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BOOK REVIEWS

Correction

The correct title of the research note published in the JOURNAL Vol. XXIX, No. 1, **January 2015** on pages 75-80 is:

"Communal Politics in Higher Education Research" by **V. Sudhakar**

The typographic error is regretted.

Editor

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Building the Foundation of Pre-School Education in an Indian State

— Intervention and Policies

Tattwamasi Paltasingh*

Abstract

Children below six years are one of the most vulnerable groups, especially in a country like India. The Early Childhood Care (ECC) programme has been initiated through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) that lay the foundation for better and healthier life for these children as well as ensure support service for growing girls and working mothers. The ICDS, one of the largest and oldest Early Childhood Care programmes, aims to address the health, nutrition and development needs of the children. The children of the un-served habitation are paid attention through ECCE, introduced by the SSA. The present paper attempts to study the infrastructure, curriculum, children's participation and other related issues concerning early childhood care in Orissa intervened through both these programs. At the end, the paper attempts to throw some light on the strategies and policies that need to be given importance to ensure better pre-primary provisions that can prepare children for schooling.

* Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research (SPIESR), Drive-in Road, Thaltej, Ahmedabad-380054. E-mail: tattwam@rediffmail.com, tpaltasingh@gmail.com
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Introduction

Children under six years of age need to be given special attention as children in this age range learn and grow at a faster pace. An experience-based brain development in early life can have an impact on the health, behavior, learning ability, cognitive, psychomotor as well as social competencies throughout life (Mustard, 2007). Child-population in India has decreased whereas overall population has increased about 17.64% in last 10 years, i.e. from 2001 to 2011 (Census, 2001, 2011). One-third of the children in the age group of 3-5 years are enrolled in any pre-school, whether public or private, with 30.5% in rural areas and 49.5% in urban areas (IIPS, 2006). Large chunks of child population still remain un-attended and vulnerable. There is a need to address the structured root of child deprivation, i.e. mass poverty, social discrimination, lack of education and gender inequality. In addition to these issues, there is a need for protection of children under six by integrating them with improved child development services that can have an inclusive strategy (FOCUS, 2006). There are existing programs like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), pre-primary schools run by the State Government, Municipal Corporation and other Government and non-Government agencies that can include some of the components. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) component under SSA is an integrated and holistic concept of care and education of children between 0-6 years from socially disadvantaged groups. The ECC aims to foster universal growth, development and learning of children. Certain provisions through this program facilitate education due to early stimulation, promote development activities and support to parents and families (Rao, 2005; World Bank, 2006, SSA, 2010).

As per Article 39 of the Indian Constitution, children should receive opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner with freedom and dignity. The Directive Principle under Article 45 of the Constitution of India says that the States shall provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete 14 years of age. In addition to such provision for Primary Education, the State shall also provide Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children until they complete the age of six years. The National Policy of Education (1986) has emphasized on the Early Childhood Care and Education as an important tool to facilitate primary education. The present paper aims to reflect and compare the Early Childhood Care and Education Centers (ECCECs) and Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) in Orissa with respect to the structure, function and infrastructure provided. The paper begins with a brief introduction on the status of the child population in the country as well as in Orissa. Subsequently, there has been discussion on the curriculum, followed by available infrastructure, problems confronted in running the centers and children's participation in both ECCE and ICDS centers. There is specific observation as well as there are overall observations on issues related to pre-school education in all four visited districts. At the end, there is an attempt to present some relevant suggestions from the experiences obtained from the field visits and empirical data.

Child Population in India

The total number of children in the age-group of 0-6 years is 158.8 million and it is about 15.2 per cent of the total population of the country. The 117 million children live in rural India and about 41 million children live in urban India (Census, 2011). States like Uttar

Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, have exhibited a declining trend in the child population during 2001 to 2011 indicating the declining fertility rate and related issues. Child population under six years during 2001 was 15.9 percent, which has declined to 13.1 percent (Census, 2001, 2011). Similarly, child population in Orissa also indicates the declining trend in this segment. A decline in the percentage contribution of both boys' and girls' population to the total population is reported both in India and Orissa. In India, the contribution of boys' population has declined from 15.9 percent to 13.3 percent while that of girls' population declined from 15.8 percent to 12.9 percent for the period 2001-2011. Similarly, in Orissa, the contribution of boys' population has declined from 14.6 percent to 12.3 percent and the girls' population from 14.4 percent to 11.7 percent in the same period (Table 1).

TABLE 1

Child Population (0-6 years) in India and Orissa

		India		*Orissa*	
		number (millions)	*%*	*number (millions)*	*%*
2001	Total	163.8	15.9	5.36	14.6
	Boys	85.01	15.9	2.74	14.6
	Girls	78.83	15.8	2.61	14.4
2011	Total	158.8	13.1	5.03	12
	Boys	82.95	13.3	2.60	12.3
	Girls	75.83	12.9	2.43	11.7

Source: Census, 2001, 2011

According to the WHO, 48 % children under five in India are suffering from stunting (Kim & Umayahara, 2010). Severe malnourishment among the 12.3 percent of children, moderate malnourishment among 29.1 percent, and mild malnourishment among 37.1 percent is reported. Only 21.5 per cent children are found to be in the normal category with regard to nutrition status (IIPS 2000). In Orissa, 59% of the children under the malnourished category are receiving the benefits of ICDS. A large number of children remain without availing any benefits (Dash et al, 2006). About 5.5 crore children below the age of six years may be in need of crèches and day-care centers, but only 4.33 lakh have access to these facilities in India (NCERT, 2006). Importance of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) has been realised to some extent over the years. However, it has not been given due attention in India as indicated by the poor developmental indices regarding children under the age of six (Gupta et al, 2007). Gender disparities in access to education have been highlighted by many scholars (Ramachandran, 2001; Vaid, 2004; Singh, 2011). One of the reasons is due to inadequate attention to pre-schooling and the related consequences of household work and sibling- care of older girls. Pre-school programmes have received significant attention over the years as mechanisms of better enrolment, retention and quality education. In order to understand the structure and function of pre-school programmes in the state, it is important to compare both the programs i.e. ECCE, catered through SSA, and AWC, through ICDS.

ECCE Intervention under SSA

The ECCE plays a positive role in promoting enrolment, reduction in drop-out and greater retention in primary schooling (NIPCCD, 1993, 1995, 2003; NCERT, 2006, Paltasingh 2010).The ECCE is an essential part of human development and major component in achieving Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) catered through SSA. However, its effective implementation is yet to materialize in the desired way as evidenced across the country. Children are still dropping out of the school because of lack of school preparedness. The pre-school activities undertaken under ECCE can help the child get ready for primary school education with adequate skills to perform better in schools. The ECCE prepares children to adjust to formal schools in a much better way. The ECCE has been taken by SSA on a small scale i.e. under 'Innovation head' fund. This fund is utilized for setting up of new ECCE centres where there are no ICDS centers. The ECCE centers are operational in difficult geographical areas such as desert, hilly areas, scattered, remote habitations and forest areas. The ECCE centres are school readiness programmes that facilitate the children in experiencing school environment. Thus, achieving the target of UEE becomes much easier. However, the ECCE components have been treated as one of the ignored aspects under SSA compared to other components. The ECCE program is viewed as a stop-gap arrangement for the un-served habitation where AWCs are not functioning (Paltasingh, 2010). In India, pre-schools are managed by both public and private bodies. The percentage of primary schools (33.71), with an attached pre-primary section under private management, is higher than the percentage of schools (22.70) under government management (Mehta, 2010). It indicates that the early intervention in childcare is given less attention for the marginalised and economically less affluent children.

AWC under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

AWC (Anganwadi Centre) under ICDS has been envisaged as the holistic intervention for providing better healthcare as well as psychological and nutritional development of children. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) was introduced by the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD, 2002), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The ICDS is an important scheme in so far as provision of services for children under six years is concerned. The ICDS works through a network of Anganwadi Centers (AWC) which implies having a play center or a childcare center located within the village. These centers are run by Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWH). The ICDS provides services, i.e. pre-school education; nutrition, health education; supplementary nutrition; referral services; immunization and health check-up. It is a centrally sponsored programme by the Government of India. There has been a massive expansion in the number of Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) in the country. However, its coverage is less than 30 percent (IIPS, 2006) considering the number of deserving children. Sixty million children (< 5 years) live in poverty and only 19.4 million children (between 3-5 years) are getting pre-school education under ICDS. The supplementary nutrition programme of the ICDS covers about 42 percent of children under six in India (Supreme Court Commissioners Report, 2009). Separate nutritional intervention programmes are recommended for the children until they attain the age of three years and for 4-6 year old children (Gragnolati et al, 2006).

The ECCE, as one of the school readiness programmes, is managed through the involvement of the community as well as a productive partnership with the school department under SSA (SSA, 2010). All these aspects need to be thoroughly examined to facilitate the school readiness programmes of the state envisaged under SSA. Most of the studies on Early Childhood Care have focused on ICDS Programme and intervention. Studies on ECCE under SSA are limited. The present paper has made an attempt to highlight both the programmes with certain elements of comparison on the functions, provisions and problems confronted by them.

Methodology

The paper has been drawn as a part of the larger study on early childhood care carried out in selected districts of Orissa. The broad methodology adopted includes survey research. However, both qualitative and quantitative approach was followed based on the requirement. The details of sampling frame, with categories of sampling units, have been presented in tabular form (Table 2 & 3). Data have been collected from four districts i.e. Cuttack, Bhadrak, Boudh and Nuapada districts of Orissa. The blocks from different districts were selected on the basis of highest concentration of ECCE Centers. Two blocks from each sample district have been chosen for the purpose of the study. The selected blocks from each District are Salepur, Nischintakoili, Dhamnagar, Bhadrak, Boudh, Harabhanga, Sinapalli and Komna. Data have been collected from selected ECCE Instructors, Anganwadi workers, community members, with a personal visit to each center.

TABLE 2

Block-wise no. of visited ECCECs and AWCs

Sl. No	*Name of the District*	*Name of Block*	*No. of ECCE*	*No. of AWC*
1	Cuttack	Salepur	5	3
2		Nischantakoili	5	3
3	Bhadrak	Dhamnagar	5	3
4		Bhadrak	5	3
5	Boudh	Boudh	5	3
6		Harbhanga	5	3
7	Nuapada	Sinapalli	5	3
8		Komana	5	3
9	**Four Districts**	**08 Blocks**	**40**	**24**

Multi-stage sampling procedure had been followed for the purpose of the study. The sampling had begun with the selected districts followed by blocks with maximum number of ECCE centers. Following the multi-stage sampling procedure, five ECCE centers and three AWCs from each block were selected. All the 40 ECCE instructors and 24 AWWs were interviewed. Approximately 2 community members were approached to ascertain their perception and evaluation of the ECCE intervention (Table 2 and Table 3).

TABLE 3

Sample Distribution

Sl. No.	*Sampling Unit*	
1.	No. of Blocks covered	8 (2 from each dist 2 x 4)
2.	No. of AWCs	24 (3 from each block 8 x 3)
3.	No. of ECCECs	40 (5 from each block 8 x 5)
4.	No. of Community Members	80 (2 from each centers 40 x 2)

All the ECCE centers and AWCs were visited and interviews were carried out among all the study participants. Observation technique was followed to examine different dimensions of child-friendly education parameters. As per the requirement of the study, different tools, i.e. Observation Schedule for ECCE Centre/AWCs and children of the centers, Interview Schedule & Questionnaire for ECCE Instructors/AWWs, Interview Schedule for Community Members (ECCE), were used for data collection. Focus group discussion was carried out among the community members, some villagers and members of SMCs to obtain some qualitative information on the functioning of ECCECs and AWCs. Data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Major Findings

Functioning of ECCE centers and AWCs with respect to the Early Childhood Education component was compared in terms of curriculum component, participation of the children, infrastructure, cleanliness and various problems faced by the staff because of non-availability of resources. Each component is discussed and analysed subsequently.

Curriculum in ECC & AWC

Curriculum in elementary education is meant for conveying school-readiness skills and behaviours that facilitate children's entry in primary school (UNESCO, 2007). Need for an appropriate curriculum has been reiterated through the National Curriculum Framework-2005. According to a review of NCF, the curriculum is the sum total of all experiences available to the child, and it cannot be reduced to a syllabus (Sultana, 2009). Curriculum for children under six should be aimed at their better cognitive development, language development, socio-emotional development, physical and motor development, development of creativity and inculcation of healthy habits. In a study conducted by the NCERT (1998), it was found that in almost all the selected ICDS centers, there was a virtual absence of any play activities.

The Government of Orissa has developed a unique curriculum named 'Arunima', for children below six years in the state. This curriculum is used across all the districts. The 'Arunima' contains Oriya rhymes, some games and daily activities to be followed by the ECCE instructor and AWC worker. It has been provided to all the Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Early Childhood Care & Education Instructors (ECCEIs) for engaging the children in different activities. The information regarding use of the curriculum 'Arunima' in both AWCs and ECCE centres is illustrated in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Use of Curriculum – 'ARUNIMA' in Visited Districts

ARUNIMA followed		*ECCE (n)*	*(%)*	*AWC (n)*	*(%)*
Cuttack	Yes	7	70.00	4	66.67
	No	3	30.00	2	33.33
Bhadrak	Yes	9	90.00	5	83.33
	No	1	10.00	1	16.67
Boudh	Yes	10	100.00	6	100.00
	No	0	0.00	0	0.00
Nuapada	Yes	8	80.00	6	100.00
	No	2	20.00	0	0.00
All Districts	Yes	34	85.00	21	87.50
	No	6	15.00	3	12.50

Source: Field Data

It was found that 'Arunima' as curriculum was followed in 70 percent of ECCE centres of Cuttack, 90 percent ECCE centres of Bhadrak, 80 percent ECCE centres of Nuapada and in all the ECCE centres of Boudh district. With regard to AWC, the 'Arunima' was followed in all the centres in Boudh and Nuapada districts. However, in Bhadrak and Cuttack districts, it was followed by 83 percent and 67 percent AWC centres respectively. Overall, it was seen that most of the centres were following the 'Arunima' as the only curriculum introduced in the state of Orissa. 'Arunima'is found to be very useful in all the visited districts. The reasons why 'Arunima'was not followed in a few centres was due either to the lack of training among the staff or the non-availability of staff,in the case of a newly opened centre.

Children's Participation

Children's participation in pre-primary education in India has improved significantly in the last two decades.Their participation is found to be affected by socio-economic factors like social group, locations of centres, parental education, household income, economic status, and straggler status of the state (Kaul and Sankar, 2009). There are continuous and cumulative socio-cultural and economic exclusion factors like poverty, the compulsion among older girls to look after their families and younger siblings, some myths and beliefs faced by poor children influencing their ability to complete the primary schooling (Ramachandran et al, 2003, Singh 2011). Participation of the children from both the categories of pre-school centres was studied and the data is presented in Table 5. Variation in the participation of the children in classroom activities was reported from all the four visited districts.

The participation among the children was measured under two broad categories viz. active and passive. An active participation was found among the children from the ECCE centres in 70 percent of centres in Cuttack and Nuapada district, 60 percent in Bhadrak district and 50 percent, in Boudh district. On the other hand, in the case of AWCs, active participation of children was found in 83 percent centres of Cuttack district and about 67 percent centres in remaining three districts i.e. Bhadrak, Boudh and Nuapada.

TABLE 5

Children's Participation in Classroom Activities

District name	*Participation in Classroom*	*ECCECs (n)*	*(%)*	*AWCs (n)*	*(%)*
Cuttack	Active	7	70.00	5	83.33
	Passive	3	30.00	1	16.67
Bhadrak	Active	6	60.00	4	66.67
	Passive	4	40.00	2	33.33
Boudh	Active	5	50.00	4	66.67
	Passive	5	50.00	2	33.33
Nuapada	Active	7	70.00	4	66.67
	Passive	3	30.00	2	33.33

Source: Field Data

Available Resources

Provision of basic facilities can motivate teachers. An adequate pre-school education component, improved public awareness of health and nutrition and strengthening of traditional community structures are some of the measures for better participation and management in pre-primary education (Ramachandran et al, 2003). Early childhood services face several challenges (Rao and Sharma, 2002; Myers, 2006). In the visited centres, there are some problems noticed in day-to-day functioning of the centres. The problem was faced mainly due to non-availability of housing facility to run the centres, absence of food in ECCE centres and non-availability of kitchen facility in both ECCECs and AWCs. Among the non- available resources, housing was found to be the main problem faced by both ECCEs and AWCs (Table 6). In AWCs, the provision of food was not a problem since food was provided to all children from the department of ICDS, with disruption only in exceptional instances. This facility is not extended to ECCECs though in a rare case, children from one of the ECCE centres were receiving food as the centre was attached to a government primary school. Though there was a provision of serving hot cooked food to the children in AWC, there was no separate kitchen facility in the centre. The staff managed to cook food for the children through some makeshift arrangement like in a shed or under the tree.

