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JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION
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CONTENTS

Page No.

ARTICLES

Confucius and the Guru: The Changing Status of the Academic Profession in China and India 395
N. Jayaram and *Philip G. Altbach*

Degree Devaluation in Higher Education: Unemployment and Unemployability among the Graduates in India 411
Avinash Kumar Singh

Challenges of Achieving and Financing Universal Elementary Education in India: The Case of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 429
P. Geetha Rani

RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS

State Inaction in Education in India 465
K.R. Shah

Medical Education in India: Implications for Quality and Access to Care 473
Ajay Mahal and *M. Mohanan*

BOOK REVIEWS (See overleaf) 485

CONTENTS OF VOLUME XX (2006) 505

BOOK REVIEWS

Education and Society in Hong Kong and Macao: Comparative Perspectives on Continuity and Change (Mark Bray & Ramsey Koo, eds.) 485
G. Balatchandirane

Democratic Leadership in Education (A. Philip Woods) 488
B.K. Panda

Increasing Teacher Effectiveness (LORIN W., Anderson) 490
R.P. Singh

Balancing the Books: Household Financing of Basic Education in Cambodia (Mark Bray and Bunly Seng) 494
Tarujyoti Buragohain

Developing Portfolios in Education: A Guide to Reflection, Inquiry and Assessment (Ruth S. Johnson et al) 496
S.P. Ruhela and *Raj Kumar Nayak*

The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa: Africa Perspectives on Adult Learning (Thomas Fasokun, Anne Katahoire, and Akpovire Oduaran) 497
Shobhita Jain

Serving the Common Good: A Postcolonial African Perspective on Higher Education (Kiluba L. Nkulu) 499
S.M.I.A. Zaidi

Adverse Effects of Private Supplementary Tutoring (Mark Bray) 503
Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

Journal of Educational Planning and Administration
No. XX, No. 4, October 2006, pp. 395-410

Confucius and the Guru
The Changing Status of the Academic Profession in China and India*

N. Jayaram+
Philip G. Altbach ++

Being late starters in the sphere of modern higher education, developing countries find themselves in a difficult situation. They now need to catch up with the rest of the world, particularly the advanced ones in the west. However they confront the inexorable changes wrought by massification and globalization and their ever increasing integration into the world economy. The dilemmas involve serious policy challenges given that a growing proportion of the world's higher education students are located in developing countries; by the mid-1990s, 44 million of the world's 80 million students in higher education were in developing countries—despite the fact that only 6 percent of the population in these countries attained post-secondary degrees, while 26 percent in high-income countries had similar qualifications (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 111, p. 115). This part of the world is experiencing the highest rate of expansion of higher education.

Established in 1898, modern Chinese higher education has expanded rapidly over the last 100 years. There are now "more than 3,000 universities and colleges—including 1,225 regular full-time universities and colleges, 686 adult higher education institutions, and 1,202 new private universities and colleges. The system encompasses 13 million students and over 1.45 million staff members, 554,000 of whom are faculty members" (Min, 2004, pp. 53-54). In India, modern higher education was established as early as in 1857 as part of the British colonial enterprise. At the time of independence (in 1947), however, there were only 20 universities and 496 colleges catering to 241,369 students. During the next 55 years, India built up a massive system of higher education. In 2001-2002, there were 323 university-status institutions (178 state and 18 central universities, 18 medical and 40 agricultural universities, 52 institutions "deemed-to-be universities," 12 institutes of national importance, and 5 institutions established under state legislature acts), 13,150 colleges, and about 900 polytechnics. The system now employs 350,664 teachers and caters to about 8,275,000 students (though estimated to be covering hardly 8 percent of the population in the relevant (17-23) age group) (Jayaram, 2005).

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* In preparing this paper, the authors have drawn heavily on Chen (2003), Jayaram (2003) and Min (2004).

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more than one-third of the world's population. China recently overtook the United States as the country with the highest enrolments, while India ranks in the top five. With their well-developed higher education systems, including some excellent research universities, both countries differ from many other developing countries (Altbach, 1998). The conditions China and India share with many other developing countries include the large number of low quality institutions, sometimes difficult conditions for study, and shortage of funds at all levels. The main focus of this paper is to explain the changing position of academics in these countries today, the implications for higher education, and deal with such issues as constricting employment opportunities, deteriorating career prospects and working conditions, and changing role expectations.

The Changing Context of Higher Education

Both in China and India, and in developing countries, generally, higher education has traditionally enjoyed considerable state patronage. However, over the last two decades, higher education has been thrown into a vortex of change, inevitably impacting the academic profession. China has undergone a pronounced shift from a command economy to a market economy (albeit while still within the socialist framework) and from a predominantly bureaucratic culture to a competitive corporate culture. In India, the stimulus for change has come with the adoption by the government of structural adjustment reforms in 1990 under the influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The structural change in the Chinese higher education system since the 1990s has centered on the large number of state-driven mergers. In 1998, China's 1,022 regular public higher educational institutions enrolled 1,083,600 students. Total enrolments at higher learning institutions, including adult education institutions, amounted to 6,231,000. During 1992–1995, more than 70 public (state-run) institutions merged into 28 universities, and over 100 institutions set up cross-institution consortiums. As of 2000, a total of 612 higher education institutions merged into 250. Operationally, these changes – heavily influenced by western ethos and practices – have significantly impacted the academic profession, which hitherto carried the stamp of traditional Chinese cultural values and norms. The introduction of the "post system" in academic appointments, in contrast to the existing "title system," represents a case in point. This new system reflects the move from a predominantly bureaucratic to a competitive corporate culture in Chinese higher education.

Another reform of the Chinese higher education, particularly considering the unwavering socialist foundation of the Chinese state, pertains to the introduction of *minban* (non-state-run) or private universities and colleges. By the beginning of 2001, about 2000 institutions existed in this new sector in Chinese higher education, though "with a lower level of student enrolments and a less stable faculty" (Chen, 2003, p. 108). The employment and service conditions at these institutions are different from those in the public institutions.

In India, structural adjustment has meant a scaling back of state patronage and a simultaneous privatization of higher education. However, the government itself is confused and has been dithering about the policy to be adopted on this matter. State investment in education in India has always failed to meet the needs of "education for all." Structural adjustment has meant a drastic cut in public expenditure on higher education. Between 1980-1990 and 1994-1995, higher education's share of the central government's five-year plan expenditure decreased from 12.6 percent to 6 percent whereas the same in non-plan expenditure declined only from 14.2 percent to 11 percent (Tilak, 1996). Overall, the allocation for higher education, which had peaked at 28 percent in the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1997), has steadily declined in the successive plans to just 8 percent in the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07), which is as much as the allocation in the First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956). The annual growth rate of public expenditure on university and higher education, which was 13.1 percent between 1980-1981 and 1985-1986, fell to 7.8 percent between 1980-1981 and 1995-1996 (Shariff & Ghosh, 2000, p. 1400). Thus, the state, which had hitherto been the dominant partner in funding higher education, is finding it increasingly difficult even to maintain the same level of funding for higher education.

The gradual withdrawal of the state from higher education in India has been accompanied by its inability to address the need for reforms within the conventional higher education. The National Policy on Education (1985) and the Program of Action (1986), and their review by the Acharya Ramamurti Committee (1991) were all pre-structural-adjustment reform initiatives. Neither the phenomenal fall in the demand for conventional graduate courses, nor the remarkable spurt in the demand for courses in such areas as computer science and information technology, biotechnology, and management studies, was anticipated.

The unwillingness and inability of the state to invest in the new areas of education explain the growth of private institutions. These institutions, also referred to as "self-financing institutions," are of uneven quality – ranging from a small number of centers of excellence to roadside teaching-shops. These new entrants to the arena of higher education raise questions of autonomy and accountability (since they do not depend on state funding), on the one hand, and issues concerning teachers (like qualifications and recruitment, career options, pay and working conditions, etc.) on the other. Thus, private initiatives in higher education are fraught with serious implications for the academic profession.

Both in China and India, the general context of higher education has been undergoing change. While in the Chinese case the transition has been regulated, in the Indian case it is one of gradual withdrawal of state patronage in an unregulated market. What do such scenarios mean to the academic profession in the respective countries? What are the conditions and prospects of employment relations for academia?

China: Unfinished Reform and Professorial Uncertainty

Problems of Overstaffing and Understaffing

For almost 50 years, since the beginning of the socialist system of planned economic and social change, teachers were appointed in China under a "tenure system." Under this system, once hired, the academic as well as auxiliary staff were provided with what the Chinese called an "iron rice bowl", that is, a secure job for life. All teachers received more or less the same salary regardless of their qualifications and contributions. Over the decades, this system of appointment resulted in problems of overstaffing, incompetence, and inefficiency. In 1998, the faculty-student ratio was 1:11.2. While the problem of overstaffing cut across the system of higher education, it particularly concerned the non-teaching or auxiliary staff, rather than the teaching staff.

The problem of overstaffing has worsened with the merger of higher education institutions. The rationale for mergers was to produce economies of scale, delegate more administrative power to the local authorities, and render institutions more comprehensive. "If a smaller, less-renowned institution merges with a larger, prestigious one, the new entity usually takes the name of the latter as well as its standards for faculty appointments" (Chen, 2003, p. 109). Given their generally lower level of competence, with mergers, the faculty members from the smaller institutions are obviously placed in a disadvantageous position.

Mergers have also resulted in the downsizing of the professoriate as some positions get eliminated with their corresponding staff and some faculty are retrenched or reassigned or forced to find work at other institutions or in other professions. For example, "After Central Technical Arts College was merged with Tsinghua University in 2000 . . . only 6 of the 12 English teachers at the former were retained in the English Department of Tsinghua University. The rest were forced to find work at other institutions or in other professions" (Chen, 2003, p. 109). It is not surprising, therefore, that while the teachers at smaller institutions are generally unenthusiastic about the mergers, their students welcome it.

While overstaffing exists throughout higher education, almost every institution also suffers from a shortage of competent faculty. The latter has to do with the expansion of higher education, which has accelerated since the early 1990s:

> The number of first-year students at regular higher learning institutions increased by 47.3 percent, from 1.084 million in 1998 to 1.597 million in 1999. Enrolments at adult learning institutions increased by 15.7 percent, from 1.001 million to 1.158 million, and the number of graduate students increased by 17.6 percent. Total student enrolment doubled between 1990 and 1999. The gross enrolment rate of the 18-to-22 age cohort increased from 3.9 percent in 1992 to 9.1 percent in 1997, to 10 percent in 2000, and is expected to rise to 15 percent in 2005 (Chen, 2003, p. 109).

For the professoriate, the fact that institutions now have more students than they can handle has led to an increase in class-size and workload. Without the help of teaching assistants, the quality of teaching is an obvious casualty. Not surprisingly, most professors follow what the Chinese call the "duck-feeding" method, where teachers deliver monologues and students take down notes passively – a system with minimal interaction between the teacher and the taught. The most acute understaffing is reported in the local vocational and adult learning institutions, which have also experienced rapid expansion during the last decade, and in institutions located in small cities.

Understaffing is compounded not only by relatively low salary levels but also by the lack of opportunities for professional development. As Min notes, "while basic salaries of university faculty were comparable to those of other professionals with similar educational qualifications, faculty remuneration was lower because of larger bonuses given to employees in companies, especially in joint venture firms" (2004, p. 75). Many well qualified, competent faculty members are dissatisfied with their jobs, and tend to leave them as and when they get the opportunity. That is, the professoriate is affected by "brain drain." For the same reasons, teaching does not attract the best talents from universities. In fact, research universities affiliated with the Ministry of Education or other ministries suffer from the same weakness. Furthermore, under the conventional tenure system it is not easy to remove the incompetent teachers either.

The laws enacted by the State Council determine the qualifications for teaching positions. The Teachers' Qualification Law of 1995 stipulates the minimum qualification of a master's degree for faculty below the age of 40. In fact, the qualification levels of teachers are still low: in 1999, only 5.4 percent of faculty held a doctoral degree, and 24 percent a master's degree. The system permits pronounced inbreeding, with senior faculty and administrators tending to employ their own students. Very little mobility exists in the academic profession, which gives the many underqualified teachers who entered a low-salary but high-security jobs little incentive to work hard. Many of these staff have retired or have been pushed out in the process of modernization.

From "Title System" to "Post System"

Recognising the importance of quality higher education in a rapidly globalizing world, the Chinese government has embarked upon a program of reform in structure and orientation. The main objective of this reform is to make the system of higher education internationally competitive, and the strategy is to raise the quality of the faculty. Now at the experimental stage, once the program of reform is implemented across the institutions of higher education, it will have profound impact on the professoriate. While the Chinese government and the ruling elite have the power to implement the reform, their commitment to systemic and sustained reform remains an open question.

A hallmark of higher education reform in China, signifying a radical change in the system of recruitment for academic profession, has been the implementation of a "post system" in place of the conventional "title system" of tenured employment. In 1998, the Ministry of Education introduced the post system of academic appointments on an

experimental basis in two universities – Peking University and Tsinghua University. Each of these universities was given a special annual grant of 1.8 billion Yuan or U.S. $ 222 million) for three years. Twenty-five percent of these grants were earmarked for faculty development.

Academic positions are divided into three categories (A, B, and C in the descending order), with each category containing three ranks. Above the top category (A) is the special category of internationally known scholars. The rank-related subsidy is predetermined and divided into two parts: only 70 percent is paid to a faculty member each month, and the remaining 30 percent is paid after a faculty review at the end of the year.

Xiangming Chen lists four main objectives of this reform: (1) to break away from the "all-tenure" system with its "iron rice bowl syndrome"; (2) to separate one's title from one's rank so that competent people can be hired for the right posts even if they do not have a certain title; (3) to link one's salary with one's post, thus widening the gap between different salary scales; and (4) to downsize the faculty by reassigning surplus people to other jobs (2003, p. 113).

Unless they are competent enough, no teachers, including full professors, will be selected for the category they desire. Thus, teachers who are not competent enough will get only the basic salary for their title and no subsidy. The performance appraisal of teachers also has a provision for punitive action for non-performers. Three professors at the prestigious Tsinghua University were reportedly dismissed because of negative student evaluations and "poor performance."

Since 2000, the post system has been implemented in other universities including Fudan University and Shanghai Transport University. Shandong Agriculture University abolished the title system, and the savings resulting from expenses earlier incurred on superfluous personnel were diverted to increase the support for faculty with posts.

The post system and the associated rank-related subsidies are reportedly motivating the faculty to work harder than under the former title system. It is also expected to enhance the professional development of the faculty and commitment to their work and institution. Considering the generally low basic salaries under the title system, the financial position of teachers with proven qualifications and capabilities has steadily improved. This has been a welcome development considering that the cost of living has risen over the decades, whereas the rise in the basic salary has not been commensurate.

However, for the vast majority of the teachers, who are by and large less qualified and less competent, this reform has meant closed doors. Their salaries being low and the cost of living rising, many of them are forced to look for additional jobs outside the university. Those who have been laid off due to downsizing as a result of the introduction of the post system have reached the end of the road. Of course, the downsizing has affected the administrators, auxiliary staff, and Party officials more than faculty members. For the university leadership, the reassignment of surplus staff and faculty has been a great challenge.

As noted earlier, attracting competent people and improving faculty capabilities have been on the agenda of reform. The Ministry of Education, other ministries, and institutions have carried out several recruitment campaigns. Awards, both in kind and in cash, have been instituted to improve the competence levels of the faculty. Opportunities for advanced study and research are being extended to competent faculty. Model programs, such as the 3-T (top talents, top university set up, and top scientific achievement) initiative of Shanghai 2nd Medical University, have been instituted. Even overseas teachers have been invited to teach and do research in some Chinese universities.

The Growing Private Sector

These reforms in higher education have all addressed the public universities. Besides the public sector, China now has a rapidly growing private sector in higher education that is entirely financed by non-governmental sources. Since the early 1990s, about 2,000 private institutions have been established mostly in the "practical fields of study." While the Ministry of Education oversees the establishment of private higher education institutions, it prescribes no hard and fast rules about the number, title, ranks, or salary of the faculty.

Accordingly, private higher educational institutions offer a different model for faculty appointments, namely, the contract system. Teachers are appointed on contract for a given term, usually one year. In some cases full-time teachers are hired on monthly contracts or are paid by the hour. Part-time teachers are, as a rule, paid by the hour. Faculties at these institutions, irrespective of their specific contractual appointments, are generally not provided benefits in addition to their salary. Even so, the faculty salaries at private institutions are higher than those in their public counterparts.

It must be noted that a majority of the faculty at private institutions are part-time appointments. These institutions tend to hire as full-time teachers retired professors from public universities. Moreover, except for the few institutions accredited by the Ministry of Education, private institutions do not provide opportunities for promotion. These institutions maintain high teacher-student ratios. The teachers find themselves called upon to help the institutions with multiple tasks like accounting, counseling, etc., in addition to teaching.

Continuity and Change

The reform measures in higher education, no doubt have produced some positive results. The efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and research have improved. The criteria for appointment and promotion have become more fair and transparent than before. Apparently, however, while the old problems are being solved or dealt with, new ones emerge. The persistence of the mentality associated with the old title system causes dissatisfaction and resentment among faculty, who now feel deprived because of reforms. Tensions have also arisen among different institutions, as for example, between prestigious research universities (such as Peking University or Tsinghua University) and

less-well-known universities and institutions. Obviously, prestigious institutions have a competitive edge over the others.

The fact that the program of reform draws on western ethos and practices raises questions about its compatibility with traditional Chinese cultural norms. In a country where traditional culture advocates "peace, harmony and contentedness," the new system, premised upon competitive efficiency, has engendered social tensions. The new system, which has introduced ranks and pecuniary differences among faculty, contradicts the idea of "social justice" hitherto emphasized by the socialist ideology. Realizing the adverse implications of such tensions, attempts, both formal and informal, are being made to contain them.

The size and diversity of China's higher education system make it difficult to generalize about the academic profession. This paper examines mostly academics in the relatively high-prestige sector of an increasingly differentiated academic system. This discussion focuses less attention on the large number of academic staff, many with only bachelor's degrees, who are teaching in provincial institutions, or are part-time teachers. This paper also does not point out some of the basic realities of many universities, including limited academic freedom, especially in the social sciences, and a governance system that gives limited power and autonomy to the professoriate.

In China, rapid expansion of higher education, a desire by the Chinese government to improve the qualifications of academic staff, growing institutional diversity, and accountability-based management are all creating a changing environment and increased pressure on the academic profession.

India: The Declining Profession

Declining Employment Prospects

The unbridled expansion of higher education in India during the 1970s and 1980s, had resulted in an unprecedented demand for teachers. Responding to this demand, India has experienced a 16-fold increase in the number of teachers in higher education over a period of five decades; the total number now stands at 321,000. This development does not, however, indicate a state of healthy growth, strength, or vitality of the academic profession. Not only has the prospect of employment as a college or university teacher diminished, but security of employment, once taken for granted in the academic profession, is also becoming more problematic. As early as 1983, the National Commission on Teachers (1985) found that only 70.7 percent of university teaching staff and 68.5 percent of college teachers enjoyed permanent employment with all statutory benefits. Other faculty and staff constitute those who either are "temporary" (with no guarantee of continuation) or ad hoc (appointed as a leave replacement for a short period of time) lecturers. New categories of teachers, such as "part-time" lecturers (who teach for a specified number of teaching hours per week) and "guest" lecturers (who help the college or department "to complete portions of the syllabus") have been added. Such teachers are paid on an hourly basis, and they do not enjoy the other privileges that accompany a permanent or even a temporary or an ad hoc appointment.

The decline of employment prospects in the academic profession relates to the combined effect of structural adjustment reforms and the market forces operating within higher education. The expansion of conventional arts and sciences courses seems to have outstripped the demand for them by students, with some colleges (most Indian first-degree students study at colleges affiliated to a university) facing a severe decline in enrolments. For some private colleges assisted by grant-in-aid from the government, it has even become difficult to find workloads for teachers in these disciplines.

Most state governments have imposed an embargo on the recruitment of teachers. This has meant a freeze on the establishment of state-supported colleges, a downsizing in the number of permanent teachers at existing colleges, and most effective use of resources by redeploying teachers through a policy of transfers. In addition, most state governments have also introduced "voluntary retirement schemes" (giving incentives to teachers to retire from permanent service before they reach the compulsory retirement age). State governments are contemplating lowering the retirement age for college and university teachers. Not surprisingly, temporary part-time teachers have become a standard feature of higher education in India.

The downsizing of the academic profession through freezing of recruitment, redeployment of excess staff, appointment of guest lecturers, etc. is now a pan-Indian phenomenon. Moreover, this trend is not confined to the conventional liberal arts and sciences colleges but has affected some technical education institutions too. However, in such fields as computer science, information technology, and biotechnology, where the expansion has been most rapid, there is a dearth of qualified teachers. Medical education suffers from the most acute teacher shortage.

The bulk of the teaching community, however, is engaged in general education. Employment opportunities here have almost dried up, and those seeking entry into the profession have been employed on a part-time or ad hoc basis. That existing teachers find it difficult to get adequate workloads which does not augur well for the academic profession. State policies of downsizing the profession will likely adversely impact the already low morale and commitment of teachers.

Traditionally, a preserve of the higher social strata, the academic profession has enjoyed a prestigious reputation. However, the rapid expansion of higher education, combined with state policy of protective discrimination, has altered the social profile of the profession. A significant proportion of the candidates belong to the scheduled castes (former untouchables and related groups), scheduled tribes, and other backward classes (the traditionally disadvantaged sections of the population identified for special benefits and concessions). The new entrants into the academic profession, in many cases the first generation in their caste and community groups to have acquired postgraduate qualifications, basically lack exposure to the cultural moorings of the profession and are confused about the ethos of a profession in decline. Women still constitute only about one-fourth of the teachers in higher education. Although in some fields as the humanities and social sciences, their numbers are higher, yet lag in academic leadership roles.

Parochialism and inbreeding have become integral practices in higher education. Educational institutions run by minority religious communities have always shown preference for candidates belonging to their own religion or sect, and similarly those dominated by particular caste groups have shown bias in favor to fellows of their caste. Universities and state governments also prefer candidates from their own geographical regions. In fact, the adoption of the state language as the medium of instruction in many colleges and universities precludes eligible candidates from outside a given state.

The University Grants Commission (UGC), the national government's main funding and regulatory agency for higher education, supports interinstitutional mobility of teachers to help infuse fresh blood into a system that would otherwise become stagnant, and induce cross-fertilization among the different institutions. While inbreeding inhibits mobility, other impediments also exist. Moving from one institution to another reduces one's chances of promotion, which discourages lecturers and readers from leaving the institution they are working in. State government regulations covering teachers' retirement benefits are rigid, making senior teachers wary of moving out of the state in which they are working.

Deficient Professional Preparation

Studies on college teachers have invariably emphasized the sad deficiency of academic preparation of the people entering the profession and their declining commitment to it. This lack of qualification no doubt has a lot to do with the deplorable standards of master's and doctoral level education. For decades most master's degree holders could easily find employment at colleges, or even at universities, with absolutely no training in or orientation to teaching, and with doubtful aptitude for the vocation.

To ensure proficiency in the subject and aptitude for teaching or research on the part of candidates aspiring to become teachers, the UGC introduced the scheme of the National Eligibility Test (NET). Many state governments have been permitted by the UGC to conduct a State Eligibility Test, which is treated as equivalent to the NET. As a screening mechanism, the NET is a step in the right direction. Despite these efforts, standards of post-baccalaureate education remain generally low. Professions, such as architecture, law, and medicine, require their prospective recruits to undergo a specified period of internship. Even a high school teacher needs to obtain the bachelor of education degree. To become a lecturer at a college or university, however, no prior training or experience is necessary.

While this anomaly is recognized by many, educators do not agree as to the additional qualifications that should be required for entry into the academic profession. Insistence on a research degree (Ph. D. or M. Phil.) has become counterproductive. The rush for enrolment in doctoral programs, following the UGC's decision in the 1970s to make a Ph. D. the minimum qualification, has resulted in a deterioration of the quality of doctoral research at universities.

Regardless of the importance of qualifications and screening at the point of entry into the profession, the need for post-induction training and periodical professional

enhancement can hardly be exaggerated. Starting in 1987, the UGC established at least one Academic Staff College (ASC) in each state with the mandate to improve standards of teaching through "orientation courses" (focusing on pedagogy and social relevance of education, for young lecturers) and "refresher courses" (providing up-to-date information on the content of various disciplines, for senior lecturers).

The ASCs conducted programs to orient the new entrants into the profession and to improve the knowledge and skills of those already in it. To instill a sense of seriousness, an element of compulsion has also been introduced. Those entering the profession are required to attend an orientation course before they complete their probation. Professionals in service must attend two refresher courses to become eligible for career advancement or promotion. As with all initiatives carrying a compulsory element, the original objectives underlying the establishment of ASCs are lost and the courses have been ritualized.

The dwindling recruitment to permanent posts at universities and colleges has reduced the enthusiasm for orientation courses. However, the situation concerning refresher courses differs given the large number of teachers seeking career advancement and the ASC's facilities are limited. To meet the demand for such courses, the UGC has been providing grants to departments at universities without ASCs to organize refresher courses. In addition to the ASC refresher courses, university departments and disciplinary associations have organized "self-financed" courses. Most refresher courses, whether they are organized by the ASCs or university departments (UGC-sponsored or self-financed), are conducted as a formality and they generally lack the advanced academic orientation expected of them.

Besides the ASCs, the UGC established the College Science Improvement Program and the College Social Science and Humanities Improvement Program to enhance the quality of teachers. Permanent teachers desirous of acquiring doctoral qualifications receive paid leave for two or three years under the Faculty Improvement Program (FIP). Teachers interested in pursuing research are offered grants for minor and major research projects. Financial assistance is extended to teachers to attend seminars, symposia, and workshops. Promising young teachers with a research proclivity are offered funds under the Career Award Scheme, and the renowned among senior teachers are given National Associateship.

While they are expected to improve the quality of teaching and thereby to benefit students, these human resource development schemes do not seem to have yielded the expected results. Most teachers do not avail themselves of the opportunities for professional development. Even those teachers who have made use of the FIP or other facilities have at best obtained only a research degree, but not implemented their advanced training in the classroom. Some teachers who have participated in the FIP are reported to have spent time on activities other than research. Similar complaints have been raised about the provision of sabbatical leave for university teachers. Not surprisingly, the UGC has now become more restrictive in awarding FIP fellowships.

Career Prospects and Working Conditions

While professional development and teaching performance have seldom concerned teachers or their associations, the issues of salary, career prospects and service conditions have always ranked high on their agenda. In fact, the teachers have often blamed inadequate salaries and unattractive career prospects for the deterioration in the status of the academic profession. In absolute terms, if not in relative terms, with the revised pay package promulgated by the UGC in 1998, teachers obtained the best deal ever, especially considering the nature and extent of their workload and the little accountability that is demanded of them. While the UGC pay package has been accepted in principle across the country, significant variations exist in its implementation by different states.

The academic profession has traditionally been pyramidal in structure, with more lecturers than readers and more readers than professors. This has meant that irrespective of the academic achievements and professional development, after a specified span of service, the teaching faculty was destined to stagnate. To offer opportunities for vertical mobility to teachers at multiple stages in their career, the UGC has incorporated a career-advancement scheme based on the professional development of teachers. While this scheme is well thought out, its implementation cannot be taken for granted, especially considering the failure of the merit promotion scheme that has been ended.

The UGC pay package fixed the retirement age for university and college teachers at 62. While the UGC is categorical that "no extension in service should be given," it has allowed the universities the option to re-employ a superannuated teacher up to the age of 65 years in certain cases. However, only the central universities (those directly funded by the central government) have accepted the recommendation to set the retirement age at 62. State governments have retained the existing retirement age (58 for college academic staff and 60 for university academic staff), as they fear that it would lead to agitation by government employees demanding a similar revision of the retirement age. Given the growing unemployment rate among the educated, it would be indefensible for any state government to raise the retirement age. More important, when state governments have meager resources for higher education and are consciously pursuing a policy of downsizing the number of teachers, (including through early retirement incentives), raising the retirement age would be unthinkable.

The UGC's new pay package also set the number of teaching days and the workload of teachers. A minimum of 180 "actual teaching days" per year has been stipulated for universities and colleges. Universities are to devote 72 days and colleges 60 days for admission formalities and the evaluation of students. The workload of full-time teachers has been fixed at not less than 40 hours a week for 30 working weeks (180 teaching days) in an academic year. Of these, 16 hours of direct teaching have been set for lecturers and 14 hours for readers and professors.

These regulations have received unenthusiastic acceptance by the academic profession. Based on past experience, these are sure to be observed more in theory than in practice. For instance, university and college calendars formally include the official number of "working weeks" and "teaching days" and the stipulated duration of vacations.

However, in connivance with their teachers unions, some universities have cleverly introduced midterm holidays called as "breaks" rather than "vacations." There is little accountability with regard to the required number of teaching days. With delayed admissions, innumerable official and unofficial holidays, and strikes by students, teachers and the non-teaching staff, the loss of working days is quite high.

State governments imposed specific workloads on grant-in-aid colleges to ensure that teachers would have a certain number of "direct teaching" hours – a policy necessary for downsizing the number of teachers and redeploying or firing excess teaching staff. Fearing downsizing of staff, however, some university departments have inflated the workloads by creating dummy timetables.

