including children with disability. The model of inclusive education promotes the school itself as an agency for social rehabilitation and mainstreaming. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) introduced inclusive education programme in Karnataka. SIA developed a pilot model for training teachers. Though there are difficulties faced by teachers, yet many are willing and trying to create possibilities where none existed. It is stressed that universalizing inclusive education in government schools is a small but significant step towards achieving goal of 'education for all'.

Two interventions deal with out-of-school and working children. Kamleshwari Jandhyala writes that HV Foundation worked for bringing the issue of out-of-school and working children into focus and also for evolving strategies for mainstreaming them into the formal education system. The approach emphasizes increased and focused teaching time, tailoring, teaching to child's needs and creating a favourable environment conducive to learning levels. It is a welcome and necessary change. Again, Maya – a

Bangalore based NGO, was concerned about children who were working in urban areas. The children were enrolled in a short non-formal education (NFE) programme, which would serve as a bridge course through which children would join the regular school. They were not readily accepted by the government schools after they completed the NFE programme. Working with government schools has been somewhat difficult.

Lastly, two interventions deal with issues of tolerance and peace. Gauri Salvi writes about the activities of 'Sabrang' which initiated Khoj – a programme aimed at clearing the prejudices from the minds of the students of the Bombay International School. They developed modules for Classes V to VII within social studies curriculum. It emphasized that only after understanding how and why biases enter the mass psyche, can the effective interventions generated to counter them. The motive is to get children to question and then to think matters through and think of answers. In this, involvement of parents is desirable and thus a parent-teacher combine can become a force to bring about social change. Swathi Dandekar writes about a supplementary curriculum developed by Abacus. It highlights issues like social justice and various issues in civics that affect children's lives in classroom discussions. One component is the training of teachers. The success of the programme depends upon the teachers being progressive sensitized human beings.

In sum, the book talks about various interventions that have been tried in schools. Essentially these require training of teachers (both pre-service and in-service), preparation of the teaching-learning material, interest and involvement of the students and use of teaching aids to stimulate the process of learning. Let us hope that the educational authorities can incorporate some material in the regular school curriculum at the appropriate stages. For the benefit of the readers, the book provides a resource directory of the organizations dealing with issues in education. The book will be of interest to a wide variety of readers interested in education development in one way or the other. The editors and various contributors to this volume deserve compliments for their endeavour.

B-58, Inderpuri
New Delhi-110012

P.C. Bansal

Arun KAPUR (2007): *Transforming Schools - Empowering Children*. Sage Publications, New Delhi. ISBN 978-0-7619-3563-6; pp. 253; Price Rs. 480.

Books about schools in India are rare. Where schools form the subject of writing, they are framed as cases in systems studies – private unaided, aided, government. Others refer to schools in the context of achievement, teacher presence/absence, infrastructure status and so on. State agencies, such as Directorates and CBSE, view school as a 7 or 8 digit alphanumeric indicating region, gender, pass percentage, which pretty much is what a school means to them. Teacher education publications give us a view of a school as a

'plant' [as in machinery, not garden] described as a world of timetable organization, attendance and health records, museum trips. In newspapers, schools make an appearance when examination results are out, highlighting the best and the rest, or, when an unfortunate instance of child being grossly treated by a teacher or worse, goes missing. Happier reportage also happens sometimes, as when a school speaks to an Indian born astronaut in space, or when annual events attract celebrities. With each such reading, one yearns for a book or article in which the school is a live institution of children and is at the centre stage rather than as a mere setting for other events. The heavy weight of the title notwithstanding, 'Transforming Schools, Empowering Children', by Arun Kapur, is a refreshing first about schools in India. That Kapur has been a school teacher and still heads a prominent private school in Delhi is another first – a practitioner's view of the school.