TABLE 6

Available Resources in Running the Centres

Sl. No.	*Availability*	*ECCECs (n=40)*	*(%)*	*AWCs (n=24)*	*(%)*
1	Housing	12	30.00	16	66.66
2	Food	1	2.50	24	100.00
3	Kitchen	0	0.00	0	0.00

Source: Field Data

The housing facility was found to be available in 30 percent ECCE centres and about 67 percent AWCs. The food was not provided to any of the ECCEs barring one centre. However, the food was provided in all the visited AWCs. Kitchen facility was not extended to either of the centres in any of the visited districts.

Provision of Infrastructure in ECCECs and AWCs

Universal access to education is an essential component of UEE. Access implies facilitating full, free and joyful participation of children in learning. Access comprises children's participation in learning by addressing social, economic and linguistic barriers in addition to barriers arising out of physical distance, topography and infrastructure (SSA, 2010). A study by NIPCCD has emphasised the importance of adequacy of infrastructure facilities in elementary education (NIPCCD, 1995). Adequate number of classrooms, activity rooms for staff members and appropriate space for outdoor and indoor activities of children were found as major infrastructural requirements of pre-primary education that affect the ECCE environment (Sultana, 2009).The existing condition of pre-primary schools in the Papumpare District of Arunachal Pradesh was not found to be satisfactory in terms of infrastructure, programme, records and registers (Hangsing, 2011). The provision of infrastructure was found to be significant in determining children's enrolment and attendance. Provision of certain infrastructure in the visited centres like playground, drinking water, toilet, game and play instruments, instructional materials, nutrition programme and health check-ups were identified in the present study (Table 7).

TABLE 7

Available Infrastructure in ECCEs and AWCs

Available facilities	*ECCEs*				*AWCs*			
	Cuttack n (%)	*Boudh n (%)*	*Bhadrak n (%)*	*Nuapada n (%)*	*Cuttack n (%)*	*Boudh n (%)*	*Bhadrak n (%)*	*Nuapada n (%)*
Playground	5 (50.0)	2 (20.0)	3 (30.0)	2 (20.0)	2 (33.3)	1 (16.67)	3 (50.0)	1 (16.67)
Drinking water	8 (80.0)	5 (50.0)	8 (80.0)	5 (50.0)	6 (100.0)	5 (83.33)	1 (16.6)	5 (83.33)
Toilet facility	4 (40.0)	3 (30.0)	4 (40.0)	3 (30.0)	3 (50.0)	1 (16.67)	1 (16.7)	1 (16.67)
Game & play instruments	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	2 (20.0)	3 (30.0)	5 (83.3)	5 (83.33)	5 (83.3)	5 (83.33)
Instructional materials	5 (50.0)	4 (40.0)	7 (70.0)	4 (40.0)	5 (83.3)	6 (100)	6 (100)	6 (100)
Nutrition programme	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (100.0)	3 (50.00)	5 (83.3)	3 (50.00)
Regular health check- up	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	1 (10.0)	6 (100.0)	5 (83.33)	3 (50.0)	5 (83.33)

Source: Field Data

There was an attempt to identify the required infrastructure in each of the selected districts.

Cuttack District

It was found that in 50 percent of the ECCE centres and 33.3 percent of the AWCs, there was facility of playground for the children. The space for playground was not provided to the

ECC centres through SSA, but co-incidentally, there was space for the children to play in front of the centre. Drinking water facility was available in 80 percent of the visited ECCE centres whereas the same facility was found in all the AWCs. The toilet facility was found to be available in 40 percent of the visited ECCECs and 50 percent of the AWCs. Provision of game and play instruments was found to be available only in 10 percent of the ECCE centres. The same provision was found to be available in 83.3 percent of AWCs. Out of the total ECCECs, 50 percent had instructional materials while 83.3 percent AWCs had instructional materials for the children. With regard to food and nutrition, none of the ECCECs had such facilities whereas all children of AWCs were provided food and nutrition in all the visited centres (Table-7). Facilities of regular health check-ups were extended to all the AWCs unlike ECCE centres in Cuttack District.

Bhadrak District

Out of the visited centres, in 30 percent of the ECCE centres and 50 percent of the AWCs, there was playground facility for the children. Drinking water facility was available in 80 percent of the visited ECCE centres whereas the same facility was found only with 16.7 percent of the AWCs. The toilet facility was found to be available in 40 percent of the visited ECCECs and 16.7 percent of the AWCs. The provision of game and play instruments was available only in 20 percent of the ECCE centres, whereas the same provision was found to be available in 83.3 percent of AWCs. Out of the total ECCECs, 70 percent had instructional materials whereas all the AWCs had instructional materials for the children. With regard to food and nutrition, none of the ECCECs had such facilities whereas 83.3 percent children of AWCs were provided food and nutrition in the centres. It was found that facilities of regular health check-ups used to be conducted in one -half of the visited AWCs in Bhadrak District.

Boudh District

In Boudh District, 20 percent of the ECCE centres and 16.7 percent of the AWCs had playground facility for the children. Drinking water facility was available in 50 percent of the visited ECCE centres and in 83.3 percent of the AWCs. The toilet facility was found to be available in 30 percent of the visited ECCEs and 16.7 percent of the AWCs. The provision of game and play instruments was found only in 30 percent of the ECCE centres, whereas it was available in 83.3 percent of the AWCs. Of the total ECCEs, 40 percent had instructional materials for children while it was found available in all the visited AWCs. With regard to food and nutrition, none of the ECCECs had such facilities whereas 50 percent children from the AWCs were provided food and nutrition in the centres. The facility of regular health check-ups was extended to 83.3 percent of the AWCs (Table-7).

Nuapada District

It was found that facility of regular health check-ups was extended to 83.3 percent of the AWCs in Nuapada District. Out of all the visited centres, only a few of the ECCE centres and AWCs had the playground facility. Drinking water facility was available in 50 percent of the visited ECCE centres and in 83.3 percent of the AWCs. The toilet facility was found available in 30 percent of the visited ECCEs and 83.3 percent of the AWCs. Provision of game and play instruments was found in some of the ECCEs whereas the same provision was found available in most of the AWCs. Out of the total ECCECs, 40 percent had instructional

materials for children, whereas all the AWCs had such materials. With regard to food and nutrition, none of the ECCECs had such facilities whereas 50 percent children of the AWCs were provided food and nutrition in the centres (Table-7).

Cleanliness

Cleanliness plays an important role in maintenance of proper health of the children. There had been studies which had reported poor status of cleanliness in the pre-school centres (Ramachandran et al, 2003). There was an attempt to find out the status of cleanliness in the visited centres (Table-8).

TABLE 8

Cleanliness of the Centres

Cleanliness of the centre		*ECCECs*	*AWCs*
Cuttack	Good	6 (60.00)	4(66.67)
	Average	3 (30.00)	2 (33.33)
	Bad	1(10.00)	0 (0.00)
Bhadrak	Good	6 (60.00)	3 (50.00)
	Average	2 (20.00)	3 (50.00)
	Bad	2 (20.00)	0(0.00)
Boudh	Good	4 (40.00)	2 (33.33)
	Average	5 (50.00)	4 (66.67)
	Bad	1 (10.00)	0 (0.00)
Nuapada	Good	4 (40.00)	2 (33.33)
	Average	6 (60.00)	4 (66.67)
	Bad	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)

Source: Field Data

Based on the personal visit, it was observed that in Cuttack district more than half of the ECCE centres and AWCs were found to be cleaned. In Bhadrak district, cleanliness was maintained in more than half of the ECCECs and just half the AWCs. However, in Boudh and Nuapada Districts, cleanliness was maintained in about 40 percent and less than this in ECCECs and AWCs. It was found in most of the visited AWCs and ECCECs that there was no proper supervision and monitoring in maintaining the infrastructure and cleanliness.

Discussion of the Findings

It was found out that in all four districts of Orissa, both the ECCECs and AWCs were following 'Arunima' as their curriculum. An active participation of children was found in Cuttack and Bhadrak districts followed by Nuapada and Boudh districts. Out of the total visited centres, more than 40 percent ECCECs as well as AWCs face problems in running the centre. Housing was found to be the major problem faced by both ECCECs and AWCs. This facility was not extended to ECCECs. With regard to food and nutrition, none of the ECCECs had such facilities whereas in AWCs, provision of food was not a problem because MDM was provided to all children from the department of ICDS. Thus, the provision of food and nutrition was a major attraction for which AWC had an advantage over ECCEC. Children and

parents were more attracted to AWCs because children received both snacks and meals everyday. There was demand from the villagers for providing of food and nutrition to the children by ECCECs. Majority of villagers were not co-operative in providing space for ECCECs. Even if there were club houses/community centres, villagers were reluctant to provide space for ECCECs operations. In Cuttack district, majority of the centres were run at the ECCEC Instructors' houses. ECCEC instructors were, to some extent, compelled to run the centres. Very often, it was noticed that in one of the blocks of Cuttack, the ECCEC children were sitting on the floor without even a mat. Majority of the ECCE centres in the villages of Boudh district were functioning in the community centre. The ECCE Instructor found it difficult to keep the instructional materials within the community house. Some of the centres were operating in village community centres or in the religious places, designated for religious rites, in Nuapada district. The play and instructional materials was supplied only once (during 2006) to all the ECCE centres in Nuapada and Bhadrak districts. After that, none of the centres had received any instructional materials for the children. It was found that facilities of regular health check-ups were extended to most of the AWCs in all four districts, while children in the ECCECs did not receive such support on a sustained basis.

Comparative Issues Concerning AWCs & ECCECs

This section is a detailed summing up of the specific observations, findings and discussions with the relevant stakeholders in all the visited districts of Orissa. There is a possibility that the same ECCE centre will be converted to AWC. Hence, most of the ECCE Instructors have the fear of losing their jobs. This has affected the daily functioning of existing ECCE centres. Some ECCE centres were recently discontinued because the Instructors were selected as AWWs. There were no exclusive meetings for ECCE centres among the community members. The meetings were usually conducted for school purposes and the ECCE centres were, to some extent, sidelined. There should be more involvement among the school principals, teachers and community members with regard to ECCEC activities. Some centres were operating within the school premises. In such a situation, the Instructor found it difficult to retain children when MDM was served to the children. Little children were asking for food when MDM was served. Such a situation could be avoided through provision of food, if the centre were to operate in the same premises. Majority of the ECCE centres in the villages were functioning in the community ('Bhagat Ghara') centre provided by the villagers. The ECCEC Instructor found it difficult to keep the instructional materials within the community house. Keeping the TLM requires some arrangement and that can be managed through the intervention of community members. Irregular and insufficient salary was identified as the major factors responsible for demotivation of ECCE instructors with their jobs.

There was comparison between AWC and ECCEC because of non-provision of food and instructional materials in ECCE centres. The salary of the Instructor and AWW was also compared. Children and parents were more attracted to AWCs because children received both snacks and meals every day. The school teachers, Block Resource Centre Coordinators (BRCCs) and Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) were interested in the continuance of ECCECs as they facilitated better learning and school preparedness among the children. At the same time, it was suggested that better facilities and infrastructure be provided so as to sustain ECCE centres. Centres were operating either in school premises or

in ECCE Instructors' houses. ECCE Instructors had to run the centres in their houses as otherwise their jobs would be at stake. It was suggested that in cases where there was not much co-operation from the villagers to accommodate children in a comfortable manner, schools could provide a suitable alternative to accommodate the ECCE Centres. Unavailability of several infrastructural requirements and regular financial support from the government were noticed in the visited districts. Such problems could be sorted out with the intervention of Gram Panchayat, members of SMCs, Mothers' Teachers' Association (MTA), Parent's Teachers' Association (PTA) and Block Resource Centre Coordinators (BRCCs). An irregularity of funds has discouraged the ECCE Instructors as well as parents because the children have insufficient instructional materials. None of the ECCECs and AWCs strictly follow ARUNIMA in toto as their curriculum. However, a part of it is being followed by them as per their convenience. In proper Bhadrak, block centres were located in extremely crowded localities not suitable for running of the ECCE centre. The geographical coverage of Bhadrak block was very scattered and many of the schools and adjacent ECCE centres were located in remote areas. Children of ECCE centres in this district were affected by floods in the Salandi and Kapali Rivers. It was noticed that most of the ECCE instructors were better qualified than AWWs. There was direct supervision of the school principals, teachers, BRCCs, CRCCs in the functioning of many ECCE centres. Though MDM is not officially provided, many children of schools attached to the ECCECs get food if they are present at the time when MDM is served.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Both ECCECs and AWCs are the programmes undertaken to promote pre-school education among children till they attain the age of six years. The activities related to ECCEs are undertaken by SSA whereas in the case of AWCs, the responsibilities are carried out by ICDS. There is convergence between these two departments of Govt. of India. At the same time, there are some differences between these two programmes in terms of provision of infrastructure, and provision of nutritional components etc.. These two contradictory provisions often inhibit attainment of the desired objectives. ECCECs are strongly compared with AWCs because there are lack of many facilities and provisions. The ministry concerned (MHRD) should look into the details of providing differential treatment to these two categories of pre-school activities. The Department of Women and Child Development should also converge with SSA in some areas, for instance in the provision of training to the staff members, supply of instructional materials, supply of food and nutrition to the children. This would be necessary as otherwise both ECCEC and AWC would function as two parallel departments without considering the requirements of children and the community. The responsibility to educate children from birth to six years must be shared as a major responsibility in all related departments like Department of Women and Child Development, Department of Rural Development, Health and Education as well as Tribal Development. These departments should address the issues pertaining to pre-school education on a common platform based on the need of the community and the children. ECCE has a major role to play in the all-round development of the children. It cannot be narrowly understood and confined to the four walls of a classroom. The centre can be connected to the community and linked to the school as per the requirement. The centres can also operate in construction

sites where large number of children below six years can derive the benefits of pre-school education.

Instead of strict and rigid principles, there should rather be flexibility in adopting strategies, models and structures that can facilitate early childhood and care. ECCE interventions can respond to the vast, diverse, complex needs of the pluralistic society. The livelihood pattern of the locality, including the work style of the woman, timings of the woman, agricultural labourers can be taken into consideration. There should be utmost care to retain the regularity of children in Pre-school centres. This will be possible only if the instructors are regular in attendance. Pre-school programmes need not be de-contextualized from the community. In many instances, communities perceive these programmes as isolated from them and only the responsibility of Government. Therefore, there are instances where the community is reluctant to provide space for children. Often, there is evidence of caste hierarchy in villages where little children are not allowed to eat with lower caste children. This problem can be avoided through community mobilization training and awareness programmes on caste and gender issues among the villagers. The under-privileged group should be the focus of attention to derive benefits from pre-school education programmes. Better cooperation among school principals, teachers and community members with regard to ECCECs activities is suggested. Regular and appropriate salary for ECCEC instructors could motivate them for better performance. Provision of food and instructional materials in ECCE centres will encourage the children and their parents towards better enrolment and retention in these centres. A regular flow of funds will also encourage the ECCEC Instructors and parents as it will enable the children to get sufficient instructional materials. The curriculum, 'ARUNIMA' need to be followed more firmly for better development of the children under six years of age. It is important that ECCE centers should be linked to the primary schools, whether physically or programmatically. The school connectivity of ECCECs helps substantially in diverse ways with the direct supervision and facilities provided in the school system.

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Religion and Educational Behaviour of Muslims in Rural India

Malik Raihan Ahmad*

Abstract

[The paper illustrates the role of religion in shaping the educational behaviour of people, especially Muslims, in rural India. Rural society is relatively much influenced by religion. Religious ethos plays a significant role in determining the social conditioning of human beings. The paper draws attention towards the educational trends among rural Muslims in the State of Uttar Pradesh in India. The paper is empirically rich where it explains the demographic profile of sample villages of Siddharthnagar district. Five villages of five sub-divisions have been studied and an interpretative understanding has been attempted of *Maktab* (Muslim religious educational institutions) at the village level. It brings to light the educational behaviour of rural Muslims.

The paper briefly aims to arrive at two points. First, parents realize the importance of modern education, which is the need of the day, but at the same time, they are not ready to leave their religious education. The rural Muslim population is inclined to adopt the curriculum which is the combination of both modern and traditional elements. Muslim religious educational institutions, that have introduced modern subjects, have attracted larger chunk of students although government schools have offered several incentives in various forms.]

