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Governing Academic: Within and Without[#]

Pankaj Chandra[*]

Universities are about how lives could be lived. They prepare young people for challenges of tomorrow. That is how universities deliver to the nation in perpetuity with ideas that are ahead of time. Theory of today becomes practices of tomorrow and society draws on these resources for advancing knowledge that will better the world. When a society becomes too lazy to draw upon this knowledge or when the university fails to experiment or build questioning and innovative values in students, then the society becomes vulnerable to a possibility of an economic and social decline. Society then stops driving change in how it will define living and building relationship with people and their ideas. Four forces are influencing societies to re-calibrate their position on how life is going to be lived. These are demographics, science and technology, climate change, and urbanisation. They are having a phenomenal impact on how people think, work and relate with others and the state of resources for the same. They are also re-writing our understanding of the laws of the society.

What does this do to the world of higher education? Education significantly affects both the changes themselves and our ability to manage and adapt to these changes. It is well known that size and quality of higher education impacts national and the regional economies. The bigger the cover of higher education, the higher are the chances that society as a whole will have better prepared citizens to lead and adapt to these global changes. Societies that are able to create equal opportunity to get quality education, are more likely to develop the DNA of survival in these changing circumstances than perhaps those where access is not based on capabilities. It is important for the young in a society to believe that only merit and capabilities matter in universities and outside. The more contemporary and deeper these capabilities are, the better are the chances that an economy will shift towards higher value add activities and deploy better ideas and technologies for social purpose. Large populations of young in geographical proximity provides for a bridging of information gap but without an ability to link the science driven world view with one's own sociological context, it becomes a volatile admixture of disablement and discontent. Most importantly, Indian institutions will have to understand the nature and causality of these impending

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changes and articulate how the society will need to drive them and transform itself simultaneously, in order to adapt to changing environment and its ensuing requirements.

Finding nimble yet robust governance systems is the key to managing change that is upon us in. Governance in an academy is about

1. Ensuring that the university is being true to its charter
2. Creating an environment of excellence in learning and innovation
3. Developing and steering the institution on the basis of a shared vision of the institution
4. Defining the roles of various stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, university leadership, boards/executive councils, alumni, government, funding organisations, recruiters, etc.
5. Securing and safeguarding its autonomy: academic, administrative, financial
6. Securing safety of both ideas and people within the institution
7. Enforcing the accountability of various stakeholders
8. Navigating through organisational management and influence
9. Managing the long and short term finances, and
10. Ensuring the translation of its ideas and innovation for use by others.

On almost all counts, most of our institutions fail to show exemplary performance. And we must ask: Why? But before we do that, we must understand the relationship between elements of this governance system.

II

The governance system of an academic institution comprises the structure of governance (i.e. the sponsoring agency and their intermediaries, the governing bodies, the executive, faculty, staff and the students), the policies/rules/processes that govern the institutions including resolution of conflicts, the inter-relationships between various groups that comprise the governance structure, processes for reconciling short term and long term objectives, and the renewal system. It is the interplay of these elements that defines how well the institutions will be able to meet their objectives. Four main types of governance situations seem to be prominent amongst Indian institutions. The first type is where the governance is dominated by the bureaucracy of the state government which largely defines the agenda of the institution in very narrow terms of admissions, teaching, examination and hiring of the vice chancellor, the registrar and the faculty and staff. This organisational form controls most of the processes related to the above. It struggles through the management of a large number of affiliated colleges. The second type can be seen in central universities where the university leadership establishes norms of engagement and the faculty are largely passive or act in opposition to higher level mandate. The vice chancellors of these institutions govern through rigid rules and are in turn dependent on thinking from agencies like the UGC (as are the State institutions) or the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The third governance environment appears at stand-alone institutions they are found in all disciplines but particularly in engineering, management and medicine. Institutions in this group are small in size and are seen to be “faculty governed” where the

institute leadership is expected to largely implement what the faculty decides – deviations almost always lead to conflicts. In recent times, these have been some of the more celebrated and sought after institutions in the country. These stand-alone institutions do not enjoy a smooth relationship with sponsoring agencies like the MHRD. These agencies have played the role of enlightened owners who control through the choice of board of governors, the choice of institute leadership and funds. Finally, the private institutions present another style of governance. They are largely controlled by their promoters, are mostly run like family businesses with low faculty participation in governance, are generally low on transparency, and have yet to establish quality in both academics and governance (of course, few exceptions do exist here as well – obviously, the question is whether Indian higher education system runs on exceptions?). The colleges, amongst them, that are affiliated to a university face the added control from the university. The preponderance of government agencies rather than educational bodies (for example, accreditation bodies or association of universities or association of vice chancellors or education think tanks) in defining how universities are managed defines the tenor of engagement in this domain.

The quality of governance defines the quality of education that will be imparted by the university. It should be designed to deliver the charter of the institution. Academic institutions are organisational forms that require a governance environment that balances academic freedom with accountability through a process of participative decision making. This balance can be very easily disturbed by extreme positions. An aggressive and control driven leadership or a board or the sponsor would turn the other stakeholders hostile and destabilise this fine balance. Similarly, an institutional agenda driven by self-preservation of faculty and staff creates permanent fissures in the relationship between leadership and them thereby weakening the governance system. What makes this governance system so vulnerable to an imbalance in this relationship? Academic governance works on the principles of mutual persuasion, low demarcation of academic and administrative roles, and the primacy of merit in ideas and actions. And most important, an aspiration towards self-regulation. An overreach by any stakeholder violates these principles, destroys the ability to dialogue, weakens the appreciation of various skills required to run an institution and develops institutions that are sectarian, based on personal exchange and low morale. Along with permanency in employment, the above can create a potent mixture of entitlement, whimsical decision making, and low accountability. Such an environment creates a barrier to learning, advancement of knowledge and change, in general. It appears that this balance has been severely shaken in the Indian higher educational scenario.

How we govern our institutions impacts who comes to work, how we enable our best and brightest to achieve their potential in life, how we find solutions to challenges facing our societies, and how we impregnate the now with the possibilities of the future. But most important, Governance impacts the health of the university as an organisation and how it contributes to the learning of the student and its teachers.

The higher education ecosystem operates in two distinct worlds with very insignificant crossover. It reflects the ethos of the larger society. There is one world where institutions could be rural as well as urban, both government or private but where the quality of preparation of students and teachers is low, domain knowledge is low, commitment to the purposes of education and the institution are low, motivation to improve the learning environment is low, professionalism is low, financial resources are low, motivation of founders and trustees to engage with the institution is low but the control is high,

infrastructure is poor, work environment is uninspiring, and where desire and ability to bridge deficits in students is also low. You get in but have few alleyways to explore when you get out. And there is the other world that is aspirational as it is difficult to get in because it is easy to fly out, where the so called "best" converge, where a semblance of merit exists, where all conversations are over information and facts, where insights don't count, and where access to the world is the aspiration. And there are shades of the two in between. Such is the tiered world of higher education in our country.

These systems have become what they are because of the nature of their governance structure. A comparison of the governance structure of a typical Indian institution vis-à-vis its global impactful counterpart that has lasted long would be instructive. The first question is about who makes choices at an Institution: globally impactful institutions are self-regulated while Indian institutions are regulated but the government and its proxies. Let's now look at their governance structure. The society or the public monitor the outcomes of global institutions through citizens' and public reviews. In India, we are now starting to do it through ranking by the government. Elsewhere, the role of the regulator is to simply grant permission to start or exit. In our country, the regulator grants permission to start (and rarely to exit); sets minimum number of credits for a programme and the duration for its completion, cadre ratio, student-faculty ratio, requirements to graduate, choice of global partners; it defines broadly all academic agenda including programme details, curriculum, syllabus etc; it sets guidance on admissions, fees, compensation, evaluation of faculty, rewards and incentives, means of promotion; as well as the number of hours that a professor should teach in a week or how they are to be evaluated and even when should they retire. The accreditor, globally, sets the minimum acceptable quality of the programmes and the minimum number of credits that define a programme, and such accreditation is mandatory to operate. In India, accreditation is also about minimum acceptable quality of the programmes based on regulator's fixed specifications and it is optional. The role of the government is also at variance. Globally, the state establishes policy at the broadest level including the minimum enrolment from the state (in case of public institutions) defines subsidy for students from the state, provides incentives for promoting new areas of teaching and research, approves the budget for public institutions, establishes the minimum compensation (i.e., the floor) for public institutions, and in certain countries does not even specify retirement age. Institutions, especially public ones, are seen as the pride of the state and they receive special attention. It is not unusual for a state governor to host a reception for a visiting delegation or a fundraising event of a public institution. Their counterparts in India practically detail the operating governing environment which includes minimum enrolment from the state and subsidy for students from the state (in case of public institutions); search and selection of syndicate members, boards, vice chancellors, faculty etc, including the duration of their tenure, compensation and required credentials; they also oversee the academic agenda including programme details, curriculum, syllabus etc; define processes for admissions, fees, maximum compensation (i.e., the roof) for public institutions; evaluation of faculty, rewards and incentives, processes for promotion; what is quality and who can judge it, budgets for public institutions; when should the semester begin and end in a year; and also, amongst others, which topics should be considered for doctoral dissertation. Faculty at public institutions in India are considered equivalent to government servants and are regulated in that brash manner by respective bureaucracies. And finally, let's compare what the University and its Boards do. Globally, this governance element is

involved in search and selection of trustees, board, vice chancellors, etc, including the duration of their tenure, compensation and required credentials; the faculty are selected by faculty themselves; they set all academic agenda including programme details, curriculum, syllabus etc; establish processes of admissions, fees, compensation (roof), evaluation of faculty, rewards and incentives including the conduct of promotion; they define what is quality and who can judge quality; define cadre ratio, student-faculty ratio, requirements to graduate; tenure (which is an extended probation ranging from 6 years to 10 years); they recruit faculty globally; they choose global partners; and develop new areas of specialisation to meet the changing societal and industrial requirements. Most important, they raise resources for the institution. The counterpart in our country, largely, conduct admissions (in some states, however, admissions is also done by the state); public institutions set papers for examinations, evaluation and declaring of results for large number of affiliated colleges as well; and other administration functions in the running or the university organisation. One can see that the big question in higher education is about who makes choices/decisions regarding higher education? Several questions are embedded in that one question:

- Who selects its stakeholders?
- Who judges what is to be taught and how?
- Who judges what quality in education is?
- Should those who fund higher education make academic choices?
- Who funds and who pays for education and how much? and
- Should faculty in public institutions be considered as public servants?

Many tensions exist in the Indian academia – between competing visions of higher education, between the stakeholders, in striking a balance between research and teaching, between competing resources, and between competing opportunities within and outside the university etc. They impact the governance of the university and consequently its health and its excellence. Hence, it needs to be re-designed.

III

Governance in higher education can be viewed from multiple lenses of decision making and influence. They help us understand the complex interaction of issues that define the governance system in the Indian university. They also support the argument that governance is about ways of doing things. There is a strategic view of governance at the university which allows universities to establish a long term view of their own activities and make choices that support it. These also relate to the purpose of the university and the roles of each stakeholder; the structure of the university and the related aspects of autonomy, relationship between stakeholders (within the university and outside) and its accountability; and the task of curating university values. University as an organisation imposes its own constraints and challenges in the way it is governed and the processes needed to keep it healthy. The university as an organisational form is far more complex than other organisations because of its matrix structure, its knowledge ethos, its cultural openness, its lack of perceived hierarchy, its consensual decision making processes, its tolerance for variance, its continuous youthful character and the accompanying impatience, and its single minded pursuit of new knowledge. This is reflected in

the organisational view of the university. Finally, governance is as much about vision and processes as it is about their execution. Issues of capacity, tactics and performance for managing the university effectively are captured in the operational view of the university. Getting things done or the logistics of running the institution is as crucial, if not more, than the policies designed to run them. Most leaders do not understand the need for managerial systems that will enhance operational capabilities and consequently help achieve the objectives of the university.

The structure of relationship between the government, the regulator, and the university define the extent to which each of these views can be exercised effectively. Two such relationships need some attention – the one within the academy and the one from outside.

IV

Let me first turn to governance within the university. The university is an organisation of people who are accountable to stakeholders (including the professoriate) and who need to be enabled, motivated and rewarded for achieving objectives that they set for themselves within the context of the university's objectives. More importantly, university organisations need to be fundamentally excellence-seeking. The demands on this organisation to diversify activities and build new areas of expertise, engage deeply with diverse stakeholders, manage elaborate infrastructure and technologies, deal with complex external institutional processes like the courts, for example, and raise resources has only increased the complexity of the governance in institutions. Indian universities have developed an organisational ethos that can be seen as a struggle between the professoriate that wants to define internal norms and related decision making and the State that desires to control institutional objectives and their execution through a multitude of agencies and rules. This has had a deleterious effect on the culture, the incentives, and the learning ambience of the university. Managerially, this would represent a highly contested organisation with poor prospects of growth. Let me point to two areas of dissonance in internal governance.

Organisational Leadership

Leadership is one of the most significant elements of an organisational governance system. Its choice and its role define the tempo of the organisation and its direction. Three attributes define a leader – her vision, her courage, and her execution capabilities and style. The leader defines and works the organisational relationships, brings stakeholders to buy a vision, and stands tall in times of doubt and steadfast in times of uncertainty, and keeps advancing the organisational objectives. Academic leadership is unique as it is premised on influencing without using authority. So why do academic choose to become institutional leaders?

One of the most complex and exciting aspects of organisational leadership is change making. It is expected that leaders understand the changing environment and their needs and will transform their organisations to meet the requirements as they unfold. Change making, however, is about courage – believing in something and building consensus to implement change. Centralisation of decision making and not being able to accept decisions that one did not support have been two of the biggest failures of university leadership.

Academic community in our institutions mostly follows two stances towards a leader – they become sycophantic to a leader or they oppose the leader on every issue (there is very small third group that is independent thinking and votes on merit of the proposition). These dent the courage in a leader to stand tall and experiment. When asked why would he bring a trivial organisational discipline issue to the Board of Governors, a leader of a public institution responded by saying that did the Board not want him to follow Central Civil Services or CCS rules? A conversation with the concerned employee would have served the purpose, set an example, and maintained respect for the leader as an approachable head. Academic organisations differ from others as they depend on individual sense and sensibilities to define the latitude that they can take with the system without sacrificing excellence. Leaders without courage find it convenient to hide behind rules. A case in point is a situation that arose at one of our premier universities. The university had given study leave to a young faculty to undertake doctoral studies abroad. At the end of the leave period, the faculty sought another six month's extension to complete the thesis. The university refused and asked the faculty to return immediately much to the detriment of the completion of the thesis. Governance requires making judgements in institutional decision making which "governance by rules" destroys. Here, an emphasis on a prescriptive culture, rather than protection of the core, makes change making impossible. This, unfortunately, has become the state of affairs at many of our so called "best" institutions. But the more fundamental question is, what kind of leaders are we selecting?

One has to only look at the leaders and their search process at our universities to quickly understand why leadership is a weak link in our university organisations. Our universities do not have robust processes to search them out nor prepare them for such roles. Governments fail to appreciate that all institutions are unique, their context varies and hence their issues are also going to be nuanced differently. Yet, it selects as if one model fits all. The search and selection committees rarely visit the institution to understand its culture, its needs, and the kind of leader the institution needs at that juncture. Same is true for most leaders who are selected. Worst still, when such decisions get made in state capitals or Delhi, these decisions are highly likely to be incorrect. The likelihood of those close to the institution, making these decisions correctly, is higher as they would understand the needs of the institution and its culture better. But this would require preparing the institution and its stakeholders to engage in a committed and an unbiased search.

Academic leadership, like in other organisations, has to possess many capabilities and has to perform at a level higher than others in the organisation. The core, of course, is academic competence, fairness, integrity, and administrative prudence. Academic organisations in India do a very shabby task of preparing organisational leaders or providing feedback and training to bridge managerial deficits. Which dean or a VC has received any feedback? We see so many institutional heads who have barely held any serious academic administrative position prior to becoming deans or even VCs. Even where they do, rarely have they taken positions of significant change-making or written committee reports that have become exemplars for academia. These opportunities help build leadership skills in the world of academic administration specially visioning, building consensus, managing disagreement and ensuring that execution is flawless. It also gives an opportunity to recognise one's own style of management and develop an intuitive feel of issues and their resolution heuristics.

Demands on academic leadership is only increasing and becoming more complex. But when organisational leadership gets awarded on the basis of sectarian considerations or for being part of an interest group or through some influence or for a consideration, universities receive leaders who carry none of the above competencies. All of these, act as barriers to transformation of a university organisation.

Decision Making Processes and Organisational Culture

The culture of the university organisation – norms, pattern of behaviour and its consistency, ways of addressing issues and disagreements, or as people say "the way we do things here" has changed for ever. It establishes the identity and defines the commitment of the organisation, its focus, and, most importantly, its decision making environment. Culture of an organisation is impacted by a variety of factors. First, the culture is as enlightened and effective as the people within because it is they who give form to it and protect it. Two, culture is never static and it must evolve with the environment, internally and externally. Once, it remains static for an extended period of time, it becomes an awfully complex task to change it. Three, since culture defines identity, dignity (perceived or real), self-belief and ownership, changing it is as much about sensitivity as it is about new ideas. Four, culture is built on shared vision and values of those who believe in them. Consequently, appropriate recruitment and actions of leadership become strong signals of intent of change. Cultures that do not define their core values or are seen to change their core values with changes in dominant groups or leadership, experience rapid deterioration of excellence. And lastly, while culture is a matter of belief, it is bolstered by performance and external validation of the quality of outcomes. Academic culture, as a result, came to be defined by academic freedom and autonomy, excellence and meritocracy, and academic conversations and a strong respect for peer review processes. This culture is carried over years through a socialisation process where individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values, habits and attitudes of the society to which it belongs to. An interesting intellectual question is how does a culture repair itself?

Cultures emerge to serve a purpose. You change the purpose and the culture changes its hue. But once formed, it takes special effort to re-purpose both the organisation and its culture. The purpose of the university organisation in India has been vitiated over years and so has been its culture. Successive central and state governments have imposed their social and cultural values on higher education while imposing their ways of doing things but never releasing it to think for itself. They have distracted the university from its purpose – access became devoid of quality, learning became free of knowledge and application, philosophy of education got taken over by the assembly line driven by coaching classes and examinations to enter universities, and the professoriate became obsessed with governance and not by learning and knowledge generation. How did it impact the culture of the university organisation and its decision making process?

Academic institutions, globally, involve their stakeholders in shared governance through a combination of direct participation on Boards and Academic Councils as well as through involvement in committees at the university, school and department levels. What makes this culture of consensus building complex in India is the fine line between participation and active opposition. Who gets in becomes crucial for decision making? When institutional leaders spend little time influencing others in the community and when faculty do not

restrain themselves from preventing initiatives that do not benefit them directly but are beneficial to the institution, the university becomes moribund. Experiments die out.

Indian universities are more hierarchical than flat in their organisation culture. Flat organisations facilitate governance by equals. There also, however, is a hierarchy of processes and decisions that defines the independence of the decision maker while involving the community in providing inputs. Committees are generally seen as ways of collecting and synthesising inputs and providing recommendations based on a deeper assessment of the issue at hand by a reasonably-sized group. Faculty, on the other hand, desire referendums in large faculty meetings with discussions on every issue. Organisationally, this is very ineffective when deep discussion is desired though it may serve to reflect the mood of the stakeholders when a decision is to be made. That is why universities are supposed to have standing departments, schools and university level committees for deep discussion of issues and for views and recommendations to flow upwards. Many times, this does not happen when departments or schools do not function as independent thinking groups but rather as vested interests (in such cases, decision making gets centralised) or when the capture of the higher level decision making body is so complete that even inputs are not sought from others (thereby creating anguish and isolation amongst the academics). Of course, the net result is deep polarisation. Both are detrimental to making transformational changes in the organisation.