Whether the number of direct teaching hours (16 hours per week for lecturers and 14 hours for readers and professors) is a pedagogically sound norm does not seem to concern the academic profession or the UGC. Of concern, instead, are the issues of teacher truancy and absenteeism, since rather than regularly teaching the classes allotted to them, many teachers are not even on site at the institution for the stipulated five hours a day. Attempts by concerned vice-chancellors, principals, and department heads to police teachers have not yielded the desired results.

Performance Appraisal

Evaluation of the performance of its members is sadly lacking in the academic profession. Traditionally, the quality of teaching has not been a criterion for teachers to be recognized and rewarded. In practice, promotions have been based almost exclusively on seniority in service. The lack of objective indicators of performance may well undermine the effectiveness of a career advancement scheme.

Some states (e.g., Karnataka) have instituted annual "best teacher" awards, although they provide little motivation or incentives to improve teachers' performance. It is true that good performance by the students in the examination may provide some credit (and satisfaction) to teachers, either directly or indirectly. However, poor student performance is seldom used as a basis to admonish or punish teachers. Except at a few top universities and the Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Management, peer review or student evaluations of teachers is virtually non-existent in most colleges and university departments. Any proposal for such forms of review or evaluation would be vehemently opposed by teachers unions.

The National Policy on Education envisaged the creation of an open, participative, and objective system of teacher evaluation. It even contemplated laying down "norms of accountability," "with incentives for good performance and disincentives for non-performance." Subsequently, the UGC announced a format for "self appraisal" by teachers, both at the time of entry into the profession and annually thereafter. However, this process has either not been initiated or has been perfunctory. In response, the UGC has now made "consistently satisfactory performance appraisal reports" mandatory for career advancement.

Academic Autonomy and Professional Organization

Barring a few rare exceptions, academic autonomy is reasonably secure in India. In fact, the instances of teachers abusing it are plenty, and these take many forms, such as non-performance of role obligations (teaching and research), resisting change in curriculum and pedagogy, indulging in malpractice in evaluation, and others. This calls for governmental intervention, just as it raises the question of professional obligation of teachers.

Private tutoring by college teachers is one issue that has attracted critical attention of governmental authorities and members of the public alike. The rise of "shadow education" conducted through "coaching classes" is closely related to the falling standards of formal education. With the existing colleges being unable to teach effectively and the students wanting to sharpen their competitive edge, private tuition has become a vital supplement to classroom instruction and is thriving. Since teachers involved in coaching classes are, by and large, formally employed in colleges on a full-time basis, private tuition raises the question of professional ethics.

The UGC has always been critical of the college and university teachers engaging in private tutoring, but has not been able to do anything about it. State governments have been ambivalent about private tutoring. While in principle, they are opposed to it, some states have introduced special coaching classes for students belonging to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes. Others have issued administrative orders banning private tuition and coaching classes conducted by regular teachers, but find it impossible to implement the ban. Teachers' organizations are silent over the whole issue.

After a prolonged period of political apathy, the teaching community has been gradually politicized. This trend started in the mid-1970s. That this politicization coincided with the decline of the profession is a matter of concern. It is not that academia has generally become an arena of party politics or ideological battles, yet in some universities even this has happened. Rather "the politics of scarcity" has more direct bearing on the academic profession now than ever before, and is the main motivating force for professorial militancy. To date, however, teachers' unions have not been especially effective in improving conditions for the academic profession.

Practically, every university has one or more teachers' unions, euphemistically called organizations or associations, to distinguish themselves from the working class trade unions. The growth in the number of such unions does not necessarily denote a healthy development for the profession. There has been fragmentation of organizations and often conflicts among them. Such a proliferation of teachers' unions through a process of fragmentation and segmentation has weakened the teachers' movement and hindered their professionalisation. Studies on unionization of teachers have revealed that it "does not necessarily ensure their collegial participation or promote professionalisation among them" (Jayaram 1992:161-162).

Teachers' unions are generally weak. Even the All India Federation of University and College Teachers Organization (AIFUCTO) does not command the mass support it once

did. Given the middle class focus on working conditions, salary is the only issue on which teachers can be mobilized. On a closer review it appears that whatever strength teachers' unions manifest is not due to any intrinsic qualities, but due to the soft attitude of the government toward them. It is amazing that even when teachers go on prolonged strikes, the principle of "no work, no pay" has seldom been applied to them.

The pattern of agitation by teachers is by now well established. It consists of protest rallies, mass or relay hunger strikes, marching to chief/education minister's house, abstention from work, and finally the boycott of examination work. Going by how the government has dealt with strikes by much stronger unions of employees in the telecommunication, postal, insurance and banking sectors during the last few years, teachers cannot take the material success of their strike for granted. Let alone an all India agitation, even state level agitations are running out of steam.

The Decline of the Professoriate

With the structural adjustment reforms and liberalization of the economy, the state is gradually shedding its responsibility for higher education. The UGC has been virtually reduced to a mere fund-disbursing agency, incapable of enforcing its own recommendations. Educationally, the Indian university system has progressively become marginalized. Being outside the purview of the UGC and to a large extent of the state governments, the emerging private educational sector may be more successful, but it is too early to assess this.

The decline of the academic profession which was noticed over a quarter of a century ago is now almost complete (Shils, 1969). Entering the profession with no prior professional preparation other than a postgraduate degree, assured of tenure, doing unchallenging work without much accountability, teachers in colleges and universities have been largely reduced to the lowest common denominator. Every laudable policy to improve the situation has been merely ritualized. It is true that the situation is better in some centers of excellence, the institutions of national importance, and a few university departments and colleges. They are, however, drops in an ocean of mediocrity.

Ironically, the improvements in pay scales and career prospects have come at a time when the profession is at a low ebb. Teachers are largely happy with the pay package, but they are also worried about the gradual withdrawal of state support for higher education. In the meantime, both politicians and the general population have the common view that college and university teachers are a pampered lot, probably being paid more than they are worth. Without question, the profession of the guru has fallen from its pedestal.

Conclusion: The Professoriate at a Crossroads

In both China and India the academic profession is in an uncertain transitory phase. In China the academic profession is caught between the push and the pull of a state-centered socialist ideology and the old bureaucratic controls on one hand, and the socialist market economy and the new corporate culture, on the other. The professoriate in China faces the challenge of deciding what to keep and what to discard from its traditions, what to adopt

and what to modify from the trends of modernity from the west, and how to decentralize an excessively centralized system without creating chaos. In India, with the state gradually withdrawing from the sphere of higher education and dithering about long-term policy, the academic profession faces an uncertain future.

In China, reform measures for public universities and the new private sector in education have brought about greater academic autonomy, attention to quality, and increased transparency in the career advancement of teachers, though the old forces of central planning and official interference are still at work. In India, the partial loss of traditional job security has been accompanied by the diminishment of academic autonomy. In both China and India, there is an increased emphasis on quality, something that was largely ignored under systems of state control and patronage. The emphasis on quality should at least partially be credited to market forces and the internationalization of higher education.

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Degree Devaluation in Higher Education
Unemployment and Unemployability among the Graduates in India[#]

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Abstract

This paper poses the problem of degree devaluation in India as a symptom of declining external use value of a degree in securing a job or livelihood and eroding the internal validity of a degree in terms of knowledge and skills. The problem of unemployment of the educated in India is complex and is linked to the unemployability of degree holders. In a country with the second largest educational system in the world and nearly five decades of planning and implementing programmes, there is a growing mismatch between education and employment. Escalating unemployment among the educated youth highlights the case that a large number of degree holders do not seem to possess the required knowledge and skills and hence are unemployed. The paper presents a comparative analysis of general and professional education, and examines the relationships between degrees and jobs, degree and knowledge, and education and society.

Introduction

Education and employment have close linkages. While education generally prepares for an employment[1], employment supposedly influences the form and content of education. A mismatch between the two can lead to massive unemployment[2] and render the education system ineffective and degree devalued (Rao, 1961; Blaug, et al., 1969; Azad,

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[1] The objective of the higher education at the most basic level is to prepare its students for employment (Ambani and Birla, 2000, p.72)

[2] By 'unemployment' we mean an individual without work, seeking work in the recent past, and currently available for work. (MHHDC, 2004). A great deal of confusion prevails around the concept and measurement of unemployment. The concept and techniques used for measurement of unemployment vary and quote different figures of unemployed persons.

1991; Jayaram, 1993). There is a very high incidence of unemployment among the educated. Just as a market economy faces currency devaluation, India is facing the problem of degree devaluation in higher education. Degree devaluation is the process whereby educational degrees, for societal and occupational purposes, become less valuable over time. 'Degree devaluation' here, refers to a fall in both internal and external value of the degrees awarded to students. While the external value of a degree may be examined in terms of employment and employability of educated people or degree holders, the internal value of a degree can be viewed in terms of certification of knowledge and skills of degree holders.

Devaluation usually occurs when there is excess of supply over demand, leading to a condition of degree 'inflation' or degree devaluation. Unemployment among the educated is linked to both demand and supply factors. While the demand factors are related to the absorption capacity of the economy, the supply factor is related to the employability of the educated. The rapid expansion of higher education, has also contributed to the mismatch in the labour market. Several efforts have been made to understand 'educated unemployment[3] from the demand perspective, but studies with focus on supply, that is, employability of the educated have been limited. Despite the high incidence of unemployment, there has been an 'educational inflation'. The increase in the supply of the educated has not matched with the increase in demand by way of jobs, which has resulted in a constant 'escalation' of educational qualifications. There is the additional paradox of unfilled posts and a large army of jobseekers marked by a mismatch of job and qualification. This paper analyses the nature and extent of unemployment among the educated and examines the growth and pattern of unemployment at different levels of education among different groups of educated persons. While there are shortages of technical skills at the middle level, it has been observed that graduates and post-graduates in arts, commerce and science constitute a large proportion of the educated unemployed. "Maximum (10 percent or more) of devaluation is observed in the case of education categories of arts, science, commerce degrees and engineering diplomas, 'medium' (5 to 10 percent) with reference to engineering degrees, and 'minimum' (below 5 percent) in the case of medical degrees." (Agarwal, 1985 cit in Jayaram, N. 1993. This paper addresses the question, 'Why is the incidence of unemployment higher at the level of higher education, especially among social science graduates?'

[3] In recent years, the expression 'educated unemployment', although having different meaning, has been frequently used for unemployment among the educated. In this paper, the author has followed the same pattern.

Unemployment of the Educated

Unemployment[4] in India has been increasing and has assumed alarming proportions. According to the 2001 Census, there has been a four-fold increase in the number of jobless over the last decade, that is, from 10.8 million in 1991 to 45.2 million in 2001. In absolute terms, there were 45.2 million unemployed in 2001, of which 8.5 million were illiterate and 36.7 million literate, including 4.8 million graduates. The problem of unemployment among the educated is more serious than unemployment per se, as education is considered an important instrument of enhancing employability and securing livelihood. Among the unemployed with higher secondary education and above, 41.2 percent were in urban areas and 35.7 percent in rural areas (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
Unemployed Youth (Aged 15-25) by Educational Level in India, 1997

(Percentage)

	Rural			*Urban*		
Educational Level	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Illiterate	7.5	6.1	13.1	3.7	4.5	2.1
Below Primary	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.9	4.6	2.2
Above Primary and Secondary	53.4	54.7	48.5	51.12	54.3	43.2
Higher Secondary and above	35.7	35.8	34.8	41.12	36.6	52.5

Source: NSSO quoted in MHHDC, (2004)

Degree devaluation is also a consequence of the mismatch between education and employment. The mismatch can be visualised from Table 2, which indicates the inverse relationship between the two, that is, the rate of unemployment steadily increases as the level of education rises. Unemployment rate[5] (0.3 percent) is the lowest among the illiterate (0 year or person with no formal education) and the highest (11.30 percent) among persons with tertiary education, that is, over 10-12 years of formal education. In other words, the higher the level of education, the higher the rate of unemployment in India (MHHDC, 2004). The level of education of an average unemployed (9.1 years) is significantly higher than even that of the average regular employees in industry or service (7.9 years).

[4] According to the report on "Global Employment Trends for Youth, 2004" by the International Labour Organisation, (ILO) Geneva, among the 184 million unemployed people around the world, 47 percent are young persons. Around 88 million young people between the ages of 18-24 are unemployed worldwide. The global youth unemployment rate has risen by 23 percent in the past decade as a proportion of the total number of job seekers worldwide. The second alarming trend is that 85 percent of the unemployed youth are living in developing countries and according to the ILO report, they are 4.1 times more likely to be unemployed than adults.

[5] The unemployment estimates are based on the Usual Primary Status (UPS).

TABLE 2
Unemployment and Level of Education (percent)

Years of Education	*Rate of Unemployment*			*Distribution of Unemployment*		
	Male	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*
0	0.4	0.1	0.3	5.1	3.8	4.8
1-5	1.7	1.3	1.6	15.2	7.7	13.3
6-8	3.7	4.9	3.8	21.5	11.5	19
9-10	5.4	15.8	6.5	21.5	23.1	21.9
11-12	7.6	21.1	9.1	15.2	15.4	15.2
More than 12	8.5	27	11.3	21.5	38.5	25.8

Note: Unemployed are persons, aged 5 years or more, who are unemployed according to usual status.
Source; 2000 NSSO data quoted in Ghose, (2004).

In India, the association of modern formal education with full-time regular employment in the industry and the service sector goes back to the colonial period. One of the main objectives of starting modern formal education by the British colonial administration was to educate and employ native Indians to run its offices and factories (Basu, 2002). Till today, this trend continues. The type of employment corresponds closely to the level of education of workers. To secure a full-time regular employment in the organised sector, that is, industry and services, one needs to have a high level of education. Among the three types of employees that is, casual, self and regular, the regular employees have the highest level of education and the casual workers have the lowest. There is also a close relationship between the level of education of workers and the sector of their employment. Agricultural workers have the lowest level of education, while service sector workers have the highest level. Overall, casual labourers in agriculture are the least educated and regular employees in industry and services are the most educated (Ghose, 2004).

Although, a certain level of formal education is a precondition for getting full-time and regular employment in industry and the service sector, it cannot ensure employment. The unemployment rate of graduates (17.2 percent) is significantly higher than the overall unemployment rate (10.1 percent). Around 40 percent of the graduates are not productively employed. Moreover, majority of the non-technical graduates have no work. The graduates in rural areas have a much higher work participation rate (68.4 percent) than those in urban areas (58.7 percent) (MHHDC). Furthermore, the rate of educated unemployment is higher among females than among males; and among females, it is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. In India, the unemployment rate at the university level was 17.6 percent for males and 24.9 percent among the females. At the upper secondary level the unemployment rate was 9.8 percent for males and 15.4 percent among the females. It was still lower at the lower secondary/middle level at 4.0 percent for males and 5.2 percent among the females (Ranjan, 2006). The argument that modern

education has a de-skilling effect (MGU, 1999), is also reinforced by the fact that the rate of unemployment is the highest in the most literate state i.e. Kerala[6]. For example, Kerala has the highest rate of educated unemployment in India. Although the situation in Kerala differs from that in other states, in certain respects the problems are similar. Educated unemployment prevails in the state mainly because of the oversupply of liberal arts and science graduates. This has arisen because of the liberal policy adopted by the state in opening colleges for general education. Some of the other reasons of educated unemployment are people's preference for salaried white collar jobs, contempt for manual labour, low self-employment, etc. The educated unemployed are by and large unemployable, for they secure no skills through education (MGU, 1999). It is no wonder that with the expansion of modern education, the importance of agriculture and other primary sector activities has been on the decline. In recent years, the shift to higher education has been triggered by the supply of funds for education through remittances from emigration. Emigration is higher among those with higher education. At the same time, the unemployment rate among persons in households with emigrants is higher than among persons in households without emigrants. One can visualise a relationship between education and unemployment. However, unlike other states in the country, the rate of unemployment is higher among matriculates than among graduates, and higher among females than among males (Mathew, 1997; Zachariah and Rajan, 2005).

Increase in enrolment in higher education is related to declining job opportunities. That is, whenever there has been a decline in unemployment (such as during 1987-88 and 1993-94), there has been a corresponding increase in the number of students opting for higher education. The decline in labour force participation stimulates higher education enrolment. Those who have completed Standard 10, find it difficult to find employment. Hence the percentage of people continuing education beyond the secondary level has arisen. A large number of secondary school pass-outs have been drifting into general education, due to lack of appropriate and adequate employment opportunities at the post secondary level. Several students stay on and stagnate in higher education in the hope of finding a job. One may argue that increase in higher education enrolment is related to declining job opportunities to some extent.

Uncontrolled and Uneven Expansion of Higher Education

India has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of student numbers, after China[7] and the United States (Altbatch, 2005). It has 291 universities, 15343 colleges, 0.44 million teachers and 9.52 million students (See Table 3). The

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[6] For a population of little over 30 million, Kerala has 4 million unemployed educated youth (Kumar, 2001).

[7] Till very recently, China was behind India in terms of higher education enrolment and overall higher education management. Among 200 top or world class universities reported in the Times Higher Education Supplement, while three Chinese universities have been listed, only one Indian higher education institution finds place in the ranking. (Altbatch, 2005).

growth is impressive, as at the time of Independence in 1947, there were only 20 universities and 500 colleges in the country. There has been considerable growth in student enrolment and educational institutions in higher education during the post-Independence period. Post-Independence educational development in India can be divided into two phases:

i) 1950 to 1975 (characterised by proliferation[8] of universities nationwide) and
ii) 1975 to 2000 (the near absence of alternative educational opportunities for school leavers) (Nayyar, 2005).

TABLE 3
Institutions and Enrolment in Higher Education in India, 2002-03

Institutions	%	Number
Universities		217
Deemed Universities		74
Institutions of National Importance		13
Research Institutions		81
Colleges		15,343
Enrolment		
Total Higher Education		9516773
Percentage of Enrolment in B.A. Degree Course	39.73	3780703
Percentage of Enrolment in B.Sc. Degree Course	16.16	1538139
Percentage of Enrolment in B.Com Degree Course	16.24	1545970
Percentage of Enrolment in Engineering/Tech. Degree Course	7.45	708643
Percentage of Enrolment in Medical Degree Course	2.19	208465
Percentage of Enrolment in Teacher Training Degree Course	1.25	118593
Percentage of Enrolment in B.A/B.Sc./B.Com Degree Course	72.13	6864812

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, Government of India, (2000).

Despite the phenomenal growth of higher education in the country, India[9] has only around 10 percent of its young people in higher education, compared to industrialised countries which have more than half, and China, which has 15 percent (Altbatch, 2005). Moreover, the distribution of enrolment in higher education shows uneven growth among different disciplines and different zones. The growth has been mainly in favour of general education (that is, arts, sciences and commerce), as it constitutes around 72

[8] During 1975-77, in Bihar 286 colleges were added to the existing 17 colleges by taking over colleges run by private parties, despite the fact that many of these institutions did not have the infrastructure or facilities to qualify as colleges. (*Times of India*, 21st March 2005).

[9] If with less than 10 percent of the relevant age group enrolled in higher education, India has a grave problem of unemployment among the educated. It is boggling to imagine, if the enrolment rates match those in the advanced countries. Therefore the reason for this problem seems to lie in the nature of expansion of higher education since Independence.

percent of enrolment in higher education; technical and professional education constitutes only 28 percent. This growth in general education is mainly supply based, as the students fill up seats in the educational institutions.

It is to be noted that around 74 percent of educational institutions/colleges are providing general education (see Table 4). The crisis worsens when we examine the case of humanities and social science education under higher education. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities constitutes more than 48 percent of student enrolment.

TABLE 4
Type-Wise Number of Colleges in: 2000-2001 (as on 1.1.2001)

Type	*Number of Colleges*	*Percentage*
Arts, Science, Commerce & Oriental Learning Colleges	9466	73.92
Teachers Training	694	5.42
Engineering/Technology/Architecture	678	5.29
Medical	1069	8.35
Agriculture	102	0.80
Veterinary Science/Animal Science	50	0.39
Law	335	2.62
Others	335	2.62
Total	12806	100.00

Source: UGC, (2004, p.9)

The disparity in educational growth can also be seen among different zones. Tables 5 and 6 show the educational disparity among the six zones. As indicated in the tables, the South and West zones together cater to over 65 percent of technical and professional graduates, while the North and East zones despite having a large population size, cater to only 25 percent of technical and professional education. Within the zones, while the South zone has 55:45 ratio of general and technical education which may be treated as balanced, the East zone has an imbalanced ratio of 85:15.

TABLE 5
Zonal Distribution of Enrolment in Higher Education - Total, General and Technical

Zones	*General Education*	*%*	*Technical Education*	*%*	*Total*	*%*
Central	506919	6.57	115849	6.42	622768	6.54
East	1614424	20.93	201502	11.17	1815926	19.08
North	1835460	23.80	300904	16.68	2136364	22.45
North-East	290052	3.76	65944	3.66	355996	3.74
South	1548038	20.07	725212	40.20	2273250	23.89
West	1917866	24.87	394603	21.87	2312469	24.30
All India	7712759	100.00	1804014	100.00	9516773	100.00

Source: Adapted from Selected Educational Statistics, (2004)

Educational growth has been almost adverse to the sectoral growth of jobs. Various reports have shown that although jobs have been increasing in the professional stream, degrees have been multiplying in general education mainly in arts and humanities. Out of 9.52 million students in higher education, only around 19 percent are pursuing a professional education, and the remaining 81 percent are into conventional general education.

TABLE 6
Enrolment in Higher Education: Total, General and Technical

Zones	*General Education*	*%*	*Technical Education*	*%*	*Total*	*%*
Central Zone	506919	81.40	115849	18.60	622768	100.00
East Zone	1614424	88.90	201502	11.10	1815926	100.00
North Zone	1835460	85.92	300904	14.08	2136364	100.00
North-East Zone	290052	81.48	65944	18.52	355996	100.00
South Zone	1548038	68.10	725212	31.90	2273250	100.00
West Zone	1917866	82.94	394603	17.06	2312469	100.00
All India	7712759	81.04	1804014	18.96	9516773	100.00

Source: Adapted from Selected Educational Statistics, (2004)

The higher education system in Bihar dominated by social science education courses, represents an extreme example of degree devaluation in relation to both: (a) decline in academic standard, and (b) declining degree linked job opportunities.

In the Indian context, Bihar is a suitable case of degree devaluation. In the last two decades, there has been a perceptible decline in the standard of education in the state. After bifurcation, with a large number of technical education institutions being housed in Jharkhand state, the educational condition of the state has become pitiable. The quality of university education is so poor that a large number of students migrate to other states at the school level itself, for both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The colleges and universities in Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are flooded with students from Bihar. The out migration of students at the school level is a new phenomenon and has surfaced due to the worsening educational and economic conditions of the state. Those who remain within the state become part of this malaise. Educational institutions are facing the problem of understaffing, incompetent teachers, poor experimental and research facilities, caste and communal politics, faulty examination and evaluation systems, poor infrastructure and delay in academic sessions. Besides these, the ravaging problem of affiliation has vitiated the educational atmosphere of colleges and universities. While on the one hand, the old colleges are not filling up vacancies against the sanctioned posts, the new affiliated colleges under political patronage have over-employed both faculty and administrative staff. Moreover, several colleges have started teaching postgraduate courses. At many such colleges, the number of teachers in position is more than the sanctioned strength. Further, if we examine department-wise numbers of post graduate students, at many such traditional departments such as Persian, Sanskrit, Maithili, Philosophy etc., the number of students is more than that of teachers.

Caste politics which has been affecting the general functioning of higher educational institutions has become aggravated after implementation of the Mandal Commission Report. Decision making with regard to appointment of teachers, admission of students, examination and examination results is very often influenced by local caste and communal politics. Although some of these factors are also applicable to the Indian university education as a whole, the university education system in Bihar is an extreme case of quality crisis in higher education. (Sharma, 1997).

It is to be noted that the basic structure of the current Indian academic system was established by the British which had its own specific interests. The concept of a system of affiliation which was adopted in India and later became a standard design for further expansion of higher education was based on the model of the London University. Although the model was abandoned by the British a long time ago, higher education in India has persisted with the policy of affiliation (Singh, 2003). The problem has been aggravated by the mushrooming of affiliated colleges devoted to teaching mainly social science/humanities and their involvement in postgraduate teaching. This has worsened the functioning of universities and colleges, thereby affecting educational processes and products. It is ironical that the universities do not rely on their own degrees for filling faculty positions, as college and university teachers are selected on the basis of National or State Eligibility Test (NET/SET).

Social Science Education

Humanities and Social Sciences constitute more than half of the total higher education intake.[10] In broad terms, the social sciences are those that aim for a rational and systematic understanding of human society. The social sciences comprise the application of scientific methods to the study of the human aspects of the world (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_sciences). Social science education involves teaching and learning humanistic disciplines, such as, philosophy, history, economics, sociology, political science, anthropology, geography, psychology, law, language, arts and so on. It differs from natural science education in a fundamental way. They diverge from the arts and humanities in that the social sciences emphasize the use of the scientific method and rigorous standards of evidence in the study of humanity, including quantitative and qualitative methods . Social science has a close association with the university system, as it was the social scientists that were mainly responsible for the revival of the university system in the 19th century[11] (Wallerstein, 1996). Social scientists engage in research and theorize about both social and individual actions.

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[10] According to Wallerstein (1996), social science is the enterprise of the modern world to develop systematic, secular knowledge about reality that is validated empirically.

[11] Between 1850,and 1945, a series of disciplines came to be defined as constituting an arena of knowledge to which the name 'social science' was accorded... done by the establishing universities first chairs, offering degrees in the disciplines, research, association of scholars on disciplinary lines, the creation of library collections, catalogued by disciplines (Wallerstein, 1996).

TABLE 7
Examination Results – 2001
Faculty-Wise Turn-Out of Graduates and Postgraduates

Sr. No.	*Faculty*	*Graduate*		*Post Graduate*	
		Total	*%*	*Total*	*%*
1	Arts	950476	49.21	290879	61.51
2	Science	285889	14.80	57487	12.16
3	Commerce	360774	18.68	70908	15.00
4	Education	88374	4.58	6411	1.36
5	Engineering & Technology	110284	5.71	12087	2.56
6	Medicine	38259	1.98	8748	1.85
7	Agriculture	8258	0.43	3649	0.77
8	Vet. Science	1403	0.07	619	0.13
9	Law	57504	2.98	1799	0.38
10	Others	30180	1.56	20289	4.29
	Total	1931401		472876	

Note: The above figures have been worked out on the basis of data received from 244 universities/ university level institutions, out of 267 during the year.
Source: UGC, 2004, Mimeo

As far as the growth of social science disciplines in India is concerned, the progress has been far from satisfactory. Ravaged by the exponential growth of affiliated colleges in the university system, the quality of social science education has declined substantially. Social science education provided at the university level is too general. General education degrees like BA and MA neither prepare the students for a well balanced adult life, nor do they provide any regular means of survival in terms of employment. The students stay in general education for a very long period in the hope of getting regular employment. Some of them get absorbed through sheer perseverance. But a large number of them remain unemployed (see Table 8).

Moreover, the quality of social science research, barring a few cases, has also been disappointing (Chatterjee, 2002). Good quality research that follows theoretical models has been developed in the west, has led to undesirable practices:

a) Despite the withering of state and state level institutions and due to the nature of funding, most of the social science researches have been state centric.

b) Theoretical framework determines the nature of research outcome.

c) There is not much community involvement in the follow-up of the research findings, showing a very poor link between research and development.

TABLE 8
Discipline-Wise Unemployment

Sl. No.	*Disciplines*	*No. of Unemployed Youth*	*%*
1	Arts	21,53,000	46.78
2	Science	9,97,000	21.66
3	Commerce	7,79,000	16.93
4	Engineering	2,19,000	4.76
5	Medicine	48,000	1.04
6	Veterinary	7,000	0.15
7	Agriculture Science	36,000	0.78
8	Law	21,000	0.46
9	Education	85,000	1.85
10	Others	2,57,000	5.58
	Total	46,02,000	100.00

Source: Quoted in Sinha, (2000).

One of the major ironies of university education is that its stakeholders are unorganised, isolated and indifferent. Those who have a real stake in the higher education are not taking an active part in higher education (Gupta, 2003). Besides the quality of general education being poor, the student spends precious time and resources on coaching for competitive examinations.

As the history of university education shows, universities were set up in India as a replica of western European universities, mainly to meet the administrative requirements of the colonial empire. The other worldliness embedded in the Indian university system has a constraining effect in playing a proactive role in developmental activities. This is also because social science education which dominates most of the educational programmes in the university system has not been able to disengage from its legacy and relate them to the modern world. As Wallerstein (1999) put it, "*If social science is to make any progress in the twenty-first century, it must overcome the Eurocentric heritage which has distorted its analyses and its capacity to deal with problems of the contemporary world.*"

Education and Employment Linkage (Nexus between Degrees and Jobs)

One can visualise a correlation or strong linkage between degrees and jobs, only if both degrees and jobs grow at the same rate. From the very beginning of the university system, the number of degree linked jobs created has been falling short of the requirement (Rao, 1961; Blaug et al, 1969). Growing unemployment among the educated youth, especially among social science degree holders, circumscribes the educational planners to review linkages between education and the economy. Despite the fact that

India has one of the lowest percentages of students in higher education in proportion to its population, our economy has been able to absorb them partially.