The freshness is immediately apparent in the choice of themes. It opens with 'Purpose of School', its description uncluttered with references to philosophers and educationists, though undoubtedly informed by them. One could argue on some of the ideas such as 'Schools ensure the survival of the fittest' (p2) as a purpose, for instance, but one cannot fault the clarity of the author's position on this. Nor that, for this book at least, its all about the school and those in it who are the focus. This focus is sustained throughout the book and is best revealed in the treatment and ordering of the usual themes that have become keywords with schools: learning, curriculum, assessment, technology, teachers, parents, management, and leadership.

The chapters on learning and curriculum link schools with learning, which however is often not actually so. The plethora of books on theories of learning rarely mentions the school. As for the reverse, not many of these exist anyway. The inevitable spectre of examinations is quickly raised and candidly accepted, while we are urged to seek space, even if a small one among the 'push and pull' for child directed learning. The few theories of learning described come later, instead of at the beginning, and this prevents the theories from swamping the mind of readers. This ordering would be of particular value to readers, such as educated parents searching for a meaning in their children's education, and know that they are willing to learn from theory, but theirs and their children's lives can't wait for theory (or policy).

Curriculum as given and curriculum as relevant, on-going social process are the two alternatives that Kapur sets out before strongly advocating the latter as the preferred choice. He displays great enthusiasm for a curriculum that is linked to student's interests, the society and the world. That have been said, he does not go far enough, proof of which lies among others in the figures in the book. The book is replete with flowcharts, concept maps, grids to explicate the author's viewpoint. The lack of quantitative tables is actually welcome in Indian educational discourse, swamped as it is with millions if not billion quantitative tables, including School Report Cards. However, back to the book. In Figure 3.1(p 32), 'Board Examinations' are placed at the top of the figure and is followed by a wide array of connected desirable aspects of curriculum, such as curriculum in harmony with student's interest, interaction of students, teachers, knowledge, milieu, industry and

society, keeping pace with new knowledge, rest of the world (this is an interesting aspect: why is the student distinct from the rest of the world? Why 'they' and 'me'? Why not 'us'? and winds up by placing 'Pro-active Life Skills Based Education' at the bottom. All these do not hang conceptually together in a flow, and that the inevitable contradictions in attempting to preserve all these is indicative of the dilemma and limbo in which schools also find themselves. It also is indicative of the conceptual limits that the author expects from his readers. This sense of not having gone far enough, despite striking a rich vein of originality and school-centeredness, lingers throughout the book and is not dispelled despite the valiant efforts to expand and enlarge the scope for realization of student potential.

Notwithstanding this, the book is rich with valuable insights. For instance, the author candidly admits that it is assessment that is the de facto curriculum, something rare among educational theorists. The subsequent account of contemporary understanding of assessment methods is lucid and is followed by a frank view on examinations in India, their certification and filtration role, with practical suggestions on how to further the status quo. Taken together with the chapter on aesthetic and expansive potential, there is much of value for all types of schools in India.

The technology section is troubling. Notwithstanding the justified descriptions of the power of ICT and the web of ICT based possibilities, one misses the recognition from an author who has spent so much time teaching children, that the access to information and ease with which they can be processed can, and often does, lead to a certain superficiality and uncriticality mostly masked by the slickness of presentations possible through ICT. Children's thinking is often tentative, exploratory, fragile and vulnerable. ICT can be as much a juggernaut on children's thinking as an interesting but overpowering teacher or parent.

Sections on Teacher, Teacher Preparation, Lesson Planning would be familiar reading territory in private schools. Yet another first for Indian schools is the description of the day in the life of a teacher. This succinct account of two pages does more than hundreds of pages of policy documents to reiterate the simple fact that the life of a teacher is as demanding as those deemed engines of shining India. For that alone, this book is a gem. The chapter on 'Diversity and Inclusion' is less common and very welcome. Parents too find a special place in the form of a whole chapter and is a valuable addition-though one misses being able to 'put a face' to the descriptions.

This brings us to the choices of theories and models used in the book. Traditional teacher educators would, perhaps justifiably, find much missing in the theoretical frames of the book, used as they are as chronological accounts of theories. Yet, it is important to also view the theory selections as valuable when viewed from the practitioner's viewpoint. That these are what the practitioner views valuable is an important statement for the discourse on education. It must form an agenda for academics and teacher educators to introspect on what exactly has gone wrong in the chronological, non-engaged (hence I term this voyeuristic) dialogic of teacher education.