* Directorate of Distance Education, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad-32
E-mail: malikraihan@rediffmail.com

Introduction

Religion has been identified as an important component of human societies from the very beginning. Instances, to explain certain inexplicable situations and experiences of everyday life through religion, have been noticed in both primitive and civilized societies. Religion has also been found associated with the human attempt to find purpose and meaning in life. Scholars, from the very beginning, have found religion as a guiding force for human behaviour and have used it as an independent and important variable to understand human behaviour. Durkhiem, Karl Marx, Max Weber and others have analysed the impact of religion in the process of formation and crystallization of human behaviour.

Durkheim, as a functionalist, says that religion reinforces 'collective conscience' (Haralambos & Halborn, 2000, p. 433) without which society cannot exist. Of course, he talked about different forms of religions which appeared, according to him, through the process of social evolution and always recognised their conscious or unconscious impact on human actions and behaviour. Advocating the importance of religion in society, he questioned the people who labelled religion as mere fantasy. He asked: 'how could a vain fantasy have been able to fashion the human consciousness so strongly and so enduringly?'

Karl Marx recognized the role of religion in society and criticised it for its negative role vis-à-vis revolution. In his understanding, religion is 'the opium of the people' (Durkheim 1912, p. 436). Religion acts as an opiate to dull the pain produced by oppression. He attached greater value to religion by saying that it acts as a mechanism of social control in maintaining the existing system of exploitation while reinforcing the class relationship.

Max Weber, in his book "*Protestant Ethics and The spirit of Capitalism"*, (Renavikar, 2003, p. 18; Haralambos & Halborn, 2000, p. 447), analyses the whole affair by putting the religion as base. He tried to show how religion, that is Protestants ethics, led to the development of capitalism. In the same manner, Rodenson tried to analyse the role of Islamic ethics in producing the spirit of capitalism. He found that Islam, as a religion, does not have ethics conducive for the emergence and development of a capitalist economy.

Similarly, there are other studies undertaken by scholars on the different aspects of the fore mentioned subject. They arrived at different conclusions in terms of its positive and negative roles. But the important point to notice in this particular context is that none of them has ever discarded the importance of religion and its role in shaping the behaviour of individuals and the structure of societies.

Scholars recognised the force of religion, as reflected in their scholarly works, but simultaneously they also predicted its future termination. They believe that with the development of scientific and rational thinking, religion will lose its importance.[1] Weakness of religion, as an institution, was being observed in a negative correlation with rationality and scientific thinking. It means that religious institutions will get weak whenever and wherever the rationality and scientific temperament is nurtured.

[1] Durkheim, Marx, Weber and others also agree on the point that with the evolution of society, religion will lose its importance. Durkheim discussed it while giving the typology of religion that comes with the evolution of society. Weber talks about the 'iron cage' based on fully scientific explanations where religion will not find any place. For further any book on the subject can be consulted.

Thus, urban areas are labelled as more rational and scientific than their rural counterparts. Of course, we do not have a water-tight compartment between urban and rural areas, rather it is a continuum. In this continuum, we find some units from both the categories overlapping each other. It means that there may be many villages or rural areas, as per government records, having higher degree of urbanism than some towns in the country and vice versa. But, for the purpose of understanding, it would be safer and better to overlook the overlapping units and take the obvious ones only from both the categories for the purpose of understanding the differences clearer in terms of the religious impact and grip in the process of social formation. Inter-caste and inter-religious marriages, sharing dining tables irrespective of religion and caste, homosexuality and lesbianism are the behaviours of big urban societies which are against religious prescriptions. Here we are not touching upon the moral and social implications of these behaviours. The very purpose of mentioning these emerging social practices is simply to show the weakening grip of religion among urban dwellers. We do not find open space for those practices in rural areas; instead we see instances of the strong hold of religious beliefs and practices in their day-to-day lives.

In this milieu, an attempt is being made to understand the impact or rather the role of religion in shaping the educational behaviour of rural Muslims. The study does not bother about the non-school going children, causes for drop-outs and quality of education etc.. It is simply a psycho-social analysis of religious impact on Muslims' behaviour in rural India towards education. What are the factors influencing the decisions when they take about the education of their children?

Methodology

The study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. The major purpose of such studies is to describe the affair as it exists (Kothari, 2006, p. 2). Qualitative researches are based on the measurement of quality. This aims at discovering the underlying motives and desires of human behaviour. It is concerned about the phenomenon needed for an in-depth understanding. Through such researches, we can analyse the various factors that motivate people to behave in a particular manner or that make people like or dislike a particular thing (Kothari, 2006, p. 3).

Sampling technique, which is the best solution to finish the work in a best possible manner within the available resources, is used for the study. Whenever field studies are undertaken, the considerations of time and cost, almost invariably lead to the selection of the respondent. The selected respondents constitute what is technically called a 'sample' and the selection process is called sampling technique (Kothari, 2006, p. 55).

There are many designs of sampling to be used according to the nature and requirement of the study undertaken. According to the need of this study, stratified and purposive sampling design has been used. Under stratified sampling, the population is divided into several sub-populations which are individually more homogenous than the total. The selection of items from each sub-population was made to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2006, p. 62). Accordingly, the district (Siddharthnagar)[2] under study is divided, at first stage, into

[2] Siddharthnagar is a district of Uttar Pradesh situated in the north eastern part of the state.

five strata as it has five administrative sub- divisions. These are Bansi, Shohratgarh, Domariaganj, Itwa, and Naugarh.[3] Each sub-division is identified as a stratum.

At the second stage of sampling, one village is taken as sample from each sub-division through purposive or deliberate sampling method. In this type of sampling, the researcher selects items from the strata deliberately that he feels of his purpose. In other words, under purposive sampling, the organisers of the inquiry purposively choose the particular units of the universe for constituting a sample, on the basis that the small mass that is selected out of a huge one will be a representative of the whole (Kothari, 2006, p. 59). While selecting the sample villages, from each sub-division, its distance from the respective towns, availability of basic infrastructure and composition of its population in terms of religion is taken into consideration. Each village is distinguishable in all aforementioned aspects from the other.

The data from the sample villages is gathered through observation and unstructured interviews of the villagers. Of course, it was not possible to interview the entire population of the villages that was ranging from 600 to 2430. After separating the Muslim names from the voter list, a random Table was used to pick the individual samples to be interviewed. Twenty people were interviewed from each village.

It seems better to have a look on the social profile of the villages individually, so that the analysis of the state of affairs and inferring conclusions can be easy and comprehensible for both the essayist and the reader.

Semra

Name of the village	Concerned sub-division	Total Population[4]	Muslims in %	Distance from the town	Educational institutions in village
Semra	Itwa	2430	80%	3 km.	4

Semra is the village chosen as sample for the study from Itwa sub-division. Itwa has almost all the pre-requisites to be declared as a town on government papers but yet it is not. The village is situated three kilometres south-west of Itwa town. Muslims constitute about 80 percent of the total 2430 voter population of the village.

The village folks have to go to town to meet all their basic needs like some shopping, medical assistance, post office work etc. The connecting road is nothing but a muddy passageway without any tarred or cemented sections. As in the case of most of the Indian villages, no public transport facility is available on this road. People have to manage their own transport to come to the town. Most of them have bicycles and bikes.

Semra is a prosperous village. At least one member from each family is working either in one of the Gulf countries or in Mumbai[5]. Most of them are in informal sectors. Of course, the ratio of people working in Gulf is much lesser than the people working in Mumbai. They are earning relatively satisfactory wages, and, in the context of Indian villages, leading a decent life. Land holding pattern of the village is not much different from its population

[3] The former name of Siddharthnagar.

[4] The figures are reflecting only the voter population of the village, taken from voter lists of the village concerned.

[5] It is the economic capital of India, in the state of Maharashtra and the state capital as well.

composition. More than 80% of the village land is under the control of Muslims and indeed, that symbolises their domination. Most of the people among Muslims claim to be literate but are not able to go for government jobs or any other jobs where skill of reading and writing is needed. As it happens, they are hardly able to read Urdu and Hindi that they learned from the *maktab*[6] of the village. Among the young generation, about 14 people are receiving higher education at different institutions. But the noteworthy point in this regard is that about 10 of them have reached this level through oriental stream of education through the *madarsa*[7].

In terms of educational assets, the village has one *maktab*, one government junior high school[8] with its primary section and one newly established semi-public school[9]. The *maktab* has good infrastructure. It has a double-storey building consisting of eight rooms and a big veranda. It has proper sanitation and drinking water facilities. Of course, it is a de-schooling village because all three educational institutions are located at the periphery of the village and, as such, villagers do not need to worry about their wards reaching school.

Politics of the village, besides other areas, has played an interesting role in education also. The village has two equally strong political factions. Both the factions are associated with two local political leaders of two different parties. The political interplay between factions caused many interesting developments. However, in this case, we will confine ourselves merely to the educational behaviour of the villagers.

Earlier the *maktab* was the only facility to provide education for the entire Muslim population of the village. Some lower caste non-Muslims were also sending their children to the *maktab* to enable their children to learn mathematics, Hindi and Urdu as well. Teachers in the *maktabs* also equally teach all the subjects except those related to religion. Earlier, these subjects were and even now continue to be the essential components of the *maktab* syllabi. Later, the government established a primary school in the village, which was recently upgraded to a junior high school. The junior high school, even after providing many benefits as part of government scheme, did not succeed in attracting Muslim students.

The primary section of the government school has a unique character now. As mentioned earlier, the village has two political factions, with politics having the freedom to access various spheres. After a long gap, political power in the village shifted to the rival faction with the *Pradhan* getting elected from among them. The shift in power to the other faction gave the newly-elected *Pradhan* an opportunity to provide another educational institution option in the village itself to counter his political rivals associated with the old *maktab*. Accordingly, he decided to establish another *maktab*. While getting students for his new *maktab* was no problem for him given his following in the village, the new *pradhan* succeeded in attracting students of the old *maktab* by developing a relatively modern curriculum while introducing the unique feature of combining his *maktab* with government primary school. This endeavour provided a middle path between a secular curriculum and a

6 Educational institutions established by Muslims to provide religious education generally up to fifth standard

7 Educational institutions established by Muslims to provide religious education up to the level of graduation and above.

8 Basically it was primary school which has been recently upgraded as Junior High School.

9 Semi-public school means a school established partly on the pattern of private and public schools not sticking purely with *maktab* culture where only Maulanas teach the religious books.

religious one. On the one hand, secular education offered many benefits besides education but these could not replace religion, while, on the other, *maktab* was not able to provide anything barring religious education[10]. Being part of the society, Muslims of the village were feeling the pressing need for modern education and yet they could not abandon religion. The middle path opened the way for the students to get the benefits of both the hitherto mutually exclusive options that Muslims were seeking.

The *pradhan* constructed three rooms for his *maktab* adjacent to the premises of government school. He provided students the opportunity to get registered simultaneously in the government primary school and in this *maktab*. This development enabled Muslim students get scholarships, midday meals and other facilities provided by the government while studying in the new *maktab* with its curriculum different from the earlier one. The combination of oriental and modern education, supplemented with monetary benefits, made the new *maktab* more popular. The syllabus of the newly-established *maktab* was a mixture of the UP Board curriculum and oriental education. Even the teachers appointed under the scheme of *shiksa mitra*[11] for government primary school were teaching in the *maktab* and drawing their salaries from the government fund. Teaching staff was neither from the village nor from the neighbouring villages. The expenditure of both the *maktabs* was managed from the donations of the villagers working in Mumbai.

A similar trend but at are other level has also been observed. The village, as mentioned earlier, was a big one with a population of about 2430 voters. But nearly 30% of the Muslim students did not enrol themselves in either of the *maktabs*. Instead they went to Itwa in a modern public school named *Al-Farooq Public School* again due to same reason. Established in 1996, this school was providing a combination of oriental and modern education. It attracted many students from the entire sub-division because of its other advantages, like an attractive building and good transport facility, besides a mixed syllabus suiting Muslims.

The affluent families of the village sent their children to *Al-Farooq School*. They could afford the expenses on uniform, books and transportation of the school. Quite naturally, the remaining families, belonging to economically weaker sections (constituting about 70% of the total Muslim population of the village) were unable to do so and had to take benefits from the *maktabs*.

Politics of education is hot in the village. The faction that is not in power is blaming the *pradhan* for spoiling religious education by attaching it with a Government school. But the combined syllabus of modern and oriental subjects remained the attraction for students. Consequently, emulating the new *maktab,* the management of the old one, who had criticised the new *maktab* for spoiling religious education, also introduced modern subjects because of the fear of losing students.

The whole picture reveals that religion is still a determinant of the educational behaviour of the villagers. Scholarship, midday meal and free dress and books are attractions, but not at the cost of religious education. Of course, primary school was there with all free facilities but it could not attract any Muslim student just because of the lack of

[10] *Maktabs* have modern subjects in Urdu Medium but it is the general perception that *maktab* means religious education.

[11] Under the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the government of UP appoints teachers through Panchayat head of the Panchayat concerned on contract basis for primary schools with such teachers being known as *Shiksha Mitras*.

religious education in its syllabi. When they got a chance to bag the free facilities along with religious education, they rushed there without any fear of modern education. The same is the case with *Al-Farooq Public School.* It is situated in Itwa, the main town, where many other government schools had been functioning before it was established. However, Muslim students did not go to these schools because of the lack of religious component in their syllabi. *Al-Farooq* introduced mixed syllabi of oriental and modern subjects and attracted many students even though it is costlier than the older schools in the area.

Bagahwa

Name of the village	Concerned sub-division	Total Population[12]	Muslims in %	Distance from the town	Educational institution in village
Bagahwa	Domariaganj	1960	65%	6 k.m.	4

Bagahwa village is one of the villages of Domariaganj sub-division. It is located six kilometres to the north-east of the town. According to the voter list, the population of the village has about 1960 voters, 65% of whom are Muslims. The dominant group of the village is of Muslims. They may be called as dominant caste as all families, excepting one, belong to the same caste. Their share in the land-holding of the village is much more than other groups of the village. The village is situated in a remote area without any basic infrastructure. A road connecting the village with the town Domariaganj is under construction. The town is equipped with all basic facilities like hospital, post office and others. The village-folk are required to go to the town for all their basic needs. Most of them use a shorter route, which is a boat ride across the river Rapti[13], to get to the town. The villagers are less exposed to urbanism. Bulk of the Muslim population is engaged in agriculture either as landless labourers or as petty peasants working on their lands. There is another section of the populace, which has migrated to bigger cities in search of livelihood. Some of them are working as unskilled labourers in Mumbai. Three men from different families are working in the Gulf in unorganised sectors. There are only three graduates among Muslims in the entire village. Three more graduates from the same family were also reported but they have left the village to settle in Domariaganj town. The family was forced to break all its relationships from the village because the villagers did not recognise and offer the social status that it achieved through social mobility. The village, however, is doing well in so far as religious education is concerned. More than 20 *hafiz*[14] and *alim*[15] are in the village but most of them are from the non-dominant group. Three Muslims, now retired, were working as teachers in the local primary schools. Notably, Muslims of the village do not have any share in government jobs.

The village has three *maktabs* and one government primary school. One of these *maktabs* was established about four years ago and another one about two years ago. They

12 The figures are reflecting only the voter population of the village, taken from voter lists of the village concerned.

13 It is a river originating from the Himalayas and the biggest river of the district.

14 It is a course offered in *Madarsa* in which the student is supposed to memorise the whole Qura'n.

15 This is a degree offered by the *Madarsa* and is recognized by many universities as equivalent to the twelfth grade.

are without basic minimum facilities. They do not have proper buildings, toilets or playground. The oldest *maktab,* however, is relatively better equipped. It has a building with seven rooms within a large boundary wall. The *maktab* has seven teachers and more than 150 students. It is more than 20 years old and is situated two kilometres from the village. In fact geographically, this *maktab* falls in the neighbouring village but is functionally associated with Bagahwa. Children are supposed to go to school on foot. Earlier, thanks to unity factors, the entire village was concentrated in one old *maktab.* Internal competition for controlling resources and other benefits created a political rift within the dominant group. This political rift led to the developing of strong political factions in the village. One of the factions dominated the old *maktab* management, and consequently the other faction was forced to establish another.

The second *maktab* is functioning in just two small huts. It is not far from the village. Four teachers are working in it with more than 50 students registered in this *maktab*. This newly established *maktab* included Science, English and Math with oriental subjects in its syllabi from the first standard. This happened because the management of this *maktab* was better exposed to the outside world as compared to the other group from the village. Apparently, they also adopted these new courses to justify the setting up of this new *maktab* to the people so as to get donations from them and also to attract students. They succeeded in getting sufficient number of students for their *maktab* simply through their attractive syllabi.

