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Effect of Parental Characteristics on Education and Employment Attainment among Youth in India

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Abstract

Using the unit level data from "Youth in India: Situation and Need, 2006-07", this paper examines the effect of parental characteristics on children's schooling and occupation in India. The children's education and occupation are analysed for young people aged 15-24 years from a representative sample of 174,037 households and a total of 50,848 young people comprising 8052 married young men, 11522 unmarried men, 13912 married young women, and 17362 unmarried young women. The educational attainment of both father and mother are combined and a composite variable is computed. Similarly, the occupational distribution is examined among those working. The mean years of schooling of young people by parental educational attainment, controlling for socio-economic conditions of households, is examined. Result indicates that parental education exerts greater influence on children's schooling even after controlling for socio-economic characteristics of the household. In case when both father and mother were illiterate, the mean year of schooling of young people was 4.8 years compared to 11.5 years among parents with 10 years and above schooling. Results are robust across space and socio-economic groups. With respect to occupation, the study found little mobility among young people.

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Introduction

Fertility transition and increased economic growth in last two decades has brought the debate on demographic dividends to the forefront in India. The country became one of the fast growing economies in recent decades and the increase in share and proportion of working population is said to have accelerated the growth process. While some researchers are optimistic on demographic dividends, others advocate caution owing to quality of labour force, structure of the economy and a number of related factors (Bloom and Williamson 1998; Bloom, Canning and Malaney 2000). Among the working population, the young people (aged 15-24), constituting about 243 million (20.1%) of the Indian population in 2011 (ORGI 2013), are important contributors to the growth process. Young people are facing transition in key markers of life, physical, emotional, economic, marriage etc.. Each of the components of young people is critical for development of the nation. Though today's youth are better educated than before, they are heterogeneous with respect to their educational attainment, occupation, health etc. and many of them are facing unemployment and illiteracy while living in acute poverty.

Education is an important indicator of human development. Findings from the Youth in India, the largest ever population based study on young people in India, revealed that one in ten young men and one in four young women had never attended school. Moreover, young women were particularly disadvantaged-one-third of rural young women and almost two-fifth of married young women had never been to school. The inter-state differences were large, 10-16% of young men and 38-51% of young women from northern states had never been to school, compared to 2-8% and 5-21%, respectively, in Maharashtra and the southern states. The primary reason for never attending school among young men and women was economic, gender differences, housework, school located too far, poor quality of school etc (IIPS and Population Council 2010).

Parents and family environment influence the behavior and decision taken by adolescents (Chevalier, A., 2004). The influence of family environment on education outcomes has been the subject of considerable research, both in developed and developing countries. In India, there is a strong positive relationship between parent's education and their children's education. Parent's socio-economic status plays a major role in their children's education. There is a significant inter-linkage between fathers' occupation and that of their children.

Literature Review

The influence of family environment on education outcomes has been the subject of considerable research, both in developed and developing countries. Parents' and family environment influences are key explanatory variables on the behavior and decision of adolescents (Arnaud Chevalier, 2004). Prior research has shown that the effect of education and occupation between generations are due to three possible factors (social, economic and cultural), which influence the youth work status and their living standards. In particular, children of those mothers, who had more education, tend to fare better academically than those whose mothers had less education (Haveman and Wolfe, 1995; Hofferth and Sandberg, 2001; Walker et. al. 1994). Education provides mothers with knowledge about what is needed to help their children succeed academically (Davis Kean, 2005; McNeal, 1999). For

many parents, this process of managing a child's education starts with selection and management of an early childhood education and care programmers (Clarke-Stewart & Allhusen, 2005). Although the use of early childhood education and care has grown for all socio-demographic groups (Meyers and Jordan, 2006), more highly-educated mother use non-parental care at a substantially higher rate than those with less educated mothers (Bainbridge et al 2005 Fuller, Eggers-Pierola, et. al., 1996). It is believed that maternal education captures a range of factors linked to social position and beliefs regarding early development and schooling (Fuller, Holloway, and Liang, 1996).This finding has been attributed to a more educated mother having better knowledge of child development as well as her ability to pay for higher quality care setting. Children, with less educated parents, therefore, may be "doubly disadvantaged" as they are less likely to benefit from educational materials and are also less likely to be enrolled in better educational institutions (Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, and Waldfogel, 2004).

Studies in USA and UK have showed that effect of economic constraints on educational choice is less important than family background, mainly parental education (Chevalier, 2004). Behrman and Rosenzweig (1991) use pairs and compare the educational choices of their respective children. This study contradicts the general view that mother's schooling has a larger effect than that of the father on the achievement of their children. Plug (2004) compared the adopted and natural children to estimate the causal effect of parental education. These studies report that mother's education had a significant effect on the educational attainment of an adopted child but the parental effect remains significant (0.20) for each year of parental education even after accounting for family income. Black et al (2005) studied the change in school leaving age (SLA) in Norway, during the 1960s, and found that the effect of parental education on children's educational achievement is greatly reduced and, with the exception of the mother-son relationship (0.17), become insignificant when parental education is assumed endogenous. Lidia Farre, Roger Klein and Francis Vella (2009) used OLS estimates of the inter-generational transmission of education to show that the coefficients that capture this transmission mechanism is large although for daughters, the impact of father's unobserved ability is larger than that of the mother. Jo Blandon and Paul Gregg (2004) recognized that, on average, children from poorer backgrounds have worse educational outcomes then their better -off peers. Economic literature on the causal relationship between income and educational attainment has a strong emphasis on direct financial investment in children's human capital (Becker and Tomes, 1986).

Evidences from rural China (Chyi and Yunsen 2005) suggest the causal relationship between parents' and children's education levels. Mother's education affects only her daughter's education and not son's, while father's education has uncertain effect on both daughter's and son's education. Studies also suggests that parents' education significantly affects children's high school completion and the effect is positive but the simple and direct correlation is not necessary causal, (Aston et al 1991; Havemen et al 1991; Dearden et al 1997; Mulligan 1999). On the other hand, Philip Oreopoulos et al (2006) found that increasing parent's education can effectively decrease drop-outs of children. Most of these studies focus on developed countries and there are not many studies on parent's education and occupation effect on children in developing countries.

Need for the study

Till recently, studies focused on the socio-economic and programme factors affecting educational level in different parts of India. These studies basically highlighted the poverty, social status and poor quality of educational system as the outcome of low educational level. But the inter-generational link between parents and children has rarely been explored by researchers. Moreover, limited studies have highlighted the inter-generational link between parents and children's occupational pattern like in other developing countries, inter-generational transfer of family work is very much persistent in India. But whether the socio-economic development and awareness about other possible occupational opportunities are changing. Additionally, there is a large regional and socio-economic variation in educational level. The limited evidence on inter-generational link on education and occupation is also due to the paucity of reliable data. In this regard, this study is an attempt to understand the inter-generational correlation in education and occupation among youth in India. We believe that there is strong positive relationship between parents' particularly the mother and children's education. Such outcome also varies by state, caste, religion, wealth quintile, family type and place of residence.

Objectives

The broad objective of this paper is to investigate the effect of parental education and occupation on young people's educational and occupational outcome considering range of selected characteristics. The specific objectives are:

- To examine the variation in young people's educational and occupational attainment by parental characteristics in selected states of India.
- To examine the relationship of parental education, household wealth and siblings on schooling of young people.
- To examine the linkages of young people's educational and occupational attainment in selected states of India.

Data and Methods

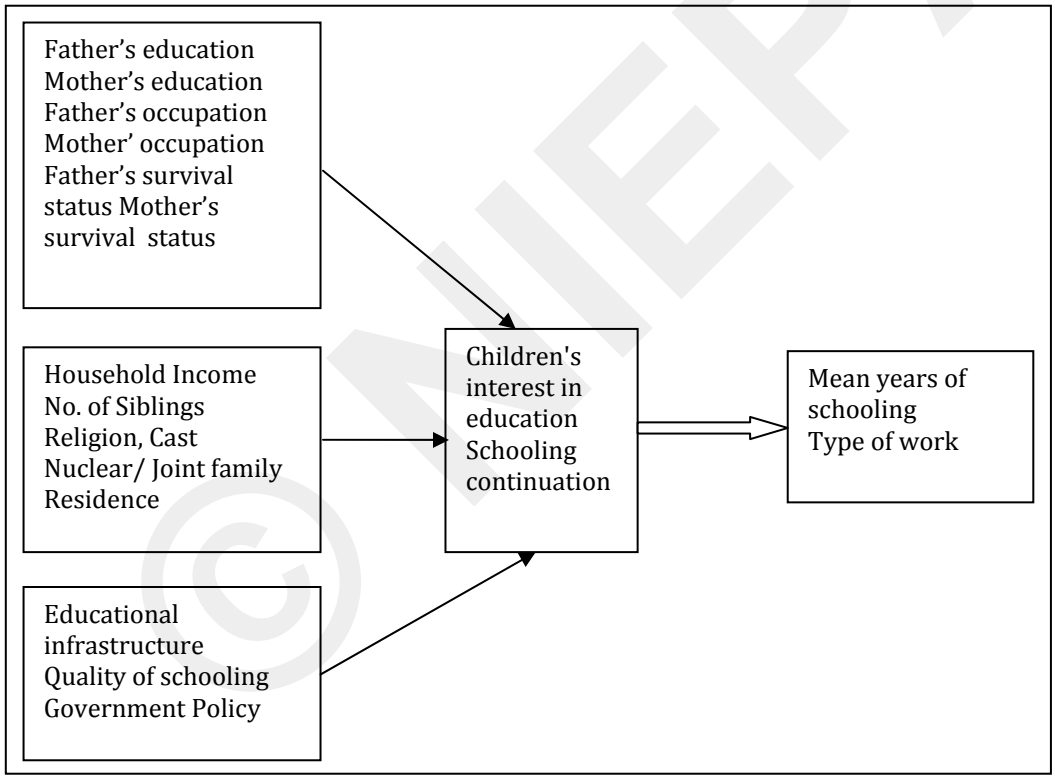
We have used the unit level data from "Youth in India: Situations and Needs Study", conducted in 2006-2007 in six states of India, namely Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It covered a total of 174,037 households and a total of 50,848 young people (8052 married young men, 11522 unmarried men, 13912 married young women, and 17362 unmarried young women). We have selected education and occupation of parents from the individual file. The variables such as years of schooling and type of work of young people are two key dependent variables. The work status is analyzed among those working or seeking jobs. We have also constructed the composite variable of parental education and classified them into 14 categories. Bi-variate analyses are used in the analyses; the ordinary list square (OLS) is used to understand the effect of independent variable on dependent variable. The dependent variable is young people's education in years of schooling and occupation. The set of independent variables considered

include age, sex, caste, religion, household economic status, place of residence along with parental education and occupation.

Conceptual Framework

We have developed a conceptual framework to understand the role of parental characteristics in children's well being (Fig 1). The framework is general and the analyses have been carried out based on the availability of variables. The mean year of schooling and the type of work are the two main outcome variables in the analyses. The background variables are parent's socio-economic status, educational infrastructure, quality of schooling and government policy.

FIGURE 1



Results

Table 1 describes the mean years of schooling of young people by parental educational characteristics in India. In general, it is observed that the educational level of children is higher for those parents who had higher educational level. For example, for those fathers who were illiterate, the mean of schooling of their children was 5.1 years compared to 8.9 years among those children whose father's education was 8-9 years of schooling, and 11.3

years among those children whose father's schooling was 12 years and above. The standard deviation declines with increase in father's education from 4.4 when father was illiterate compared to 3, when father had 12 years and above of schooling. Similarly, the schooling of children varies directly with educational level of mother. The mean years of schooling of children belonging to illiterate mothers was 6.0 compared to 10.7 years when mother's education was 8-9 years, and 12.2 years when mother's schooling was 12 years and above. The standard deviation also declines with increase in mother's education. In general, we found that the mother's education exerts greater influence on children's education compared to the father's education. This pattern was similar in rural and urban areas.

TABLE 1

Mean years of schooling of young people by parental educational level, India, 2006-07

	Total			*Urban*			*Rural*		
	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*N*
Father education (years)									
Non-literate	5.1	4.4	19932	6.6	4.1	3515	4.7	4.3	16418
1-4	7.7	3.6	4299	8.5	3.3	1024	7.4	3.6	3274
5-7	8.1	3.6	8029	9.1	3.3	2505	7.6	3.7	5524
8-9	8.9	3.4	4934	9.8	3.1	1751	8.3	3.6	3183
10-11	9.7	3.5	6815	11	3	2910	8.8	3.7	3905
12+	11.3	3	4958	12.1	2.7	2816	10.3	3.1	2142
Total	7.4	4.5	50848	9.4	3.9	14981	6.5	4.4	35868
Mother education (years)									
Non-literate	6	4.4	34275	7.6	4.1	6878	5.6	4.3	27397
1-4	9.2	3.1	3131	9.6	3.1	1048	8.9	3	2083
5-7	9.8	3	6220	10.3	3	2645	9.5	3	3575
8-9	10.7	4.4	2698	11.1	2.7	1405	10.3	2.8	1293
10-11	11.6	2.8	2593	12	2.6	1706	10.8	2.9	886
12+	12.2	2.6	1402	12.3	2.5	1172.4	11.4	2.6	230
Total	7.4	4.5	50848	9.4	3.9	14981	6.5	4.4	35868
Parents education (years)									
Both are illiterate	4.9	4.4	20563	6.4	4.2	3535	4.5	4.4	17028
Father 1-9 and mother illiterate	7.3	3.8	10818	8.3	3.5	2560	7	3.8	8258
Father 10+ mother illiterate	8.5	4	3752	9.9	3.5	1065	7.9	4	2687
Father illiterate and mother 1-9 years	8.1	3.4	1444	8.5	3.1	492	7.9	3.5	952
Father 1-9 and mother also 1-9 years literate	9.6	2.9	5789	10	2.9	2377	9.3	2.8	3412
Father 10+ above and mother 1-9 years	10.8	2.8	4628	11.4	2.7	2165	10.3	2.8	2463
Father 1-9 and mother 10+ literate	10.8	2.7	549	11.1	2.6	313	10.5	2.8	236
Both are 10 and above literate	12	2.6	3304	12.3	2.5	2474	11.2	2.7	831
Total	7.4	4.5	50848	9.4	4	14981	6.5	4.5	35868

The differentials in educational level of young people by parental education (both father and mother) showed similar pattern. The mean years of schooling of young people, when their parents were illiterate, was 4.9 years compared to 7.3 years when father had 10 and more years of schooling and mother was illiterate. When father and mother had 10 years and more of schooling, the mean years of schooling of their children was 12 years. It showed that the parental education level has a significant impact on the schooling of their children. The pattern is similar in rural and urban areas but the differences are higher in rural than urban areas.

Table 2 shows the differentials in mean years of schooling of young people by parental educational level controlling for caste, religion, wealth quintile, family type, sex and place of residence. We have provided the results for the six states of India and the pattern is similar. The parental education has positive effect on child schooling. In India, when both (parents) were illiterate, the mean years of schooling of children was 4.8 years compared to 11.5 years when parents had 10 years and above schooling. In Rajasthan, where both father and mother was illiterate, on an average, the youth had 4.0 years of schooling compared to 11.6 years when both parents had 10 years and above of schooling. In Bihar, when parents were illiterate, the mean years of schooling among young people was 2.5 years compared to 4.8 years when father had less than five years' schooling and mother was illiterate. Similarly, when both father and mother had 10 and above years of schooling, the mean years of schooling of children was 9.7 years. The reasons for non-attendance of school were many e.g. socio-economic, household, infrastructure, government policy, and health-related reason. Low economic condition was one of the major factors for discontinuation of schooling in Bihar. In Maharashtra, where parents (both father and mother) were illiterate, the mean years of schooling among their children was 6.3 years compared to 11.9 years when both had 10 and more years of schooling. In case of Andhra Pradesh when parents were illiterate, the mean years of schooling among youth was 6.0 years compared to 11.8 years when father and mother had 10 more years of schooling. In Tamil Nadu, when both father and mother was illiterate, the mean years of schooling among young people was 7.2 years compared to 12.5 years when both had 10 and above years of schooling.

The mean years of schooling varies by other characteristics like caste, religion, wealth quintile, family type and place of residence. Among those parents belonging to Schedule Caste (SC) and illiterate group, the mean years of schooling of their children was 4.7 years, compared to 10.6 years among children whose parents were in this same caste but had 10 and above years of schooling. In the case of Schedule Tribe (ST) and illiterate parents, the mean years of schooling of their children was 4.0 years, compared to 8.3 years in the parents belonged to the same caste but had 10 and above years of schooling. A similar pattern was found in years of schooling among youth in case of others backward class (OBC), and others category. This indicates clear intra-caste differentials in the attainment of the educational level in India. With respect to religion, when father and mother were illiterate, the mean years of schooling was 4.9 years compared to 8.0 years if mother's educational level was 5-10 years and father was illiterate. Among Muslims, when both the parents were illiterate, the mean years of schooling was 3.6 years compared to 10.6 years when the parents had 10 and above years of schooling. Similar pattern was observed among others religious groups.

TABLE 2

Differentials in mean years of schooling of young people by parental educational and socio-economic characteristics in India, 2006-07

	Both are Illiterate	Father 1 to less than 5 & Mother Illiterate	Father 5 to less than 10 & Mother Illiterate	Father 10+ & Mother Illiterate	Mother 5 to less than 10 & Father Illiterate	Father Illiterate & Mother 1 to less than 5 Literate	Father 1 to less than 5 & Mother 5<10 literate	Father 5 to less than 10 & Mothers 10+ Literate	Both are 10+ Literate	Mother 1 to less than 5 & father 10+ Literate	Mother 1 to less than 5 & Father 5<10 Literate	Mother 5 to less than 10 & father 10+ Literate	Both are 1 to less than 5 Literate	Both are 5 to less than 10 Literate	Total
India	4.8	8.3	7.4	7.3	8.2	7.8	9.2	10.4	11.5	10.0	9.3	10.8	8.9	9.9	7.3
State															
Rajasthan	4.0	6.3	6.8	7.7	7.5	6.9	8.4	9.3	11.6	10.4	8.9	11.2	7.5	9.7	6.3
Bihar	2.5	4.8	5.8	5.6	6.0	5.6	6.6	9.3	9.7	8.9	7.9	9.4	6.8	8.8	4.9
Jharkhand	3.3	5.5	6.2	5.9	6.4	6.3	8.6	7.6	9.7	9.0	8.4	10.2	6.2	8.8	5.6
Maharashtra	6.3	8.0	8.1	9.0	7.9	8.0	9.3	10.4	11.9	10.3	9.4	10.9	9.0	10.0	8.9
Andhra Pradesh	6.0	7.3	8.5	8.9	8.4	7.6	9.1	10.8	11.8	9.9	10.1	11.4	9.6	10.1	7.6
Tamil Nadu	7.2	8.3	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.9	9.5	11.0	12.5	10.2	9.4	11.2	9.1	10.1	9.3
Caste															
SC	4.7	7.0	7.4	6.8	8.0	8.1	9.3	9.2	10.6	10.2	9.3	10.4	8.8	9.7	6.6
ST	4.0	6.8	6.8	6.7	8.2	6.0	7.8	8.3	8.3	9.2	9.1	10.4	7.6	9.1	5.4
OBC	4.7	6.9	7.3	7.0	8.1	7.8	9.3	10.6	11.4	9.7	9.2	10.7	9.0	9.9	7.2
General	6.1	7.7	8.0	8.5	8.8	7.6	9.1	10.8	12.0	10.3	9.4	10.9	9.4	10.0	9.1
Religion															
Hindu	4.9	7.2	7.6	7.4	8.3	7.8	9.2	10.4	11.6	10.1	9.4	10.9	9.0	9.9	7.4
Muslim	3.6	5.8	6.4	6.1	7.5	7.2	8.8	10.0	10.6	8.7	8.3	9.9	8.4	9.3	6.2
Others	5.3	7.6	7.4	7.6	8.3	8.6	9.4	10.9	11.6	10.7	9.5	10.6	8.7	10.0	8.0
Wealth Quintile															
Poorest	2.6	5.4	5.0	3.8	5.6	6.0	6.7	6.8	3.8	5.4	6.8	7.3	7.5	7.7	3.5
Poor	4.1	6.2	6.3	5.3	7.5	7.3	7.7	8.2	7.6	8.6	8.5	9.0	8.1	8.2	5.4
Middle	5.6	7.3	7.2	6.8	8.0	7.8	8.9	9.5	8.8	9.2	8.9	9.6	8.5	9.3	6.9
Richer	6.7	8.2	8.3	8.5	8.5	8.8	9.6	10.3	10.8	10.1	9.5	10.6	9.5	10.0	8.5
Richest	8.1	9.3	9.5	10.2	9.7	8.5	10.1	11.4	12.3	11.3	10.3	11.6	10.2	10.8	10.7
Family Type															
Nuclear family	4.9	7.0	7.6	7.4	8.0	8.1	9.4	10.4	11.6	10.1	9.3	10.9	8.8	9.9	7.5
Non-nuclear family	4.8	7.3	7.3	7.2	8.4	7.5	8.8	10.3	11.4	9.9	9.2	10.6	9.0	9.8	7.2
Place of residence															
Urban	6.3	8.1	8.4	9.0	8.4	8.1	9.1	10.8	12.2	10.8	9.5	11.3	9.1	10.3	9.4
Rural	4.5	6.9	7.1	6.7	8.1	7.7	9.2	9.8	10.1	9.5	9.2	10.3	8.8	9.5	6.5

The differentials in mean years of schooling controlling for parental education is large by wealth quintile of the household. For example, the mean years of schooling among illiterate parents and also belonging to poorest wealth quintile was 2.6 years compared to 8.1 years among parents in the richest wealth quintile and illiterate combination. From the discussion, it is clear that wealth status of household is a significant predictor of young people's educational level even controlling for parental education.

The mean years of schooling of young people did not vary much by family type. For example, when parents were illiterate and belonged to nuclear family, the mean years of schooling of young people was 4.9 years compared to 4.8 years when parents were illiterate and belonged to joint family. The mean years of schooling of young people varies significantly by places of residences, controlling for parental education. It is significantly higher in urban areas (6.3), when parents were illiterate compared to 4.5 years in rural area.

Occupational Distribution of Young people

Table 3 shows the occupational distribution of young people by their educational level in India. Among young people who had no schooling, 40 % were working as cultivator, 50% as agricultural laborer compared to 0.3 % in the category of other workers. Similarly, among young people with 10 and above years of schooling, 61.4 % were working as cultivator, 21% as agricultural laborer with 3.8 % engaged in administrative work and 1.9 % doing business. In Bihar, among young people with no education, 37.3 % were engaged as cultivator compared to 70.7 % among those who had education of 5-10 years. Similar pattern was witnessed in Jharkhand. In Maharashtra, among young people with no education, 35.5 % were working as cultivator compared to 0.26 % in administrative work. In Andhra Pradesh, among young people with no education, almost everybody was engaged in agricultural work. In the state of Tamil Nadu, among young people with no education, 37.5 % were engaged as cultivator with 14.7% engaged in skilled/manual work. Among those children with 10 and above years of schooling, 69.7% were working as cultivators with 4.1% engaged in administrative work.