This very reader-friendly book evokes a sense of satisfaction too. It is about Indian schools, yet having the feel and ease of better international publications.

A lingering thought however is that what if the author had gone a bit further to describe a school which really pursued its vision of purpose, learning, and children without having to circumscribe and 'cope'. What if the author had described a school, which really is epitome of diversity. Such a school would have a classroom full of children, happy and learning, from every class, caste, ethnicity, gender, nationality and abilities learning meaningfully together... a kind of Earth school. What if a school could convince educated parents to recognize the value of true diversity, which is the missing link in their children's holistic education? Then, the word 'student' in the book will evoke a real world of children...and many of the educated parents' doubts and problems about education of their children will be cleared... Perhaps, that could be Kapur's next venture.

Institute of Advanced Studies in Education
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110 025

Janaki Rajan
E-mail: janakirajan1@rediffmail.com

Constructing University Visions and the Missions of Academic Profession in Asian Countries: A Comparative Study. Report of the COE International Seminar. COE Publications Series No 23; Feb. 2007: Research Institute for Higher Education; Hiroshima University 1-2-3, Kagamiyama, Hagiashi Hiroshima 739-8512, Japan; pp.146 (un-priced), Paperback

The Report deals with papers presented in the course of three sessions at a conference organized by Hiroshima University. All the three sessions were preceded by a keynote address by a distinguished scholar and thereafter two papers each were read out. Each session ended with the comments on the proceedings of the session just concluded. This is the normal pattern of scholarly presentations. The Report also carries a program summary toward the end with a list of other publications of the Institute. The format is attractive and all the papers in the Report are worth reading and reflection.

The contributors numbered 13, including the Director of the Research Institute. The nine countries represented included Mongolia, India, Japan, Philippines, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, and Thailand.

The conference tried to grapple with some basic issues concerning higher education, such as functions of higher education vis-à-vis national development and its leadership role. In most of the advanced countries higher education is funded to meet its national goals, except perhaps in India where the leadership still continues to think in terms of its colonial past. This is one reason why we in India regard higher education a 'merit' good. Higher education in USA or Japan is an instrument for remaining at the top of the echelon because for them 'centers of excellence' means keeping their nations ahead of others in

ideas. Just as in a human organism, brain is on top of the body, higher education too must remain at the top of the educational ladder. While other parts of human body perform all functions at the behest of the brain, similarly higher education too shows direction and defines goals. Seen from this perspective, each country paper says something very subtle about its national goals revealing all that it could without treading on anyone else's toes. These papers offer the reader an opportunity to compare differing national goals and efforts to achieving the same.

Let us take the opening address first.

Akira Arimoto, Director and Professor in the RIHE (the first national institution of research in higher education) defined vision and mission of academic profession in general and Japan in particular. Time was when Abraham Flexner or Cardinal Newman or Clark Kerr would define the goals of higher education while the universities were still being asked to both conserve and disseminate knowledge. Time was and when for a few universities, education was still meant to make men 'gentlemen' and for them these were places for whiling away one's time. But today, these goals of higher education would be considered perverse because the nature of concerns has suddenly gone berserk.

Today there are other types of demands being placed at the door of higher education, which include "globalization, marketization and orientation toward 'Knowledge Society'. While the functions of knowledge, such as discovery, dissemination, application and control, continue to attract the attention of the university scholars, the rise of nationalism has put specific burden on the nature of its functioning. It is perhaps because of this that ever newer institutions have come up in the domain of higher education (such as IITs) as the universities by their very nature cannot perform many types of functions. Going deep into this growth, it is becoming clear that "Nationalism has produced a differentiated system of national universities reflecting the national characteristics found in individual countries." (Is this not the reason why in India Jawaharlal Nehru University could flourish while in Japan it would remain an outcaste and unfunded? JNU typifies Indian psyche which is basically politics-driven and our government repeating a colonial definition of higher education merely gives credence to the logic that we have refused to grow.). How true is the statement of the Director – "National control of the university with introduction of top-down management became a focal point, although bottom-up management had prevailed across the system." The present day government in India is a case in point.