The culture in our universities has become fragmented over the years and they fail most of the tests of organisational robustness and innovativeness. They have become rigid and are no longer self-correcting; they are not performance and outcome driven and hence have become unaccountable; they are bureaucratic about change as everything is mandated by the UGC or the MHRD or the State Education Boards, etc, hence shared vision has not evolved; its ownership has become weak hence socialisation to the core of its culture is nobody's concern; and most important of them all, our universities have not been able to recruit people into their vision, values, and commitment of building high quality institutions hence have become grounds of conflict. The balance in our universities has tilted towards those who do not align with institutional goals. Such individuals also visualise the university in the time frame of their tenure rather than one that has to outlive all those who come through it. The university organisation has to shift its weight to the other side by attracting people who will re-build the university with a culture of performance and accountability and fairness and who will nurture others to excel. Another aspect of culture is building a narrative around respect based on merit and not necessarily association or tenure at the institution. One key failing of our universities has also been our inability to monitor and implement our norms. Culture goes awry if its essence is not reinforced periodically. Department chairs and Deans play a very important role in this regard. There are always elders in academia and administration who remind all of the days gone by, who build historical perspectives around decisions and dilemmas, and who induct the new into the culture of the organisation. Such people arise instinctively and are mandated only by their intrinsic belief in the value of the university organisation and their commitment to it. This is an important missing link in our universities. And the key glue to sensible decision making in the university organisation.

V

Let me now address how the outside – the government and its various organisations and the society – have impacted the working of academia. I would like to make five points in this regard.

First. Organisational structure forces a certain type of behaviour that in turn defines how the organisation is going to perform. Higher education ecosystem is over-structured with too many players like MHRD and the counterparts in States, UGC, AICTE, Niti Aayog, PMO, executive councils, courts, etc, who jostle for the control of the lives of university organisations. The current structure represents a control and conflict oriented organisational design. It is complex and poorly coordinated when it comes to decision-making and it does not allow any alternative view to percolate. Moreover, it makes governance very onerous and difficult since it is premised on controlling all strategic decision-making. They leave little place for the aspiration of the institution and its internal stakeholders ---people who actually deliver quality education. Three pathologies accompany the current structure. One, their impact has not been positive as they are unable to distinguish the organisation of a university from a revenue organisation. That a university is fundamentally a social organisation whose first purpose is learning and knowledge generation and that it is managed and enabled very differently from all that bureaucracies manage, is an idea that comes with enormous angst and difficulty to bureaucracy. Second, there is a belief in the bureaucracy that institutions are not capable of taking care of themselves and hence need to be managed from outside with firmness and rigidity (and often with persistent disrespect). And third, the failure to coordinate amongst the large number of agencies reflects either a lack of clarity in terms of how the academy should be managed or a power struggle between them or both and that is impacting universities adversely. Policy entities define both the input and internal processes but rarely think about outcomes. What is clear is that successive governments including the politicians and the bureaucrats do not have a long term vision of higher education that is premised on India's needs both within and globally. They fail to recognise that without universities cooperating with governments, the latter's goals can never get served. And universities cooperate when effort is made to align its goals with those of the external stakeholders. This is what makes a university organisation unique. To change their performance, the structure must be changed first.

Second. The root cause of this grand abandonment of a philosophy in education is a lack of imagination and experimentation due to standardisation and control. When government took over control of all institutions, it could run them only by standardising all norms and behaviour – standardising how an institution is structured and operated, standardising how faculty is selected, how admissions are done, how offices are run, how buildings are built, how the libraries are to be stocked, how projects are to be done (where in the world does a government float tenders to award research projects?), how curriculum is to be shaped, how many hours do teachers teach every week, how exams are to be conducted, what compensation would teachers get, what kind of topics can PhD student work on, etc. The rationale is obviously to standardise the process in order to normalise inputs across institutions and regions of the country when in fact the processes must be designed

differently to get similar outcomes since the preparation of the students vary. It destroys academic values.

Once any agency wants to control a large empire, the only way it can do so is by "standardizing" all structures and processes. In academic setting, this standardisation leads to uniform thinking, low experimentation, and low tolerance for anything diverse. Interestingly, in such a setting the only way to set quality is by certification and that too through a mass examination process. Such became the story of Indian higher education. The mandating of standardisation of inputs of learning, its certification as well as its management was the victory of bureaucracy over academia. However, it had severe implications on the culture and values of the university. Classes did not matter (in fact both the faculty and the students were found outside the classrooms), books and library did not matter, engagement with faculty and the peers did not matter; in fact, what was being learnt did not matter so long as you did well in the standard examination at the end of the year or semester!

The worst implication of the above is the emergence of a "government" mindset in our institutions – one that is not student centric and that governs by rules and less by culture and norms. This control mindset also manifests itself into areas like appointment of vice chancellors and Board of Governors or Executive Council members. The proposal to select VCs and faculty through a centralized selection process is ultimate example of this "sarkarikaran." Bureaucrats are selected through a standardised national selection process that also allocates them to various states/services/cadres. Are academics bureaucrats? And what capabilities does the government have in even appointing VCs or registrars? Academics are selected and initiated by other academics in the same department and the university, as they are hiring colleagues with whom they will work in the future. Several states have already been hiring faculty for their affiliated colleges in this centralised manner. No wonder, why our institutions look, feel and operate more like government offices than vibrant academic centres of learning and teaching.

Third. Good institutions are all largely autonomous. They have a vision of how they would like to serve the society. No institution became excellent by implementing a vision of others or when someone else forced their vision on them. The notion that someone, who understands merit less, is making choices for me and is making decisions that affect me is a sure recipe of mediocrity and disaffection within academia. Making decisions that affect the university, much closer to the university, helps in making fewer mistakes. It improves the probability that the decision maker would understand the context of the choice better. Vice chancellors being selected by committees that are located far away from the university and by those who do not understand the university well, or a suggestion of mass selection of faculty through a centralised public service commission where needs of the departments will not be understood, or a central admissions process where students and department do not create a match of their individual needs or the development of a model curriculum by a group of faculty, remotely, which would then be implemented everywhere – all of these efforts to standardise and control processes from a distance kills motivation, innovation, and consequently, excellence. Moreover, there has been a strong tendency in recent times to control and define what conversations can happen or can't happen at our institutions. This is a strong sign of poorly governed ecosystem. Control is not just a disease of the public

institutions. Lack of autonomy exists as much in private as it does in government institutions.

Lack of financial autonomy has negatively affected institutions. Severe under-funding for decades coupled with bounding the institutional resources on all ends – low revenues, low financial support, control on student size – the institution has very few areas to generate resources that are needed for ensuring quality learning.

The impact of lack of autonomy is that the best flee – generally faculty and now even students. The second level effect is that institutions with low autonomy will change less, will react much slowly to requirements of the society and of their students, and will be more authoritarian. This distracts the academic mind from their task of learning. The best flee to other countries or to other vocations. The mediocre define the culture of the academy and use rules over judgement to create a self-preserving environment. In this setting, many bright people become very average over time. Any change that affects them even marginally is rejected.

Defining outcomes will become essential to improve the overall quality of higher education but what will be more crucial is to provide freedom to institutions to develop their own unique experiments to achieve those outcomes. The tragedy of standardisation is that it kills building a community of judgement: the central endeavour of autonomy.

Fourth. Authoritarian attitudes, control from outside, and lack of transparent communication within leads to mistrust in organisations. Mistrust builds governance deficits – conversations die, perceptions are formed, positions are hardened, data is ignored, micro-powers develop, opposition becomes the constant, and progress is stifled! The organisation starts to require a herculean effort to manage itself. Power blocs emerge and they compete with each other in capturing decision making.

The root of this mistrust lies in forsaking the role of merit as the defining image of academia. Add to it, the severe under funding of higher education for decades and the reasons for this state of governance can be significantly explained. Access without consideration of quality has been the hallmark of the rapid expansion of the higher educational system. Once the yardstick by which you measure this form of organisation that is knowledge oriented moves away from merit and merit alone, the organisation starts to drift away from its purpose and starts defining its achievements in everything other than knowledge generation and its uses. Relationships based on caste, religion, and personal proximity or obligations (social or discipline driven) or any other moral argument jettison merit from the neighbourhood of academia and derail its highest pursuit – the search for truth. The result is patronage, control and anarchy. The more anyone controls, the more anarchic the system tends to become. Appointment of incompetent and uninspiring leaders, blatant promotion of weak academics, rent seeking by university officials, faculty and staff limiting their engagement within the institution while increasing their engagement outside, closed faculty offices and empty libraries, stagnant and uninteresting curriculum, un-usable or un-cited research, etc, are outcomes of this low involvement of stakeholders. Then there are the Board members or Executive Council members who rarely engage with the institution beyond a few meetings but approve most significant policies and the direction that an institution will take. Merit goes out of all considerations and entitlement based on years spent in the university becomes the norm. One wonders: how can our institutions

focus on excellence with so much of organisational dissonance due to intense mistrust amongst the stakeholders?

Fifth. *External* political influence has always been part of Indian institutional ethos. It was celebrated in the 19th century as part of India's independence movement but it got vitiated since then as it lost its vital cause. Society forgot that universities were supposed to be safe places for unbounded conversations and that it was these conversations that allowed the youth to form their own independent opinion. It is is the hallmark of education at any university. University politics became clients of their external sponsors and influencers and campus violence becomes its instrument. This changed the purpose of coming to an institution for many and remains a contested area especially in the vacuum created by a weak learning environment. Violent campus cannot be safe places for holding difficult dialogues.

VI

So, where do we go from here and how do we recover from our current state of governance. Let me conclude by making the following remarks. There is enough evidence to argue that institutions must be self-regulating entities that must make their own choices about themselves. Universities have to be developed into self-correcting entities and their governance system needs to be redesigned. And this will have to be done one institution at a time. The governance system of a university represents the eco-system that helps in making the university work. It forms a supply chain of connected entities, people, processes and perspectives that ensure that the strategic vision is translated into decisions at the university. Indian higher education system needs to address the following issues in order to overhaul its governance system that will foster excellence.

Defining the Purpose of the University

A competitive and modern economy is as much about good governance, quality infrastructure, and judicious utilisation of resources as it is about exploration of nature, an appreciation of diverse cultures, respect for public commons, modernisation, and enlightened citizenship. The role of education is to help the individual reflect on such issues. Universities are the platform for such an enquiry and reflection. University's role as the premier think centre for the country or the region has to be re-established. This would require changing the charter of each institution and re-crafting their vision. Unless institutions are ring fenced from political interference, it will become difficult to develop self-correcting institutional abilities.

Defining the Proving Grounds and Benchmarks

Indian higher education must lead efforts to make the society rid of poverty and the economy to become competitive and modern. Each institution must be able to choose what must be its mandate in this context and build appropriate capabilities over time to excel. There is an important place for high quality teaching institutions who innovate with

pedagogy with its commensurate incentives as it is for research institutions. But this choice has to be made by each of the universities themselves.

Delivering Autonomy

Autonomy of the institution is the sine qua non for excellence. Autonomy is the ability to make one's own decisions in a transparent manner with appropriate oversights. Governments and private promoters, both, have to recognize that once they set up mechanisms of governance through internal structures and processes, a governing board, a process for strategic planning and financial oversight through statutory auditors, their role in directly governing the university diminishes. This will help in strengthening the internal governance and in developing professionals to run the institution. Government and promoters must seek stringent external reviews both of academic and financial outcomes. Mandatory accreditation then becomes necessary for peer evaluation of quality of programmes while external peer review do the same for faculty and their performance. Structures like the Court or the Syndicate and often the Executive Councils are not functioning in today's times. They either have to be closed or entry to them has to truly reflect a quality representation of society. This accountability would require autonomy of the university in the following domains: (a) an ability to select all university employees including university leadership; (b) a clear right to develop and change programmes, curriculum and examination structure; and (c) allowing governance to rest with the Boards of institutions including decisions on admissions and fees. Funding mechanisms that allow institutions to choose how to dynamically allocate them to various heads is a measure of such enablement. Why badger an institution for not hiring faculty when there are no funds to do so? Universities are dynamic organisations – attempts to control them should be curbed as it slowly destroys their vibrancy, their meritocracy and their creativity. And there is no such thing as graded autonomy – it is either all or nothing.

Defining Roles and Accountability

Academic institutions need to articulate clearly the roles of various stakeholders and the nature of their acceptable influence. This will minimise the areas of conflict and help move the institution forward – an area where Indian institutions have done rather poorly. Restoring accountability within the university system is even more crucial. Processes relating to annual reviews, hiring, and promotion need to be decentralised and made meaningful. Academics are provided with tenure to enable them to research issues that are important to the society but not marketable or publish their research without any fear of retribution. It was felt that this would be needed to advance knowledge. This privilege must not be violated. At the same time, the key question remains, what must be done if a faculty member stops generating knowledge post tenure or stops producing quality research? The current hiring, confirmation, and promotion processes of faculty is insufficient to judge or exhibit proficiency. Trustees, Boards of Governors or Executive Councils must play their strategic roles in protecting the purpose of the university, ensuring oversight, and enforcing accountability.

Getting the University Leadership Working

Given our control driven environment, leaders in academic institutions struggle to search for relevance. Generally, leadership is given a mandate by boards or executive councils to achieve certain goals in a limited duration and it is their responsibility to develop a shared vision around these goals and deliver them to the benefit of the society. They also evolve policies and ideas on governance or future directions through interaction with stakeholders and see through their execution. They balance pulls from different stakeholders and are the key interface with external stakeholders. Like any leadership position in any organisation, this is quite a challenging role. Several changes are needed to ensure that this role is performed effectively: first, the vice chancellor has to be supported very ably by her leadership team and her office – most offices in universities are ill-equipped to play such a role. Second, successful institutions assign neutral and wise senior professors and board members as advisors (with no executive responsibility) to the leader to ensure that values/traditions of the university are maintained and that wise counsel is always available. Third, universities must deepen practices of strategic planning, annual planning and reviews, and periodic assessment of plan achievement to ensure that universities are moving ahead on ideas and plans that are evolved in every department. Fourth, the role of the leader as the chief executive officer has to be emphasised given the multitude of responsibilities that she carries including statutory responsibilities. Fifth, the government and the private promoters will have to work through the boards to influence the leadership and her activities rather than interfere directly into the affairs of the university. The leaders' role will become even more complex and challenging in times to come because of the increased importance of external relationships in managing aspirations of universities. This will require training of the leadership team and decentralisation of decision making to free them from day to day operations.

Managing Scale

The big challenge facing Indian institutions is to manage large enrolments. Rigid control by regulatory agencies have led to imbalance in size of the campus: on the one hand, we have large number of institutions that individually have inadequate enrolment. On the other hand, we have university systems with affiliated colleges that have unmanageable number of students. This dilemma has to be resolved in favour of quality. Beyond a point, the university has to open more regional campuses to manage a reasonably-sized population within its system. This would be the evolution of a multiple-campus university system with perhaps a limited set of program offerings pertinent to the university's spatial location.

Develop a New Financial Model for the University

Universities, whether public or private, urgently need to rework their financial model. As the number of universities and students grow, the old model of financing based on a prescribed ratio of students, staff and activities will need to be revisited. This has had two effects – one, where the responsibility of doing newer things has been left to the discretion of the funding agency thereby taking away local initiatives; and two, when majority of funding comes from a single source, the responsibility to the larger society diminishes (even if the

funding is public). Raising funds from a variety of sources has the effect of democratising priorities and also puts this initiative in the lap of academia. There is no substitute for philanthropic participation in higher education. Each university should be helped to develop an endowment. A one-time grant for universities to setup their endowment will be necessary. The financial model will require setting aside a separate corpus for capital expenditure and maintenance, financial aid and research. Without increasing investment of both the government and the society, education of our youth will remain of inadequate quality.

The key question in India, however, will always remain, whether we will be able to execute any of the above changes in the governance system. This will require the government to agree to these ideas more than the institutions.

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A Framework for Critical Pedagogy: Lessons from Selected Teachers Working in Higher Education Institutions[#]

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to develop a framework for classroom-based critical pedagogy for higher education institutions. Five teachers working in higher education institutions, who were perceived as the best teachers by students, form the sample for the study. Based on the observations of the classroom teachings, an attempt has been made to extract the critical pedagogical practices in the pedagogical practices of these teachers. Collaborative social research approach was used for data analysis in which data was analysed to create the codes and categories of data through line-by-line inductive coding. The four cross case themes derived in the analysis are Equitable Opportunities, Presentation of Multiple Perspectives through Teaching, Expanding Learning beyond the Classroom which have Implications in Their Contexts, and Critical Methods in Teaching.

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Introduction

The Global Education Monitoring Report (2017) has highlighted the high stake tests and the rampant private tuition system as the two important evils of Indian education system. In fact the private tuition system is a by-product of the pressure created by the high stake tests, and in turn it become another reason for additional pressure. The soft violence unleashed by the examination centric education system at the cost of skills necessary for a critically conscious generation will be a catastrophe for the future generation. As per the national crime bureau statistics, 6.7 per cent of total suicides happen in India are by students. Failure in examinations has claimed 2630 suicides in the year 2015 alone (NCRB, Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India, 2015). High stake test has become a panoptic surveillance system (Foucault, 1991) that regulates the students in higher education system. These tests were performing a neoliberal responsibility of converting a subjective phenomenon to measurable scores so as to commodify them for market friendliness. The neoliberal force behind the commodification of education (Shumar, 1997; Clark, 1998; Slaughter & Leslie, 1999; Bok, 2003; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005) has been pushing 'teaching executives' to work on targets fixed for them. The targets are fixed in the form of completion of syllabus, fund attraction, publication etc. Converting teachers into teaching executives by fixing business model targets has made classrooms a grave yard of criticism and creativity. A new breed of pedagogies (I would like to call them as 'decorative pedagogies') are gaining momentum in the classrooms of Indian higher education institutions. These decorative pedagogies often work with attractive wrappers of technology and activities that entertain students. Growing public support for such shallow pedagogic approaches has converted classrooms to laboratory for deepening false consciousness among students. They promote conformity and obedience overlooking critique and creativity. Student community is thus defied to realise the way they are shaped to acquiesce or rather to accept control and oppression joyfully. Conscientisation (Freire, 1993) is a far distant dream for younger generations in Indian higher education institutions. Slipping in to pessimism is of new excuse! The system ought to propel forward in search of pedagogies that equip critically conscious generation to make use of its demographic dividends for an egalitarian society.

The Main Argument

To cross the barren pedagogic terrains in higher education institutions, a revolt is needed in Indian classrooms. Paulo Freire is a solace and it is high time to anchor upon his pedagogic ideas. Freire offers a trajectory that can be well used by a country like India, with high socio economic inequality and cultural diversity, to progressive educational process and goals. He is not much heard in India so is the use of his ideas in Indian education system. Freire provides a base upon which a pedagogy of hope can be build up in Indian classrooms. The first argument of this paper is that Freire's ideas of teaching, popularly known as critical pedagogy, is latent in the teaching of some excellent teachers, who practice it without knowing the theoretical background it. Hence critical pedagogy is latent in Indian classrooms through the practices of some best teachers in higher education institutions. Being a student of teacher education my realisation of this latency in many such great teachers whom I come across gives a ray of hope for a silent revolution in classrooms. Identification of those

teachers who knowingly or unknowingly practice critical pedagogical practice can offer insights for developing a model for the best use of teachers who are not acquitted with such practices. Hence the second argument of the paper is drawn from the assumption that identification of the critical pedagogical practices of teachers can be used for building a broad framework of critical pedagogy in higher education classroom. These two arguments were the base for the research questions framed for the study. Before progressing to research questions of the project it is imperative to have clarity about what I mean by 'critical pedagogy' in this project.