Table 4 shows the occupational classification of young people by father's occupation. We have considered only those young people who were working. Those who were studying and not working or those who were unemployed have been excluded from the analyses. The rationale of doing so is to know how occupational mobility has taken place over the generations. We have further considered the occupation of fathers with majority of mothers of young people not working at the time of the survey. We have classified the occupation of father into seven categories, namely cultivator, agricultural labourer and labourer, administrative, skilled, clerical, business group and other workers. There appears to be little occupational mobility in the country. Among those fathers who were engaged in cultivation, 19% of their children also worked as cultivator, 52.8% worked as agricultural labourer while 4.2% were engaged in administrative work, 19.2 % in skilled (manual) work with 3.2% doing business. Similarly, among those father engaged in administrative work, 4.1% of their children were working as cultivators, 30.9% children were engaged in administrative work, with 7.9% of the children doing business. It shows that occupation of young people was related to the father's occupation. In the case where the father was in business, 1.7% of their children were engaged in cultivator activity, 28.4% children were skilled workers while 27.9% were engaged in business. The differentials in children's occupation by parental

TABLE 3

Differentials in Child Occupation by their Educational Characteristics in India, 2006-07

Child Education	*Child Occupation*								
	Culti-vator	*Ag. Labour/ Labourer*	*Admini-strative*	*Skilled/ Manual*	*Clerical*	*Business Group*	*Others workers*	*Total (%)*	*Total No.*
India									
Illiterate	39.99	50.00	0.1	9.2	0.00	0.4	0.3	100	3184
1 < 5	41	42.73	0.14	14.88	0.25	0.62	0.39	100	3488
5 < 10	56.71	26.51	0.41	13.97	0.58	1.4	0.42	100	19961
10+ Schooling	61.49	21.47	3.85	8.72	2.02	1.93	0.51	100	24122
State									
Rajasthan									
Illiterate	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	100	4
1 < 5	58	32.41	0	9.17	0	0.21	0.21	100	575
5 < 10	67.22	17.78	0.4	12.09	0.4	1.77	0.33	100	4170
10+ Schooling	67.42	18.15	3.64	7.23	0.76	2.51	0.29	100	5243
Bihar									
Illiterate	37.36	41.95	0	18.97	0	1.72	0	100	106
1 < 5	50	35.15	0	13.5	0.19	0.78	0.39	100	767
5 < 10	70.71	17.07	0.4	8.49	0.25	2.27	0.81	100	2670
10+ Schooling	56.65	31.78	2.94	5.99	0.48	1.64	0.52	100	4587
Jharkhand									
Illiterate	44.39	46.43	0	8.16	0	0.51	0.51	100	2253
1 < 5	5.3	38.48	0	9.7	0	0.91	0.61	100	784
5 < 10	63.31	24.04	0.47	9.99	0.23	1.25	0.7	100	3230
10+ Schooling	68.9	9.84	7.85	6.28	1.43	3.99	1.71	100	2532
Maharashtra									
Illiterate	35.56	57.77	0.26	6.29	0	0.13	0	100	461
1 < 5	31.9	49.61	0.62	14.95	0.92	1.23	0.77	100	390
5 < 10	57.34	30.73	0.43	9.18	0.72	1.19	0.41	100	3479
10+ Schooling	64.95	15.27	4.2	8.74	3.58	2.35	0.92	100	3200
Andhra Pradesh									
Illiterate	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	2
1 < 5	27.89	55.25	0	16.33	0.13	0.13	0.27	100	572
5 < 10	42.89	36.4	0.32	17.93	1.06	1.32	0.09	100	2867
10+ Schooling	52.49	26.86	3.82	10.81	2.2	1.61	0.21	100	4887
Tamil Nadu									
Illiterate	37.58	46.98	0.34	14.77	0	0	0.34	100	358
1 < 5	27.83	43.19	0.29	28.41	0	0.29	0	100	400
5 < 10	44.74	26.64	0.44	26.58	0.44	0.77	0.38	100	3545
10+ Schooling	69.73	9.85	4.18	11.28	3.18	1.35	0.43	100	3673
Place of Residence									
Urban									
Illiterate	55.9	29.0	0.5	13.5	0.0	0.5	0.5	100.0	893
1 < 5	42.1	27.4	0.5	26.3	0.5	1.7	1.4	100.0	1244
5 < 10	59.3	16.6	0.7	19.3	1.3	2.2	0.6	100.0	8719
10+ Schooling	68.3	8.2	5.9	9.7	4.3	2.8	0.7	100.0	13107
Rural									
Illiterate	36.7	54.3	0.1	8.3	0.0	0.4	0.2	100.0	2291
1 < 5	40.7	46.0	0.1	12.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	100.0	2244
5 < 10	55.7	30.3	0.3	11.9	0.3	1.1	0.3	100.0	11242
10+ Schooling	58.0	28.2	2.8	8.2	0.9	1.5	0.4	100	11015

occupation in rural and urban areas shows similar pattern. In Urban areas, among those father engaged as cultivator, 6.7% of their children were also doing cultivation, 32% were

agricultural labourer/labourer, 40% engaged in skilled (manual) work while 9.1% were engaged in administrative work and 5.6 % were doing business. Among those fathers engaged in administrative work, 36.8% of their children were working in administrative jobs, followed by skilled manual (18%), labourer (17%), clerical (16%) and business group (10%). In the case of rural areas, among those parents who were working as cultivator or agricultural labourer, majority of their children were also engaged in these respective works. For example, among those parents who were working as agricultural labourer, 78% of their children were working as agricultural labourer. This indicates that the rural poor are not benefiting in terms of better work and quality of life.

TABLE 4

Percentage distribution of young people's occupation by father's occupation in India, 2006-07

Father's Occupation	*Young Peoples' Occupation*								
	Culti-vator	*Agric. labourer/ labourer*	*Admini-strative*	*Skilled (manual)*	*Clerical*	*Business group*	*Other workers*	*Total Percent*	*Total*
Cultivator	18.9	52.8	4.2	19.2	1.2	3.2	0.5	100	4925
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.5	72.9	2.2	19.4	1.8	1.6	0.6	100	11833
Administrative	4.1	25.1	30.9	19.5	11.2	7.9	1.4	100	518
Skilled	0.7	35.5	5.6	50.1	4	2.8	1.3	100	3736
Clerical	3.4	31.4	15.8	25.3	15.4	6.1	2.5	100	589
Business group	1.7	24.8	9.9	28.4	5	27.9	2.4	100	888
Other worker	4	39.3	6.9	22	3.5	2.3	22	100	173
Total	5.3	58.1	4.5	25	2.7	3.5	1	100	22662
Urban									
Cultivator	6.7	32	9.1	40.2	4.4	5.6	2	100	450
Agric. labourer/ labourer	0.4	50.5	6	33.2	5.6	3.2	1.2	100	2116
Administrative	0.4	17.1	36.8	17.5	16.1	10.7	1.4	100	280
Skilled	0.1	24.2	8.1	55.3	6.8	3.9	1.6	100	1685
Clerical	0.3	24.5	19.9	23.9	22.1	7.3	2.1	100	331
Business group	0.6	19.7	11.5	24.9	9.2	30.8	3.3	100	478
Other worker	3.9	26.3	11.8	22.4	7.9	2.6	25	100	76
Total	0.9	34.4	9.9	38.4	7.8	6.7	2	100	5416
Rural									
Cultivator	20.1	54.9	3.7	17.1	0.9	2.9	0.4	100	4475
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.7	77.8	1.4	16.4	0.9	1.3	0.5	100	9718
Administrative	8.8	34	23.9	21.8	5.5	4.6	1.3	100	238
Skilled	1.1	44.9	3.5	45.9	1.8	1.9	1	100	2051
Clerical	7	40.5	10.5	27.2	7	4.7	3.1	100	257
Business group	3.2	30.7	8	32.4	0.2	24.6	1	100	411
Other worker	4.2	49.5	3.2	22.1	0	1.1	20	100	95
Total	6.6	65.5	2.9	20.7	1.1	2.4	0.7	100	17245

Table 5 shows the differentials in occupational distribution of young people by parental occupation and wealth quintiles. The wealth quintiles were classified into five groups; the poorest, poorer, middle, richer and richest. Among those father belonging to poorest quintile and engaged as cultivator, 71% of their children were working as agricultural laborer/ labourer followed by 13% as cultivators. Similarly, among those father engaged as agricultural labourer, 88% of their children were also working as agricultural labourer, indicating little upward mobility of the poorer sections of the society. Likewise, among those fathers belonging to richest quintile and working in administrative jobs, 38% of their children were engaged as administrative workers. Among those fathers belonging to poorest quintile and engaged in skilled work, 63% of their children were working as labourers. Only less than 1% of their children were doing business. Only 0.5% of children of fathers belonging to the second poorest wealth quintile and doing skilled and manual work were engaged as cultivators while 48.2% were doing skilled and manual work. Similarly, in third wealth quintile, among fathers engaged in cultivator work, 20.7% of their children were doing cultivator work with only 2.1% doing administrative work. Of those fathers doing business, 0.7% of their children were working as cultivator while 20.9% were engaged in business.

TABLE 5

Percentage distribution of young people's occupation by father's occupation and wealth quintile in India, 2006-07

Wealth Quintile	*Culti-vator*	*Agric. labourer/ labourer*	*Admini-strative*	*Skilled (manual)*	*Clerical*	*Business group*	*Other workers*	*%*	*Total*
1st Quintile									
Cultivator	12.7	70.7	1.1	14	0.1	1.3	0.1	100	757
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.1	88	0.5	9	0.4	0.4	0.7	100	3178
Administrative	2.6	52.6	13.2	31.6	0	0	0	100	38
Skilled	1.3	62.9	0.6	32.3	0.2	0.6	2.2	100	539
Clerical	4	80	0	8	8	0	0	100	25
Business group	8.1	54.8	0	27.4	0	9.7	0	100	62
Other worker	2.9	62.9	0	25.7	5.7	0	2.9	100	35
Total	3.2	81.3	0.7	13.1	0.4	0.7	0.8	100	4634
2nd Quintile									
Cultivator	19.3	63	2.3	12.1	0.8	1.7	0.7	100	1299
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.5	78.9	1.4	16.2	1	0.6	0.4	100	2717
Administrative	2.8	69.4	8.3	16.7	0	2.8	0	100	36
Skilled	0.5	46.6	2.1	48.2	0.6	1.6	0.5	100	633
Clerical	8.5	40.4	4.3	21.3	17	2.1	6.4	100	47
Business group	3.6	32.5	6	31.3	2.4	22.9	1.2	100	83
Other worker	0	50	0	23.3	0	0	26.7	100	30
Total	6.3	69	1.9	19.6	1.1	1.4	0.7	100	4845

Table Contd...

Wealth Quintile	*Culti-vator*	*Agric. labourer/ labourer*	*Admini-strative*	*Skilled (manual)*	*Clerical*	*Business group*	*Other workers*	*%*	*Total*
3rd Quintile									
Cultivator	20.7	51.2	2.1	21.7	0.8	3	0.4	100	1150
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.3	70.7	1.9	23.2	0.9	1.6	0.5	100	2816
Administrative	10.9	37.5	20.3	20.3	9.4	1.6	0	100	64
Skilled	0.5	39	2.5	52.7	2.5	1.9	0.8	100	785
Clerical	6.9	49.4	13.8	24.1	2.3	2.3	1.1	100	87
Business group	0.7	36.7	1.4	38.1	0	20.9	2.2	100	139
Other worker	6.5	41.9	0	19.4	0	0	32.3	100	31
Total	5.8	59.5	2.4	27.8	1.2	2.5	0.7	100	5072
4th Quintile									
Cultivator	18.9	45	5.9	25.2	1.6	2.9	0.6	100	1089
Agric. labourer/ labourer	1.7	58.8	2.9	29.1	3.1	3.7	0.6	100	2182
Administrative	3.4	25	34.5	23.3	7.8	3.4	2.6	100	116
Skilled	0.9	25.2	6.2	57.6	5.9	3.1	1.1	100	1022
Clerical	1.3	27.5	12.4	35.3	13.1	5.9	4.6	100	153
Business group	1.3	24.9	9.3	31.6	4.6	24.9	3.4	100	237
Other worker	6.3	34.4	9.4	28.1	0	3.1	18.8	100	32
Total	5.5	45	5.7	34.4	3.8	4.5	1.1	100	4831
5th Quintile									
Cultivator	22.3	26.4	12.6	25.4	3.3	9	0.9	100	633
Agric. labourer/ labourer	2.2	44	9.8	29.8	8.5	3.9	1.8	100	943
Administrative	3.1	11.9	37.5	16.5	16.1	13.4	1.5	100	261
Skilled	0.1	17.2	14.5	51.5	8.6	6.1	2	100	757
Clerical	2.2	21.9	21.6	22.7	21.2	9	1.4	100	278
Business group	0.8	13.3	16	22	8.4	37	2.4	100	368
Other worker	6.7	15.6	20	13.3	8.9	6.7	28.9	100	45
Total	5.6	26.2	15.5	31.2	9.2	10.3	2.1	100	3285

Table 6 shows the result of Ordinary Least Square Regression analyses. The dependent variable is the years of schooling of young people. The independent variables are father's education, mother's education, age, wealth quintile and number of siblings. We prefer to use the OLS as the dependent variables are continuous. Most of the independent variables are continuous in nature. Results of the OLS are presented for each state and combined six states of India. The coefficients are in expected direction and consistent across the states. For example, the coefficient of fathers' schooling varies from 0.14 in Tamil Nadu to 0.27 in Bihar. The coefficients are statistically significant in all the states. Similarly, the regression coefficient of mother's years of schooling varies from 0.07 in Maharashtra to 0.12 in Bihar and the coefficients are statistically significant. The coefficient of age is large across the states. The effect of household wealth controlling for other factors varies from 0.11 in Tamil Nadu to 0.15 in Bihar. However, the number of brothers and sisters exerts a negative

coefficient with schooling, indicating that with increase in the number of siblings, the years of schooling of children is likely to be lower. The R2 values indicate the explanatory power of the model. In India, the model explains 63% variation in child schooling and varies from 50% in Tamil Nadu to 66% in Bihar. From the above discussion, it may be said that the parental effect is large and a significant factor of child schooling in India.

TABLE 6

Result of OLS regression of young people's years of schooling by parental education, wealth index and number of siblings

India	*Unstandardized Coefficients*		*t*	*R^2*
	B	*Std. Error*		
Father education	0.2	0	50.5	
Mother education	0.1	0.01	18.98	
Age	0.28	0.01	48.11	0.63
Wealth index	0.15	0	76.04	
Number of Brother & sister	-0.42	0.01	-47.51	
Rajasthan				
Father education	0.25	0.01	27.5	
Mother education	0.11	0.01	8.63	
Age	0.18	0.01	12.98	0.65
Wealth index	0.14	0	33.11	
Number of Brother & sister	-0.41	0.02	-19.69	
Bihar				
Father education	0.25	0.01	27.5	
Mother education	0.11	0.01	8.63	
Age	0.18	0.01	12.98	0.66
Wealth index	0.14	0	33.11	
Number of Brother & sister	-0.41	0.02	-19.69	
Maharashtra				
Father education	0.17	0.01	17.58	
Mother education	0.07	0.01	6.74	
Age	0.31	0.01	23.86	0.59
Wealth index	0.11	0	24.98	
Number of Brother & sister	-0.24	0.02	-11	
Tamil Nadu				
Father education	0.14	0.01	14.12	
Mother education	0.11	0.01	9.59	
Age	0.19	0.01	13.99	0.50
Wealth index	0.11	0.01	21.66	
Number of Brother & sister	-0.29	0.03	-10.95	

Conclusion

This paper examines the effect of parental educational and occupation on child schooling and occupation in India using the population- based survey data. Results indicate that the education level of children varies directly with educational level of parents. For fathers who had higher educational level, their children had higher educational level even controlling for socio-economic condition of the household. However, the economic status of the household also found a significant predictor of child schooling. Most of the children of fathers engaged in primary activities were doing the same type of work as their fathers. In so far as fathers doing secondary, tertiary and quaternary work were concerned, the larger percentage of their children were also doing similar type of work. This indicates the positive association between the occupation of the fathers and that of their children. With regard to fathers belonging to 'others' category, the education status among their children is high in comparison to those young children belonging to Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST). In case of the religious factor, the mean years of schooling of children whose fathers belong to others (Christian, Sikh, Jain etc) category is high compared to those whose fathers were Hindus or Muslims. Partial differences were found in the context of education and occupation. In Tamil Nadu, the mean years of schooling is high compared to others states. The occupational mobility in Bihar and Jharkhand is low compared to other states. In the poorest quintile, most of the people engage in agriculture labour and primary activities.

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Understanding and Addressing Social Equity Concerns for Realization of Right to Education

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Abstract

Equity means equal opportunity for all children to complete elementary education irrespective of gender, religion, caste, socio-economic, cultural, or linguistic background and geographical location. It cuts across components of access, enrolment, retention, participation and quality. Given that exclusion tends to take highly contextual forms - varying in scope, form and degree in different parts of the country (and within a state too), strategies to achieve equity and inclusion must come to grips with the local situation within which a particular form of inequity or exclusion is manifested. Hence, careful situation analysis and systematic documentation of forms of exclusion would be a necessary starting point. While the RTE Act provides a legal entitlement for children belonging to disadvantaged groups and weaker sections, their actual participation will require innovative and sustained measures integrated with mainstream interventions to ensure meaningful progress on equity. In order to pursue these measures, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan should strive to find newer ways of breaking the barriers that prevent the participation of children from these backgrounds. Further, the reality of children experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage should inform planning and implementation. Government schools cater mostly to disadvantaged groups and weaker sections and, thus, it is important to work with government agencies on a multi-pronged strategy that includes advocacy, teacher training, curricular reform and community sensitization.

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Elementary education (Classes I-VIII) is the stepping stone of the entire education edifice and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the main vehicle for providing it to all children in the age-group of 6-14. This flagship programme of the Ministry of HRD is India's most important social sector programme for Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE).The SSA covers all States and UTs and reaches out to an estimated 199 million children in 1.3 million habitations in the country (8th AIES-2009) through 1.41 million elementary schools, including 0.84 million primary and 0.57 lakh upper primary schools. Although the programme has created tremendous awareness among the masses regarding the importance of elementary education, it has not been possible yet to universalize elementary education. The stickiness of the elementary education drop-out rate at 40% *(Selected Educational Statistics, 2010-11, MHRD)* shows that the systemic issues of equalizing opportunities for good quality education to all children have not been addressed fully. An independent sample survey, sponsored by MHRD and conducted by International Market Research Bureau (IMRB) in 2005, estimated the number of out–of-school children (OoSC) at 10.3 million. A repeat survey, conducted in 2009 by the same agency, showed a decline in the number of out-of-school children to 8.1 million, close to the official estimate reported by States to MHRD's Project Approval Board (PAB) for SSA and quoted in the Twelfth Plan document. Somewhat similar estimates have been provided by Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for rural India. However, these estimations should be taken with caution in view of the number of OoSC estimated in Census 2001(32 million). Census 2001 showed that 12.6 million children under the age of 14 were engaged in child labour, which clearly means that all these children were out of school. As per latest NSSO estimates (66th Round), the projected aggregate child population in the age group of 5-14 years (2009-10) is 255 million and 12% of these children (29.3 million) are not attending any educational institution.

Education of Socially Disadvantaged Groups

As per DISE 2011-12, there were about 39.41 million SC children (19.8% of total enrolment), 21.74 million ST children (10.9%) and 25.46 million Muslim minority children (12.8%) attending primary and upper primary grades. Addressing equity issues is, therefore, of paramount importance in elementary education. One of the four goals of the SSA is bridging social and gender category gaps in elementary education. Consequently, the programme attempts to reach out to girls and children belonging to SC/ST/Muslim communities. However, the SSA has not yet given much attention to urban deprived children, children affected by periodic migration, children living in remote and scattered habitations, and children belonging to most disadvantaged groups. Although the programme has identified Special Focus Districts (SFDs) on the basis of adverse performance on indicators of enrolment, retention, and concentration of SC/ST/Minority communities, the strategies adopted so far have tended to be somewhat fragmented and devoid of institutional support, given the complex nature of inequality and exclusion. As a result, the many forms that exclusion takes, and the different ways in which it is manifested, have not been sufficiently addressed across the components of access, participation, retention, achievement and completion of elementary education. This makes exclusion the single most important challenge in universalizing elementary education and the most difficult roadblock in realizing the ultimate outcomes of the SSA, viz. (i) ensuring universal access to elementary education of eight years and (ii) improving the quality of education, translating into greater

level of learning of the children. The lack of progress in achievement of the outcomes necessitates an understanding of the causes of the phenomenon of exclusion and the urgent need to address these in order to reach the intended outcomes and meet obligations under the Right to Education Act 2009. With the RTE Act in force, this challenge must be addressed with urgency.

The disproportionate representation of these socially disadvantaged groups does not stop at non-enrolment and drop-out. They are also over-represented among those who attend schools irregularly and usually have lower learning levels than others. National Learning Achievement Survey for Class V students, undertaken by NCERT in 2010, which follows a more sophisticated method using Item Response Theory (IRT), revealed that SC and ST continue to perform poorly in all subjects: language, mathematics and EVS. Studies commissioned by MHRD show that SC/ST/Muslim children and girls are at a disadvantage. The key reasons cited could be broadly classified into school- related factors (dysfunctional schools, irrelevant teaching learning etc.) and those related to socio-economic barriers (such as migration, ill- health, discrimination within schools and classrooms and social distance). Even when the overall gender disparities are slowly decreasing, the educational status of SC/ST/Muslim girls, as compared to their other counterparts, continues to remain precarious. They also constitute the majority of those migrating families forced to migrate due to livelihood demands, with usually a negative impact on the children's education. The SSA has tried to address these issues through various interventions. Some of them are general, such as opening schools, providing basic infrastructure and teachers, and in-kind transfers, viz. textbooks, mid-day meal, uniform etc.. Some are more specific and targeted, such as having various kinds of innovative schooling strategies with the objective of mainstreaming them into formal schools, provisions for special opportunities for learning (e.g. bridge courses, seasonal hostels and other such centres) and exposure such as science exhibitions, visits and training of teachers on such issues. In varying degree, these appear to have played a role in enhancing the participation of SC/ST/Muslim children though it is difficult to ascertain the extent of impact. Also, all these interventions need to be reviewed and, if necessary, re-conceptualized in the context of the RTE norms and intentions.

RTE vis-a-vis Equity and Social Inclusion

The RTE Act 2009 has defined children belonging to disadvantaged groups and children belonging to weaker sections. Disadvantaged Groups are defined as those belonging to *SC, ST, socially and educationally backward class or such other groups having disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economical, geographical, linguistic, gender, or such other factors as may be specified by the appropriate Government.* The Act requires the appropriate government and every local authority to *ensure that the child belonging to weaker sections and disadvantaged groups are not discriminated against and prevented from pursuing and completing elementary education on any grounds*. An amendment to the RTE Act has also been proposed to include children with disabilities under the definition of disadvantaged groups. The above definitions in the RTE Act open up the whole sphere of circumstances, which come in the way of a child's enrolment and participation in school, and his/her completion of the elementary stage. This necessitates an attempt at listing of categories of children who might be covered under section 2(d) and (e) and spelling out possible strategies to prevent explicit and implicit discrimination in pursuing and completing

elementary education. The enactment of the RTE requires addressing gender and social equity within a framework that is holistic and systemic. The approach will be informed by the following perspective, which is in keeping with the principles laid out by the *Report of the Committee on Implementation of RTE Act and the Resultant Revamp of SSA*:

a. ***Equity*** will mean not only equal opportunity, but also creation of conditions in which the disadvantaged sections of the society – children of SC, ST, Muslim minority, landless agricultural workers and children with special needs etc. can avail of the opportunity.
b. ***Access*** will not be confined to ensuring that a school becomes accessible to all children within specified distance but implies an understanding of the educational needs and predicament of traditionally excluded categories – SC, ST and other sections of disadvantaged groups, Muslim minority, girls in general, and children with special needs.

In the context of the RTE Act, the equity agenda of the SSA is intended to work towards:

- Moving from incentives and provisions- based approach to a rights and entitlements approach;
- Developing a deeper understanding on issues contributing to exclusion and disadvantage, arising from entrenched hierarchical structures (social, linguistic, cultural, religious), prevalent stereotypes and the challenges faced by children from disadvantaged communities, including within the school space;
- Assessing needs of different excluded and marginalized groups and communities and, consequently, addressing these needs through contextualized strategies;
- Encouraging innovative thinking and dialogue to identify viable, holistic, and multi-pronged strategies to address issues of gender, equity and exclusion that will cut across the SSA goals;
- Encouraging, up scaling and institutionalizing interventions and strategies found effective, viable and sustainable for strengthening the mainstream education system.

All Children in School

Most States have achieved their access-related goals, reducing OoSC and increasing enrolments in schools. This is being achieved through the opening of new schools, construction of additional classrooms, hiring of new teachers, conversion of EGS centres into primary schools, upgrading primary schools to upper primary schools, and through special interventions aimed at urban SCs/STs/Muslims and girls. In order to improve physical access to schools, SSA sanctioned opening of about 2.1 lakh new primary schools and 1.74 lakh upper primary schools upto the end of the Eleventh Plan period (2007-12). About 1.92 lakh primary and 1.05 lakh upper primary schools were constructed, along with 16.04 lakh additional classrooms, 5.84 lakh toilets and 2.23 lakh drinking water facilities upto the Eleventh Plan period. Moreover, 91% of sanctioned primary schools and 88% of upper primary schools are operational, with major backlogs in Bihar, U.P., W.B. and Rajasthan. Taking into account the RTE needs, over 67000 new school buildings, 10500 residential schools, 4.98 lakh additional classrooms, 62366 drinking water facilities and 3.43 lakh toilets have been sanctioned during the Twelfth Plan period (2012-17). It is noteworthy that 0.13 million EGS centres were upgraded into regular schools. In the context of RTE norms, more

than 70% of government schools and more than 85% of private schools comply with availability of at least five out of nine physical facilities(Aide-memoire, SSA, 14th Joint Review Mission: 18-28 July 2011). There has been considerable progress in enrolling OoSC to schools over the years. However, there have been issues pertaining to the mismatch in the number of OoSC reported by IMRB/ASER survey, Village Education Registers, States' Reports to PAB of MHRD and NSSO estimates.