Compare the Indian scenario with that of the USA or USSR. While the USSR typified national control, the USA is responsive to market economy. As compared with these two, India is closer to the USSR than to the USA. Japan too is moving away from the top-down control and is gradually becoming responsive to market economy. Where it fails, the big corporate houses have stepped in to fund innovation and creation of marketable knowledge. "Increasingly it is accepted that university organization consists of the functions both of the academic side and of the business side, and the university is not functional without them all." This is the Japanese way of describing a reality.

Japan, which happens to have 744 universities. Of these 550 are private and 10% of which are about to close down because of the lack of patronage or lack of finances. Therefore, the system as a whole has to shift focus from being a command academic system to market economy. The nature of demands are changing and therefore, the vision must also change and become responsive to society and the requirements of the new stakeholders. If mere teaching characterized medieval university the 21st century university should focus on research, teaching and learning. After all, we are going to become a learning society or a knowledge society. It is against this backdrop that we must consider the present day functions of the universities without forgetting that each nation accepts and creates these functions according to its requirements.

Out of the four points that Director's presentation summarized the last point is quite important. The change of university vision usually responds to change in the mission of the academic profession. Currently the academic profession is compelled to reconstruct its identity under pressure from society, sciences and scholarship. Basically, the academic profession remains a 'key profession' so that its 21st century mission is seen to be one of developing and proclaiming the logic of a profession responsible for social development by way of enhancement of scholarship with integration of research, teaching and learning."

The first session had two presentations: one from Mongolia and the other by the Philippines. Mongolia is currently undergoing tremendous social and academic transformation in the post Soviet era when things are no longer as stable as they once were. This nation is facing several problems, including the equivalence of degrees and the type of courses they ought to emphasize on. In short, in Mongolia there is a "widespread emphasis on internationalization, decentralization, privatization, managerialism and accountability of higher education." The other paper was on Philippines which discussed internationalization of higher education in the country. Two features emerged fairly prominently: (1) In terms of access to higher education, this country was next only to the USA; (2) The nation is able to face the challenges that have recently emerged in terms of internationalization. The paper talks of research being the key to the production of knowledge, which in turn is a pre-requisite for sustained growth of the nation.

The second session started with a keynote address delivered by the President, Honam University, Korea. According to this key-note, the present day university education has to suit a rapidly changing techno-socio-economic environment. The new higher education vocabulary consists of terms like 'borderless', 'transitional', 'trans-border'/'cross-border' etc and hence it is only natural that its functions are undergoing changes.

According to him the vision for the 21st century higher education could be described in terms like globalization, mobility, conformity vs. diversity, balance between autonomy and accountability; co-operation and competitiveness etc. To be country-specific the Koreans have to resolve certain issues like offering two routes to learners (academic and retraining); two modes (full-time and part-time); two sets of destinations (regular higher education and work-related continuing learning); two types of learning (blended; on-line and off-line learning); two types of learning (research-oriented and learning-oriented

learning); two approaches (Korean and foreign); and lastly, two types of clientele (elite and mass education.). The terms used may be different in different countries, but these issues confront all nations today. The type of economy Korea is, it has to think of life-long education and providing access to all. The obvious emphasis in Korea would be on generating ideas and practices for innovations in a highly competitive world.

Morshidi Sirat, Professor and Director, National Higher Education Research Institute, Malaysia, in his paper raises a poser: Are academics being marginalized and de-professionalized in the process of creating regional hubs? The paper carries a summary of visions of 15 universities in the country but the main concern of the speaker remains that the modern day university is becoming too oppressed by market demands and in order to survive it has to respond positively too. Mr. Sirat does not feel satisfied with this ground reality but can he alter the reality is a poser which I doubt anyone can answer.