> Today universities in India are beleaguered institutions. They are just about tolerated by the public because they hand out degrees that are prerequisites for getting salaried jobs or for getting married. There is little expectation that students will excel in Indian universities, nor are faculty members taken seriously as knowledge producers (Gupta, 2003).

Enrolment and degrees in higher education have been increasing much faster than employment. The underlying average annual rate of growth of higher education at over 6 percent is much higher than the rate of growth of employment in the organised sector, in which the matriculates and college graduates seek to be absorbed. According to the census data relating to the educational qualifications of the youth, during 1981-91, the number of high school graduates or matriculates (including those obtaining a technical or non-technical diploma not equal to degree) has increased by 75 percent from 17.76 to 31.00 million; and that of college graduates has risen by 96 percent from 2.43 to 4.77 million. Of course, not all matriculates and graduates enter the labour force; but those who enter, face problems in finding work.

With the aggregate number of registered unemployed across the country having crossed the 40 million mark, there is a shift in perspective from unemployment to the unemployability of educated youth, particularly graduates. One way of enhancing the employability of the educated is supplementing the existing education with vocational and life skills learning. The authorities have tried to introduce vocational education at the school level, but college education has continued on traditional lines. The opportunities for obtaining professional education certificates have been expanded but they cannot be termed to have promoted vocationalisation of college or university education. The linking of the structure of salaries to formal degrees rather than to the acquired level of skills or performance capacity has meant that those pursuing vocational courses also continue to aspire for and at the first opportunity drift back to the degree courses.

> Due to a large population base, a primary-activity based economy, and an education system geared towards providing formal employment, the south Asian labour markets have been associated with a high incidence of unemployment among the youth and the educated during past decade. The underlying reasons include the diminishing role of the public sector in employment generation, *a mismatch between the education offered and the opportunities available*, and the lack of marketable skills and training. (MHDC, 2004, p. 3).

Employment prospects of the educated persons, both in rural and urban areas, have been declining. Self-employment among them is slowly catching up in recent years.

Globalisation and the Employability of the Educated

Globalisation has brought various challenges for the Indian economic and education systems. Employment prospects of the educated youth have worsened during the past

decade or so because of low or negative growth in public sector employment. The nature of work opportunities sought by the youth has also been changing in the globalised world in response to current and emerging needs. Whatever employment has occurred within the private sector was mostly in the semi-skilled or low skilled areas. Very little employment was generated for the educated (MHHDC, 2004). With rapidly declining opportunities in the organised sector, the educated youth are drifting towards self-employment. According to the NSSO 2000 report, over 50 percent of the workforce, mainly youth, is self-employed[12] in the absence of any regular opening. As for the employed workforce, only 14 percent are lucky to have regular jobs, while a massive 33 percent of national workforce is engaged as casual labour. Thus with globalisation, both self employment[13] and casualisation of labour have increased. Furthermore, manufacturing a major source of employment in the organised sector has shown constant decline in recent years. Several people have lost jobs due to closure of factories and disinvestments in the PSUs (Public Sector Undertakings). The heaviest casualties have been small scale industries. The closure of nearly 3000 units in Delhi alone has resulted in the loss of over 0.1 million jobs.

Shift from Unemployment to Unemployability

With escalating educated unemployment, the debate is shifting from unemployment to unemployability, as the latter is a major challenge to the entire educational system with implication for the aim and content of the education currently being provided. A large number of young unemployed have poor and unsuitable qualifications for employment. Poor qualifications here refers to the poor performance in examinations. It has been reported that unemployment among the educated is more often the result of unemployability of the educated rather than non-availability of employment opportunities. In a field action project in Kerala, it was found that educated unemployment was mainly due to contempt for manual labour and the daily wage practice, and the fear of job insecurity. The researchers endeavoured to bring about an attitudinal change among the unemployed youth through a series of experiments at training, conscientization, cooperatisation, and financial support (MGU, 1999).

Unemployability has both regional and occupational dimensions. Regional disparity of educational growth has been accompanied by other types of disparities, such as, technological, industrial, infrastructural etc. The problem of disproportionate educational

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[12] Self-employment can mean any self-generated business for livelihood. Graduates have been reported to be engaged in activities such as running a tea stall/*dhaba* to driving auto-rickshaws for survival.

[13] In addition, the work-seekers seem to have compromised on their aspirations and expectations and adjusted to the labour market by accepting the available work. According to the 1993-94 survey, almost 58 percent of the "educated" or secondary and higher-educated workers in rural India were self-employed, whereas the corresponding proportion in 1987-88 was only 31

growth seems to have aggravated in states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan where the growth of labour force far outstrips work opportunities being generated.

Diploma Disease in India

There is a growing realisation within the education system that formal education at the school[14] and tertiary levels needs to be supplemented with vocational and life skills learning. Under pressure of heavy criticism of outdated university curriculum and syllabus, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has given the green signal to a number of value-added, job-oriented diploma programmes in colleges and universities during the Tenth Plan period (2002-07). The issue of skill development has become crucial in higher education. It has been suggested that the colleges and universities should supplement their degree courses with certificate/ diploma/ advanced diploma programmes for which a special grant of Rs. 0.1 million per vocational or life skills course has been introduced. Universities and colleges have started applying for the add-on courses. The Commission has also constituted expert committees to study and encourage revision of college and university syllabi at least once in five years.

> "Out of the 9.28 million students in higher education, only 17 percent are pursuing professional streams while the remaining 83 percent are in conventional higher education streams, i.e. B. Sc., B.Com. and BA degree programmes. We want to make education more meaningful for these students. Dual qualifications will enable students to get conventional plus vocational education simultaneously, as well as generate more funds for institutions. Many state universities have lapped up this proposal but most central universities are yet to take it up," Nigavekar, A .Former UGC Chairman (quoted in Thakore, 2004)

One of the goals of starting add-on course for general education graduates is linking them with the outside world. The choice-based credit system (CBCS) implemented in Madras University for postgraduate programmes is proving ideal for narrowing the gap between university education and employment. This system facilitates movement of students from one discipline to another, provides greater flexibility in the choice of courses and enables highly motivated students to gain extra credits. While the core courses are part of the main discipline, students get to choose from a variety of electives from other disciplines. Furthermore, in teacher education, with the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) laying precondition of training certificate for teacher's job in schools, there has been an unprecedented rise in demand for D. Ed (Diploma in

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[14] Under the National Policy on Education adopted in 1986 and revised in 1992, high priority has been assigned to "vocationalisation" of secondary education. The goals for 1995 and 2000 envisage the diversion of 10 and 25 percent of the students studying beyond the High School Certificate examination to the vocational stream. The objectives are to enhance the employability of individual students, to reduce the mismatch between the demand for and the supply of skilled manpower and to provide an alternative to those seeking to pursue higher education without a particular interest or purpose.

Education) courses in recent years. Besides the existing teacher education colleges increasing their additional intake of students for such courses, several new teacher education colleges are being opened to meet the demand. There is danger that the professional education may meet the same end if its growth is not monitored from quality perspective.

Degree[15] Devaluation

The constant escalation of educated unemployment discussed above indicates erosion of credibility of the credentials. The one reason that the products of Indian universities are unemployed is that they are unemployable. The students go out of the system with a certificate but with little systematic knowledge, practical skills or linguistic ability (Jayaram, 2004). One can cite several examples – in 2004, around 300 graduate and postgraduate sweepers (university degree holders) were reported to have been appointed as Class-IV employees by the Bombay Municipal Corporation (*Times of India,* 2004).

(i) The Government of Uttar Pradesh appointed a large number of Ph.D. degrees holders as teachers/ para-teachers in elementary schools and later declared them unsuitable and cancelled their appointment (*Times of India,* 2003).

(ii) Indian students, who go abroad for higher studies and jobs often have to go through additional courses, as Indian degrees are not treated at par in USA, UK and other developed countries (Singh, 2003).

(iii) The waiting period for securing the first job is longer among students with general education than among students with technical and professional education; and within general education, longer among the arts students than among the science and commerce graduates (Mathew, 1997).

The lack of a link between conventional general courses and the job market is becoming apparent. The students stay on in the conventional education system for a longer period in the hope of getting eventually employed. Unfortunately only a few get absorbed into the organised sector. The unemployment among the conventional or general degree holders has worsened over the years, as the public sector or government is not able to absorb them. Globalisation has intensified the problem of educated unemployment. The shift from unemployment to unemployabilty of the educated, thus calls for a systemic review of the education system in general and higher education in particular.

Conclusion

University education in India has expanded enormously in terms of quantity without adequate concern for quality. Since Independence, the quality crisis in higher education has emerged due to its unplanned growth. There have been manifold increases in the number of universities, colleges, teachers and students. The growth, to a great extent, seems unplanned and exhibits a weak linkage with employment and the outside world.

[15] By 'degree' we mean academic title, rank or grade given by university or college to somebody who has passed an examination or written a thesis (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary).

The problem lies at the very root of university education. Various reports have shown that although jobs have been increasing in the professional stream, degrees have been multiplying in general education, mainly in arts and humanities. The condition has become ironical. On the one hand, the country does not have adequate manpower to carry out developmental work; on the other hand there is a high incidence of unemployment among the educated youth. The expansion and diversification of educational growth has been almost adverse to the sectoral growth of jobs. Out of 9.52 million students in higher education, only 28 percent are pursuing technical and professional education, while the remaining 72 percent are into conventional general education. The crisis gets worse, if we examine the case of humanities and social science education under higher education. The Faculties of Arts and Humanities constitute more than half of the total annual pass-outs (including graduates and postgraduates) in higher education.

Indian higher education is too general to make any major dent on the economic and employment front both for the individual and for society at large. Efforts to channelise school leavers to vocational education are insufficient. This effort has to be expanded and appropriate training and employment systems have to be put into place to ensure that those graduating from vocational and middle level technical courses have opportunities to upgrade their qualifications in order to climb the higher rungs of career and achievement. An interesting set of solutions to the problem is that "Higher education will not be aimless: Consumers of education will have a right to know what they will get out of their investment of money and time. Investors will not get low cost capital for capital-intensive projects but only for creating employment. Educational institutions need to be brought under the purview of consumer courts; and made accountable for the quality and content of what they teach. The promote multiplication of employment in services as distinct from creation of employment in production." (Indiresan, 2004). However, the problem is complex and needs to be studied further in its historical, political and economic contexts at both the micro and macro levels.

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Challenges of Achieving and Financing Universal Elementary Education in India
The Case of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

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Abstract

The paper critically examines the programme on Education for All, namely Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) within a financing and development framework of elementary education in India. In doing so, the paper identifies a number of policy and implementation gaps in the programme. The important issues at implementation level are the gap between approved outlay and the actual amount released from the center to the states. Further, states have been unable to adhere to the prescribed uniform sharing ratios even during the 10th five-year plan (2002-2007), which raises the bearing capacity of states, especially educationally and economically disadvantaged states. Within the limited resources allocated, the utilization rates are not satisfactory. This brings yet another important aspect of strengthening the administrative and absorptive capacity of the states/districts and further down to effectively utilize the resources. The analysis evidences that both in terms of budgetary allocation and actual expenditures, quality is given indeed the last priority as ensuring the basic minimum levels of physical and human infrastructure and equal access to all the child-age population of 6-14 is not yet attained in majority of the states in India. On the developmental aspects, the scheme not only widens social inequity but also perpetuates the declining quality by encouraging alternate schools and para-teachers. In the long run this would jeopardise genuine democratic processes and structures. These low-cost options would result in serious ramifications on the equity, quality, balance and sustainability of basic education.

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Background

Universal elementary education in India is yet to be achieved despite its being on the agenda of public policy since independence. Increased attention to it after the adoption of National Policy on Educaiton-1986 (GoI, 1986), the 86th amendment making elementary education a Fundamental Right, *Sarava Shikhsha Abhiyan* in 2001, etc appear to have made a significant impact but the goal still eludes. Financing of elementary education assumes critical importance in the context of long overdue commitments to universalise it. In India, education particularly elementary education is financed by the state (central and state governments). The state governments take major responsibility of financing elementary education. In the recent past, the central government is also taking interest in elementary education and is financing around twenty percent of the budget expenditure on elementary education.

The role of central government in elementary education is manifested by way of the centrally sponsored schemes. The centrally sponsored schemes are designed by the concerned line ministries (in India for education, the Ministry of Human Resource Development) and implemented by the state government education departments. In 1978, while preparing the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85), the Planning Commission identified nine educationally backward states – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. It was felt that it was not possible to achieve universal elementary education through formal system of education. Therefore, a few strategies have been worked out to cover the non-school GoIng children of the age group 6-14. Hence, the first centrally sponsored scheme, namely non-formal education was initiated in 1978 in these nine states alone. Around the same time, Literacy Mission was also initiated to improve the adult literacy across states in the country.

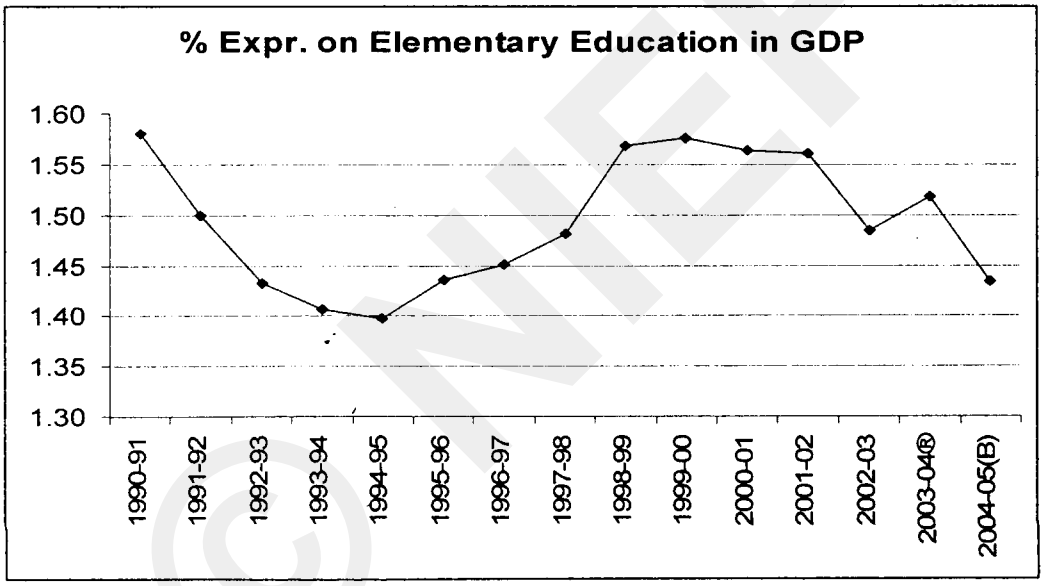
The first nation-wide centrally sponsored scheme, specifically in elementary education, called Operation Blackboard was initiated in 1987 to improve the educational infrastructure in primary schools all over the country. It aimed at three critical components of educational development, viz. classrooms, teachers and teaching-learning equipment. Even though education became a concurrent subject in 1976[1], it got operational meaning only in 1986. Indeed the momentum of interest in universalising elementary education in the country began with the National Policy on Education (1986). Operation Blackboard was an offshoot of this, as National Policy on Education identified that the state of educational infrastructure in elementary schools was dismal to achieve universal elementary education. Around the same time, another important nation-wide centrally sponsored scheme was initiated on teacher education by establishing District Institutes of Education and Training. Realising the specific needs of each region, schemes such as Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (1989), Bihar Education Project (1991), Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (1993), and Lok Jumbhish in Rajasthan

[1] Both the central and the state governments are made to share responsibility in the subject education. Prior to 1976, education was a state subject.

(1987) were initiated. These schemes were launched with external aid for primary education for the first time in India.

Following the introduction of macro-economic reform policies in the beginning of 1990s that included stabilization and structural adjustment policies, a fiscal squeeze was experienced in all social sector investments in many developing countries, including India. As a follow-up of the economic reform packages, expenditure compression trickled down to public expenditure on education, including elementary education (see Chart 1). However, it began to improve to reach to the 1990-91 level of 1.58 percent of the GDP by 1999-2000. But again it plummeted to 1.48 percent of GDP in 2002-03.

Chart 1
Expenditure on Elementary Education* as Percent of GDP in India



* Includes expenditure on elementary education by the center, states and UTs.
Source: Based on analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, MHRD, various issues, and EPWRF (2003) and www.cso.org

Even though the expenditure on elementary education has increased by four times from 1990-91 to 2002-03 at current prices (see column 3 of Table 1), yet it has declined as a proportion of GDP. This clearly brings out that as income grows, the budget expenditures on elementary education are not improving.

In order to offset the adverse impacts of structural adjustment policies, World Bank and other UN agencies induced the Government of India to initiate the social safety net measures. Hence, external assistance through District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) to primary education was launched in 1994. Many international agencies are involved in funding DPEP. Major contributor is the World Bank, and other donor

agencies are UNICEF, UNDP, DFID and SIDA. It is the largest externally funded programme in education, covering 270 districts in 18 states of India in three different phases. In addition, the central government launched a national scheme of midday meals to improve enrolment and attendance, called the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education in 1995. As a follow-up of DPEP, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), meaning education for all, a centrally sponsored scheme, was launched in 2001 for achieving universal elementary education covering all the districts of the country, except Goa.

The flow of funds under these centrally sponsored schemes from the centre to states is through the plan account. In India, expenditure on any activity, whether economic or social, is to be looked at in plan and non-plan expenditures. Plan expenditures by and large refer to the developmental expenditures resulting in new initiatives, innovations, for instance in elementary education, new school buildings, infrastructure, etc., while non-plan expenditures refer to the non-developmental/committed expenditures in the nature of maintenance expenditures. In education, the non-plan expenditure is almost the salary expenditure of the teachers and other staff, which is the liability of the state governments. Hence, the matching share under various centrally sponsored schemes between the central and state governments is applicable to only the plan expenditures.

The present paper deals mainly with plan allocations, perhaps, only a portion of plan assistance by the central government to states, which accounts for a fraction in the total resources invested in elementary education. External assistance to SSA is again a minute share. Even though it occupies a minor share in the total expenditure on elementary education, but it strongly reflects on the new initiatives and programmes in terms of school infrastructure, teacher improvement and incentives, etc. The financial assistance through the centrally sponsored scheme SSA, despite its small share in total expenditure on elementary education, influences the state governments in planning for elementary education at the district level. Indeed, almost all districts prepare District Elementary Education Plans for the GoI's plan assistance under SSA.

As noted earlier, Table 1 evidences that the state governments take major responsibility of financing elementary education.

Looking at the share of centre and states in financing elementary education in the country, more than 90 percent of total expenditure on elementary education was met by the state governments during 1980s. Since 1990s, the centre's share has been steadily increasing, which is reflected in its increasing share to above 20 percent of total expenditure on elementary education. This share includes external financing (under DPEP, SSA, etc.), which has steadily increased since 1990s.

TABLE 1

Role of Centre and States and the Share of Plan and Non-plan Expenditures on Elementary Education in India

Year	*Center and States*			*Plan*			*Non-Plan*		
	Plan	*Non-plan*	*Total**	*Center*	*States*	*Total**	*Center*	*States*	*Total**
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1980-81	5.92	94.08	1537	5.3	94.7	91	0.28	99.72	1446
1985-86	7.73	92.27	3448	8.6	91.4	267	0.02	99.98	3182
1990-91	10.10	89.90	7956	28.0	72.0	804	0.02	99.98	7152
1991-92	11.13	88.87	8684	29.2	70.8	967	0.01	99.99	7718
1992-93	11.25	88.75	9477	29.6	70.4	1066	0.01	99.99	8411
1993-94	12.17	87.83	10822	29.5	70.5	1317	0.01	99.99	9505
1994-95	14.08	85.92	12639	30.7	69.3	1780	0.01	99.99	10859
1995-96	17.98	82.02	15218	43.9	56.1	2737	0.01	99.99	12481
1996-97	19.62	80.38	17850	44.6	55.4	3502	0.01	99.99	14349
1997-98	20.07	79.93	20392	54.6	45.4	4092	0.01	99.99	16299
1998-99	20.33	79.67	25115	53.8	46.2	5107	0.01	99.99	20008
1999-00	18.28	81.72	27905	55.8	44.2	5102	0.01	99.99	22803
2000-01	19.01	80.99	29450	55.7	44.3	5599	0.01	99.99	23850
2001-02	18.77	81.23	32494	58.5	41.5	6098	0.01	99.99	26395
2002-03	20.12	79.88	33474	63.2	36.8	6734	0.01	99.99	26740
2003-04(R)	23.00	77.00	38260	59.3	40.7	8801	0.01	99.99	29459
2004-05(B)	24.08	75.92	40576	58.8	41.2	9770	0.01	99.99	30806

* Rupees in 10 millions; (R) relates to revised estimates and (B) to budget estimates

Source: Based on Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, MHRD, various issues.

However, the increase in centre's share is not actually (*entirely*) a contribution by the centre but a change in policy to accept external funding by GoI (Varghese, 1996), which holds good for SSA as well[2]. In the later part of 1990s, the centre with external aid has been contributing more than 50 percent of the elementary education expenditures in the plan account, resulting in a continuously lesser share by states. Plan expenditures by the states further need to be examined in constant prices, which is one of the stipulations under SSA that the state governments' expenditure on elementary education to be retained at least at 1999-2000 real prices (p.6, GoI, undated[3]). However, the non-plan expenditures or the committed expenditures mainly on salary are fully borne by the state governments.

In this backdrop, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, which is believed as an instrument to achieve the long cherished goal of universalizing elementary education, is examined here. The paper attempts to critically review the scheme within a framework of financing and development of elementary education. Accordingly, Part I discusses the important aspects of financing the scheme, by examining resource allocation and utilization and the

[2] It is to be noted that this external fund for DPEP and SSA has been raised through loans.

[3] Hereafter, only the page numbers referred to this particular citation.

priorities between budgetary allocation and actual expenditures. Part II of the paper attempts to examine the likely impact of the scheme on education development *per se* and a few important managerial or governance related issues. Last part of the paper brings out the policy imperatives.

Financing of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA)

Unlike other centrally sponsored schemes, viz., Operation Blackboard, establishing District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), which are designed by the centre and implemented by the states, plans are prepared at the district level under SSA. Each district needs to prepare a perspective plan and an annual plan (p.18), reflecting all the investments being made and required in the elementary education sector (p.5). Indeed, the decentralised planning at district level was operationalised in India under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) (for details see Varghese, 1994; 1996; Tilak, 2002). Existing centrally sponsored schemes of elementary education (except Mahila Samakhya, National Bal Bhawan and NCETE) were to converge after the IX plan (under SSA) (p. 6). Further, new components under SSA, like girls' education under National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL), are simultaneously onGoIng since 2003. Apart from NPEGEL, a new scheme called Kasturbha Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) has been approved for launching during 2004-05 for setting up of 750 residential schools for girls belonging to SC/ST and other backward castes and minorities in different areas. It is to be noted that SSA began with an umbrella programme that was to subsume all existing schemes in elementary education.

The scheme of SSA is based on the premise that financing of elementary education interventions has to be sustainable. Further, SSA claims that it is a framework and a programme in a mission mode[4] with budget provision for strengthening vital areas to achieve universal elementary education (p.3). Allocation of resources will depend upon preparation of District Elementary Education Plans and their appraisal; commitment of the state with regard to the state share; performance of state government regarding resources made available earlier; reports of supervision teams regarding the quality of programme implementation; and availability of financial resources in a particular year (p.20).

Table 2 presents the share of GoI's budget allocation to MHRD and funds released by MHRD to State Implementing Societies under SSA, which highlights a number of insights on the actual resource allocation under SSA than envisaged in the programme.

First, on the positive note, the allocations under SSA by GoI have been increasing over the last five years since its inception. Second, the approved outlay by MHRD under SSA has been increasing exponentially over the last four years (column 2). It could be possible that in the initial years, the number of district that prepared their plans were low

[4] Both DPEP and SSA documents use the term mission mode, indicating the sense of urgency, which may also induce impatience in the process and create the need to see results quickly, which often misses the sustainability of the efforts.

and as states gained experience in the preparation of plans, more and more plans were submitted resulting in higher level of approved outlay in the subsequent years.

TABLE 2

Share of GoI's Budgetary Allocation to MHRD and Funds Released by MHRD to State Implementing Societies under SSA (Rs in 10 millions)

Years	*GoI's Allocation*	*Approved Outlay by MHRD under SSA*	*Funds Released by MHRD under SSA*	*Funds Released as percent of Approved Outlay of MHRD*	*Total GoI's Expenditure on Elementary Education*	*Fund Released by MHRD under SSA as a % of Expdr. on Elementary Education*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
2000-01	325	--	--	--	3609	9
2001-02	500	1138	500	43.9	3250	15
2002-03	1567	3080	1558	50.6	4260	37
2003-04(R)	2732	8335	2431	29.2	5219	52
2004-05(B)	4754*	11019	5051	45.8	5752	64

* Rs. 3075 million enhanced to Rs. 4754 millions during 2004-05; (R) relates to revised estimates, and (B) to budget estimates and correspond to columns (5) and (6) only.

Source: Based on Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, various issues; www.education.nic downloaded as on 17.3.06; GoI (2005)

But the actual funds released by MHRD are in consonance with the GoI's allocations (refer column 1 and 3 of Table 2). However, in the year 2003-04, the gap between GoI's budget allocation and fund released by MHRD was Rs.301 millions, which has been reflected in higher fund release than budget allocation in the next year, i.e, 2004-05. So, the approval of outlay by MHRD under SSA may be as per the SSA norms but the actual fund release is determined by availability of financial resources in a particular year.

Third, funds released as a percent of approved outlay of MHRD were just at the margin of either 50 percent or less than the approved outlay. In 2003-04, it plummeted to 29 percent of the approved outlay. This clearly suggests that more resources for the scheme are required from the GoI (column 3). Last, it may be noted that more than fifty percent of the total expenditure on elementary education by GoI is accounted for SSA (column 6 of Table 2). Over the years, elementary education is getting operationalised through SSA in a project mode rather in a short-term perspective, the impact of which may have serious implication over the growth of the education system as such in the long run (discussed in Section III).

Another important aspect is how this limited GoI's budgetary allocation under SSA has been distributed across states. In principle, budget for the states, based on District Elementary Education Plans, is approved based on certain criterion. However, the actual sanction depends upon the total availability of funds under SSA. Table 3 presents funds released by GoI as a percent of approved outlay under SSA across states in India.

TABLE 3
Funds Released by GOI as % of Approved Outlay under SSA in Selected States in India

States	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Andhra Pradesh	42.50	48.42	25.27	47.72
Arunachal Pradesh	42.50	60.55	13.98	46.99
Assam	42.50	67.66	26.25	52.46
Bihar	42.51	33.14	25.43	36.13
Chhattisgarh	40.34	53.81	37.50	52.76
Gujarat	42.49	108.08	51.20	48.22
Haryana	42.50	33.62	45.68	55.40
Himachal Pradesh	42.49	59.10	49.71	50.62
Jammu & Kashmir	--	37.85	32.73	33.37
Jharkhand	42.50	33.92	35.43	37.07
Karnataka	42.49	79.03	36.69	60.37
Kerala	42.50	25.92	38.97	53.24
Madhya Pradesh	41.85	66.68	0.00	38.27
Maharashtra	42.01	29.76	26.84	42.03
Manipur	--	0.00	15.82	29.87
Meghalaya	42.50	157.73	27.41	53.91
Mizoram	42.50	56.38	37.50	69.70
Nagaland	--	49.38	13.10	60.72
Orissa	42.50	16.51	30.51	34.07
Punjab	42.50	48.94	32.29	15.26
Rajasthan	42.50	57.33	34.70	36.67
Sikkim	42.40	73.19	22.30	37.50
Tamil Nadu	42.50	73.43	42.29	60.20
Tripura	42.50	102.76	53.79	65.35
Uttar Pradesh	42.47	52.66	31.09	54.70
Uttaranchal	42.07	43.23	28.07	70.13
West Bengal	41.18	49.07	30.97	52.44
India	43.94	50.59	29.16	45.84

Source: GoI, (2005c) (2003-04 and 2004-05); www.eduction.nic downloaded as on 17.3.06 (2001-02 and 2002-03).

Funds released as a percent of approved outlay in 2001-02 seem to have adopted a uniform but arbitrary ceiling of 42 percent of the approved outlay across majority of the states. Since there was a drastic decline in the shares of funds released as a percent of approved outlay in 2003-04, it is better to look at shares of fund release in 2004-05 over 2002-03. In as many as 15 states, the percentage of funds released has declined (see Table 3). In about 14 states, more than 50 percent of approved outlay is released in 2004-05.

Why the share of fund release has declined in majority of the states? Why only around 50 percent of approved outlay is sanctioned? It may, however, be noted that release of funds would be based on the utilization in the previous year (under-utilisation leading to spill-over) as well as the new plans sanctioned. Further, this information across individual states does not suggest some states either well performing or educationally backward, like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, could get consistently higher share.

Hence, a grouping of states based on *a priori* information on their educational and economic development into four categories and their relative share of funds released by GoI is examined here. This might throw some additional insight. In addition to four categories of states, north-eastern states have been added as the fifth category and UTs are put together as one group (see Appendix Table B for the states falling under various categories and a note on the rationale for classifying them under such categories). Table 4 gives the share of funds released by GoI under various categories of states. The category IV, the educationally backward states, are sanctioned higher resources over the last four years. The shares have consistently increased over the period, even though such an increase was not visible in Table 3.