Challenges in Estimation of Out of School Children

In order to get a real estimate of the number and nature of OoSC, several states have initiated detailed child tracking mechanisms. States like Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, MP, Odisha and Rajasthan have developed online Child Tracking System (CTS) for tracking OoSC. The data compiled through CTS in these States reveal that there are, in fact, more OoSC children than believed, thus invalidating the estimates using VERs. For example, Rajasthan's child tracking survey in 2010 revealed that 1.2 million children were still out of school, compared to IMRB estimation of 1.0 million OoSC in 2009 and VER estimates of nearly 0.2 million. This brings home the fact that there might be many more OoSC in other States and the agenda of access is yet unfinished. A number of strategies have been adopted by the States to ensure enrolment for hard-to-reach children. These include opening neighborhood schools, relaxation of norms, hostel facility for primary schools, increasing number of seats in tribal schools, transport and escort facilities. Some States have carried out geo-spatial mapping of schools with the help of global positioning system (GPS) for determining habitations unserved by schools. These include Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, W.B. and Manipur. However, the data on the coverage and reach of special initiatives to improve access has not yet been compiled yet. Not all States have defined neighborhood schools under state RTE rules. The findings of CTS, conducted in several States, have turned the notion of last mile to be covered for OoSC upside down. It is a considerable last mile that the States have to cover before all children will be in school and learning. The timeframe, mandated for establishment of neighborhood schools and provision of school infrastructure, was upto March 2013. States have to redouble their efforts in estimating the actual number of OoSC and opening of new schools following neighborhood norms.

There is a need to deepen the understanding of RTE from the grassroots to the state level. It is a challenge for States to devise targeted strategies to bring back to school children belonging, in particular, to excluded groups like migrants, urban poor, Muslims and SCs/STs. Other related issues that need attention include development of special teaching-learning materials for these children and recruitment and training of teachers to address the issues of learning. There are appreciable efforts being made by some States to provide academic support to OoSC and drop-out children after admitting them to schools. In several States, teaching-learning activities are conducted at Special Training Centres (STCs) as mandated by RTE Act. The students are placed in their age appropriate classes after a minimum period of three months and maximum of two years, depending on their age and readiness. The teachers and schools should be prepared to organize these special trainings wherever the number of such OoSC happens to be small. Teachers and schools should also be prepared to welcome and integrate children who enter after receiving such training outside the schools. This has implication for in-service teacher training. All the States have mapped out- of-school children but the migration pattern, with its implication on number of children

(including their language specific needs), would be required for them to be referred to STCs. Though it is appreciable that States have started providing special attention for newly-enrolled children, there is a need to have clear direction and strategy. The States need a framework within which to work out their strategy for running STCs. The experiences from NGOs and other institutions need to be adapted, such as 'Katha' for urban schools and 'CARE' for rural schools. All new endeavours should be informed by an analysis of various approaches that have demonstrated results, e.g. the 11-month bridge course used by CARE India for their 'Udaan' project, and adapted versions in the KGBVs in four States; the one developed by NCERT; and such other effective bridge/accelerated learning courses. The graded curriculum (with clear learning objectives for each study unit) needs to be designed thoughtfully, keeping in mind the varying age groups (and their existing knowledge) and the short period of time available to cover the multi-grade level skills and concepts. The States also need to quantify children who, though in school, are not learning and make provisions for them. In the case of upper primary, the concern is about the 11 States following seven years of elementary cycle. Now eight states have decided to move towards eight-year elementary cycle. The concern here is not only about physical transfer of Grade VIII from secondary to elementary, but ensuring curricular and subject balance in Grades V and VIII.

Special Focus Districts

Education is the most effective instrument of social empowerment. Concern for education of socially disadvantaged groups is interwoven in the SSA. Educational incentives to offset the cost of education are provided to SC/ST children and girls. The SSA facilitates context-specific interventions for promoting educational opportunities to such groups. Districts, with substantial population of SC/ST/Muslim communities, and districts, with more than specified number of OoSC, high gender gaps and deficit infrastructure, have been identified as special focus districts for targeted interventions under SSA. Joint Review Missions for SSA have emphasized the need to treat gender and social disadvantage as being integral to SSA's larger perspective on quality with equity. The programme targets geographical areas in districts and blocks with predominance of SC/ST/Muslim population in the matter of allocation of funds and school infrastructure to promote education of those deprived of educational facilities so far Special Focus Districts identified for the purpose include the following categories:

(a) SFD-A Category (70 districts): Districts with a gap in additional classrooms exceeding 3000. The plan of these districts should address the requirement of additional classrooms. The outlay for civil construction in these districts could go up to a maximum 50% of the total outlay of the district in order to saturate requirements of classrooms only.
(b) SFD-B Category (173 districts): These are districts which have more than 20,000 OoSC (27), districts with Retention Rate lower than 60% (126), and districts with gender gap of more than 10% at primary or 20% at upper primary level (20). The district plan should provide for interventions to address these gaps.
(c) SFD-C Category (109 ST, 61 SC, 88 districts having 20% or more Muslim population, 121 PMO's Minority Concentrated Districts, 35 Naxalite-affected and 94 Border Area districts): These are districts with a large population of disadvantaged social groups,

Naxalite-affected districts and border districts. The district plans should provide for interventions to focus on the specific problems of these districts.

Retention and Transition

It is interesting to note that MHRD has identified 126 districts (SFD-B category) as districts with low retention rate at primary level (less than 60%) and notified them as Special Focus Districts. However, it is not clear what specific actions will be taken by MHRD or States to improve retention rates in these districts. Cohort drop-out rate shows that 27% of pupils entering Grade I drop out before completing Grade V (Selected Educational Statistics: 2010-11). Estimated retention rate at primary level in 2011-12 is only 76%. At upper primary level, retention rate is still worse. In States that allow a seven- year elementary cycle, retention upto Grade VII is over 72%, while in States where the elementary cycle is of eight years, the retention till Grade VIII is low (47%). It has to be noted that the majority districts in this category are from U.P., Bihar and other educationally backward states. Transition rate from primary to upper primary is also a concern in U.P. and Bihar as compared to other States. This shows that some of the historically educationally disadvantaged States, in spite of progress, still need to get their act together to retain children in school and ensure their completion of eight years of elementary cycle. However, this does not mean that the issue is solved in other States. The issue will be much more severe if one looks at the way different States have been defining 'drop-out'. For example, in Rajasthan, no child is considered as drop-out unless the child is absent from school continuously for more than 45 days, whereas in Kerala, children who are absent for two weeks consecutively is considered as drop-out. Related to the issue of drop-out and retention is the issue of student attendance/absenteeism. In this regard, it is to be noted that there are two types of student absenteeism-chronic and sporadic. While sporadic absenteeism does not affect student retention, chronic absenteeism has its impact on retention and potential drop-out. Studies commissioned by MHRD show that on an average, only 68% of students attend school regularly at primary level and 75.5% at the upper primary level. There is a huge loss of student time (32%) in schools and, hence, its impact on learning. While average attendance in schools is more than 90% in Kerala and H.P., it is well below 80% at the primary level in the Hindi heartland.

One of the issues in planning for retention and transition is the concrete logical chain, which links inputs to processes and outputs and, finally, outcomes. Irregular attendance needs to be viewed as a very different and far more complex challenge than access and enrolment. Community mobilization efforts need to undergo a qualitative shift taking RTE norms into consideration, whereby communities are also empowered on issues related to discrimination, rights, corporal punishment, and abuse. Teacher training approaches need to undergo a change whereby equity issues are viewed as essential elements for improving quality. The States need to review their strategies towards SC/ST/Muslims in order to move away from a piecemeal to a comprehensive approach, addressing all issues simultaneously: community- related issues such as constraints faced in attendance, parental perceptions, community perceptions about diversity and quality; and teacher and school- related issues such as inclusive schooling processes, respectful behavior, reflection of their language and knowledge in materials and processes etc..

Understanding Exclusionary Practices

While the SSA has identified SFDs (C category) with concentration of SC/ST/Muslim communities, a further unpacking of layers of exclusion that exist within these districts will be required by local authorities entrusted with the role of identifying out-of-school children and ensuring that they are brought to school. Since the RTE Act guarantees elementary education in a neighbourhood school, the neighbourhood can be the best unit for identification of marginalized children. For doing this job effectively, it will be imperative that the local authorities work closely with communities and community-based groups that have links within communities and can help in identifying the OoSC. School Management Committees (SMCs), envisaged in the RTE Act, should have to play a key role in the mapping exercise and in ensuring inclusive strategies in the School Development Plan (SDP), the preparation of which has been entrusted to them. Equity in SSA is, therefore, intended to focus not merely on addressing exclusion of girls and children of SC/ST/Muslim communities as well as including gender and other equity issues within the quality goal, but also on tackling the phenomenon of out-of-school children, who were never enrolled because of poverty, social thinking, parental negligence, family work, household chores, such as care of siblings, non-availability of schools, migration of family in search of work, children of urban areas living in slums, on streets, railway platforms, children with disabilities (CWSN), destitute and orphaned children, and those working as domestic help or in shops. Also, equity includes a new category of excluded children – those living in areas affected by civil strife, children affected from migration, urban deprived and homeless children, children in remote and sparsely populated habitations, and other categories of excluded children. As a first step in the exercise of bringing children from marginalized backgrounds into school, a careful mapping of these children - who they are and where they live - should be undertaken systematically.

In addition to the mapping of OoSC, an understanding of the realities of the situation faced by them at the community and school level is required, including an identification of all the points of exclusion from the level of the household up to education system. Exclusionary practices often begin even before a child reaches the school premises. An SC girl, for instance, traveling through an upper caste hamlet on her way to school, may face harassment on her way that could well discourage her and dissuade her parents from sending her to school. Parents of children from Muslim families may also have similar inhibitions in sending their children to schools that are located in areas dominated by the majority community. Safety of children, regularly subjected to derogatory name calling, rebuking, even physical harassment, is a significant factor determining participation of children from such backgrounds in school. Children from SC/ST/Muslim communities have both common and unique needs and challenges impeding attempts to their inclusion. The following is a brief account of needs and nature of exclusion pertaining to each community as extracted from the Report of the Committee on *Implementation of RTE and Resultant Revamp of SSA*:

Exclusion of Scheduled Caste (SC) Children

Exclusion by Teachers:

- Segregated seating arrangements in the classroom, with SC children made to sit separately and typically at the back of the classroom.
- Undue harshness in reprimanding SC children in relation to upper caste children, in scolding children for coming late to school, in resolving fights, condoning name-calling by upper caste children etc.
- Not giving time and attention to SC children in the classroom, such as not checking their homework or class work, not answering their queries - even rebuking them for asking questions in class.
- Excluding SC children from public functions, including non-participation in morning assembly or public events such as Republic/Independence Day or by routinely making them sit at the back of the classroom.
- Making derogatory remarks on SC children - their supposed inability to keep up with academic work.
- Denying SC children the use of school facilities, including water sources. Keeping water segregated; preventing SC children from using school taps or containers used to store drinking water.
- Asking SC children to do menial tasks in school, including cleaning school premises and the toilets.

Exclusion by Peer Group:

- Calling SC children by caste names and not sitting with them in the classroom.
- Not including SC children in play activities in the classroom or in break time when children go out to play; SC children often return to their own neighbourhoods to play with non-enrolled SC children there.

Exclusion by the System:

- Incentives schemes meant for SC children not being implemented in full.
- Lack of acknowledgement of SC role models in the curriculum or by teachers.
- Reinforcing caste characteristics in syllabi and textbooks.
- Lack of sensitization of teachers in teacher education and training.
- Insufficient recruitment of SC teachers.

Intervention Strategies for Inclusion of SC Children should be based on intensive micro-planning, addressing the needs of every child. The following interventions for inclusion of SC children can help in addressing the aforesaid practices of discrimination and exclusion:

- Establishing norms of behaviour within the school for teachers and students.
- Detection of forms of discrimination practiced in a particular context by either teachers or students is not easy since many forms of discrimination have become part of accepted behaviour and go unnoticed and unchallenged. Finding ways of listening to children's voices would be crucial to this exercise. Setting up a system of reporting on discriminatory practices at school level would be a beginning. Complaint boxes, that are regularly dealt with at SMC meetings, are a suggested intervention.

- Timely redressal of instances of discrimination at the level of the school or Block. Delays in taking action can lead to discouragement on part of parents and teachers.
- Establishing norms for classroom interactions such as seating patterns that ensure that children are not segregated on basis of caste/community/gender. The 'Nali-Kali' model of multi-level learning, pioneered in Karnataka in the mid-nineties (based on Rishi Valley's school-in-a-bag programme), is worth adopting as it allows children to sit in groups based on levels of learning. This breaks social barriers and allows for rotation and inter-mingling as children move in and out of learning circles.
- Co-curricular activities (sports, music and drama), which tend to break social barriers, need to be encouraged. They are a neglected area and could be an important strategy for increasing interaction of children and allowing them from varied backgrounds to exhibit their talents and get recognition.
- Recognizing the agency of teachers. The teacher is a key figure in the school and can help to either perpetuate or obliterate discriminatory practices. But her/his role in this process is largely neglected so far. Interventions in the following areas would go a long way in overturning the current situation:
- (a) Sensitization of teachers from pre-service training onwards: Special modules should be developed by experts for use in teacher education and training programmes. Special in-service training within the mandated 20 days should be organized to deal with specific problems of inclusion at Block level.
- b) Setting norms for teacher behaviour: Some norms related to corporal punishment and abuse have been included in the RTE. Strict monitoring and adherence to these norms would help obliterate some of the malpractices mentioned above, such as making SC children perform menial tasks.
- Helping teachers develop pedagogical tools/classroom practices that allow breaking of social barriers. Technical support in developing such tools should be sought from experts/civil society groups.
- Providing adequate infrastructure for schooling in districts with concentration of SC population.
- Opening schools in SC concentrated neighbourhood wherever required.
- Special training as per need for age appropriate admission.
- Interventions for specific categories of deprived SC children living in difficult circumstances.
- Monitoring attendance and retention of children regularly.
- Providing context- specific interventions like residential schools or transport, as required.

The SSA recognizes that problems of exclusion often take local and context-specific forms and the above mentioned suggestions comprise a general list of issues emerging from studies conducted so far, which need to be addressed urgently. As a case of best practice, Bihar has initiated a special strategy known as 'Utthan' for the most marginalized (Dalits or SCs), wherein a community member, mostly from within the community, is especially prepared for providing escort, counseling and extra-academic support to children in order to sustain their interest, attendance and learning and, therefore, ensure their retention in schools. The intervention has shown encouraging results. However, it is at a nascent stage

and needs further nurturing and support in order to demonstrate sustained change. States need to evolve such a strategy further to make the school itself a more equal and responsive institution by training teachers through appropriate means, including reflective and introspective methods. This would facilitate the gradual phasing out of external volunteers. MHRD needs to appreciate that such interventions require longer timeframe to be able to bring in any sustainable gain and support the exercise of transforming schools into more responsive institutions.

Exclusion of Scheduled Tribe (ST) Children

The ST children, besides facing some of the exclusionary practices mentioned above for SC children, also face problems peculiar to their situation. Tribal populations tend to be concentrated in remote, hilly or heavily forested areas with dispersed populations, where even physical access to schools is difficult. If there are schools and teachers, the teachers are unlikely to share students' social and cultural backgrounds or to speak students' languages/dialects, leading to a sense of alienation among children. Tribal Welfare Department has tried to address this problem by establishing residential or 'Ashram' schools for tribal children; however, there is a need, not just for many more residential schools, but also for improved quality in these schools. A significant minority of educational institutions attended by tribal children are actually under the administrative control of other Departments, such as Social Justice, Tribal Development and Labour. The issues of inter-departmental convergence are likely to affect children enrolled in these systems. One of the manifestations of this absence of convergence is the lack of consistency of norms and standards for tribal residential Ashram Schools. A capital issue for the education of ST children is the question of language of instruction, with children speaking a tribal dialect and not conversant with the state language. This issue is critical in border areas, with frequent migration of communities with traditionally migratory lifestyles. Further, history textbooks are silent on the issues of tribal culture.

With the operationalization of the RTE Act, 'Ashram' schools have also come under its purview and have to follow the prescribed norms and standards. Collaboration with the Education Department on residential schools for tribal-dominated areas would be required to enable a strengthened and consolidated approach to this problem, including recruitment of teachers of similar social and cultural backgrounds and provision of curricula and textbooks that are not alienating for tribal children. The biggest problem faced by tribal children is that of language. Analysis of the educational indicators shows that majority of tribal children drop out of the primary school due to the difference in the school and home language. Teaching materials and textbooks tend to be in a language students do not understand; content of books and syllabi ignore students' own knowledge and experience and focus only on the dominant language and culture. Not understanding the school language and, therefore, the course content, children are unable to cope and end up repeating grades and eventually drop out. While instruction in the mother tongue is widely recognized as beneficial to language competencies in the first language, achievement in other subject areas and second language learning, there is no explicit obligation on States/UTs to institute mother tongue education. The "three language formula" that has been the cornerstone of the language policy in India has not been uniformly implemented across the country. In some linguistically diverse States such as Jharkhand, Orissa and Chhattisgarh,

the problem is compounded by multiplicity of linguistic backgrounds represented in a single classroom. Providing multi-lingual education is not a simple task. Even education in the mother tongue is challenged by a host of problems such as:

- the language may not have a script and/or may not be recognized as constituting a legitimate language; apt terminology for education purposes may still have to be developed within the language;
- there may be shortage of educational materials in the language and lack of trained teachers;
- there may be resistance to schooling in mother tongue by students, parents and teachers, and
- if there are several mother tongues represented in one class, it compounds the problem even further.

Research has shown that the mother tongue is the best medium of instruction, and inclusion of tribal children hinges crucially on the language issue. With the RTE Act adding immediacy to their inclusion, this issue must be addressed fully, rather than be ignored due to the complexities involved. For this, support is needed from all quarters interested in a pluralistic social order that would ensure enhanced participation of tribal people. For a start, Tribal Welfare/Education Departments, responsible for implementation, would need to communicate with each other and interact with NGOs and scholars who could support the processes. States showing initiative should be supported.

Intervention Strategies for Inclusion of ST Children can help in addressing the above-mentioned practices of discrimination and exclusion, such as:

- Teaching in the local language by recruiting native speakers.
- Development of educational material in local languages using resources available within the community, and training of teachers in multi-lingual education.
- Establishing resource centres in tribal-dominated states for providing training and other technical support for development of pedagogic tools/materials catering to multi-lingual situations.
- Sensitization of teachers to tribal cultures and practices.
- Incorporation of local knowledge in the curriculum and textbooks.
- Creating spaces for cultural mingling within schools for recognition of tribal cultures and practices and obliteration of feeling of alienation in tribal children.
- Involvement of community members in school activities to reduce social distance between the school and the community.
- Textbooks in mother tongue for children at the beginning of primary education where they do not understand regional language.
- *Anganwadis/Balwadis* in schools in tribal areas so that girls are not required to do baby-sitting.
- Special training/knowledge of tribal dialect for non-tribal teachers working in tribal areas.
- Special plan for nomadic and migrant workers.

In the context of Tribals (STs), language has been a special concern and a number of states have reported undertaking work on materials that would facilitate teaching through tribal languages or multi-lingual teaching in early years. The impact of such interventions is

not clear and it would probably require some more time to see the results. However, it is important to point out that language is both an identity and a learning issue. While it is important to look for technical solutions that would facilitate teaching and learning, it is also crucial for teachers and other education functionaries to develop a perspective that allows a positive and respectful attitude towards all non-mainstream languages and knowledge. In this case, the issue goes beyond tribals alone, as SCs and Muslims also often face discrimination in this respect. This requires a shift in training approaches. The study on discrimination (or social inclusion) needs to be expedited, with a definite timeframe, to be able to provide specific and meaningful insights on these issues and inform strategies.

Exclusion of Muslim Children

SCs and STs are not the only ones to continue to experience discrimination within the system. Similar issues are faced by Muslims who have to suffer negative stereotypes within classrooms and in some state textbooks. The issue of language is also important from the perspective of the Urdu speaking section of the population. Education of Muslim children continues to be a particularly neglected area in policy and programming. As a result, their educational attainments are second only to those of SC population in most areas as mentioned in Sachar Committee Report. From the scattered bits of evidence that do exist, it can be said that in addition to the general issues of discrimination and harassment faced by children from other disadvantaged and excluded groups, children from Muslim families face some of the following constraints too:

- Denial of admission.
- Unfriendly school and classroom environment.
- Cultural and religious domination.
- Early withdrawal of male children to enable them to apprentice with artisans, mechanics etc. to enable self-employment as discrimination in the organized labour market is a huge perceived concern.
- Earlier withdrawal of female children to enable them to find grooms more educated than themselves.
- Unfulfilled demand for adequate number of Urdu medium schools or Urdu as a second language.
- Lack of Urdu language teachers.

Intervention Strategies for Inclusion of Muslim Children such as the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madarsas (SPQEM) and the Scheme for Infrastructure Development for Minority Institutions (IDMI) help in addressing the above-cited practices of exclusionary discrimination, in addition to the following strategies:

- Systematic research on specific constraints faced by Muslim children in different areas. Muslims, like SCs and STs, are not a homogeneous community and exhibit wide differences in social and cultural practices in different States. A more thorough understanding of these issues will help formulate better interventions for inclusion of Muslim children into the education process.
- Opening of schools in Muslim -concentrated neighbourhoods.
- Providing 'girls only' (*Pardanashin*) schools in Muslim -concentrated neighbourhoods.

- Providing Urdu medium schools in Muslim- concentrated neighbourhoods.
- Providing escort to Muslim girls, preferably women from the community, for safe school-going.
- Option of learning Urdu as a second language.
- Recruitment of more Urdu teachers, especially in Muslim-concentrated areas;
- Context-specific and tailor-made programmes for special training.
- Sensitization of teachers to issues of cultural and religious diversity, especially in relation to Muslims.
- Incorporation of practices, such as:
  (a) due representation of Muslim culture in curricular and pedagogical processes;
  (b) discussion of Muslim cultural and religious practices in schools with the help of community members;
  (c) celebration of Muslim festivals in the schools;
  (d) sensitive handling of Muslim children in Ramzan when they may be fasting;
  (e) adequate representation of Muslim parents in the SMC.

A large part of exclusion results from social distance caused by lack of knowledge and understanding about minority communities. Finding spaces to break these information barriers would go a long way in reducing the hostilities and insecurities that exist. The major SSA intervention for Muslim children in most States has been in the form of support to Madrasas. The support comes in the form of strengthening of teacher training, resources for various activities such as exposure visits, sports, science camps etc.. This is a welcome step and such interventions would lead to improvement in quality and participation. A large number of Muslim children attend regular formal schools and, in many cases, face discrimination in various forms as indicated by research studies from various parts of the country. The States need to take cognizance of the fact while developing their approach for an inclusive school. The teachers, in particular, and the education system, in general, need to develop mechanisms to ensure that schools remain secular institutions, with a deep respect for diversity and other such Constitutional values.

Community mobilization efforts need to undergo a qualitative shift, taking RTE norms into consideration, whereby communities are also empowered on issues related to discrimination, rights, corporal punishment, and abuse. Teacher training approaches need to undergo a change whereby equity issues are viewed as essential elements for improving quality. The States need to review their strategies towards SC/ST/Muslims in order to move away from a piecemeal to a comprehensive approach addressing all issues simultaneously: community-related issues, such as constraints faced in attendance, parental perceptions, community perceptions about diversity and quality; and teacher and school-related issues such as inclusive schooling processes, respectful behavior, reflection of their language and knowledge in materials and processes etc..

Exclusion of Children of Most Disadvantaged Groups (MDGs)

The SSA recognizes hierarchies among the poor. There are groups which are not only the most deprived and exploited, but quite neglected. These groups deserve a special priority and focused action. The programme should carefully assess their needs and plan context-specific, innovative and integrated interventions to make tangible progress in eliminating

exclusion of children belonging to these groups. The following groups have been classified among the most disadvantaged groups:

- Urban deprived children, including those in poor slum communities and uprooted urban habitations;
- Child labour, particularly bonded child labour, and domestic workers;
- Children in ecologically fragile areas where they have to fetch fuel, water, fodder and do other household chores;
- Children of families of scavengers and other such stigmatized professions;
- Children of itinerant or seasonal labour who have mobile and transient lifestyles, like construction workers, road workers and workers on large construction sites;
- Children of landless agriculture labour, nomadic communities and pastoralists;
- Forests' dwellers and tribals in remote areas and children in remote desert hamlets;
- Children in areas affected by civil strife.