The next presentation by Mohammad Kamil Tadjudin from Indonesia discusses the problems his country faces vis-à-vis global challenges. The present day problems include: enhancing enrolment capacity in higher education; maintaining equity and participation rate; offering quality education; enhancing funding; increasing internal efficiency of the system; teaching a relevant curricula and improving governance. The country faces the problems of bureaucracy in public institutions and therefore it is slow in reacting to the demands of the time. The paper ends with a comparison of what Indonesia had in 1945 i.e. at the time of its independence and what it has grown into today. The strides are simply breathtaking.

The third keynote address was delivered by Maoyuan Pan from the Ximen University, China. One needs to go through the paper carefully to realize that China is no longer concerned with developing merely higher education but is busy creating universities that are not merely first rate but are comparable with the best in the world. This refrain of the paper stands endorsed with everything that China is currently engaged in: be that Olympic or producing any mechanical gadget. The idea is to show that no one can anywhere near China. It is the next superpower and therefore all its efforts should be aimed to achieve that goal.

The next paper is by a professor viz. Charas Suwanwela from Thailand. This paper too raises similar issues as elsewhere. Here too the nature of problems in higher education remains the same as elsewhere, except for one notable difference, which is that this country is passing through a phase called 'golden period'. Research is getting handsome funding, salaries of teachers are moving northwards and the prestige of the faculty is rising in esteem. All these are signs of 'golden age'.

The last paper is on Indian higher education by Professor JBG Tilak from NEUPA. According to the contemporary history, the vision for India's higher education and the professionals has come from the President of India himself who has been trying to persuade Indians to accept that the Vision is to become a Knowledge Society and the timeframe for this is the year 2020. In the hope that something concrete might emerge out of this Vision a Knowledge Commission too has been set up to perform the Mission with well-defined goals. It would be a pleasant surprise if these dreams become a reality for

going by what is happening in the country right now is that the vice-chancellors in the majority of the cases are either simply inefficient or they are incapable of taking any initiative. The ones who dare the political leadership who are masters of their destinies, would not let that happen. In state universities like Agra or Meerut, it has been difficult to talk about an academic session. Admissions and examinations have no fixed schedule and one follows the other in such a quick succession that teachers find no time to take classes since they are supposed to either remain busy with admissions or examinations. They have in the process even forgotten to attend to their primary function – taking classes. Tilak talks of our institutions of higher learning not finding their names in the international lists. However, he should feel happy that even then our so-called intellectuals pass muster and are allowed to draw most undeserved salaries. The UGC, the repository of all knowledge, is seldom found giving meaningful directions. Unfortunately, it neither leads, nor funds (properly or wisely) and neither does it find itself in a position to command respect. It is a mere grant-giving agency with occasional bouts of academic fever and no fangs to show because the real powers are vested elsewhere. Thus far it has not been able to address even a single problem like ‘directional’ growth. We merely talk glibly of terms like globalization, competition and innovation and also of ‘centers of excellence’ etc., but in reality our academics are greater politicians than anything else. We keep comparing ourselves with China but do we have the spirit and acumen to match their efforts?

On the whole the present publication is thought provoking and the discussion important for those who have the ability to be curious (jigyasu) and the competence to rise above the mundane pastime, i.e. politicking.

Formerly with the NCERT
Pocket A-4/ 206, Kalkaji Extension, New Delhi 110019

R.P. Singh
E-mail: profrpsi@gmail.com

Higher Education in South-East Asia. The Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education; Unesco Thailand; 2006. pp. viii + 254.

UNESCO Bangkok and SEAMEO, RIHED carried out a joint research study and seminar on “A Situational Analysis of Higher Education Reforms in South-East Asian Countries” in 2005. Eight research case studies from eight south-east countries viz., Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam were discussed in the seminar in July, 2005 and presented to policy makers, university administrators and faculty members. The present publication is the revised version. As the title suggests, these case studies of higher education in these eight countries provide an overview of the changing trends in higher education in the context of market-oriented, transnational global backdrop and reform process with respect to: (i) higher education reforms, (ii) access to higher education, (iii) diversification of higher education, (iv)

university governance and management, (v) restructuring of faculties and academic progress, (vi) developing research capacities, (vii) change to the academic profession, (viii) roles and function of private higher education, (ix) internationalization of higher education, (x) accreditation and quality assurance, and (xi) challenges and future development.