Defining Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy, as an approach to teaching, emanated from the writings and thoughts of Paulo Freire (1958, 1967, 2004), one of the world's most renowned progressive educationalists of modern times. Freire was profoundly influenced by critical theory proposed by Frankfort school of social sciences (Freedman 2007). Drawing from critical theory and other radical philosophies he proposed a teaching approach that helps students to question and challenge the forces that dominate a system and there by the subjects of that system. All such systems are designed by few and followed by a large number of people who are less powerful compared to the designers. Beyond the legitimate practices that ensure the domination and control of the few over the others, a handful of beliefs and customs supplement the control and domination of the powerful. According to Ira Shor (1992), "Habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organisation, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse."

Critical pedagogy became popular across the world through the translations of the works of Freire during the 1970s. Earlier the approach of teaching proposed by Freire was labelled as Radical Pedagogy. The later debates on radical pedagogy convinced Freire that the term 'radical' makes the approach too challenging. This made him to substitute the term 'radical' with 'critical.' Initially critical pedagogy was used as a strategy to teach second and first language as part of the literacy movements among the working class in Brazil. Critical pedagogy was thus intended towards the empowerment of working class through literacy programmes. Critical pedagogy has grown considerably from its early targets and sprawl across the issues of class, race, gender and any other areas where oppression and exploitation is continued using hard and soft power.

Educational institutions and classrooms as a site of exploitation and rigid hegemonic structures make the application of critical pedagogy in education a vitally important task. Critical pedagogy is a democratic approach in teaching and learning to transform the oppressive structures in society (Darder, Baltodano and Torres 2003; Freire 1973, 1974; Shor 1987). The basic premise of critical pedagogy is that education system is a tool of the powerful to maintain the status quo and reproduce the existing exploitive social system (Apple 1990; Mayo 1999; McLaren 2003). The way in which the classrooms saw the seeds of reproducing the existing unequal society is domination through consent (Allman 1988; Forgacs 2000; Mayo 1999). Students are acquiesced to accept the domination excreted on them manifold dimensions including the authority of teacher, official knowledge and other

practices of the classrooms and the institutions. Unless the students identify the oppression imposed up on them they will not be progressing to praxis. Critical consciousness helps students to understand the oppressive forces that limit their freedom to choose a vocation of their own and humanize them. It is wary to expect the critical consciousness to happen accidently! It doesn't mean that the classrooms of higher education institutions in India are void of attempts for conscientisation of students. Such attempts are tacit in the pedagogical practices of some teachers. Such tacit pedagogical practices have to be extracted to help the professional community of teachers working in higher education institutions to benefit from it. Such an extraction would definitely help to develop a framework far more generalisable across various academic subjects.

Research Questions

The research question posed was: How do selected teachers practise critical pedagogical tasks in their classroom? In answering this question through case study, I hoped to be able to generate a framework for how teachers can utilise critical pedagogical practices in their classroom.

Conceptual Framework

In developing a conceptual framework for classroom based critical pedagogy for the higher education institutions I used principles of Freire (1990), Ball (2000), Apple (1993) and Giroux & McLaren (1994). The thorough analysis of the principles of critical pedagogy tacit in the works of these scholars helped me to flush out four themes. Initially a list of twenty broad themes were prepared, which were later reduced to four major themes. The reduction in to four themes was done by categorising similar themes of the authors. This process truncated the twenty broad themes in to four themes. The four themes thus identified are: Providing Equitable Opportunities for all students to learn through integrating multiple sources of information and from their personal experiences; Presenting Multiple Perspectives of the content through their teaching; Encouraging students to expand Learning Beyond the classroom which have implications in their context; and Using critical methods in teaching. The above four themes were used as an initial framework to check its substantiality through line-by-line inductive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Methodology in Brief

The present study focused on five teachers working in higher education institutions whose teaching was observed for a specified period of time. A vigorous procedure was followed to select sample for the study. Detailed explanation of the selection procedure is given below.

Step 1: As a first step a list of teachers were prepared through academic nomination similar to the community nomination proposed by Foster (1991). In this process I requested for nomination of teachers working in higher education institutions from academics whom I met during various academic programmes. I asked them to suggest the names of outstanding teachers working in higher education institutions. The teachers' criteria for outstanding teachers included high turnout in classroom, students consulting teacher

outside the classroom, interest expressed by students towards teachers, patient and pacific behaviours and scholarliness. A list of thirty two teachers was prepared through this process. The list of teachers consisted of a cross section of various disciplines, locales, gender, etc.

Step 2: Details of listed teachers were collected. The details include: institution in which they work, their subject, area of interest, research contributions, experience, phone numbers and email addresses of their colleagues and some of their students were also collected.

Step 3: After collecting the basic essential details, available publications of the teachers in this list was collected. Treating their research papers and books as the index of their critical approach, a further screening was done to make a shortlist. Since the list of teachers was heterogeneous, a group of experts in all those subjects also was identified to appraise the publications of the listed teachers. The experts were asked to explore the books for the critical approach of the teachers manifested through their publications. In addition to the reading of the expert, I tried to understand the available publications of all the thirty two teachers. Based on the experience of the experts twenty teachers were removed from the list. The list comprise of only twelve teachers after this process.

Step 4: This step involved contacting the students of all the twelve teachers in the shortlist. This is to understand the approach of the shortlisted teachers in providing democratic environment in the classroom. Informal but structured interview were used for collecting information about the teachers. Informal interviews are for avoiding any difficulty among the students to comment freely about their teachers. It was planned to interview at least ten students of each teacher. But this could not be accomplished due to difficulty in reaching out to students. The key question asked to students was about the teaching of the teacher. The questions asked to students were listed below:

1) The equity of the teacher in the classroom and outside classroom interactions with the students;
2) Presentation and promotion of diversified ideas and interpretations of the academic content in the classroom;
3) Encouragement given to students to be critical about the knowledge presented by the teacher and the content in the syllabus;
4) Specificity and suitability of the teaching strategies used by the teacher in the classroom, and;
5) Democratic behaviour of teacher inside and outside the classroom towards the students and others in the institute were asked.
6) These five criteria were considered as the index of 'high quality teaching' or 'good teaching' (Lightfoot 1983). Further the present study's goal is to develop an initial framework of classroom based critical pedagogy, these improvised criterions of Lightfoot (1983) helped the investigator to focus the work and to facilitate the development of the framework. The key reason for the like of the students towards that teacher also was asked.

Step 5: Based on these telephonic interviews with the students it was finally decided to drop seven teachers from the list. The selection thus done was cross checked by the opinions of the colleagues of the teachers through informal talks. These informal talks were done telephonically. All the five teachers thus retained in the list were very impressive to students, highly democratic in their behaviour and helped students to achieve high in their

academic achievements. These five teachers formed final sample for the study. Names of the teachers used in this paper are pseudo to hide their identity.

Observation of the selected teachers was done to identify the presence of the themes mentioned above. Ten hours observation was done for each teacher. Interview was done to collect details about their philosophy of teaching, the impediments they faced in the implementation of critical pedagogical practices in classroom and to clarify the doubts, if any, about the activities they have provided in the classroom. Subject to the technical support, the observations and interviews were recorded. Collaborative social research approach was used for data analysis in which data was analysed to create codes and categories of data through line-by-line inductive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Findings and Discussions

The findings of the study are classified according to the themes derived in the qualitative data analysis. The major cross case themes identified through analysis constitute the framework proposed for the study. The five teachers selected for the study, in spite of differences in their subjects, provided Equitable Opportunities, Presented Multiple Perspectives through Teaching, Expanded Learning beyond the Classroom Which Have Implications in Their Contexts, and used Critical Methods in Teaching. The cross case themes thus derived are presented in the subsequent section with evidences sited in the classrooms during data collection. The four themes identified are discussed below.

Equitable Opportunities

In the present study, based on the classroom observations, it is found that the selected teachers' pay serious and meticulous attention to equity in a diverse classroom. Based on the analysis the notion of equity as visible in the data collected can be defined as: promoting diversity, individual attention to students in and outside the classroom, promoting opportunity for everyone in the classroom.

Promoting diversity in classroom involve respecting the knowledge dispositions of the students and treating the cultural background of the students as a resource for the classroom. It is observed that the all the teachers, participated in this study, before starting their classes invariably verify the students' knowledge about the subject that they wanted to teach. Shankar, a teacher who was observed as part of study, wanted to check the previous knowledge among the students as a basic step for introducing his new topics in every classroom. He checks it among all the students without limiting it to one or two students.

As Shankar checks the previous knowledge and information of students directly, Madhavi does the same process with a bit of probing and in a challenging manner. Through the retrospective opportunity provided to the students, Madhavi wanted to build her teaching on the basement of previous knowledge. In that process she gave space for students' differential understanding as an unavoidable element. James and Prakash too have emphasised upon starting from what is known by the students to open their scaffolding process. Such attempts of testing previous knowledge and ensure the 'cultural way' of what a student knows about a particular topic is what is discussed as "Resource Pedagogies" by Paris (2012). Gutiérrez, Baquedano-Lopez & Tejeda (1999) reiterated the importance of exploring students culturally rooted knowledge as a resource for the teacher to build up

the knowledge base among the students. Gutiérrez (2008), in her recent work, commented that "curriculum and its pedagogy are grounded in the historical and current particulars of students' everyday lives, while at the same time oriented toward an imagined possible future." The approach of the students that respect and promote diversity in classroom is an excellent testimony of the equitable opportunities provided by the students in classrooms. But it doesn't mean that attention to only diversity satisfies equitable opportunities in a classroom. The diversities should be identified as strength and it should be promoted identifying its specific nature in the individual. The ability of a teacher to address individual differences is crucial factors that determine successfulness of both teacher and learner in the classroom. Subhadra wanted to know the language and subject background of the students in a largely heterogeneous classroom. She asks students:

> *Is environment at all an issue in this classroom? Is there any further? Yes, there is. Okay, one more thing I am asking, you have come from different subjects right. Where have you come from? [Bangla] you? [Economics] you? [English] you? [Geography] you? [Political science] you? [Sanskrit]…….*

In continuation to this initial enquiry about the subject background of the students she continues in the middle of the class:

> *Every one of you have done your Master Degree. Already studied that we must not dirty our environment, we should keep it clean etc. So if you know all these, what is the need to introduce this particular paper in your B.Ed. course? Is it required?*
>
> *Student: When we in future, will face our classroom situations, from that perspective, this has been included in our B.Ed. courses.*
>
> *Teacher: But you already have the knowledge right! You have said it very well that how it will help.*
>
> *Student: But whatever we learnt of Environment studies, with that the classroom environment studies isn't really matching.*
>
> *Teacher: Okay, you are right. Anyone else? Who wants to add something?*
>
> *Student: In this professional course, we are taught 'how to learn'. In that case, compared to what we previously learnt, this can be more effective where in future we go to school for teaching.*
>
> *Teacher: Okay, anyone else? Yes, you want to say anything…..*

Using strategies that probe the student's impression about the logic of learning a particular course, she makes the students to express their attitude towards learning the subjects. The differences in attitude are important factors. In this process she has identified some students with poor interest, and makes serious attempts to engage them with some special questions and assignments. James on the other hand uses a different approach to address the individual differences in the classroom. He noticed a difficulty of a student to understand the content taught, brings in some example that best fit to the background of the student.

For example being a resident of Kottayam you can buy residence in another country, subject to the law prevailing in that country. You can buy property in Nepal likewise a Nepal citizen can come and buy property in India. Also he can move around. Also in some cases they can apply for positions, gov.jobs etc. For example Mahatma Gandhi University is located at Kottayam. There are a number of Nepal citizens working as s security staffs. Most of them are recruited on a contract basis.

By siting an example and that too by linking to a case that is well known to a particular student is not a casual way of teaching, instead a very deliberate attempt from the teacher. James would have used an example which is familiar to James quoting from a text that he has come across. Instead James harbour on a very concrete example for the student that links to a place from where the student hail. Madhavi used a different technique. She used questions as a penetrating tool to test the student's level of understanding. She throws questions to students continuously to capture their level of understanding about the issue discussed in the classroom. The questions of Madhavi are tools to understand how deep a student has analysed a particular issue at detail. She uses the same strategy with other students whenever she feels that student's understandings are constricted and inclined to a particular aspect of the issue.

Exploring the backgrounds of the students including family, cultural and socio-economic factors (Breen & Jonsson, 2005) and tailoring teaching methods that fit to them is a very important strategy of effective teachers. The serious limitation of the issue of handling students' differences is that there are no readymade strategies for that. Instead, individual difference is an art which has to be designed in contexts that demands it.

It is not very easy to limit the individual differences to the limited number of issues like subject background, local example, attitudes and level of understanding. The individual differences are specificity of contexts and individuals involved in the process of teaching and learning. The skill of the teachers participated in the study has proved that they are competent to handle the differences in its varied forms and structures.

Another means of equitable opportunity observed is the willingness of the teachers to provide opportunity for everyone a chance to perform in a way they need. Providing opportunity for every student in the classroom is a hard task in the institutionalised education system. The main constraints for teachers in this regard are the pressure for syllabus coverage, time frame and the suitability of the educational activity to the examination system. In spite of all these constraints it was observed that these teachers consider providing opportunity for the students as an inevitable part of their teaching. Subhadra, after throwing a question to the students, looks at each and every students to check whether they want to say something about the question. She promoted the comments of the students by continuously prompting them and makes sure that no one is denied a chance to speak in the classroom.

A similar style is followed by Madhavi in her teaching approach in the classroom. She continuously prompt students by keenly observing them whether any student wanted to add anything to the discussion in the classroom.

What is seen in Madhavi's approach is that she is not only providing opportunity to those who wanted an opportunity to express opinion, instead a deliberate attempt is taken to suspend the various obstructing factors that hinder the students interest for utilising an

opportunity. Shankar also is so particular that every student has something to contribute in the classroom activities.

The commitment for the teachers to provide opportunity for all the students to engage is a very significant commonality among the teachers participated in the study. They provide opportunity for the students to be able to reach a wide range of resources (Tezcan 1997; Aktey 2006) in the classroom in the form of discussions, debates and other forms of engaging classes. Equality as access, participation and results (Brookover and Lezotte 1981) goes well with the teachings of those participated in the present study.

The findings of the study has shown that promoting diversity, individual attention to students in and outside the classroom and promoting opportunity for everyone in the classroom are the key to equitable opportunity in the classroom. Teachers participated in the study accepted the cultural capital of the students through affirmations (Gay, 2000). These teachers not only provided opportunity for the students at the same time promoted them by understanding individual tastes. Classrooms are very important place from where the students learn democratic behaviour through educational activities (Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2003 as cited in Köse, 2009). The equitable opportunity provided by the selected teachers in the classroom gave not only content in the syllabus but also depicts a picture of democratic atmosphere in the classroom, the relationship of education and democracy and the basic conditions needed for the existence of a democratic classrooms (Anderson, 1998; Angell, 1991; Apple & Beane, 2007; Edwards, 2010; Eikenberry, 2009; Glesson, 2011; Grandmont, 2002; Kesici, 2008; Millei, 2011; Pearl & Knight, 1999; Pryor, 2004; Riley, 2011). The common emphasises of these teachers underscore the importance of equitable opportunity as a road to democracy and social justice, the basic tenants of Critical Pedagogy.

Presenting Multiple Perspectives through Teaching

The content available in the syllabus is not a neutral assemblage of knowledge. Instead they are emanated from perspectives of the people who belong to manifold contexts. As Street (1995) argued, there is not one literacy, but multiple literacies, and this is true with presentation of content by the teachers. Every individual teacher will have their own perspectives about the content that they teach. The perspectives of teachers have great role in crafting the design of education (de Corte, 1990, 2003; Merrill, 2002; van Merriënboer & Paas, 2003; Vermunt, 2003). While dealing with the syllabus and curriculum, teachers will have to struggle for presenting content/text neutrally, as every content is political in its nature. The teachers involved in the present study overcome this puzzle by presenting multiple perspectives about the content and at the same time promoting diverse perspectives from the students. The teachers participated in the study did not stick on to any one meaning or definition of a concept, instead they presented multiple perspectives and motivated students to develop their own perspectives about the content. While teaching about a content in his syllabus Shankar give this example which exposed multiple contexts of a same issue to the students:

Teacher: for example, we say Namaste in India but in japan they just bend their head. If you match the body shape and ask, are they like us? they are not, but in higher level they are! what is that? Respecting each other, but if you don't find that in America, in America you could sit in front of person like cross legs but in Kerala do you sit so? no because, we don't have that notion. I am not against it. I would say sit comfortably. If you sit in the classroom in a same position according to theory of evolution, it is wrong because we are grown from monkey and apes. How do they sit, do they sit like very steadily? They sit comfortably. If you go out and you don't sit like this at all, you sit comfortably. You can be relaxed, you sit different postures never like very steadily it is very natural that when we are comfortable with each other we sit in whatever shapes we want. So what I am saying is a difference only in culture.

The teacher is trying to compare the cultural way of greeting in India and in some other countries. The attempt is to present multiple ways of greeting and to convince the students about the importance and value of one's own. A similar approach is adopted by Subhadra while she leads a discussion on gender as reflected in writings of different writers in Bangla language. She critically presents the way gender is presented in the literature and point it out to students.

Through this the teacher is trying to raise the level of understanding of the students from the level fixed by the syllabus through multiple perspectives. It was observed that the students become very much enthused by such multiple perspectives presented to them in the classroom. Mr Prakash also brings in alternative perspectives about teaching to a group of students. He presents two perspectives of teaching to the students and prompting them to discuss about it in the classroom.

Teacher: So, teaching can be defined from two perspectives. One perspective id from the teacher's point of view. It involves knowledge transferring, transforming thing you are the main. Another way of defining teaching is from the learner's point of view. This mainly involves development of certain skills. Making them better human beings. So, outcome-based education in larger perspective what they try to define to define teaching is learners point of view. That means teaching is facilitating learning that comprise everything. Whatever things a teacher does in the class it will helps facilitating learning that is called teaching. So teacher has to be careful about word and action that he/she does a class room, we have to be always vigil to check our self whether it is facilitating learning. When we say facilitating learning there must be an intended learning. Something must be learned in a topic in a class, in a unit in a syllabus. There is something to be learned and teacher must be aware of that what is to be learned.

By presenting more than one, these teachers emphasised the importance of going beyond the content presented in the syllabus. There is a very serious attempt from the part of these teachers to plan such multiple contents and integrate it in to their teaching. These teachers find it as a valuable method and they consistently used it in their teaching. The students in the classroom also enjoyed being exposed to multiple perspectives about the content taught to them. This goes well with the critical pedagogy and the basic target of developing cortical consciousness among the students. According to Jones' (2006) "multiple

perspectives allow teachers to create a bridge to powerful critical literacy learning in their classrooms." Getting exposed to multiple perspectives makes students critically conscious about multiple voices. It also enable them to see how things get changed while seeing an issue through a different stand point.

Expanding Learning beyond the Classroom which have Implications in Their Contexts

All the teachers participated in the study belongs to public institutions. The syllabus and curricular requirements are specified and all the five were bounded to complete the requirements assigned to them within the time frame. The content available in the syllabus is the official knowledge (Apple, 1993) that is authenticated by the institution. The knowledge thus issued is the legitimate knowledge that all the five teachers are supposed to transmit through their teaching. The teachers participated in the study designed classes to meet the university mandated curricular aim. But the observation and the interaction with the teachers proved that they have kept the university mandated curriculum only as a minimum requirement. In addition to this minimum requirement, they have designed their own curricular objective mainly directed towards the applicability of knowledge in the local contexts of the students. Through this tacit self-made curricular design these teachers outgrow the syllabus and classroom in a traditional classroom.