TABLE 4

Proportion of Funds Released by GoI by Category of States under SSA

(Rs in 10 millions)

States Group	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Category I (Ed Devd.)	9.23	10.85	11.33	8.24
Category II (Eco Devd.)	23.77	20.22	18.74	13.04
Category III (Ed improving)	18.32	24.54	16.91	25.79
Category IV (Ed backward)	32.07	31.05	44.80	45.93
Category V (North Eastern)	10.28	9.78	7.15	6.71
Union Territories	6.34	3.55	1.06	0.29
All	100	100	100	100

Source: Computed based on GoI (2005c), (2003-04 and 2004-05); www.eduction.nic downloaded as on 17.3.06 (2001-02 and 2002-03).

While the economically developed states did get one fifth of resources in the beginning but their share drastically reduced in the later years. The educationally medium developed or improving states are to be allocated still a higher share as their efforts are to be rewarded to boost further improvement. States are allocated funds based on the district plans submitted and the financial norms of SSA. However, appropriate parameters are to be identified for rewarding better performing states. North-eastern states are the special category states and get around 6 to 10 percent, which is relatively less. However, these states get overall higher transfer of resources, both from Planning as well as Finance Commissions. Even though the distribution of shares appears to be reasonable, the point still remains that fund released is only less than fifty percent of the approved outlays.

Funds released by GoI are transferred to the state implementing societies (for the fund flow pattern, see the Figure on Channel of Fund Flow in Appendix). State governments are to transfer their prescribed matching share, keeping GoI's fund release as the base. In the process, share of funds not released by GoI were not taken into consideration by the state governments as well. The matching share under SSA between centre and states was 85:15 during 9th plan (1997-2002), which was the same in DPEP; 75:25 during 10th plan (2002-2007) and an equal share of 50:50 thereafter (p.5-6). In the 75 percent of the GoI's share, 30 percent of the resources form external assistance. The external contribution under SSA to GoI is Rs.7330 millions – International Development Agency (Rs. 3520 millions); DFID (Rs.2420 millions) and European Commission (Rs. 1390 million). This was to be distributed from 2003-04 to 2006-07, i.e., during the last four years of the 10th five-year plan.

It is equally important to know whether the states have adhered to the sharing or matching ratios. A successful implementation of any centrally sponsored scheme, like SSA, requires the states' full commitment. For instance, as reported in Table 5, the matching shares by both GoI and state governments' during 2003-04 are adhered to only in a few states viz., Kerala, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

Majority of the states have not been able to ensure the stipulated share even during the second year of the 10th plan i.e., 2003-04. Those states, which are sanctioned more than 75 percent of GoI share are, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Mizoram, Orissa, Haryana, Gujarat and Tripura. These states get the higher share at the cost of the states getting less than the stipulated share like, Bihar, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir and Nagaland. The states, which are sanctioned lower share are doubly disadvantaged in terms of economic and education development, except the economically prosperous states viz., Maharashtra and Punjab and educationally better oft Himachal Pradesh (see Table 5).

However, during the third year of the 10th five-year plan, the situation seems to have improved with many states adhering to the share, such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Haryana. It is to be noted that a few states like Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Tamil Nadu ensured the prescribed shares even in 2003-04. States getting more than 75 percent of GoI share viz., Kerala, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, and West Bengal are at the cost of disadvantaged states like Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Orissa, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, except Gujarat, Karnataka, and Punjab.

It is because the overall share at the all India level is maintained at the prescribed ratio during both the years 2003-04 and 2004-05. *The educationally backward states with an additional handicap of economic backwardness are further vulnerable even to get their eligible assistance from GoI through SSA.* Hence, their role in gearing the system towards the needs of disparity and deprivation is extremely limited.

TABLE 5
Share of GoI and State Governments in Total Released Fund under SSA in Selected States (in %)

States	*2003-04*			*2004-05*		
	GoI	*State Govts*	*Total**	*GoI*	*State Govts*	*Total**
Andhra Pradesh	68.6	31.4	1396	75.5	24.5	3708
Arunachal	79.2	20.8	1364	73.5	26.5	2265
Assam	72.0	28.0	2700	75.1	24.9	4256
Bihar	70.6	29.4	1062	75.1	24.9	2768
Chhattisgarh	83.5	16.5	1396	65.9	34.1	2137
Gujarat	87.5	12.5	788	74.7	25.3	1699
Haryana	69.3	30.7	788	75.1	24.9	818
Himachal Pradesh	58.9	41.1	905	71.6	28.4	964
Jammu& Kashmir	89.1	10.9	1287	67.3	32.7	2461
Jharkhand	88.5	11.5	1401	71.2	28.8	3693
Karnataka	75.5	24.5	658	92.5	7.5	966
Kerala	--	--	--	73.1	26.9	5919
Madhya Pradesh	69.6	30.4	2949	80.8	19.2	4454
Maharashtra	88.4	11.6	134	80.1	19.9	407
Manipur	43.6	56.4	89	78.3	21.7	267
Meghalaya	88.4	11.6	1748	69.5	30.5	3139
Mizoram	67.7	32.3	1273	53.3	46.7	573
Nagaland	71.4	28.6	2188	68.1	31.9	3450
Orissa	64.5	35.5	42	75.0	25.0	80
Punjab	75.0	25.0	2283	75.0	25.0	3536
Rajasthan	83.0	17.0	332	79.9	20.1	512
Sikkim	75.0	25.0	4539	75.0	25.0	11701
Tamil Nadu	75.0	25.0	467	75.0	25.0	1220
Tripura	74.7	25.3	2235	76.9	23.1	5987
Uttar Pradesh	75.6	24.4	32135	74.2	25.8	68021

* Rs in millions
Source: Based on GoI (2005c)

The sharing pattern varies within states between the years and in majority of the states. When the states (especially educationally and also economically backward states) are unable to contribute the lower matching shares itself, equal sharing between the centre and states thereafter would further pressurize them in a couple ways – to raise funds to meet the matching budget; and to take over the recurring liabilities generated under SSA. The moot question is whether all the states, irrespective of educational and economic development, will be able to bear the additional financial pressures under the scheme after the 10^{th} plan.

Further, states have to maintain allocation in real terms on the base year 1999-2000 and hence matching share of states has to be higher than the base year allocations (p.6)[5]. One of the major problems identified is that the state funds are not forthcoming and remain stagnant. This is one of the major hindering factors in fully utilizing the available resources as discussed later. Even under DPEP, the problem identified was that state funds are not forthcoming (see Bashir, 2000; Tilak, 2002). The funds allocated under DPEP then and under SSA now are to be seen as additionalities and not substitutable for existing programmes (p.21). SSA funding had to be viewed as a mechanism to reduce the financial pressure on the district and state than as sufficient allocations to achieve the targets. But DPEP and SSA have created a dependency syndrome among states/districts. It is found that states' own plan resources grew slowly and stagnated or declined in real terms. As noted earlier, bulk of the plan expenditure in the states comes from centrally sponsored schemes, now SSA (see Table 1).

However, viewing the allocation in a particular scheme may not be appropriate even if one looks at it in terms of 1999-2000 prices. It needs to be examined in terms of the total budgetary allocation to elementary education by the states as a percent of State Domestic Product. As Table 6 reports the share of expenditure on elementary education either remained stagnant (Karnataka, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Punjab) or declined in majority of the states (Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Jammu & Kashmir, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Haryana).

In only two states Bihar and Assam, the shares have increased. It is a paradox that an economically backward state of Bihar exhibiting a higher share of SDP and the economically prosperous state of Punjab displaying a lower share of SDP. One possible reason could be income of Bihar (and also Assam) is less while a higher expenditure in elementary education shows a high share of SDP; while the reverse is true for Punjab. In addition, the expenditure on elementary education would be predominant in the total resources available for education as a whole in a state like Bihar.

It could be observed that states, which are allocating a lower share of expenditure to elementary education are also allocating lower state share under the scheme SSA as well. For instance, states like Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Orissa, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Gujarat, and Punjab are such states, which have allocated lower state share during 2003-04 and 2004-05. These are the states in which their share of expenditure on elementary education as a percent of SDP has either stagnated or declined during the programme period (see Table 5 and 6). In this sense, SSA has not promoted significant additional resources for education from the states. It is to be realised that states resource mobilization for education is also critical. SSA funds needs to be viewed only as additionality and not a substitute. Indeed, SSA has not catalyzed significant additional resources within states.

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[5] As in DPEP, the states are required to maintain elementary expenditure at 1991-92 level.

TABLE 6
Share of Expenditure on Elementary Education*
as Percent of State Domestic Product

States	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Madhya Pradesh	4.97	4.62	3.82	2.38
Bihar	3.99	2.52	4.07	4.11
Himachal Pradesh	3.25	3.14	3.08	2.85
Assam	3.1	2.83	3.49	4.29
Jammu & Kashmir	2.33	2.09	2.08	1.99
Orissa	2.3	2.36	2.06	1.89
Karnataka	2.29	2.21	2.28	2.47
Rajasthan	2.11	2.19	2.11	2.1
Uttar Pradesh	1.98	1.69	1.64	1.5
Maharashtra	1.84	1.38	1.26	1.21
West Bengal	1.64	0.88	0.83	0.88
Gujarat	1.29	1.29	1.09	1.13
Tamil Nadu	1.28	1.07	1.14	1.08
Kerala	1.23	1.97	1.75	1.89
Haryana	1.09	1.02	0.98	0.95
Andhra Pradesh	1.06	0.96	1.11	1.1
Punjab	0.65	0.79	0.74	0.77
All India	1.56	1.48	1.52	1.43

* Expenditures by state governments' only.

Source: Based on Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, various issues, and Central Statistical Organization, New Delhi.

It clearly emerges from the analyses that public expenditure for universalisation of elementary education has been inadequate. Indeed, it is long over due given the inadequacies in the system and the large number of out-of-school children. According to census 2001, only 72 percent of children in the age group 6-13 years are currently attending an educational institution in India. The remaining children amounting to nearly 58 million in the age group of 6-13 years are not attending an educational institution. The gross enrolment ratio in 2003-04 is also not very encouraging that only 85 percent of 6-13 age group children (including about 20 percent of under and over age children) are enrolled (Selected Educational Statistics, 2003-04). To achieve UEE and fill the existing inadequacies in elementary education, the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) suggested that the allocation to elementary education needs to be nearly doubled as a proportion of national income (GoI, 2005b). Many problems of universalisation of elementary education, like access to and expansion of schooling, quality of education, have exacerbated by inadequate financing. Though adequate financing may not solve all the problems of universalisation of elementary education, it could have certainly addressed at least the quantitative pressures.

Resource Utilisation

Low resource utilization has been a major lacuna under SSA. This is true in many of the social sector expenditures in India. On the one hand, there is hue and cry over lack of resources and on the other, the state is unable to spend the resources at its disposal. In many instances central grants have been returned largely unutilized. Sometimes, the state has failed to even obtain the grants. Moreover, its internal resources could also never be fully spent. However, information on utilisation rate as percent of released funds seems to have improved from 2003-04 to 2004-05 at the national level under SSA (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
Percent Utilised on Released Funds* in Selected States under SSA (in %)

States	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*States*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Andhra Pradesh	74.0	77.8	Maharashtra	89.7	80.5
Assam	98.8	98.0	Mizoram	58.7	94.3
Bihar	19.3	60.9	Nagaland	76.1	90.5
Chhattisgarh	37.8	90.7	Orissa	76.4	77.1
Gujarat	86.3	66.5	Punjab	35.7	74.1
Haryana	101.0	62.0	Rajasthan	80.5	91.5
Himachal Pradesh	70.1	87.5	Sikkim	33.3	59.0
J&K	37.6	81.7	Tamil Nadu	90.6	96.9
Jharkhand	41.7	88.4	Tripura	55.6	99.7
Karnataka	88.3	87.3	Uttar Pradesh	80.4	96.7
Kerala	79.6	76.6	Uttaranchal	90.2	74.5
Madhya Pradesh	--	88.2	West Bengal	14.5	82.8
India	70.7	83.7			

* Released funds plus total outstanding balance.
Source: Based on GoI (2005c)

As many as in eight states, viz., Mizoram, Tripura, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Sikkim, Bihar and West Bengal, utilization rate was less than 60 percent. Almost all of these low utilizing states are also educationally backward states. However, the situation has improved except Sikkim where there is less than 60 percent utilsiation rate in 2004-05. But, Haryana, overspent than the released funds in 2003-04.

On the contrary, Bihar spent only 19 percent of its total resources in 2003-04. Low utilization rate of the funds is not something new under SSA, even in DPEP it persisted (Varghese et al, 1999; Karan and Pushpendra, 2005). For instance, Bihar spent a mere 30 percent of its budget allocation in 2000-01 under the Bihar Education Project. However, the utilization rates are around 60 percent under SSA compared to 30 to 40 percent rates under DPEP in Madhya Pradesh and Kerala (Varghese, et al, 1999). A number of utilization studies under DPEP as well find the low utilisation rates as one of the major problems.

Utilization rates by components[6] could provide additional insights. The sixteen activities under SSA have been grouped into six major components for a meaningful analysis (see note below Table 8 for grouping of activities). Table 8 reports utilization rates by components and by category of states in India. The states and union territories have been classified into six categories (as in Table 4 and explained in appendix table with an explanatory note). As expected, utilisation rate in building is the highest, quality and incentives follow the second and third orders.

TABLE 8
Utilization Rates* by Components by Category of States in India

Category	*Buildings*	*Teachers Salary*	*Other Variable Expr*	*Equity and Access**	*Quality*	*Incentives (students)*	*Total*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Category I (Educationally Devd.)	82.31	78.36	50.86	89.84	64.12	77.51	74.61
Category II (Economically Devd.)	59.57	47.64	65.15	31.37	48.15	39.00	49.82
Category III (Ed. improving)	57.12	46.64	59.52	41.58	68.67	67.02	60.81
Category IV (Educationally backward)	79.48	65.14	60.65	36.30	33.30	66.45	60.39
Category V (North Eastern)	58.46	84.16	49.83	54.43	74.09	57.27	63.34
UTs	27.16	10.16	36.73	12.91	33.17	81.04	24.49
All	68.95	58.99	59.49	39.58	61.15	60.74	59.84

* Utilization rates reported here are independent.

Note: Capital expenditure refers to civil works; other variable expenditure includes maintenance, management cost and SIEMAT; Equity and access includes IED, EGA/AIE and NPEGEL. Quality includes school grant, teacher grant, teacher's training, community training, innovative activities, Total Research Evaluation Management Systems, BRC and CRC (other than civil work). Incentives consist of textbooks and TLE.

Source: Computed, based on GoI (2005c).

The least utilization rates (40 percent) are reported on the component equity and access, all over India. The pattern varies by components across categories of states. The building component across the educationally developed and the backward states depict similar spending rates, where the utilisation rates are above and around 80 percent respectively. However, as expected, buildings show the highest spending rate only among educationally backward states. In educationally developed states, the highest spending

[6] Detailed account of information on allocation and expenditure about sixteen activities during 2004-05 across states and union territories given in the second report of Joint Review Mission of SSA have been used.

rate is reported on equity and access. It could be because in these states, it is the last 10 to 20 percent non-enrolled children that are to be covered to attain universal elementary education. These children would comprise of the most difficult section to be reachable like nomads, the poorest of the poor, etc. While in the other categories of states, economically developed (II), educationally improving (III) and north-eastern (V), utilization rates on access and equity range between 55 and 60 percent. Why these states were not able to utilize almost half of their allocation even under buildings need to be further explored. Some important reasons for overall under-utilisation are discussed later.

Utilization rates in teachers' salary were above 65 percent in educationally developed (I), educationally backward (IV) and north-eastern (V) states, while economically developed (II) and educationally improving (III), states' spending rate was only 45 to 50 percent. Indeed, it is the same story on recruiting teachers from Operation Blackboard to DPEP, especially in educationally backward states (Bashir, 2000). 'States that did not utilise the support under Operation Blackboard for a third teacher in primary or an additional teacher in upper primary, will be eligible for assistance for new posts created to meet the rising enrolment of pupils. Assistance will not be available for filling up existing vacancies that have arisen on account of attrition' (p.56). It is because teachers' salary brings in additional recurring liabilities to the states. State governments while implementing the activities are more concerned with the recurring liabilities and hence allocation under those activities exhibit low spending rates.

On the component quality, educationally developed (I), north-eastern (V) and educationally improving (III) states reported above 65 percent utilization rates. On the contrary, economically developed (II) reported low and educationally improving (IV) reported least spending rates. However, the spending rates are relatively better on incentives except in economically developed (II) states. Across categories of states (column 7 of Table 8), three-fourths of the allocation have been utilized by educationally developed (I), and one-fourth of the allocation is being utilized in UTs. Around 60 percent utilitisation rates are reported in educationally improving (III), educationally backward (IV), and north-eastern (V) states, while in economically developed (II) states, only half of the allocations have been utilized.

Similar findings are observed under DPEP as well in Assam, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. Civil works have been progressing while non-civil works are not improving at an expected pace. Programmes requiring very little investment are given low priority in implementation. Programmes requiring financial commitment from the state governments for sustainability are not adequately forthcoming (Varghese, et al, 1999).

Indeed, the problem of under-utilisation is worse if one looks at mid-year utilisation rate, which is mere 23 percent overall (Table 9).

TABLE 9
Utilisation Rates in the Mid-year* of 2005-06 by Components under SSA**

(Rs. In 10 millions)

	Budgetary Allocation	*Actual Expenditure*	*Expr. as % of Allocation*
Capital Expenditure	4585	1137	24.80
Teachers salary	3254	805	24.73
Other variable expr.	878	303	34.55
Equity and Access	1803	278	15.44
Quality	2215	334	15.08
Incentives	914	296	32.34
Total	13649	3153	23.10

* Mid-year corresponds to till September 2005.
** For grouping of Components see note on Table 8.
Source: Based on GoI (2006)

The component-wise utilization rates are minimal on equity, access and quality aspects. The share of incentives show relatively better utilization rates but then by middle of the year the allocation towards textbooks and other TLE should have been spent almost fully. This suggests that the improvements in equity, access, and quality and incentives to students are showing very slow progress, which is true across various categories of states as well except educationally developed states.

Factors Responsible for Low Utilisation of Resources

Several reasons can be put forward to explain this under-utilisation, which may include initial administrative hurdles, GoI not releasing adequate funds and also transferring the funds to states not in time, delayed release of matching grants and/or no release of the prescribed share of the matching grant; delays in preparation, submission and approval of annual work plan & budgets; procedural delays; inadequate provisions in the budget; low utilisation of funds in the previous quarter, etc. (1) New scheme brings new guidelines and requires new procedures. It takes time before the state governments/districts become fully aware and able to fulfill the new criteria. But, this is only a bottleneck at initial stages and should not continue. (2) GoI is not releasing adequate fund. Even when released majority of the states, as many as 17 states were getting funds from MHRD only after September and a very few (just two) states were getting funds within six months of the beginning of the programme (see Table 10). However, in the later years from 2003-04 onwards, the resources have been released much ahead before August 2003 during the financial year 2003-04 and before July 2004 during 2004-05.

TABLE 10
Timing of Resources Released from MHRD to States (SIS) under Annual Plans between 2001-02 and 2004-05

	Before September 2001	*After September 2001*
2001-02	Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttaranchal, West Bengal
	2 states	17 states
2003-04	Before September 2003	After September 2003
	All states and union territories (PAB) approved between the months of February and August 2003	Nil
2004-05	Before September 2004	After September 2004
	All states and union territories (PAB) approved between the months of May and July 2004	Nil

Source: Based on www.education.nic downloaded as on 17.3.06

(3) The problem of states with matching grants is two-fold that either late releasing of funds and/or not releasing the prescribed share of the matching grant (see Table 3). Even though, for instance, Government of Uttar Pradesh has been releasing its share of funds in all the years but releases have not been timely and did not follow the calendar prescribed in the manual (GoI, 2005a). Same is the situation in Himachal Pradesh even during 2005-06 where the first installment of the state reached in November 2005 and the second installment was outstanding even in December 2005. Government of West Bengal has made available its 25 percent share, with a lag of between three and four months (GoI, 2005a). For instance, in Andhra Pradesh the states share of receipts were not in time till 2003-04. But the situation has improved during 2005-06. However, this needs to be sustained in the coming years as well (GoI, 2006). Release of bulk money in the last few months of the financial year would also result in compromised quality of expenditure.

(4) From the state implementing societies, the funds are transferred to districts and then at the sub-district level. The fund transfer to sub-district level is effected with delays from the districts and as a result there are substantial balances at the district level. For example in the districts of Uttar Pradesh, closing balance in a district, Kheri, was Rs. 29.5 million

and in Unnao it was Rs 13.5 million on 31st December 2004. The delay is occasioned by accounting details of the sub-district entities. At times, details of the requirement for specific schemes are obtained from sub-district levels. This delays the transfers (GoI, 2005a). This also reflects the extent of reliance on fund utilization on specific head identified by the state or the central level. It also reflects the lack of flexibility in reallocating the funds under different heads.

(5) As a result of fragmented and delayed release by GoI and states, like Government of Uttar Pradesh, the State Implementing Society has also not been adhering to the schedule of releasing funds within 15 days of their receipt. In 2003-04 funds received in September 2003 were released to districts over the next five months. This situation improved in 2004-05, and funds received in October 2004 were released in several installments over the next two months. Such transfers not only mean that senior officers at the State Implementing Societies are constantly busy with releases but it also increases the load on accounting system manifold and also delays the transfers at districts. While, funds transfer to sub-districts is also efficient (by using credit advices instead of cheques), there are delays in actual release. These delays are partly on account of lack of pre-planning and partly due to lack of clarity of instructions and effective monitoring by the District Project Officers (GoI, 2005a). This also reflects autonomy over decentralized implementation.

(6) While central government funds are credited directly to the designated SSA bank account of the state implementing societies, the state share generally is credited at state treasury. This is not in consonance with the provisions of the SSA Implementation or Finance Manual. SSA funds from state government should also be credited to SSA bank account. Funds are released to the district in several installments, for instance in Madhya Pradesh (to Mandla district in 8 installments and to Seoni district in 7 installments) during 2004-05 (GoI, 2005a).

(7) There can be a deliberately created or unintentional delay in the central bureaucracy, with spill-over effects for the next year's allocation (which is partly based on spending figures of the previous year) (Mooij and Dev, 2004). It is also true that the financial guidelines of SSA are restrictive and are not need-based. This, combined with the fact that a number of decisions are based on administrative ease rather on issues of appropriateness and need (Kainath, 2006), further add to low utilization rates. Procedural norms are such that 'funds are to be released only after the previous allocations are transferred to state implementation society within 30 days. Government of India would release funds to the states/UTs and installments (the second disbursement) only after ensuring these stipulations. State level implementation society is to certify that the level of investments is being maintained by states for further allocation of resources' (p.25). These procedural delays also lead to spillover.

TABLE 11
Annual Spillover of Unspent Funds as Percent of Total Expenditure under SSA

State	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*State*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Andhra Pradesh	44.4	17.0	Maharashtra	26.1	8.6
Assam	36.5	0.9	Mizoram	11.6	16.8
Bihar	53.3	31.6	Nagaland	50.5	13.9
Chhattisgarh	21.8	17.8	Orissa	25.0	15.9
Gujarat	22.1	31.2	Punjab	22.6	120.4
Haryana	14.6	7.8	Rajasthan	20.7	25.4
Himachal Pradesh	14.7	17.6	Sikkim	53.1	53.3
Jammu&Kashmir	5.8	3.6	Tamil Nadu	14.4	7.0
Jharkhand	32.0	34.5	Tripura	39.0	0.2
Karnataka	29.7	6.8	Uttar Pradesh	30.5	10.6
Kerala	16.1	26.9	Uttaranchal	57.3	6.7
Madhya Pradesh	--	15.9	West Bengal	102.8	2.8
India	34.0	15.5			

Source: GoI (2005c)

Table 11 reports annual spillover of unspent funds as percent of total expenditures, which were very high during 2003-04. States, which showed more than 50 percent spillover, are West Bengal, Uttaranchal, Bihar, Sikkim and Nagaland. However, the situation seems to have improved during 2004-05.

(8) One of the major problems among the districts is that almost all of the districts want to get the highest sanction irrespective of their capacity to absorb and utilize. As noted earlier, the low utilization rate by components like quality, equity and access, brings out their inadequate institutional and administrative capacity and governance to pursue the required activities. However, this aspect further needs to be explored at the micro level.

(9) Uniform-financing norms (ceiling) have been adopted despite variations in size and scale of problems across districts. As noted earlier, they include specific limits on the availability of resources and their broad pattern of allocation between different major items of expenditure (see Table 9), which are same for all districts. The rationale being, SSA seeks to protect these funds from being spent for items such as construction, by placing limits on various heads. It is argued that if no such upper limit is indicated, perhaps all resources would have been spent on construction and nothing or meager resources would be left out for other components. But it is also counter argued that districts are not free to reallocate resources between various heads depending upon local specific requirements.

(10) Last, but not the least, locally powerful groups have no interest (including teachers in the upper caste as observed by Karan and Pushpendra, 2005) that 'Dalitisation (socially deprived community in India) of government schools is taking place only in terms of students...Government schools are dominated by non-dalit teachers, who use all

their social capital for remaining absent from schools up to maximum manageable periods. This has implications not only for the students enrolled ... but also for their overall functioning (Karan and Pushpendra, 2005, p.115). There are vested interests in the social status quo, and education is perceived as a threat to this social order. This fear also means there is no interest in spending money on education (Mooij and Dev, 2004). For instance, the Uttar Pradesh government 'has taken little interest in the Total Literacy Campaign, even after the considerable potential of that campaign had been well demonstrated in several other states. The under-utilization of large grants earmarked for the promotion of elementary education (...) is yet another symptomatic indication of the low priority given to basic education by the state government (Dreze and Gazdar, 1996, p.88).

To sum up, states/districts getting the resources by the end of the financial year are hardly left with any time to utilize the money. In addition, the financial rules stipulate that the states are supposed to utilize the money in the same financial year for which it has been allocated. The unutilized money is a major hurdle for further development in a number of ways. For instance, the current year's allocation normally depends upon the previous year's expenditures, more specifically the preparation of annual work plan and budgets. If unspent amount is shown then the implication is that states/districts are not in a position to spend the resources or not able to absorb the resources even though they require resources because they did not have adequate time to plan for the developmental activities. The delayed flow of funds has affected planning at the State Implementing Society level and eventually the pace of implementation of the programme. Further, the delays at various stages of the system, including at the sub-district level where transfers are reported as taking up to eight weeks is clearly slowing down the utilisation rates. Indeed, a vicious cycle is getting formed beginning from the delay in getting the fund – low utilization – unspent funds - spillover to next year - reduction in the coming years' budget, etc.

As rightly observed by Mooij and Dev (2004) there are conflicting interests in the process of allocation, but also in the process between allocation and implementation. The final expenditure is a result of both. Despite all this, a few possible options may be thought of to improve utilization:

- The present procedure of Utilisation Certificate is not at all meaningful in achieving the set target. Instead, if it relates to any outcome measure, it will be a great leap forward to achieve the targets in real terms.
- Unutilized amount or the spillover not to be adjusted in the budget of the forthcoming year but given a grace period to utilize it effectively.
- Strengthening administrative capacity at the district and sub-district levels.
- Improving absorptive capacity of the educationally and economically backward states.

Priorities: Budgetary Allocation vs Actual

It is pertinent to examine whether the priorities envisaged in budgetary allocation are maintained while spending. As shown in Charts 2a and 2b, the priorities envisaged in allocation are not adhered to when expenditures are incurred on various items. For instance, quality components constitute 16 percent in the allocation, while the expenditure incurred on this item is 11 percent. Similarly, equity and access occupied a 13 percent share in the allocation, which got reduced to 9 percent in actual expenditures. While priorities of capital expenditures, teacher salary, etc, have shown a higher proportion than envisaged in budgetary allocation.

Chart 2a

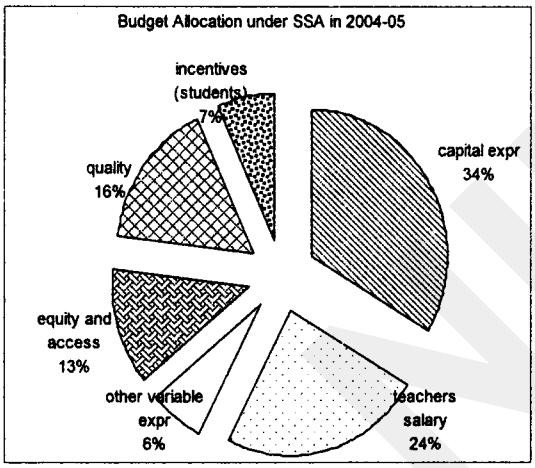
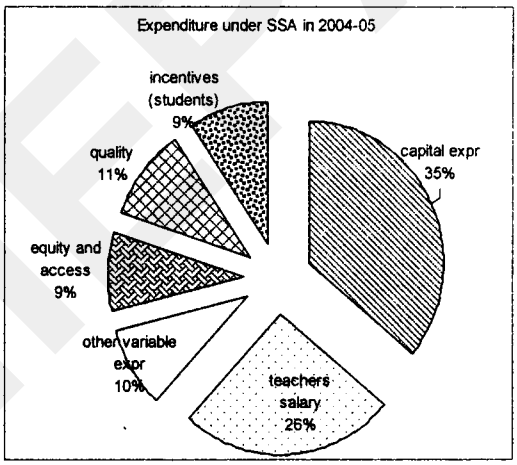


Chart 2b



Source: same as Table 8
Source: GoI (2006)

Even though, the national pattern is suggestive of the variations between allocation and expenditures, it is equally important to examine whether the same holds good across states in a vast country like India. A detailed account of both allocation and expenditures about sixteen activities during 2004-05 across states and union territories have been analysed both vertically and horizontally[7].