There are nine chapters: one introductory chapter presenting the overview of the trends and eight chapters describing the situational analysis of the eight countries.

Introductory chapter on “Higher Education in South-East Asia: An Overview” by Molly N.N. Lee and Stephen Healy categorizes the eight countries into three groups: those with gross enrolment ratios in higher education of 30 percent and above (Singapore, Thailand and Philippines); between 10-30 percent (Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Vietnam); and below 10 percent (Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR). Analysis of higher education in these countries does indicate the usual trends of (a) massification (b) diversification, (c) internationalization, (d) marketization, (e) institutional restructuring, (f) trading autonomy for accountability, (g) academic restructuring and strengthening research capacities, (h) changing academic profession, and (i) future developments and challenges. Particularly this challenge is reflected in the manifestation of the following acid tests:

- Subjected to more rules and regulations
- Pressure to raise funds
- Limited academic freedom
- Delinking from civil service

As universities find themselves operating in a more competitive and market-oriented environment, they need to be flexible and able to respond quickly to market signals and pressures. It is no wonder that academic leaders have started searching ways to make their institutions more entrepreneurial and autonomous. As many universities expand with limited resources, these are under pressure from their stakeholders (students); state authorities are concerned with quality of education they provide. So, accountability for their performances on one side and academic flexibility and autonomy on the other bring into play the focus on developing systems for self-evaluation and assessment.

The papers present a number of policy issues for government, such as determining the role of the government (state) in the provision of higher education, the relationship between private providers and government, and issues linked to monitoring mechanism, accreditation of courses and quality assurance. Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia have passed private higher institutions acts to regulate the provision of private higher education in their countries.

The situational analysis in case of Cambodia reveals that if private participation in higher education is the trend, more coordination at the policy level and implementation levels is needed.

In case of Indonesia, the concern for disparity between institutions remains a key challenge (p. 66). One solution suggested by the author is partnership and collaboration between weak and strong institutions.

Laos has only one higher education institution at the national level, namely National University of Laos (NUOL) which is able to offer a comprehensive set of undergraduate and graduate degree programmes. This is clearly insufficient to fully develop the intellectual base of the country's human resources and help the government to achieve the goals of the New Economic Mechanism (p. 94).

A new strategic vision on higher education has been developed by the Government of Lao PDR, i.e. equitable access, quality improvement, and planning and management. For achieving seven objectives for higher education, a clutch of strategies have been spelt out.

The Philippine higher education system, in spite of one of the oldest in the region, lacks variety to cater to the demand for diverse and advanced fields of study. Still there exists mismatch between skills and the knowledge. There is ambiguity with regard to the language of instruction and the overall balance between quantity and quality.

Singapore entered into technological revolution in 1979, involving restructuring the economy on high-technology, skill-intensive manufacturing and service sector activities. Higher education was pitched to meet the anticipated rise in new manpower demands. The universities are to serve four main objectives: (i) Provide top-level professionals, managers, planners and researchers, (ii) Raise the intellectual tone of the society, (iii) Act as benchmark in maintaining high standards of education in Singapore, and (iv) Create wealth

The Singapore case illustrates that positive interventions in higher education by the government need not necessarily impede the successful functioning of higher education. However, it is to be seen that to what extent heavy government intervention is consistent with greater creativity and innovation.

The roles, structures and responsibilities of both private and public sector participation in higher education in Thailand have changed the scenario of higher education in terms of student access and quality. University autonomy continues to be a major issue for Thai higher education. As of August 2005, there were only four autonomous universities. The other 21 public universities are still traditional universities. In future the country has to face the ever-increasing demand of knowledge-based economy which requires reforms in higher education.