Ms Madhavi brings in resource materials that are not given in the syllabus or mandated by the syllabus. Instead she brings in an article which she deems it to be important for the students to read and understand it. For teaching the interaction between politics and caste, she circulates an article among the students and requested them to go through it in advance. A similar strategy is followed by Ms Subhadra. She conveys students that if one can read newspaper every day the content that they have to learn in the class can be well covered.

Advocating the newspaper and materials other than the books suggested by the syllabus and also the guidebooks and other reading materials prevalent as per convention, the teacher take learning beyond the classroom and link it with a broader world outside the classroom. Mr Prakash does the same in a slightly different way. When he discuss about teaching and pedagogy with a group of students, he expands the notion of 'teaching' through a group discussion and define it in a contextually relevant manner.

> *Teacher: So teaching can be defined from two perspectives. One perspective is from the teacher's point of view. In this perspective you have said that knowledge transferring, transforming thing you are key to teaching. Another way of defining teaching is from the learner's point of view. It involve developing skills, making better human beings etc. So outcome based education in larger perspective what they try to define to define teaching is learners point of view. That means teaching is facilitating learning that comprise everything. Whatever things a teacher does in the class if it helps facilitating learning that is called teaching.*

Such a definition of teaching has emerged from the classroom in a group discussion. The definition of teaching as available in the reference book and syllabus would be different from the idea emerged from the classroom. Through this process, students get an opportunity to explore the content and its relation with their lived realities and develop an understanding of their own.

All the instances discussed here have expanded the learning process beyond the syllabus and conventional practices that restrict univocal idea. Providing them materials from outside classroom and encouraging them to learn environmental science from the local vernaculars are stretching out learning from the narrow walls of classrooms. So is the strategy of helping students to define a content based on their own experiences. Such classes draw from the context of the students and utilise the experiences of the students as an effective element for promoting learning. Teachings that relate the content matter with real world situations are best examples of contextualised teaching and learning (Berns & Erickson 2001). Paving the contextual background in teaching and learning by expanding learning beyond classroom can motivate many students more effectively than conventional classroom pedagogies (Baker *et al* 2009; Perin & Hare 2010).

There have been serious research initiatives to develop standards and frameworks for the integration of context with teaching learning process and to identify its benefits (Grubb & Kraskouskas, 1992; Grubb, 1995; Grubb & Badway, 1999). The contextualisation and expansion of learning beyond classroom by these teachers were not done after knowing the growing importance of such method among the pedagogic researchers. What motivated them is their philosophy of teaching that motivates them to make the process of teaching more meaningful to students and for themselves.

Critical Methods in Teaching

The methods used by the teachers involved in the study are focussed on promoting critical thinking among them. They presented multiple perspectives, asked questions, promoted discussions on it, analysed meanings and promoted argument on various issues. These five teachers identified that conventional methods like lectures are insufficient for promoting critical thinking among the teachers (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005). It was noticed that the methods used by these teachers include questioning, motivation for critically approaching the knowledge, dialogue and its focus on social justice and relating knowledge to one's own context and many other healthy practices that are critical pedagogical in nature.

The questions were taken from the life experiences of the students so that they can enthusiastically involve in responding to it. Questions gradually grow in to the content to be taught and present opportunity for the students to think critically about certain issues.

All the classes observed, equipped their students to be active and critical towards the knowledge presented by the teacher. These classes go against the authoritarian classrooms (Shor, 1992) where students are passive and trained to be conformist and obedient members of the society. Also the classes through the discussions and active participation students ensured by the teacher combat the idea of 'individualism' as the rout to success and upward social mobility (Apple 1990; Bowles and Gintis 1976). These critical pedagogical classrooms are perfect examples that resist the reproduction of knowledge in an unequal society, instead it provide path for a counter hegemonic action through empowering students to think, critique and engage in group discussions. These classrooms address the need for a change in the realm of teaching and learning through new practices, values, morality and a culture that critique and negotiate the hegemonic (McLaren 2003; Shor 1992) systems in classroom teaching learning process.

Conclusion

The above analysis helps in developing a framework of classroom based critical pedagogy with four major themes. The four cross case themes are Equitable Opportunities, Presentation of Multiple Perspectives through Teaching, Expanding Learning beyond the Classroom Which Have Implications in Their Contexts, and Critical Methods in Teaching. These four themes are the borders of the framework which can vary according to the contexts of the classroom. A wide variety of component constitutes classroom-based practice of critical pedagogy. A comprehensive listing of these components is impossible as the context of the classrooms varies across time and space.

The framework proposed here is not a rigid one demanding strict adherence to all the four themes discussed above. They are just cornerstones to be used by the teachers to anchor their pedagogical strategies based on critical pedagogy. It does not mean that the practice of all the four themes is compulsorily mandated to label a class as critical pedagogical classroom. Depending upon the contextual demands, teachers can incorporate these four pillars or use them independently in their pedagogical strategies. Absence of one theme or presence of a strategy which is not mentioned in the theme will not suspend the practice and existence of the classroom based critical pedagogy as proposed by the framework in this study. Hence the four themes mentioned above are complementary to each other and additively makes a strong critical pedagogical practice in the teaching process. Also, the themes and labels given to them in the framework is arbitrary. Depending on the context the themes may get added with new elements making it adaptive to the new situations. This provision gives freedom for teachers to practice the classroom based critical pedagogy in a way that best fit to their contextual demands.

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Estimation of the Maximum Age Group of School Dropouts in Punjab by Using CETD Matrix

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to find out the peak age of school dropouts in Punjab, and also to identify the causes of school exclusion. The data were collected by using a survey schedule. For an analysis Combined Effect Time Dependent (CETD) matrix, one of the soft computing techniques was used for identifying age-group of dropouts. To study this problem, four types of matrices were divided which are called Initial Raw Data Matrix, Average Time Dependent Data matrix (ATD Matrix), Refined Time Dependent Data matrix (RTD Matrix) and Combined Effect Time Dependent Matrix (CETD Matrix).This analysis concluded that the age-group of maximum dropouts is 9-11 years. Students have viewed combination of multifarious psychological, homebased and economic factors as the most prominent factors responsible for exclusion from formal schooling.

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Introduction

Universal access, equity and quality triangle of school education has remained the central theme of all national and international policies. The global commitment to provide quality basic education was initiated by the UN Declaration on Human Rights (1948). During the ten years after the Jomtien Conference, the international community witnessed a series of conferences, i.e., World Summit for Children (1990), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992), The World Conference on Human Rights (1993), the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (1994), the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the World Summit for Social Development (1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the Mid-Term Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (1996), the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (1997), and the International Conference on Child Labour (1997)which all reaffirmed the message of the Jomtien Declaration and linked education to development, quality of life, human rights, democracy, social integration and justice, and laid special emphasis on inclusion of all children in formal schooling. Further, Education for All was adopted by The Dakar Framework in 2000 at the World Education Forum and identified six key measureable education goals which aimed to achieve by 2015 and these goals also contributed to the global pursuit of the eight Millennium Development Goals (The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014), especially MDG-2 on universal primary education and MDG-3 on gender equality in education, by 2015. The world has now adopted (September 2015), the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Transforming our World by 2030" to continue to momentum created by the Millennium Development Goals addressing the unfinished development agenda of the MDGs and also to focus on development issues. *Goal SDG4.1 and Goal SDG 4.5 state to ensure equitable and quality primary as well as equal access to all levels of education by 2030 are also* accordance to the vision of ensure inclusive and equitable quality education.

With the formulation of National Policy on Education, 1986, India also initiated a wide range of programmes for achieving the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). These efforts were intensified in the 1980s and 1990s through several schematic and programme interventions, such as Operation Black Board (OBB), Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP), Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP), Bihar Education Project (BEP), Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (UPBEP), Mahila Samakhya (MS), Lok Jumbish Project (LJP), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) – the flagship Centrally Sponsored Scheme in partnership with State Governments for UEE across the country. This was further strengthened with the passage of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 which gave a legal mandate to provide free and compulsory elementary education to every child in the age group of 6-14 years. States and Union Territories were supported in the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009 through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of SSA. Centrally Sponsored Schemes of SSA, RMSA and Teacher Education were the three major school education development programmes of the Ministry of Human Resource development (MHRD), Government of India and are now merged in Samagra Shiksha (2018-19) to treat school education holistically. Samagra Shiksha, an overarching programmme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12, has been, therefore, prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable

learning outcomes. The common objectives of all the schemes are to enhance access through the expansion of quality school education; to promote equity through the inclusion of disadvantaged groups and weaker sections, and to improve the quality of education for all.

Critically evaluating all the above mentioned central and state schemes and policies, it is observed that unequivocally the Government of India has taken remarkable steps in order to achieve universalization of primary education and there is significant spatial and numerical expansion of elementary schools in the country. But, due to varied reasons, UEE (Universalization of Elementary Education) is still a distant dream and the goal of universal elementary education continues to elude us. This remains an unfinished agenda of universal education at the upper primary stage and secondary stage. Goals of universal school education of good quality highlights some major challenges: expanding equitable access, raising learning achievement, and reducing gaps in education outcomes across states and among group.

To achieve the aims of quality with equity, it is necessary to explore hindrances and obstacles of universal school education at state level as each state of India has its own diversities in terms of all social educational indicators. Punjab, which is known to be one of the prosperous states faces serious challenges in school education. One is that government schools in the state have become schools exclusively for poor sections of the society. Most of the middle class, upper lower classes and all the upper class parents send their children to the so called public schools and this is resulting in ghettoisation of schooling as a whole educational system nowadays is reproducing social inequalities between the haves and have-nots. If we keep the learning achievements of government and private schools apart, the second big issue is exclusion of children of some special categories from formal schooling such as the working children, children with special needs, children below poverty line, migratory children, street children, children engaged in gainful activities, etc. This requires a careful analysis as these are indeed children who have historically remained excluded from education and are at high risk of dropping out even after enrolment if special attention is not paid. Different agencies such as the NSSO, UDISE, Census of India, SRI-IMRB Surveys and ASER revealed a range of estimates of dropout children in various states. Talking about Punjab which is the focus area of our study, it is reported that about 91,578 children, in the age group 6-17 years, in Punjab were out of school, during the academic year 2014 (SRI and IMRB Survey, 2014).Additionally, the Controller and Auditor General of India (CAG)reported on social, general and economic factors (Government of Punjab,2017) --- that a large number of 38,94,228 students of 6-14 age group (24,30,265 and 14,63,963 for I-V and VI-VIII respectively) were enrolled in schools of Punjab in 2017 ((NUEPA& GOI, 2016-17), and as per projected population (2016) there were around 50,28,376 children in 6-15 age group in the state. Dropout rate in Punjab is 2.83 percent at the primary level and 2.89 per cent at the upper primary level (NUEPA& GOI, 2016-17). Net enrolment ratio in 2016-17 was 82.70 percent at the primary level and 73.66 percent at the upper primary level respectively. It means 17.3 per cent children at the primary and 26.34per cent at the upper primary are not attending schools.

Review of Related Literature

A plethora of such studies are available which have investigated the causes and certain socio-demographic characteristics of school dropouts. Generally, the determinants of participation (or non-participation) in schooling have been influenced by three sets of factors: (i) Family related reasons --- socio-economic status such as poverty and financial constraints (Mehta 1977; Sattar 1984; Bhagyalakshmi2001; Jayachandran 2007), apathetic attitude of parents from disadvantaged groups, (Pandya and Bora 1997; Balkrishan *et al* 2007; Jayachandran 2007; Rani (2011); parental education (Balkrishan *et al* 2007); (ii) School related reasons --- school environment (Pradhan, 2015), including quality of physical and human infrastructure and quality of instruction and, lack interest in studies (Panda *et al* 1992; Pratinidhi *et al* 1992; Visaria *et al* 1993; Zachariah 2005; Balkrishan *et al* 2007, Government of Punjab 2009; Sabha & Gaouri 2012; Pradhan 2015; RTE Forum 2015-16); further physical access to school, tangible and intangible costs of education, lack of physical facilities in schools specifically toilets for girls (Bhagyalakshmi 2001; Government of Punjab 2009; Rani 2011) (iii) Personal reasons --- family responsibilities, household chores, sibling care (Balkrishan *et al* 2007; Government of Punjab2009; Sikdar and Mukherjee 2012).

Thus it is clear that school dropout is a complex phenomenon and it cannot be explained from one perspective. Therefore the process of exclusion from school education can be explained using conceptual model of "zones of exclusion" which was developed to study the phenomenon of primary school participation as a project of the Consortium for Research in Educational Access (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay 2008; Lewin 2007). Each zone of exclusion has its own unique identity and problems. The *first category* of excluded children includes who never enroll in school mainly out-of-school children. The *second category* of excluded children includes those children who enrolled in primary school but either never attends school or leave school without completing even five years of schooling. The *third category* includes children who are at risk of exclusion. Apart from these children, some may even complete this cycle but barely learn anything and, therefore, face the risk of not moving further in education. These are the victims of silent exclusion: They are physically present but get no cognitive benefits. Children who complete primary school but do not enter upper primary school lie in the *fourth category* of exclusion. Children who enter upper primary school but dropout without completing upper primary circle included in *fifth category* of exclusion. The achievement of genuine access and equity reforms that address problems in each of the zones of exclusion should be addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. Hence, in order to bring the underlying causes on surface which makes children vulnerable to be out from the school system and to estimate maximum age group of schooling deprivation, a field survey has been done on the children who live in slums who are face the threats of multiple exclusion due to poverty, migration.

Objectives of the Study

The primary purpose of the study is an identification of age-group of dropout students and secondary purpose is to explore reasons for the dropping out from school.

Methodology

Sample of the Study

The study area of present research is Ludhiana which is the first metropolitan city and largest Municipal Corporation of Punjab, and it ranks fifth among the most urbanised cities of India. Being an industrial hub of the Punjab, it attracts large numbers of migrants from UP and Bihar, many of whom face the challenge of exclusion. A majority of the migrated population lives in slum areas of the city. As per Census 2011, the slum population of the city is about 23 per cent of the total urban population. According to the Municipal Corporation of Ludhiana, there are total 218 slum pockets, out of which 215 slums are located within the municipal boundary and 3 slums are located outside the municipal limit. The idea behind this study of the phenomenon of dropouts in slum population was that children drop out from school because of migration with families, child labor, poverty and this problem is more pronounced in street children, children living in slum areas more particularly urban deprived children (migration reported as one of the clusters of exclusion by multitude of researchers). Even the global Education Monitoring Report (2018) pointed directly that migration and displacement are two global challenges to achieve sustainable development goals. In this back drop, to guesstimate maximal age of dropouts in this group, out of total 218 slum settlements, Jodhewal slum area (*basti*) is selected purposively because this is one of the NH 1 areas which has the highest slum concentration of Ludhiana as mostly of the slums are concentrated in the northeast and southeast of the city along Ludhiana-Rohan road and near NH1 (Municipal Corporation Ludhiana,2015).The researcher personally visited this slum and the children who discontinued their study and are in the age group of 6-14 year of age are interviewed. On the basis of availability of children at the time of visit a sample of 112 children (including 45 boys and 67 girls) are identified and designated as school dropouts.

Research Tools

Data collection involved the use of a survey schedule developed exclusively for the purpose of this study. The survey schedule was used to record details on the socio-demographic status along with perceived reasons for going out of school and reported by children. The socio-demographic profile has been classified into categories, i.e., gender, age, religion, caste, locale.

Statistical Analysis

CETD matrix is used to study the peak age for the maximum number of school dropouts. This technique is not only used in educational researches (Kandasamy *et al* 2013; Selvam 2015; Mukund and Chatterjee 2017; Porchelvi and Dorathy 2019), but also in the field of medicines (Anand and Lathamaheswari 2015).This is a five stage process and data were transformed into four types of matrices, namely Initial Raw Data Matrix, Average Time Dependent Data matrix (ATD matrix), Refined Time Dependent Data matrix (RTD matrix), and Combined Effect Time Dependent Data matrix (CETD matrix).

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The socio-demographic profile of respondents revealed that boys constitute 40.18 per cent and girls 59.82 per cent of the total sample. Further, 70.30 per cent respondents belong to Hindu religion and 20.54 per cent have religious affiliation to Muslim religion while Sikhs are 9.16 per cent. Caste-wise data reveal that 20.67 per cent dropout students are from general category and 55.23 per cent are from schedule caste category followed by 24.10 per cent other backward class. Additionally, Locality-wise data reveal that a majority of the respondents lives in slum areas (81.25 per cent) and 18.75 per cent respondents are from rural areas.

Application of CETD Matrix

Outcome used in the data analysis is eleven primary reasons chosen on basis of responses of students and these entries are recorded in a form of matrix by taking ages along the columns and the causes along the rows. At the outset, all the reported reasons are referred as S1 (lack of interest in studies); S2 (poverty), S3 (taking care of siblings), S4 (distance of school), S5(health ailments), S6 (helping family in domestic chores), S7 (lack of parental support in schooling process), S8 (lack of transport facilities), S9 (illiteracy of parents), S10 (participation in agricultural or other income generational activities), S11 (migration with family) respectively. The children were divided into three age groups as 6-8, 9-11, and 12-14. Then, the total number of children dropped-out from the school for each reason in each age group is found out and tabulated. The initial raw data matrix is formed by taking reasons for dropout as the columns and the age groups of children in years 6-8, 9-11, 12-14 as the rows. Estimation of Maximum Age Group of Dropout students by using 3 X 11 matrices is given here under in following steps.

In this section, main causes of dropout as perceived as given by respondents are applied to the CETD model. In the **first stage**, the raw data is represented as a matrix. Entries corresponding to the intersection of rows and columns are values corresponding to responses from the participants for the questionnaire. The 3 x 8 matrix (Number of age groups is 3 & Number of primary reasons is 11) is uniform i.e., the number of individual years in each interval is the same. Initial raw data matrix with children age group as the rows and reasons of dropping out (S1, S2,... S11.) in the columns is as follows in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Initial Raw Data Matrix of Dropout of Order 3x11

Age-group	*S1*	*S2*	*S3*	*S4*	*S5*	*S6*	*S7*	*S8*	*S9*	*S10*	*S11*
6-8	3	1	1	3	4	3	2	1	6	1	1
9-11	6	4	1	2	2	12	3	5	3	7	2
12-14	5	3	2	1	1	9	8	2	1	4	3

Second Stage: In the **second stage**, in order to obtain an unbiased uniform effect on each and every data so collected, transform this initial matrix into an Average Time Dependent Data (ATD) matrix. The ATD matrix is obtained by dividing each entry with the interval of years in

the corresponding age group (i.e.3).The ATD matrix is calculated as follows (Dividing each entry with the interval of age group, i.e., 3) and reported in Table 2.

TABLE 2

The ATD Matrix of Dropout of Order 3x11

Age-group	*S1*	*S2*	*S3*	*S4*	*S5*	*S6*	*S7*	*S8*	*S9*	*S10*	*S11*
6-8	1	0.33	0.33	1	1.33	1	0.66	0.33	2	0.33	0.33
9-11	2	1.33	0.33	0.67	0.67	4	1	1.66	1	2.33	0.66
12-14	1.66	1	0.66	0.33	0.33	3	2.67	0.66	0	1.33	0.33

Then the Average and Standard Deviation of the above ATD Matrix for each column of reasons of drop –out is calculated and shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

The Average and SD of the Above Given ATD Matrix

Average	*1.56*	*0.89*	*0.44*	*0.67*	*0.78*	*2.66*	*1.44*	*0.88*	*1*	*1.33*
Standard Deviation	0.41	0.41	0.16	0.33	0.42	2.04	0.88	0.57	0.82	0.82

Third Stage: To make the calculations easier and simpler, in the **third stage** (**Refined Time Dependent Matrix**)using the simple average techniques convert the above average time dependent data matrix into a matrix with entries eij € {-1, 0, 1}.Using the Average **uj** of each j^{th} column and **σj** the SD of the each j^{th} column, a parameter α from the interval [0; 1] is chosen randomly and formed the Redefined time dependent Matrix (RTD matrix),The row sum of this matrix represents peak factor. This matrix is named as Refined Time Dependent data matrix (RTD) matrix or as the fuzzy matrix as the entries are 1,0,-1.