Children belonging to the above-mentioned groups and others, who are in circumstances of extreme deprivation, will need exceptional arrangements put in place in the perspective of children's rights. One among the most appropriate learning situations for them could be well- established hostels and residential schools as well as transportation to and from school, besides other integrated and participatory interventions in collaboration with government agencies, NGOs and community. A major issue concerning children in extremely difficult circumstances is sheer lack of their voice due to alienation from community and little representation in agencies and fora like the SMC, PTA or VEC. The SSA should make efforts to address this issue by advocacy for children's right to participation, by supporting the formation of support groups and children's collectives, and by encouraging efforts to accommodate their voices in planning, implementation and monitoring of interventions and strategies.

However, barring a few isolated interventions, strategies that comprehensively address the issue of the above-cited groups are not noticeable. Globally, literature on some of these groups shows well conceptualized and responsive strategies that go beyond education interventions which are needed to enable children from these groups to participate and gain from schooling. Whereas there could be a range of access and learning related strategies that are available to the State teams, there may be a need to understand other interventions and incorporate these into the plan. Some of these interventions could be related to psycho-social care, counselling, de-addiction therapy, health support, supplementary nutrition. Issues of child health, protection and psychological well-being need to be integral to the intervention. It is essential that with these special groups, the lens of intervention be that of understanding and supporting the child in a holistic manner. SMC training and development process in urban areas should be different from rural areas, as the issues surrounding them are very distinct. MHRD could consider developing separate model guidelines for this purpose. Moreover, the States need to identify some of the most marginalized groups in each State and undertake a study to understand their situation in a comprehensive manner. In particular, there is a need to understand the situation of children, who have either experienced or are growing up experiencing prolonged violence closely.

What needs to be understood is that the impact of this on child's emotions and personality is traumatic, deep and lasting. This understanding should be followed by development of a context-specific plan that responds to the need of the child in a holistic

manner. Such children need schooling that includes counseling and other forms of support going beyond regular educational processes. States and districts facing conflict situations need to keep this in mind while developing their plans. The plan should map other departments and stakeholders whose help may be needed while working with these special groups e.g. Departments of Health, Social and Family Welfare, Police; Psychologists, De-addiction therapists and Child Protection groups. The MHRD should mobilize institutions (like NIMHANS) and professionals who could support States in this effort. The practice of using SSA innovation funds for interventions related to SCs, STs, Muslims, urban deprived and other marginalized groups is also puzzling. There should be separate allocations for such purposes and the innovation funds should be allowed to be used for real innovations.

Innovative Strategies for Addressing Exclusion of Most Disadvantaged Groups should include the following:

- Mapping of disaggregated data to identify pockets of exclusion at district/block levels, to cull out geographical locations where exclusion has occurred over the years.
- Identifying the various forms of exclusion, beyond visible ones of enrolment/retention.
- Stopping closure of schools without alternative/viable means for children to attend schools.
- Accelerating processes of extension of upper primary school net.
- Accelerating systems of tracking children's attendance to identify children at risk of drop-out. Adapting schools to make them more inclusive and prevent drop-out, and significantly enhancing the bridging system to enable all children to return to school.
- Ending police/army occupation of schools immediately and making them zones of peace.
- Amending Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act (CLPRA) to prohibit all forms of child labour for those under 14 years, including in agriculture, and bringing it in line with the RTE Act.
- Ensuring adequate provisions for child labourers to be mainstreamed into schools.
- Analyzing capacity of the system at upstream, midstream and downstream to address the service delivery in education process and also address discrimination.
- Using different methods to build capacities of key stakeholders in the system to identify the excluded and meaningfully include them in the schooling process, but, at the same time, making the system responsive to their needs and providing them the opportunity to participate meaningfully. Teacher Education is a critical aspect in this regard.
- Building alliances and partnerships to raise the debate of exclusion to a larger audience and, through partnerships, address issues of exclusion. Utilizing inter-sectoral partnerships to address the issues of child labour, discrimination etc..
- Ensuring inclusion of children from marginalized communities in schools and minimizing malpractices of all forms by developing rational, fair and transparent mechanism of regulation of private providers of education for children under 14 years of age.
- Enhancing the provisions in all government schools to Kendriya Vidyalaya norms to ensure true equity and evolve a strong regulatory framework to ensure compliance of private schools with the government norms and equity for excluded groups.

Children in areas of prolonged conflict and civil strife, children with HIV and AIDS, and several other such groups form the most marginalized and most disadvantaged groups of

children. Situation analysis and interventions for some of the largest among the aforesaid groups of most underprivileged children i.e. children affected from migration, the urban deprived children, children in areas affected by civil strife, and children termed as "excluded among the excluded", are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Education of Children Affected by Migration

To address the issue of seasonal migration for varying periods for work in brick kilns, agriculture, sugarcane harvesting, construction, stone quarrying, salt pens etc. and their adverse effect on education of children, who migrate with or without other members of the family, the SSA encourages identification of districts, blocks and villages/cities/towns whereof or whereto there is a high incidence of migration. The RTE Act mandates bringing such children to regular schools, both in districts where they stay and in districts whereto they seasonally migrate. This would require innovative and effective strategies for special training to develop age- appropriate competencies to facilitate children's enrolment and retention in age-appropriate classes, and to coordinate between the education providing agencies at both the locations mentioned above. Special Training strategies for these children would require meticulous planning. Some *intervention strategies* can be developed on the following ideas:

- seasonal hostels or residential camps to retain children in the sending villages/urban habitats during the period of migration,
- transportation facility to and from the school in the vicinity of the worksite, and, if it is not practical, then work-site schools should be provided at locations where migrant families are engaged in work,
- peripatetic educational volunteer/s who can move with migrating families to take care of children's education during the period they are on move from school at one location to school at the other, and
- strategies for tracking of children through migration cards/other records to enable continuity in their education before, during and after the migration.

The receiving District/State, where migrant families are located for some period, should have responsibility for ensuring that education of the children in age- appropriate classes continues during the period of migration. It is expected that the Annual Work Plans & Budgets (AWP&B) of these districts would include activities for education of such children under Special Training component. The involvement of NGOs in the processes of mapping of migration and planning and implementation of interventions should be actively supported. Funds available under innovation can be used to support activities in an integrated strategy which are not supported under any other norm of the SSA. Since migration takes place across Districts and States, it would be necessary for sending and receiving districts and States to collaborate with each other to ensure continuity of education of such children and by other means, such as providing appropriate textbooks and hiring teachers, who can teach in the language in which children have been receiving education. For this purpose, "task forces" could be set up to effect regular coordination between States/Districts. The appraisal process of the AWP&B should scrutinize if areas of high incidence of migration are identified and whether strategies for education of seasonally migrating children are included in District and State Plans. There is also a host of other problems that have persisted in the

previous years and for which not enough thought has been put in, such as the question of language diversity of migrants and the problem resulting from the necessity of integrating with urban life. At the same time, incoming migrants, especially those speaking a certain language and coming from a particular part of the country, face issues of citizenship and identity that can act as barriers for them to be able to access schooling for their children.

There has been greater migration amongst STs because of unemployment and indebtedness and the schooling of such tribal children has been in jeopardy. Unless the rules of admission, re-admission, attendance, examinations and promotions of migrant children are modified, including entrusting the responsibility to receiving districts to take care of educating all migrating children for the duration that they were in the district with proper access to schooling, the number of migrating tribal OoSC is unlikely to decline in a significant manner. It is essential that child tracking system and additional learning support are extended to all migrant children. All States should carry out online Child Tracking System (CTS), as done by Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, M.P., Odisha and Rajasthan, by adapting the methodology (electoral units) and with special emphasis on urban areas. This will provide near-actual numbers of OoSC that need to be in school, including those that have dropped out. Orissa has a project named AAROHANA for mainstreaming drop-outs and OoSC. At every block and village level, data on OoSC in various age groups, including details on name/guardian is prepared, and each block resource centre entrusted the responsibility to mobilize the parents and enroll the children. The novelty of project AAROHANA is the mainstreaming of children, after the course completion and follow-up action, to retain them in formal school. This is being done through appointment of resource persons, who ensure regular attendance of every child enrolled in the bridge courses, conduct weekly evaluation of each child, map the extra-curricular activities of children and act as remedial teachers when mainstreaming them in a school. In Gujarat, migratory cards are issued to students along with progress cards. Based on information in the migration card and progress card, the child is enrolled in a suitable class by the school in the village the child migrates to. At the end of the migration period, s/he returns with her/his parents to the original school to continue the education in the same class and also appears in annual examination for the same.

Urban Deprived Children

A progressively growing section of India's population now lives in urban areas. Many of the new arrivals move into slums and shanties, which are frequently unrecognized and are not supported by adequate infrastructure, especially schools. Slums, being unrecognized and officially temporary entities, there are often no or inadequate provisions for schools to cater to these growing populations. Consequently, schools catering to slums are disproportionately likely to be overcrowded. They are also more likely to be affected by arbitrary displacement, entailing, for children, sudden loss of access to what had been, until then, their neighborhood school. In the absence of adequate educational facilities, many of the newly-arrived children end up being pushed into child labour. The Commonwealth Games, held in Delhi during the first year of the RTE Act, saw a large number of under-age migrant children being pushed into child labour, including at the very venues of the Games in full glare of media publicity. Another category of vulnerable children are the homeless children and children residing on railway platforms who face a host of protection issues,

apart from the loss of educational opportunities. The inadequate facilities for education of urban poor children on the part of the State are often met through the opening of small and unrecognized private schools that fall short of new RTE standards. There are severe questions about the quality of these institutions. However, the neglect by the state of its duty to reach out to a large population, combined with strong aspirations of poor parents for education and schooling for their children, has left a vacuum that is being filled by these schools. It is hoped that the future would see a more clear focus on ensuring that the government school system becomes more responsive to the same.

The SSA has been focusing on the growing problem of schooling of disadvantaged children in urban areas. Successive Joint Review Missions (JRMs) of the SSA have also dwelt on this component. Urban areas have special challenges like the education of street children, children who are rag pickers, homeless children, children whose parents are engaged in professions that make children's education difficult, children living in urban working class slums, children who are working in industry, children working in households, children at tea shops, garages etc.. Other city specific features are: very high cost of land, heterogeneous community and high opportunity cost etc.. Moreover, due to multiplicity of education providers and agencies managing education, often a number of initiatives for UEE do not reach the urban area schools. Such a situation results in inadequacy or lack of quality improvement, consequently augmenting the number of urban deprived children. States have taken initiatives, ranging from identification through surveys to providing basic amenities in the form of shelter homes, networking with departments, programmes and agencies like Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission, Municipal Corporations and NGOs. Some significant efforts have been made in Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi, Bhopal, Lucknow, Patna and Jabalpur by municipal agencies and education departments in collaboration with NGOs.

However, despite these initiatives, there is a growing need for systemic and coordinated efforts to provide solutions on an institutional basis to urban issues. Thus, to implement RTE in urban areas, the SSA should adopt a more holistic and systems approach. This approach would necessitate coordination and convergence of interventions across Departments, local bodies, civil society organizations and the private sector. The SSA should encourage a *diversity of interventions* planned and executed in an integrated, collaborative and cohesive manner to tackle the unique challenges in the urban areas. This would require planning distinctively for the urban areas, either as separate plans or as part of District Plans in the case of smaller towns. In either case, this would require partnership with NGOs, Municipal Bodies etc.. Mapping and identification of OoSC in urban areas may require special efforts. Whole City Planning (WCP), for ensuring coverage of all eligible children in the drive for UEE, should be rigorously adopted in the SSA. The Municipal Corporations of larger cities should be considered as "Districts" for purposes of preparation of Elementary Education Plans. The arrangements for decentralized management should also apply to these proposals. These proposals can be developed by Municipal Corporations and the State Governments will have to recommend these for funding under the SSA, clearly specifying the source from which the State share would be provided. All the SSA norms should apply to urban areas. Besides wards, urban slum clusters have, so far, been units of planning in different cities. However, experience has shown that these units need to be more micro-oriented so as to effectively address the idea behind habitation planning. More thinking and deliberation in this context would help in equitable planning for urban-deprived children.

Based on successful experiences of some NGOs working in urban areas, SSA in some states have adopted interventions that have proved effective in urban contexts. This includes steps such as making provisions for drop-in centres, hostels, organizing specific activities such as special camps and escorts and so on. While this is appreciable, some special characteristics of urban areas, that draw a large number of migrants from various parts of the country due to livelihood opportunities, need to be considered. This poses a serious challenge in terms of language. RTE ensures the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction to the extent possible. While it may be difficult to ensure the use of mother tongue in such a multi-lingual situation, it would be important to take note of this fact and orient teachers to deal with such situations sensitively and competently. The presence of work opportunities for children in urban areas poses a serious challenge, especially in the RTE context. Parents facing economic hardships are easily attracted to these and community engagement exercises need to address this issue seriously. Also important is the fact that certain factors play a more important role in urban areas as compared to rural areas, i.e. the presence of toilets in the school is important in urban areas, especially for those coming from slums. The States have developed metro city plans separately and it is, indeed, a welcome step. There is now a need to ensure that these plans are implemented well, taking the specific needs of respective metros into consideration. Delhi, with a high proportion of slum population, needs to take this up on an urgent basis.

Children in Areas of Civil Unrest

Areas of civil unrest constitute one of the most neglected areas of the country, covering the regions affected by Naxalite and separatist activities and other large tracts of the north-east. Given the overall instability prevailing in these areas, it is not surprising that education is negatively impacted owing to the concerns about security and safety and the breakdown of government services. Continued police/military occupation of schools in conflict -affected areas has put schools at risk and excluded children from their right to education. *International Education for All Status Report (2011)* has described how Naxalite insurgency groups have attacked schools to damage government infrastructure and instill fear in communities in Chhattisgarh. Apart from loss of infrastructure, this creates a constant sense of fear with both students and teachers reluctant to risk their lives by going to school. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has identified the use of schools by security forces as contributing to their abandonment. The Supreme Court has repeatedly called for the army/police to move out of schools (Tripura, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Manipur), but the process has been very slow, with the army and para-military forces insisting that they have pulled out of schools, when, in reality, they have not. It is regrettable that this situation has persisted despite repeated interventions by the highest court of the land. At the same time, there are issues with children being co-opted into violence as part of the ongoing conflict. Two additional issues requiring mention are the extension of educational provisions to internally displaced communities, with sensitivity shown to children's language and culture, and the need to extend psycho-social support to children affected by conflict through strategies that are not apparent. Clearly, these are new areas of growing concern that is leading to the marginalization of a large number of children from educational processes. The SSA recognizes the situation of these children as an alarming and significant problem and advocates concrete steps to ameliorate the situation as early as

possible. Some *measures to insulate children* and their education from the impact of such situation are as follows:-

- Prohibiting the use of school for housing police, military or para-military forces.
- Making schools safe zones by providing adequate security and emotional support to enable children to come to school and continue with their education undisturbed.
- Providing alternative arrangements for all affected children to enable them to continue their education without a break, such as residential schooling facilities or transportation to safer schools in affected areas.
- Organizing negotiations with leaders to ensure that schools are allowed to function uninterrupted.

Excluded among the Excluded

The SSA acknowledges that the whole list of children excluded from the education process cannot be captured in terms of categories. While children with special needs are being dealt with separately, children from migrant families with nomadic background, children working as domestic help, children in conflict with law, children in protective institutions, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children affected by natural disasters, to name a few, are some categories that have not been explicitly listed. Special strategies to enable their participation would have to be developed. Support in developing these strategies, advocacy for them, and monitoring continued participation of these children should be important elements of the SSA's focus in implementation of the RTE Act. There are many active civil society groups that have gained substantial experience and knowledge of working with these children. Active involvement of these groups must be sought to enable their inclusion in the education process. A process of empanelling such groups for resource support would be a good starting point. However, more active engagement of the Education Department as well as National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPRC)/SCPCR will be necessary to ensure that these children do not remain excluded.

Children Living with and Affected By HIV/AIDS

The information about the educational status of this category of children is notoriously difficult to locate. It becomes especially difficult when progress has to be looked at for only a particular year. Agencies like NCPCR have played a critical role in raising the issues of violation of the rights of children (including educational rights) living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. However, there is no mechanism to ensure that stigma attached to HIV/AIDS affected children is addressed. Central Government statistics have revealed that as many as 61 children have been expelled or removed from various schools across India over the last three years after they were found to be HIV-positive in Andhra Pradesh. After A.P., W.B. has the worst record, with 13, and Haryana, with nine expelled students. Other States are Gujarat (4), UP (3) and Maharashtra (1). Reportedly, all the schools involved were let-off lightly by MHRD and the respective State Education Boards despite demands for severe penalties and de-recognition of such schools. Though there is a provision for much harsher penalties for schools indulging in such inhuman and insensitive practices, various boards have decided to go easy on such schools.

Children with Disability

The disability rights groups were arguably the most active segment from civil society at the time of passage of the Right to Education Bill. The first set of amendments proposed in the Act was to ensure that the educational rights of children with disability were addressed. A set of recommendations were made for inclusion in the new SSA Framework and the model rules. Some of these have been taken on board; however, given the shortage of time between the new Framework coming into force and the end of the third year of RTE, the reality on the ground has not undergone any change. In addition to the ongoing re-drafting of Persons with Disability Act 1995, another critical development has been the finalization of the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), which also incorporated several provisions for ensuring that all new teachers were empowered with at least some knowledge about working with children with disability. However, evidence of concrete change on the ground in the actual lives of children is limited. Much still remains to be done to ensure availability of adequate number of trained teachers able to teach children with special needs (CWSN).A long- standing demand of the disability sector, for matters related to the education for children with disability, is that this subject should be handled by the MHRD and not by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE), in accordance with the recommendations of the National Policy for Persons with Disability 2006. This remains unaddressed. The rationale behind the demand is to ensure that the educational needs of this category of children receive the attention they deserve, and that this should not be seen as something that is done out of charity. Another issue that has failed to find resolution is the status of 'Special Schools' for children with disability. Compliance with the RTE norms is an essential pre-requisite of recognition of all schools. However, the norms for mainstream schools would be too low for children with disability. At the same time, the educational qualifications are different. This should require a clarification from the Ministry (either MHRD or MSJE). However, this is yet to happen. Ironically, the need for obtaining recognition would be welcomed by a large share of the disability sector. There is a need for standardization and rational regulation of Special Schools. One possibility is of notifying the same as 'Special Category Schools' under RTE. This has, however, not happened.

There are few reliable figures for CWSN, and mechanisms for early identification are grossly inadequate. Only 1.5 % of the child population has been found to be disabled in education surveys, compared with a figure of 2.1% of the population, as per Census 2001. Interestingly, despite a better health system and higher child survival indicators, USA has an 11% disability rate for children in the 6-14 age-groups. This underscores the need of setting up appropriate mechanisms to identify diverse disabilities among children, because knowing the correct figure of children with disability is a must for apportionment of special interventions. The question raised at the time of the passage of the RTE Bill, about the extent to which schools were actually inclusive for children with disability, still holds. Children with disability experience, simultaneously, the lack of physical and social access as well as the lack of inclusive institutions. A critical question is that in addition to the children enrolled in schools and those that are out of school, the CWSN is a third category. Nearly 1.38 lakh children are covered through home- based education. Again, keeping a group of children out of mainstream government schools and expecting them to be satisfied with only a few hours of instruction in a week, is not in consonance with the rights framework. The acute shortage of trained teachers and rehabilitation professionals remains. The state has taken some steps

to ensure enrolment of hitherto out-of-school children. The new SSA framework looks at home-based education as a form of bridging rather than an alternative form of schooling. This is a welcome step and should not be diluted in any form. In addition, states like A.P., Bihar, Rajasthan, M.P., Chhattisgarh and U.P. have started some bridge courses for children with disability. However, their availability falls far short of the actual requirements. Availability of teaching learning materials, lack of emphasis on universal design in construction of school buildings, planning for access, and a whole host of other issues have also not been resolved. Further, children with disability are disproportionately likely to suffer from discrimination and violence in the classroom.

Child Labour

The Census 2001 showed that 12.6 million children, under the age of 14, were engaged in child labour, which clearly means that all these children were out of school. As mentioned at the outset, the projected aggregate child population in the age group of 5-14 years (2009-10) is 255 million (NSSO 66th Round)and 12% of these children (29.3 million) are not attending any educational institution. Although the SSA has brought a large number of these children under the educational system, leading to a decline in child labour from 10.57 million in 1999-2000 to 5.24 million in 2009-10, there are *additionally* 19.5 million destitute children and 3.3 million poor children engaged in domestic works who do not attend school (CSO website). As every child out of school is a potential child labourer, civil society organizations place the number of child labour at 40.0 million. The above official estimations do not include children in the more vulnerable age group of 15-18. It has been reported that there were approximately two million child commercial sex workers in the age-group of 5-15 while about 19% Muslim children never see the inside of a classroom. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated the number of child labour at 23.2 million. Also, thousands of poor girls are estimated to be trafficked from Jharkhand alone for domestic work. About 20% of these poor domestic workers are under the age of 14. Some 20 million people, mostly women and girls, migrate for domestic work to Mumbai, Delhi and other large cities. About 20% of these workers are under the age of 14. Thousands of children also migrate from Bihar, U.P., Maharashtra, Orissa, W.B., and the North- East region. There are about four million workers in stone quarries in Maharashtra, of which nearly one million are children. According to another estimate, there are over three lakh street children in metros of Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Kanpur, Bangalore and Hyderabad. About one lakh street children are not enrolled in any school in Delhi (Consortium for Street Children, 2009). A recent unpublished study of 300 brick kilns around Hyderabad shows that as many as 35% of total migrants are children, of which 22% are under 14. There was greater migration amongst STs because of unemployment and indebtedness. The schooling of these children is in jeopardy.

The law mandated with tackling child labour, Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act (CLPRA) 1986, makes a distinction between hazardous and non-hazardous categories of work for children under 14. So, for example, the law bans child labour in *dhabas* deeming it hazardous labour, but not in agriculture. There is an urgent need for an amendment to the CLPRA, to place a complete ban on child labour under 14 years of age, and ensure that all children under 14 are in school. The passage of the RTE Bill should have provided the impetus for a complete abolition of child labour, of whatever sort, given the fact that

education and child labour are mutually exclusive. Unfortunately, the strategic thinking, to ensure all children are finally brought back into school, has not happened. Despite the RTE Act mandating that all children under 14 be in full-time day schools of a certain minimum standard, the practices of child trafficking and child labour, including bonded labour, have not ended. Another critical development has been the move towards the enforcement of minimum norms and standards in the schools meant for child labourers. This was, especially, attempted in the context of streamlining of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) schools into mainstream schools. However, the Central Government, instead of ensuring conformity with the new standards, opted for their closure, forcing the courts to intervene to prevent premature closure. The current trend is to give the NCLP schools three years to upgrade as with the rest of the schools. However, the rate of change has been fairly slow.

Innovative Activities for Supplementing Mainstream Interventions for Equity

In order to promote inclusion of children of marginalized communities, the SSA should develop context-specific interventions, over and above the mainstreamed interventions, to address the problem of exclusion of girls and children belonging to marginalized communities and disadvantaged groups. This would include interventions for girls, early childhood education, children of SC/ST/Muslim communities, urban deprived children, and other groups of children in difficult circumstances, such as child labourers, children affected by migration, children without adult protection, children in conflict with law etc.. All successful interventions, attempted so far, should serve as exemplars for preparing such interventions. Need-specific and innovative interventions should be articulated and formulated in terms of their objectives, rationale, methodology, timeframe, expected outcomes, monitoring etc.. Innovation should be integrated with mainstream interventions in the SSA and lead to tangible progress at least in some components of UEE. The SSA would provide to each district upto Rs. 50.0 lakh for innovative activities for equity to support mainstream interventions to include children belonging to marginalized communities and disadvantaged groups. In the revised norms, the ceiling of Rs. 15.0 lakh per district for a maximum of four projects has been removed. While the SSA would encourage a wide variety of need-based, local-specific innovations, some examples of *context-specific innovative interventions* for marginalized communities and groups can include:

- Awareness building on child rights and entitlements, as per RTE, at the grassroots.
- Providing avenues/creating forums for encouraging children as key stakeholders in the education system.
- Innovative strategies for special training to groups of most disadvantaged children.
- Forming support groups for children without adult protection, homeless children, children working as domestic help, child beggars and other groups of children in extremely difficult circumstances.
- Strengthening of ECCE centres and support in capacity- building of ECCE workers.
- Community mobilization and capacity- building to facilitate preparation of school development plan.