How vertical integration in education in a federal set up like India is attended to is examined in terms of the total GoI resources available under the scheme i.e., how much each category of states are allocated and expenditures incurred on different components. Table 12 presents the share of distribution of budgetary allocation and actual

[7] The states and union territories have been classified into six categories (as in Table 4 and explained in Appendix with an explanatory note). The sixteen activities under SSA have been grouped into five major components for the purpose of analysis (see note on Table 8 for grouping of activities).

expenditures by components across various categories of states. This table is structured to know the order of priority of category of states across various components.

TABLE 12
Share of Distribution of Allocation and Expenditures by Components Across States by Category

Category	*Budgetary Allocation*					
	Buildings	*Teachers Salary*	*Other Variable Expdr*	*Equity and Access**	*Quality*	*Total*
Category I (Ed Devd.)	7.32	3.86	7.11	4.39	11.55	6.62
Category II (Eco Devd.)	15.57	2.77	17.31	17.23	19.04	14.32
Category III (Ed improving)	27.64	35.64	27.75	20.68	22.58	26.58
Category IV (Ed backward)	43.32	54.23	40.15	50.82	36.79	45.89
Category V (North Eastern)	5.62	3.16	6.94	5.91	8.76	5.85
UTs	0.53	0.34	0.73	0.98	1.28	0.74
All	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	Actual Expenditure					
Category I (Ed Devd.)	8.74	5.13	6.08	6.08	12.11	8.26
Category II (Eco Devd.)	13.45	2.24	18.96	13.29	14.99	11.92
Category III (Ed improving)	22.90	28.18	27.77	18.15	41.55	27.01
Category IV (Ed backward)	49.94	59.89	40.93	55.45	20.04	46.32
Category V (North Eastern)	4.76	4.51	5.82	6.88	10.62	6.19
UTs	0.21	0.06	0.45	0.15	0.70	0.30
All	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

*Includes incentives; ^ Same grouping of components as in note below Table 8.
Source: Computed based on GoI (2005c)

In terms of budgetary allocation under the scheme, the order of priority is educationally backward (IV), educationally improving (III), economically developed (II), and north-eastern (V), and educationally developed (I) states. Allocation under buildings follow the same order. As far as teachers' salary is concerned, the first and second order of priority remains the same, that of category IV and III states being allocated higher shares and the order then changes as category I, V and II. As far as the other three components are concerned, i.e. quality, equity and access, and other variable expenditure, the first and second order remains the same. There is some interchange between the other three categories of states that are educationally developed (I), economically developed (II) and north-eastern (V).

The same order of envisaged allocation is maintained in terms of expenditure that educationally backward (IV) and educationally improving (III) states are the most needy states, except some minor interchange between III and IV in quality component. But still in terms of building, categories IV and I states overspent than the allocation while in other categories of states, it is a decline in the share than in the allocation. As far as teachers' salary is concerned, except educationally improving states (III), all the others

spent higher than the allocation. In terms of equity and access, the expenditures are more than the allocation in educationally developed (I), educationally backward (IV) and north-eastern (V) states, while in quality, it is educationally developed (I), educationally improving (III) and north-eastern (V) states.

Variations are bound to be there between allocation and expenditures. For instance, the priority changed in terms of expenditure, which is almost double on quality components in category III states, could be a welcome trend but not on either teachers' salary or other variable expenditures.

TABLE 13
Share of Distribution of Allocation and Expenditures by Category of States by Components^

Category	*Buildings*	*Teachers Salary*	*Other Variable Expr*	*Equity and Access**	*Quality*	*Total*
			Budgetary Allocation			
Category I (Ed Devd.)	36.51	10.72	8.15	16.46	28.16	100
Category II (Eco Devd.)	35.91	3.56	9.18	29.85	21.49	100
Category III (Ed improving)	34.37	24.66	7.93	19.31	13.73	100
Category IV (Ed backward)	31.19	21.73	6.64	27.49	12.95	100
Category V (North Eastern)	31.74	9.94	9.02	25.08	24.22	100
UT	23.78	8.31	7.48	32.56	27.87	100
Total	33.04	18.39	7.59	24.82	16.16	100
			Actual Expenditure			
Category I (Ed Devd.)	40.28	11.26	5.56	18.70	24.20	100
Category II (Eco Devd.)	42.94	3.41	12.01	20.88	20.77	100
Category III (Ed improving)	32.29	18.91	7.76	15.63	25.40	100
Category IV (Ed backward)	41.05	23.44	6.67	21.70	7.14	100
Category V (North Eastern)	29.30	13.20	7.10	22.07	28.33	100
UTs	26.36	3.45	11.22	21.24	37.73	100
Total	38.07	18.13	7.55	19.74	16.51	100

* Includes incentives;
^Same grouping of components as in note below Table 8.
Source: Same as Table 12

On similar lines, horizontal integration is examined by analyzing the distribution of similar levels of either economic or/and educational development of states across components. Unlike the earlier table, the present framework is to be viewed in relation to the scheme's postulates, for example, that the ceiling on buildings as 33 percent of the total allocation, etc. Table 13 reports the share of distribution of allocation and actual expenditures by category of states by various components.

Overall, the share indicated under allocation is maintained at expenditures as well except on buildings, which is at the cost of reduction in expenditures on equity and access. It may be noted that for all other components, the shares under allocation are adhered to at the shares of expenditures. As far as budgetary allocation is concerned, highest share is found in buildings across category of states. Second higher share of allocation is under quality component in category I states, while it is equity and access in category II, IV and V states. On the contrary, in category III states, teachers' salary occupies the second highest share. Third priority is the quality component, that too only in category II states, while it is teachers' salary in category IV states.

Even though SSA claims to provide quality elementary education (p.1.), quality aspects are yet to get into the priority in category III and IV states where it is the last or fourth priority. Building, teachers' salary, equity and access are the most immediate concerns than quality even in terms of budgetary allocation itself.

As far as expenditure is concerned, across the components and category of states, the rationale of shares envisaged in allocation is not adhered to. By all means, building is the first priority in terms of expenditure, irrespective of the developmental status of category of states. Quality is the second priority in educationally developed (I), economically developed (II), educationally improving (III) and north-eastern (V) states (in category II there is almost equal share between quality and equity and access), except in educationally backward (IV) states where teachers' salary is the second priority while quality is relegated to fourth rank. Either equity and access or teachers' salary occupies the third order in IV and V category states. Emerging trend is that quality is the fourth priority in educationally improving category (III) and educationally backward (IV) states.

It is evident that both in allocation and expenditures, only after ensuring the basic minimum levels in terms of physical and human infrastructure, and ensuring equal access to all the child-age population of 6-14, quality is given priority.

Emerging Challenges

This part of the paper attempts to bring out the emerging challenges in the development of education per se and elementary education in particular in a wider perspective. With an extensive discussion on various aspects of financing of the scheme, the overall impact of the scheme on education development is examined here. Issues focusing on norms adopted under SSA, which have not only financial implications but also have an effect on the equity and quality aspects; and management related issues having an impact on the functioning of the system and the overall development of education are discussed.

Norms Adopted

Alternate Schools

The Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) was initiated by Government of Madhya Pradesh in 1997. Habitations not having a primary school within one kilometer radius, with 40 children (25 to 30 in tribal areas) will be entitled to have an EGS type school

Alternate school. The community is required to identify teachers (*Guruji*) who would be then trained by the Education Department. The community is also required to provide land/space for schools, manage mid-day meal through the Panchayat and participate through Village Education Committees and Parents Teacher Association. Later many states have adopted the EGS type schools. In 1999-2000, this scheme was taken at the national level. As against the National Policies on Education, 1968 and 1986, which envisaged formal schools, the SSA (to implement polices) encourages alternate schools in various forms. Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternate and Innovative Education scheme is a part of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan framework. SSA programme will provide planning and management support for the operationalisation of the EGS and AIE scheme (p.35). Under SSA, any individual who has passed Class X or XII can start a school. It need not be a formal, full-time school and can be located anywhere. A further worry is that these alternative schools increase in number and also in proportions at a faster rate than the formal schools (see Table 14).

TABLE 14
Growth of Formal and Alternate Schools in India (in numbers)

Year	*Formal Elementary Schools*	*Increase Over the Previous Year*	*EGS/Alternative Schools/ Bridge Course Centres*
2000-01	845007	+	+
2001-02	883667	38660	+
2002-03	897109	13442	+
2003-04	974520	77411	+
Total increase	246791	129513 (40)	194689* (60)

\+ Not available;

* Total alternate schools during the period 2000-01 to 2003-04; figures in brackets indicate percentage increase in formal and alternate schools in the total increase in all type of schools

Source: Based on MHRD, (2004); Selected Educational Statistics, various issues.

The increase in alternate schools over the last four years accounted for 60 percent while formal schools accounted for 40 percent. These alternate schools are aimed at 'providing an opportunity to the rural poor, especially those belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe and other backward classes to secure education for their children'. This would further marginalize the children from these deprived communities, as the government directly creates such segregation by creating special schools exclusively for children belonging to these communities. Operationalisation of the fundamental right to education under schemes like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, to a large extent replaced formal schools with such 'alternative education'.

Para Teachers

The appointment of Shiksha Karmi or 'barefoot teachers' began in Rajasthan in 1987 and many other states followed the suit. These contract-teachers were given a variety of names – 'Vidya Sahayak' in Gujarat, 'Vidya Volunteers' in Andhra Pradesh, 'Guruji' and 'Shiksha Karmi' in Madhya Pradesh, and 'Shiksha Mitra' in Uttar Pradesh. Many educationally backward states, such as Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and West Bengal appointed a large number of para teachers. These para teachers are recruited on a contractual basis with a bare minimum qualification and are imparted a training ranging from 10 days to one month and are paid salary one-fifth of the regular teacher's salary. States having large proportions of out-of-school children, especially the educationally and economically backward states viz, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Bihar, etc, except Gujarat, are increasingly adopting the low cost strategy of recruiting para teachers. If this trend continues, these para teachers would form a substantial proportion in the total number of teachers (see Table 15).

TABLE 15
Share of Para-Teachers in Total Teaches at Primary and Upper Primary Levels in Selected States* in India in 2002

State	*Primary*	*Upper Primary*	*Elementary*
Gujarat	33.49	26.53	27.13
Arunachal Pradesh	14.05	10.17	12.22
Uttar Pradesh	12.61	5.38	10.59
Andhra Pradesh	11.62	17.89	13.99
Himachal Pradesh	11.37	5.76	9.92
Orissa	10.36	6.56	8.99
Jammu & Kashmir	10.32	7.08	8.44
Uttaranchal	8.82	2.42	6.96
All India	6.70	8.17	7.37
Total Teachers (in Nos.)	1939646	1608222	3547868

* States where the share is above national average have been reported in the table.
Source: Based on 7th AIES, 2002, http://gov.ua.nic.in/aises

According to MHRD Annual Reports, 4,03,390 and 2,10,431 para teachers were sanctioned at elementary level in 2003-04 and 2004-05 respectively (MHRD, 2004; 2005). The tenth five year plan document states that 'Steps would have to be initiated to fill up all the existing vacancies of the teachers, though in a time-bound manner, with defined responsibility to local bodies and communities, and to remove legal impediments in the recruitment of para-teachers' (GoI, 2003, p. 41). It offers an enormous possibility of financial saving, hence the policy shift towards appointing 'para-teachers' in place of regular teachers. These less qualified, untrained and ad-hoc teachers in the system will

seriously hamper the already poor quality of elementary education. As Kumar et al (2001) rightly pointed out, this would lead to rapid weakening and general dismantling of the structure of primary education'.

Incentives

Incentives for education would be more influential for the children from low-income families to enroll in schools. Under SSA, National Nutritional Support to Primary Education, initiated in 1995 (mid-day meal) would remain as a distinct intervention with food grains and specified transportation costs being met by the centre and the cost of cooked meals being met by the states (p.6). However, using household data, Viswanathan (2006) found that except children in the age group of seven to nine years in Tamil Nadu, a large majority of children does not have access to the meal schemes in 1999-2000.

Free textbooks are to be provided to all girls/Scheduled Caste /Scheduled Tribe children at primary and upper primary within an upper ceiling of Rs.150 per child. States are to continue to fund free textbooks under state plans. Other incentives viz., distribution of scholarships and uniforms will be funded under the state plan on the basis of state norms and not funded by SSA (p.6-7.). These incentives would be part of SSA framework but not be funded under SSA programme. But, incentives for children at elementary level in terms of uniforms, scholarships, etc are inadequate in many of the educationally backward states. However, the Right to Education Bill makes an attempt to provide uniforms and textbooks (GoI, 2005b).

Governance Related Issues: Coordination among Different Partners

In order to reduce the time lapse, the channel of fund flow (see Appendix) would bypass the state treasury, so that the fund could directly flow to the state implementing societies. This structure was originally created under the auspices of DPEP. Since, they operate outside the normal bureaucratic and administrative norms, the financial and decision-making efficiency of an independent society may be more advantageous. But at the same time, creation of parallel structures will have serious institutional implications. Further, in the non-DPEP districts, new implementing societies have been established. Perhaps, in some of the states, there are two societies simultaneously operating – one is for implementing the district primary education and the other district upper primary education. Two societies for implementing the same programme, SSA, at the district level would create chaos rather than facilitate the implementing process. For instance, in West Bengal, there are a number of institutions like the West Bengal Board of Primary Education, and the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education which cover upper primary level. Both Boards have an SSA cell which gives direction and support to the programme in addition the State Council of Educational Research and Training, and State Implementing Society. (GoI, 2005a). In order to function smoothly, it is important to ensure all these bodies move in the same direction.

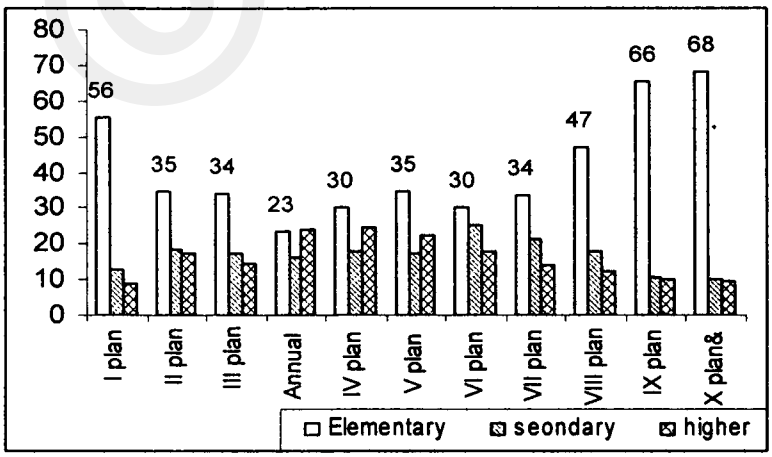
Feeling of Ownership

It is one of the major problems with many of the centrally sponsored schemes. How to make the states and its departments to involve and own the programmes initiated at the centre? The state and district administrations perceive them as separate programmes and are in operation in a piecemeal fashion. Further, it was found that states have enormous difficulties in taking on a centrally sponsored scheme such as Operation Blackboard, in addition to its regular workload. This in turn gets reflected in slow implementation and lack of response (Dyer, 2000). This is primarily because of lack of feeling of ownership of the policy and programmes by the states. States need to realise and accept a centrally initiated scheme and should consider it as a part of its own policy, when the scheme also reflects the plan priorities, such as, Minimum Needs Programmes of the states.

Education Sector Related Issues: Sub-Sectoral Approach

It is often viewed that channelising more resources to elementary education may require shifting of resources away from other levels of education (secondary and higher education). The tenth plan document indicates a clear shift of resources from higher and secondary to primary education "Since budget resources are limited, and such resources as are available, need to be allocated to expanding primary education....", (GoI, 2003, p.17). It can be noticed from Chart 3 that since 7th plan onwards, there has been a hike in allocation for elementary education. In the tenth plan, almost three-fourths of the central plan outlay are envisaged for elementary education. It becomes clear that major part of resources are tuned towards accomplishing the goal of universal elementary education in the recent plans. However, it is to be noted that this higher allocation is at the cost of the growth of other levels of education.

Chart 3
Intra-Sectoral Plan Allocation of Education Expenditure in Total Education under Five Year Plans in India



Compartmentalizing different levels of education became more prominent during 1990s. It is to be realised that while elementary education is fundamental to the nation, higher education determines its economic and technological progress in the globalised era, which are the necessary and sufficient conditions for growth and development respectively.

Policy Imperatives

Resource requirements to attain universal elementary education are quite bulky because of huge number of out-of-school children and still increasing child population in the educationally backward northern states and also due to the huge existing inadequacies in the system. The centrally sponsored scheme SSA provides a very small share of resources to fill this gap besides suggesting low-cost alternatives. As evident from the analysis, this minimum share from GoI (with external assistance) is inadequate given the approved outlays under SSA. More resources ought to flow from centre to states. The 12th Finance Commission has recommended an additional flow of funds in the name of equalization grants earmarked for education to eight states, namely, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal (GoI, 2004). It may be noted that these states fall in the category of educationally improving (III) and educationally backward (IV) states. Despite this, still the financial requirements would be grossly inadequate given their huge requirements.

Sustainable finances spelt out in terms of the sharing ratios between the centre and states have not been adhered to across states even during the 10th five year plan period. Further, it needs to be looked at whether the states can sustain the increasing proportion after 10th plan. Perhaps, this would determine the sustainability of finances, which is absent in the whole formulation and implementation process. Some of the educationally backward states require more resources and further economically poor states may not be able to adhere to the said sharing pattern. In other words, the sharing mechanism needs to capture the state's capacity to bear the financial responsibility. On the contrary, it is found that the educationally backward states with an additional handicap of economic backwardness are further vulnerable even to get their eligible assistance from GoI through SSA. This leads to an equally important concern of backward states' inability to absorb the centres transfers through SSA. This also exacerbates the disparity in educational development across states. In this regard, how to improve the backward states' absorptive capacity needs to be explored. An alternative sharing pattern can be attempted.

Utilization rates even though appear to be improving in recent years, are a major concern. It appears and is claimed that there will be at least adequate budget provision available for universal elementary education. But it is often argued that when states are not able to utilize the resources under various centrally sponsored schemes including SSA, why then ask for more resources? The challenge here is how to make the states and districts to augment the spending rates across various components. The pattern of allocation as well as expenditure indicates that many activities, except buildings (civil

works), indicated in the initial plan documents were not getting satisfactorily implemented. It emerges that only after ensuring the basic minimum levels in terms of physical and human infrastructure, and ensuring equal access to all the child-age population of 6-14, quality is given priority. The most important reason is inadequate capacities at the districts and below levels and lack of full commitment by the states. Adopting easier and short-term alternatives viz, para schools; para teachers, etc might certainly reduce the cost burden of the government, but will result in serious ramifications on the equity, quality, balance and sustainability of the basic education system.

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Appendix A: Channel of Fund Flow

Channel through which resources are allocated to SSA is exhibited in Figure 1. The figure exhibits the funds for SSA flow from the Government of India to the districts passing through three conduits. This consumes considerable amount of time before districts actually get the resources.

Figure 1

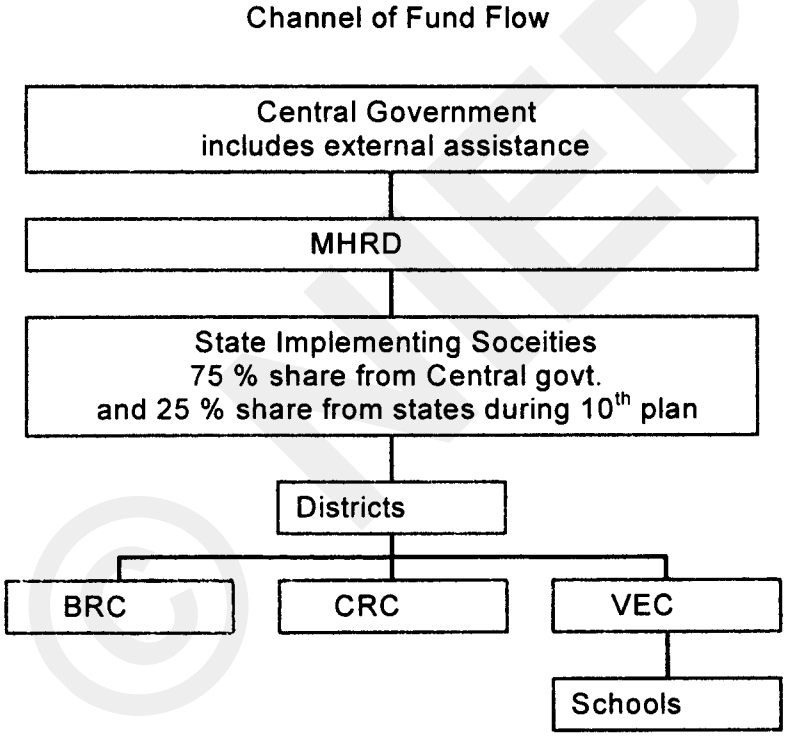

TABLE B

Category of States Based on Educational and Economic Development*

Category I *Edu. Developed*	*Category II* *Eco. Developed*	*Category III* *Ed. Improving*	*Category IV* *Ed. Backward*	*Category V* *North Eastern*	*Union Territories (UT)*
Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu	Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal	Bihar, Orissa Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim	Andaman & Nicobar, Chandigarh, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry

* Note on Classification of States

Linking with a priori information on the educational and economic development of the major states in the country, four broad patterns of financing education could be observed based on the indicators of share of education expenditure in SDP and state budget expenditure (see Tables C and D). In addition, the north-eastern states and the union territories were categorized as Category V and UT respectively. The basis for categorization of states is broadly on indictors such as percent of education expenditure to SDP and state budget expenditures in addition to the strength of the state economy; the state not making educational progress and the state not committed to making progress. These criteria apply to the major 15 states reported in Tables C and D. In addition, the three new states, bifurcated in 2001 from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, have been placed in Category III and IV based on their education and economic performance.

TABLE C

Share in Percent of Education Expenditures in SDP Across Selected States in India

States	*1980-81*	*1985-86*	*1990-91*	*1995-96*	*2000-01*	*2004-05(B)*
Andhra Pradesh	4.0	5.1	4.0	3.3	2.9	3.1
Bihar	3.4	4.5	6.0	6.2	0.8	6.6
Gujarat	3.1	4.1	4.4	3.6	3.8	2.5
Haryana	2.7	3.0	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.4
Himachal Pradesh	6.5	6.6	8.1	7.7	6.6	5.6
Karnataka	3.5	4.7	4.3	4.2	3.4	3.6
Kerala	6.1	7.1	7.1	6.4	4.1	4.6
Madhya Pradesh	3.1	4.0	4.6	4.6	6.9	2.6
Maharashtra	3.0	3.4	3.5	3.0	4.3	3.0
Orissa	3.5	3.1	5.5	5.2	4.9	3.7
Punjab	3.5	3.2	3.4	2.1	3.1	3.1
Rajasthan	3.7	4.7	4.9	5.4	4.2	3.9
Tamil Nadu	3.8	4.5	5.2	4.2	3.5	3.0
Uttar Pradesh	2.7	3.4	4.6	4.3	3.7	3.1
West Bengal	2.7	3.3	4.7	3.3	--	2.7
India	3.1	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.4	3.5

Source: Based on Analysis of Budget Expenditure, various issues; EPWRF (2003), www.cso.org

The first category of states includes the ones, which allocated a higher share for education even though their SDP or economy is not very strong (Kerala and Himachal Pradesh above 6 % of SDP). Tamil Nadu can be included in this category by considering the rapid progress of educational development in this state, even though not much higher resources (only around 4 % of SDP) are allocated. Even though, Bihar's expenditure on elementary education as % of SDP is the second highest in India, and double that of Kerala, it cannot be said that Bihar's economy "is strong", and hence its non-inclusion in the first category besides its commitment and progress towards educational development.

TABLE D

Share in Percent of Education Expenditure in Education in Total Budget of Selected States in India

States	*1980-81*	*1985-86*	*1990-91*	*1995-96*	*2000-01*	*2004-05(B)*
Andhra Pradesh	25.1	24.7	22.4	20.8	17.4	18.3
Bihar	23.8	26.4	28.1	24.6	25.2	25.5
Gujarat	22.2	25.3	25.8	23.8	18.7	17.6
Haryana	20.0	20.5	19.9	14.5	21.7	16.8
Himachal Pradesh	24.9	20.0	21.0	19.9	20.6	19.6
Karnataka	21.7	22.9	22.1	22.6	21.3	18.9
Kerala	34.9	32.1	30.6	30.8	24.2	24.2
Madhya Pradesh	21.0	22.9	25.8	24.5	33.7	15.2
Maharashtra	23.4	19.8	23.2	23.7	27.7	20.9
Orissa	22.3	19.5	24.2	23.7	21.5	15.1
Punjab	28.4	23.2	22.3	13.1	17.6	14.4
Rajasthan	24.9	23.9	25.6	22.0	22.2	21.6
Tamil Nadu	23.6	25.2	25.5	22.7	22.5	20.0
Uttar Pradesh	21.6	22.9	24.1	21.5	20.7	17.0
West Bengal	23.6	25.1	29.1	24.3	--	18.7
India	9.3	13.5	10.5	13.3	14.4	12.3

Source: Based on Analysis of Budget Expenditure, various issues

The second category consists of states with almost the reverse position, that is, higher income or economic growth but a lesser allocation to education (Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Maharashtra). Though, Punjab and Haryana are prosperous with their rich agriculture, they have not allocated a higher share for education consistently for long periods of time. The third category comprises those states that are educationally medium developed but making serious efforts in the recent decades. The states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh; Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttaranchal would come under this category. The states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh are making serious efforts to improve their education systems in consonance with their economic progress under globalisation. Indeed, these two states have been the pioneers in implementing many of the state reforms from power sector to e-governance. However, their education levels and development are at a disadvantageous position but the states are making serious endeavours in this regard also. The economic progress or efforts of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are almost reverse of the situation found in either Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh. But these two states have made some efforts (*Lok Jumbish* in Rajasthan and *Education Guarantee Scheme* in Madhya Pradesh) in improving their education and have tried to allocate a higher share for education.

The fourth category of states includes educationally and economically backward states that do not seem to show any commitment towards improving education. The states that fall under this category are Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Jammu & Kashmir.

Fifth category is the seven north-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura along with Sikkim. Sixth category is all union territories, i.e., Andaman & Nicobar, Chandigarh, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

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Vol. 61	OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2006	No. 4

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

Environmental Degradation and Its Correctives in Agriculture Sector — *S.S. Johl*

Regional Convergence in Indian Agriculture — *Madhusudan Ghosh*

Perennial Crop Supply Response Functions: The Case of Indian Rubber, Tea and Coffee — *Parmod Kumar and Anil Sharma*

Extent and Source of Instability in Foodgrains Production in India — *H.R. Sharma, Kamlesh Singh* and *Shanta Kumari*

RESEARCH NOTES

Revenue Maximising Combination of Crop Enterprises in Bayelsa State of Nigeria: A Linear Programming Application — *E.A. Allison-Oguru, M.S. Igben* and *E.C. Chukwuigwe*

Scale Efficiency of Indian Farmers: A Non-Parametric Approach — *Atanu Sengupta* and *Subrata Kundu*

BOOK REVIEWS * PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED*

ABSTRACTS OF PH.D. THESES IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS *

NEWS * INDEX TO IJAE, Vol. 61, 2006 *

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RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS

State Inaction in Education in India

K. R. Shah*

Abstract

State inaction in the context of financing education in India is explained in terms of two related phenomena of under-financing and crowding out. The basis of under-financing is the non-fulfillment till date of the goal of spending six percent of GDP on education as recommended by the Education Commission[1964-1966].The more unfortunate and disturbing long-term trend observed in this regard is the slackening of the state efforts to mobilize the required resources during the period of high economic growth [1986-87, 2001-2002] when compared with that of low economic growth [1966-67, 1985-86].Chances of achieving the target in near future are remote. The crowding out phenomenon is elaborated first in terms of the discrepancy between the ideal intra-sectoral allocation based on the attainment of six percent target and the actual allocation, and second in terms of the trends in actual intra-sectoral allocation of plan expenditure on education during the first nine five-year plans. These two phenomena, particularly in a changed educational paradigm of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation have brought to the fore a few searching questions like: Is state inaction defensible by any chance? Is it to stay longer? How to resolve a dilemma of striking a balance between access, equity and quality of education?