Using the formula,
The value of eij corresponding to each entry is determined in as follows.

If aij≤ (uj – α * σj) then eij = -1
Else if aij € (uj – α * σj , uj+ α * σj) then eij = 0
Else if aij≥ (uj+ α * σj) then eij = 1

Where **aij's** are the entries in the ATD matrix, **uj** is the average and **σj** is the standard deviation of the j^{th} column.

Fourth Stage: In this stage fuzzy alias RTD matrix for different α–values (0.15, 0.30, 0.45, 0.75) that are randomly chosen between intervals 0 to 1 based on the values Average and Standard Deviations tables and also the Row sum matrix, i.e., sum the row values of founded fuzzy matrices. Therefore, these selected α–values as parameters are used for the formation of RTD or Fuzzy matrices for four combinations. By varying α€ {0, 1} the above processes are repeated four times to assure the results. These are used to find Combined Effect Time

Dependent Data matrix that gives result of which age group of respondents severely affected by non-participation. The RTD and The Row Sum Matrix matrices of four alpha values are given in the following section.

The RTD or Fuzzy matrix one for α=0.15

$$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

The Row Sum Matrix one (See graph 1)

$$\begin{pmatrix} -5 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

The RTD or Fuzzy matrix two for α=0.30

$$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 0 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

The Row Sum Matrix two (See graph 2)

$$\begin{pmatrix} -5 \\ 2 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

The RTD or Fuzzy matrix three for α=0.45

$$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

The Row Sum Matrix three (See graph 3)

$$\begin{pmatrix} -5 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

The RTD or Fuzzy matrix three for α=0.75

$$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & -1 & -1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

The Row Sum Matrix four (See graph 4)

$$\begin{pmatrix} -4 \\ 3 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

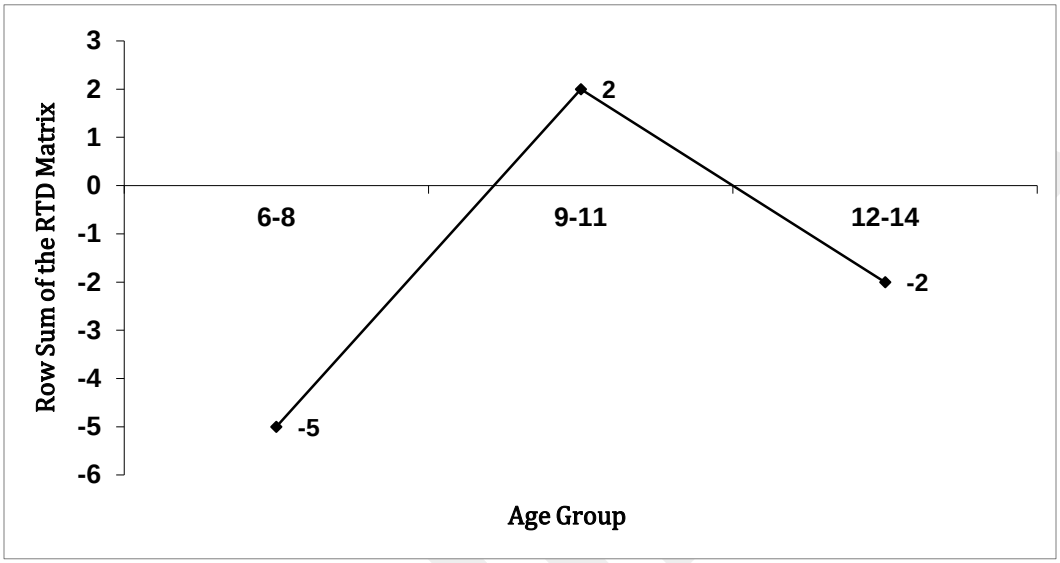
Using the row sum of the RTD matrices the following graphs are plotted for the different values of alpha (alpha = 0.15,0.30,0.45, 0.75). The graphical charts prepared for the age group, row sum of the RTD matrices of various alpha values depicted that age group (9-11 years) to explain dropouts.

GRAPH 1

Graph Depicting Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping out (Alpha= 0.15)

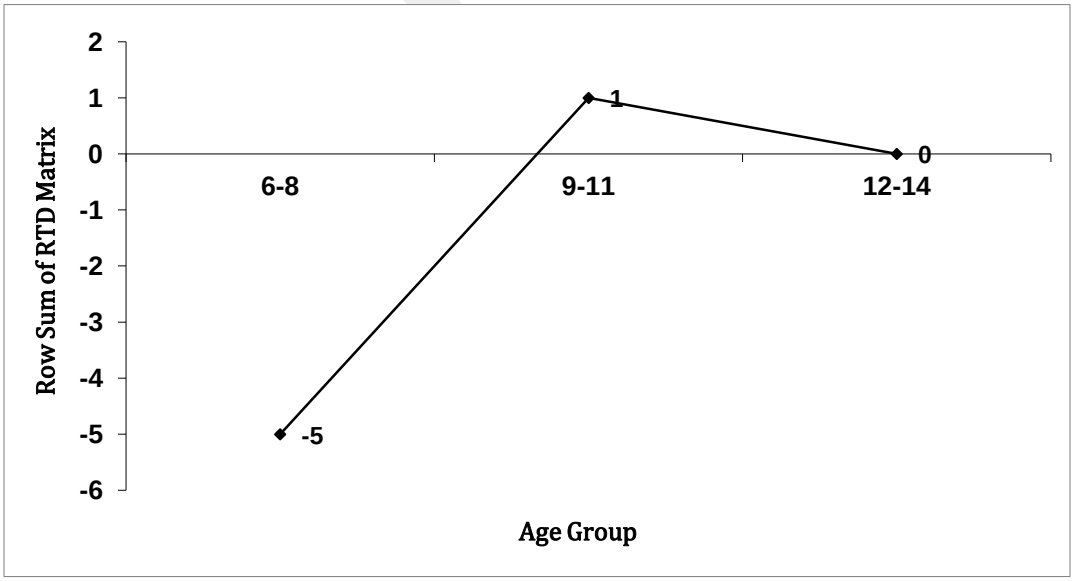
GRAPH 2

Graph Depicting Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping Out (Alpha= 0.30)



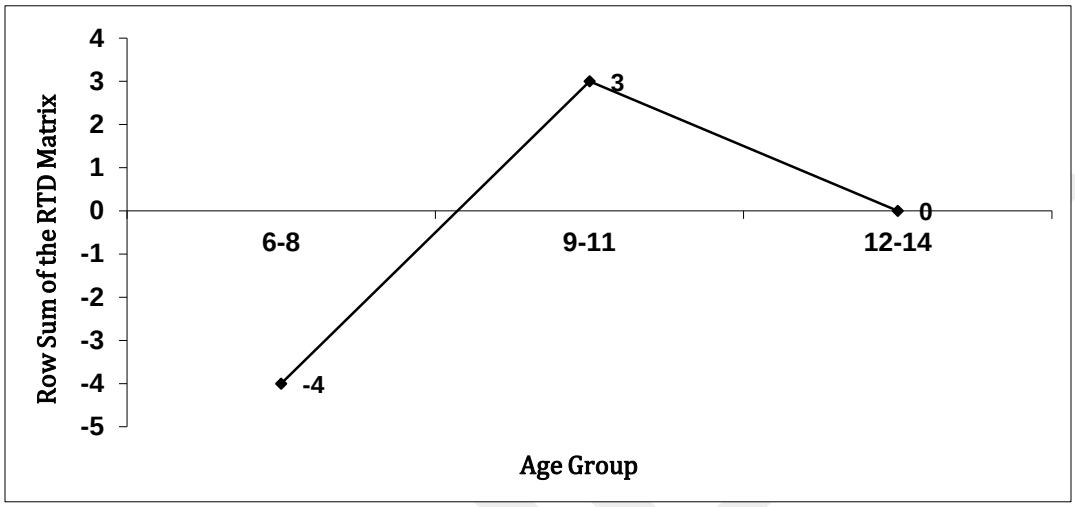
GRAPH 3

Graph Depicting Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping Out (Alpha= 0.45)



GRAPH 4

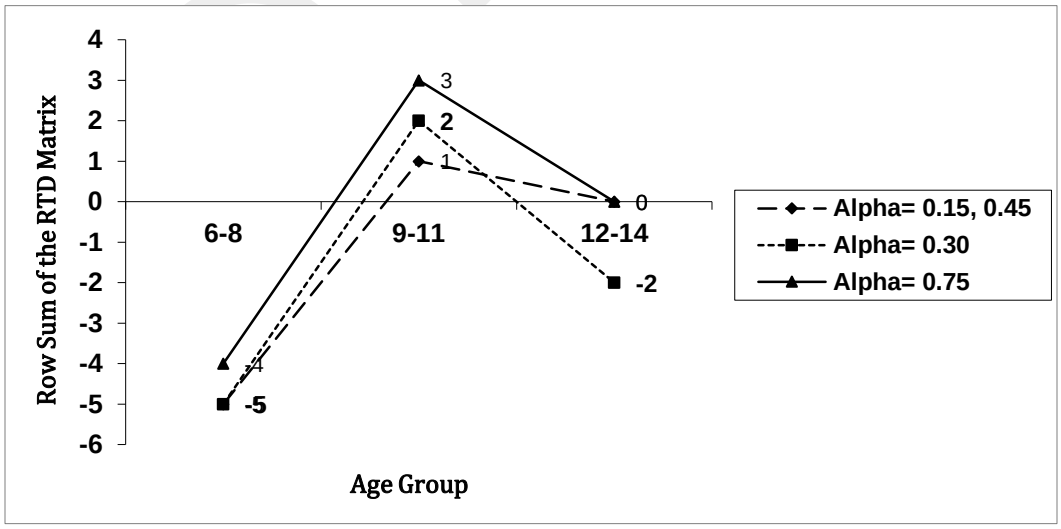
Graph Depicting Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping Out (Alpha= 0.75)



The following graph 5 gives the comparison of all the fuzzies row sum matrices with age group which draws the same result. It is clear from the graph 5 that at the age of 9-11 years, children are prone to leave the schools, hereby meaning that this age group is more vulnerable as compared to all other age groups.

GRAPH 5

Graphical Comparison of the Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping Out for Different Values of Alpha



Fifth Stage: At the **fifth stage (Combined Effective Time Dependent Data matrix**) using the fuzzy matrices the Combined Effect Time Dependent Data matrix (CETD) are obtained, which gives the cumulative effect of all these entries. The Combined Effect Time Dependent data matrix also confirms the same result. This matrix is the cumulative sum of all the entries in the RTDs. This gives the following CETD matrix and also the Row Sum of CETD Matrix.

The CETD matrix

$$\begin{pmatrix} -4 & -4 & -3 & 4 & 4 & -4 & -4 & -4 & 4 & -4 & -4 \\ 4 & 4 & -3 & 0 & -2 & 3 & -3 & 4 & 0 & 4 & -4 \\ 4 & 1 & 4 & -4 & -4 & 1 & 4 & -2 & -4 & 0 & -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

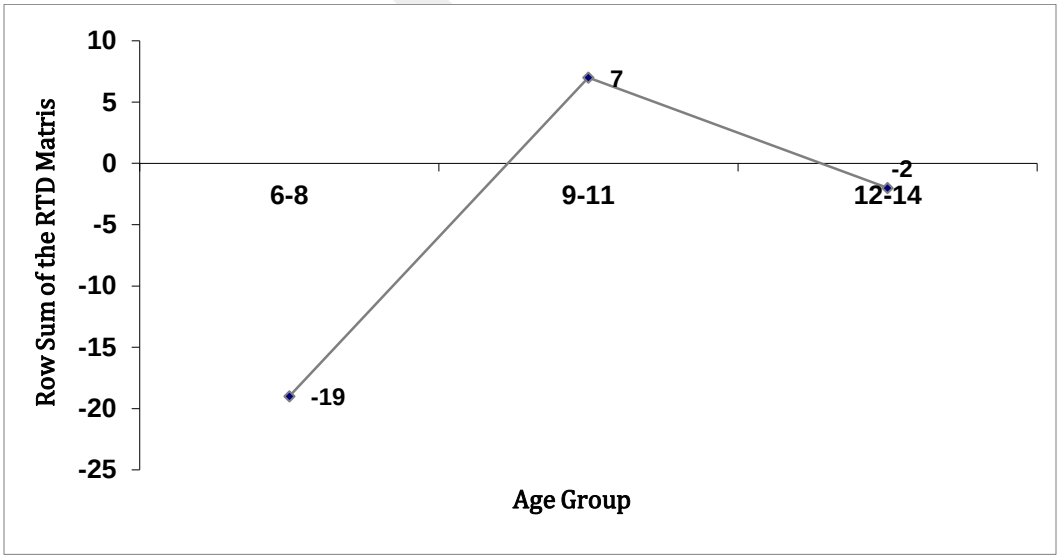
The Row Sum of CETD Matrix

$$\begin{pmatrix} -19 \\ 7 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

Lastly, the row sums of the CETD matrix are obtained. The graph 6 shows the Row Sum of CETD Matrix along with Y-axis and time scale on X-axis. Above mentioned age group is also confirmed by the CETD row sum matrices with age group visualization chart.

GRAPH 6

Graph Depicting Maximum Age-Group of Dropout Students with Primary Reasons for Dropping Out for CTED Matrix



The graphs of the RTD matrix and CETD matrix show the results of the analysis of children of different age group and their reasons for dropout for various values of α. From the above analysis, it is observed that the dropout rate is high in age group of 9 to 11 and it was not changed with the change in the value of the parameter α-values from 0 to 1. The mathematical inference is that the age group of children with high dropout rate is 9 to 11.

Conclusion

From the CETD matrix analysis, it is concluded that age group of children with high dropout rate is 9 to 11 year. A combination of causes operates in this study to keep the children away from the schools such as illiteracy of parents, lack of parental support in schooling process, take care of siblings, help family in domestic chores which are together reported by large majority of students (75 per cent), whereas poverty, migration with family, participation in agricultural or other income generational activities are perceived by majority of students (65 per ccent) and near about half of the students explored lack of interest in studies, distance of school, health ailments ,lack of transport facilities. Therefore students have viewed psychological, home based and economic factorsare the most significant factors which is responsible for exclusion of children from schools.

Discussion of Results

Studies conducted in India tried to identify clusters of exclusion in terms gender, caste, first generational learners and inter-state migration population (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay 2010; Malik and Mohanty 2009; Toor 2019) as dropout rate is higher among scheduled caste children (Kumar 1993; Maerterns 2011; RTE Forum 2015-16) and girls (Hamideen 2000; Chattopadhyay *et al* 2005; Velaskar 2007). Other worst effected children are children of migrants and children with special needs (Singhal 2016). In this study one cluster that is one particular age group (9 to 11years) is emerged and children of this age group are the worst off for the poor implementation of the SSA/RTE Act 2009. This implies that in this age group, these children have to move from primary to upper classes and this change of shift generally works as bouldering for continuation of schooling. Secondly, evaluation of students to promote to next class is based on the different levels of Padho Punjab and no final exams are conducted till the level of third class and the fear of board examination/final examination in senior classes may cause psychological burden on the minds of students and they decide to be non-enrolled for farther classes. Moreover, sometimes characteristics of learning disabilities, educational backwardness are identified at this level as at initial stages teachers provide remedial teaching with normal class. When these children are required resource teachers or extra classes to cope with normal class, this academic difficulty and unsatisfactory progress can increase the chance of retention in the same class for more than the required period of stay and this in turn escalates the process of dropping out from school. In addition to this, it is noteworthy that in this age group these children would have become physical capable to do any manual work or labour and parents prefer to involve them in income generational activities such as seasonal labour such as potato harvestings, filling sacks in grain markets, helpers at restaurants/eateries/shops to support family income. Sometimes parents associate them with mason, carpenter, and constructer, tailor so that they can learn skilled work to earn livelihood as they feel that

education cannot give food to eat. Even they say that what will happen if he or she study as in future he has to work as daily laborer because already lot of unemployment in India even qualified persons are not getting job. Due to poverty and ignorance their parents relate education to earn money not perceives education as a way of life. Driven by poverty and addiction to earn money at very young age can work as significant motives and these are the enormous barriers to achieve the goal of universalization of school education. Even, studies conducted by Tilak (2000); Dwarakanath (2002); Duraisamy (2006), Government of Punjab (2009), RTE Forum (2015-16) similarly mentioned that economic factors more specifically financial constraints continue to be most important than other factor in explaining non-enrolment and dropout in elementary education. There is high dropout rate from primary to upper primary level (Ramachandran 2004), further connotes that if these children remain in school, they will remain at risk of exclusion. Addition to this, present study also surveyed that children seldom remain out of school for one single reason. Causes of school deprivation are a strong concoction of social, psychological, personal, economic elements. Consequently, it is difficult to compartmentalise the causes into one single factor as causes of non-enrolment and non-participation are interrelated and complex. While some of these are direct and root causes for non-participation, others fall out of these causes or factors leading to the causes. One thing more which needs to be mentioned that category of schools must be seen in the line of results of present study. There are a total of 28,717 schools in the state where primary sections are taught in Punjab, out of which 14242 schools fall in the category of primary only ((NUEPA & GOI 2016-17). Although, after RTE-2009 implementation, no doubt the share of primary only category of schools has decreased, but still the percentage share(near about 50 per cent of exclusive primary schools remains higher as compared to other category of schools. It indicates that still transition from primary (old) to upper primary (new school) can be the cause of drop out in this age group. If the new school is in the same or adjacent area, then this cause-effect relationship to explain non-enrolment to upper primary classes cannot be true. But if school is far away or in a new area, then the distance of the school can be a significant variable for dropouts more specifically among girl students. According to the DISE (NUEPA2004 to 2017), reported that the percentage of children making transition from primary to upper primary level increased sustainably. As many as 95.70 per cent children in Punjab transiting from primary to upper primary stage during 2016-17 which was higher than national average. It seems, no doubt Punjab has better transition rate than other states, the goal of universal education can be achieved if 100 per cent children transited to upper classes may be upper primary or secondary.

Suggestions

The recent evidence shows that the problem of dropout is as grave as the problem of non-enrolment of school age children living in slum areas. To attain the goals of universalization of school education, there is also the need of strong action for retention of enrolled children along with enrolment of non-enrolled children by giving weightage to age group of 9-11 years estimated through CETD. Equally important is to tackle the quality parameters of education so as to ensure that children in schools actually learn and according to Niti Aayog in its Three Year Action Agenda (201718 to 2019-20) suggested one way to improve quality is to modify the RTE Act to actually make it a 'right to learning' instead of being as it currently is, a 'right to go to school' and amended the RTE rules required each

state to formulate grade-level learning outcomes and ensure that they are achieved. Quality should essentially carry overarching approach of equity; otherwise specific quality interventions in isolation would jeopardise genuine democratic processes and structures and will result in serious ramifications on the equity, quality, and sustainability of education system as a whole.

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A Socio-Historical Inquiry into the Contemporary Mode of Relationship between Muslim Community and Modern Schools in Relation to the Concept of Backwardness

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Introduction

This paper[1] theoretically positions itself within the confines of two general questions. The first is as to how did the existing mode of relationship between the Muslim community and modern schooling practices come into existence? Secondly, what were the historical factors (such as various political forces, social practices, major events and discourses) which determined the configuration of the existing mode of relationship between the Muslim community and modern schooling practices? These are two general questions which decisively oriented our investigation into the educational history of Kerala Muslims.