- Community-based monitoring of teacher/student attendance, child participation/ protection of their rights.
- Building a congenial learning environment inside and outside the school.

The revised SSA Framework focuses on the issue of exclusion, differentiating between the issues of discrimination done by teachers/peers and the system, and seeks to lay down recommendations for action for each. However, it is too early to see the extent to which these provisions would translate on the ground. There are some specific issues that affect the education of children from these marginalized communities. Children from these social groups are disproportionately likely to come from first generation school- going families. They are less likely to devote time to studies at home due to household work, sibling care, or wage labour. Consequently, the lack of after-school learning support has a more severe impact on them. Furthermore, given the limited scope for meeting expectations of teachers in these homes without an enriching learning environment, schools and teachers should step in to provide support. However, training and support systems, to enable teachers do this, have been lacking. As such, discrimination against children from marginalized communities persists. This has included everything from crude manifestations of untouchability to more covert means (often as part of hidden curriculum in classroom). This is based on inured beliefs which go back centuries and are difficult to break. However, it is unacceptable that children from SC and ST communities should be treated as inherently unequal. Teacher education has the potential for breaking this cycle, if issues related to structural inequality are integrated into the curriculum. Unfortunately, the state, instead of taking the side of the marginalized, has, in a few instances, shown its willingness to side with the oppressor. Thus, while the provision of mid-day meals can be one instance of breaking this structural inequality, excuses and alibis are found to not implement the provision of having more SC/ST cooks.

The RTE Act does offer scope for parents from marginalized communities to join SMCs and take charge of the schools their children attend. However, with the SMCs not in place in most States, this has remained a potential that has not yet been realized. Moreover, English education has emerged as one controversial area in this regard. Introduction of English language in the curriculum has been one issue that has been introduced to address aspirations of parents, including those from the marginalized groups. However, the implementation of this provision that emerges from the aspirations of poor parents has left much to be desired in terms of quality. Such provisions, if poorly implemented, would lead to greater exclusion, as children are handicapped. An example in point is the introduction of English sections in MCD Schools. Reaching out to communities from where the children come should be a key area of RTE-SSA interventions for equity and inclusion. This would warrant community participation and ownership in interventions for equity and inclusion. In addition, close involvement with other departments as well as with non-governmental and civil society organizations will also be a crucial factor in ensuring universal participation of excluded children. In the case of children without adult protection, lack of community support and ownership has been a major challenge. To overcome this, children's own community should be encouraged to mobilize in the form of 'collectives' or 'support groups' and these collectives and support groups should be given enough space to voice their concerns and participate in planning, implementing and monitoring interventions for their

education. The RTE-SSA should encourage States/UTs to partner with NGOs that have relevant experience to facilitate these initiatives. Moreover, it should also encourage participation of NGOs and civil society organizations by way of participatory need assessment, implementation and monitoring. In addition, these agencies are expected to play a proactive role in advocacy for children's rights, with emphasis on RTE, and, report any violations.

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The Challenge of Ensuring All Students Complete Secondary School*

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One of the major educational challenges in virtually all industrialized nations is ensuring that all students graduate from upper secondary or high school. Although many countries allow students to leave school prior to completing upper secondary school, a high school diploma is increasingly viewed as a minimal requirement for entry into the labor market and for further education. In fact, with the global economy generating an increasing number of jobs that require at least some post-secondary schooling, students, who earn no more than a high school diploma, will likely have diminishing economic prospects in many countries. That is why most countries of the world are increasing post-secondary or tertiary education. In the United States, President Obama has established a goal for the US to be the first in the world in the proportion of young people with college degrees by the year 2020. Yet, it is unlikely that the US will reach that goal without substantially improving its high school graduation rate.

The Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD) computes the percentage of upper secondary graduates to the population at the typical age of graduation. The average graduation rate among all OECD countries in 2010 was 84 percent and ranged from 47 percent in Mexico to 100 percent in Portugal (OECD 2012, Table A2.1). The United States has a graduation rate of 77 percent, which ranks 22nd among all OECD countries. For the first time, the OECD reports an upper secondary graduation rate of 69 percent for China.

Graduation rates vary by several demographic characteristics. One is gender. Among all OCED countries, the graduation rate in 2010 was higher for women (87 percent) than for men (81 percent). But there was no gender gap in Turkey, and almost no gender gap in Japan (95 percent for men, 96 percent for women). In China, too, the gender gap was almost non-existent (69 percent for men, 70 percent for women).

In at least some countries, there are other demographic disparities in graduation rates. In 2012, the OECD reported that the upper secondary completion rate in the United States for students, whose parents had completed tertiary education, was 91 percent while the secondary school completion rate for students, whose parents had completed below upper secondary education was 68 percent, a completion gap of 23 percentage points (OECD 2012,

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Box A2.2). The completion gaps were similarly large in some other countries, such as Norway (36 percentage points) and Sweden (24 percentage points), but smaller in other countries, such as Israel (9 percentage points). In the U.S., there are large disparities in high school graduation rates by racial and ethnic background, with graduation rates among African American and Hispanic students as much as 30 percentage points lower than among Asian American and White students (Rumberger, 2011).

The requirements for graduating from high school vary both within and between countries, which makes comparing graduation rates tricky. In the US, for example, most students earn a high school diploma, but the requirements for the diploma are determined in most cases by both their local education authority and their state government. Graduation requirements vary greatly in terms of the subjects students must study and whether students are also required to take an exit examination. Some students, such as students with disabilities, earn an alternative high school credential with still different requirements. In many countries, students can complete upper secondary by earning academic certificates that permit access to post-secondary programs or vocational certificates, that only provide access to advanced vocational training. These differences make the goal of improving graduation rates, not just about raising the number, but also about improving the knowledge and skills of high school graduates to better prepare them for further education, meaningful employment, and citizenship.

The challenge of improving high school graduation rates in many countries, especially those with highly diverse populations, will depend greatly on the ability to improve rates among the most disadvantaged populations. This is definitely the case in the US, where the non-White population will soon represent the majority of students in the nation's schools. In the most populous states, such as California and Texas, racial and ethnic minorities already represent the majority of the school- age populations. Similarly, the populations, who speak a language other than English, are also sizeable in those same states and have much lower graduation rates than English-background students.

One reason for reducing drop-out rates and improving graduation rates is because drop-outs suffer extensive economic and social consequences. First, drop-outs have difficulty finding jobs. Across the OCED countries, the unemployment rate, in 2010, for people without an upper secondary country was 12.5% compared to 7.6% for people with an upper secondary education (OECD, 2012, p. 12). Second, even if they find a job, drop-outs earn substantially less than high school graduates. Across the OECD countries, people without an upper secondary education earned 23% less in 2010 than people who completed this level of education (OECD, 2012, p. 140).

Drop-outs experience other negative outcomes (Belfield & Levin, 2007). Drop-outs have poorer health and higher rates of mortality than high school graduates; they are more likely to engage in criminal behavior and be incarcerated over their lifetimes compared to graduates. They are also more likely to require public assistance and less likely to vote. Although the observed relationship between dropping out and these economic and social outcomes does not necessarily imply a causal relationship, a growing body of research evidence has, in fact, demonstrated one (Rumberger, 2011). This suggests that efforts to reduce drop-out rates would, in fact, reduce these negative economic and social outcomes.

The negative outcomes from drop-outs generate huge social costs. Federal, state, and local governments collect fewer taxes from drop-outs. The government also subsidizes the poorer health, higher criminal activity, and increased public assistance of drop-outs. One

recent study estimated that each new high school graduate would generate more than $200,000 in government savings, and that cutting in half the drop-out rate from a single cohort of drop-outs, would generate more than $45 billion in savings (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

Understanding why students drop out of school is the key to addressing this major educational problem; yet identifying the causes of dropping out is extremely difficult. Like other forms of educational achievement, such as test scores, the causes of dropping out are influenced by an array of proximal and distal factors related to both the individual student and to the family, school, and community settings in which the student lives.

Drop-outs themselves report a variety of reasons for leaving school, including school-related reasons, family-related reasons, and work-related reasons (Rotermund, 2007). The most specific reasons cited by US tenth-graders in 2002 who dropped out were "missed too many school days" (44 percent); "thought it would be easier to get a GED [an alternative certificate]" (41 percent); "getting poor grades/failing school" (38 percent); "did not like school" (37 percent); and "could not keep up with schoolwork" (32 percent). But these reasons do not reveal the underlying causes of why students quit school, particularly those causes or factors in elementary or middle school that may contribute to students' attitudes, behaviors, and school performance immediately preceding their decision to leave school. Moreover, if many factors contribute to this phenomenon over a long period of time, it is virtually impossible to demonstrate a causal connection between any single factor and the decision to quit school. Despite this difficulty, two types of factors have been identified that contribute to or increase the likelihood that students drop out of school: (1) individual factors associated with students' attitudes, behaviors, and experiences; and (2) contextual factors associated with students' families, schools, communities, and peers.

A variety of individual factors are associated with dropping out (Rumberger, 2011). Drop-out rates are higher among students who have low educational and occupational aspirations. Several activities and behaviors also predict drop-out rates, including absenteeism, misbehavior in school, and pregnancy. Finally, poor academic achievement is a strong predictor of dropping out. Together, these factors support the idea that dropping out is influenced by both the social and academic experiences of students.

In addition to these proximal factors, a number of distal factors are associated with dropping out. One is student mobility. Both *residential* mobility (changing residences) and *school* mobility (changing schools) increase the risk of dropping out of high school. Student mobility may represent a less severe form of student disengagement or withdrawal from school. Another distal factor is grade retention. Although retention may have some positive impact on academic achievement in the short run, numerous studies have found that it greatly increases the likelihood that students will drop out of school. Finally, a number of long-term studies have found that lack of early academic achievement and engagement (e.g., attendance, misbehavior) in elementary and middle school predicts withdrawal from high school.

While individual factors clearly contribute to students' decisions to drop out of school, individual attitudes and behaviors are shaped by the various settings or contexts in which students live—families, schools, communities, and peer groups.

Family background is widely recognized as the single most important contributor to success in school. Socio-economic status, most commonly measured by *parental education* and *family income*, is a powerful predictor of school achievement and drop-out behavior.

Parental education influences students' aspirations and educational support; while family income allows parents to provide more resources to support their children's education, including access to better quality schools, after-school and summer school programs, and more support for learning within the home. In addition, students, whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision-making (known as *authoritative parenting style*), and are generally more involved in their schooling, are less likely to drop out of school. Additionally, students in single-parent and step-families are more likely to drop out of school than students in two-parent families.

Schools also exert powerful influences on student achievement, including drop-out rates. Four types of school characteristics influence student performance.

The first is the social composition of the schools. The characteristics of students attending schools, particularly the socio-economic composition of the student body, predicts dropping out even after controlling for the individual factors that influence dropping out.

The second characteristic has to do with the structural characteristics of schools, such as size, location, and school control (public versus private). In the US, drop-out rates from Catholic and other private schools are lower than drop-out rates from public schools, even after controlling for differences in the background characteristics of students. Yet, students from private schools typically opt for transfer to public schools instead of or before dropping out, so that student turnover rates in private schools are not statistically different than turnover rates in public schools. Smaller schools also have lower drop-out rates. What is less clear is whether structural characteristics themselves account for these differences or whether they are related to differences in student characteristics and school resources often associated with the structural features of schools.

The third type of characteristic concerns school resources. Resources, in particular student/teacher ratios and teacher quality, appear to influence drop-out rates even after controlling for a host of individual and contextual factors that might also influence drop-out rates.

The final type of characteristic has to do with school policies and practices. In particular, academic and social climate—as measured by school attendance rates, students taking advanced courses, and student perceptions of a fair discipline policy—predict school drop-out rates, even after controlling for the background characteristics of students as well as the resource and structural characteristics of schools.

School factors contribute to student withdrawal in two ways. One way is indirectly, by creating conditions that influence student engagement and their *voluntary* withdrawal from school. Another way is directly, through explicit policies and conscious decisions by school personnel that cause students to *involuntarily* withdraw from school. These rules and actions may concern low grades, poor attendance, misbehavior (such as zero-tolerance policies), or being over-age and may lead to suspensions, expulsions, or forced transfers. This form of withdrawal is school-initiated and contrasts with the student-initiated form mentioned above. Some schools, for example, contribute to students' involuntary departure from school by systematically excluding and discharging "troublemakers" and other problematic students.

In addition to families and schools, communities and peer groups can influence students' withdrawal from school. Differences in neighborhood characteristics can help explain differences in drop-out rates among communities, apart from the influence of families. Some evidence suggests that there is a threshold or tipping point in the quality of neighborhoods

that results in particularly high drop-out rates in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, sometimes referred to as "concentrated disadvantage." Poor communities may influence child and adolescent development through the lack of resources (playgrounds and parks, after-school programs) or negative peer influences. Community residents may also influence parenting practices over and above parental education and income. Students living in poor communities may also be more likely to have drop-outs as friends, which increases the likelihood of dropping out of school. Another way that communities can influence drop-out rates is by providing employment opportunities both during and after school. Relatively favorable employment opportunities for high school drop-outs, as evidenced by low neighborhood unemployment rates, appears to increase the likelihood that students will drop out, while more favorable economic returns to graduating, as evidenced by higher salaries of high school graduates compared to drop-outs, tend to lower drop-out rates. Working long hours in high school can increase the likelihood of dropping out, although the impact of working in high school depends on the type of job held and on the student's gender.

Knowledge about why students drop out suggests several things about what can be done to design effective drop-out intervention strategies. First, because dropping out is influenced by both individual and institutional factors, intervention strategies can focus on either or both sets of factors. That is, intervention strategies can focus on addressing the individual values, attitudes, and behaviors that are associated with dropping out without attempting to alter the characteristics of families, schools, and communities that may contribute to those individual factors. Many drop-out prevention programs pursue such *programmatic strategies* by providing would-be drop-outs with additional resources and supports to help them stay in school. Alternatively, intervention strategies can focus on attempting to improve the environmental contexts of potential drop-outs by providing resources and supports to strengthen or restructure their families, schools, and communities. Such *systemic strategies* are often part of larger efforts to improve the educational and social outcomes of at-risk students more generally.

Second, because dropping out is associated with both academic and social problems, effective prevention strategies must focus on both arenas. That is, if drop-out prevention strategies are going to be effective, they must be *comprehensive* by providing resources and supports in all areas of students' lives. Since drop-outs leave school for a variety of reasons, services provided them must be flexible and tailored to their individual needs.

Third, because the problematic attitudes and behaviors of students at risk of dropping out appear as early as elementary school, drop-out prevention strategies can and should begin early in a child's educational career. Drop-out prevention programs often target high school or middle school students, who may have already experienced years of educational failure or unsolved problems. Instead, early intervention may be the most powerful and cost-effective approach to drop-out prevention.

There are three alternative approaches for improving drop-out and graduation rates:

1. *Programmatic approaches* involve creating programs that target a subset of students, who are most at risk of dropping out (or have already done so), by providing either supplemental services to students within an existing school program or a complete alternative school program within a comprehensive high school (school-within-a-school, such as an academy) or in a separate facility (alternative school).

2. *Comprehensive approaches* involve school -wide reforms that attempt to change school environments to improve outcomes for all students. The most common approach is to reform existing schools by developing a comprehensive set of practices and programs locally or by adopting an externally developed comprehensive school reform (CSR) model. A second approach is to create new schools, by either establishing a new school locally or adopting an externally developed whole school model. The most popular new schools are charters—public schools that are established and managed outside the regular public education system, and that are freed from most regulations and requirements of regular public schools. The third approach—which can be combined with the other two—is to create collaborative relationships between schools and outside government agencies and local community organizations to provide services and programs for students and their families.
3. *Systemic approaches* involve making changes to the entire educational system—what some scholars have labeled "systemic school reform"—under the assumption that such changes can transform how all schools function in the system and, therefore, have widespread impact. Systemic reform can occur at the federal, state, or local level of government.

All three approaches have a limited record of success in the U.S.

In 2002, the U.S. Department of Education established the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) to review scientific evidence on the effectiveness of a variety of educational interventions, including drop-out programs. The WWC reviewed 84 studies of 22 drop-out prevention (and recovery) programs and found only 23 studies of 16 interventions that met their evidence standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2008)—12 of the programs were student-support or alternative education programs while four were CSR or new school models—and assessed their effectiveness in improving three student outcomes: (1) staying in school, (2) progressing in school, and (3) completing school. Of the 12 student support programs, five were judged to be effective in keeping students in school, four were effective in helping students progress in school, and four were effective in helping students to complete school, although none of the four programs was effective in helping students earn a regular high school diploma. Of the four CSR or new school models, only one was effective at keeping students in school, two were effective in helping students progress in school, and none was effective in helping students to complete school. Moreover, none of these four programs was effective in helping students earn a regular high school diploma; rather, they helped students earn an equivalent diploma by passing the General Educational Development (GED) test. This distinction is important for two reasons: first, research has demonstrated that students who earn a GED do not enjoy the same economic benefits as students who earn a regular high school diploma (Tyler, 2003), and second, most educational accountability systems reward schools and districts only when students earn regular diplomas. Three other reviews of the research evidence on drop-out interventions also found a limited number of effective programs (Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center, 2006; Hooker & Brand, 2009; Klima, Miller, & Nunlist, 2009).

Evidence on the effectiveness of systemic interventions is also mixed. Increasing the compulsory schooling age to 18 helps to improve graduation rates, but increasing high school graduation requirements—such as adopting exit exams or a college preparatory

curriculum for all students—does not (Rumberger, 2011). Creating alternative pathways in either the public or private sector for students to earn a high school diploma also shows mixed outcomes. In particular, several recent large-scale studies found that some charter schools outpace their traditional counterparts, while other charter schools trail behind (Betts & Hill, 2010; Gleason, Clark, Tuttle, & Dwoyer, 2010; Zimmer, Gill, Booker, Lavertu, Sass, & Witte, 2009)

There is more consistent and compelling evidence for two early interventions: pre-school programs and class-size reduction in early elementary school. Both produce significant improvements in high school graduation rates (Rumberger, 2011).

Studies have examined not only the effectiveness of drop-out prevention strategies but also their costs and economic benefits. One recent study found that five specific interventions—from pre-school programs to a high school reform model—produced economic benefits that were two to three times their costs (Belfield & Levin, 2007). These findings support the economic benefits of investing in proven drop-out prevention interventions.

To conclude, successfully addressing the drop-out problem in the United States as well as other countries will require both capacity and will. Capacity requires technical expertise to develop and implement effective drop-out prevention and recovery programs, as well as more ambitious systemic school reforms. While some schools have such capacity, most require additional resources, technical expertise, and incentives to restructure existing schools. The development of such capacity will require political will; but even with the will to reform schools, it is unlikely that the United States or any country will ever ensure all students graduate from high school without ensuring adequate resources of families, schools, and communities.

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RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS/COMMENTARY

Viewing Equity — Efficiency Quandary Retrospectively — With Reference to Education in India[#]

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Abstract

It is an accepted and well-recognized fact that the prevailing low quality of education cannot be tolerated henceforth, and concerted efforts are called for its improvement. However, the reality is that quality goal comes last in the sequence of triple goals in plan and other government documents—access, equity and quality. Pre-occupation of providers with quantitative expansion has not led us to the accomplishment of any of these goals in a manner we had thought of. This has made our task a bit complex. The pertinent question is: at what level of education does the quality issue deserves to be addressed first?

In this note, we have made a strong plea for addressing this issue at the elementary education level, which is the *base* of the education system. System based on shaky foundation faces all the chances of downfall with respect to triple goals.

Quality elementary education saves us from the wrongly established notion of interpreting, or rather misinterpreting, universal access in terms of enrolment only as universal quality access. Converting universal enrolment into true universal quality access facilitates the transition of majority of students of lower social groups in government schools from elementary level to high school level and even to higher education. This transition by creating level playing field also makes the education process socially inclusive which is, otherwise, exclusive. All the stakeholders concerned with education are required to understand and appreciate the logical connection between the quality of education, level playing field and social inclusion. The proposed policy strategy seems to be the appropriate one to tackle the equity-efficiency quandary bothering the Indian education system for long.

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Retrospectively speaking, the equity—efficiency quandary is as old a phenomenon as the birth of human capital revolution in the mid-1960s. The dictionary meaning of the word 'quandary' is: "a state of difficulty, perplexity, uncertainty, or hesitation". The Indian experience, over a period of time, has revealed that the level of achievement of these objectives is very much below the desired point at all the three levels of education. The point of interest is how to avoid or ameliorate the "trade-off" tag associated with the quandary. The tag manifests in the inherent difficulty in pursuing or fulfilling equity (equality of educational opportunities, or social justice) and efficiency or excellence (i.e., quality of education) goals at the required speed at the same time and, more so, at the higher education level when its foundation, elementary education, itself is shaky in this respect. The structure of the Indian education system, based on a weak foundation, has remained the characteristic feature of the education scene for quite a long time. As a consequence, the "trade-off" tag has escalated, perpetuated and engulfed the higher levels of education, making the realization of these goals almost a nightmare. Thus, the basic issue is to remodel the education system in a manner that paves the way for laying a solid foundation in terms of access, equity and quality. Our understanding leads us to plead that if the quality, this single goal, gets precedence over the other two goals of access and equity, primarily at the elementary level of education, then the access and equity goals at higher levels will not pose a big threat. This very strategic policy point has been glaringly ignored in our discussion on attaining the goals. The order of priority goal should necessarily be--- *quality, access, and equity.*

What is the relevance of this quandary now when education, especially higher education, has ceased to be a 'public good', when it has become 'global' and a 'tradable' commodity, and when its access, in terms of quality, is governed more by the catch phrase 'level playing field' and yet we want it to be socially inclusive? These are important questions at a time when, in a knowledge economy, the attention is focused more on strengthening higher education, which is expected to realize the triple goals of access, equity and efficiency.

Priority of Triple goals in the Twelth Five Year Plan (2012-2017)

Triple goals are highlighted in 12th Five Year Plan but, unfortunately, the order or rank of these goals is missing. Moreover, the quality and excellence goal seems to have been relegated to a back seat. Following sentences reproduced here from chapter 10" on Education" of "An Approach to the Twelth Five Year Plan" (www.planning commission.nic.in) lends credibility to our assertion.

(1) "The Eleventh Plan had outlined a three-fold strategy of expansion, equity and excellence for higher education."
(2) "The process of broadening access, making higher education inclusive, and promoting excellence initiated during the eleventh plan must be consolidated and expanded further during the XIIth Plan." and
(3) "There must be a strategic shift from mere expansion to improvement in quality of higher education."

Furthermore, the Mission Mode National Programme of enhancing access, proposed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in its 12th Plan document to the Ministry of Human

Resources and Development (MHRD), stresses the need for expansion. The recommendation, relating to the launching of the 'Rashtriya Uchch Shiksha' (RUSA), similar to the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' (SSA), during the 12th Plan, is made to attract the youth coming out of expanded secondary education' (www.thehindu.com\education\issues\ article2844708, January 30, 2012). Fifty percent increase in the intake capacity is proposed to reach the desired GER (gross enrolment ratio).

The thrust on expansion of higher education appears untimely in the context of prevailing education scene in terms of quality and equity goals. The Planning Commission itself has admitted that" we now confront the greater challenge of improving the quality of school education". The consequences of the persistence of poor quality of school education are self-evident.

The provision of 'public good' of inferior quality, over a long period of time, in government and local bodies' primary and middle schools, which accounted for 75% and 71% respectively of total enrolment in 2004-2005, has nurtured the process of social *exclusion and not inclusion.* Majority of them are from the lower socio-economic strata. Those who manage to get into high school have to study in government schools as they cannot afford to study in private schools. Moreover, if, in order to minimize the deficiencies of quality at elementary stage, they are required to spend on unaffordable private tuition, then they suffer from the double disadvantage of low access to high school education and getting education of lower quality (A. Vaidyanathan 2012). Following figures highlight this sorry state. "50% of ten year old children could not read at a basic level, over 60% were unable to do division, less than 40% attend secondary schools, and half dropped out by the age they reach to enter higher education" (K. C. Baiju 2012).

During 2000-2010, the number of universities increased from 250 to 600 while that of colleges from 10,000 to 32,000 (Annual Report, MHRD, 2010-11).Has this expansion made an effective dent in the age-old issue of under-utilization of facilities and reduced the unit cost per student without affecting quality? Optimum utilization of infrastructure and other facilities is as important as allocating more financial resources simply for quantitative expansion in an atmosphere of resource crunch. The following evidences tell a different story.