The Vietnamese higher education system consists of 227 institutions serving its population of 80 million people. The government has put in place legislation and regulatory framework for the development of a non-public higher education system that includes three main types of institutions: semi-public, people-funded and private. So far only one private institution has been established though the initiative was made in 1993. The reasons are stated to be of two types: the public is not used to the idea of private education yet, and secondly the regulation in some aspects is not clear and concrete enough to ensure to those people who want to establish such an institution. It is expected that Vietnam's higher education system will develop to meet the twin requirements i.e. meeting national needs in its aims and to be economically integrated into the global economy.

These case studies of eight South-East Asian countries in higher education discuss the changed scenario since 1990 onwards. Analysis reveals that the process of reforms in higher education has been set albeit gradually. This is due to the fact that such reforms are constrained by the socio-political and economic environment of each state.

90/31-A, II Floor (Rear Portion)
Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017

V.P. Garg

Syamala MOKA (2004): *Women's Dynamism in Higher Education*. GK Print House Pvt. Ltd., Visakhapatnam. (Hard cover), pp. 210; Price: Rs.225.

In the modern social context, women's status is gradually leaving the traditional, cultural burdens that confine women in the domestic role of production, reproduction and family care taking. Modernity offers room for women's valorization and dynamism in various fields. It is true that there still exists resistance and conservatism biases that perpetuate domination and marginalization of women. However, these are highly dismantled by the dynamics of women's mobilization. This is a period of emancipation of women within the political, economic, and cultural trilogy. The present book is an effort to highlight and voice the attitudes, aspirations and activities of women students in reference to academic, political and social activities. The objective is to scrutinize issues pertaining to women's political and social problems. The author is credited for a relentless effort and dedicated endeavor of a scholar. In the contemporary scenario, the chosen field is very relevant. The book comprehensively dwells into the subject matter relating to status of women in the present society and the emerging trends in women education in India.

The book is divided into five chapters further subdivided into distinct sections. Chapter one is an exploration of position of women and her changing status. Dynamism of women in historical perspective and related issues like factors responsible for awakening in women are discussed. Talking about higher education in women, the discernable changes and their causes are dealt in detail and are well supported with research evidence. The author shares the view that the fresh enthusiasm among women after three decades of independence was mainly due to awakening created by national leaders and other women welfare agencies. She feels concerned about prevailing social injustice and a need to bring out the talent and intellectual competency among the women. Chapter two deals with the review of related literature. A substantial portion of the review deals with developmental aspects of women education in India especially higher education. The chapter most explicitly presents a comprehensive survey of existing policies for women education and their implementation strategies, welfare schemes, women rights and organizations. The other research evidence pertains to issues related to marriage and working women, role conflicts, changing status of women in India, women's struggles in family, work place and society, changing dynamics of

position of women in Indian family and women education, especially rural women and employment opportunities for them. Chapter three discusses the research methodology outlining the objectives of the study, hypotheses, description of questionnaire, variables, sample of the study and procedure for execution of the study. Subsumed under the broad canopy of the fourth chapter are the thought-provoking observations and analysis of the study. The response pattern has been examined thoroughly and results are recorded systematically in a tabulated form. The analysis of data is systematic and trends have been examined variable wise. Some very interesting and mind stirring observations have been revealed about existing position of the women in the practical world. In chapter five, the findings of the study have been analyzed. The author opines that moderate sense of dynamism is displayed by women students in higher education and feels that more privileges need to be given to emancipate women and improve their status. The study gives a further probe into the new vistas of research in this area.

On the whole, this book gives sufficient insight into the crucial issues of women studies and intricate relationship between education and women dynamism & development, as also of the current trends of thinking among scholars and students on the status of women education in India. Rich in content with exhaustive and meticulous observations, the present book is valuable for anyone who may feel concerned about issues related to women education in India. The overall presentation of the book is reasonable and is definitely useful in its present form but we hope that the contents of the book are carefully edited before releasing its next edition. It is a welcome addition to the existing corpus of literature in the discipline of women studies.