With the functioning of the new *maktab,* the old *maktab* started losing its strength. Syllabi of the new *maktab* forced the people of the old *maktab* to have a re-look at their own curriculum. Owing to the rigidities on account of village factionalism, people were forced to maintain distance even at a high cost. They did not send their children to the new *maktab* though they realized the importance of the new syllabi. Later, they also introduced modern subjects in their own *maktab* as it was felt that they would not be able to compete otherwise.

The third *maktab* was established on the basis of intra-religious faction. Intra-religious differences always existed in the village but were never politicised earlier. This politicisation may be attributed to an identity crisis of some people from the younger generation and some sort of support from others to derive political mileage at village level. This *maktab* is functioning at the threshing area adjacent to the village in a cottage made from hay. They also have English, Math. and Science in their syllabus. Two teachers from the same village are teaching in this *maktab*. Strength of students is not more than 40. Most teaching staff of the *maktab*s is from the same village and a few from the neighbouring villages. They are managing their expenditure through donations from within and outside the village. Almost all Muslim children of the village attend one of these *maktab*s. The Government primary school running in the village reported only two Muslim students on its rolls. Interestingly, both the students admitted in the Government school were simultaneously enrolled in the *maktab* also. They enrolled themselves in the government primary school just to get the monetary benefits being provided there by the government even though for all practical purposes, they were attending the *maktab*. On days when the *maktab* was closed, the students were attending the government school.

The establishment of the latter two *maktabs* was the result of political factionalism in the village and was sought to be justified by the introduction of modern subjects in the syllabi. This modern component in the syllabi of all *maktabs* became the competition factor among them. The government school (of the village), with its completely modern syllabi,

paradoxically could not manage to attract any student even when the modern subjects became the tool for the success of the *maktabs*.

Mauharia

Name of the village	Concerned sub-division	Total Population[16]	Muslims in %	Distance from the town	Educational institution in village
Mauharia	Naugarh	600	55%	4 k.m.	1

Mauharia is the other sample village of Siddharthnagar district from Naugarh sub-division. It is located about four kilometres north-east of Naugarh. The village is about half a kilometre away from the tar road. Population of the village is about 600, of whom 55% are Muslims. The village is poor, both in educational and economic terms. Most of the people of the village are working in Mumbai as unskilled labourers in unorganised sectors. Their incomes hardly serve the basic needs of their families. One complete family of the village is living in Mumbai and seems quite prosperous. But it does not have any direct impact on the village due to the lack of its direct physical interaction with the villagers. The village is less exposed to aspects of urbanism though it is close to the district headquarters. This is so because the district itself seems to be in the lower middle stage of the folk urban continuum.

A maktab is functioning in the village. There is no government school within its boundary. The village is small and does not fulfil the requirements for establishing a separate school for it. The neighbouring village has a primary school and two Muslim students of Mauharia village attend classes there. But it is reported that these children were also students of the *maktab,* and due to some personal rift with the *nazim*[17] of the *maktab,* the guardians withdrew their wards and sent them to the government school of the neighbouring village. It did not happen due to any logical reason. Two boys of the village are doing *hifz* course in a *madrasa*[18] of Naugarh also.

The village does not play any active role in *panchayat* politics. It is small and attached to the neighbouring villages. No one ever staked a claim for candidature to the post of *Pradhan* in the *panchayat* elections from the village.

The *maktab* of the village is in a very precarious situation. It has only one room with a very small veranda. Usually students sit under a big cane tree adjacent to it. Syllabi of the *maktab* are based on oriental subjects, with little English and Math, developed by oriental and religious agencies. A teacher of the *maktab* looks after all the issues related to it. He himself manages the income by collecting donations from people in Mumbai, especially during the month of *Ramadan*[19].

It seems that poor economic situation of the village does not allow its inhabitants to think about the education of their children. They are isolated and unable to assess the future

16 The figures are reflecting only the voter population of the village, taken from voter lists of the village concerned.

17 *Nazim* is term used for manager in *Madarsa* education system

18 *Madarsa* is generally used for those Muslim religious educational institutions that provide education up to *Alim* or any other level that is above to primary level.

19 It is a holy month for Muslims in which they keep fasts for the whole month and spend money for the cause of religion.

needs. They neither have any option for providing modern education to their children and nor is there anyone who can create this option for them.

Kulhi

Name of the village	Concerned sub-division	Total Population[20]	Muslims in %	Distance from the town	Educational institution in village
Kulhui	Bansi	900	40%	12 k.m.	2

Kulhi is another sample village taken from Bansi sub-division. It is situated about 10 kilometres south of Bansi town. The village does not have access to the tar road directly. To reach the road, the village folk have to travel over a kilometre on foot. After reaching the tar road, the transport facility is quite satisfactory to Bansi town.

Population of the village has about 900 voters, 40% of whom are Muslims. Comparatively speaking, the village is not as prosperous as Semra and not as poor as Mauharia of Itwa and Naugarh sub-divisions respectively. It is equipped with one primary school, which was recently upgraded to the level of a junior high school, and one well-established *maktab*. Barring two students doing graduation, the village does not have any representation in higher and modern education. But there are four *Maulanas*[21] in the village actively engaged in the cause of education. One of them became a primary teacher under the Urdu teacher recruitment scheme, promoted by the Mulayam Singh Government in Uttar Pradesh. He was also looking after the *maktab* as *nazim*.

The maktab has all basic facilities such as seven roofed rooms with boundary wall, play ground, safe drinking water and sanitation. Expenditure of the *maktab* is met by collecting donations from the village and other places. Six teachers are working here. Though not from the same village, they stay within a radius of about 50 kilometres from the village. All Muslim children from the village are attending this *maktab* for their primary education. The *maktab* syllabi was modified by including modern subjects without replacing the oriental subjects with the modern ones. The previous and present *nazim* were well exposed to the happenings in the outside world. They used to visit places and keep themselves abreast with the modern trends in education.

They did not develop a public school model as they believed that their area of jurisdiction was limited due to its location in such a remote place. They also felt that their target group could not support their children upto that level. They believed that they were trying to provide quality education of that standard with limited facilities.

The primary school of the village is serving only the Hindu population, especially Dalits, because almost the entire Hindu population of the village is Dalit. It did not attract any Muslim student from the entire village despite providing all the facilities of a government school. One *Maulana* from the village established a girls' *madrasa* in Bansi town. It attracted many girl students from the village, district and also the neighbouring districts. It is

[20] The figures are reflecting only the voter population of the village, taken from voter lists of the village concerned.

[21] In general, *Maulana* is used for person having religious education.

functioning with good infrastructural facilities within a safe boundary wall. Boundary wall is the most important tool of satisfaction and motivational factor for parents to send their daughters to the *madrasa*. But the idea behind parents sending their daughters to such a *madrasa* is that it helps the girls in getting acquainted with religious education and thus facilitates their marriage. They seldom thought of job prospects emerging from this education. The syllabi of this *madrasa* consisted of English, Economics etc. but their efficacy was limited. The education provided here is recognised by many universities.

As has been seen the Muslim students are attending only *maktabs.* They do not have any other options barring government primary school. The village, unlike the other two, does not have any political faction or any other form of competitive pressure to attract the students. But they introduced the modern subjects along with the existing oriental subjects simply by realizing the need of the day.

Gulahura

Name of the village	Concerned sub-division	Total Population[22]	Muslims in %	Distance from the town	Educational institution in village
Gulhaura	Shohratgarh	1100	20%	8 k.m.	1

Gulahura is the fifth and last village of the district, located about seven kilometres towards the west of the sub-division headquarters. The sub-division is known as Shuhratgarh. The village is near the main road. A man can easily get to the road by walking a little distance. Population of the village has about 1100 voters but the ratio of Muslim population is only 20%. Thirteen percent of Muslim population is of the *ashraf*[23] and from single caste, which is also the dominant caste of the village. The rest 7 % are from *ajlaf* and *arzal*[24] category. Majority of the Hindu population here belong to the Dalit community. Only three Brahmin families are there in the village.

Brahmins and *ashraf* Muslims of the village hold more than 50% of the land. They are educated and well aware. The village *pradhan* is from Muslim *ashraf* group. He has been managing the headship of the village since the last 20 years. Before him, his father was head of the village *panchayat*. Brahmins have been isolated from the village politics as they could not gain the support of the Dalit as traditional caste barriers came in the way. However, the Muslims managed to get the support from Dalits by developing close relationships with them.

One maktab and one primary school is the source of education for the villagers. The primary school is good and is approved for upgradation as a junior high school. The building for this junior high school is under construction. One head master from the other village and two girls from the same village are teaching there. Girls are appointed under the scheme of *shiksha mitra* and are from *Brahmin* families. Once again, like all other primary schools this one too does not attract any Muslim student.

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22 The figures are reflecting only the voter population of the village, taken from voter lists of the village concerned.

23 The upper strata of the caste classification among Muslims.

24 The lower strata among Muslim caste classification are *ajlaf* and *arzal.*

The *maktab* here is very old. It consists of three rooms and one veranda. It has good drinking water facility and place for using as play ground. The *pradhan* of the village is having full control over the *maktab*. He manages the expenditure by collecting zakat[25] from the village and some from outside. The only teacher here is from the neighbouring village. Almost all the Muslim children of the village are attending the *maktab* barring the children of six families from the *ashraf* category, including the *pradhan*. Their children are attending a modern public school in Shuhratgarh. Since the *pradhan* and other influential families of the village are not sending their children to the village *maktab,* they are not concerned with the quality of education being provided in this village.

Muslims of the village are sending their children to the *maktab* with the intention of making them aware about religion. They feel that *maktab* will enable them to perform their basic religious duties. They also feel that government school of the village will spoil their children in terms of their religion.

At the village, they do not have any option of getting modern and religious education simultaneously. At times, when it comes to choosing between the options available, they prefer religion to secular education.

Conclusion

Observations made in the villages reveal the changes taking place in the behaviours of Muslim rural population. Of course, the impact of urbanization and globalisation has percolated to the villages through media and mobility factors. As a result of the impact of these unavoidable processes, modern education became an important need of the market of the day. Muslim population, being part of the same society, were not insulated from this impact. They felt the coercive nature of modern education. But the oriental education reacted against this penetration in identity assertive model and rural Muslims could not shift completely from oriental to modern education. They adopted a mixed pattern, blending both the entities, which has become very popular among them.

Rural Muslims did not choose syllabi only with modern education. Government schools are available with many incentives at all villages. But negligible number of Muslim students gets enrolled there. They prefer to stay in *maktabs* without modern subjects rather than attend government schools. They favour the curriculum that combines both modern and oriental subjects and opt for it whenever they get a chance. Making the syllabi a combination of modern and oriental assumes such importance that it is used as a political tool and a point of competition between people.

The towns had Christian missionary schools, which, despite their good performance and inherent discipline, could not attract Muslim students because of the absence of religious education in these schools. However, when a school was opened on the same pattern and of the same standard by Muslims, it received more applications from admission-seekers than it could possibly accommodate. The only attraction for them is the blend of oriental and modern education.

[25] Religious Tax, sanctioned by Islam.

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Language Choices among Linguistic Minorities in Nepal

Sadananda Kadel*

Abstract

The paper examines the strategies of language choices in education among linguistic minorities in multi-lingual Nepal. It attempts to explore perceptions of three generations of Tharu, Tamang and Chepang ethnic groups and other stakeholders through an ethnographic study undertaken in Chitwan district of Nepal. The field data confirms that almost all members of the first generation love their mother tongue and consider it as a symbol of "identity and pride". Majority of the second generation members speak in the mother tongue while talking to their parents but use Nepali while interacting with children. However, whenever the question of a language as a medium of instruction in school arises, members of all three generations overwhelmingly argue in favour of English. The paper explores inter-generational perspectives in language use and the dilemmas in making language choices for education and everyday life.

* Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067. Email: sadankadel@gmail.com

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Introduction

Nepalese societies are increasingly becoming multi-ethnic and multi-lingual due to the growing trend of internal migration from the rural and Mountain and Hill ecological belts to the Tarai (plains) and to the urban centres. When a society becomes multi-ethnic and multilingual, the question of language choices inevitably arises in view of the need for better communication and for building relationships among different speech communities. Similar kind of social reality gets reflected in the schools and classrooms as well. The multi-ethnic and multilingual contexts of classrooms, in turn, generate debates around the choices of language as the medium of instruction, especially in the early grades of primary schooling.

In the contemporary discourses, the issue of education in the mother tongue appears to be vibrant from the perspective of identity and linguistic human rights of the linguistic minorities and specific language groups. Discourses of this sort are further exacerbated by the political change in Nepal as a federal democratic republic dethroning the Monarchy in 2008. Organisations of indigenous nationalities have been advocating for ensuring their linguistic rights through education in the mother tongue at the national level. On the other hand, the demand for Nepali as a link national language has existed ever since the rule by Monarchy and it continues to resonate even today. At another level, the demand for English has also been on the rise as it is seen as an international language that would help individuals and communities gain from the processes of globalisation and international labour migration. The growing demand for English is clearly evident as schools are gradually shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English. Thus, in the recent years, the issue of language choices for education has been one of the most debatable agenda around the globe (Roy-Campbell 2001) and in Nepal, in particular. The paper aims to examine the inter-generational shifts in language use over generations and the choices made in terms of media of instruction for the children among three ethnic minority groups of Nepal with the help of an exploratory ethnographic study.

Methodology

The study was undertaken in Khairahani village, which comprises nine wards with several small villages in each of the wards, for a period of nine months during 2010-11 as part of the on-going doctoral research. Khairahani village was selected purposively out of 36 Village Development Committees and two Municipalities in Chitwan district because: a) it is a village where dominant language group (Nepali speaking) and linguistic minority groups (non-Nepali speaking) live together, b) it is a village which has multi-ethnic communities, including indigenous inhabitants of inner-Tarai such as Tharus and hill migrants like Tamangs and Chepangs, c) village and school where more than three languages representing Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman language family, are spoken as mother tongue. The data was collected with the help of in-depth interviews, life history interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions and key informants' interviews with stakeholders concerned at different levels. A total of 153 individuals, representing three generations (grandparents, parents and children), were included in the in-depth interviews from 51 families of three ethnic groups (17 Tharu, 17 Tamang and 17 Chepang). Participant

observation in the classrooms was also carried out in one community (*samudayik*) school[1] which is diverse in terms of ethnicity and language. Moreover, all 27 schools (both community school and institutional (*sansthagat*) school[2]) were included for collection of secondary data and interviews with head teachers and teachers. The study also captured views of different stakeholders at village, district and national level.

Theoretical discussion

Socio-linguistics is one of the branches of linguistics that studies the relation between language and society (Crystal 2003, Holmes 2008, and Hymes 1974). The study has adopted socio-linguistic standpoint to explore the relationship between society and language, and degree of multilingualism at the "three socio-linguistic contexts such as home, community and schools" (Ramirez 1985). Ralph Fasold observes multilingualism as resource rather than problem. He argues that "socio-linguistics only exists as a field of study because there are choices in using languages" (Fasold 1984: 180). According to him, the socio-linguistic aspect of language choices can be examined from the perspectives of sociology, social-psychology and anthropology. Hence, the study used sociological standpoint of Joshuwa Fishman in examining language choices adopting his framework of the domains of language use (Holmes 2008 and Fasold 1984). Moreover, it also used Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Bernstein's notion of restricted and elaborated code while understanding the language situation in primary school and exploring the learning difficulties for linguistic minority children in early grades of primary education. At the same time, the researcher also paid attention on a flexible and open mindset as the study is ethnographic in nature.

Inter-generational shifts in language use among ethnic minorities

Language and society are inextricably intertwined. Language, an important means for education, can play the role of a catalyst to change the society, and socio-cultural contexts of society infuse language choices and use (Tarone 2007). Janet Holmes argues that "social setting or social context (e.g. home, work, and school), participants, topic and function for interactions" (Holmes 2008:23) are key components which have influence on language choices. Issue of choices emerges only where a number of languages co-exist. Chitwan is one of the 75 districts in Nepal that lies in the Tarai ecological belt[3] and the Central Development Region bordering Bihar State of India in the south, Parsa and Makwanpur districts in the east, Dhading and Gorkha districts in the north, and Nawalparasi and Tanahun districts in the west.

[1] Community school refers to government supported public school.

[2] Institutional school refers to private schools supported by parents and trustees.

[3] Nepal is ecologically divided into three regions, namely the Mountain, the Hill and the Tarai (plains), running east to west. The Mountain belt lies in the northern part bordering with China. The Hill region lies between the Mountain and Tarai, and the Tarai is located in the southern part bordering with India.