The report in the media (The Times of India, June 23, 2012), under the title "Quantity VS. Quality", states:" with more colleges and less students, engineering colleges and universities across the country have requested the AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education) to stop granting clearance for new colleges". A severe slump is observed in demand in states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and West Bengal. The AICTE has to direct the universities to conduct a demand and supply analysis and propose how many colleges need to be started in the next three years. Further, with respect to business schools, the same daily (TOI, September 10, 2012), under the title "India's business schools get tough lesson in supply and demand", has reported the finding of CRISIL- a ratings agency-that 140 schools are expected to close this year in the wake of an increase in vacant places from 15% - 20% in 2006-2007 to 35% in 2011-2012. Executives of both the professional courses have stressed the importance of quality improvement as majority of engineering teachers are mediocre and only one in five MBAS is employable. These instances are eye-opening for the policy-makers pre-occupied with quantitative expansion at the cost of quality betterment. Thus, there is a clear as well an urgent case for the reallocation of resources in favour of factors leading to the improvement of quality, amounting to the

optimum utilization of resources already invested and to be invested even at the higher education level. When places go a begging, the policy goal should be the consolidation of institutions leading to the improved standards of post-secondary education. The emphasis on the triple goals has a rightful place at the root of the academic system, namely elementary education.

Level Playing Field, Social Inclusion and Quality of Education

Ensuring a level playing field for countries and individuals in a knowledge economy is vital to enable them to participate gainfully in such an economy. This is more so in a country like India where the level playing field, with respect to education at all levels, is virtually absent. Its absence is owed greatly to the lack of universal retention and universal education of certain acceptable standard at the elementary stage despite universal enrolment (Universal access) only in name. In order to generate *level playing field,* the term **'access'** should be interpreted as "real opportunities for every one to avail themselves of high quality, meaningful education at affordable rates" (Sobhit Mahajan 2012).

For the emergence of education as a "commodity" to be bought and sold like any other commodity, the competition should ideally speaking be on a level field otherwise it will be among 'unequals', promoting the education process antithetical to the goal of social inclusion. Its creation is a pre-requisite for and between under-privileged and relatively under-represented sections, on the one hand, and better-off and better represented sections, on the other hand, of school-going population in a historically socially and economically stratified society, wherein public system of education, though in a state of disrepair, is preponderant.

We have observed, what seems now to be unbridgeable, the vast chasm between the 'supply' of quality education and the 'demand' for it, largely a result of the indifferent attitude of the government as a provider and regulator of the public education system. On the contrary, in the name of financial resource crunch and in the wake of neo-liberal economic reforms by preferring a diminished role, the government encouraged the privatization of the education sector as a whole.

The issues of generating level playing field and facilitating upward social and economic mobility have largely remained unattended due to the neglect of QUALITY goal and overemphasis on access and equity goals at the base of the education system. Thus, when quality at the foundation of the system remains low or poor, the access and equity goals largely remain unachievable. In the face of deplorable standard of elementary education and equally deplorable retention rate, the universal enrolment, claimed by the authorities, loses much of its significance. The realization that "we now confront the greater challenge of improving the quality of school education" came only after misinterpreting universal enrolment solely as universal access, which has almost no bearing on the quality of education. For this policy lacuna, we have paid and are still paying the heavy price of perpetuating inequalities of all sorts of educational opportunities. This lack of vision has restricted the education process from becoming a socially inclusionary process. Better quality of **PUBLIC (government and local bodies schools) e**lementary schools facilitates the smooth transition for majority of enrolled students, unlike at present, from elementary schools to high schools and even to higher education. It is the quality of education (human) capital that determines, supports and nurtures the creation of level playing field. And, once

created, it paves the way for social inclusion. Recently, a speaker at the National Summit on Quality in Education, held in Bangalore on September 14 and 15, 2012 (15th Edition of the Confederation of Indian Industry-CII), while labeling quality as a distant dream, made a distinction between quality enhancement and quality assurance, with a plea for enhancement through pedagogy, methodology and curriculum and not simply on assurance. In our view, quality assurance, even in terms of attendance and good grades, is yet to be promoted at the school stage. Its promotion may lead to a phenomenal increase in universal quality access, making transition for majority of enrolled students from lower level to higher levels of education quite smooth and easy. In this way, quality assurance is sure to make education process a level playing field and socially inclusive too. In turn, the quality enhancement would also be easier as the qualitative and quantitative participation of students would have broadened.

Nature of Quality of Education

Our contention is: Seeds of poor quality of education are sown at the elementary level of education, which have grown at the secondary level and later afflicted the tertiary level. What are the real bottlenecks coming in the way of quality improvement in this sector? The under- investment in physical, financial, and human resources over a long period of time (mid-sixties to the present day) provides a solid straightforward answer. The case in point, that is oft-quoted, highlighted, and discussed critically from time to time by the scholars, is the inordinate lingering of the pledge by the State, under one or the other pretext, to spend 6% of GDP on education recommended by the Education Commission (Kothari Commission 1964-1966) nearly 50 years ago—3% of which was recommended to be devoted to the improvement of elementary education.

Government elementary schools as well as high schools suffer from the same problems, namely inadequate physical infrastructure, acute shortage of teaching aids, laboratory equipments, ill-equipped libraries, appointment of para teachers on fixed salary, teachers' absenteeism, overburdened with activities other than teaching, teachers' unsympathetic attitude towards students belonging to the backward social groups, and lack of good quality text books in the mother tongue. Moreover, the persistence of not only these deficiencies but their further deterioration also, at a time of fast expanding demand for quality education, has paved the way for the privatization of even the school education.

The quality scenario at the higher education level is hardly different from the one narrated above for school education. Chapter 10 on Education in the 12th Plan states that" state universities and colleges suffer from under-funding by state governments, with as many as 50% of faculty positions unfilled, forcing frequent resort to contract teachers, which have an adverse impact on the quality of teaching." Thus, the quality of one important human input in the education process, having great influence on the final learning outcome, is itself questionable.

Higher education draws students from high schools, of whom the majority are not fully prepared to bear and benefit from the rigours of college and university education, even of general education (Arts, Science and Commerce) stream, which accounts for almost 80% of the enrolled students. Lamenting failure rates of around 80% in some science subjects (M.Sc. course), the author raises a searching question: "Is it fair to admit them to college and then leave them to their own devices to compete in a harsh ecosystem?" (Sobhit Mahajan,

2012) This second important human input in the education process, in the form of students with limited absorptive capacity, when combined with similarly mediocre human input (teachers), can hardly give rise to expectations of the education process churning out a better final product. Education is caught up in the low equilibrium trap. Devaluation of all its aspects is being raised now.

The Indian education sector is engulfed by some sort of a vicious circle of quality inputs. Not highly competent and rarely accountable and monitored for their performance, teachers produce students, who lack employability. However, to accomplish the targets of quantitative expansion, this sub-standard output gets absorbed in the teaching profession turning out, in turn, the low quality output.

Quality—A Priority Goal

What is the way out to turn this vicious circle into a virtuous one?

The recent observations made by two economists offer some clue to the question.

(1) "Surprisingly, the persistence of caste-class inequalities in school education and importance of redressing them are conspicuously missing in the current controversies on inequalities in higher education" (A. Vaidyanathan, 2012). He argues that in the context of social inclusion, it would make sense if attention is focused on 'merit (quality) versus equality' rather than simply on caste-class inequalities. Paying lip service to the quality goal at the elementary level has resulted in the accentuation of such inequalities at both the higher levels. In the end, the education process, associated with a steep decline in enrolments, has thwarted the goal of social inclusion. As regards access, it has become biased in favour of privileged sections of the student population from lower to higher stages of education. And

(2) Analysing the reasons for the decline of the Congress party and the rise of regional/ caste parties, Nilkanth Rath (2012) has pinpointed to the nature of planning from the Second Plan onwards under which the provision of basic services (primary schools in the villages, middle and high schools for nearby cluster of villages among others) was neglected---" this one set of reasons was overlooked by political scientists" and "Provision of basic services was made in a half-hearted manner and in fits and starts". The proof of this neglect is the attainment of *universal access,* mainly in terms of enrolment at the elementary stage, which has taken 60 long years instead of 10 years after the promulgation of the Indian Constitution in 1950 and, that too, definitely *not* in terms of *quality.*

It can also be inferred that, by and large, the failure of mere quantitative expansion of education, over the years, to trickle down has not favoured the recent rapid economic growth also to trickle down to the desired extent. In such a situation, even the recent Right To Education Act, 2009, as an instrument of social inclusion, is doubtful as regards the delivery of goods. Children admitted under this Act suffer from different forms of discrimination. The dichotomy between 'free students' (beneficiaries of 25% reservation in private schools) and 'fee paying students' in private schools has resurfaced, challenging our basic premises- one, "that the hostile attitude to the reservation has subsided" and, two," our belief that students can sustain themselves once they finish basic education". This is the outcome of the cursory treatment meted out to the quality goal at the very foundation of the

education system. Better quality of elementary education, when enables majority of students enrolled in government/public schools to pursue their schooling beyond eight years of compulsory and free elementary education successfully, improve the chances of their climbing up the education ladder. If, in the process, this promotes level playing field as well as social inclusion, these students will become a part of the mainstream of the society. This opportunity, through inculcating the spirit of self-confidence in them, may act as an antidote to the in-built socio-economic inequalities.

Measures to contain the financial burden of private direct and indirect costs of education on students' families such as mid-day meal scheme, free uniforms and textbooks, etc. in an environment of poor quality of education in government schools, where majority of students share a common socio- economic background, have hardly resulted in lengthening school life expectancy of students in the sense of promoting upward mobility and facilitating the accessibility to education beyond elementary education (Manabi Majumdar, Kumar Rana, 2012).

Unfortunately, in government schools, equity of access to 'low quality' education seems to be the rule rather than the exception. Such an education has disillusioned both students and parents. This depiction of prevailing education scenario is real, whether quality is viewed from the perspective of student performance, school attainment, or from the perspective of school governance (Martin Carnoy, 2004). Thus, imparting quality education at the very root of the education system by turning equity of access from 'low quality' to 'high quality' education is expected to lead to equity in accessibility at the top of the system.

Conclusion

Not appreciating the order of the link of triple goals-quality, access and equity-has a clear message for policy-makers. The recent policy steps such as (1) cutting down the level of education subsidy-the beneficiaries of which are falsely labelled as non-deserving, whereas the fault lies with the education process from the beginning to the end, (2) larger cost-recovery from students, (3) supporting risky education loan finance culture, (4) keeping education a soft sector throughout and (5) encouraging privatization of education - have made a mess of these goals. We have to come out from this self-created mess by following the order of link between these goals suggested here which aims at nullifying the equity-efficiency "trade-off" tag and making vicious circle a virtuous one. Superstructure of education, with shaky foundation, will crumble sooner or later in the presence of vicious circle if not turned virtuous by according a top priority to quality goal at the elementary stage at the earliest. One of the five unfulfilled non-negotiable universal rights namely 'education in good quality neighbourhood schools' could make a head-way towards fulfillment of this right once quality, as a priority goal, is firmly rooted in our policy as well as in our thinking.

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RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS/COMMENTARY

Strategies for Building World Class Universities in India

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Abstract

The value of universities has always been recognized in all societies that they have existed, the oldest in India and China, and from the University of Padua and on in Europe. The Government, too, has recognized the key value of universities and, more recently, realized that their own economic policies can have both positive and negative impact on the health of the higher education sector. The notion of world-class universities has emerged as it has been increasingly realized that successful and effective universities permit countries to 'punch above their weight' through research, training, consultancy and teaching success. Enhanced mobility of people, demands for advanced study, and the dynamics of the research community, have heightened the role universities play in the development of dynamic societies. Today, education has shifted itself from teacher-centric to student-centric to learning-centric. The main objective of this paper, therefore, is to explore the expectations of the students in setting up internationally competitive universities that are expected to compete effectively with the best of the best. This paper extensively reviews the practices of the elite universities of the world and presents those insights that aid in building world-class universities in India. This paper also analyses the expectations of different stakeholders and presents the results of academic expectations gap analysis carried out on select sample of stakeholders. The paper underpins the strategies and complexities in operationalizing activities such as flexible learning, learning-centric environment and sustained competency-learning.

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Introduction

In fact, the world-class university system has never been new to India. In the early part of second millennium of the Common Era, scholars and students from all over the world came to study in the Nalanda, Ujjain, and Takshashila universities. They were, unfortunately, destroyed in the course of history. A world-class university system has become the sine qua non for a country's economic growth in today's global knowledge economy. Today, a university system is universally acclaimed as the best in the world, if it contributes both in its quality as well as to the competitiveness of the nation's economy. This contribution is enduring the nations worldwide in examining their respective systems with the objective of transforming them into engines of modern economic growth. Preoccupation about university rankings reflects the general recognition that economic growth and global competitiveness are increasingly driven by knowledge, and that universities can play a key role in that context. Indeed, rapid advances in science and technology, across a wide range of areas from information and communication technologies (ICTs) to biotechnology to new materials, provide great potential for countries to accelerate and strengthen their economic development. The application of knowledge results in more efficient ways of producing goods and services and delivering them more effectively and at lower costs to a greater number of people.

Impetus of Higher Education on Economy

The World Development Report on the Knowledge Economy proposed an analytical framework emphasizing the complementary role of four key strategic dimensions to guide countries in the transition to a knowledge-based economy: an appropriate economic and institutional regime**,** a strong human capital base, a dynamic information infrastructure and an efficient national innovation system. Tertiary/Higher education is central to all four pillars of this framework, but its role is particularly crucial for supporting the building of a strong human capital base and contributing to an efficient national innovation system. Tertiary education helps countries build globally competitive economies by developing a skilled, productive and flexible labor force and by creating, applying and spreading new ideas and technologies. Tertiary education institutions can also play a vital role in their local and regional economy (Yusuf and Nabeshima, 2007). Within the tertiary education system, research universities play a critical role in training the professionals, scientists and researchers needed by the economy and generating new knowledge in support of the national innovation system (World Bank, 2002). In this context, an increasingly pressing priority of government is to make sure that their top universities are actually operating at the cutting edge of intellectual and scientific development.

What does it mean to be a world-class University?

In recent times, the term "world-class university" has become a catch phrase for not only simply improving the quality of learning and research in higher education but, more importantly, for developing the capacity to compete in the global higher education marketplace through the acquisition and creation of advanced knowledge. With students looking to attend the best possible institution they can afford, often regardless of national

borders, and governments keen on maximizing the returns on their investments on universities, global standing is becoming an increasingly important concern for institutions around the world (Williams and Van Dyke, 2007).

The-QS Top Twenty Universities in World Rankings

TABLE 1

Times Higher Education-QS World University Rankings 2009

2009 Rank	*Institution*	*Country*	*Peer Review Score*	*Employer Review Score*	*Staff/Students Score*	*Citation/Staff Score*	*International Staff Score*	*International Student Score*	*Overall Score*
1	Harvard University	US	100	100	98	100	85	78	100.0
2	University of Cambridge	UK	100	100	100	89	98	96	99.6
3	Yale University	US	100	99	100	94	85	77	99.1
4	University College London	UK	98	99	100	90	96	99	99.0
5=	Imperial College London	UK	100	100	100	80	98	100	97.8
6=	University of Oxford	UK	100	100	100	80	96	97	97.8
7	University of Chicago	US	100	99	97	88	77	83	96.8
8	Princeton University	US	100	96	82	100	89	81	96.6
9	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	US	100	100	89	100	31	95	96.1
10	California Institute of Technology	US	99	72	87	100	100	89	95.9
11	Columbia University	US	100	99	97	92	28	89	95.6
12	University of Pennsylvania	US	96	99	85	98	82	60	94.2
13	Johns Hopkins University	US	98	79	100	99	28	71	94.1
14	Duke University	US	95	97	100	93	29	62	92.9
15	Cornell University	US	100	99	85	94	28	73	92.5
16	Stanford University	US	100	100	71	100	25	96	92.2
17	Australian National University	Australia	100	91	75	74	99	92	90.5
18	McGill University	Canada	100	97	92	61	67	95	90.4
19	University of Michigan	US	99	99	85	81	57	52	89.9
20=	University of Edinburgh	UK	97	99	84	65	93	86	89.3

This is an elite status conferred by the outside world on the basis of international recognition. Until recently, the process involved a subjective qualification, based mostly on reputation. For example, Ivy League universities in the United States, such as Harvard, Yale or Cornell, Oxford and Cambridge in the United Kingdom, and Tokyo University have traditionally been counted among the exclusive group of elite universities. But no direct and rigorous measure was available to substantiate their superior status in terms of training of graduates, research output, and technology transfer. Even the higher salaries captured by their graduates could be interpreted as a signaling proxy as much as the true value of their education. With the proliferation of league tables in the past few years, however, more systematic ways of identifying and classifying world-class universities have appeared (IHEP,

2007). There have been attempts to establish international rankings for the universities with a raft of improvements to increase the rigour, balance and transparency of the annual global university tables — with more quality indicators, data analysis, more subject depth and much more inputs from the expert global academic community. The methodology for this ranking of world-class universities focuses most heavily on international reputation, combining subjective inputs, such as peer reviews and employer recruiting surveys, and quantitative data, including the numbers of international students and faculty, and the influence of the faculty, as represented by research citations. Notwithstanding the serious methodological limitations of any ranking exercise (Salmi and Saroyan, 2007), world-class universities are recognized in part for their superior outputs. They produce well-qualified graduates, who are in high demand in the labor market; they conduct leading-edge research published in top scientific journals and, in the case of science and technology oriented institutions, they contribute to technical innovations through patents and licenses.

Practices of the World Class Universities

In reviewing the practices of world-class universities, this paper reveals that the superior results of world-class institutions (highly sought graduates, leading edge research, technology transfer) can essentially be attributed to three complementary sets of factors that can be found at play among most top universities, namely

(i) **A high concentration of talent** (faculty and students),
(ii) **Abundant resources** to offer a rich learning environment and conduct advanced research, and
(iii) **Favorable governance** features that encourage strategic vision, innovation and flexibility, and enable institutions to make decisions and manage resources without being encumbered by bureaucracy.

Concentration of Talent

The first and, perhaps, foremost determinant of excellence is the presence of a critical mass of top students and outstanding faculty. World-class universities are able to select the best students and attract the most qualified professors and researchers. In the sciences, being at the right university—the one where the most state-of the- art research is being done in the best equipped labs by the most visible scientists—is extremely important. Some scientists describe this as a snowballing process, where an outstanding scientist gets funded to do stimulating research, attracts other faculty and also the best students—until a critical mass is formed that has an irresistible appeal to any young person entering the field. This has all the time been the hallmark of Ivy League universities in the US or Oxford and Cambridge in the UK. A key factor in that respect is the ability and the privilege of these universities to select the most academically qualified students. Harvard University, the California Institute of Technology, MIT and Yale University are the most selective universities in the United States as measured by the average SAT scores of their incoming undergraduate students. One upshot of this observation is that tertiary education institutions in countries where there is little internal mobility of students and faculty are at risk of academic in-breeding. Indeed, universities, that rely predominantly on their own undergraduates to persist into graduate programs or that hire many of their own graduates

to join the teaching staff, are not likely to be at the leading edge of intellectual development. The huge size of the leading universities of Latin American countries such as México or Argentina—the Autonomous University of México (UNAM) has 137,000 students and the University of Buenos Aires (UAB) has 183,000—is certainly a major factor in explaining why these universities have failed to enter the top league, despite having a few excellent departments and research centers, which are undoubtedly world-class. At the other extreme, Beijing University maintained its overall enrolment at less than 20,000 until the early 2000s and, even today, has no more than 30,000 students. In many cases, world-class universities have students and faculty who are not exclusively from the country where the university operates. This enables them to attract the most talented people, no matter where they come from, and open themselves to new ideas and approaches. As a matter of fact, the international dimension is becoming increasingly important in determining the configuration of these elite institutions. Harvard University, for instance, has a student population that is 19 percent international; Stanford has 21 percent; and Columbia, 23 percent. At Cambridge University, 18 percent of the students are not from the UK or EU countries. The US universities, ranked at the top of the global surveys, also show sizeable proportion of foreign academic staff. For instance, the proportion of international faculty at Harvard, including medical academic staff, is approximately 30 percent. Similarly, the proportion of foreign academics at Oxford and Cambridge is 36 and 33 percent, respectively. Unquestionably, the world's best universities enroll and employ large numbers of foreign students and faculty in their search for the most talented. In this respect, the fact that world-class universities succeed in mobilizing a broadly diverse national and international academic staff is likely to maximize these institutions' knowledge networking capacity.

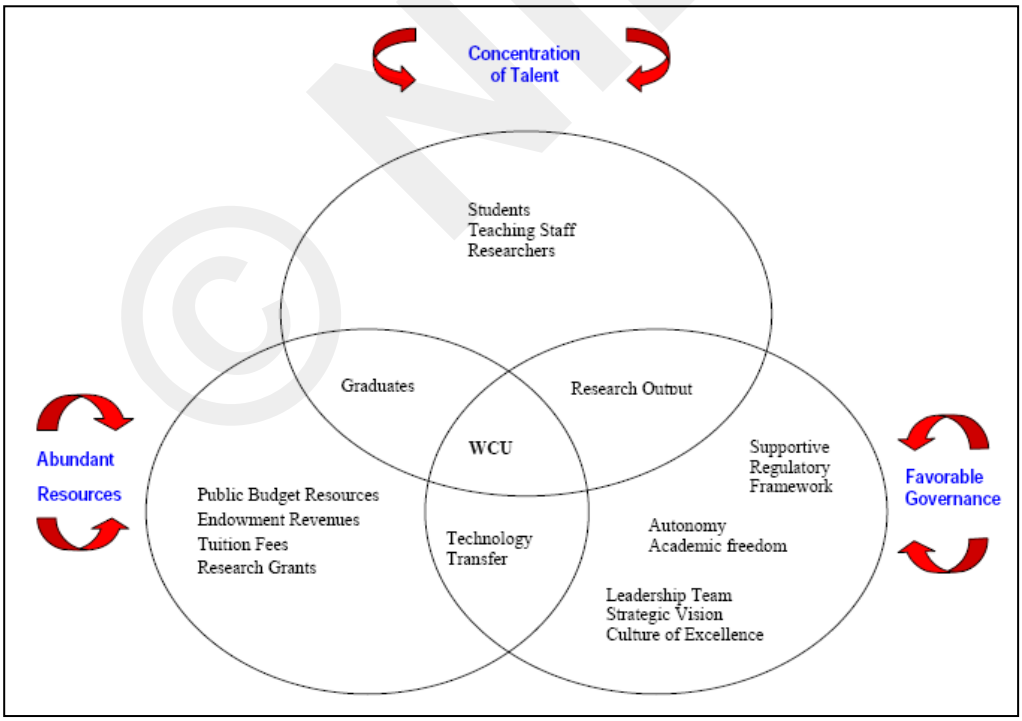
Abundant Resources

Abundance of resources is the second element that characterizes most world-class universities, in response to the huge costs involved in running a complex research–intensive university. These universities have four main sources of financing: government budget funding for operational expenditures and research, contract research from public organizations and private firms, the financial returns generated by endowments and gifts, and tuition fees. In Western Europe, public funding is, by far, the principal source of finance for teaching and research, although the top UK universities have some endowment funds and top-up fees. In Asia, the National University of Singapore, which became a private corporation in 2006, has been the most successful institution in terms of endowment funding. It has managed to build up a sizeable portfolio of $774 million through effective fund-raising, making it richer than any British university after Cambridge and Oxford. The sound financial base of the top US universities is due to two factors. 1) They have large endowments, which provide budget security, comfort, and the ability to focus on institutional priorities over medium and long-term. They are not at the short-term mercy of government funding sources or the whims of changing political priorities. 2) They benefit from the success of their faculty in competing for government research funding. At least two-thirds of the research funding captured by the top US research universities comes from public sources (Salmi and Saroyan, 2007). These abundant resources create a virtuous circle that allows the institutions concerned to attract even more top professors and researchers, as is often the case among elite universities.

Appropriate Governance

The third dimension concerns the overall regulatory framework, the competitive environment and the degree of academic and managerial autonomy that universities enjoy. The Economist (2005) referred to the higher education system in the United States as "the best in the world" and associated this success, not only to its wealth, but to its relative independence from the state, the competitive spirit that encompasses every aspect of it, and its ability to make academic work and product relevant and useful to society. It is observed that the environment in which universities operate fosters competitiveness, unrestrained scientific inquiry, critical thinking, innovation, and creativity. Moreover, institutions, that have complete autonomy, are also more flexible because they are not bound by bureaucracies and externally imposed standards, notwithstanding the legitimate accountability mechanisms which bind them. As a result, they can manage their resources with agility and quickly respond to the demands of a rapidly changing global market. The autonomy elements outlined above are necessary, though not sufficient, to establish and maintain world-class universities. Other crucial governance features are needed, such as inspiring and persistent leaders, a strong strategic vision of where the institution is going, a philosophy of success and excellence, and a culture of constant reflection, organizational learning and change.