"It is an utter unmitigated nonsense to say that India does not have money for education"

- A. K. Sen

State inaction, in the context of financing the education sector in India, amounts to under-funding by not providing or mobilizing the required resources not just for a short period but over a period of time, say one generation. Believe it or not, the phenomenon of under-financing is of long term nature as narrated below.

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Phenomenon of Under-Financing

Will the increased budgetary allocation to education (2006-07) end up in its increased share in Gross Domestic Product (GDP)? If our past experience is any guide, the answer is firm, 'no'.

The most notable recommendation of the Education Commission (GoI, 1964-66), chaired by Dr. D. S. Kothari, of 6 percent allocation of GDP to education by the state – goal to be achieved by 1985-86 – is based on the assumption, among others, of almost two times faster increase in public expenditure on education in relation to the rate of economic growth (GDP).

During the most recent decade, 1995-96 – 2004-05, as against the annual GDP growth rate of 5.81 percent, the growth of public expenditure on education was marginally higher at 6.22 percent per annum. The trends during the next decade, i.e. 2004-05 – 2014-15 indicate that by 2014-15, public expenditure on education would be around 3.65 percent of GDP, a shortfall of 2.35 percent (Tilak, 2005).

The more unfortunate and disturbing long term trend noticed in this regard is the slackening of government effort to mobilize required resources during the period of high economic growth (1986-87 – 2001-02) compared to that of low economic growth (1966-67 – 1985-86).

Indices given in Table 1 below are eye-catching, in this respect.

TABLE 1
Indices of Economic Growth and Expenditure on Education

Period	*Index of Rate of Economic Growth*	*Index of GDP Allocated to Education*	*Actual Average GDP Allocated to Education (%)*
(1)			
1951-52 – 1965-66	100.00	100.00	1.19
1966-67 – 1985-86	102.20	216.07	2.57
(2)			
1966-67 – 1985-86	100.00	100.00	2.57
1986-87 – 2001-02	144.30	146.70	3.77

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 2002-03. Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

GDP allocated to education went up by more than two times despite a very insignificant economic growth. Contrarily, during the period of rapid economic growth, 1986-87 – 2001-02, GDP allocated to education moved up just by nearly 47 percent as against 44 percent increase in the rate of economic growth (1966-67 – 1985-86 = 100.0). Both the indices have moved in tandem, unlike their movement during the period of low economic growth (1966-67 – 1985-86).

Had the level of effort reached during the period of slow economic growth been retained during the following rapid economic growth regime, the target would have been nearly attained by 2001-02 as shown below:

$$2.57\% \times \left(\frac{216.0}{100.0}\right) = 5.55\%$$

Actual average GDP allocated to education during 1966-67 – 1985-86)	Previous period index to be repeated during 1986-87 – 2001-02)

In this case, the present UPA government would not have set up the committee on 'National Common Minimum Programme's Commitment of 6 percent of GDP to Education' (MHRD, 2005). Since this was not to be the case, the 6 percent target has virtually lost its sanctity. As per the report of the above committee, "It is important to note that 6 percent of the national income is the minimum level that is required now for public expenditure in the education sector in India, and that the actual requirements would have to be eventually seen as substantially larger in the future."(P.6)

In this sense, what was once taken as the 'optimal' state investment in education, has ceased to be so now and the level of 'optimal' investment appears to be unreachable in the foreseeable future.

Phenomenon of Crowding Out

The well-known feature of the education sector is complementarily of three levels of education, which are sequentially connected, namely elementary education, high/higher secondary education and college and university education. It is self-evident that the working of the whole system gets crippled when one level, especially elementary education, which is the base/foundation of the whole system, is kept weak. The cycle of low access, equity and quality starts from here affecting in turn the other two higher levels and vice-a-versa.

When the overall state funding for education is inadequate for a pretty long period, the three levels of education scramble for limited state funds provided in a budget. A larger provision of budgeted funds for one level crowds out the provision for other levels. The phenomenon of crowding out has its origin in the earlier described under-financing phenomenon.

Intra-Sectoral Allocation

What could be the ideal intra-sectoral allocation once the goal 6 percent of GDP on education is attained? As suggested by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on Financing Higher and Technical Education (CABE, 2005), the share of elementary

education (Classes I –VIII) should be 3 percent of GDP (i.e. 50 percent of public expenditure on education); that of secondary education, and higher education (including technical education) should be 1.5 percent each.

Since the goal of 6 percent of GDP has not been accomplished, the actual intra – sectoral allocation in 2004-05 was nowhere near the proposed ideal. The respective actual shares were 1.43 percent (elementary); 0.88 percent (secondary) and 0.37 percent (higher education) in the actual GDP allocated to education. (GoI, 2005, p.11).

Further more, in support to the phenomenon of 'crowding out', one can refer to the actual trends in intra-sectoral allocation of plan expenditure on education, overing First to Ninth Five-Year Plan period. The picture during the first and the subsequent Five-Year plans is as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Intra -Sectoral Allocation of Plan Expenditure on Education (%)

Level of Education	*First Plan*	*Average Share During Second to Seventh Plans*	*Average Share During Eighth and Ninth Plans*
Elementary	56	33.0	56.0
Secondary	13	19.8	14.3
Higher	9	18.7	11.2

Source: 'Approach Paper on Education for Inclusion in the Tenth Five-Year Plan', GoI.

During the First Five-Year Plan, elementary education accounted for 56 percent; secondary education for 13 percent, and higher education for 9 percent of plan expenditure on education. Their average shares during second to seventh five-year plans were 33, 19.8 and 18.7 percent, respectively. Two higher levels of education had certainly crowded out elementary education. On the other hand, during the eighth and ninth five-year plan periods, the increase in the share of elementary education again to the first plan level of 56 percent, in fact, had crowded out the two higher levels of education. Their respective shares being lower at 14.3 percent (Secondary) and 11.2 percent (Higher).

Thus, these two interconnected phenomena in the realm of financing education, viz., under-financing and crowding out are mainly responsible for the prevailing sorry state of education sector in India. State inaction has resulted in state's failure to fulfill its time bound commitments of (i) 6 percent of GDP, and (ii) Universal Elementary Education.

In Defence of State Inaction

Is state inaction defensible by any chance? Under the cover of the other two features of the state funding of the education sector, viz, its regressivity and the high extent of blanket subsidization, one may be tempted to defend the state inaction.

Financing of education by the state is regressive, particularly higher education, as money comes from general taxation, whereas the major beneficiaries are from better-off backgrounds.

What could be the response of the Indian state to Vijay Kelkar's outburst against compulsorily levied education cess? To quote: "Levying education cess highlights the bankruptcy of thinking about education in India". The only positive response in defense one could think of is that the proceeds from the cess are primarily meant for strengthening elementary education which is both a pure public good and relatively more accessible and so less regressive, unlike higher education.

Parallel to the above feature of regressivity is the feature of heavily subsidized higher education which has been hijacked by the middle class or relatively well-off students. The state might have taken refuge for its inaction on the ground that since the Indian society is characterized by in-built socio-economic stratification, education can hardly be an equalizer. Then, why to burden the people more by according high priority to education needing more resources from general taxation which benefits relatively a small section of the society?

Does it mean that state inaction is to stay?

P. Chidambaram, Union Finance Minister, during his post-budget interactions on television is reported to have said that "higher education should become self-sufficient and here the private sector can play a major role"[1]. In reality, the hon'ble Finance Minister has endorsed the view of the corporate sector.

Is this the only option to state inaction – curtailing state's financing domain (and restricting it to school education)?

Looking at the current pitiable state of elementary education in particular, this seems to be the plausible option. Access, equity and quality (efficiency) triangle has remained elusive for the entire education system. Unless it ceases to be elusive at the foundation level of the education system, namely elementary education, it is presumptuous on our part to expect it to get converted into a reality at the higher levels of education. All the disturbing features – phenomenal number of out-of-school children of the age-group 6-14, mostly from underprivileged class, high drop-out rates, small number of 'functionally' literate children or large scale leakages in transition from one level of education to the next higher level, point to the fact that the unhealthy weeding out process gets in-built into the system from the very foundation itself. Majority of those who climb the ladder successfully are obviously from the educationally, socially and economically better-off sections of the society. The triangle instead of being broad based has become narrower day by day. However, an intriguing question comes to the mind. How is it that the quality of high/higher secondary education, and college and university education have remained poor, even after the mass withdrawal of enrolled students incapable of pursuing education successfully at the early stage?

The Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) in its paper entitled, "Education Reform: The Bold Initiative" (1997) had highlighted two failures of the education system: (a) to encourage creativity, and (b) to adequately train persons for the world of work.

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[1] Times of India: Education Times, March 13, 2006.

There could be a host of factors pointing at the poor shape of our education structure, but the one that comes out prominently from the aforesaid analysis and beyond doubt, is the prolonged state inaction in providing adequate and needed finances. There is a consensus even globally that education deserves a better deal from all the stakeholders, i.e. state, universities, students and their families, the corporate world and the civil society at large. We have paid dearly for not responding at the right time to the financial needs of the education sector.

Changing Education Paradigm

Above was a part of the story. What is the scenario now?

Education scenario has changed dramatically since the last decade and a half. The buzzwords – liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) – have not spared education also.

What is the direction of change? What do we expect from the earlier mentioned stakeholders in education?

Education for the sake of education or knowledge for the sake of knowledge – these long cherished and widely accepted ideologies in the field of education have no place in a prevailing scenario. These (ideologies) are being replaced by the entire corporate or entrepreneurial ideologies of free market and competition, permitting education to be treated as a commodity like any other commodity from the provision of which profit can be earned. This is deplorable. Generating more (enough) resources without sacrificing academic excellence should, rightly speaking, be our goal. There is no place for confusion between means and ends. The purpose of income generation to break out of the cycle of under-funding imposed by state parsimony must always be better educational institutions, say university, and not to generate funds for their own sake.

Growing Tuitions Fee Markets

In the past, tuition fee rates were not only low but remained so for decades. Any move on the part of the state to increase tuition and other fees was opposed tooth and nail by the student community and the society. So much so that higher education virtually became a 'free' good. Along with this, the provision of free education to the underprivileged and girl students has swelled the proportion of non-fee paying students (budget-students) relative to that of the fee-paying students (off-budget students). Declining students' contribution (fees) in total funding, coupled with state under-financing have eroded the 'value' of education as "universities that are apologetic about their charging levels do not impress their customers" (Shattock, 2004). To ameliorate this situation, we come across a varieties of fees in the literature on pricing higher education – discriminating or differential pricing, dual pricing, affordable pricing, deferred variable fees covered by loan entitlement and even full-cost pricing – suggested by scholars keeping in mind the accomplishment of the twin objectives of equity and efficiency. But the state has failed to act on any of these suggestions. On the contrary, to resolve the funding crisis to an extent, the state allowed universities and colleges to start self-financing courses with a condition

to transfer a certain percentage of the income so generated to the university kitty. The state also permitted setting up of self-financed private colleges affiliated to universities.

This move has complicated the scene by creating anomaly in tuition fee structure – state funded universities and colleges have continued charging relatively low fees in the face of exorbitant fees charged by self-financed private colleges, all of which are not qualitatively superior to state universities and colleges.

The demand for 'quality' education at a higher price is on the rise, nationally and internationally, in the wake of borderless education. Even less able families, aware of the importance of education for entry into the sun-rise knowledge economy, don't mind imparting best available education to their wards at any cost.

We have been told time and again about the perverse effects of public subsidy. The positive aspect of public subsidy is also worth exploring.

Let us view the impact of subsidy on the economy and society inter-generationally. The educated segment of the present 60+ population has benefited from the subsidized (higher) education, assisted the process of human capital formation, and has contributed to the growth of the economy. Their wards, mostly in the age-group of 25-40, again the beneficiaries of the subsidized education, now form the core of the expanding Indian knowledge economy. The emerging prosperous middle class to the tune of 308 million owes it to the subsidized education, of course in conjunction with sustained high economic growth during the last two decades. The young working-age population demands for their children in turn quality education at all levels at a high price. Eighty thousand Indian students joining U.S. universities every year is a case in point. In fact, Indian education market has become profitable for foreign universities eager to open their campuses here.

In a scenario of inadequate and uncertain funding of education by the state, all the main contenders – state, universities, the corporate sector ready to shoulder its social responsibility and the civil society – must enter fee-paying education market at least to restrain the outflow of human capital in-the-making for our own self-interest.

Dilemma?

Does this thinking face a dilemma of striking a balance between access, equity and quality? Apparently, it seems so. The emergence of fee-paying education market by its nature implies commoditisation of education which emphasizes quality for a few. Our goal is quality higher education for masses at a reasonable cost. We want to propel enrolment at the tertiary level from the present 7 percent of population of the age-group 15-24, to almost 20 percent. Thus there is a conflict.

However, this conflict is of our own creation. How can we expect access, equity and quality at higher level of education without achieving it first at the very root of the education system? Nowhere it is achieved simultaneously for the education structure as a whole.

First, strike at the root, elementary education, and observer the result.

Second, in view of the internationalization of higher education, universities have to face competition in the world market for educational services. At the present juncture, they have to be efficient, regardless of access and equity. United efforts are needed to achieve this goal access, equity and quality, in a phased manner.

Let us face the reality. Universities cannot be optimistic about the funding from the state budget. Tuition fees and commercialization of knowledge are to be viewed as positive factors. Institutions of higher learning have to shed their "ivory tower" image and orient their curriculum towards the need of the market, society and the consumer. On the presumption that the state may even fail to achieve the minimum of 6 percent of GDP to be allocated to education, the crowding out phenomenon should not be allowed to raise its ugly head again. This is possible, as narrated above, if state universities and colleges begin depending more and more on non-state income. It is said that "the most successful universities academically are also the most successful at generating external income", e.g. Oxford and Cambridge (Shuttock, 2004, p. 225).

To conclude, if changing education paradigm is taken as one inevitable financial reform, then the view expressed by Amartya Sen (2005) that it is 'extremely odd to pursue ethics free reforms', has to be kept in mind.

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Medical Education in India
Implications for Quality and Access to Care

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Abstract

The medical education sector in India has grown rapidly in recent years. A previous study has shown that from an almost negligible share in 1950, private sector medical colleges have grown to account for nearly half of all medical education institution as in 2004. The paper adds to the literature by assessing the impact of this growth on two issues of concern to policymakers: the quality of care and the access to such care.

While growth in the number of medical graduates has enhanced the access of the average Indian to doctors, there are a number of concerns. Rapid growth in enrolment of medical students and poorly implemented regulations relating to admissions, faculty strength and infrastructure in medical colleges are likely to have adverse implications for the quality of training in India's medical institutions. The bulk of the growth in medical education institutions occurred in the richer states, potentially leading to increased regional inequity in access.

Introduction

The India medical education sector has grown rapidly since 1950. According to a recent study, enrolment capacity at the undergraduate level grew by nearly 5 times in medical schools, and the number of institutions by eight times over the period from 1950 to 2005. This growth was led primarily by the private sector. Starting from negligible levels in 1950, the share of private sector in the total number of teaching institutions rose to more than 45 percent in 2004 (Mahal and Mohanan, Forthcoming).

The paper assesses the implications of these trends for the achievements of India's health policy goals, specifically access to healthcare and the quality of health services available to Indians. With human resources being a major determinant of health outcomes, changes in the medical education sector can have significant consequences by

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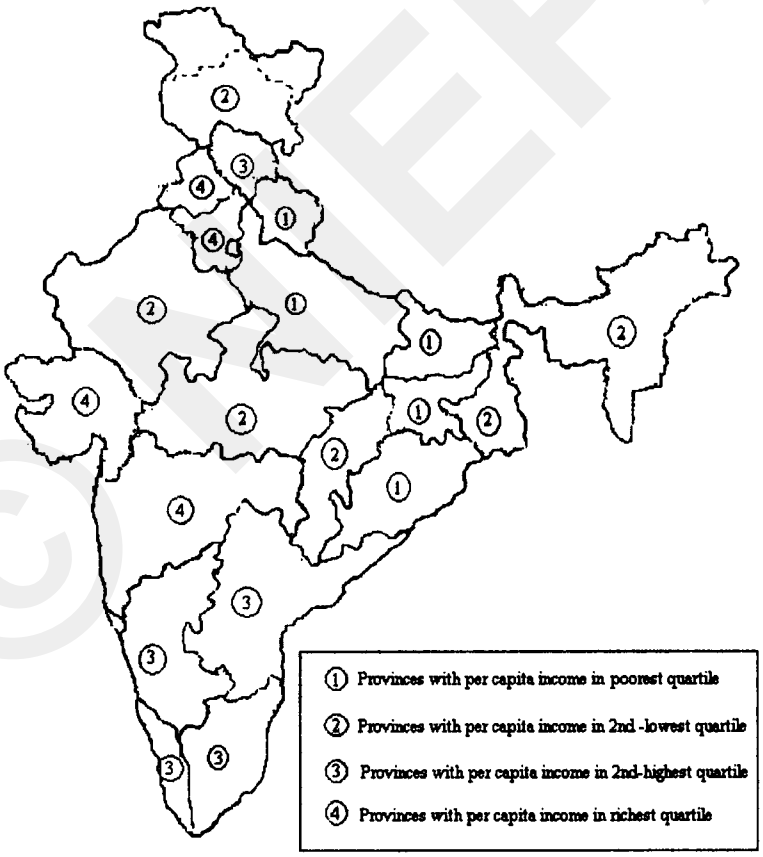
influencing the training, the overall supply and the location of healthcare providers (Anand and Baernighausen, 2003).

The equitable distribution of medical personnel across regions is crucial for ensuring equitable physical access to healthcare, an issue of particular relevance in developing countries, where various strategies to guide doctors into underserved areas have been tried (Nigenda, 1997; Wibulpolprasert and Pengpaibon, 2003). Regional differences in access constitute an important concern in India due to the large economic differences that currently exist across provinces. Figure 1 presents a map of India, ranking states from the poorest (1) to the richest category (4) in terms of per capita income.

Figure 1
Geographical Distribution of Indian States Ranked by Income Per Capita, 2000



Note: The provincial and international boundaries depicted in this map are only approximate.

Provinces in categories 3 and 4 – typically in the southern, western and northwestern parts of India - enjoy per capita incomes that are 2 to 4 times the per capita income in provinces comprising region 1, located in the central and eastern parts of India.

Data and Background on Medical Education in India

The Indian medical education sector is heterogeneous with multiple 'systems' of medicine. These can be broadly classified into two – the modern (western) system of medicine (Allopathy, or Non-Indian System of Medicine (NISM)), and Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISMH) that includes Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy.

Modern (NISM) medical training for doctors in India is provided at the undergraduate, postgraduate and super-specialization levels. The undergraduate degree, referred to as MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery), comprises 4½ years of coursework, followed by one year of internship, and provides basic training in clinical medicine and is also the prerequisite for further training (residency) in various specialties. The three main types of "postgraduate" training opportunities include three-year residency programs [MD (Doctor of Medicine) or MS (Master of Surgery)], one or two-year long diploma training programs and DNB ("Diplomate of the National Board") programs offered by the National Board of Examinations, an autonomous organization established by the Government of India. Further, there are super-specialty residency programs in medical and surgical specialties for those who have completed the MD/MS or the DNB.

Medical education in ISMH institutions is a 5½-year training process, similar to that in NISM, leading to the award of Bachelor's degrees. There are also areas of postgraduate specialization, leading to the award of an MD (or equivalent) degree.

Admissions to government medical colleges in each Indian state are conducted on the basis of a merit list, or entrance examinations, sometimes with an affirmative action quota. A national level entrance examination allows students from one state to seek admission to institutions in another. Private medical colleges offer subsidized "merit seats", based on a common entrance exam, while the remaining seats are offered through a "management" quota, ostensibly on considerations of merit, but which do require substantial fees. There are a few elite institutions, such as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, that are autonomous and have separate admission processes.

Data for this analysis was compiled primarily from public information available on official website of the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, websites of medical teaching institutions and direct contact with the institutions in a few cases. The data include information on the name, location, year of establishment, the maximum enrolment capacity for MBBS and postgraduate training, the types of postgraduate specialties offered, and whether the institution was government run, or privately operated.

We assumed that the training capacity (number of seats) remained unchanged from the date of its establishment to the present time. Our estimates of the number of seats available in 1970 using *current* seat capacity levels are remarkably close to official numbers of graduating students and seats reported by the Government of India's department of medical statistics, which reports the total number of seats available nationally each year (Government of India, 1986). As noted elsewhere, for the 1950s and 1960s, this assumption yields higher estimates of admission seats and graduating students

(Mahal and Mohanan, Forthcoming). In particular, our assumption results in an upward bias up to 30 percent in the estimated number of seats and medical graduates for the 1950s and 1960s. Thus we focus on the period from 1970 onwards. We also present similar findings from data on trends in the number of institutions, which are obviously free of such bias. Data on institutions of ISMH were compiled from the websites of the Department of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yogadhyana, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), the Central Council of Homeopathy and the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (Central Council of Homeopathy 2005; Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, Department of AYUSH 2005).

In order to compare the growth of medical educational institutions and enrolment capacity across states, we also constructed an economic ranking of the states based on per capita income in the fiscal year 1999-2000. States were grouped into quartiles based on these rankings, after weighting by population.

Results

Table 1 presents information on the growth in enrolment capacity of NISM medical education across Indian regions ranked into quartiles by per capita income: regions being collections of states/provinces, each with roughly similar populations as of 2002.

TABLE 1

Trends in Regional Distribution of Enrolment Capacity by Regional Per Capita Income Quartile Ranking for NISM (Allopathic) Education, 1970-2004

(Percentage Shares in Seats)

Provincial Ranking by GDP/ Capita Quartiles	*1970*		*1980*		*1990*		*2000*		*2004*	
	(No.)	(%)	(No.)	(%)	(No.)	(%)	(No.)	(%)	(No.)	(%)
Quartile I	1796	14.6	1896	14.8	2016	12.2	2166	11.2	2466	10.3
Quartile II	2666	21.6	2866	22.4	2916	17.6	3066	15.8	3466	14.4
Quartile III	4365	35.4	4385	34.3	6340	38.2	7900	40.8	10700	44.6
Quartile IV	3488	28.3	3648	28.5	5313	32.0	6223	32.2	7373	30.7

Notes: States are allocated to quartiles based on GDP in year 2000 [*Source*: Government of India, 2003]. Quartile Categories & Average per capita income: I (Bihar & Jharkhand, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh & Uttaranchal) Rupees 7,955; II (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh & Chattisgarh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal) – Rupees 12,055; III (Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu)- Rupees 15,840; IV (Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Pondicherry, Punjab) - Rupees 27,757.

The data show not only fast overall growth, but also increasing inequality in the location of enrolment capacity in medical education institutions during 1970 to 2004. Note that because the share of population in each quartile is the same, the unequal share

of each in the total number of seats implies also an unequal per capita allocation of seats. The increase in inequality in the location of enrolment capacity was particularly marked after 1980, with the share of the poorest 50 percent of the population declining from 37 percent in 1980 to less than 25 percent of the total in the year 2004.

Developments in ISMH education parallel these trends. The number of ISMH institutions increased by nearly 70 percent - from 242 in the early 1983 to 408 in 2002 – as in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Regional Distribution of Undergraduate Institutions for ISMH Education by Regional Per Capita Income Quartile Ranking, 1983 & 2002

(Number of Institutions)

		Ayurveda	*Homoeopathy*	*Unani*	*Siddha*	*Total*
1983						
	Quartile I	26	41	5	0	72
	Quartile II	14	31	4	0	49
	Quartile III	21	20	4	1	46
	Quartile IV	38	33	4	0	75
	TOTAL	99	125	17	1	242
2002						
	Quartile I	32	29	14	0	75
	Quartile II	18	25	7	0	50
	Quartile III	61	49	6	5	121
	Quartile IV	85	69	8	0	162
	TOTAL	196	172	35	5	408

Note: Income Quartiles used are same as in Table 1.

Source for 1983: Health Statistics of India, Government of India, 1986.

Source for 2002: Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

As of 2002, nearly 82 percent of all ISMH enrolment capacity in training and 76 percent of all ISMH training institutions were in the private sector. The last column in Table II shows that almost all of the increase in ISMH institutions during 1983-2002 occurred in states with the richest 50 percent of the population.

Detailed data on trends for postgraduate medical education were unavailable. However, Table III shows the significant level of inequality that currently exists in the regional location of postgraduate enrolment capacity.

TABLE 3

Distribution of MBBS and Postgraduate Training by Public and Private Sectors and by Regional Per Capita Income Quartile Ranking, 2000

Provinces Ranked by GDP/Capita	*MBBS Seats*				*Postgraduate Seats*			
	Public		*Private*		*Public*		*Private*	
	Seats	*Share%*	*Seats*	*Share%*	*Seats*	*Share%*	*Seats*	*Share%*
Quartile I	1896	14.9	270	4.1	1147	18.0	0	0.0
Quartile II	2816	22.1	250	3.8	998	15.7	97	7.7
Quartile III	4035	31.7	3865	58.3	1376	21.6	868	68.5
Quartile IV	3973	31.2	2250	33.9	2843	44.7	302	23.8
All India	12720	100.0	6635	100.0	6364	100.0	1267	100.0
Quartiles I & II	4712	37.0	520	7.8	2145	33.7	97	7.7
Quartiles III & IV	8008	63.0	6115	92.2	4219	66.3	1170	92.3

Note: Income Quartiles used are same as in Tables 1 and 2. The Table does **NOT** include DNB positions that are based almost entirely at private hospitals.

Source: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The conclusion about regional inequity in the location of postgraduate education capacity would remain unchanged even if we included DNB seats. Of the approximately one thousand DNB positions available nationally, about 34 percent were in states comprising the poorest 50 percent of the population, with the remaining in the richer states.

A final point is worth making about the content of specialized, or postgraduate medical education in India. Table IV presents information on the numbers and types of post-MBBS specializations offered in public and private medical education institutions in India in 2000. In order to make the analysis of these specializations more tangible and manageable, we have re-classified these into 10 categories, as indicated in the footnote to Table 4.

The most striking finding here is the small share of specialist training slots in community/preventive medicine (3 percent of all post-MBBS seats). This proportion, while higher than that found in developed countries, is noteworthy given the significant contribution of infectious diseases and a range of preventable conditions to the disease burden in India (Gaumer et al. 1999; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2003). This, last point, is underlined by the extremely inadequate numbers of institutions (and training capacity) for training public health professionals, more generally, in India.

TABLE 4
Post-MBBS Specialization in Public and Private Sectors (NISM), 2000

Type of Specialization	*Public Sector Seats*		*Private Sector Seats*	
	Number	*Share%*	*Number*	*Share%*
Medical Super-specialty	214	3.36	26	2.05
Surgical Super-specialty	264	4.15	24	1.89
Medical Specialty *(including Pediatrics, Geriatrics, Psychiatry)*	1555	24.43	309	24.39
Surgical Specialty *(including Anesthesiology)*	2172	34.13	441	34.81
Obstetrics, Gynecology	592	9.30	114	9.00
Diagnostics *(Radiology, Pathology, Other)*	595	9.35	129	10.18
Basic Sciences / Para-clinical	517	8.12	142	11.21
Infectious Diseases, Venereal Diseases & Skin	181	2.84	29	2.29
Community/Preventive Medicine	173	2.72	36	2.84
Other (Nuclear medicine, Forensics, Administration, etc.)	101	1.59	17	1.34

Note: The 90 different categories for specialization according to MCI classification have been collapsed into the 10 categories in Table 4 to enable comparison of public v/s private participation. Medical and Surgical super-specialty includes all DM and MCh posts respectively. For all other categories, MD/MS and Diplomas were included together. The Medical Specialty includes MD & Diplomas in General Medicine, Geriatrics, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry.
Surgical Specialty includes MS and Diplomas in General Surgery, Orthopedics, ENT, Ophthalmology and Anesthesia. Obstetrics-Gynecology includes MD/MS and Diplomas. Diagnostics include MD & Diplomas in Radiology, Pathology, Lab sciences. Basic Sciences such as Anatomy, Physiology and Para-clinical fields such as Pharmacology and Microbiology were counted together. Infectious Diseases, including Chest, TB, Pulmonary Medicine, along with Skin & venereal diseases were collapsed into one category. Community & preventive medicine includes public health oriented specialties (such as PSM, Community Medicine, Industrial Hygiene, and Occupational Health). Programs that didn't fit the above, such as Nuclear Medicine, Forensic Medicine, Hospital Administration, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, were included in "Others".

The most striking finding here is the small share of specialist training slots in community/preventive medicine (3 percent of all post-MBBS seats). This proportion, while higher than that found in developed countries, is noteworthy given the significant contribution of infectious diseases and a range of preventable conditions to the disease burden in India (Gaumer et al. 1999; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2003). This, last point, is underlined by the extremely inadequate numbers of institutions (and training capacity) for training public health professionals, more generally, in India.

Discussion

The most obvious implication of the trends highlighted in the preceding section is the rapid increase in enrolment capacity and consequently the number of medical graduates, some 24 thousand of whom graduated in 2004. This amounts to a nearly 4 percent addition (in a single year) of the estimated total number of physicians in India, currently estimated to be about 600 thousand in number. From this standpoint, and given India's low physician-to-population ratio of about 0.6 per 1,000 people, the developments in India's medical education sector have been beneficial in terms of sharply enhancing the access of its people to trained doctors.