In the past, Chitwan[4] was known as one of the most preferred places for migration due to various reasons: a) "heartland" situated in central Nepal and "gateway" to link Kathmandu and Tarai region through road transport (Shrestha 2001); b) fertile land for farming; c) launching of Rapti Valley Development Project and a Malaria Eradication Programme in 1956 (Kandel 2008). These reasons contributed in attracting migrants from the mountains, hills and other parts of the country which has resulted in abrupt increase in population. Thus, Chitwan has been a mosaic of 87 caste/ethnic groups which speak 49 different mother tongues. This situation also gets reflected at the village level. For instance, in Khairahani, 18965 people from more than 20 castes/ethnic groups speak 14 different mother tongues. Interestingly, eight mother tongues, namely Tharu, Newar, Tamang, Darai, Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Chepang and Bantawa are directly related to ethnic groups.

The study enumerated monolingual, bilingual and multilingual status of each member of the sample families among Tharu, Tamang and Chepang ethnic groups through a language profile at the family level (Table 1). The data shows that it has been necessary for linguistic minorities to speak at least two languages to fulfil their basic necessities of life and also to "function well in the modern world environment" (Bgoya 2001). All 114 members,[5] across all three generations among the 17 Tharu families in Khairahani village, can speak their own mother tongue. It means that Tharu families have been transferring their mother tongue to the second and the third generations.

TABLE 1

Languages spoken by members of 17 Tharu families in Khairahani

Generation	*Total number of family members*	*Monolingual*		*Bilingual*	*Multilingual*	
		Tharu only	*Nepali only*	*Tharu and Nepali*	*3 languages (Tharu, Nepali, English/ Hindi/Bhojpuri)*	*4 or more languages (Tharu, Nepali, Hindi English, Bhojpuri)*
First (grandparents)	29	4	0	21	3	1
Second (parents)	39	0	0	29	5	5
Third (children)	46	4	0	22	18	2
Total	114	8	0	72	26	8

Source: Primary data, fieldwork 2010-2011

The data shows that only four grandparents (two couples) who are above 70 years and four children below seven years speak only in their mother tongue. The three main reasons for the first generation grandparents being monolingual are apparent. Firstly, they never attended school or any sort of adult literacy classes in their lives. Secondly, they never went out of their communities in search of jobs. Lastly, mother tongue has been the only means of communication in their families. The third reason is also applicable in case of four monolingual children. Another reason is that they have not had much exposure to school as

[4] The population of Chitwan has increased by more than 5 times (from 67,822 in 1961 to 4,72,048 in 2001) within a period of four decades. Interestingly, even district headquarters of Chitwan was shifted from Upardang Gadhi (the hill area) to Bharatpur (plains) in 1957 which was linked to Kathmandu, the capital city by road only in 1959.

[5] Interestingly, it was observed that even a Brahman girl who joined Tharu family after her love marriage, has learnt Tharu language and her child also can speak it.

two of them are below pre-school age and the other two children have just entered early childhood development/pre-primary class (ECD/PPC) and grade one.

However, what is important is that a majority of Tharu members are bilingual who can speak their own mother tongue as well as Nepali, the "official" language[6]. Those who are multilingual, that is those who can speak three or more languages are largely from the third generation. Some even know four languages. Thus, the younger generation tends to acquire more languages than their parents and grandparents. The data affirms that the youngest and the third generation is increasingly becoming multilingual due to their exposure to English and Nepali as compulsory subjects or as media of instruction in school or through access to multilingual community contexts.

The case of 17 Tamang families is different from that of Tharus as they are migrants from hill areas of Chitwan and other hill districts such as Makwanpur, Dhading, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchok, Dolakha and Ramechhap. Interestingly, a total of 31 Tamangs from across the three generations can speak only Nepali which is not their mother tongue (Table 2). What is even more interesting is that a few of the first and the second generation members do not speak their mother tongue, but speak only Nepali. Close to half of the third generation Tamangs speak only Nepali indicating that the language shift has occurred among the Tamangs within the second and the third generation and that means the loss of language among the generations of Tamang families. Even more interesting is the fact that even among a few bilingual Tamang members, the two languages spoken do not include Tamang, but Nepali and English. Some multilingual members also speak Tharu, which is another minority language. That means, some Tamangs are comfortable with the other minority languages, but for some others, their own language, Tamang, is of no consequence and, hence, they do not have the environment to learn it and, instead, they seek to learn any other language that helps them survive in a multilingual context.

TABLE 2
Languages spoken by members of 17 Tamang families in Khairahani

Generation	*Total number of family members*	*Monolingual*		*Bilingual*		*Multilingual*	
		Tamang only	*Nepali only*	*Tamang and Nepali*	*Nepali and English*	*3 languages (Tamang, Nepali, Hindi English/Tharu)*	*4 or more languages (Tamang, Nepali, English, Tharu, Hindi, Gujarati)*
First (grandparents)	25	0	2	20	0	3	0
Second (parents)	35	0	8	15	2	8	2
Third (children)	46	0	21	4	7	14	0
Total	106	0	31	39	9	25	2

Source: Primary data, fieldwork 2010-2011

The family members from the second generation who have already left school and college are gradually learning to speak Hindi due to their access to Bollywood films in the local cinema hall, TVs and CDs/DVDs from the local shops. Likewise, some of them have learnt Hindi and Gujarati while working as cooks in Gujarat, India.

[6] In Nepal, as per the Interim Constitution, all languages are designated as "national", however, 'Nepali" is treated as the language of the nation as well as an official language.

Chepang is another ethnic and linguistic minority group which has a population of 52237 (0.23 per cent of total population) in Nepal. Almost half of them (a total of 21233) live in Chitwan, especially in the hill areas. However, the number of Chepang families has increased even in the plain areas in the recent years due to the employment opportunities in the plains. Table 3 presents languages spoken by members of 17 Chepang families in Khairahani. Data reveals that all members from the first generation can speak in their mother tongue but half of the second and three -fifths of the third generation cannot speak in their mother tongue and have shifted to Nepali language. Thus, language shift has occurred among second and the third generation Chepang families just as in the case of Tamangs.

TABLE 3

Languages spoken by members of 17 Chepang families in Khairahani

Generation	*Total number of family members*	*Monolingual*		*Bilingual*		*Multilingual*	
		Chepang only	*Nepali only*	*Chepang and Nepali*	*Nepali and English*	*3 languages (Chepang, Nepali, English/Hindi)*	*4 or more languages (Chepang, Nepali, English, Hindi)*
First (grandparents)	28	1	0	27	0	0	0
Second (parents)	43	0	16	22	0	4	1
Third (children)	50	3	30	11	2	2	2
Total	121[7]	4	46	60	2	6	3

Source: Primary data, fieldwork 2010-2011

One significant issue that can be observed is that the degree of being monolingual or multilingual seems to increase from the older to younger generations clearly among the three ethnic minority groups. In addition, the minority groups are voluntarily or involuntarily becoming bilingual or multilingual from older to younger generations. The first and the second generation Tamangs and Chepangs are largely the migrants from different locations, which largely are homogeneous, and their migration into plains and small urban centres has made them multilingual as they came in contact with other speech communities in their everyday life.

Schooling and languages as media of instruction

Monolingual characteristics of the densely populated Tharu settlements in Khairahani has changed into multilingual contexts as the hill dwellers such as Tamangs, Chepangs, Magars, Newars, Gurungs, Brahmins, Chhetris and Dalits migrated to the same societies as residents. The diverse multi-ethnic and multilingual environment of the societies got reflected in the school system as well. The multilingual contexts of schools provide options for language choices in education. In Khairahani, Nepali language remained the only medium of instruction in schools over a period of more than two and a half decades (1955-1982). Establishment of the first private school in 1983 opened up the option of English as medium

[7] Total number of family members from 17 Chepang families is 121. However, some of the third-generation children of these families are working as child laborers in Kathmandu and other cities, and some of the first and second-generation members are still living in their native places.

of instruction. Subsequently, a mushrooming of private schools was experienced during 1990s and 2000s. Khairahani, therefore, has since been gradually developing as an educational hub in Chitwan district where children from various castes and ethnic groups attend both private and government schools (see Table 4). Interestingly, there are more private schools than community schools, and over two-thirds of the children (70 per cent) are attending private schools. Table 4 reveals that more than two-thirds of the children (3191 out of 4575) are enrolled in private schools whereas only 1384 children are attending community schools. Data shows that 50 per cent of children, enrolled in private school, belong to so-called higher castes such as Brahman, Chhetri and Thakuri and speak in Nepali as the mother tongue.

TABLE 4

Enrolment of students by castes/ethnic group (2010-2011) in 12 community schools and 15 private schools in Khairahani

Caste/ethnic group	*Community school*		*Private school*		*Related mother tongue*
	ECD/PPC to primary level	Per-centage	ECD/PPC to primary level	Per-centage	
Tharu	725	52.00	809	25.00	Tharu
Brahman, Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi	198	14.00	1596	50.00	Nepali
Dalits	116	8.38	86	2.69	Nepali, Bhojpuri
Chepang	107	7.73	6	0.18	Chepang
Muslim	60	4.00	38	1.00	Hindi, Urdu, Bhojpuri
Tamang	26	2.00	111	3.47	Tamang
Newar	24	2.00	187	6.00	Newar
Magar	21	2.00	153	5.00	Magar
Gurung	12	0.86	48	1.50	Gurung
Majhi	7	0.50	4	0.12	Majhi
Rai	6	0.43	3	0.09	Rai
Darai	1	0.07	78	2.00	Darai
Others	78	6.00	61	2.00	Hindi, Bhojpuri, Kumal, Bote, Pahari, Rajbanshi, Thami, etc.
Total	1384	100	3191	100	

Source: Attendance Registers (2010-011) of all 27 schools and verified by teachers

It appears that more children from Tharu, Tamang, Newar, Magar, Gurung and Darai ethnic groups are enrolled in private schools. But the presence of children from Dalits, Muslims, and Chepang, Majhi and Rai ethnic groups in private schools is lesser than in community schools. Parental preference for English medium private schools has contributed to the decrease in the number of students in community schools over the period of one decade (2001-2010)[8]. Usually school teachers, educated and rich parents send their children to private schools. This gives an impression to linguistic minority parents that English medium private schools are "better schools". Thus, each family dreams of sending its children to such schools despite economic difficulties. It appears that the complex

[8] The data reveals that the number of students has significantly decreased (by 62 per cent to 70 per cent) in six community schools, whereas eight private schools were established in Khairahani during 2000s.

relationship between socio-political environment and language choices has resulted in school choices (Trudell 2004).

As far as media of instruction in those schools are concerned, there exists four different options, namely Nepali, English, Nepali and English, and Sanskrit and Nepali. Nine community schools have adopted Nepali medium of instruction. They are situated in the different small villages of Khairahani, namely Magani, Baseuli, Bairahani, Surtani, Majhui, Sultana, Salauli, Jabkauli and Phasera Pharseni having predominant population of Tharus. Moreover, one private school also runs its teaching activities in Nepali medium. This school has been established to accommodate the students who fail in both private and community schools. School provides them special care and assists them to pass SLC. It is interesting to note that even English subject is taught in Nepali medium in those schools. The field data shows that seven private schools claim to have English medium of instruction completely with all subjects except Nepali taught in English. All of them focus on creating a conducive environment for children to speak English in the classroom as well as school premises. The researcher could observe interactions between teachers and students in English during the study period. It was further seen that one school had a reinforced punishment system against the use of Nepali or other mother tongue languages in the classrooms with the intention of maintaining a complete English medium learning environment in the school.

A mixed medium of instruction, namely, Nepali and English has been adopted by one community[9] and seven private schools. Most of these schools use English as medium of instruction in the lower grades and Nepali in the upper grades. In some schools, English and Nepali medium are separately used at secondary level dividing two different wings. However, head teachers and principals of those schools reiterate that Nepali medium will be completely phased out after some years due to increasing parental demand for English medium. Further, one school[10] has adopted Sanskrit and Nepali as medium of instruction where only Brahman boys from Chitwan and neighbouring districts, such as Dhading, Nuwakot and Bara, attend the class. The main objective of this school is to prepare Hindu priests for the future. Initially, this school used Sanskrit fully as the medium of instruction under the leadership of a *guru* having sound knowledge of the Sanskrit language. However, it was shifted to a mixed modality (Sanskrit and Nepali) in 2009 in line with the demands of parents and students. It was because English and Maths were also included as subjects which are very useful in daily life. What is interesting is that the influence of English is evident in Sanskrit medium school as well. Students also reiterated that English and Maths are required to enable them to survive in the rapidly changing contexts. According to them, there is scarcity of Hindu priests among the younger generation in their societies, and, as such, they are hopeful of getting full time work as priests.

[9] Khairahani Higher Secondary School has started English medium of instruction from grade ECD/PPC since 2008. The same batch has reached grade three now. This will be gradually upgraded to grade 12 in the years to come. Thus, this school has adopted English medium from grade ECD/PPC to three and Nepali medium from grade four to twelve

[10] Local social workers and religious persons took initiatives to establish Mukteshwor Sanskrit School in Parsa Bazaar in 2001. School covers children's lodging, food, stationery and other expenses.

Preference for mother tongue as a symbol of identity and a matter of pride

The study attempted to explore perceptions of children about their mother tongue and the linguistic difficulty faced by them in school through interviews with some students from upper grades at primary and secondary levels. An 11-year-old Tharu girl, who was studying in grade five, said:

We speak Tharu language at home. But, when I joined *shishu* (pre-primary class), teacher started to teach in Nepali which I could not understand well. So, I did not like to attend the class regularly. Gradually, I learnt Nepali in school. Language difficulty remained up to grade three. Then, I improved my Nepali. During those days, one of our teachers was Chauddhari. Sometimes, he used to explain using some Tharu words also. I used to be happy hearing some words in our mother tongue in classroom.

This opinion indicates that even the nominal use of mother tongue can play an important role in motivating children in the early days of schooling. Her happiness stems from a sense of pride and affinity to the mother tongue. Further, some second-generation respondents have also experienced similar kind of difficulties in their school lives. A 25-year-old Tharu father (second generation) shares his own experiences:

I also experienced language-related difficulty when I was studying in grade two. One day, the Maths teacher asked a question and I tried to answer in Nepali but I also used Tharu words while answering. Teacher slapped me twice saying that *"Nepali bhasha ni bolna aaudaina?"* (Don't you know even speaking Nepali?). Then, I cried in the class. That was a sad moment. That was not my fault. Teacher should have allowed us to use some words in Tharu language as well in the early days.

The family profile data reveals that all the first-generation grandparents from three ethnic groups, barring two Tamangs, can speak in their mother tongue (see Tables 1, 2, 3). Interestingly, some Tharu and Chepang grandparents cannot speak any other language apart from their mother tongue. The grandparents prefer to speak in their own mother tongue due to various reasons: a) they love their own language very much and are competent to speak it fluently; b) they do have relatively less exposure of communication with other ethnic groups; c) they had rare opportunity to attend school; and d) some of them cannot speak Nepali. A 71-year-old Tamang grandfather states:

> I always talk to my wife in our mother tongue. It is easy to express love, sorrow and sympathy in mother tongue. My two sons are working as drivers in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Whenever they call me and my wife up, we prefer to talk to them in Tamang language. They also feel happy. Mother tongue gives us our identity as Tamangs. I feel proud to be Tamang. However, our grandchildren cannot speak the Tamang language. I am very much concerned about it. Therefore, I have started to teach them Tamang language at home.

Field data confirms that there is an overwhelming consensus among Tharu, Tamang and Chepang ethnic groups that mother tongue is a symbol of "identity" and a "matter of pride" for them. Some respondents argued that they have considered education in mother tongue as a basic human right. Indigenous people's organisations such as Tharu Kalyankari Sabha, Nepal Chepang Association and Nepal Tamang Ghedung have decided to use their mother tongue as a means of communication while organising meetings and workshops at different

levels. It is evident that indigenous people's organisations have been advocating education in their mother tongue as their right. Preservation of their mother tongue is very much essential for fostering their identity in the changed political context. Central President of Tharu Kalyankari Sabha asserts:

We should go ahead in taking care of our own history, ethnicity, identity and language. Our organisation is going to publish syllabus for grade one to five in Tharu language. We have planned to develop a grammar of Tharu language at the national level. Education in Tharu language has been started in some districts such as Sunsari, Udaypur and Kailai. Children can easily learn more in their mother tongue rather than in other tongues. So, education in mother tongue is very necessary.