FIGURE 1
Characteristics of a World-Class University
Alignment of Key Factors



Source: Jalmi Salmi 2007.

Expectations and Perceptions of Students – A Gap Analysis

It is believed that a tertiary qualification would get the students a "good" job. In most universities, the students expect to have access to learning support services and quality teaching. The students would want those mechanisms that clarified the expectations of lecturers and tutors (e.g., clear course objectives, good staff – student communication); and preferred enthusiastic faculty, who had good presentation skills, and provided detailed, regular prompt feedback. It is found that quality teaching, university's response to their education needs, improvement in their language skills and mix with students. It is important for educational institutions also to be aware of student's needs and expectations, and take steps to identify, measure, meet and even exceed those expectations that are under their control.

Students as customers: Students, especially those of mature age, whether local or international, expect a high standard of service delivery. Quality has become a "major preoccupation" in the higher education sector (Wright and O'Neill 2002). The students expect more from their universities than the university administrators realize. Students look to universities as a reliable source of information, both related to the coursework and about the university in general. Students do expect prompt service, appealing classrooms and campuses, with modern classroom facilities and equipment. Some students place more emphasis on faculty and administrators' willingness to help students and maintain error-free records. In other words, the faculty's job does not stop once he/she steps out of the classroom and the administrator's job does not stop once they step into their office. Students expect to have their perceptions altered through freshman orientation sessions or a discussion of expectations at the first class of each course in which the student enrolls. Students expect faculty and administrators to be willing to help students as a common courtesy. In today's competitive, market-sensitive environment, university students expect to be treated like consumers, rather than students. The students expect that campuses should make every effort to maintain and enhance their physical environment. Students expect comfortable, up-to-date, modern classroom facilities. Since services are by nature, intangible, the customer, in this case student, looks for concrete manifestations of quality.

Strategies for Transformation

Proactive Government policies

Today, it is very unlikely that a world-class university can be rapidly created without a favorable policy environment and direct public initiative and support, because of the high costs involved in setting up advanced research facilities and capacities. A more attainable goal could rather be to set up an integrated system of teaching, research, and technology-oriented institutions that feed into and support a few centers of excellence that focus on value-added fields and chosen areas of comparative advantage, and can eventually evolve into world-class institutions. First, the government could consider upgrading a small number of existing universities that have the potential of excelling. A second strategy would consist of encouraging a number of existing institutions to merge and transform into a new university that would achieve the type of synergies corresponding to a world-class institution (hybrid formula). A third approach would be to create new universities. The

government should create the financing and regulatory conditions that will enable and encourage the universities to compete at an international level on a host of indicators on which the quality and relevance of university education are commonly assessed, including reputation and awards, faculty, and research grants.

Strategic Vision at the University Level

The establishment of a world-class university requires, above all, a strong leadership, a bold vision of the institution's mission and goals, and a clearly articulated strategic plan to translate the vision into concrete programs and targets. To be able to develop an appropriate vision for the future of the university and to implement this vision in an effective manner, the university head needs to fully understand the core agenda of the institution and be able to apply the vision with the necessary operational skills. A crucial element of the vision is the discovery of a niche market towards which the institution seeks to build and maximize its comparative advantage.

Succession Plan

The time dimension is an important aspect that needs also to be factored into the strategic plan of the aspiring world-class university. Developing a culture of excellence does not happen from one day to the other. Proper sequencing of interventions and a careful balance between quantitative objectives are required in order to avoid experiencing the kinds of growing pains. It is important to stress that vision development and strategic planning are not a one-time exercise. In a highly competitive environment, the more successful organizations in both business and academia are those that are relentless in challenging themselves in the pursuit of better and more effective ways of responding to client needs. With constant replenishment of intellectual capital, performance is never static in the best universities. The most successful institutions are not content with relying on past accomplishments but always aspire to be among the best in the world and, internally, they create an atmosphere of competitiveness.

Global Dimension

One way of accelerating the transformation into a world-class university is to use the internationalization card effectively. An influx of top students can be instrumental in upgrading the academic level of the student population and enriching the quality of the learning experience

The ability to attract foreign professors and researchers is also an important determinant of excellence. Universities need to be able to offer incentives, including flexible remuneration and employment conditions, to bring on board, on a short or medium- term basis, top academics from other countries. These individuals can help upgrade existing departments or establish graduate programs and research centers in new areas of competitive advantage. In cases where it is difficult to attract foreign faculty on a full-time basis, the university can start by bringing leading foreign scholars on a temporary basis. To facilitate the contribution of foreign scholars, a number of aspiring world-class universities have formed fruitful partnerships with top universities in industrial countries. Attracting leading scholars from the diaspora is another internationalization strategy.

Conclusion

Strategic planning is not a panacea but a process for developing a world-class university system in India. The transformation of the Indian university system can be catalyzed by propagating such planning throughout the higher education system, across the country and across all the layers of the system, through policies, seminars, workshops, training programs, conferences, and consultation. Envisioning a world-class university system for India would be the first step in formulating a strategy and implementing it. Envisioning such a large and complex system has to focus on both the 'forest' and the 'trees'– the system, the institutions that constitute the system, and the relationships between them. It has to be parsimonious enough to be intuitively sensible and, yet, plastic enough to encompass the variety of institutions within the system. It will necessarily be a collage of visions of the constituent institutions. Well-conceived, the collage will be coherent and meaningful; ill-conceived, the collage will be incoherent and meaningless.

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RESEARCH ABSTRACT

Benefit Incidence Analysis of Public Spending on Education in India in a Regional Perspective

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Introduction

Education, as the pivotal factor of development, moved to prominence in the 1960s with the pioneering studies of T.W. Schultz and G.S. Becker. However, the germination of this idea dates back to the times of Adam Smith and early classical economists. Consequently, not only public expenditure but subsidy also emerged as an important instrument of investment, leading to the emergence of public expenditure as an important area of economic analysis.

The present study makes an attempt to focus on various aspects of public expenditure; the study also delves into measuring the distribution of subsidy using the tool of Benefit Incidence Analysis.

Objectives of the Study

The following questions were examined in the study:

- What is the state-wise trend of public expenditure for different levels of education in the post-reform period?
- What is the benefit Incidence of public subsidy received by the various income groups across the various levels of education?
- Is there a difference across various states in terms of benefits received by the various income groups?

Methodology and Database

The study is based on secondary data sources. The trend in public expenditure has been calculated using data from Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure, Selected Education Statistics of various years from 1990-91 to 2009-10. Benefit Incidence Analysis has been estimated using data from National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) database '*Participation and Expenditure in Education*' (unit level records) for the 64th round schedule 25.2 pertaining to the year 2007-08. The estimates are computed by using NSS population weights.

Total Expenditure – Total Expenditure (Revenue account) has been used from Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure and the actual figures have been used which have been converted into 2004-2005 constant price.

Enrolment-Enrolment figures for the purpose of calculating per capita growth rate have been taken from Selected Educational Statistics of various years from 1990-91 to 2009-10. Enrolment figures for Benefit Incidence Analysis (BIA) have been taken from NSS 64th round. Enrolment figures for the same covers government, local bodies and public aided institutes.

1. **Elementary Level Enrolment** – This comprises enrolment figures from Classes 1 to 8.
2. **Secondary Level Enrolment** – This comprises enrolment figures from Classes 9 to 12.
3. **Higher Level Enrolment** – In the present study, Higher Education implies any graduation, post-graduation and above level courses, which are under general education (not technical), and degree and diploma course, which is at the level of graduation/post graduation.

Family Income – Since the NSS data does not provide figures on family income, Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE)[1] has been used as a proxy for income. MPCE has been used for five equal quintile divisions, with quintile one being the lowest.

Scholarship – This has been computed by adding 'annual amount waived' item 17 and 'annual amount received' stipend item 20 of Block 5, schedule 25.2 of NSS 64th round.

Cost Recovery – This variable has been computed by adding the following variables: 'tuition fee'; 'examination fee' and 'other fees and payments'. These variables are given in block 6, item 3, 4 and 5, schedule 25.2 of NSS 64th round.

Subsidy – Total expenditure-Cost Recovery

Gross Domestic Product/Gross State Domestic Product – These figures have been taken from Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and spliced to 2004-05 constant prices.

Coefficient of Variation (C.V.) – C.V = $\frac{\sigma}{\bar{X}} \times 100$..... (1)

Suits Index/Concentration Co-efficient-

Area of A[2]= $\frac{1}{2} - [1/N\sum_{i=1}^{N-1} Ci + 1/NCn], Cn = 1$..... (2)

Suits Index =2A..... (3)

Where N is the number of equal divisions (quintile), Cn is the cumulative frequency of subsidy distribution quintile- wise.

Major Findings

The present study has been organised in six chapters and the major findings are summarized as follows:

- On analyzing Public Expenditure at an All India Level, it emerged that the advent of reforms dealt the harshest blow on higher education sector in terms of financial squeeze. This can be corroborated from the percentage of GDP spent on all the three levels of education. Wherein, in 1990-91 the proportion of GDP spent on elementary, secondary and higher education stood at 1.5%, 1.04%, 0.43% respectively which changed to 1.6%, 0.98%, and 0.41% in the year 2009-10. These figures also throw light on the relative importance given to the three levels of education by the state. On comparing the centre and state's share of expenditure on the three levels of education as a proportion of GDP, it is seen that the centre's share has been relatively less, which dwindled to lesser levels by 2009-10.
- An analysis of per capita expenditure on elementary, secondary and higher education at an all-India level reveals that, elementary education has gone up from Rs. 1235 in 1990-91 to Rs. 3765 in 2009-10, an increase by 104 percentage points in the index in the 20-year period. Similarly, for the secondary level, the increase has been from Rs. 5921 to Rs. 9154, an increase by 54 percentage points, while for higher level of

[1] MPCE=$\frac{Total\ Monthly\ Consumption\ Expenditure}{Household\ Size}$

[2] 'A' is the area between the Line of perfect equality and the concentration curve

education, the increase has been from Rs. 12843 to Rs. 15302, an increase by 19 percentage points during the above-mentioned time period. However, in case of secondary and higher education, the increase has not been consistent during the entire 20-year period, with the per capita expenditure declining in 2004-05 by 31 percentage points in the secondary level and by 33 percentage points in the higher education level. This has implication on the quality of education, which is provided, with respect to reduction of per capita availability of resources for students like library, laboratories, scholarships, faculty development programmes.

- On making an inter-state analysis, assessment of public expenditure on the three levels of education as a proportion of GSDP, shows that the relative priority is given to elementary level, followed by secondary and then higher level of education. Bihar's public expenditure on elementary level, as a proportion of GSDP, is the highest at 3.18% which is an average figure from 1990-91 to 2009-10, and Orissa's the least at 0.62%. West Bengal contributed the highest proportion of it's GSDP to secondary education as compared to the remaining 14 states. In case of higher education, Bihar, Orissa and Kerala recorded the highest proportion of their respective expenditure to GSDP. Bihar's proportion, at 0.52% of GSDP (average), remains the highest when the entire period (90-91 to 09-10) is taken. Gujarat attributed the least proportion of its GSDP to higher education, at 0.18% (average), in decade two of reforms, with Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab also according low priority to higher education in decade two of reforms. And also besides the states of Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, all the other states under analysis have registered a decline in their expenditure on higher education as a proportion of GSDP.
- On assessing the growth rates of public expenditure on the elementary level of education from 1990-91 to 2009-10, it is seen that on an all-India level, the growth rate in the entire period i.e. from 1990-91 to 2009-10 is impressive and stands at 8.4%. However, the first decade of reforms (1990-91 to 1999-00) registered a lower growth rate of 6.4% than the second decade (2000-01 to 2009-10) wherein the registered growth rate was 11.8%. Similarly, secondary and higher education registered growth rates of 6.7% and 7% respectively for the entire 20-year period. Both these levels of education recorded a relatively higher growth rate in decade two of reforms.
- However, when we look at the growth rates state-wise for the 15 major states, the results are quite varying, with Punjab recording the lowest growth rate at 2.9% and Maharashtra the highest at 7.2% in the entire period from 1990-91 to 2009-10 for elementary level. Despite being economically advanced, states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala recorded low growth rates, which implied almost universal coverage of the relevant age group. Though Rajasthan is considered as a BIMARU state, it made huge contributions in public spending of education, which has helped it lower the incidence of poverty while improving human development.
- Every state has shown an increase in growth rate in the second decade of reforms i.e. from 1999-2000 to 2009-10, with states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh recording a growth rate of over 12%, which is above the all-India growth rate. Growth rates of public expenditure on secondary education state-wise reveals that Andhra Pradesh has recorded a negative growth rate of -0.8%. This decline in the public

investment on secondary education gets reflected in the fast and rapid expansion of private schools and enrolment in them especially in the state of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. For higher education, it is seen that in the states of Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, a higher growth rate has been registered in decade two as compared to decade one. The highest attained growth rate in the second decade has been by the state of Bihar at a whopping 40.16%. One has to be careful while interpreting these figures as a lot of information gets masked, like if the absolute figures are given a look then one sees that Maharashtra has contributed the highest i.e. to the tune of Rs. 1324.8 crore in the year 2009-10.

- On looking at the growth rate figures of per capita expenditure on all three levels of education, it is seen that at an all-India level, the per capita growth rates are lagging behind the growth rates of public expenditure, showcasing inadequacy of public spending, which, despite reflecting an increase, is unable to keep pace with the growing enrolments. States like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh recorded a higher per capita growth rate than growth rate in public expenditure for elementary level of education. For secondary education, only Tamil Nadu has recorded a per capita growth rate higher than its growth rate of public expenditure in the second decade (1999-00 to 2009-10). In case of higher education, it is seen that at India level, in the second decade of reform, the per capita growth rate has risen to 5.8% from a negative growth rate of 2.4%. This hints at checking the fund-starved situation of higher education to some extent. Bihar registered the highest growth rate in decade two, which was to the extent of 36%, followed by Orissa and Assam. The states of Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh registered negative per capita growth rates in decade two of reforms. These figures indeed give rise a sense of discomfort, which needs to be addressed, as a low per capita expenditure on education would have adverse repercussions with respect to access and equity, and this would eventually decelerate the process of development.
- An important contribution of the study, with respect to assessing the distributional effect of public spending, has been in methodology, wherein the present study, while calculating benefit incidence, has not assumed per capita subsidy to be the same across all quintile groups but, rather, has found out subsidy quintile-wise after adjusting total expenditure with quintile-wise cost recovery.
- The disaggregation of the distribution of subsidy is found out state-wise and also at an all-India level, across the three levels of education (Elementary, Secondary, Higher), over the five quintile groups for which the findings are as follows:

  Distribution of public subsidy for elementary level of education is pro-poor at India level and across the states. At all-India level, it is seen that 41% of the benefits are distributed in favour of the poorest quintile and two percent in favour of the richest quintile. However, it is seen that in the state of Kerala, the distribution of subsidy for elementary level is almost equally divided among the various quintile groups. In all the remaining 14 states, the distribution of subsidy for elementary level is highly skewed in favour of quintile group 1 vis-à-vis the richest quintile.
- On assessing the distribution of subsidy in secondary level of education in a similar manner, it is seen that on an all-India level, 11% of the subsidy distribution accrues to

quintile 1 and 22% to quintile 5. In the states of Maharashtra and West Bengal, the distribution of subsidy has been, more or less, equal among all quintile groups. In Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, the distribution of subsidy is progressive, with higher levels of subsidy accruing to the lower income groups. This can be seen from the Table on distribution of subsidy quintile-wise in the Appendix section. It is found that in the states of Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Haryana, Kerala, Punjab and Rajasthan, the distribution of subsidy has been skewed in favour of quintile 5, revealing less participation captured by enrolment from the lower quintile groups, which emerges as a disturbing fact.

- On looking at the distribution of subsidy for higher level of education, it is seen that at the India level, the distribution of subsidy is regressive, with 1% of subsidy benefits accruing to the poorest quintile and 65% to the richest quintile group. Glaring inequalities in subsidy distribution is seen in the state of Gujarat, with 87% of the benefits accruing to quintile 5 and 0.23% accruing to quintile 1. Inching close is the state of Haryana, with 83% subsidies benefitting quintile 5 and 0.28% benefitting quintile 1. It is seen that in the states of Karnataka, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, the distribution is relatively less unequal.
- Calculation of Suits Index, which is nothing but a concentration coefficient that helps to accurately determine the progressivity/regressivity of subsidy distribution at a glance i.e. suits index with a positive sign implies a regressive distribution and, conversely, one with a negative sign implies progressive distribution. With this in mind, it is found that for elementary level of education, the distribution of subsidy is progressive, both at India level and across the 15 major states. For secondary level, the all-India figure, with a positive suits index, implies a regressive distribution of subsidy. A state-wise assessment for the same reveals a progressive distribution in the states of West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Orissa, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and, for the remaining states, it is regressive. For higher level of education, the distribution of subsidy is regressive if we see the all India level with a positive suits index. However a state-wise analysis reveals that in all states, except those of Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, the distribution of subsidy benefits remains progressive. A graphic representation of the results by way of concentration curves is also presented state-wise.

Summing up, it can be stated that investment in all levels of education should be simultaneous in nature rather than sequential**.** The crisis in terms of public funding in higher education needs to be reversed. High subsidy in higher level of education should be encouraged on the grounds of increased participation of students from the poorest quintile, thereby making the education system egalitarian.

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Book Reviews

SRIVASTAVA, Prachi (2013): ***Low-fee Private Schooling: Aggravating Equity or Mitigating Disadvantage?*** **United Kingdom: Symposium Books,** ISBN: 978-1-873927-91-5 (Paperback), Pages 219, Price: US $ 48.

The book under review is an edited volume of seven empirically grounded chapters from India, Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya. These chapters collectively explore the domain of low-fee private schools and put together data and perspectives to engage with the inherent social, economic and regulatory issues confronting these schools. Rather than providing any definitive answer, it argues for further systematic research on low-fee private schools. In spite of different context, all the chapters have engaged with a common question- whether low-fee private schools are aggravating equity or mitigating disadvantage? In addition to seven empirically grounded studies, the very first and the last chapter provide 'analysis of some of the evidence and debates on the topic thus far (p.10)'. Apart from highlighting context specific issues, the chapters also depict the existence of some fundamental issues and problems common to the operation of these schools. These schools are usually governed by amorphous policy space often in contravention of the official regulatory framework. It makes it difficult to find out their exact number. Again, the question of their 'affordability' and 'quality' have acquired prominence in almost all the chapters. Evidence from these studies show that the clientele group of low-fee private schools are almost first generation learners, with parents belonging to the lower middle and working class. The findings from the book suggest that the low-fee private school sector serves the need of poor families, who are otherwise not served by government provisions. In that sense, these schools make their best contribution to achieving the goal of EFA (Education for All). It also shows that the poorest and the marginalized are likely to be left out. All the chapters find low-fee private schools as an important actor for achieving EFA but raise issues and concerns demanding further research insights.

While the issue of quality is 'inconclusive', the rejection of public schools by poor parents depicts the inherent meaning of quality for them. Low-fee private schools have become the marker for quality education compared to public schools. The book under review provides interesting insights on the issue and leaves the reader to make further inquiry. Research findings from Pakistan show (chapter 3) the absence of baseline experience among parents regarding quality in low-fee private schools. Being illiterate, parents usually depend upon their children who are actually studying in low-fee private schools. In contrast to their parents, 'youth are more attuned to the teacher attributes and perceived teacher quality in the low-fee private schools than were the parents. It relates to their and peers' direct personal experiences of the schools on which to base their assessment' (p. 79). The absence of baseline experience among parents will assure the persistence of poor quality of education in the low-fee private schools 'until the next generation of parents has the necessary knowledge base to use exit and voice effectively and

force improved competition' (p. 79). Even in the absence of baseline experience, the quality perceptions among parents acquire different meaning in Kenya. The Slum parent's preference for low-fee private schools (chapter 4) is completely determined by quality perceptions. The longitudinal evidence in Nairobi shows the dramatic increase in the number of private schools serving the slums. In the sample schools studied by Dixon et al., there is an increase in enrolment by 130 per cent. Dixon et al believes that increased enrolment is the result of quality consideration by the poor parents, and better performance of low-fee private school children in Mathematics and Kiswahili than their counterparts in the public schools. They draw this conclusion while contradicting the well- established belief in Nairobi that 'parents send their children to low- cost private schools because they are unable to access free government education, owing to excess demand. Therefore, poor parents in these areas have no 'choice' but to send their children to private schools' (p. 101).

In the face of poor quality public schools, parent's choice for a low-fee private school implies equity issues as well. The book, under review, elaborates this concern very consistently in all the chapters and the implicit potential of low-fee private schools to achieve EFA. Instead of government's effort to provide free schooling, evidences show that households belonging to extremely poor categories prefer low-fee private schools. This phenomenon is not simply an urban trend, and is present both in rural areas and among the poor. In the context when the parent's decision for low-fee private school is guided by quality perceptions rather than economic considerations 'then it might be worth considering the condition under which these schools can receive state assistance' (p. 59). The Ghana case shows the 'presence of private schools in rural areas offer a real choice for poor households wishing to access better quality education' (p. 59). 'If learning outcomes are better in some low-fee private schools and parents who use them receive no subsidy, their expansion is likely to be anti-equity' (pp. 59-60). Under this condition 'the state has the responsibility to alleviate the cost burden of accessing low-fee private schools among the poor, if such schools can demonstrate that they actually provide better quality education at relatively lower costs (p. 66)'. The case of Nairobi in the book again reiterates the findings from Ghana. In Nairobi, public schools are quite popular among elites rather than private schools. It is precisely the result of policy initiatives to improve the quality and enrolment in the government schools. But ironically, these initiatives could not make government schools inclusionary and crowded out the poorest children. Contradicting this popular perception, Dixon et al. points out that the increasing number of low-fee private schools in Nairobi shows that quality consideration motivates the slum parents to choose low-fee private schools like those made by wealthier parents.

The book, under review, also outlines the hapless regulatory framework governing low-fee private schools. It poses a serious challenge to the equity concern, especially when these schools are addressing an important need in the lives of poorer parents. Informal registration procedures have underestimated the exact number of low-fee private schools. The official monitoring visits are nothing more than opportunities for officials to collect bribes in exchange for allowing schools to remain open. For example, in Nigeria, low-fee private schools generally encounter the land requirement barriers to get government approval. 'For recognition, these schools have been required to have an owned (not rented) site, a purpose built building of considerable size, and qualified teachers' (p. 135). The Kenyan experience (chapter 5) shows the existence of complex regulatory procedures and insufficient monitoring by the government officials. This directly encouraged many owners

to 'open their doors prior to being registered, knowing that there was insufficient monitoring to face the immediate consequences' (p. 119). Stringent barriers, like the land requirement for opening schools, again forbid private school owners from registering with the ministry. Land issues have also contributed to limiting the number of public school establishments in slum areas in Nairobi because technically slums are illegal settlements and, therefore, public schools are built generally outside the slum. Unlike the Kenyan experience of insufficient monitoring by government officials, PEIRA's (Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority) self-financing status in the Islamabad capital territory has hindered its regulatory functioning and raised serious challenges for low-fee schools. With tight revenue margins, private schools pass all the monitoring cost on the poor parents. Humayun et al. in the chapter 8 argues for extending financial support to PEIRA from the government to address equity concerns. Similarly, the proposed standardized regulation under the Right to Education (RTE) Act in India poses challenges to the existence of low-fee private schools. As the number of 'private unaided schools in Delhi is higher than in any other state and union territory in India, their closure, under RTE regulation, will hamper the main objective of the RTE to ensure children's right to education' (p. 155). Under the situation when recognized schools have a fair amount of impact on the existence and expansion of the unrecognized schools, there is a possibility on the part of the low-fee private school to flaunt the rules and get recognition through informal procedures by bribing the officials.

The contributors to the volume are mainly from educational studies who invoke interest regarding different facets of low-fee private schools. Research papers in the volume have nicely used data from secondary sources, with some first- hand narratives from the field. The book falls short on some issues and few chapters can be charged with methodological fallacy to arrive at hasty conclusions. The merit of the volume lies in the varied territory it covers in its investigation of the sheer magnitude and facets of low-fee private schools. Ignoring these limitations, the volume is timely and welcome as the literature on low-fee private schools is scanty. The volume has successfully added one more brick in the wall while provoking students of education, sociology, policy makers, and stakeholders to ponder about the intricacies of the issue.

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TILAK, Jandhyala B.G. (Editor) (2013): ***Higher Education in India: In search of Equality, Quality and Quantity,*** Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, India, ISBN: 978-81-250-5131-2, pp. 538 (Paperback), Price not mentioned.