At the same time, the rapid growth of institutions providing medical education, which are concentrated in better-off states, has potentially serious implications for ensuring equity in access to healthcare, a key goal of India's National Health Policy (Government of India, 2002). Studies in other countries suggest that doctors often practice medicine in proximity to their place of training (Wibulpolprasert and Pengpaibon, 2003). Evidence that supports a similar conclusion for India includes firstly, the extensive reservation of seats for local/regional candidates in admissions to medical colleges (Napier and Vijaya, 2002). Secondly, new registrations of medical doctors are disproportionately located in the richer states (Mahal and Mohanan, forthcoming; Government of India, 2004).

One might argue that existing regulatory requirements that require new medical colleges to have an accompanying hospital before being accredited, have the potential of improving the quality of care (in the attached hospital) to those who can afford it. Such hospitals in the private sector may attract richer patients, leaving the public sector and its subsidized facilities to the poor. In this sense, growth of private medical colleges that has been the driver of the growth of medical education in India, might promote equality through improved access to public services as well as better quality care in private hospitals. However, it appears natural to us that such steps are more likely to improve intra-regional equity in regions where new facilities are located, with no obvious implications for reducing inter-regional inequity. At the same time, the currently dire budgetary situation of governments at the center and the state-levels in India suggests that any improvements in equality in access to care via publicly provided health services are unlikely to be simultaneously accompanied by improvements in quality of these services.

Aggregate numbers and their regional distribution inadequately reflect problems of access stemming from the composition of medical training, as suggested by the relatively small numbers of doctors in postgraduate specializations in community and preventive medicine in India. At one level, the problem may not actually be especially serious if large numbers of general practitioners with an MBBS degree (without specialization) provide the necessary services in this category. With roughly 40 percent of all MBBS trainees going on to specialize, the long-run average proportion of general practitioners among all doctors will roughly be 60 percent, in line with norms (Gaumer et al. 1999). However, if it turns out over time that increasing proportions of MBBS doctors specialize, there will be cause for worry, given the situation in Egypt where 62 percent of

all doctors are specialists, especially if specialists promote expensive curative care over preventive services (Gaumer et al. 1999).

The unregulated spread of private medical colleges, the main driver in the growth of medical education in India, may threaten the quality of medical training as well. Despite laws requiring transparent merit-based admissions and a variety of infrastructure and faculty standards for private medical colleges, poor implementation of these laws can contribute to declining quality of medical education (Medical Council of India, 1999; Government of Andhra Pradesh, 2004). Concerns have been raised about improper admissions under the management quota, often in exchange for high levels of admissions fees in India (Deccan Herald, 2004). The process of recognizing medical colleges also appears to be somewhat flawed, with a past president of MCI being indicted of corruption charges (Dutta, 2002). There is compelling evidence that many private medical colleges are short of staff and infrastructure, including hospital beds (Tilak, 2002; Kumar, 2004). Indeed, given the sharp increase in the number of medical colleges and the doubling of enrolment capacity after 1980 from about 12 thousand to nearly 24 thousand (see Table I), it is difficult to imagine that enough trained full-time faculty could have been found to adequately staff the newly created colleges and maintain reasonable teacher-student ratios.

A consequence of poor regulation and of regional bias in training in allopathic medicine has been the practice of allopathic medicine by individuals trained in Indian systems of medicine and homeopathy (Government of India, 2002). While the relative absence of allopathic practitioners in economically backward regions of the country may have facilitated the use of allopathic medicine by poorly trained practitioners of traditional medicine, the problem has also been caused by the training of traditional practitioners in the use of modern medicine at their medical colleges. The issue of regulating physicians trained in ISMH and preventing them from practicing modern medicine has been a contentious one in India. The Indian Medical Association (IMA) and its state subsidiary bodies have been strong advocates rallying against this privilege. Current laws in India, following the Supreme Court's rulings in two separate cases in 1996 and 1998, prevent ISMH physicians from practicing modern medicine. That said, the problem is rather complicated, since most of the doctors serving in rural areas are those with training in ISMH (Billimagga and Rao, 2002).

A caveat is in order here. The problems of quality discussed above need not conflict with the high esteem in which Indian trained medical practitioners are held internationally. The latter is a self-selected group of high-merit individuals who migrate, and ought to be distinguished from the "average" medical professionals. As one example, 56 percent of the medical graduates of the top ranked All India Institute of Medical Sciences in the period 1956 to 1980 have migrated abroad. A more recent study suggests that the emigration rate of top medical graduates may actually have increased over time (Kaushik et al., 2006; Khadria, 1999). Unfortunately, rapid increases in the total number of medical graduates might actually accelerate the process of self-selected emigration of higher quality physicians. This may happen if the rising aggregate supply

of doctors in a regime of overall quality decline lowers the economic returns to being a physician, particularly if financial returns do not adequately reflect quality differences among physicians. Emigration of high quality physicians who could potentially serve as teachers in local universities may lead to further declines in the quality of medical graduates produced.

To address regional inequities in the location of institutions for medical training and related availability of doctors, firstly, it may be useful to set up advanced research and training institutions in several economically backward states, as is being proposed (Government of India, 2005). If relocation of government-doctors to teaching institutions in backward areas for this purpose proves difficult, an alternative is to grant large subsidies to the private sector to either manage such institutions, or to set up institutions on their own.

Secondly, the government could subsidize the medical education of individuals living in backward areas, perhaps by combining such a subsidy with a bond to serve in the backward areas for a limited number of years. The success of these approaches will likely depend on the emergence of a suitably large effective demand for care, preventive or curative, in the underserved areas. This increase could be brought about by the expansion of insurance schemes, such as community-type financing or social insurance schemes. The example of Mexico, where improvements in the distribution of doctors went hand in hand with the national insurance scheme is instructive in this regard (Nigenda, 1997).

With regard to quality, there is an obvious need to tighten up the lax regulatory environment in India, particularly in its implementation, whether in the states or at the center. This includes the need for ensuring that well equipped hospitals are linked up with medical colleges before being approved for admission of students. There is also a need for better screening of students admitted to medical colleges under the "management quota" so that merit remains the paramount criterion, and effective monitoring of the quality of medical education in private medical colleges. The former may require common examinations that monitor student performance across colleges, publicly accessible information on admission standards practiced by colleges, including college ranking by performance, and enforcement of sanctions on colleges violating such norms. A useful first step is the government policy of maintaining a publicly accessible list of recognized institutions, but obviously much more needs to be done in terms of both punitive steps as well as to explore ways to increase the supply of teaching personnel.

Finally, policymakers in India need to think proactively about developing a cadre of public health professionals focused more on prevention and promotion of population health other than through curative interventions. The recent announcement by the Indian Prime Minister regarding the setting up of a Public Health Foundation for India, with the ultimate aim of setting up five public health schools in India is a step in the right direction.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Bray, MARK & Koo, RAMSEY (eds) (2004): ***Education and Society in Hong Kong and Macao: Comparative Perspectives on Continuity and Change.*** Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong, 2004. Pages 323 + xiv. ISBN 962 8093 34 7; Paperback. Price not stated.

This book looks at various facets of education and society in the former British colony of Hong Kong and the erstwhile Portuguese colony of Macao, and compares contrasting relevant education aspects in the colonial period and after their reversion to mainland China. The introduction traces the problem and the approach in perspective. There are four sections in the book. The first section covers the levels and sub-sectors of education, the second section focuses on political, economic and social issues, and the third is devoted to curriculum policies and processes. The last section covers conclusions in two chapters. By and large, all the authors have done a fine job of comparing and contrasting the experiences of Hong Kong and Macao as seen from the perspective of the particular issue they deal with. In most of the chapters the problem is well introduced, the comparative experiences presented and useful conclusions drawn. The concluding section takes off from the introduction and rounds off the readings, summing up all the issues and giving a unified perspective of everything discussed, giving wholeness to the book. There is little to fault in the book and much to learn. Instead of spreading oneself too thin covering all that is touched upon in the book, it would be better to take up some chapters and some issues and use these to give a flavour of the book, particularly given the space constraints. This is precisely that which has been below.

The introduction points out that the colonial transitions in Hong Kong and Macao were different compared to other countries, coming as they did at the close of the twentieth century. This implies that both politics and education systems have had relatively development in their case compared to that of other erstwhile colonies. Political impact on the scale and content of education mattered; likewise the nature of education itself impacted the realm of politics. The question of continuity and change is a basic theme around which the chapters revolve.

The chapter on preschool education points out that Portugal was not overly enthusiastic about the spread of education and whatever education it was concerned with was that of the Portuguese-speaking children, and the education of Chinese-speaking population was left to the churches and voluntary agencies. Thus preschool education developed primarily through private efforts. In the 1970s the few official kindergartens had facilities far superior to those in the private ones. Likewise teacher training also was a burden of the private sector. Governmental efforts in this regard came only in the mid 1980s and that too in a small way. The major involvement of the government in this

sector came in 1995 when it held that all children would get seven years of fee-free education, including the preschool level. The situation in Hong Kong was similar with preschool education getting step-motherly treatment, but in later years the government was more involved and responsive to the recommendations of the Education Commission which did not have to do with financial allocations for this sector but with issues of quality of teachers and the like. Currently, Macao is better placed than Hong Kong as regards to preschool teacher training, but fares poorly in terms of adult-child ratio and class size. While Hong Kong can boast of an education system superior to Macao's, the preschool sector languishes as it is in the private sector.

The chapter on primary and secondary schooling shows how the perception of Macao as a settlement resulted in an understanding that Chinese were foreigners there and they shaped the development of schooling accordingly. To this should be added the fact that the Christian missionaries' large role in the promotion of education was very important. These impinged on the development of education in Macao; 90 percent of the schooling was in private hands in terms of student numbers. In the case of Hong Kong the public provision of education during colonial times while small did not differentiate between the races. While the Portuguese enclave system excluded the common man, the British approach tended to include him in the provision of education. The fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1991 and World War I led to the outbreak of nationalism in the mainland and fearing a spread of it in Hong Kong, officials asked the non-government schools to register with the Director of Education, thus initiating government interest in education. World War II reduced the British Empire and this was to find resonance in the education sector too. Towards the end of the colonial period too, the changes in the mainland, impacted on education in Hong Kong. Changes are bound to come after the merger with the mainland notwithstanding the 'one country, two systems' policy.

The chapter on higher education points out that though Macao is endowed with a smaller higher education sector, in terms of higher education per capita it scores over Hong Kong. Like elsewhere economic development, political considerations and social values influenced the development of this sector in both places. Since the mid-1970s, the Hong Kong government used manpower forecasting as a planning tool for its education policy and over 15 percent of the relevant age group had undergone higher education by 1993/94. Macao which lagged behind progressed greatly in the 1990s. Education was a largely private sector activity in Macao. Hong Kong spent a respectable 1.1 percent of GDP on higher education in 2001/02 but student fees played a role in covering the cost of education. Now there is more marketisation and the cost of higher education is going up. In Macao too the costs are considerably high though the permanent residents of Macao get a 40 percent fee reduction. While the costs of higher education are high, the returns to students have been considerable in both the places.

The chapter on higher education, imperialism and colonial transition studies four institutions to see the interplay among these three studies. As the British had looked on Hong Kong as a base for the penetration of China, education did not unduly concern them till about 1911, from which time their interest in education, particularly higher education

was pronounced. Higher education policy was used as a policy of appeasement. However, the size of the sector remained small with financial support denied to the private sector and higher education reaching only 2 percent of the relevant age group by 1984. Likewise Portugal was also stingy in providing resources for education in Macao, including higher education; it was due to the efforts of the missionaries that higher education developed. Political motives dictated the behaviour of the British towards higher education in Hong Kong before 1949 and not the needs of the local people. The same policy continued later too. The higher education institutions were to be used for the implementation of the British strategy of "the Chinese ruling the Chinese". In Macao, in recent times, Portugal used the university as a base to spread Portuguese culture and language. What stands out is that the aims of establishing Western universities in these colonies were to achieve imperial objectives in the cultural arena and ensure economic expansion on the mainland. Higher education was to serve the political needs of the suzerains more than the developmental needs of the colonies.

The chapter on higher education and labour force looks at the development and supply of skilled personnel for these two erstwhile colonies. Both grew rapidly during the final two decades of the last century and thus the creation of skilled personnel was an important issue. In 1994 just about 6.6 percent of the employed population in Macao had tertiary qualifications indicating that the stock of higher educated population was low. However, the very small size of Macao makes it expensive to create people invested with special skills; it might be economical to employ outsiders in certain fields. Hong Kong has rapidly become a service oriented economy recently and hence the human capital requirements have changed accordingly. The stock of higher educated personnel in Hong Kong is much greater compared to Macao for a variety of reasons.

Another chapter covers the important interface between the church, state and education during especially the colonial times and how church-state relations, views of state on religion etc., impacted on the growth of education in both these colonies. Yet another chapter looks at the issue of language and education highlighting the complex factors that determined the choice of language for education and the paradoxical outcomes. Four chapters are devoted to various aspects of curriculum policies and processes. Two chapters form the conclusion and summarize and elaborate on the lessons presented through the earlier chapters. The first takes up issues of methodology and focus on comparative education. The second outlines the continuity and change in education in Hong Kong and Macao.

The basic merit of the book is that it lays down the methodology of comparative education, demonstrating it with the case histories of Hong Kong and Macao. The numerous insights into the experiences of Hong Kong, Macao, mainland China in addition to brief glimpses in the experience of many other countries is the second major contribution. The third is the range of relevant pointers that crop up for the educational systems of other countries. Hence, this book has much to recommend for.

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Woods, A. PHILIP (2005): ***Democratic Leadership in Education.*** London, Paul Chapman Publishing. ISBN 1-4129-0291-6 (Paperback); pp.167; Priced 19.99 Pounds.

The importance of leadership in generating and sustaining school development and change has been highlighted and reinforced in the contemporary literature. There is a paradigm shift in the various leadership theories; leadership as a definition as well as in terms of its role which has undergone significant changes, making leadership the preserve of one individual. There is an emerging conception which stresses the need for multiple sources of leadership. The author has put forward a proposition of leadership with a democratic approach as a challenge in the present context, wherein there is a paradigm shift from various kinds of leaderships and trends. The author in this regard has focused his aims and attention on democratic leadership (1) which entails searching for the common human good; (2) which can exercise and facilitate deliberations; (3) which occurs throughout organisation and works to recognise and enhance the exercise of some decisional rights such as exercising democratically legitimate authority; activating accountability processes and training in the initiative in participatory decision making, and as a whole contributes to leaders' and others' growth toward human potential. Ultimately, it is the democratic leader who can create an environment in which people are empowered and enabled to perform efficiently with full potential. Liberal minimalism, civic republicanism, deliberative democracy and developmental democracy are the four models of democracy. However, the author has based his deliberations on the developmental conception of democratic practice which encapsulates freedom, equality, organic belongingness and substantive liberty, and this also comprises the ethical, decisional, discursive and therapeutic aspects.

The four models of democracy were discussed and the principle behind each of the models was presented as a starting point of the dialogue. Stressing on the potentialities of developmental democracy, the author enlightens about its capacity to realise deeply embedded human potentialities like creativity, self-transcendence and reintegration of human capacities which can create economic and social conditions which enable everyone to participate and work towards their human potential. In the absence of sufficient food, employment, adequate housing, learning opportunities, educational stimulation becomes very difficult to realise and the true goals of democracy rather are great obstacles in realising the potential. Highlighting the ethical rationality which contributes to the distribution of internal authority and right to participate in organisational decision-making, which is characterised by dispersal leadership, wherein the leader is indulged in dialogues with all its members and it recognises social relationships as well, thus encompassing social justice and absence of cultural domination. This type of shared leadership affects the hierarchy, and turns the hierarchical pyramid upside down.

Therefore, it becomes very complex to identify a specific model of leadership, as they have specific faces meant for a specific activity. For instance, the transformational leadership produces inspirational influence, has an individual consideration, provides intellectual stimulation and influences the people to attain educational goals. Although varieties of leaderships coexist, there is an inherent problem of hierarchy and doesn't take into account ethical aspects. The distributed leadership gives an impetus to opening the boundaries beyond formal positions and succeeds in attaining ethically-centered changes in an organisation with positive influences, including spiritual, if required.

The author puts forward his argument for the need for democratic leadership as it becomes the most satisfactory model in addressing issues of creativity, inclusion and reintegration of human capacities; leading to improving performance, self-esteem and organisation capacity effectively. This provides the necessary impetus for the development of the school organisation and takes into account an open approach to knowledge of the practical implications of learning and attaining knowledge.

The objective of a school leader therefore, centres on creating sensitive and responsive environment which can enhance learning while taking care of the societal vis-à-vis schooling factors, proper understanding and involvement of not only students and staff but the families and communities are also to be considered for making committed and meaningful learning opportunities in the school. However, conceptualising the process and the environment for learning seems to be very simplistic. But there are challenges in terms of obstacles, such as non-democratic culture of the institution/school, un-supportive socio-political forces, reluctance, unethical and apathy for values with differences arising out of a variety of inequalities that affect the achievement of democratic leadership considerably. It is not only ensuring conducive environment which can bring about desired changes in the school but also a space for maneuvering all these into the schooling process. The free space can be created in terms of sharing, distribution of authority, orientations which in turn can evolve ethical values and self-direction and respecting all the cultures, trust tolerance and mutual responsibilities, care and respect and high levels of interaction and interpersonal relationships. These are some of the most important dimensions to be considered by the capable and skilful democratic leader. The expected democratic leadership skills of various researchers were also discussed to reinforce the proposition of democratic leadership in the book. In order to embark upon a democratic role which of course is situational may take into account a variety of parameters, such as maintaining status and sometimes shedding status, communicative virtues, independence, knowledge of democratic principles and practices, aspect, enabling all to participate actively in the institutional work, critical reflection or inner potential and outer context, sharing power, conflict handling, belief in collegiality, activism and confidence building.

However, practising the principles of democratic leadership in the institutions is very much a complicated process as the leader has to follow what he preaches. The challenges therefore, are in terms of striking right balance, together with the time, energy, and resources are involved in democratic rationalities. Extending the outreach and reducing

the demarcated boundaries with the different stakeholders gives not only democratic meaning but also legitimises the decision taken in the institution. Profound participation, facilitative role, right kind of actions, open boundaries, leading the institution in learning pursuits and commitment to time and balanced utilisation of resources, are key elements embodied in a democratic leadership. Thus the ultimate aim of democratic leadership therefore, stems out of fundamental impulses such as values and ethics, rationality and social justice which in turn enable the stakeholders to share power, share hope, and share the fruits of society while serving the organisation. The topic of the book is highly relevant in the present context and it is right time for the educational leaders to introduce as well as practice democratic leadership in order to make an efficient organisation.

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Anderson, LORIN W. (2004): ***Increasing Teacher Effectiveness.*** UNESCO, IIEP, Paris; ISBN 92-803-1258-8 (Paperback); Pages 168; Price undecipherable.

It is one of those books, which ought to be read with considerable patience and also in a learning mode. It addresses mainly an eternal question: *Who is an effective teacher*? Can we prepare in any teachers' college an 'effective' teacher? In fact the question that stares in our face: Is 'effectiveness' teachable? Is this a trait and also can it be objectively evaluated? A few of these questions have been answered unequivocally, not that all will agree either with his ideas or the conclusions. Before we go deeper into the book it would be advisable to remember that the first edition came in 1991 and was primarily used by the Ministries of Education in several countries; and in 2003, OECD looked at several of the measures in the appendices of the 1991 edition for getting insights. This means that the book should help planners and administrators more than it does the teacher educators, who in any case have to do the bidding of their administrators. The book frankly admits, "A great deal of money has been expended in research trying to discover the characteristics and activities of a 'good' or 'effective' teacher". Yet it is difficult to say that we are anywhere near the foolproof findings or suggestions for action.

The division of the content matter into VIII chapters explains to a large extent what lies in store for the reader. The chapter scheme of the books: (1)Understanding teacher effectiveness (2) Standard and structure of learning units, (3) Classroom environment, climate and culture, (4) Classroom organization and management, (5) The structure of lessons, (6) Teacher –student communication, (7) Student learning, and (8) How to increase teacher effectiveness? In brief, the chapter suggests the approach to the problem is both comprehensive and concrete. Let us deal with the issue as perceived by the author first and then make our observations.

The first chapter tries to define 'effectiveness' in a teacher. According to the author, "Effective teachers are those who achieve the goals, which they set for themselves or which they have set for them by others (e.g. by the Ministries or School boards etc)." One thing becomes obvious. The effective teachers are those who are 'goal-achievers.'

The author talks of four assumptions in his understanding. The first assumption is that 'effective' teachers tend to be aware and actively pursue goals. The second assumption is the result of a caveat, according to which 'teachers often do things on their initiative which are independent of any motivation' and hence the definition that 'teaching is an intentional and reasoned act'. One can understand teaching is' intentional' but it is also 'reasoned' is difficult to digest. A third assumption is that teachers' goals should be concerned with 'student learning', simply because teachers' goals are stated in terms of their students' learning. A fourth assumption is that *no teacher is effective in every aspect of his profession.*

This makes teaching a human affair since all of us are made imperfect.

The author admits, It seems reasonable to assume that those who are referred to as being 'effective' teachers, are more often than not effective in achieving specified learning goals." The author also acknowledges the fact that "the student has the complete veto power on the success of instruction." It means 'effectiveness' of teaching cannot be conceived of as an independent variable of students' learning and students' active collaborative effort. It further means the student has to be either self-motivated or persuaded to be one.

There are additional considerations, which the teacher has to contend with. In a formal or non-formal teaching there has to be a curriculum (teacher-evolved or society-generated), a classroom or a designated place, and the active process called 'teaching'. Now that the scenario of teaching learning has been conceived, we take up the definition of the characteristics of 'effective' teaching. Under the cluster 'professionalism', the author notes four characteristics viz. *commitment, confidence, trustworthiness*, and *respect*. In another cluster 'thinking' or reasoning, a teacher is supposed to have both *analytical* and *conceptual* thinking. The third cluster is 'expectation' under which fall *drive for improvement, information seeking, and initiative;* and lastly, under the cluster 'leadership', *are flexibility, accountability* and *passion for learning.*

If we went by the undefined, un-clustered and yet the most talked about Indian characteristics of 'effective' teacher, they would be: commitment, informed and information-seeking, helpful and self-denying in the materialistic sense of the term. It is more than obvious that while self-denial as a cultivated characteristic would not be acceptable to the majority in the West but it would be at a premium in this country.

This is how the ancient Indian seers looked at the characteristics of a teacher around 1500 B.C. Let me hope we discover a better definition than this.

> "A teacher should have the ability to build up the students under his charge. He must never be proud of his knowledge. He should be as glorious as fire and possess qualities of leadership. He must be specialist of his branch of knowledge. Just as a cow collects milk in her udders after grazing grass, a teacher should

collect knowledge through reflection and self-study. He should make teaching an enjoyable experience even as food items are made tasty and palatable before they are served. He should be popular among his students and be their benefactor. Sitting in the midst of his students he must look distinguished because of his knowledge". RIGVEDA 1/69/2

Besides looking at these characteristics in a comparative mode, both horizontally and vertically, the idea is also to look at them in a cultural perspective. It is amazing to note that what ancient Indians were concerned with some 4500-5000 years back continues to be a major problem even to this day. The main problem is how to mass-produce these characteristics. Let us hope some day we shall be able to discover the method or the technology to do so, but until then we have to continue researching the alternatives.

Let us come back to the book under review.

The second chapter of the book deals with standards and structures. Having defined teaching as an intentional and reasoned act, i.e. firstly, teachers teach for a purpose and secondly, teachers teach because they think what they teach is worthwhile for the students to learn, the author defines 'intended learning outcomes', which according to him are no more than subject-verb-object (SVO) paradigm. Here subject stands for students; and the object defines the content to be learnt. The function of the verb is to link the two. But the most important part of the chapter is the definition of the standard. The author has tried to categorize the vast majority of the objectives, and the standards that teachers encounter. While the categorization of knowledge (factual, conceptual, procedural and meta-cognitive) is helpful in understanding the meaning of the objectives; the standard seem to be fixed by others. The author talks of the basic unit too. A basic learning unit corresponds to a chapter in the textbook. The chapter then has to be reorganized in view of how it may be taught effectively.

Toward the end of the chapter two the author makes certain recommendations:

1. Teachers must have a sound understanding of the standards that define intended or expected student learning.
2. Teachers must use their understanding of standards to design appropriate and effective learning units. The author has tried to define the standards in terms of understanding factual, conceptual and the procedural knowledge.
3. Teachers must be aware of the need for curricular alignment, i.e. the critical connection between the standard/objectives, the assessments, and the instructional activities.

In the following chapter, the author touches upon classroom environment, climate and culture and seems to agree with Ainley (1987:539-540): "In the current recent research literature, there is little consistent evidence of a strong effect of the materials and equipment in schools on achievement. There is, however, available a substantial amount of evidence that the physical environment of a school or classroom can affect the behavior of people and their attitudes toward school and learning."

This point is of considerable interest to us in India because the apex body of teacher education (the NCTE) believes very strongly that classroom space and the materials therein have a direct and identifiable bearing on student-learning, and hence the norms on classroom space and equipment. Neither local Indian evidence nor any international study supports the most untenable of NCTE's contentions.

Under six sub-heads on p.54, the author gives a list of 15 classroom dimensions associated with powerful learning environments. The six heads given in Box1 are: In the classroom; the curriculum, instruction, learning teachers and students. While what dominates in the classroom are: mutual respect, diversity and behavioral self-control; in the curriculum authenticity and integration; in instruction dialogue, inclusiveness, active knowledge construction, in learning meaningful learning, stands supported by connectedness; and while teachers have to be learning leaders, the students have to be co-operative before getting empowered. The teachers are advised to create attractive and functional classrooms, the climate warm and businesslike and establish a classroom culture. Obviously, the policy makers have to support teachers by helping teachers make classrooms functional, provide finances and help teachers create a positive learning culture.

The following chapter talks about classroom organization and management, which necessarily considers how to organize a classroom—homogeneous or otherwise. Going by research evidence, there is nothing that supports any given organization of classes, therefore, some in-service is called for. In chapter V the author discusses the structure of lesson. A teacher should be able to organize it around defining the purpose of the lesson, sequencing the ideas and deciding activities necessary to make a lesson cognizable. The advisory consists of taking a unit as part of the bigger scheme of things; help students to retain the memory of learnt lessons, and enable sufficient practice for improving the same. The administrators must help the teacher in his work and appreciate the efforts. In the following chapter on 'student learning' presentation of learning material in attention-riveting style and permitting students to interact have been suggested.

I suppose the most important chapter is 'How to increase teacher effectiveness?' The author goes deep into the problem and comes out with the following nuggets of wisdom. First suggestion is that the teacher may be inspired to overcome his unwillingness to change, encouraged to fill knowledge-lacuna, and be provided with opportunities to learn from others. I think there is hardly anything beyond commonsense that should attract our attention. However, in between there are insights, which might help India's teachers and teachers' colleges who are currently facing a dud apex body.

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Bray, MARK and Seng, BUNLY (2005): ***Balancing the Books: Household Financing of Basic Education in Cambodia.*** Comparative Education Research Centre. ISBN 962-8093-39-8, (Paper bound), pp. x+ 113. US $ 16.

The book under review is the fourth in a series of CERC Monographs on private expenditure on basic education in Cambodia. In the introduction, the authors explain that when the goods and services are distributed totally free of cost, they are commonly under-valued by the recipients. In this context the authors say that the middle and high income group recipients of education, may afford to pay and it would not only encourage the recipients to value the services, but would also reduce the demand from the government for the poor. The poor households conduct cost benefit analysis before sending the child to school whether the economic benefits are likely to be outweighed by the total package of direct and indirect costs to the households. The government and household expenditure on basic education have to be in proportion in order to keep the expenditure in balance. The authors use the term 'Balancing the books' in this context.
The book has been divided into nine chapters. In the first chapter, an attempt has been made in identifying themes and issues in a comparative framework. In developed countries like Western Europe and North America, the school expenditures are incurred by the government and the household cost for school uniform and transportation are so small that authors did not attempt to analyze it. But in low developed countries like, Cambodia, the household costs may be very heavy on that account. The type of household expenditure on basic education and mechanisms are also discussed. One of the major household expenditure in Cambodia is supplementary tutoring fees. After formal school time, the same teacher and same students occupy the same class for supplementary tutoring for class work and household needs to pay for that separately. That is equivalent to private coaching, which is normally taking place at home and in some coaching centres in other countries.

The second chapter discusses details about the history of social, economic and political issues of Cambodia. The school education system, school enrolment rate and government budgeted expenditure have also been discussed in details.

The third chapter deals with the method of data collection, definition of item that need to be considered as household expenditure on education, sample size, assumption and weights, technique of data collection, persons included in the group discussion for their views about the household expenditure on education by grades. The item-wise expenditure reported by pupils was cross-checked with those in the market in each focus site. This was done in order to avoid under reporting or over reporting of household expenditure on education by the parents or by the pupils.

Chapter fourth focuses on household expenditure on education from 2004 survey data. The household expenditure has been divided into eight categories; these are expenditure on registration and records books, uniform and equipment, learning materials, supplementary tutoring, tests and examination, transportation cost, pocket

money and other expenses. The household expenditure has been presented for primary and lower secondary schools in both rural and urban areas. The household expenditure has been compared with the earlier survey which was estimated for the year 1997/98 before launching the Priority Action Programme (PAP).