In order to effectively pursue these questions, the paper proceeds by identifying some previously unexplored factors which played a decisive role in shaping the present-day association of the Kerala Muslims with modern education and the use of the term "backwardness." The term "backwardness" holds a derogatory connotation. Cultural differences and preferences between modern westernised educational practices and traditional practices of a religious community's nature must, however, be examined from a holistic perspective. Education of the Kerala Muslims will therefore be discussed with respect to these themes pared up broadly between the early colonial period up to the present. They are the following:

(i) The centuries of continuous war on the Malabar Coast, particularly the Portuguese War during the early colonial period and its effect on the indigenous education system of Kerala Muslims.

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1 This paper is a further refinement and theoretical elaboration of the some of the arguments which were part of the published book by the thesis publisher Lap Lambert. See Banu, Shareena, C P, Population Governance Discourses: Education and Contemporary Kerala Society, Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, 2014.

(ii) The British colonial attempts to govern the Muslims through the construction of a different Muslim leadership and decline of the Makhdum leadership in Kerala.
(iii) The colonial discourse incited on educational backwardness of the Muslims against the backdrop of Mappila Uprisings.
(iv) Kerala Education Bill of 1957 and the emergent discourse on private community management schools.
(v) The proliferation of Muslim denominational schools and its rise as the principal agent of schooling in the field of modern education.

Analysing the sociological implications of the present mode of relationship between the community and schools inevitably requires a sound and comprehensive conceptualisation of the notion of "community" and its changing nature. Therefore, a parallel analysis of the plurality of political interests, religious aspirations, economic goals, modes of power relations and interest articulations by the distinct sections of the community also forms part of this paper.

According to 2011 Census there are mainly three communities in Malabar: The Hindus 55 per cent, Muslims 27 per cent and the Christians 18 per cent. The social interaction between the different communities is cordial; however, the religious beliefs and the extent to which these beliefs should play a role in the educational system are decisively different. Malabar is a worldly society that also holds a deep sense of being a gated community where the communities maintain their separateness of identity.

The communitarian identity politics of the Muslim community is interlaced with intra-community politics which subdivide them into heterogeneous categorization based on the denominational linkages within. There are mainly four groups among them: the Sunnis, Wahhabis, the Jamaat-e-Islami, and the Tabligi Jamaat. These groups, while all falling under the umbrella of the term Muslim, hold some opposing, contrasting views.

The paper is divided into five sections, each unfolding a particular historical event.

The Portuguese War and Its Effect on the Indigenous Education System of Kerala Muslims

The educational history of the Muslims of Kerala can be traced back to the sixth century when the Islamic missionaries (Malik Ibn Dinar and others) visited Kerala.[2] By the fifteenth century Malabar had become the military capital of the Zamorian kingdom and the seat of its chief arsenal. The Zainudeen Ibn Ali bin Ahmad Mabari (1467-1522 A D), known as the *First*

[2] During this period education, was conducted in the newly established mosques by the Islamic missionaries for the newly converted native Muslims on the Malabar coast. Over a period of time, as more and more people started taking interest in religious learning, new modes and methods of teaching were also introduced. Hence, only classes for higher level were held inside the premises of the mosque, and the classes for the primary level were shifted to outer premises of the mosques. The classes for the primary level were called the Othupallis (or Maktabs). The curriculum was limited to learning how to recite the Quran and memorising important hymns and invocations recited during prayers and religious rites. The higher learning came to be called the Dars (or Madrasas). Arabic, Islamic ethics, Jurisprudence and Islamic history used to be taught there as part of the syllabus.

Makhdum, laid the foundation for institutionalised system of Islamic learning and education in Malabar.

It was the arrival of the Makhdum's from Yemen to Kerala that marked a new innings in the history of education of Kerala Muslims. Among the Makhdums who came in the sixteenth century, some families settled at Ponnani in Kerala. Ponnani was then one of the important trading centres of Malabar. Zainudeen Ibn Ali bin Ahmad Mabari, on his return after five years of education in Egypt decided to build the *Valeya Jumma Masjid* in 1501 at Ponnani which over time developed into a great centre of Islamic learning and came to be called the al-Azar of Kerala Muslims.

William Logan's *Malabar Manual*[3] records the average daily attendance of students there as around 400 including students spending many years to finish the course from foreign counties like Indonesia, Malaya and Java.[4] The syllabus was very broad and designed to comprehensively cover Islamic knowledge including *Quran*, *Hadith*, and *Fiqh* as well as Arabic language, literature, Grammar, Rhetoric, Geometry, Astronomy, Arithmetic, Logic, Philosophy, Medicine, History and Islamic Mysticism. It had an integrated curriculum including even secular subjects.

It was during this period that Malabar found its place in the educational map of Islamic studies in Asia. It also earned the title of *All Ilmu Ponnani* - the hub of knowledge and wisdom by virtue of being the domicile landscape of *Valeya Jumma Masjid*. The economic and cultural prosperity of the people of the Malabar Coast and high living standards of the Muslim traders during the later medieval period was reflected in the functioning of the *Dars's*. During this period the Dars's could afford to bring popular Islamic scholars from the Far East and other countries. Moreover, the high level of scholarship and erudition of the Makhdums symbolised their eagerness to engage in intellectual pursuits. The exegetical writings of the first and second in the line of successors of the Makhdum family found place in the libraries of many Islamic scholars of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East including the library of al-Azar University.

The Makhdums of Ponnani[5] were playing an important political role in favour of the native rulers from time to time. They had been maintaining friendly relations with the leaders in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and Sultan of Bijapur. Though the Makhdums enriched the literary and intellectual culture of the Muslims of Kerala with poetry and other genres of literature,[6] of particular importance is Zainudeen Makhdum's *Taufatul Mujahideen*, 1584 written in Arabic. The book has acquired much significance in our times as an important historical document which renders an account of the social and political history of Kerala during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Historians value the book as the first authentic historiographical work on Kerala society. It also provides a vivid sociological

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3 William Logan, Malabar Manual, New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2000, p cccviii.

4 Ibid, p 108

5 Though the word Makhdum means worthy of services, it is also believed that the title Makhdum was an honorary title conferred upon the Qazi of the great Jumah Masjid of Ponnani by the native rulers. See K V Abdul Rahman, Ponnani: A Brief Historical Account, ME S Ponnani College Souvenir, 1969, pp 174-175.

6 See KM Mohamed, Makhdums of Kerala, the Unknown Arabic Scholars of Eminence, Journal of Kerala Studies, Vol XII, March, June, Sept, December, 1985, Part 1-4, Department of History Publication, Kerala University, pp 241-248.

sketch of the nature of caste system and various customs and practices prevalent in Kerala during that period. Most importantly it offers an objective account of the European colonialism and maritime war especially that of the Portuguese period. *Taufatul Mujahideen* provides a detailed account of the political situation in Malabar: the Portuguese aggression in the Arabian Sea from 1498-1583, and its effect on the social, political and economic life of the people of Malabar. Many translations of the book in various languages including English and Portuguese have come up till date.

The hostile political conditions deeply affected the social and institutionalised life of the people and simultaneously influenced the functioning of the *Dars* system in Malabar. Amiable socio-political and economic atmosphere is imperative for the proper functioning of educational institutions. The *Dars* system had reached its pinnacle when the Muslims enjoyed economic prosperity as well as political security.

Not only from within had the community received financial support but from the native governments as well. The Thirumalasherry Thampurran, the then ruler of Ponnani, had been gifting property and funds for the functioning of the Ponnani *Dars*. The Zamorian Raja who occupied Ponnani later on also continued this tradition. In *Taufathul Mujahideen* Zainudeen notes that *Qazi's* and *Mullas* in major religious centres were appointed sometimes by the government and received their payment from the government treasury.

The continuing war with the Portuguese affected the economic prospects of the Muslim merchants; who liberally sponsored huge sums to the *Dars*. The financial support given by the native rulers also withered away gradually. In the final analysis these factors inversely affected the functioning of *Dars* and these institutions then on registered a very low-profile existence.

The decline of Muslim indigenous education system which had begun during the Portuguese period was brought to completion during later British colonial period with the low-profile existence registered by the Makhdum family during this time.

The British Colonial Attempts to Govern the Muslims and Decline of the Makhdum scholarship

The indigenous education system of the Muslims of Kerala was in complete decline by the latter part of the seventeenth century. It is discerned that this decline was a result of the deterioration of the Makhdum leadership and the simultaneous emergence of a new kind of Muslim leadership.

The traditional leadership of the Muslims was represented almost equally by the Makhdum and the Tangal families in Malabar. In the past there was no notion of a leadership assuming any colossal authority. Religious and political representation solely under the spiritual or religious authority of one individual was unknown to the Muslim community of Malabar. The Makhdum families were revered for their intellectual contributions whereas the Tangal families were respected for their consanguinity with the Prophets family. More importantly the naval chieftains, the Marakar families, of the *Zamuthri* Raja held the most important position in the medieval political order.

Stephen Frederic Dale, in his book *The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922: Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier* also holds such a view that in the early period neither the

Makhdum nor the Tangal claimed any doctrinal authority.[7] Dale goes on to state: "Both the *tannals* and *musaliars* often had their earliest advanced religious education at the important Mappila educational centre at Ponnani, where the man who was generally accorded the status of the head of the *ulama,* the Makhdum Tannal resided. However, this *tannal* did not claim or attempt to exercise administrative or doctrinal authority over the numerous local mosques scattered throughout the district."[8] From Dale's account of the Muslim Ulama of Malabar, it is evident that neither the Tangals nor the Makhdums had any ultimate authority over the Muslim population as such. This would mean the sense of community which we see today among them is of later origin.

During the British colonial period a centralised religious leadership, which claimed a hegemonic representation of the Muslim community, emerged as a result of the British administrative reforms.[9] The British Raj, in its early days, itself brought about major administrative reforms in the institutionalised structures of political authority. By introducing such reforms in local administration, the British Raj fostered reliable leadership in local areas. Such measures also enabled them to penetrate their reach into the local political and administrative systems. The British raised the positions of many local zamindars and landlords especially from the upper strata of the society (for instance the Brahmins and Dominant castes).[10] Malabar thus became part of the Madras province. Some of the rich Tangal families of Malabar were given positions of such authority. The colonial authorities acknowledged the authority of the traditional religious leadership of the Tangal families and gradually ignored the Makhdum leadership.

During this period the Makhdum family was a target of focussed attack of the colonial administration since Makhdums were known for their anti-imperialist political writings. The colonial rulers raised the status of Tangals as the allies of the colonial administrative organisation; moreover, considered them as the sole custodians of the Muslims community in Malabar.[11] Many Tangal families during this period held important positions in local power structure and became part of the colonial administrative process. The Tangals soon rose from the position of spiritual leaders to the new political elites of the community.

With these political developments the Ponnani Makhdums began to face challenges from the Tannal families of Ponnani to their uncontested intellectual leadership held until then. Evident tension arose between the two groups during the colonial period, and the Tangals gradually began to acquire social and political prominence in as much as to be considered as the legitimate political leadership of the Muslims with the strategic support of the British administration.

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7 See Stephen Frederic Dale, The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922: Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

8 Ibid, p111.

9 The colonial administrative reforms drastically transformed the nature of Muslim leadership. If during the pre-colonial period the dissemination and circulation of power was more decentralised, the colonial period can be marked by the centralisation of power.

10 These people thus chosen were entrusted with many rights and privileges had to act as intermediaries and tax collectors for the British administration; thereby setting up proper mechanisms befit requirement of the Raj.

11 The colonial rulers to control the course of community's actions might have made use of the Muslim traditional/religious authority in Malabar.

It can be inferred that, with support of the British rulers the Tangals gradually gained complete control over the *Valeya Jumma Masjid* and its property. The long intellectual tradition of Ponnani Makhdum families lost their magnanimity and authority as they were not given any economic support either from the British government or the Waquaf Board. The mosques and Waquaf property completely came into the hands of the Tangals whose religious authority over the community thereafter was unopposed. The property looked after by the Makhdum family as the custodians of community property were thus shifted to the Tangal Family.

The British colonialism therefore had a drastic effect on both the economic condition of the Muslims of Malabar and their traditional system of dissemination of knowledge. The mental makeup of the people was greatly influenced by these events and changes in the form of a new mode of leadership.[12] One's sense of being a member of the community was radically redefined during this period. The Ponnani system of learning came again to the limelight during the later British colonial period when the socio-religious and educational reforms initiated by Makti Tangal and others criticised the orthodox and unscientific system of education practiced by the Muslims during this period. It is this changing leadership practice along with the emerging possibility of representative 'politics of the governed'[13] manifested itself in the Muslim response to modern education.

It is of particular importance to mention that the Mappila women of Muslim communities of Malabar were amongst the most highly educated at this period of time, while upper caste Hindus and other communities lagged behind them. The elite Muslims brought tutors to their homes and this increased the number even further.[14] However, due to economic decline their educational level also began to deteriorate. It is at this point in the educational backdrop that the term "backward" was used to reference to Muslim education. This section, and the previous one, pose the argument that Muslims were highly educated and intellectually vibrant at one point; therefore, they should not be qualitatively recorded as permanently backward. The idea of a linear/ evolutionary/ progress makes backwardness a stultifying concept.

[12] Scholars like Partha Chatterjee, Sudipta Kaviraj, Gyanendra Pandey and Dipesh Chakrabarty have shown as to how the consolidation of community identity was a direct effect of colonial administrative policy of categorising and differentiating the population into caste groups, religious communities, etc. Such a 'system of differentiation' facilitated the growth of local community based leaderships so as to strengthen the process of consolidation of a scattered population, on the basis of their primordial social identities. Studies on British colonial rule in India have established succinctly the close association between the colonial administrative policies and the emergence and consolidation of caste and religion based communities in India. See, for instance, Gyanendra Pandey, The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India, New Delhi:Oxford University Press, 1990. An aspect of community formation which needs much discussion here is the result of parallel promotion of community based representative leadership during colonial period.

[13] See Partha Chatterjee, The Politics of the Governed, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2006.

[14] P K Michel Tharakan, Socio-Economic Factors in Educational Development: Case of Nineteenth Century Travancore, Economic and Political Weekly, XIX (45) November 10, 1984, pp 1913-1928.

Colonial Discourse on Muslim Educational Backwardness and the Backdrop of Mappila Uprising[15]

The discourse on educational development was central to the colonial dialogues on education in India. Rather than focusing on education policies for economic development of the people, the goal of education at this time was to produce a few educated individuals who would work loyally for the colonial establishment.

Macalayism has a longer than the presumed history in India which is continuing to define the current definition of what educational development stands for. But in the case of Muslim community it has deviated from the normative of development especially in the colonial times as they were against modern education. Let us begin our analysis by observing certain oriental anthropological metaphors/terms/qualifiers coined by colonial anthropologists on Muslims.

The term "backwardness" was, historically, used to describe the educational system of analysis during this colonial period. Using the term "backwardness" makes one look at a pertinent question. Did colonial rule and educational discourse create the basic reasons for the Mappilas (or the Muslims of Malabar) to become conceptually and perceptually a separate gated educational community? The colonial introduction of modern education initiated the dialogue on Asian educational traditional and cultural practices that were then observed by outsiders as backwardness. Communities not complying with the colonial educational norm were thereby judged as backward. This colonial discourse on 'illiteracy' and 'backwardness' resulted in the hierarchical structuring of population.[16] The analysis on Muslim educational backwardness entailed three aspects: the Muslim fanaticism,[17] orthodoxy of Muslim leadership and their rejection of the modern means of knowledge and educational practices. The British strategically overlooked the indigenous educational system and the diverse literary and political contributions of Makhdum scholars. This was part of larger attempts of colonialists to portray the history of natives, more so the Muslim history, in such a way as to facilitate their 'civilising mission.' The British Raj recognized that the subjects could be made responsive to governance only by attributing a particular partisanship and a particular history. The population became framed into different entities with different subordinate positions on life and world, especially in politics. The Hindu landlord versus Muslim peasant was abbreviated into Hindu and Muslim conflict. Along with

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15 According to K N Pannikar, both material and ideological reasons were part of the Uprising. It was an uprising against the Raj by both poor peasants against the rich landlords. And religion became the ideological basis of revolt. See Pannikar, K. N, Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1936-1921, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

16 Ashis Nandy, in his preface to The Intimate Enemy, observes, "Modern colonialism won its great victories not so much through its military and technological prowess as through its ability to create secular hierarchies incompatible with the traditional order." See Ashis Nandy, The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1983, p iv.

17 For an absorbing descriptive study on colonial discourse on Muslims as 'fanatics,' see M T Ansari, "Refiguring the Fanatics: Malabar 1836-1922," in Shail Mayaram, M S S Pandian and Ajay Skaria (ed): Muslims, Dalits and the Fabrications of History, Subaltern Studies XII, Delhi: Ravi Dayal Publishers and Permanent Black, 2005, p 36-77.

the economic factors, religious ideology has contributed to lack of interest of Muslims in modern education.[18]

Political atmosphere in Malabar during the Mappila uprising, a major historical event in Malabar, turned out to be the ideal context for the articulation of these discourses. The colonial administration invented measures to introduce modern 'secular' education among the Muslims of Malabar as part of the colonial strategy of governance in the wake of Mappila Revolt. From 1840 onwards the colonial administration began to recognise that a long-term plan would have to be developed for checking the Mappila outbreaks in the region.[19] Separate context of continuous upheaval of Mappilas against the British prompted them to pursue policies on this line. Secular education in the western pattern was constructed as the only solution to the 'Mappila problem.' It was suggested that with the spread of secular western education among the Mappilas the fanatic attitude of the population could be controlled. Thus, the British administration concluded that the education of Mappilas, who numbered one third of the population, was the most difficult problem to be dealt with in Malabar.[20] Although the British colonialism from the very beginning recognised that the Muslims in general were a direct threat to their empire.[21] The Mappila rebellion was depicted as a demonstrable site of ideology of the British Raj.[22] The colonial government came to the conclusion that the unscientific method of education practised by the Muslim community was the most important reason for Muslim backwardness and, therefore, an intervention in the educational system of Mappilas became the primary imperative.

All attempts to create interest in the Muslim community for modern education, unlike in other communities, ended up in failure till the end of eighteenth century. Simultaneously a discourse on social and educational backwardness as a reason for the rebellious attitude of the Malabar Muslims was propagated to disclaim its own regressive economic policies

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18 According to Zoya Hasan and Ritu Menon, religion is not the basic reason for low level of education among Muslim girls. The main reasons are economic poverty, lack of state initiative and communal politics. See Zoya Hasan and Ritu Menon, Educating Muslim Girls: A Comparison of Five Indian Cities, New Delhi, Women Unlimited, 2005.

19 After the promulgation of repressive Acts such as The Moplah Outrages Act and he Moplah War Knives Act of 1854, the Mappila peasantry became much more violent towards the British administration. See K N Pannikar, Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar 1836-1921, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp 97-100.

20 C A Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Government of Kerala, 1997, pp 300-301.

21 It was the colonial administration's rationality of government to identify the Muslims of India as "a source of permanent danger to Indian Empire." In his dedication of the book, Hunter (see the publisher's note in William Hunter's The Indian Musalmans, Delhi: Indological House, 1969; first published in 1871) writes: "…I have most fully recognised the duty of studying the people. The greatest wrong that the English can do to their Asiatic subjects is not to understand them..… In these pages I have tried to bring out in clear relief the past history and present requirements of a persistently belligerent class --- of a class whom successive government have declared to be a source of permanent danger to the Indian empire." The book The Indian Musalmans was written as an apologia by Sir William Hunter to the question posed by Lord Mayo that whether Indian Musalmans were bound by their religion to rebel against the Queen.