This is a very useful volume of essays, selected from over four decades of reflections on this critical public institution for higher learning, published in the *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)*-from the 1960's until the present. This latter is indeed the country's most valuable forum for public engagements on issues of growth and development, poverty and inequality, as well as policy and contexts. The variety of essays in higher education published herein reflect, quite naturally, the ethos of these grounded arguments in India's political

economy, as also give a specific longitudinal insight into the nature of higher education in India, as viewed from varifocal lenses across disciplines. The sheer variety of methods employed—ranging from the analysis of robust National Sample Survey (NSS) data by Deshpande (pp. 76-87) and Sundaram (pp. 88-109), primary survey data by Chitnis (pp. 61-75)), to qualitative case method employed by Wood (239-251) highlighting institutional functioning in a regional perspective, alongside a deeper philosophical grounding of the pieces by Be'teille (pp. 21-35) and Vishwanathan (36-60), are a befitting invocation to the 'rational' and 'argumentative' in the reader. There is, in this volume, a 'full-circle' or 360 degrees over-view of how this critical institution has functioned, embedded in a post-colonial context and a social structure, characterized by deep inequities.

The editor's introduction (Tilak, pp.1-20) locates the institutional origins of an 'Indian' higher education within a certain chronological depth--the ancient institutions of Nalanda, Takshila, and Vikramshila, whereas the 'modern' form is located in a contested conjuncture of historical time--the colonial project. He finds the Western universities, set up in India, as structural 'implants', which essentially remained elitist and restrictive. National universities, specially those set up by initiatives from Gandhi and Tagore were institutions of counter and protest. At the time of independence, what obtained, therefore, was a very narrow base. Following independence, much faith was put on these institutions, as higher education was thought of as a necessary complement to the project of modernisation. It was assumed that institutions of higher education would provide the knowledge base and skilled manpower necessary for industrialisation. Until 1970's was, therefore, a phase of manifold expansion of the system, associated not only with great optimism about what this system could, in fact, do for a nascent country, beaming in the first glow of independence, but also beset with the unique challenges of a deeply inequitous social structure. Caste-based group inequalities, therefore, became an important parameter of public policies in this area. Later in the volume, there is a sufficiently rich discussion on the working of these policies for special inclusion, and their real achievements in addressing the fundamental issues of inequality are concerned. Tilak sees a fundamental change in the nature of these institutions once the logic of the market begins to predominate, and there is a retreat of the state, viewed from a proxy indicator—the decline in public expenditure in higher education, which is very noticeable in the last two decades, specially since the introduction of structural adjustment policies and an implicit adherence of a policy consensus, which promotes marketisation, privatisation, and liberalisation. It is not surprising, therefore, that two of the main themes discussed in this volume happen to be the issues of inequality and policies for special inclusion, and second, the dilemmas inherent in a new policy, in turn, represented by its affinity to the logic of the market. Before I turn to discussing the contributions around each theme, let me mention that I find Tilak's arguments about declining public expenditure as only one proxy indicator of changes, indeed decline. Other alternative vantage points from which different narratives of the decline emerge are those from centres of dispute resolution—the courts which have played an important role in guiding or regulating the policy direction in higher education, and from ethnographic studies. The piece by Shah (pp. 184-203) is an excellent example of highlighting both. Universities, which were visualised originally to be rule-bound domains working with merit as the yardstick, declined by becoming the institutional repositories of mediocrity. The roots of this are to be found in erroneous structures of decision-making, specially in state universities, which resulted, ultimately, in Universities themselves becoming the site of politics. Time-bound promotions, no check on quality, politically

motivated leadership appointments, sub-standard research—together contributed to a culture of mediocrity, where certificates were left with no value. The author beckons politicians and intellectuals to act in concert, change the rules, and institutional culture so as to reconstitute the practice of higher education.

Of the two themes of contemporary relevance, which find detailed examination in this volume, the first relates to the issue of inequality and social inclusion. In the opening piece by Andre Be'teille, there is a philosophical exposition of the principles of equality and universality, which underlie a modern democracy, and are evoked by a universalist discourse of rights and citizenship. There are, however, limits to which the argument for equality or universality can be pursued, beyond equal opportunity. The author suggests that a strongly competitive higher education system is likely to yield general social advantage and is perfectly compatible with the arguments of Rawls about inequality being justified if it benefits the most disadvantaged (pp 34-35). The practical operation of these policies has been the subject of discussion in articles written over three decades—from the early 1970's until the present. Chitnis notes, in an EPW article written in 1972, the considerable gap between the proportionate share of disadvantaged social categories in population and in enrolment at different stages of education for 13 major states in 1964-65. She finds this gap to be considerable at higher stages of education, indicating restricted access of scheduled castes and tribes to higher levels of learning, with the notable exception of Mysore. This backwardness is further perpetuated, as she finds out in her detailed examination of institutional performance for Bombay University, by bunching of lower castes in institutions of lower quality, perpetuating a cycle of poor performance by the weak. These themes are resonated and expanded considerably in Deshpande, writing two and a half decades later (in 2006) that we must think of higher education in terms of inequalities and exclusion (rather than equalities and competition). Based on NSS data for 1999-2000, he demonstrates the Hindu upper caste domination of all streams of higher education, far in excess of their proportionate share in the population. He notes this to be 'discrimination in the form of principled exclusion' (p. 80); to the extent that this institution functions as an avenue of mobility, it must be subjected to the obligations of social justice imposed on public institutions. A full redress of inequalities calls for looking at other resources—economic, social, and cultural. Using the same round of NSS data for 1999-2000, Sundaram presents a more disaggregated picture of backwardness and finds that there is a shared characteristic of backwardness for the very poor across social caste categories, although, at an aggregate level, scheduled castes and tribes do lie at the bottom on multiple criteria of backwardness. With the introduction of this nuanced vision in the understanding of backwardness across socio-economic criteria, the author cautions against a simplistic understanding of social caste based backwardness as the only entry-barrier to higher education.

The second theme, wherein there is a rich discussion in this volume, is the policy turn following the advent of the market, bemoaned in an iterative sense as a retreat of the state. In a detailed overview of the phenomena of globalisation, Nayyar (pp. 461-471) notes that these changes are recasting the knowledge architecture on which the University itself is premised. Technology and markets together have a tremendous influence on academic content and research agendas. Besides, increasing commercialisation has left its own imprint. The tenets of tenure, academic freedom, and university autonomy, can no longer be used as a shield to ignore these challenges. The university will have to ready itself for these, specially as the wealth of nations is increasingly dependant on knowledge, and not simply on

land and natural monopolies, as in the past. Samuel Paul calls for reinventing state policies if the advantages of internationalisation are to be reaped. The basic problems of our higher education, both in areas of access and quality, can find gainful solutions if this were done. Indeed, any seeming threat from foreign universities is far less, in the face of the new opportunities for resolving structural constraints. One of the bodies, set up to deliberate on how to navigate these changes, is the National Knowledge Commission (NKC). Its deliberations as well as its recommendations have been the object of criticism by a number of contributions. Anandkrishnan (506-513) notes that the NKC privileges expansion and excellence at the expense of equity and inclusion. Tilak (518) notes that the NKC recommendations are arrived on a weak base of discussions, with little consultations with either the UGC or the MHRD, while also favouring privatisation.

For those readers who open the volume for a more immediate concern—developing an insightful research agenda on themes of contemporary relevance, for higher education has been in the limelight for reasons more than just a decline of public expenditure, or a retreat of the state-there is much to be gathered from the many articles in this volume. Not all have received the analytical glance of this reviewer, but not in the least for reasons of any less rigour or relevance. For those who seek to engage with themes from the contested reforms of our times, there is plenty on the parallel colleges in Kerala, where bus-conductors doubled as part-time college teachers, and classrooms were close in appearance to cow-sheds (Gopinathan and Ajit, pp.259-279), or on graduate unemployment in India, where the authors Sharma and Apte (212-238) compare census data with live registers of the employment exchange. Some of these tables can be taken up by future researchers and updated for each data template. It is surprising, though, to find almost no article on teachers' unions, or student politics, themes that refer to explicit politicisation. Also, since most technocratically-designed reforms move with an apprehension towards the ideological encounters that change proposals are expected to receive from unions, some evidence on these themes would have been welcome. These omissions, however, may be more reflective of lesser research and discussion on these themes in the EPW pages than of any intrinsic exclusion by the volume editor. As higher education becomes a contested terrain for contrarian reasons—as a site for pervasive inequalities as also aspirations for mobility, for retreat of the state, as also greater need for the state to introduce fair markets- this book will prove invaluable in guiding new thought and debate, articulating the differences on these issues.

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DESHPANDE Satish and Usha ZACHARIAS (Eds.) (2013): ***Beyond Inclusion: The Practice of Equal Access in Indian Higher Education,*** Routledge, New Delhi, ISBN 978-0-415-83207-6), Pages 340.

It was after a long time that I read an edited volume that forces the reader to re-think and confront the harsh reality of inclusion and exclusion in higher education. Most often, the

discourse on inclusion is fractured and is carried out in silos – without linking school education to higher education or without delving into the daily experience of discrimination that thousands of students experience across higher education institutions. This volume is refreshing because while discussing higher education, it takes into account the cumulative impact of school education in determining what opportunities young people have and how social differentiation and discrimination in school affects their self-belief and their self-confidence. This, ultimately, excludes thousands of young people from higher education – either because they cannot make it or, even when they do make it, they drop- out or continue to be excluded from meaningful learning. Deshpande argues that different educational morality rate of different social classes effectively acts as a social filter that results in self-exclusion (rather than explicit elimination) through the examination system. Having studied in poor quality schools – mostly government schools or low cost private schools – students from socially-disadvantaged groups do not acquire the necessary academic competency and, as a result, either graduate from school with very poor grades or fail. Deshpande draws upon the classic text of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) to argue that "previous performances being equal, pupils of working class origin are more likely to 'eliminate themselves' from secondary education by declining to enter it than to eliminate themselves once they have entered and a fortiori more likely not to enter than to be eliminated from it by the explicit sanction of examination failure (p 153)". This introductory chapter by Deshpande is a must-read for educationists as it takes the reader through the debate on caste quotas and formal inclusion through reservation.

Mrinalini Sebastian's chapter lays out two approaches to understand inclusion and exclusion – i.e., the discrimination approach, where caste is used as the primary criteria for identifying and benefits of reservations, and the disadvantage approach, where the historical sources of discrimination are taken into consideration. She gives a comprehensive historical view of the inclusion debate in India. G N Devy's chapter looks at the affirmative action saga through three institutions: Gujarat Vidhyapeeth, Rayat Shikshan Sansthan and Devy's own Adivasi Academi in Tejgarh. The ethnographic journey is interesting and the key learning from them is "denial cannot be eliminated merely by creating institutions providing access, far less through legislation alone. They go to show that denial can be minimised and access can be improved by bringing in the knowledge stocks of the excluded within the realm of institutional knowledge transactions and by providing space for life experiences of the excluded classes inside the classroom" (p.93).

Vandana Dandekar's chapter on reservations in Medical Education in Maharashtra was an eye opener. The daily experience of and the career paths of students, who came in through reservations, is different – with an overwhelming proportion of them opting for a career within the government as Medical Officer/Civil Surgeon and a smaller proportion going into private practice. The academic performance of students from reservation is not homogeneous and there are significant community differences – with Scheduled Tribe students lagging behind. Interestingly, Ranjit Singh Ghuman and Davinder Kumar Madaan's chapter on engineering education in Punjab show that the educational level of parents exerts a huge influence on the ability of poor or disadvantaged social groups to move on from secondary to higher education – and this is particularly significant for girls. The chapter also takes an in-depth look at the Yadavindra College of Engineering in Talwani, Bhatinda that primarily reaches out to poor rural communities. Considering that over 70 per cent of all rural residents in the district are from socially disadvantaged groups, makes this a very

valuable experience. However, the author does not tell us if students in exclusive institutions meant for rural students benefit from such a non-discriminatory space or whether the quality of education they receive is significantly better.

Anoop Kumar Singh's chapter on 'Defying the Odds' explores what propels Dalit and Adivasi students to struggle against immense odds. The author argues that the students succeed "through self-belief, determined struggle and above all with very hard work to make up for their many disadvantages…" (p. 175). The author argues with evidence that SC and ST students have to depend a great deal on their own resources and grit – sometimes even hiding their caste identity – to be able to negotiate an educational environment that is prejudiced. The daily humiliation suffered by reservation students is rarely acknowledged in public and this chapter is important because it discusses the texture and the contours of prejudice experienced by students. This is done through detailed exploration of successful survivors and their experience of discrimination. He then discusses – again through case studies – suicide as the last resort or the ultimate protest and what leads to a young student resort to it. This chapter should perhaps be made a compulsory reading for all administrators and academic faculty members in all universities of India – so that we can all search within ourselves to stop this vicious spiral of exclusion and discrimination, leading to poor educational outcomes.

N. Sukumar's chapter on Quota's Children also traces the experience of discrimination and exclusion – it is short and based on the author's experience makes a good companion to the earlier chapter.

Sony Pellissery, Vivek Mansukhani and Neera Handa's chapter is based on the experience of the Ford Foundation fellowship programme. It's an excellent example of how an affirmative action programme can be run – without prejudice, without being judgmental and, most importantly, with full respect for the participants. The fellowship was based on the understanding that "access to higher education is itself a social justice issue" (p.223) and the way a programme is managed, makes a huge difference. The objective of the FF programme "was not merely to select disadvantaged persons, but also those who could make a difference to disadvantaged communities or social justice leaders… Final selection of candidates… is based on individual qualifications that differentiate the candidates from one another, rather than on the socio-economic factors that are common to all eligible candidates" (p. 232 and 234). The programme has shown that there is a huge talent pool among the most disadvantaged and they have tremendous leadership potential. Equally significant is that the academic skill gap can be bridged with tailor-made training and support. The chapter is a valuable addition to this volume by demonstrating how we can foster inclusion in a creative and positive manner.

The CREST experience is an excellent companion to the earlier chapter as it is also based on the same philosophy – that tailor- made support can help bridge both the academic gap as well as foster self-confidence and enhance self-esteem of students. Dr. D. D. Nampoothri explains this in a chapter that explodes the myths that we hold about Kerala and how the experience of discrimination is as debilitating as it is in any other region of India. Dr Nampoothiri proceeds to describe how the CREST programme is positioned and argues that there is a need to seriously look at pedagogy adopted in engineering education and why it is important to continuously engage with issues of self-esteem and self-belief – through sessions that enable students to confront these issues and explore their creativity and the rich knowledge that lies deep within them.

The chapter on soft skills and the 'psychologisation of marginality' by Usha Zacharias takes us through a review of different experiences of empowering the marginalised and locates it within the realm of soft skills in overcoming marginality. This is an interesting chapter and guides the reader to the how of it – what can be done to confront and overcome the experience of discrimination through school and in society.

The volume, taken as a whole, is a very interesting compendium of chapters by different authors, exploring ways and means to go beyond the inclusion debate and look at ways and means to go forward. What is missing in this volume is a good concluding chapter that bring the rich narratives together by revisiting affirmative action policy and make a case for a bold new approach.

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TILAK, Jandhyala B.G. (2011): ***Trade in Higher Education: The Role of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)***, Paris, UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning, ISBN: 978 92 803 1362 8, Pages 154.

The book presents an elaborative account of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and specifically the ways in which higher education is spelt out in this document. This focus is important as it addresses an important topic, which has vast implications for the future of higher education, and the book is meant for the following groups of readers: policy-makers, educational planners, administrators and researchers.

The book begins by examining the concept of globalisation and internationalisation, and importantly locating the topic on trade within the discourse of internationalisation. While the book is right to argue that, on the one hand, the conceptualisation of higher education in the trade in services adopts a narrow definition, which focuses predominantly on the role of teaching and learning, but, on the other hand, GATS has been outlined in a broad manner. However, some of the recent developments, for example the world credit crunch, financial crises, the decline of globalisation, leading to the concept of 'gated globalisation' and rise of economic nationalism (Das, 2013; The Economist, 2013), have, in some ways, prompted us to re-look and re-think the ideas of globalisation and internationalisation, as well as the role of higher education as a trade in GATS.

Having located the concept of higher education as a trade, the book explores the changing context of internationalisation in higher education. As internationalisation shifts from academic cooperation to be more competitive, GATS has, therefore, provided the structure to formalise, legalise and coordinate these developments of internationalisation. The book continues to illustrate the ways in which higher education has been operationalised in GATS. For instance, there are four Modes which aim at four types of cross-border mobility. It also points out the fact that within GATS, countries cannot differentiate international and foreign with national entities and, when a schedule is agreed, the schedule is irreversible. This is followed by a detailed account arguing the pros and cons of higher education as a form of trade in GATS, and more specifically, looking at the incentives for

developed and developing countries, as well as the implications for higher education in these different sets of countries. The subsequent chapters focus on the current situation of internationalisation in higher education while using India as a case study, where the country can concurrently assume the role of exporter and importer of higher education in GATS.

This book presents a comprehensive insight into the subject of higher education in GATS, and rightly concludes that instead of the need to have GATS in formalising, legalising and coordinating developments of internationalisation, there is a more pressing need for stronger national framework to govern higher education. The need for stronger framework is particularly important in developing countries for charting the development of their higher education systems. However, besides illustrating in details higher education in GATS, it would, perhaps, be also interesting for the book to explore the following questions: (a) Although the different forms of mobility involves students and academics, what is the experience of these individuals and how can this be taken into consideration and incorporated into the GATS? (b) While the General Agreement on Trade does not have barriers and cannot favour national over international entities, however, national legislation can have jurisdiction on other aspects, for instance quality control and national standards to ensure safety and quality in the automobile industry. The question is: Can the national system maintain control on higher education in the matter of quality assurance and putting up legislations and barriers to regulate the sector? (c) With the growing developments on technology and free flow of information via the World Wide Web, for example the popularity of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs), what are the implications on higher education in GATS due to technological advancement?

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WILDAVSKY Ben (2010): ***The Great Brain Race: How Global Universities are Reshaping the World,*** Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press ISBN: 978-0-691-14689-8, pp. 220 + index, (paperback).

Globalisation has a tremendous effect on higher education everywhere; as a result, higher education institutions in most parts of the world are undergoing great transformation. One of the important aspects on how globalisation transforms higher education can be seen by looking at the phenomenon of internationalisation of higher education. Internationalisation of higher education or higher education across borders is being seen nowadays largely in terms of international trade, i.e., very distinctly from the old

pattern of attracting meritorious foreign students and faculty with scholarships and fellowships to enrich the learning environment of the university campuses. The World Trade Organization and the General Agreement on Trade in Services on Higher education, which play a dominant role in the era of globalisation, are also mainly responsible for this new trend. While most people welcome internationalisation of the traditional type, which does not recognise education as a commodity meant for trade, there are mixed opinions on the new trend. Ben Wildavsky argues in the book under review that with the strong emergence of international and global higher education markets, application of principles of free trade to higher education would be necessary and it would benefit all countries – 'exporters' and 'importers' of higher education. This would also result in better formulation of higher education policies. In this context, drawing on extensive reporting in countries like China, India, and USA, and those in Europe and Middle East, Ben Wildavsky, who was education editor of US News & World Report, economic policy correspondent for the National Journal, higher education reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle and executive editor of the Public Interest, and is a senior fellow at the Kauffman Foundation and a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution, chronicles a few major inter-related striking trends in higher education: international mobility of students, setting up of satellite campuses, global rankings of universities, and the emergence of for-profit universities.

A very high rate of student mobility has been an important feature of the last couple of decades – students moving essentially from developing countries, like India and China, to countries like USA, UK and Australia and Canada, the four most popular Anglophone destinations for foreign students. Of course, these destination or host countries are losing their monopoly and other countries, including some developing countries, entered the race to attract best students. For example, Japan, Korea, China and Malaysia have set high targets of attracting students from across national borders. Countries have noted not only that foreign students provide enhanced rich cultural diverse learning environment in the university campuses, but also and more importantly, the foreign students are a source of scarce financial resources, as the foreign students in many countries are required to pay high levels of fees – much higher than what native students do, besides contributing to the economy with spending for living during the student days, and adding skilled talented manpower to the stocks of human capital after graduation. Hence, recruitment of foreign students is increasingly becoming a priority for many countries and universities and in this "fierce" global hunt for students, many aggressive practices—some controversial like appointing agents and offering commissions to agents, in addition to advertisements, exhibitions and fairs — are also being followed. Simultaneously of course, some well established universities are more interested in having close research collaboration with faculty in other countries. In chapter 1 on the "Worldwide Race for Talent" Wildavsky describes some of these issues and controversial and not- so- controversial practices.

Another important growing phenomenon in cross-border education is establishing of branch campuses. These are satellite campuses of a parent institution that is located outside the country where the satellite campus is located. The number of international branch campuses worldwide grew from 35 before 1999 to above 200 in 2012. Reviewing the experience of quite a few such campuses, Wildavsky raises some pertinent questions on the quality of the faculty, and of programmes offered in these satellite campuses, on their expenses and viability, and on their not-so-desirable practices, but concludes that, given the growing demand for translational education, this will continue to be a major trend, though

"some bumps in the road are certain" (p.69). He argues for removal of legal and other barriers for setting up such campuses in large numbers, as this would benefit countries on both sides.

The global university rankings have made at least some of the countries recognise the need to enhance quality and standards of their universities. Universities, which are already on top in world rankings, want to retain their positions and, to remain at the top, they need to make concerted efforts, particularly because many new initiatives are being taken by other universities. Thus, there is competition among the so called first-tier institutions themselves. Countries, which have either no or negligible number of universities figuring in global rankings, have also initiated several measures to set up world class or global universities and/or to nurture some of their high-quality institutions to reach world-class levels. Countries like China, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore pose a formidable challenge to the advanced counties in this race. Countries seem to adopt either or all of the three kinds of approaches that Jamil Salmi advocated in his famous slim book *(The Challenge of Establishing World Class Universities*, World Bank, Washington DC, 2009) — 'picking winners', 'hybrid' formula and 'clean-slate' approach. While most countries recognise the need to have world-class universities essentially to improve their global standing, few seem to acknowledge the need for the same for their own national development, though it can be argued that in many cases such universities might serve both purposes at the same time. Rather a subtle shift is taking place in public policies from focusing on national development goals to global standings. After all, the rankings also seemed to be having a great influence on attracting foreign students, besides increasing public and private investments. While this is not an important concern for Wildavsky, he, nevertheless, reviews the numerous rich paths adopted by several countries from France and Germany to Singapore, Korea, India, China, South Africa and Saudi Arabia in this regard. There is a lot to learn by others from these interesting cases — both from their successes and failures.

An important premise, on which the entire book under review is based, is: global higher education markets exist and they are here to stay, perhaps, with much more and stronger features of market systems. Wildavsky does not find any major problem with these markets; in fact, he perceives the global higher education markets as a great opportunity and not as a threat; they help in creating a new global meritocracy; they benefit every one, both educationally and economically; hence, they need to be welcomed and ensure their efficient functioning with appropriate legal, economic and social policies. For the efficient functioning of the markets, authentic information is essential for all the participants in the market system. Wildavsky reviews how the various global rankings systems and other efforts by organisations like the OECD serve this purpose. The elaborate information provided by the ranking systems compels the universities to improve the quality of their teaching and research programmes, and to identify areas where improvement is needed and work accordingly.

A closely related and a controversial aspect in the growth of higher education is the growth of profit-seeking private universities in many parts of the world. While there are analysts as well as policy-makers, who are either highly critical of such institutions, or highly favourable to such a phenomenon, it may have to be noted that governments, particularly in developing countries, are not in a position to control the growth of such institutions, even when they want to do so. This is applicable even to the erstwhile Communist countries, for example China or the countries of the Russian Federation. Regulatory mechanisms have

been rarely effective. Wildavsky concludes that "so long as the need they fill is so great," their growth is assured.

The author is of the firm opinion that like many other aspects of globalisation, trends in student mobility, growth in branch campuses, for-profit private universities, global rankings, etc., can never be reversed; in fact, they would grow at unparalleled rates. According to him, all these trends represent "a healthy spur to global competition." Hence, he argues in favour of application of principles of free trade to higher education, so that the economic benefits associated with trade are maximised and the world's knowledge economy is sustained (p. 193).

The Great Brain Race is a very interesting book, with a review of experiences of many experiments being carried out in various countries and by universities across the globe. Those who are engaged in higher education business at global level could find the book extremely perceptive, insightful and engaging. While one may not necessarily agree with Wildavsky in his analysis, perceptions and arguments, one would, nevertheless, enjoy and benefit from the highly stimulating commentary he makes on the global trends in higher education.

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