Department of Foundation of Education
NUEPA, New Delhi

Vineeta Sirohi
E mail: vineetasirohi@nuepa.org

K.S. JOMO and Erik S REINERT (eds.) *The Origins of Development Economics: How Schools of Economic Thought have Addressed Development*. New Delhi: Tulika Books & London: Zed Books, 2005, pp. 165 (hardbound) Price: Rs. 400 ISBN: 81-85229-98-8 [and]

K.S. JOMO and Ben FINE (eds.) *The New Development Economics: After the Washington Consensus*. New Delhi: Tulika Books & London: Zed Books, 2006, pp. 304 (hardbound) Price: Rs. 650 ISBN: 81-85229-96-1

Economics is a comparatively new science, formally originated with the Scottish writer, Adam Smith's famous book, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* printed in 1776. But economists recognise the origins of Economics to the Mercantilists, if not to the earlier periods, who were followed by the Physiocrats, all before Adam Smith. Development economics as a separate field of studies is much more recent, born after the World War II, though development and growth issues occupied the centre stage of all economic thinking all the time. As Tamás Szentes highlighted (in the

first book under review), during the post-World War II, development economics was not born, but was only 'separated' from the main body of economics in general (p. 146).

The two books under review form excellent readings on a critical history of economic thought starting from the period of Mercantilists of the 16th and the 17th centuries to the modern period of globalisation of the 21st century, including the classical and Neo-classical economics and the Washington and the post-Washington Consensus. They are also much different from the standard textbooks of history of economic doctrines. The several papers in both volumes describe how economic growth, by the very nature of things, is an uneven process, as a consequence of diversity among humans, among firms and among technologies. They also describe how there has been continuity in economic thinking over the last four centuries, and how the writings of different periods influenced the writings of the following generations.

The eight chapters in the book edited by Jomo and Reinert cover Mercantilism, the Italian tradition of political economy, the German economics (of historical school and institutionalism) as development economics, the capitalist transformation, modern growth theory, the classical economics, Marxian economics, Neo-classical economics, Latin American structuralism and dependency theory, Keynesian economics, etc. As Tamás Szentes noted, the several schools of thought have not only certain common concerns for development issues, but they are also characterised by differences in approach to development, nature of development, judgement, appraisal, assessment of the prospects and the results of development.

The second book starts where the first book ends. It is concerned with the 'new' development economics. It starts with examining the illusions of development of the Washington Consensus, the fall of the Washington consensus, and the features of the Post-Washington Consensus. The Washington Consensus has been so strong, as Ben Fine (p.15) notes, in influencing economic thinking that development as a process or as a field of study is reduced to market and non-market imperfections. The critique of the development economics is also viewed as if it began only with the post-Washington Consensus, particularly with Joseph Stiglitz, ignoring all the earlier contributions. Further, to view that the post-Washington consensus offers comprehensive development may be illusory. While it recognises the importance of the state, the role of the state is redefined to confine to provide a conducive or an enabling environment for the markets, as Elisa van Waeyenberge rightly reminds us. But as Sonali Deraniyagala and Ben Fine argue, free trade cannot be answer for development. In a very interesting article, Pauline Rose describes the importance education received in the development policy framework of the Washington Consensus and the post-Washington consensus. During these periods, the World Bank has emerged as a leader in education, more specifically the human capital, all over the developing world, with all its ramifications. The book covers several macro as well as sectoral issues, such as financial programming (and poverty reduction strategy papers) of the International Monetary Fund, technology, social capital, corruption, governance, agriculture, and geography.

The several chapters in both volumes are powerful in their analyses and arguments, and critical in their approach. In all, the two books provide an interesting blend of conceptual, theoretical and methodological aspects, adding fresh insights on several aspects relating to development economics. The only limitation one may note is that the chapters in each book could have been organised better, in a better sequence. In fact, there seems no attempt have been made to put them in any proper order. Secondly, development economics is too large, and understandably the two books cannot provide a comprehensive account of the state of development economics. Nevertheless, they do provide a rich and a scholarly account of the field.

Department of Educational Finance
NUEPA, New Delhi-110016

Jandhyala B.G. Tilak
E mail: jtilak@vsnl.com



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