The fifth chapter, deals about the opportunity cost of the school going children. Two types of opportunity costs are defined. The first is the lost utility from the fact that expenditures on school-related items cannot be deployed to other uses; and second is the lost income from a child's schooling which arises because the child cannot work elsewhere when in school. Both types of opportunity costs have been discussed in details. The opportunity cost or the forgone earning differentials between boys and girls have also been discussed in details in this chapter.

The chapter six focuses on income received at the school level from the government and from other sources. The school receives grant from government in the form of salaries, for the Priority Action Programme (PAP), and the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP). The average salary and EQIP receipts per pupil for primary and lower secondary level for the year 2003/04 has been discussed in details. The average annual investment on building per pupils has been shown separately for primary and lower secondary levels for the decade of 1994-2003. The income per pupil from other sources raised by the school authority has also been discussed in this section.

In the seventh chapter, a comparison has been made between household expenditure and government expenditure on primary education for the years in 1997/98 and 2004. However, the proportion of household and government expenditure for lower secondary education has been shown only for the year 2004. The authors should have made a comparison between household expenditure and government expenditure on lower secondary level as well.

Chapter eight discusses the policy implications of the study. Different types of alternative policies have been discussed for cost sharing in order to reduce the households' burden of both direct and indirect cost of basic education. It is observed that the gap between households and government expenditure at lower secondary level is still very high.

The chapter nine is the concluding chapter of the book. The authors focus on the major progress achieved in education sectors through both supply side and demand side interventions in Cambodia. Like many other countries, the challenge ahead for universal enrolment through abolition of fees and preventing dropout from the school system upto a certain period in order to fulfil the goal of universal basic education in Cambodia.

The book has documented Cambodia's efforts towards fulfilling the goal of universal basic education of the country well. The PAP was launched in 2000, which has reduced the burden of household cost on basic education quite a lot. Still the household expenditure is more than the government expenditure at lower secondary level in the year 2004. The lucid, streamlined presentation is a major strength of the book. The book is very useful for both researchers and policy makers and also a good guide for the surveyors.

On the whole the book is highly stimulating and contributing a scholarly addition to the world of literature in education.

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Johnson, RUTH. S. et al, (2006): ***Developing Portfolios in Education: A Guide to Reflection, Inquiry and Assessment.*** California: Sage Publication Company. ISBN 1-4129-1389-6 Paperback; pp. 207; Price $ 32.95.

The world of today is so complex that many new philosophical, sociological and psychological ideas have creeped in to the arena.

The book under never is about using portfolios with the students effectively, so that they may be engaged in the learning process. Portfolios have become a desired tool for assessing students because they provide authentic evidence, how and what the student know, believe, and are able to do. The purpose of this book is to provide direct support to students as they complete their portfolios. The primary goal of this book is to describe how portfolios are organized, defined and evaluated, so that students will have the complete examples of what is expected of them throughout the portfolio meeting process. The second goal is to assist the students in employing the portfolios for the reflection and proportionate development.

The book is divided into two parts. Part one is devoted to the rationale for developing portfolios and part two presents a guide on developing portfolios.

A portfolio is like a collection of work that has been compiled over a period of time or like a scrape book. Its contents are organized to assess competencies in a given standard, goal or objectives and focus on how well the learner achieved in that area. It contains evidence of knowledge, dispositions and answers. It may also be used for assessment and evaluation.

The development of portfolios ideally evolves as dynamic interaction among the instructors. According to the authors, the portfolios assess competencies how effectively the education and the candidates are responding to diverse student groups. The students provide assessment information about what have been learned by them in their courses and the programmer's strengths, weakness and implementations.

The authors have mentioned six levels or stages of action research in the development of portfolios: First Level: Problem Identification; Second Level: Action Planning, Third Level: Implementation, Fourth Level: Evaluation, Fifth Level: Reflection, and Sixth Level: Self Evaluation.

Samples of four types of portfolio reflections have been given in the book. The authors have suggested the following sections for portfolios contents:

Section	Contents
A. Introduction	Overview/Executive summary of the portfolios
B. Personal and background information	Personal statement Vision Philosophy Resume Letter of reference Credential and certificates Transcript from colleges, university
C. Professional competencies	Professional standards with documentation (artifacts) of competencies.
D. Reflections of the course/ Programmer	Include reflections that are formative and summative. There may be reflections in the section on standards.

Useful tips have been provided by the authors for the penetration of the portfolios. Also how electronic portfolios can be prepared and used has been presented. A developing portfolio on education has also been provided so that the readers may understand the whole process of portfolios preparation and presentation.

Certainly, it is a very useful new book. It will greatly help the students and the teachers in developing and making portfolios as a valuable resource in learning and a tool for assessment.

However, it may be pointed out that most of colleges and schools in India do not have computers, so that electronic portfolios may not be prepared. Most our school teachers are not well trained and they don't yet know the importance of portfolios Colleges of education are not providing any instruction or guidance in this respect. A glossary of terms related to portfolios has been provided. An excellent bibliography has been appended. It is desirable that our teacher educators and researchers of the education courses are introduced to the new concepts of portfolios making and presentation.

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Fasokun, THOMAS, Katahoire, ANNE, and Oduaran, AKPOVIRE (2005): ***The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa: African Perspectives on Adult Learning. Cape Town: Pearson Education, South Africa.*** ISBN 9282011178 (Paperback), pp. 172, Price not mentioned.

The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa forms part of a series titled "African Perspectives on Adult Learning." It deals with applied aspects of psychology of adult

learning. Providing an introduction to psychology as an applied discipline, the book aims to help adult educators to perform their work in a more effective manner. It has ten chapters, of which the first three chapters introduce psychology as applied to the perceptions, cognitive functioning and learning styles of adults as well as explain the various concepts of adulthood and diverse and complex nature of adult learning in the African contexts. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 discuss theories of adult learning and their implications for adult teaching, cycles of life span development and how motivation affects participation of adults in learning programmes. Chapter 7 describes the various models of learning styles that can be used by adult educators to teach adults. Chapters 8, 9 and 10 are on actual application of adult psychology to practical aspects of adult learning. The key skills of providing guidance and counseling for teaching adults are covered in the last three chapters of the book and would prove to be most useful resource for adult educators.

The African perspective on various aspects of discourse in this book at times begins to appear an exercise that highlights universal features of human existence anywhere in the world. Take for instance, on page 74, the discussion is on life span development from an African perspective. Perception of human development as a multi-directional, multi-dimensional, and contextually defined lifelong process is almost a universal phenomenon unless otherwise recorded in some exceptional cases. The dichotomy between the individual and the social, and tendency to favour one over the other are never as crystallised as have been made out in the commonly held stereotypical views of the west which are more individualistic than the African or Asian worldviews. Human societies can hardly survive without social interaction, and therefore, depicting these features as specifically African appears to be somewhat artificial.

Moreover, the African perspective could have been more ethnography-based and region specific to provide a sense of actual grassroots social reality that confronts adult educators in the field situations. In several instances the authors display awareness of the heterogeneous nature of culture in Africa. For example, see pages 16 and 21 where references have been made to diverse nature of adult learners in Africa in terms of language, tradition, gender and socio-economic status etc. If they had also elaborated the forms of diversities as found in different region of the continent, the reader would have felt a sense of becoming aware of complexities inherent in achieving the aim of motivating and counselling adults.

References to empirical studies by African scholars show the range of locally available resources and hopefully this would also take care of correcting the imbalance in 'English-language curriculum materials used in the professional training of adult educators in Africa' (see page xiv). For example, on page 109, we find a long list of studies of African learning systems, emphasising the need to use the concept of culture to explain the learning styles of learners in Africa.

The discussion of learning styles in Chapter 7 provides both the general pattern of learning by adults and the specific categories of ways of learning of adult learners in Africa. Further, the exploration leads the adult educators to recognise their learning style

so that in turn they can help adult learners to discover their own learning styles. This approach makes the discussion very useful in a practical sense and the textbook serves rather well its aim of providing 'knowledge about psychology of adults within African contexts' (see page xv). The same can also be said about Chapters 8, 9 and 10, which examine (i) instructional techniques in order to facilitate effective adult learning, (ii) use of the various resources to make learning programmes more effective and attractive to adult learners, and (iii) the roles of adult educators in providing guidance and counselling services.

The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa has an explicitly gender-neutral style in its lay out, language and general discussion of issues concerning adult learning. For example, most illustrations in the book have a fair and balanced inclusion of female and male readers/ learners. Addressing both female and male readers on pages 8, 11, 18, 39, 71 and 72 are examples of gender-sensitive style and language. All through this book it is easy to discern this inclusive approach to gender.

Both the sections on 'Activity' and on 'Further Questions' in the course material design, provide ample opportunities to the readers of this extremely useful textbook to construct their own repertoire of knowledge based on valid information and experiential learning. In this sense, *The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa* is a very relevant textbook not only for adult educators in Africa but also those in most developing countries facing the problem of widespread illiteracy and lack of capabilities to enhance the level of well being of common people. Written in a very readable style and format, and the relevant information provided, the textbook can be recommended to all in the field of adult education.

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Nkulu, KILUBA L: ***Serving the Common Good – A Postcolonial African Perspective on Higher Education***. New York; Peter Lang Publishing Inc, 2005; pp. 168, Price not mentioned.

The countries that were till recently under the suzerainty of European super powers have seriously concentrated on reforming their education system after getting independence. But almost all these countries, the so called third world countries, while trying to reform their education system have focused on doing away with the colonial roots that have been prevalent in the country. Thus all attempts have been directed towards developing indigenous education that suits the local needs and also inculcates in the citizens of the country a sense of pride in the respective social and cultural values that were deliberately neglected by the colonial masters. Many of the African countries that have been colonized in the past are no exception to this malady.

The restructuring of the education system after gaining political freedom is taking place for all levels of education but it is specifically focused on reforming higher education. The book under review attempts to analyse the perspective of higher education in African countries in the post-colonial era. It specifically deals with the post-colonial perspective of higher education in Tanzania and presents the significant contribution made by Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the former president of the United Republic of Tanzania. It may be noted that the higher education can have the pursuit of either liberal or utilitarian knowledge. The book demonstrates that while consensus over the primary aim of higher education is lacking, it is still an issue that needs to be discussed and debated. The study suggests that the simultaneous integration of the critically analytical abilities, useful skills, and communal values is important for the enhancement of human capacity to deal with day-to-day conditions in the society.

The study claims to have drawn from a wide range of critical scholarships, both western and African, to propose Nyerere's post-colonial African perspective as a contribution to remedy of the existing state of higher education. It lays out social, cultural, and philosophical issues facing Africans in the realm of higher education and discusses the human-centered perspective – a vision of education for the common good – advocated by Nyerere. The study combines analysis and interpretation of both theory and practice of higher education in Africa and the West.

By explaining the classic trends in educational theory in detail, the author discusses the ways in which the particular educational models existed in Africa prior to the colonization of the continent by the Western powers. In this regard it is noted that indigenous African education was practical and responsive to the needs of the society. It emphasized the teaching of values as a way of integrating individuals within their collectivity, their immediate social and cultural environment. Indigenous African education is of interest as it informs a local model which emphasized the acquisition of productive skills along social and cultural values for the molding of civic-minded persons.

Discussing the educational models in pre-colonial Africa, the author notes that learning in Alexandria, which is the oldest center of Christian higher learning, focused on the pursuit of liberal knowledge – the development of enlightened individuals who would apply their intellectual ability to engaging in public debate of the critical issues their society faced. Ironically, the intellectual fame of Alexandria seems to have had little or perhaps no impact on higher learning in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Referring to two important institutions of higher learning in Africa, the author writes that higher education in Karawiyyin University Fez, a city of higher learning in Morocco, and Al-Azhar University in Egypt shared similarities. However, whereas the primary purpose of Al-Azhar may have been to uphold Fatimid ideology through the teaching and practice of Islamic law, Karawiyyin University appears to have been established primarily to articulate and to propagate the Idrissid view of orthodox Islamic culture. An examination of the history of both these institutions suggests that higher learning was influenced by the ruling families as a vehicle for promoting religious and ideological

propaganda. The ruling families patronized scholars and intellectuals in order to win their favour, but also to cultivate loyal, educated citizens.

According to the author, the organizational and subject matter differences between indigenous education, found in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and higher education in selected places of North and West Africa, testify to the fact that pre-colonial Africa truly had two educational models. Indigenous African education reflects one utilitarian model which was rooted in local realities and concerned with the continuity of social and cultural values. Higher education reflects a liberal model which is extra parochial and elitist.

With regard to the impact of colonization on education in Africa, the author notes that British colonial policies facilitated the development of higher education across Sub-Saharan Africa. Several university colleges came into existence in different parts of the African sub-continent. Higher education in Africa south of Sahara maintained special relationship with overseas universities during the colonial period. The author is of the view that despite the damage the colonization is accused of having caused to African cultural heritage, formal higher education – as presented during the colonial period – contributed much to the intellectual emancipation, enabling early African leaders to instigate independence movements.

The post-colonial higher education in Africa faced the dilemma of continuing or discontinuing the legacy of colonization. It had to choose whether to adopt metropolitan vision of pursuing intellectual refinement even if it did not respond to the conditions of surrounding communities or to adopt a radical vision of denouncing the residue of colonial intellectualism. Author opines that higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa has continuously been confronted with the legacy of the colonial model that emphasized the pursuit of intellectual excellence and leadership. Emphasis of intellectual excellence gave the impression that colonial higher education had sought to inculcate the attitude of superiority in the mind of university graduates, making them assume that they were special class of individuals entitled to increased power and privileges over the rest of the society.

Explaining about the social transformation of Tanzania and the important role played by Julius Nyerere the author writes that Nyerere's vision of social reform positively impacted educational policies in Tanzania. During Nyerere's presidency, it was believed that by linking education to communal values and factual knowledge, Tanzanians would be able to overcome the challenges of underdevelopment. The education in Tanzania became reflective of the policy of socialism and self-reliance. Schools and institutions of higher learning integrated intellectual activities with work and service to the community. Informed observers – Tanzanian and non-Tanzanian alike – attest that it was the country's socialist policies that contributed to a record setting rate of literacy and to political stability in Tanzania during Nyerere's tenure. In fact, Nyerere's vision of a new order did not fully materialize due to the lack of consensus within and without Tanzania about the ways to bring about sustained social transformation.

According to the author, one of the most interesting conclusions about Nyerere may well be his ability to balance elements from African and Western cultures with a real touch of pragmatism. Nyerere hoped that combining critical analysis with positive action would not only ascertain the link between education and real issues, but also help to solve the problems of society. Education will enable individuals to understand and to relate to the world in which they live with the purpose of contributing to its transformation for the better. Author is of the view that Nyerere's educational philosophy contributes to a body of knowledge on higher education in the twenty-first century.

Explaining about the Dar es Salam model of higher education, the author analyzes aspects of curriculum at the University of Dar es Salam and investigates ways in which the curriculum and the mission of this University reflect Nyerere's interest in education for social transformation. He investigates issues which dominated debates at the University and show how such debates are related to Nyerere's perspective of higher education in a newly independent country. The University of Dar es Salam was, according to the author, established for the purpose of enabling individuals to reflect on issues of their time critically but objectively, and to propose appropriate solutions. The University was committed to developing a sense of critical analysis and service to society at the same time. At this point, the University of Dar es Salam found itself in a position of contributing to the transformation of Tanzania the way Nyerere and his policies had envisaged. Analysis of the history and content of the compulsory course becomes crucial for understanding connections between Nyerere's educational philosophy and the curriculum at the University of Dar es Salam.

Nyerere created a sense of purpose for the country and inspired national consciousness, encouraging the use of common language and the pursuit of higher education for human-centered development. He influenced the policies which effected practices at the University of Dar es Salam and is believed to have sponsored the decision which made enrolment in the National Service mandatory for university entrants in Tanzania. The policy was formulated on the premise that the elite in formation would learn to serve the common good instead of seeking personal materialistic advantages at the expense of the majority of people.

The author concludes that Nyerere contributed a vast body of knowledge to the study of higher education both by his exemplary life style and the influence he exerted on policies affecting the University of Dar es Salam. Nyerere's educational thought clearly affected practices at Dar es Salam. However, whether this University could fully become a model of higher education for post-colonial Africa remains an open question. The author is of the view that Nyerere's perspective on higher education needs to be revisited now because it rekindles critical reflection on the relevance of current educational practices to a globalizing world.

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Mark BRAY (2003) ***Adverse Effects of Private Supplementary Tutoring.*** Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. Price: not mentioned; ISBN No. 92, 803, 1240, 5 (paperback), pp. 85

Private supplementary tutoring has become a common feature in most countries – developing as well as advanced; and it is popular under different names, such as private coaching, private tuition, cram classes, etc. Both demand for and supply of such private tutoring has been on a rapid increase, as it is associated with financial gains to the teachers, and added academic benefits to the students. But this also has a serious adverse effect on the quality of instruction in public schools. Teachers make fewer efforts to teach well in schools and encourage children to take private tutoring after school hours. This 'shadow' or 'parallel' education system, though common in many countries, has not attracted much attention of the researchers, though one can nevertheless find a reference to this phenomenon in several places.

Conducted in the research project framework of the International Institute for Educational Planning that deals with ethics and corruption in education, the present study by Mark Bray under review focuses on this particular aspect. Chapter 1 gives a brief description of the nature, magnitude and causes of the growth of private tutoring. A quick look at the literature indicates that this has been a very wide spread phenomenon in some societies. For example, as high as 70 per cent of urban children in some areas in India, Hong Kong and Korea, 80 per cent in Taiwan, and 90 per cent of the children in urban areas in Japan were found receiving some sort of private tutoring. Expenditure on private coaching also forms a sizeable proportion of the total family expenditure on education. It formed 1.6 per cent of GDP in Egypt in 1997. Chapter 2 analyses the effects of private tutoring on mainstream schooling. Even though students feel benefited by the supplementary tutoring, its effects on mainstream schooling are serious, particularly on teacher behaviour, teacher absenteeism, and teaching process. Though Bray could not discuss in detail, the effects on, social behaviour of the students and teachers, the corrupt economic gains the teachers make and their effects on 'black money' and thereby on the economy, and on social values at large are indeed serious and deserve a careful examination. In addition, private tutoring may accentuate inequities in the system, as better-off students opt for private tutoring, and less privileged have to solely rely to mainstream teaching, which itself is affected by private coaching. Based on a few case studies conducted in Mauritius, Hog Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, in Chapter 3 the author describes the policy responses of the governments. Governments opt either to ignore this phenomenon altogether, or take some measures towards banning or prohibiting it. Some governments accord recognition to this practice and try to regulate it; and rarely governments are found actively encouraging it. Countries that tried to prohibit the practice or even to regulate it could not succeed. Conclusions and a few lessons are drawn in the concluding chapters of the booklet.

This is a short, but interesting study of the problem of private tutoring. Since it is not a legally allowed practice in many societies, it would be difficult to get any authentic data on the problem. Hence Bray was to rely more on the literature particularly to present an idea on the quantitative dimensions of the problem. The constraints also did not allow Bray to conduct a rigorous research study. Perhaps that is not the purpose of the booklet, or the series in which it is published. Hence no pretensions of a research study. The causes for the growth of the phenomenon both from the demand and supply side need a detailed analysis. Probably household surveys, and not teacher surveys, could be particularly useful to investigate into this problem. The constraints also forced the author to adopt a more descriptive style. The description of government policies in a few Asian countries is indeed useful and this forms an important contribution of the book. The lesson that can be drawn from the experience of the countries covered in the study and even other countries is simple but unfortunate: private tutoring is a 'corrupt' practice; it is growing; it has to be counter-checked; but it cannot be controlled. But one may like to argue that very significant improvement in the quality of education in the formal schooling system will reduce demand for private coaching to a great extent. Good quality formal public schooling system may serve as an answer to many a problem of this kind.

This short book, providing useful insights into the problem, serves like an appetizer and stresses the need for elaborate studies on this phenomenon. Thanks to Mark Bray and the IIEP for the appetizer.

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Contents of Volume XX (2006)

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Contents of Volume XX (2006)

Vol. XX No. 1 (January 2006)

Page No

ARTICLES

Child Schooling in a Community in Transition: A Case of Scheduled Tribe Community in Andhra Pradesh 1
Motkuri Venkatanarayana

Women's Education, Dowry, Bargaining and Gains to Marriage 27
T. Lakshmanasamy

Accreditation Trends in Indian Higher Education 53
B.R. Manjunath

Governing Transformation: The Role of College Councils in Further Education and Training College Reform in South Africa 77
John Adams, Pinkie Mabunda and *Simon McGrath*

RESEARCH NOTES 97

Indian Education Service in Retrospect and Prospect: An Imperative need for its Creation
S. Kumar

Can Self Financing be a Viable Source of Resource in Traditional Universities? 109
M. Indira

REVIEW ARTICLE

Students Loan Schemes for Higher Education in East Asia 125
Asha Gupta

BOOK REVIEWS

India Social Development Report (Council for Social Development) 143
Kristoffel Lieten

Perspectives of Teacher Education (G.N. Prakash Srivastava); and Teacher Professional Development: An International Review of Literature (Villegas-Reimers, Eleonore) 145
R.P. Singh

Building Alliances: Schools, Parents and Communities in Hong Kong and Singapore (Maria Manzon) 148
Archana Mehendale

Educational Leadership: Culture and Diversity (Dimock Clive & Allan Walker) 150
B.K. Panda

Know Your Child (G. Pankajam) 154
Neelam Sood

Leading Effective Secondary School Reform: Your Guide to Strategies that Work (Loughridge Mikie & Loren R. Tarantin) 156
Indu Khetrapal

Universalizing Elementary Education in India: Uncaging the 'Tiger' Economy (Mehrotra Santosh, P.R. Panchmukhi, Rajnana Srivastava & Ravi Srivastava) 158
Madhumita Bandyopadhyay

Islamic Education, Diversity, and National Identity (Hartung Jan-Peter & Reifeld Helmut) 162
Nighat Ahmad

Labour Markets and Social Policy in Central and Eastern Europe: The Accession and Beyond (Nicholas Barr) 165
R.S. Deshpande and *M. Jayashree*

Widening Access to Education as Social Justice: Essays in Honor of Michale Omolewa (Apkovire Oduaran and Harbans S. Bhola) 168
Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

Vol. XX No. 2 (April 2006)

ARTICLES

Liberalism and Privatisation: Challenges to Education 179
Jacob Aikara

Demand Side Factors of Children's School Participation: An Exploration with Household Survey Data for Rural North Bengal 189
Sudip Chakraborty

Engineering and Technology Education in India: Uneven Spread, Quality and Social Coverage 205
S. Srinivasa Rao

Massification of Higher Education in China 227
Wang Libing

RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS

Community Participation in Primary Education Under Janshala Programme in Orissa 247
P.K. Acharya and *K. Girija Shankar*

Schooling in the Hill Economy of Arunachal Pradesh 257
Sanjukta Das

BOOK REVIEWS

Reforming the Ministry to Improve Education: An Institutional Analysis of Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) of NEPAL
(Bista Min Bahadur and Carney Stephen) 273
S.M.I.A. Zaidi

Entrepreneurialism and the Transformation of Russian Universities (Michael Shattock) 277
K.R. Shah

Leadership Styles of Principals: Authoritarian and Task Oriented
(Anju Mehrotra) 279
P.C. Bansal

Teachers Leading Change (Judy, Durrant and Gary, Holden) 281
R.P. Singh

Technology Environment and Human Values: A Methaphysical Approach to Sustainable Development (K.M. Mohapatra) 284
Manju Narula

Urban Literacy: Communication, Identity and Learning in Developing Contexts (Rogers Alan [ed.]) 287
Jacob Aikara

University Research Management: Meeting the Institutional Challenge
(Helen Connell [ed.]) 289
Bhanoji Rao

Expanding Opportunities and Building Capacities for Young People: A New Agenda for Secondary Education 291
Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

Vol. XX No. 3 (July 2006)

ARTICLES

State Monopoly in Higher Education as a Rent Seeking Industry in Greece 299
Theodore Pelagidis and *Michael Mitsopoulos*

Privatization of Public Assets in Higher Education in Kerala 313
Rajan Varughese

Challenges for Management Education: Evolving Strategies for Low End B Schools 321
Rakesh Gupta, Sarika Tomar and *Seema Sharma*

RESEARCH NOTES

Quality Assurance for South Korea's Higher Education 333
Hyung-Yeel Koh

District Primary Education Project: The Experience of Himachal Pradesh 339
Akshay Sood and *B.L. Shukla*

BOOK REVIEWS

The American Faculty: The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers (Jack H. Schuster and Martin J. Finkelstein) 361
Philip G. Altbach

Meeting Basic Learning Needs in the Informal Sector, Technical and Vocational Education & Trainign Series (Madhu Singh) 363
Anil K. Yadav

Incentives to Improve Teaching (Vegas, Emiliana) 366
R.P. Singh

Creating a Learning School (Middlewood Jack) 370
S.P. Ruhela

Full Circle: A Life with Hong Kong and China (Hayhoe, Ruth) 371
Manju Narula

Foundations of Adult Education in Africa: African Perspectives on Adult Learning (Nafuko, Fredrick, Amutabi, Maurice and Otunga, Ruth) 374
Shobita Jain

Promoting Social Cohesion Through Education (Roberts Schweitzer, et. al.) 376
Meenu Anand

Social Education in India – Position and Placement Prospects of Teachers 1999-2011 (Anil K. Yadav and N.J. Waghmare) 380
Murali Dhar Vemuri

Internationalisation and Trade in Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges (OECD) 382
Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

Vol. XX No. 4 (October 2006)

ARTICLES

Confucius and the Guru: The Changing Status of the Academic Profession in China and India 395
N. Jayaram and *Philip G. Altbach*

Degree Devaluation in Higher Education: Unemployment and Unemployability among the Graduates in India 411
Avinash Kumar Singh

Challenges of Achieving and Financing Universal Elementary Education in India: The Case of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 429
P. Geetha Rani

RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS

State Inaction in Education in India 465
K.R. Shah

Medical Education in India: Implications for Quality and Access to Care 473
Ajay Mahal and *M. Mohanan*

BOOK REVIEWS

Education and Society in Hong Kong and Macao: Comparative Perspectives on Continuity and Change (Mark Bray & Ramsey Koo, eds.) 485
G. Balatchandirane

Democratic Leadership in Education (A. Philip Woods) 488
B.K. Panda

Increasing Teacher Effectiveness (Lorin W. Anderson) 490
R.P. Singh

Balancing the Books: Household Financing of Basic Education in Cambodia (Mark Bray and Bunly Seng) 494
Tarujyoti Buragohain

Developing Portfolios in Education: A Guide to Reflection, Inquiry and Assessment (Ruth S. Johnson et al) 496
S.P. Ruhela and *Raj Kumar Nayak*

The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa: Africa Perspectives on Adult Learning (Thomas Fasokun, Anne Katahoire, and Akpovire Oduaran) 497
Shobhita Jain

Serving the Common Good: A Post-colonial African Perspective on Higher Education (Kiluba L. Nkulu) 499
S.M.I.A. Zaidi

Adverse Effects of Private Supplementary Tutoring (Mark Bray) 503
Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

Journal of Educational Planning and Administration
Volume XX No. 4, October 2006

Journal of Social and Economic Development

Vol. 8	January - June 2006	No. 1

CONTENTS

Articles

Manufacturing Sector Productivity in West Bengal across Phases of Liberalisation During 1981-97 — *Maniklal Adhikary and Ritwik Mazumder*

Applying NOAA Recommendation: A Contingent Valuation Study of Desirable Quality Water in Kolkata, India — *Chirodip Majumdar and Gautam Gupta*

Economics of *Gajni* Farming under Different Farming Systems in Coastal Floodplains of Karnataka, India — *Ganesh B Keremane and Balachandra K Naik*

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Volume XX No. 4, October 2006

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Journal of Rural Development

Vol. 25	Oct – Dec 2006	No.4

1. National Youth Service Corps Members' Participation in Community Development in Enugu State, Nigeria 489
   - A.E. Agwu, O.M. Akinnagbe and N. Chukwuone

2. Incidence of Indebtedness in Rural India : A State Level Analysis 507
   - H.R. Sharma

3. Social Capital and Joint Forest Management Programme : A Comparative Study of Female-Headed and Joint Forest Protection Committees in West Bengal 537
   - Debnarayan Sarker and Nimai Das

4. Effects of Group Design on Loan Repayment Performance of Formal Farmer Groups in Nigeria 565
   - Mkpado M. and C.J. Arene

5. Food Security in Rural Bihar : A Village Level Study 579
   - Veena Kumari and R.K.P. Singh
   -

6. Family Planning Use and Correlates in Rural Tamil Nadu 595
   - Manjamuthu Vaithilingam

7. Empowering Artisans through Small Scale Brick Production in Eastern Uttar Pradesh 611
   - Jayanta Mitra, Sachin Kumar, N. Vasudevan and Rakesh Johri

BOOK REVIEWS

1. Elementary Education in India : Where do we stand – State Report Cards 2005 by Arun C. Mehta 625
   - N.V. Mahuri

2. Elementary Education in India : Where do we stand? by Arun C. Mehta 626
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