Almost all the respondents representing three generations of Tharu, Tamang and Chepang families reiterate that their mother tongue is intertwined with their culture which is their identity. Hence, they love very much their language which needs proper attention from the state for its promotion. This situation also resembles the Indian context, as argued by Nambissan, where "home language of tribal children is integral to their sense of culture, identity and self-worth" (Nambissan 1994:2753). Moreover, Ugot also presents the Nigerian context that mother tongue is a "major badge of ethnicity" (Ugot 2009). Suzanne Romaine also states that "the concepts of ethnicity, nationality, language, and religion have long been interrelated in complex ways" (Romaine 2000). A large body of literature confirms that linguistic minority children's exposure to education in the mother tongue plays a vital role in building the foundation for "successful early childhood experience" and better learning in formal schooling (Rao 2008), which also "forms the basis for development of proficiency in all other languages" (Mohanty 2006).

Preference for Nepali as a link language

Khairahani is a multilingual village where Nepali, Tharu, Tamang, Chepang, Newar, Magar, Gurung, Hindi, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Limbu and Darai mother tongues are spoken as major languages. Nepali has been a link language among the different speech communities and is widely used, especially in some "domains of language use[11]" such as education, administration, employment and friendship. It is also used in family and religion domains to some extent. Nepali is the medium of instruction in almost all the community schools and an official language in local government bodies and other offices. Linguistic minorities need to speak Nepali language while getting involved in their employment outside their village. Hence, they give preference to Nepali not only as a lingua franca for wider communication with other linguistic groups but also as a language of interaction between the first and the third generation of the same family. For example, linguistic profile of the family reveals that the percentage of third-generation children from Tamang and Chepang families who cannot speak their mother tongue is 46 and 45 respectively. Use of Nepali language as means of communication has been essential in such families where language shift prevails. For example, an old Tamang grandfather feels comfortable to speak to his wife, sons and daughters in Tamang language at home but he needs to use Nepali while talking to his grandchildren because they cannot understand Tamang language. He states:

[11] Joshuwa Fishman's domains of language use include family, friendship, religion, education, administration and employment (Fasold 1984).

> My elder son fell in love with a Magar girl, his classmate in grade nine, and got married to her. Then, both of them left school. Now, my grandchildren cannot speak Tamang language because their mother cannot speak it as she represents the Magar ethnic group. So, I need to speak Nepali language to have interaction with my grandchildren.

Most of the second-generation parents usually speak in their mother tongue while talking to their parents, friends and relatives. However, they give preference to Nepali language while interacting with their children. It is because they have perceptions that their children should be capable enough both in Nepali and English languages to compete with their peers, especially from so-called higher caste families such as Brahmans and Chhetris. Those families send their children to school providing them "cultural capital" and "linguistic capital" at home to facilitate their coping with the school culture during the early days of schooling. However, most of the linguistic minority children are deprived of such kind of benefits at the family level. Most of the parents, who attended schools at least at the primary level, recall their own bitter experiences regarding difficulties they faced in learning Nepali and English subjects during their school life. Thus, they want to help their children improve their fluency in Nepali language by practising operating it at home.

Preference for English as a language of instruction

Notwithstanding respect, love and affinity to their mother tongue as discussed earlier, Tharu, Tamang and Chepang families are increasingly preferring English as the medium of instruction. In recent years, exposure of parents to foreign employment has been one of the main contributing factors for choices of English language for education. Field data reveals that 53 per cent of Tamang and Tharu families out of total interviewed families have sent at least one member to the Middle East, South Korea, Malaysia and other countries for employment. A 51-year-old, first-generation Tharu grandfather, who has sent his two sons to Saudi Arabia for employment, provided the view that:

> Our children can learn Tharu language at home. Why to teach them Tharu in school? We cannot survive only with our mother tongue. It does not work out whenever we go outside. After all, English is necessary. When anybody goes to Saudi or Qatar for employment, he should speak English until and unless he learns the language of those countries. So, there is high demand for English. Even poor parents want to send their children to private English medium boarding school. But they cannot afford that. Therefore, government schools should also start English medium.

This view indicates that parents prefer to send their children to private school due to attraction of English. But private school is not affordable by poor families which is why they demand English medium for community schools. A 43-year-old man (second generation) from Tamang family shares his experience:

> I spent five years in South Korea. Before going there, I filled up a full copy by writing my name and signing in English. During the travel, I could not read the flight details displayed on the TV screen at the airport. I could not fill up the immigration form myself. Second time, I went to Saudi Arabia where I spent two years working as a driver. In Riyadh, I could not read the signboards and even the

> address mentioned in the letters and documents which I had to handover to the parties concerned. Learning from this bitter experience, I came to realise that English is very essential when we go abroad. So, I gave call from South Korea to my wife back home and asked her to shift our children from government school to English medium boarding school.

It shows that parental exposure to outside world has been instrumental in changing their attitude and choices of language. Linguistic minorities are experiencing better income due to employment in the foreign countries. It has helped them to shift their children from community school to private school.

Likewise, a 40-year-old second-generation Tamang woman feels proud about sending her son to the most expensive school in the district:

> I was dropped out when I was in grade two. So, I'd like to educate my children very well. My son is 10 years old. He is studying in the fourth grade in the best school of Chitwan district. He can read and write in English very well but his friends who are attending government school cannot do like that. I am happy with that because everything comes in English these days. For example, when we buy any medicine, we need to know the name and expiry date of the medicine. I and my husband cannot read that but my son can. I feel so good.

Her husband, who never had a chance to attend school in life, spent 10 years in South Korea, earned money, sent his son to English school and constructed a permanent house in the highway area. This has been considered as a "success story" among relatives and neighbours which obviously influences other parents' perceptions about English.

Many respondents from the first and the second generation stated that proficiency in English will help their children get employment in the Gulf countries, Malaysia and South Korea, etc.. They argued that poor parents from the ethnic groups cannot afford their children's higher education. Hence, most of them intend to send the younger generation to those countries for employment immediately after the completion of their school education. They are of the view that educating children in an English medium school could add value in achieving their aim. On the other hand, some of the parents indicated that the possibility of employment in tourism sector had prompted them to educate their children in English medium schools. They reiterated that Sauraha, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Nepal, which lies in Chitwan district, attracts thousands of tourists each year by offering opportunities for jungle safari, elephant rides, boating and watching crocodiles, traditional Tharu dances and other cultural events. This has created a good scope of employment for local youths.

Some of the educated parents argued that the new generation has been increasingly aspiring to pursue further studies abroad which necessitates very good score in different kinds of tests related to proficiency in English language. It is believed that exposure to English medium of education from ECD/PPC will help their children achieve excellent results in such tests. Reference books and text books for higher education are not available in mother tongues or in Nepali. Thus, most of the students, especially from the technical fields, should rely on the reference books and other reading materials written in English language. A 14-year-old Tamang student (third generation) who aims to pursue higher studies abroad narrates:

> I am studying in ninth grade in Daisy English Boarding School. This is completely an English medium school. Teachers teach all subjects, except Nepali, in English. Anyway, English is easy for me. I'd like to continue my study up to master's degree. I prefer to go abroad for this. I cannot speak Tamang language which is difficult to learn. However, I do not feel any regret in this regard.

This represents the views of a number of third-generation Tharu, Tamang and even Chepang students who are attending private English medium boarding schools. A similar situation prevails in China as well. Coulmas, in his book titled 'Sociolinguistics: the study of speakers' choices' writes, based on the findings of a survey carried out in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou among the city-dwellers in 2003, that "80 per cent respondents in the under-35 age group believed that fluency in English was key to success" (Coulmas 2005 as cited in Mckay and Bokhorst-Heng 2008:8).

Growing preference of the younger generation to the "English language culture (e.g. Hollywood, pop music, fast food)" (Block 2008) is also evident in the schools of Khairahani. The classroom observation reveals that linguistic minority children hesitate to sing songs in their mother tongue but feel proud of singing the very latest Nepali and Hindi film songs mixed with English words, and even English rhymes. Interestingly, when a teacher asked students of grade five to sing songs, they sang very recent Hindi film song which includes English words - "*Sheila Sheila ki jawaani, I'm too sexy for you...*" Another student sang a Nepali song laced with English words "*simple simple kacnchhi ko dimple paryo gala, ... handsome handsome kanchhako phakaune yo chala..*" It appears that younger generation intends to use English words while talking to their friends even in Nepali. For instance, while talking to best friend, a Tamang student says: *herna, padnai man lagena (you know, no mood in study) it's too much boring*. This situation also corroborates with the Malaysian context where the younger generation prefers to use English in peer talk (Khemlani David 2006).

It is apparent that some of the parents from the hill migrant ethnic groups[12] are found to be "reluctant about transmitting their home languages to their children due to growing influence of the dominant language Nepali" (Kadel 2009) as an official language, lingua franca and the medium of instruction in community schools. This has resulted in language shift among third-generation Tamangs and Chepangs in the host society. On the other hand, Tharu children who cannot speak Nepali well are experiencing learning difficulties during their early days of schooling due to "home-school discontinuities". This situation has invited an environment in which Tharu child may "start rejecting the home languages and cultures" (Rao 2009). Thus, prevalence of language shift and linguistic difficulties have been influencing language choices.

Some of the parents argued that English language is used for multiple purposes such as language for international communication, medium of instruction, and compulsory and optional subject in school. It is helpful for using computer, internet and calculator, and reading medical prescriptions, names of medicines, tickets (air and train), catalogues of the

[12] Tamang, Chepang, Newar, Magar and Gurung are originally hill dwellers. They started to migrate to Chitwan (plains) searching for better life options since the eradication of Malaria in 1957.

technical appliances, hoarding boards and signboards in big cities, hotels and restaurants. They reiterated that "we must use English until and unless we can replace English in all of those things by our language". Thus, reasons for selection and learning of English appear to be "pragmatic in nature" (Bisong 1995) considering the rapidly changing world.

It is due to parental choices for English as language for education that Khairahani Resource Centre[13] in Chitwan district has already replaced the "local subject or mother tongue" by additional English as an optional subject in all 30 community schools of Khairahani, Birendranagar and Kathar villages. This decision was taken with the consent of all school management committees (SMCs). It is interesting to note that even a Sanskrit school has included English as an optional subject.

Language choices in education: Dilemmas and contestations

At the national level, the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) and education related documents such as Education Act, Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action (2001-2015, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for school education of Nepal (2006), School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015), and Multilingual Education (MLE) Implementation Guidelines (2009) clearly spell out the provision for education in mother tongue. The flash report I, 2011-12 reveals that 33 different languages have been used as media of instruction at primary level. Altogether 853, 370 and 36 classes in grade one are running in Tamang, Tharu and Chepang language respectively across the country (DOE 2011). However, it was evident that the ground realities of Khairahani village and Chitwan district got reflected differently. For example, growing parental choice for English as the medium of instruction has seriously affected mother tongue education programme in Tharu language which was initiated in Rastriya Primary School, Sultana, Khairahani in 2009. Despite the presence of an overwhelming majority (84 per cent) of Tharu children in school, mother tongue education initiative could not continue for more than two years. According to a teacher of this school representing the same ethnic group, the main reason of this discontinuity is "unwillingness of parents" to educate their children in Tharu mother tongue. He elaborates:

> We conducted Tharu language class in our school as a local subject. We used *"more kitab"* (my book) as text book which was written by a local Tharu head teacher. However, the class was discontinued after two years. The main reason was unwillingness of parents on mother tongue education due to their attraction towards English medium. What they perceive is that it is not easy to get employment in Nepal immediately after school education. So, Tharu youths are compelled to go abroad searching for jobs. English, an international language, could be helpful in this regard. So, SMC decided to replace Tharu mother tongue by English as an optional subject, as per the demand of parents.

Some of the other teachers indicated that neither SMC nor Tharu Kalyankari Sabha have carried out any kind of review or analysis in this regard. While parents seem to be happy with this decision, they are further demanding that English be the medium of instruction in

[13] Resource Centre is an educational unit under District Education Office which has major responsibilities of supervising schools and providing training to teachers and collecting educational data from all schools for planning and management.

this school as they cannot afford to send their children to English medium private schools in Parsa bazaar because of their poor economic condition. This situation corroborates with the contention of one of the high ranking officials of District Education Office, Chitwan regarding education in the mother tongue. According to him, parental interest in mother tongue education is gradually decreasing due to the growing craze for private boarding schools which adopt English as the medium of instruction. As shared by him, Chitwan DEO developed curriculum and text books in Tharu language, with the help of local Tharu language experts, and sent the same to Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), which published them with necessary revision and inputs. Some active SMCs took initiatives to implement education in Tharu mother tongue three years ago especially in the areas where majority of the children belonged to Tharu ethnic group. DEO provided curriculum and textbooks for them. However, those schools never made request for grade two text books. DEO was informally informed that those classes were closed due to lack of parental interest. DEO also provided support to implement education in Tamang mother tongue in some schools but the same problem recurred. According to District Education Officer, DEO has not received any demand for mother tongue education during the academic year 2068 BS (2011-2012).

One of the high-ranking government officials of the Ministry of Education (MOE) indicates that the main reason behind unwillingness of parents for education in mother tongue may be unavailability of research-based evidences regarding effectiveness and usefulness of mother tongue-based multilingual education. He argues:

> MOE has given authority to SMC to choose subject and language as the medium of instruction based on the NCF. SMC can take decision as per local need and demand. When option of language choice between mother tongue and English arises, parents undoubtedly go for English. It is because they think that English is easily available, informed and proven option. They have seen that English helps to get employment inside the country or outside. (.....) We have not been able to demonstrate the proven evidences of the mother tongue-based education. Systematic reinforcement is still lacking.

It is natural that without Nepal- specific and concrete evidences on outcomes of mother tongue-based multilingual education, parents might think that use of mother tongue in education could be risky which "might push towards further disadvantages". In fact, reinforcement of evidence-based strategies to mitigate such risk is lacking till date.

In the current context of Nepal, three kinds of worldviews on language issues figure in public discourses, debates and contestations. Firstly, the growing influence of western culture and English language has further marginalised ethnic groups' culture and mother tongues, displacing them from the educational contexts. Thus, English has been regarded as a "killer language". The major bearers of this view are organisations of indigenous nationalities such as Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), Nepal Tharu Kalyankari Sabha, Nepal Tamang Ghedung and Nepal Chepang Association that have been advocating for education in mother tongue right from their establishment at national, district and even village level. For instance, according to Kantipur national daily (13 December 2011), a delegation from NEFIN met the State Minister of Education and strongly demanded stopping the provision of English as optional subject replacing the mother tongue or local subject made by SMCs in several districts. The team even made it clear that such an

act is "illegal" and must be stopped. The government should promote mother tongue-based MLE as spelt out in various education policy- related documents. Secondly, a huge majority of parents, teachers and third-generation children from the linguistic minorities, who argue in favour of English with due respect to their own mother tongue, are of the view that SMCs are fully authorised to choose a language as the medium of instruction as well as subject based on the choices of parents and children. This group opines that English might open up the possibilities for better education at a higher level and employment in a competitive world.

Lastly, a third dimension is emerging in the changing context which proposes possibility of creating win-win situation for both mother tongue and other tongues like Nepali and English. This view critically examines the MLE implementation guidelines which basically talk about education in mother tongues but does not deal strategically with learning need of mother tongue, Nepali, as a link language, and English in a comprehensive package. In other words, such strategies should create a conducive environment where even a "killer language" can contribute as a "healer language" for addressing learning constraints as well as aspirations of linguistic minorities.

Conclusion

The inter-generational language use patterns at the family level and classroom context reveal that it has been essential for linguistic minority children to get involved in learning through their mother tongue to bridge the gap between home and school languages and, of course, to ensure their linguistic identity and rights. They also need Nepali as an official language and a lingua franca for wider communication with other speech communities, and English as an international language which is an unavoidable requirement for higher education. Multilingual contexts of societies, schools and classrooms have created an ample opportunity of "choice among the language varieties" (Fasold 1984) for the speakers. Language choices can be viewed from the lens of the socio-cultural, institutional and educational contexts which may play a vital role either to encourage or discourage the choice making process. Moreover, a speaker's attitude and preference might be influential in this regard (Baker 2006).