22 See Thomas R Metcalf, Ideology of the Raj, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

against the landless peasantry.[23] One of the important acts in this line by the colonial administration was the official declaration of the Mappilas of Eranad and Valluvanad as "backward" castes in 1894. This was the landmark notification, as this article had produced a new category of Indian population who were deemed "backwards." In the form of Grant-in-Aid, special grants for schools were allocated particularly for Muslims to start aided schools. The district education department continued its efforts to enhance the basic literacy, especially in the blacklisted areas as the *fanatical zones*.[24]

Similar observations supportive to my study have been noticed and is mentioned here as a supplementary note. In his work, Abraham also discusses how the 'criminality' of Mappilas was described in various British reports.[25] "Spencer's report on the administration of Malabar also continued with the same categorisation of Jungle Mappilas with the very same propensities. Another description of a Mappila as a "robber" and "bandit" is found in Board of Revenue Consultations correspondence in 1802. However, the stereotypical term "fanatic," which later colonial administrators used to address the Muslims in India and their resistance, was nowhere mentioned in the early British reports. Interestingly, John Wye's report also identified the Nairs (another caste group) of Malabar along with the Mappilas as "criminals.""

Muslims also responded to those educational measures amounting to a counter discourse which reflected in the changing mode of Muslim representation and affirming community interests. For instance, the Malabar peasant outbreaks initially were localized and limited in scope[26] and lacked a proper leadership. Later stages of the outbreak were mostly organised under the Muslim leadership. At this point, the colonial administration started attacking the Muslim leaders. In order to organise the Muslim population under their control, the leaders appropriated the Muslim interests at large. Religious leadership of the peasant revolt, though intensified the anti-colonial struggle, affected the cultural and secular life of the people. This religious orientation to involve more Muslims in the anti-colonial movement resulted in violent incidents of communal clash between Muslims and Hindus in Malabar. Forceful conversion to Islam took place for the first time in Kerala during the uprising. Conversion had always been a peaceful and voluntary act until then. Such an excess of religious sentiments indicates the new orientation towards religious and community life. It is the long-term effects of colonial construction of Muslims though various colonial educational discourses.

Muslim leadership positioned their community against learning both English and Malayalam languages. In the colonially structured society, the anti-English and

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[23] K N Pannikar, Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1936-1921, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

[24] See C A Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Government of Kerala, 1997; K N Pannikar (ed): Peasant Protests and Revolts in Malabar, People's Publishing House, New Delhi. 1990.

[25] Santhosh Abraham, "Constructing the 'Extraordinary Criminals': Mappila Muslims and Legal Encounters in Early British Colonial Malabar," Journal of World History, 25 (2/3): June/September 2014, pp. 373-395.

[26] K N Pannikar notes that, "Within the nineteenth century revolts were localised and limited in scope, the revolt of 1921 embraced almost the whole of mappila peasantry in Ernad, Walluvanad and Ponnanitaluks." See K N Pannikar (ed): Peasant Protests and Revolts in Malabar, New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1990, p xxvii.

anti-Malayalam (also called *Aryanezutu)* politics were perceived as a reflection of community's backwardness. While in the Kerala public sphere there was much discussion on accepting English as the new *Lingua Franca* of the modern scientific world. The language politics of Muslims were considered as sign of non-acceptance of scientific temper of the time and the new world order. During this time modern education was widely acknowledged by different communities. The anti-English movement and the rejection of Sanskrit, along with the overt acceptance of Arabic, led to a broad isolation of the Muslim community.

The conceptual darkness reflected in the Muslim politics of the time was seen as the symptomatic attitude of the Dark Age of Medieval period existing among them. They propagated that Malayalam was an Aryan language and English was the language of hell; therefore, education of Muslims should be in Arabic or in Arabi-Malayalam only.[27] The masses were warned that learning literary Malayalam or *Pachha* Malayalam would bereft them of their heritage and lineage as a Muslim. The taboo against sanskritised Malayalam is also a tangible sign of the counter discourse against the upper caste landlords as a protest against the caste injustice in Kerala. The dialectical dialogue between the two axes, the colonial and colonised, was shifted to a triadic picture where the caste and religion overlapped.

Language becomes a marker of affirmation, especially for the poor Dalit Muslims of Kerala. Most Muslims of the Malabar Coast were converts from lower caste in Kerala. The converted, Dalit, Muslim population might have looked at anti-*Aryanezutu* discourse by their orthodox leadership, as the articulation of cultural and social oppression they had suffered from upper castes for centuries. The attitude to *Aryanezutu* could be associated with the new Muslim political desire of affirmation linked to conversion. Madrasas became the site for disseminating such discussions on *Aryanezutu*. These conversations stopped them from looking at modern schools as a site of empowerment. Factors such as these pulled them backwards in terms of educational development during the post-independent. The Muslim religious leaders were the propagators of such dialogues.[28] The divergence of the colonial educational discourses and precise historic events produced actions which lead to different orientations of different communities towards education and schooling in Kerala. These actions left the community ill-equipped to easily accept modern schooling as means to educational development. Leaders such as Sanaullah Makti Tangal (1847-1912), encouraged western education among Mappilas. He had written extensively in Malayalam to encourage people to get rid of their stigma against it.

Kerala Education Bill of 1957 and the Emergent Discourse on Private Community Management Schools

In Kerala, education was mostly a community affair. Along with the government, community based private management acted as a key player in the general education of the children in Kerala. Political mobilisation in the pre-independence period was closely associated with the consolidation of political and educational interests of different castes

[27] Arabi Malayalam is Malayalam written in a modified form of the Arabic alphabet, with additional letters and dialectical marks suit to the special sounds of the Arabic language.

[28] The rebellion in Malabar is still a challenge to historians because of these intermixing sentiments of nationalism, religion and the conversion of lower caste peasants.

and communities. Educational discourses in the post-independence period only intensified these community interests. It is important to have a theoretical mapping of the educational discourse in post-colonial India to better understand the mode of community school relationship in the context of Kerala Muslims.

The post-independence educational discourse in Kerala was primarily with reference to the Kerala Education Bill of 1957. One of the important stake holders in the Kerala education was the Christian community.[29] The private management or community schools had mostly followed the model of the Christian missionary schools which had gained wider acceptance in Kerala. Rather than the government schools, it is the Christian missionary schools which became popular especially among the educated elites in Kerala; even if it is widely admitted that there was a strong association between spreading of secular knowledge and preaching of Christianity.[30] Initially, the people found an amicable co-existence or conformity between secular education and western style schooling as introduced as a Christian way of life, as against their own (non-Christian populations) association with secular education. This was the major reason for the attraction towards missionary schools as the standard which influenced the idea of educational development in India. It is this wide popularity of Christian educational institutions that enabled them to become a strong force in the educational system in Kerala.

E M S Namboodiripad notes: "As years passed, non-Christian communities saw the field of education being monopolised by Christians. They were very unhappy about this, and they started their own educational governmental institutions….."[31] In the subsequent years of independence the Nair Service Society of Nair community and Sri Narayana Darma Paripalanam of the Ezhava community equally established their presence in spreading modern education in Kerala, except Muslims who were lagging behind. The government aid to these schools was then highly appreciated and viewed as a sign of the shared interest between the government and community managements for spreading modern education in India.[32] But this harmonious cooperation between the state and the private management was fractured in 1957 with the introduction of the Kerala Education Bill.

The Kerala Education Bill was introduced by the communist government in Kerala.[33] The controversy surrounding the Kerala Education Bill expounds the nature of the conflicting interests of the state and communities. The issue centred on the state intervention and control over the private management educational institutions.

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29 In the year 1967, out of about 11,000 schools in the state, 7,000 were under private management. Out of these, 3,000 schools were operated by the Christian management. See Donald Eugene Smith, India as a Secular State, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, p 366.

30 Sanjay Seth, 'Secular Enlightenment and Christian Conversion,' in Krishna Kumar and Joachim Oesterheld (ed): Education and Social Change in South Asia, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007, pp 27-44.

31 E M S Namboodiripad, The Communist Party in Kerala, New Delhi: National Book Centre, 1994, p 181.

32 PK Michel Tharakan, 'Socio-Economic Factors in Educational Development: Case of Nineteenth Century Travancore,' Economic and Political Weekly, XIX (45), November 10, 1984, pp 1913-1928.

33 See also T V Sathyamurty, 'Kerala's Education Policies under Communist-led Governments,' in India since Independence: Studies in the Development of the Power of the State, Vol 1: Center-State Relations: The Case of Kerala, Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1985, pp 382-420.

As the Bill directly deals with the aided educational institutions, almost all the communities, including Muslims, stood against such a move on part of the government to intervene in the management of private educational institutions. "…..since the Bill was connected with the ownership and management of educational institutions in which the Christians as a community had very big stakes,"[34] the Education Bill directly roused anger of the Christian community in particular. "The leadership of the community was able to generate fear in the minds of the masses that their religion was under attack."[35] One of the strong arguments posed against the Bill was that it goes against the educational rights of minorities to establish and manage schools of their own choice as guaranteed by the Article 30 (1) of the Constitution.

Both the religious and caste groups were up in arms about the Bill. This struggle is popularly known as the liberation struggle. As the private schools had a strong community base in Kerala, the government could not gain popular mandate for the Bill. In the end, with the strong intervention of the Central Government led by Jawaharlal Nehru, the bill was withheld. Meanwhile, the communist government was dismissed by the centre and the newly elected congress government amended the Education Bill to incorporate the recommendations of the Central Government. The victory of the anti-bill campaigners again reinforced the strong presence of community interest in the educational scene in Kerala.[36] It was a strong signal to the state government of the increasing strength of community-oriented mobilisation in the post-independence period. The state government, before introducing any reform in education, had to negotiate with the interests of communities in the education sector.[37]

The implausible effect of the discourse associated with the Education Bill is that the community leaders were able to generate fear in the minds of the masses that their religion was under attack. It was felt that, in the post-independent period, if community interest is to be protected, communities should have more and more community schools. The Muslim community also entered into the domain of education only for addressing this particular crisis. The community schools among Muslims were mostly for protecting the religious interest of the community at the earlier stages. But compared to other communities Muslims, at this point in time, had not educationally organised like other communities and were lagging behind in secular education.

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34 E M S Namboodiripad, The Communist Party in Kerala, New Delhi: National Book Centre, 1994, p 181.

35 Ibid, p 181.

36 During the colonial period, the colonial rulers granted special permission to Mappila schools in Malabar to have religious instruction in the schools. After independence, the secular education policy of the Indian government having found such a practice going against the secular principle of the state to ensure its non-interference in religious matters of the people, made a separation of religious education and secular education. After independence therefore, the religious instruction in schools was prohibited.

37 For varying perspectives on the issue, see A Mathew, 'Education in Kerala at Cross Roads: Some Critical Aspects,' in J B G Tilak (ed): Education, Society, and Development, New Delhi: NIEPA, 2003; George Kristoff Leiten, 'Education, Ideology and Politics in Kerala, 1957-1959,' Social Scientist, 6 (2), September 1977.

The Proliferation of Muslim Denominational Schools and Its Rise as the Principal Agent of Schooling in the Field of Modern Education

In the last few decades, the Muslim community witnessed intense religious polemics between different denominational or sectarian groups. The *Sunnis, Mujahids, and Jammat-e-Islami* and other Muslim communities were of differing opinions on various issues concerning religious belief, ritual practices and above all education.[38] Most notably, the *Mujahid* group continually challenging the *Sunni*. The Sunnis are criticised for pushing the community into convention and customs rather than towards scientific spirit and modernity, especially in the field of education. The denominational appropriation of education had brought a new dimension to community-school bond. Now that the differences are more ideological, each group tries to maintain their distinct identity through the schools managed by them. To affirm their denominational identity and to spread their religious ideas among their followers, each group has started their own schools, Madrasas and colleges with their own text books and examination boards.

The denominational and sectarian divisions among the Muslims contributed to proliferation of educational institutions. Though the *Sunni* group had already maintained their own educational institutions, they mostly focused on conservative, religion-based education through Arabic colleges and Madrasas. Due to increased denominational competition in the field of higher education, particularly in vocational education, this traditional trend is losing popularity. Earlier Muslim schools were mainly meant for the members of the particular denominational group who wanted to pursue their carrier as Muslim priests, Arabic teachers, etc. However, the denominational appropriation of education in modern times also witnesses marked changes in their pattern of schooling. Due to the enthusiasm shown by different denominations, at present, the emphasis leans towards modern education, especially professional courses.

One of the new tends in the educational landscape of Muslims in Kerala is the emergence of the neo-rich Gulf Malayali as major investors in denominational educational institution. The Gulf migration has encouraged the Muslims to further invest huge amounts in the fields of primary and higher education. School managements of denominations also look at Gulf remittance as a major source for their schools, especially in the context of privatisation of higher education.

The Gulf migration appraised the Muslim's vision of the education for their children. Their vision of school became redefined by the schooling system in the Gulf countries. Parents increasingly began to demand for self-financed Muslim management English medium schools. To meet the demand of Gulf migrants, to protect Muslim identity and culture, organisations are now opening up new English medium schools wherein modern as well as religious teachings are being imparted. Gulf money has thereby augmented the denominational competition. The *Samastha Sunnis*, the *Mujahids*, and the *Jammaat-e-Islami* started showing special interest in starting professional education from the Gulf investment.

Gulf migration is an important dimension in the changing the nature of the functioning of Madrasas as well. This has changed the face of Madrasa system in Kerala too; by changing

[38] The ideological polarisation has gone to the extent that the people belonging to a particular denominational group do not go to the mosques of other denominational groups. Some activists and members practice denominational endogamy as well.

the attitude of the parents towards religious education.[39] The private management schools are all set to address the NRI parent's demand for English medium schools with proper religious and moral codes. The coming up of large number of Muslim managed private schools (preferably following a CBSE syllabus) are integrating both secular and religious education. The recent trend is that the Gulf migrants prefer to send their children to the English medium schools which would take care of religious education by adding two or three hours of religious education on Arabic and Islamic principles. The parents also want to reduce the strain on children of attending the Madrasas early in the morning before going to school. School management of private schools therefore now includes two to three hours of Arabic teaching as part of their syllabus.

The Gulf migration and emergence of a new middle class within the community changed the attitude and aspiration of the new generations of Muslim parents. These factors, along with the denominational politics have contributed to Muslims entering the field of education in Kerala. Privatisation of education encourages private investment in the field of education, which also further strengthens the communitarian politics in Kerala. The basic orientation of the Muslim community towards the modern education will therefore continue to differ from other communities. The denominational schools seem to be more interested in attracting parents to their schools for consolidating their religious and political position than in initiating substantial changes in the educational aspirations of Muslim population. There is still a lack of convergence between religious sentiments, educational and professional goals. The Muslim community, in this respect, is yet to develop a proper understanding of their existing educational initiative's efficacy in addressing the changing demands of the economy wherein higher education for achieving professional and technical skills is of utmost importance. Yet the Muslims lag behind compared to other communities in education and hence economically unable to take benefit of good jobs in Gulf Countries. Corollary to it, the community is extremely conscious of their religious ideology lurking inside them and gain articulation in all denominational discourses or conflicts.

[39] One thing specific to Kerala is that student attendance in the school is not affected by Madrasas. Madrasas take special care to adjust their timing so that children can carry on their formal schooling. Madrasas are generally located in the close vicinity of the house. The timing of the Madrasa is so arranged that they can attend their two hours class in the morning and get back to their house. The Muslim families in the locality make sure that their locality has got a Madrasa nearby and there be no clash of timing between Madrasa and formal schools. As an academic, one must objectively consider what has happened to the traditional Madrasa system while looking at the present scenario. Here a differentiated approach is unavoidably necessary to understand how Muslims, as a multitude, moved toward a modern style of religious education. During the colonial period, the British administration and the Muslim reformers tried to modernise the madrasa where secular education should be imparted. In modern times, due to the effect of gulf schools, religious education is now imparted as part of the secular school curriculum. It is confined to one period of Arabic or Sanskrit education imparted in Private Aided and Unaided Muslim management schools. See U Mohammed, Educational Empowerment of Kerala Muslims: A Socio-Historical Perspective, Other Books, India, 2007. Already in Oriental Schools government allows to teach Sanskrit or Arabic Language in school. The emphasis is now more on secular education. Parents who do not want their children to lose touch with their religious heritage have the option of continuing the tradition of sending their children to Madrasa early in the morning. This appears to be the case especially with students of government schools.

Concluding Statement

Here an important question is left open against the background of the analysis made in the previous sections of this paper. First and foremost, I state that the problem, which mainly characterises today's academic enquiries, faced by the Muslim community is a false problem. As Slavoj Zizek, a leading philosopher of our time, rightly puts: the role of philosophy is not solving problems; rather the role of philosophy is to redefine problems, because the problem we face today could be a false problem. Philosophy therefore redefines the problem. Therefore, as an example, it is nobler to ask questions such as: Why does the Muslim community remain backward in educational achievements? Is it because of economic backwardness or the religious conservativism that the Muslim's remain backward in education? According to the central finding of my study these questions emerge from false assumptions of a problem. The problem essentially lies in the specific conjunction of modern educational practices and identity construction of the Muslims in India in general and Kerala Muslims in particular. An understanding of this conjunction is therefore important.

When it comes to educational development, the term backwardness has become the vernacular term invoked for description of the pitiable social and economic condition of Muslims. The paper refuses to invoke this term educational *backwardness* against the Muslim Community or any other society. The colonial politics and ideologies of educational and communal development have to be understood from a historical perspective so that injustice is not repeated in contemporary times. Past injustices and subjugation are never a measure of a community's fullest, greatest potential. No community can organise itself for educational growth until they are empowered to some extent. It is a series of events, told from limited perspectives, that has left us in disguise of the various events or divisions in history.

The unequitable high and low economic condition, especially after the Portuguese War has impacted the Muslim attitude to education in general and western education in particular. The European portrayal of Indians demands a new way of expounding the problem. A telephoto lens of history is used here to come closer to the genealogy of the word backwardness. The word itself leaves an impression that a community has been lagging behind ever since it was born, whereas the education history of Muslims shows the high and low political effects over the concept. History is a dynamic process of making and remaking and the ruptures need to be taken care of. If the backwardness is a construction we need to deconstruct the concept. It is time now to dismantle the concept to regain the identity of the community. The universal subject, that is defining and appreciating the cultural aspects of being, should look at Muslim as predicated by the particular aspects of repression.

If we make a graphic representation of Mappila Education over the years, one can see different narratives of dynamic highs and lows with prolonged ages of unease. The times of great expanses, of conflict and decline, lseading to this critical and competitive age have been discussed in detail in this paper. Now there is healthy competition between communities and the denominational groups; however, in the field of higher education a great deal more is required to be done to bring equality. The ontology of the term backwardness does not fit well with the history and present circumstances of the educational development among Muslims. State policies and the use of the term backwardness or OBCs (Other Backward Castes) have two century old stories to tell which is only touched upon here critically highlighting only certain facets. The State has to critically revalue its own uncritical use and

conceptualisations, which has a colonial origin. Society would benefit from using terminology such as unorganised communities as a sounder representation for expressing the low-key educational affair over the years.