The field data confirms that inter-generational shift on language choices and use takes place at the family level. The first-generation Tharu, Tamang and Chepang grandparents in Khairahani consider their mother tongue as a symbol of "identity" and a "matter of pride". Hence, they feel comfortable to think and talk in their home language with love and respect. Most of the second-generation parents also express the same kind of feeling regarding their mother tongue. However, they usually talk to their parents in the mother tongue and give preference to Nepali language while interacting with their children. It was witnessed that most of the children from the third generation prefer to speak Nepali due to its dominance as an official language, the medium of instruction as well as a subject in school. However, whenever the question of language choices in education arises, the overwhelming majority of children, parents and teachers argue strongly in favour of English as the medium of instruction as well as a subject. This choice is very much guided by the possibility of better academic performance, scope of higher education and better employment opportunities in future despite linguistic minorities' respect, love and affinity for their own mother tongue. Linguistic minority parents strongly reiterate that for obtaining excellent results at each

level of education and getting better employment in future, their children must compete with the children from so-called higher castes who get exposure to English medium from ECD/PPC. At the same time, linguistic minorities also feel threatened due to growing influence of western culture and English language which might further marginalise their culture and mother tongues and displace them from the educational contexts. Some of them also consider English as a "killer language" despite its popularity among the third-generation children. Despite this sort of reservation, linguistic minority parents appear to be reluctant to choose the available option of mother tongue education due to lack of Nepal-specific evidences regarding its outcomes and impact on the learning process of their children. Interestingly, parental attitudes and decision on language choices keep evolving as per the changing contexts of the competitive world which have direct or indirect implications for language-in-education policy of the country. This situation calls for an attention of language policy -makers for making strategies so that linguistic identity and rights issues can be properly addressed and increasingly growing demand of English, as the medium of instruction, can also be dealt with in a comprehensive manner.

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RESEARCH ABSTRACT

Equalization and Utilization of Educational Opportunity at Secondary Stage with Reference to Muslim Community in Eastern U.P.

Aiyaz Ahmad Khan*

Title	Equalization and Utilization of Educational Opportunity at Secondary Stage with Reference to Muslim Community in Eastern U.P.
Research Scholar	Aiyaz Ahmad Khan
Supervisor	Dr. Nishat Parveen
Department	Department of Teachers Education Shibli National P.G. College, Azamgarh, V. B. S. Purvanchal University, Jaunpur, U.P.
Co-Supervisor	Dr. S. N. Pandey
Degree Awarded	Ph.D.
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* Department of Education, Aligarh Muslim University Murshidabad Centre, West Bengal-742223.
Email: aiyazamu@gmail.com

Abstract

In a democratic system, progress of the country depends, to a large extent, on the harmonious development of the social, economic and cultural spheres of all its communities. The school in a democratic system is considered as the primary institution wherein the future of citizens is shaped. The beauty of India is its diverse cultures, traditions, languages, religious beliefs and communities. Muslims constitute one of the minor and backward communities.

While several initiatives have been taken for the development of Muslims, the Sachhar committee (2006) found the Muslims in India a socio-economically and educationally backward community. While education plays an instrumental role in socio-economic development and even though educational opportunity is being provided to the Muslim community, they continue to lag behind. The reason for this backwardness lies in the inadequate utilization of available opportunities.

Thus, the focus of the present study was to explore the extent to which Muslims are utilizing the educational opportunities and compare it with their non-Muslim counterparts and also try to determine whether there is any significant difference between secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students with regard to socio-economic status, self concept, and adjustment. The sample for the study, selected randomly, comprised 522 (340 Muslim and 212 non-Muslim) secondary school students. The statistical technique like Mean, SD, and t-test were used for the treatment of data. The result revealed that Muslims are lagging behind in utilizing the educational opportunities as compared to their non-Muslim counterparts.

The problem of minorities is one of the most perplexing and intriguing. This is not confined to any specific region of the world but is universal in its scope, even though it varies in nature and extent according to the peculiar circumstances of place and time, various combinations of power and numbers. Zakaria (1995) said that "Muslims were deprived of benefit of development schemes which government launched for ameliorating conditions for poor and marginalized sections of the society". They were under-represented in government service and in decision-making bodies. It is also evident from the Prime Minister's High Level Committee (2006), "Displacement from traditional occupations has contributed to Muslims being deprived of their means of livelihood and has led to economic backwardness".

Educational development is among the key issues of post-Independence policies for all, including Muslims. As per the Census (2001), literacy of Muslims (59.1%) is less than the national literacy (65.4%) by 6.3 percentage points. The situation is worst in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) even though Muslims comprise in U.P. constitute a significant 13.5% of the state's population. Utilization of opportunity is clearly as important as availability of opportunities. Thus, the socio-economic development of a community depends on the opportunities provided and their utilization.

Objectives of the Study

The researcher proposes to study the problem with the following objectives:

1. To explore institutional factors that hinder the utilization of educational opportunities for secondary school Muslim students.
2. To find out the extent to which secondary school Muslim students are utilizing the educational opportunities and comparing the same with that of their non-Muslim counterparts.
3. To examine socio-economic status of secondary school Muslim students and compare it with that of their non-Muslim counterparts.
4. To find out the gender differences in relation to socio-economic status of secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students.
5. To examine self concept of secondary school Muslim students and compare it with that of their non-Muslim counterparts.
6. To find out the gender differences in respect of self-concept of secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students.
7. To examine adjustment of secondary school Muslim students and compare it with that of their non-Muslim counterparts.
8. To find out the gender differences for adjustment of secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students.

Methodology

Method

The normative survey method was employed in this study.

Sample

The population of this study was drawn from the students studying at the secondary level in the urban schools of four districts viz. Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Mau and Varanasi of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Out of the total urban schools, 24 government schools (12 boys' and 12 girls') were selected through random sampling technique, with six schools selected from each district. The two stratas selected for sampling were category (Muslim and Non-Muslim) and gender (boys and girls). The sample for the study, consisting of 552 students, comprising 224 Muslim boys, 123 non-Muslim boys, 116 Muslim girls and 89 non-Muslim girls, were selected through random sampling procedure.

Research Instruments

1. Questionnaire for Principals developed by researcher: to study institutional factors
2. Adapted Socio Economic Status Scale-Urban by G. P. Srivastava (1991)
3. Self Concept Inventory by R. K. Saraswat (2008)
4. Adjustment Inventory for School Students by A. K. P. Sinha and R. P. Singh (1993)

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher personally visited all the selected schools for data collection after getting the necessary letter of reference from the Head, Department of Teacher Education, Shibli National (PG) College, Azamgarh. All the sample units were assured that data collected would be used only for the purpose of research and confidentiality of information would be ensured. All the three tests namely Socio-economic Status Scale, Self-Concept Inventory and Adjustment Inventory for School Students were administered by the researcher, with the help of school teachers, as per the instructions given in the test manual while the questionnaire for the Principals was duly filled in by the principals.

Statistical Technique

Mainly the t-test was employed in order to determine the significance of difference between Muslim and non-Muslim students and between male and female students of both Muslim and non-Muslim groups. In addition, Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) were also computed during the analysis of data. Further, the researcher calculated the coefficient of equality in order to determine as to what extent educational opportunities are used by the Muslims.

Major Findings of the Study

In a bid to ascertain the extent to which educational opportunities are being utilized by secondary school Muslim students as also the significance of difference between secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students on the scales of socio- economic status, self-concept and adjustment for school students, the researcher has arrived at certain significant results which are summarized and presented below:

(A) Related to Institutions

1. All the schools are in *Pucca* buildings and all the schools are having sufficient classrooms.
2. Almost all the schools follow Hindi as a medium of instruction. None of the schools are transacting curriculum in Urdu as the medium of instruction. This hinders the achievement of Muslim students.
3. Seventy five percent of the schools were organizing the morning assembly on daily basis with 25 percent doing so on occasional basis.
4. Sixty nine percent schools follow attendance rules very strictly while 31 percent are lenient in their attendance rules.
5. In minority institutions, around 80 percent teachers belong to minority community and the remaining 20 percent to the majority community, while in non-minority institutions, 93 percent teachers are from the majority community with only seven percent teachers from the minority community.
6. High pupil- teacher ratio is observed in eastern Uttar Pradesh and this is manifest in all the four districts viz. Azamgarh (60), Ghazipur (46), Mau (48) and Varanasi (49).
7. The parent teacher meeting was held in 81 percent schools, comprising 31 percent schools having it on monthly basis, 19 percent on quarterly basis and 31 percent on yearly basis, with the remaining 19 percent schools having no provision for such

meetings. Significantly, only 23 percent of Muslim parents are participating in parent teacher meetings which is comparatively far below the percentage of non-Muslim parents participating.

8. While 69 percent schools are offering Urdu in their curriculum, only 28 percent Muslim students opted for it.
9. Eighty seven percent of the schools are organizing co-curricular activities on occasional basis whereas only 13 percent organize it on regular basis. The co-curricular activities are mainly sports, cultural activities and essay competitions.
10. Groupism among students of different social groups is found to be a major problem of indiscipline in almost all the schools.

(B) Related to Utilization of Educational Opportunities

1. The coefficient of equality for the Muslim community was found to be 58.81, 79.95, 54.09 and 94.06 for Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Mau and Varanasi respectively. It indicates that the share of Muslims in the field of education is low in proportion to their population size in all sample districts barring Varanasi. The Muslims of Varanasi are utilizing maximum opportunity among all four districts. Most of the Muslim community members are involved in business and therefore have a good economic status.
2. Overall, the coefficient of equality for the Muslim community of four districts was calculated to be 75.90. It clearly indicates that Muslims are not still not availing the educational opportunities at par with what is available to them in terms of their population percentage and they continue to lag behind their non-Muslim counterparts even after six decades of Independence.

(C) Related to Socio-Economic Status

1. Significant difference was found between secondary school Muslim boys and non-Muslim boys in terms of socio-economic status. The finding indicates that the socio-economic status of Muslim boy students is poor in comparison to their non-Muslim counterparts.
2. Likewise, a significant difference was found between secondary school Muslim girls and non-Muslim girls in terms of socio-economic status, with Muslim girl students belonging to poor socio-economic status as compared to their non-Muslim counterparts.
3. Significant difference was found in the socio-economic status of overall secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students with the former having overall poor socio-economic status.
4. Significant difference was also found between secondary school Muslim boys and Muslim girls in terms of socio-economic status, which was better in the case of the girls as compared to the boys within the Muslim community.
5. No significant difference was noted between secondary school non-Muslim boys and girls with regard to socio-economic status. This showed that within the non-Muslim community, boys and girls had almost similar socio economic status.

(D) Related to Self Concept

1. Significant difference was found between secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim boys in terms of self concept, with the Muslim boys showing poor development of self concept compared to their non-Muslim counterparts.
2. Similarly, a significant difference was found between secondary school Muslim girls and non-Muslim girl students in terms of their respective levels of self concept, with the Muslim girls showing poor development of self concept in comparison to their non-Muslim counterparts.
3. Significant difference was also found between overall secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim with regard to the measure of self concept, with overall Muslim students showing poor development of self concept compared to non-Muslim students.
4. Significant difference was found in self concept levels between secondary school Muslim boys and Muslim girls with the development of self concept among girls being better than that of boys.
5. Significant difference was found between secondary school non-Muslim boys and girls in terms of the measure of self concept, with the girls having better self concept than the boys within the non-Muslim community.

(E) Related to Adjustment for School Students

1. Significant difference was noted between secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim boy students with regard to their respective adjustment levels, with the former showing poor adjustment compared to non-Muslim boy students.
2. Significant difference was found between secondary school Muslim girls and non-Muslim girls in terms of their respective levels of adjustment with Muslim girls displaying poor adjustment compared to the non-Muslim girls students.
3. Significant difference was found between overall secondary school Muslim and non-Muslim students with regard to their respective adjustment levels, with the Non-Muslim students' displaying better adjustment with the school environment than their Muslim counterparts.
4. Significant difference was also found between secondary school Muslim boys and girls in their respective levels of adjustment with the girls, on an average, showing slightly better adjustment to the school environment than the boys within the Muslim community.
5. Significant difference was found between secondary school non-Muslim boys and girls in the adjustment levels, with girl students showing slightly better adjustment to their school environment than boy students from within the same non-Muslim community.

Educational Implications

The present study has its implications for creating awareness among Muslim parents regarding the importance of education and motivating them for availing Government educational facilities. Being educationally backward, Muslims are not well aware of the schemes and programmes of the government. Special awareness programmes should be

launched in Muslim localities. Urdu is the mother tongue of the Muslim families. Therefore, students should be taught in the Urdu medium in schools located in Muslim-populated areas. School environment should be made congenial in order to improve enrolment rate of Muslim students. Major researches should be undertaken to identify the factors responsible for drop-out of Muslim children in the schools where the community is not utilizing the educational opportunities. Co-curricular activities like sports, cultural events and excursions should be arranged by schools and active participation of Muslim students in such activities should be ensured which, in turn, would motivate them to be more receptive to the learning process. Thus, helping the Muslim students will surely yield better results through proper harnessing of individual potential together with optimum utilization of available educational opportunities.

Moreover, there are various factors which directly or indirectly contribute in the utilizing of the educational opportunities. The contribution of socio- economic status, self-concept and adjustment are the most at the school level. The study has revealed that students belonging to lower socio-economic status groups lagged behind in utilizing the educational opportunity in comparison to the non-Muslim students. Therefore, government of India should provide financial support to Muslim students in the form of scholarships to enable them to continue their education without any financial impediments. This would be a specifically supportive measure on the part of the Government towards those students who are bright but are unable to succeed in studies in their schools due to their low socio-economic status.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Muslim community is lagging behind the non-Muslim community in utilizing the available educational opportunities at the secondary level. While the institutional factors are not encouraging the Muslim students to learning, such discourage factors, directly or indirectly, Muslim parents from availing educational opportunities. Our schools do not cater to the psychological needs of the Muslim students. However, Muslim students are having poor levels of socio-economic status, self concept and adjustment as compared to their non-Muslims counterparts, with the result that they are prone to lesser utilization of educational opportunities.

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The Indian Institute of Economics, Federation House, FAPCCI Marg , 11-6-841, Red Hills, Hyderabad-500 004.(India). Phone:(O) 23393512, Fax: 91-40-23395525.
Email: iieaer@yahoo.com, website:http://www.iieasia.in

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RESEARCH NOTES/COMMUNICATIONS/COMMENTARY

When Will India Achieve Universal Adult Literacy?

— Status and Prospects

Motkuri Venkatanarayana*

Abstract

The present paper examines status and disparities across sub-population groups distinguished by location, gender and caste, and across states with respect to literacy. It also explores the prospects of literacy rate in India with a modelling of simulation exercise while considering different policy interventions. In this respect, it is observed that the performance of India in literacy rate is relatively poor. The progress in the literacy rate especially during the last decade is decelerated when compared to that of the previous decade. Again, rural-urban differences, gender gaps and social group disparities and regional variations across states continue to persist. The initiative for improving literacy rate through informal/non-formal adult education programmes, especially in the context of National Literacy Mission and its initiative of Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), yielded very poor results. With respect to the prospect of India meeting the EFA goal related to adult literacy are not so encouraging. It would require greater policy attention and better initiative for the improvement of adult literacy. Our simulation exercise has shown the impossibility of achieving 100% literacy rate in the near future for the country unless there is a policy intervention through adult education programme. The exercise indicates the need for revitalising and rejuvenating the National Literacy Mission (NLM) and revamped adult literacy programmes of TLC and PLP.

* # 102, Thomas Residency, H. No. 12-10-335/1/2, Seethaphalmandi, Secunderabad, Hyderabad-61, Telangana. E-mail: venkatanarayan@gmail.com

Introduction

India is considered as one of the emerging economic superpowers in the changing global scenario in the backdrop of the recent high growth trajectory of the Indian economy. However, its achievements in human development indicators still lag behind those countries like China against which the country's economic growth is competing. Particularly in respect of literacy and education, India is lagging behind China (see Dreze and Loh, 1997; Dreze and Sen, 2013). Besides, India's position in human development ranking happens to be lower than some of the countries, like Bangladesh, with relatively poorer economic growth (see HDR, 1991; 2012; Dreze and Sen, 2013). Within the country, there are huge variations with respect to economic and human development indicators across states and across regions/districts within the states.

One of the factors that is necessary for sustaining the high economic growth trajectory of a country is its human capital base. In other words, it is the educational level of its population. The crucial role that education development plays in the growth process of an economy is well established (see Barro, 1997; Barro and Sala-i-Martin, 2004; Psacharopoulos, 2006). Moreover, the informed citizenry, which facilitates the better governance, active citizenship and collective actions, are critical for the functioning of civil society, especially in a democracy. The vehicle through which these are made possible is education. Moreover, education enhances the functioning of an individual better (see Sen, 1999). Literacy and basic education are crucial for the human as well as economic development (see Basu *et al.*, 2009). Illiteracy is found to be one of the associative factors for poverty and economic backwardness. At the micro level, socio-economic disadvantage/ deprivation is said to be higher among households without any literate member as compared to those having at least one (see Basu and Foster, 1998; Basu *et al.*, 2000; Gibson, 2001). In this context, the necessity for further educational development is emphasised in order to unravel the growth potential of the Indian economy (Mehrotra *et al.*, 2005).