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Book Reviews

AYYAR, R V. Vaidyanatha (2017): ***History of Education Policymaking in India, 1947–2016***, Delhi: Oxford University Press India, pp. 582, Price: ₹ 1995, ISBN: 9780199474943

The recently released National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which follows the 1992 modified version of National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE 1986), has steered the public conversation towards education policy. The domain of education policy, however, is more than just discourse --- it is the foundation which supports the whole education system of a country. As emphasised in the UNESCO's *Handbook on Education Policy Analysis*, a national education policy establishes the primary goals pursued by the concerned government in matters of education, at the sectoral as well as the sub-sectoral level. As such, education policy assumes a central role in directing the specificities of education-related strategies and plans, which subsequently get implemented. Typically, while the challenges in the implementation process receive sufficient academic coverage, seldom does the policymaking process, shaped by the socio-political and environmental context, receive similar attention. While analysing education policy in silos is useful, such an analysis remains incomplete without tracing a policy's historical progression. Studying the historical evolution of the policy reveals how previous policies are often embedded and recast in new forms. Moreover, lessons of history provide key takeaways which have a direct bearing on both policy design and implementation. In such a backdrop, to study the genealogy of the recently released NEP 2020, R. V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar's book *History of Education Policymaking in India, 1947–2016* comes as a timely read for gaining a comprehensive account on India's education policy.

In its introductory chapter, the book locates the root of India's formal education policy in the British Raj. Invoking the fabled Macaulay's Minutes, which haunted decades of Independent India's education policies, it pinpoints how elements of the British education policy get replicated in the early years of the Republic. Nevertheless, to its merit, it does not restrict the scrutiny of deficiencies (of education policies) to the colonial vestiges alone. As the author states, "…..it is not unusual for the education discourse in India, to begin with the ritualistic excretion of the infamous minutes of Macaulay of all that is wrong with Indian education….."Constantly regarding Macaulay as being the prime mover of India's education policy, undermines the significant contribution (both positive as well as negative) of other leading Indian education stalwarts and commissions constituted, including the Sargent Committee on Post-War Educational Development, the Radhakrishnan Commission on University Development and the Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education, among others.

In the subsequent chapters, the National Policy of Education 1968 (NPE 1968) and the NPE 1986 have been elaborated upon one by one. The author painstakingly illustrates the conceptualisation of the formidable Kothari Commission --- despite its idealistic foundation

it did not lose sight of the reality. Furthermore, the book draws attention to how certain elements of the 1968 policy persisted long beyond the official policy timeline. Prominently, how the recommendation of spending 6 per cent of the GDP on education, has become somewhat of an heirloom, being ceremonially passed on to each successive education policy. (The latest NEP 2020 is no exception to this legacy.) Existing controversies too can be chronicled from the past – for instance, the language issue was a bone of contention even in the nascent days of Independent India's formulation of education policy: ".....the visualisation (of the national system of education) presented no problem except the conceptualisation of the language policy.....eventually the constitution-makers opted for a half-hearted compromise." While exploring the tenets of NPE 1986, a separate chapter elaborates how the change in political regime had direct implication on the implementation of 1986 policy. The change in political leadership led to the constitution of the 'Ramamurthy Review Committee' in 1990, for reviewing the policy. Subsequently, with the reinstatement of the Congress government again, the 1992 revised version of NPE 1986 ignored a large part of the recommendation, incorporating only few, primarily owing to ideological conflict between the political regimes.

As such, instead of brushing politics under the carpet, politics of policy development is a recurrent theme throughout the book. Numerous instances of politics influencing policy, including incidents when the political leaders shunned individual efforts in bringing about education reforms have been elaborated. Taking up specific cases, the book illustrates how education is not a neutral space; rather it's a fertile ground of contestation. As the book navigates issues ranging from the politicization of affirmative action to detoxification and saffronisation of textbooks, it compels readers to take cognisance of the politics underlying policymaking. The sway of textbook controversy, especially with regards to history textbooks, is reflective of the persistent effort to sanitize history, aligned with the narrative that best serves the interest of the present-day ruling class. It further drives home the point that education sector is equally is enmeshed in power dynamics. Thus, history of India's education policymaking, in a sense, is a testament that knowledge production is hegemonic in nature, with its frequent usage to preserve the status-quo of those in power.

Although the book largely concentrates on assessing education policy setting at the national level, in an exclusive chapter it provides a brief description of how a state education department functions navigating issues ranging from litigation, teacher union, managing relationship with the concerned Chief Minister, politicians, etc. Moving beyond politics, policy response in ensuring social justice and equity has been similarly foregrounded. Issues ranging from the extension of reservations (quotas) to Other Backward Classes (OBCs), to the constitution of a National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions, have been covered. The policy response in ensuring social justice and equity, through affirmative action and other schemes for socio-religious minority groups, has been similarly foregrounded.

The book, however, is not limited to socio-political scrutiny of education policy. It sufficiently deals with other disciplinary facets as well. For instance, with regards to the economics of policymaking, it delves deeply into the issue of education financing. The author states how the system of financing, plagued with the proverbial *ostrich syndrome,* failed to foresee apparent financial hurdles. The lack of this realisation led to the premature abortion of numerous policies, owing to budgetary deficiency. Simultaneously, it has also probed the transformations brought forth by the economic reform of 1990s as visible from

the mushrooming of private schools, universities and professional institutes across the country. A specifically devoted chapter analyses 'the winds of change' which led to the emergence of new trends such as the self-financing professional institution, re-entry of foreign schools' boards and emergence of private universities. The author further contends that 'the present (India) is a foreign country' in the wake of the triumph of globalisation and liberalisation in overhauling India's education landscape. Underscoring the regulatory changes which accompanied and enabled this transition, the other drivers of change delineated, include emergence of new technologies, rise of private education, globalisation and the economy's gradual transition to a knowledge economy. The author presents an analysis of how these factors cumulatively altered the landscape of Indian education.

Even though policymaking is presumed to be a prerogative of the executive and legislature, with frequent aid from academicians, the author puts the spotlight on the often-ignored role of judicial policymaking. The book depicts the powerful part played by the judiciary, especially in crisis management, and at times, in inadvertently creating crisis (such as the Supreme Court judgment in Association of Management of Private Colleges in 2013, where it deprived AICTE the regulatory right over technical college). From the watershed Yash Pal case judgement, up to upholding the Constitutional validity of the RTE Act, the neglected role of the judiciary has been given its due credit. The author further cautions that the shifting interpretation about laws over the years (for instance, regarding the right of private entities to establish an educational institution) shows how crucial decisions are contingent on the ideals espoused by the judges. As such, the judicial philosophies of individual judges shape their approach to respective cases, thereby creating a situation of uncertainty, as was in the case with AICTE.

Despite its voluminous content, the author's restraint in adopting a purely matter-of-fact approach succeeds in sustaining the reader's interest. The narrative style flow of the book, coupled with the quality of content, further enhances its readability. For the stakeholders in education such as administrators, policy makers, policy practitioners at central, state and institutional levels, in addition to teachers and students, the book is an absolute essential. Moreover, since it sparingly uses jargon, non-academic readers, having no prior knowledge of education policy, should find the book equally beneficial, both for its unique insight and for easy reference on theme of education policymaking.

In conclusion, the book is immensely valuable in providing the readers with a rare insider's account, given the author's vast experience as an education policymaker. In reflecting back at his personal experience, the author asserts, 'It ain't over even after it is over' --- even the most successful policies are prone to multiple modifications which inevitably arises from various sources of externalities, some intrinsic to the policy design itself.

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TUKDEO, Shivali (2019): ***India Goes to School: Education Policy and Cultural Politics***, New Delhi: Springer Nature India Press, pp. 144, eBook, ISBN: 978-81-322-3957-4

The National Education Policy 2020 is arguably believed to be a remarkable policy document which, ostensibly, shall overhaul the education landscape in India. Policies thus at times are loaded not only with the pathway curated for future but also the heavy expectations of the public. As such, in lieu of reading the policies in isolation, it is important to look at them in the context of historical factors affecting their making. Now *India Goes to School,* an exemplary work in the area of cultural politics of education policy in India, provides a reader just that. Shivali Tukdeo, with her strong theoretical rigour and germane empirical references has produced an ingenious critical work. Shivali is an associate professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, India. Her scholarly engagements are rooted in diverse disciplinary interactions including education policy, critical social theory and sociology of education, among others.

Having spent several years working in the new policy regimes in education in India, her current research includes social exclusion and education. The book has seven chapters where each chapter sets the pace for the next one. The author begins with the intriguing shifting discourse on the caste based reservations; from the time when higher caste people protested against the recommendations of the Mandal Commission for extending quotas to Other Backward Classes (OBCs), to an era when reservations are being protested for by the dominant caste groups, thus shifting the discourse from historical injustice by caste-based exclusion to economical backwardness across caste spectrum. Critical studies which explicate how caste continues to write the grammar of schooling are presented succinctly and with precision. Shivali states that "policies are neither natural/logical conclusions to social problems; nor is the state the sole actor that steers policy change" (p10). Higher academic achievements of marginalised are considered exceptions whereas lower achievement scores are attributed to bad parenting and at times traits of communities. School Management Committees (SMCs) are not only a failure but in fact reinforce the social control by local elite. "While the elite schools actively reconfigure themselves in terms of international economic, educational norms and promote greater cross-border exchange, they also engage in practices of highly selective admissions, social segregation and maintaining distance from local schools" (p17).

The author elaborates on the introduction of formal mass education in India by the British and how it had different meanings for different caste and class groups; she makes the discussion more profound as those meanings weren't atemporal by nature. Shivali is sedulous in putting together the conflicting as well as merging views of the British and the native, between indigenous and the formal education. There is meticulous weaving of the contestations of indigenous knowledge systems and English formal education through the political lens of caste, class and gender, giving concomitant account of some of the significant education policies and developments in the 18th and early 19thcentury.It is pointed out how responses to formal education are "diverse, scattered and incongruent" (p39) and how assembling it would be a precondition for making an enriching education policy.

Through a critical reading of various policies including Gokhale's bill for free and compulsory education which was voted out by legislative council in 1912 and Kothari

Commission Report 1966, the conceptualisation of national system of education and the eventual acceptance and spread of formal mass education has been discussed. The author exposits various political articulations which formed the core of national system of education. The conflict among Nai Talim proposed by Gandhi, Hindu right's position on formal education for Hindu revivalism, education of scientific temper and secular ethos by Nehru and Ambedkar's position on postcolonial education have been critically deliberated. The independent Indian state viewed education as a significant tool for nation building; it was considered as a social leveller in the face of segregation due to caste, class and gender. With the idea of massification of education, adult literacy and universal elementary education became two immediate priorities. Mass education was an attempt to bring in social justice and equality; however, the author expresses her dismay that the mass education "ironically led to the reinforcement of elite power that it sought to destabilise" (p 51). The author also explicates the gradual loss of the public confidence in government schools and the concomitant mushrooming of the private schools, and the link between social class and the kind of coaching industry's service students availed.

In the modern era, the influence of international and supranational organisations' in education is critically looked at. There's intriguing brainstorming on how the education slowly slipped out of the gamut of obligations of the state with the prominent role of private players and the civil society. The emergence of international organisations like UN and its tributaries, and their involvement in the global politics and culture affected the national policy articulations. With the increased movement of students and resources across borders, notions of borders are ever changing. Such reconstitution of borders has impacted the tertiary system of education in significant ways. The author critically points out the erosion of local economy owing to global capitalism, growing global inequality index and weakened local institutions. The funds of World Bank, the OECD and the UNESCO indirectly frame and control education policy. The author also discusses transnational partnerships of organisations of different capacity; significant mention is of the World Education Conference in Jomtien, Thailand in which 155 states, 20 intergovernmental organisations and several NGOs participated. The conference brought education to the forefront as an agenda of international development. The central idea of the conference was "Education for All (EFA). "The Jomtien declaration was followed by successive conferences redefining the direction of educational reforms. This led to a plethora of alliances between financial institutions and governments. The discourses hence generated were intended to legitimate neoliberal policies. The increased involvement of international organisations, non-state actors and civil society added to the decreased obligation of the state. Following the Jomtien conference, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was laid out by the Government of India with the aid from World Bank in 1994. The DPEP made districts the unit of educational management and was hence a crucial step in the process of decentralisation of educational planning.

The next significant themes were the concept of internalisation of higher education, education-driven migration and theorisation of diaspora. The internationalisation of higher education not only leads to acquisition of material benefits but also possibilities of higher cultural capital through socialisation and effective social practices. With her scrupulous critical inquiry, the author evaluates the experiences of Indian students, particularly in the US. Also, she further discusses India's policy for the Non-Resident Indians (NRIs).

She explicates how independent India was not able to safeguard interests of its vast diaspora, however, there was an eventual shift in the policy giving recognition to the Indian diaspora and recognising its strength. While the author discusses the value addition to the country by the "successful NRIs" and "model minorities," she doesn't fail to acknowledge the perspective of those NRIs who're not in privileged positions and may get neglected both by the government of India and the Indian diaspora. The author explicates that merit is defined in terms of individual ability but reservation is loaded with social history within which individual's ability is parameterised, and hence assiduously draws connections between caste privilege, educational attainment and model minority.

The transnational education is a complex growing space in the field of education. The author presents an in-detail intricate discussion on three organisations: Asha, Ekal Foundation and Pratham. Shivali exposits that "movements of people are closely connected to the flows of capital, supply of labour and extraction of a variety of resources" (p 103). The three organisations are part of transnational advocacy and diasporic networks, and through their example, the author describes the process and practices of transnational networks in education. As organisations function through online groups and virtual conferences, social life is informationialised.

The final essay is sort of an analytical synthesis which brings together all the major contestations and builds on critical arguments on education policy in contemporary India. The author calls attention to the commodification of education and the decreasing obligation of the state. Privatisation of education, participation of non-state actors and civil society, global influence on education and tryst of the Indian diaspora are some of the key highlights, and based on which author proposes some exigent reforms.

The book is a critical historical analysis of education policies and cultural geopolitics in India. However, there could have been more discussion on how education policies are alienating for some cultures; it would have been a more profound read if germane aspects of cultural homogenisation from the works of anthropologists like Wade Davis were included in the essays. In the larger realm of education policy research, this book creates anintricate niche placing education policy in the middle of the social context it belongs. The greatest strength of the book lies in its ability to intertwine issues of power, struggle and social and cultural construction with education policy, an outlook which had not received the scholarly attention it deserved.

Shivali's sharp ability to evoke intriguing questions is patent throughout the course of the book, and it makes the experience more thought-provoking. The book is a rich repository of sublime insights for future policy researches, and is a recommended read for policy makers, bureaucrats, research scholars and every individual who wishes to delve deeper into the understanding of the politics of education policy in India

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RAMACHANDRAN, Vimala (2018): ***Inside Indian Schools: The Enigma of Equity and Quality***, New Delhi: Social Science Press, pp. xx + 271, Price: ₹ 850, ISBN: 978-93-83166-25-1

Over the years, India has seen a positive trend in the enrolment of children in schools, especially in the age group of 6-14years.The NUEPA's report on elementary education in India (2015-16) reveals that the enrolment in primary classes has increased to 129.12 million. The enrolment of girls has reached to 48.21 per cent. The share of children from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with respect to the total enrolment is 19.94 per cent and 10.64 per cent respectively. Similarly, the percentage of enrolment of Muslim children has also increased to 14.43 per cent. While the aforesaid conditions contributed towards ensuring equity, there were other factors that played a decisive role in assessing and ensuring equity. There is thus a pressing need to take the discussion beyond these numbers and to understand the issues which the data often conceal.

One of the way by which quality of education can be assessed is whether students have acquired the basic skills like reading, writing and arithmetic. The ASER survey of 2018 revealed that around 42 per cent students studying in grade I could not even read a letter and only 5.2 per cent of students could read text of their level. In arithmetic, 35.7 per cent of the same grade could not recognise numbers and only 3.9 per cent and 2 per cent could subtract and divide respectively. This clearly shows the deplorable quality of our education system. This has resulted in the growing distrust of public school system. Subsequently, there is an increase in the movement of students from government to private aided and private unaided schools. Government schools are now attended mostly by the socially and economically backward students. Therefore, these sections of the society get further marginalised as they have access to poor quality of education which does not help them acquire even basic skills and consequently, they remain trapped in the vicious circle of poverty.

The book under review makes an honest attempt at highlighting this reality. It points out various government efforts that have been concentrated on increasing accessibility and enrolment and have not given due consideration to the quality of education being provided. This has led to the creation of parallel systems of education in the country. One system is that of private schools that caters to the upper and middle classes with better learning outcomes and facilities. The other system is that of government schools for children belonging to socially and economically weaker sections with poor facilities. This has resulted in spatial segregation of children which has further exacerbated exclusion. It has led to the creation of "hierarchies of access" (p 31).

The issue of equity and quality is very much tied to the issue of equality. Throughout the book there is an effort to make us look at "equity and quality as two sides of the same coin" (p 11) which has been found missing in many initiatives of the government in the field of education. Professor Ramachandran's nuanced understanding of the issues concerning Indian schools is clearly reflected in the book. She had been part of various government programmes like Mahila Samakhya, Bihar Education Project, LokJumbish Project, District Primary Education Programme and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya. Her extensive fieldwork and rich experience of working in the area of education becomes evident as

she presents a comprehensive understanding of various issues and perspectives in school education through her present work.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part looks at the macro data to help understand the bigger picture. This part has five chapters, including the introduction. The Introduction discusses key policies and programmes that have had an influence on changing the educational landscape of the country. While doing so it also highlights the instrumental role of the international community towards universalisation of elementary education in India. It explains the trajectory of important events that took place in the field of school education, providing a much-required context for the readers. It also gives the layout of the book.

The chapters in this section underscore the role of gender, caste, class and location of the child in determining their access and retention in schools. Thereby, it points out the limitations of the indicators commonly used for monitoring educational progress. The author makes two important observations which emerge from her studies. Firstly, she cautions against treating Scheduled Tribes as a homogeneous community and emphasises on the need to take into consideration the varying educational needs of different tribal groups. Secondly, she stresses on the need of locating gender inequalities in education within the broader framework of social, economic and regional inequalities.

The second part of the book comprises four chapters that discuss various issues faced by the students and teachers belonging to particular regions. These chapters are outcome of qualitative studies conducted by the author between 2002 and 2015. These studies are valuable in understanding the various manifestations of discrimination in schools. It looks at the intersection of multiple identities like gender, community, social group, class and caste shaping the classroom experiences of students. The studies reveal that several practices in schools are discriminatory in nature and further strengthen the caste hierarchies. It explains the various sites and means through which exclusionary practices continue to takes place in schools.

The author focuses on the impact of social and economic exclusion of children on their physical and psychosocial development. She traces its impact on children from the time of conception till they are in schools. The studies conducted by her shows the impact of family's economic and social status in determining mother's health and nutrition level which affects a child's learning capacities. In doing so, it takes the discussion further on the close links between health, nutrition and learning.

The concluding chapter of the book looks at the concerns of another important stakeholder in the education, i.e., the teacher. The popular discourse around school education blames teacher's lack of motivation, qualification, absenteeism and careless attitude as one of the major reason for the failure of the education system. The author's qualitative studies provide the holistic perspective to better understand the teacher's position and status. It focuses on the various factors that influence teacher's motivation and accountability. The findings of the studies stresses on the crucial role that school's environment plays in motivating and supporting teachers.

The book develops an analysis of various aspects of school education. It sheds light on different issues and concerns plaguing the school system in the country. However, the book has a few limitations which need to be pointed out. The qualitative studies discussed by the author covered only a few states. Therefore, its insights will have certain limitations owing

to its limited coverage. Furthermore, in the discussion on exclusion, the author misses out on two important aspects. Firstly, she briefly mentions the issues of children with special needs. Their concerns need more attention and engagement as they bear the burden of cumulative exclusion. Secondly, while discussing the exclusion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the author could have engaged with the absence of their representation in the school textbooks and participation in the classroom discussions. On the whole the book makes a significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of equity and quality in education, and provides an extensive avenue for practitioners and future researchers for engaging with policy and practices.

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