However, India is one of the developing countries with a historical trend of low levels of literacy rates. India's performance in terms of the child schooling (i.e. school attendance rate), especially since 1990s, is remarkable thanks to initiatives such as OBB, DPEP and SSA[1]. But its performance in literacy rate is relatively poor (see Dreze and Loh, 1995; Gupta, 2000; Srivastava, 2002; Rao, 2002; Govinda and Biswal, 2005). This is on account of the large stocks of illiterate population in the country, especially in the adult and older age groups, who have been ignored, so far, in the policy measures. It is due to historical neglect of primary education in the country that the stock of adult illiterates have accumulated. Despite the initiatives of National Literacy Mission (NLM) that was launched in 1988 and its prime component Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) in 1989 for removing adult illiteracy, such a trend of literacy deprivation has been continuing (see Rao, 2002; Govinda and Biswal, 2005). The latest Census 2011 provisional data indicates that still around one-fourth of its population in the 7+ age group are illiterates. The recent UNESCO's Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012 indicates that out of the total 775 million adult illiterates in the globe in 2010, 37% are located in India; China's share is only 7% (see UNESCO, 2012).

[1] Abbreviations as follows: OBB – Operation Black Board; DPEP – District Primary Education Programme; SSA – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

India was a signatory participant in the World Conference on Education for All (EFA), held in 1990 at Jomtien, and the World Education Forum, held in 2000 at Dakar. In this context, India has committed to concomitant Declarations, particularly that of Education for All, and achieving six goals set in the declaration. Of the six goals, the fourth one is about achieving 50% improvement in adult literacy rate by the year 2015 over the base level in 2000. However, the current progress in literacy rate in India, particularly over the last one decade, indicates that meeting the fourth goal would be very difficult, if not impossible. Owing to increasing investment in elementary education and corresponding policy initiatives that improved school participation rates, further accretion to the pool of adult illiterates may recede. The demographic transition, witnessed during the last two decades, also contributed to the receding accretion to the illiterate stock. However, given the continuing high drop-out rate in elementary schooling, addition to the stock of adult illiterates cannot be ruled out.

The intended demographic dividend, expected from the demographic transition recently witnessed in India, may not be possible from its economic growth and development in the absence of a proper human capital base and particularly without the functional literacy skills of its labour force. Particularly in the context of an emerging knowledge-based society/economy, illiteracy not only poses a disadvantage in the labour market but also hampers the quality of life, as it precludes the sharing of information that would help in improving the quality of life (see Sen, 1999; Gibson, 2001; Basu *et al*., 2009). Moreover, without functional literacy, it is very difficult to derive optimal advantage from the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Besides, when the Government of India starts implementing the Direct Benefit Transfers (DBTs) in various spheres, the illiterate beneficiaries could face disadvantages vis-a-vis their educated counterparts while attending to financial transactions through banking institutions and through the use of electronic machines (Venkatanarayana and Ravi, 2013).

Therefore, the policy concern arises regarding the prospects of adult literacy and the policy interventions required for accelerating the progress in literacy rate, in general, and adult literacy rate, in particular, in India. In fact, there had been attempts to improve adult literacy since Independence but such initiatives and interventions were very meagre in coverage until the late 1980s (see Rambrahmam, 1989; Rao, 2002). The NLM 1988 and its prime initiative TLC in 1989 was the most massive adult literacy programme in India (see GoI, 1994; Rao, 2002; Karlekar, 2004). But even such a massive programme could not succeed in achieving its aim of liquidating illiteracy (see GoI, 1994; Karlekar, 2004). Its impact on improvement in literacy rates seems to be very minimal. Indeed, since mid-1990s, it was reduced to a state of virtual dormancy. After a decade, another mission (or a modified-NLM), in the form of *Sakshar Bharat*, was initiated in 2009 for a similar objective though its implementation is still sluggish on account of administration procedures and processes.

In this context, the main objective of the paper is to assess the prospect of achieving universal adult literacy with a policy intervention factor through adult literacy programmes targeting diverse age groups. The paper begins with an analysis by examining the status and disparities across sub-population groups distinguished by location, gender and caste, and across states with regard to literacy. It then proceeds to explore the prospects of literacy rate in India through a simulation exercise model while considering different policy interventions. The paper is organised as follows. Section I below presents the status of literacy levels in India while Section II presents the prospects of literacy rate in India. Section

III discusses policy initiatives and issues related to adult education programmes. Finally, the paper contains concluding observations and remarks.

Literacy Levels in India

With regard to the literacy rate, there has been a significant improvement over a period in India. However, the latest Census 2011 provisional figures indicate that about three-fourths of the population in the country are literates while the remaining one-fourth are illiterates. Over a period especially since 1961, the progress in overall literacy rate in the country was the highest ever during the 1990s (12.6 percentage points increase between 1991 and 2001). Thereafter, there has been decelerating progress in the literacy rate during the last decade (between 2001 and 2011) wherein the improvement in the literacy rate of the country was around eight percentage points, which is considerably lower than the progress registered in the previous decade.

Again, there exists rural-urban difference, gender gaps, social group disparities and regional variations across states/districts in literacy levels within the country. There are huge rural-urban differences in literacy rate although differences are reducing over time. The literacy rate in urban India was almost three times that of rural India in 1951, with the urban-rural literacy rate ratio gradually reducing to around two in 1981 and further to 1.24 in 2011. The rural urban difference in literacy rate was about 16 percentage points in 2011. Such a rural-urban difference is relatively high among the females (21 percentage points).

TABLE 1.1

Literacy Rate in India by Gender and Location

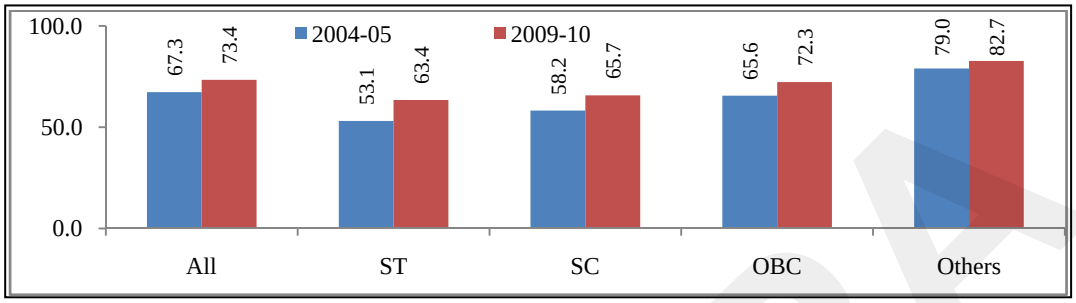
Year	*Rural and Urban*			*Rural*			*Urban*		
	Person	*Male*	*Female*	*Person*	*Male*	*Female*	*Person*	*Male*	*Female*
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	12.10	19.02	4.87	34.59	45.06	22.33
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35	22.50	34.30	10.10	54.40	66.00	40.50
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	27.90	48.60	15.50	60.20	69.80	48.80
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	36.00	49.60	21.70	67.20	76.70	56.30
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	44.69	57.87	30.62	73.10	81.09	64.05
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67	58.74	70.70	46.13	79.92	86.27	72.86
2011	72.99	80.89	64.64	67.77	77.15	57.93	84.11	88.76	79.11

Note: 1. Literacy is for 5 + age population till 1971 and thereafter since 1981 for 7 + age population.
Source: Census of India.

Similarly, although the gender gap in literacy rate in the country is narrowing as a result of the faster improvement in female literacy rate over a period compared to their male counterparts, the male literacy rate was almost three times that of females in 1951. A gradual reduction in gender gap brought down the ratio of male to female in terms of literacy rate, to 1.9 in 1981 and further to 1.25 in 2011. Nevertheless, the gender gap in literacy rate continued to be considerably high at around 16 percentage points in 2011. Such a gender gap is even higher in the rural areas (19 percentage points).

FIGURE 1.1

Literacy Rate (%) in India by Social Groups



Note: Literacy rate for 7 + age population.
Source: Estimated using NSSO 61st (2004-05) and 66th (2009-10) Round Employment and Unemployment Survey unit record data.

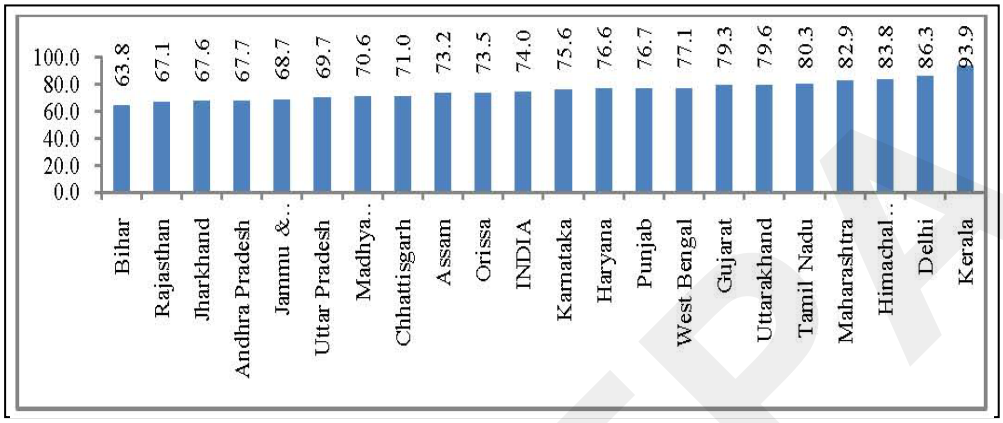
Across social groups, disparities in literacy rates continue to persist (Figure 1.2). In 2009-10, around one-third each of the ST and SC population (7+ years of age) in the country were found to be illiterates. The illiteracy is considered to be one of the important factors perpetuating the historical disadvantages of these backward communities.

Across major states, there is a huge variation in literacy rate among the 7 years and above age population (see Figure 1.1). According to 2011 Census data, the highest literacy rate (94%) is observed in Kerala followed by Delhi (86.3%), Himachal Pradesh (83.8%), Maharashtra (82.9%) and Tamil Nadu (80.3%). The lowest literacy rate (63.8%) is observed for Bihar followed by Rajasthan (67.1%), Jharkhand (67.6%), Andhra Pradesh (67.1%) and Jammu and Kashmir (68.1%). There is almost 30 percentage points difference between the highest and the lowest literacy rates across major states. Most of the populated states are having literacy rate below the national average (see Figure 1.2). Thus, illiterates are heavily concentrated in highly populated and educationally backward states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan as they are having lower literacy rates. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, while accounting for one-fourth of the total population of India in 2011, are home to around one-third of the total illiterates in the country. Together with Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, these two states account for 45% of the total illiterates in India.

The literacy rate again varies across age groups of population. On an examination of the age group specific literacy rate, it is observed that the literacy rate in India declines as one progresses to higher age groups. Incidentally, the improvement in the literacy rate over the period is relatively higher among the younger age groups than that of the adults and older people (Figure 1.3). The share of literates in younger age to the total literates is higher than their proportion in the total population (Table 1.2). Correspondingly, the contribution of adults and older age group literates to the total literates in India is lower than their proportion in the total population. The lower levels of literacy among adults and older age groups in India indicates the historical neglect of primary education. By ensuring availability of primary education to all children of school going age, the fresh flow of illiterates can be arrested (Bordia and Kaul, 1992). Initiatives such as District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have been endeavouring to achieve the goal.

FIGURE 1.2

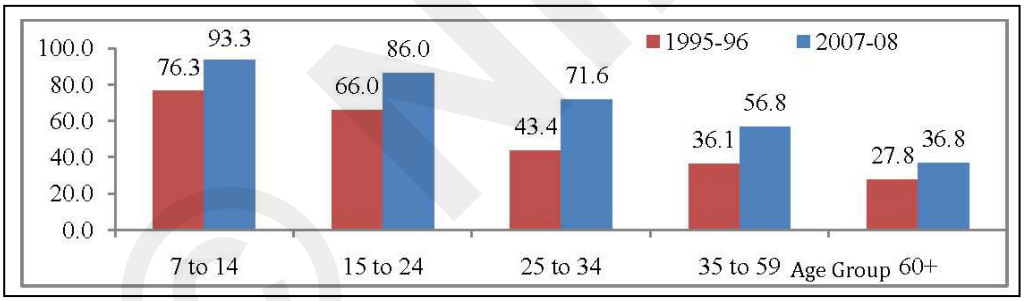
Literacy Rate (7 + Age-group) across Major Indian States, 2011 (%)



Note: 1. Literacy Rate – percentage of literates to the 7 + age population; 2. States are ordered by the rank in terms of literacy rate.
Source: Census of India, Census 2011 Provisional Data.

FIGURE 1.3

Improvement in Literacy Rate (%) across age groups in India



Note: Age-group specific literacy rates.
Source: Estimated using unit record data of NSS 52nd (1995-96) and 64th (2007-08) Rounds of Survey on Literacy and Participation in Education (Sch. 25).

Disparities in Age-Specific Literacy Rate across Major States

Age-specific literacy rate across states shows that the variation in literacy rate across states among the 7-14 years age group is the least as compared to the subsequent higher age groups (Figure 1.4 - a, b, c & d). The variation across major states in terms of literacy rate increases with progressively higher age groups. Kerala tops the list and Bihar figures at the bottom among the 21 major states in the first two prime age groups (7-14 and 15-34). For the next two age groups (35-59 and 60 and above), while Kerala remains at the top, in the bottom position, Bihar is replaced by Rajasthan which accounts for the lowest literacy rate among the major states. It indicates that the recent policy efforts, through the initiatives of DPEP and subsequent SSA with regard to elementary schooling in India, have narrowed

down the variations across states and consequently the literacy rates among the younger age group. However, there has not been much policy attention towards narrowing down the historically sharp variations across states in the levels of school education, particularly primary schooling, wherein an individual can acquire literacy skills. It is a historical policy neglect of illiterate individuals living in the educationally backward states. There was an effort made under the New Education Policy of 1985 and the consequent establishment of NLM in 1988. The initial intensity and enthusiasm of the TLC, initiated in 1989 under the NLM to provide illiterate adults the second chance of acquiring literacy skills through informal adult education programmes, has dried up over a period.

TABLE 1.2

Distribution of Population and Literates by Broad Age-groups in India (%)

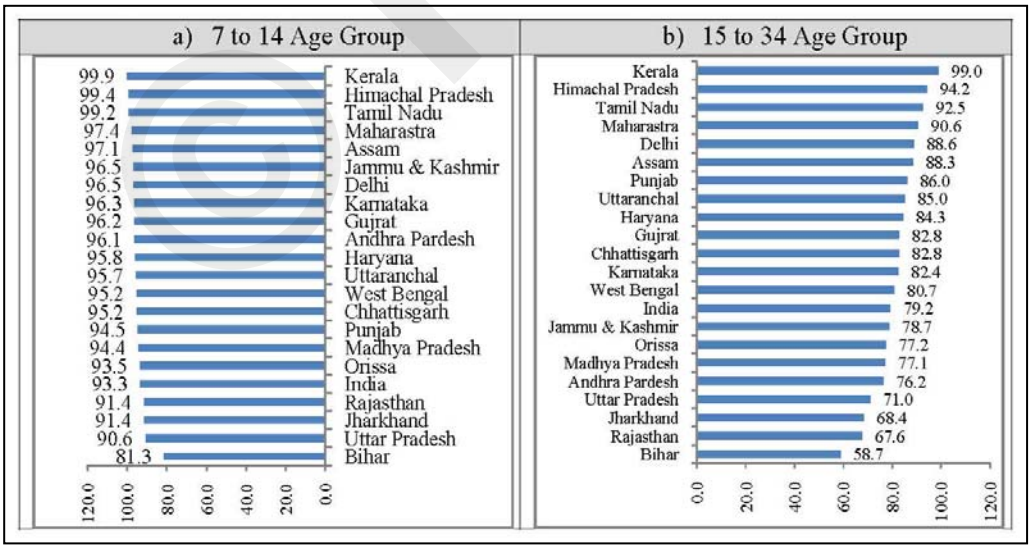
Age-Group	*Distribution of Population*		*Distribution of Literates*	
	1995-96	*2007-08*	*1995-96*	*2007-08*
7-14	19.1	17.9	29.8	27.2
15-24	16.4	18.0	24.3	25.3
25-34	17.0	16.1	19.4	18.8
35-59	23.4	26.2	22.4	24.3
60 +	6.4	7.3	4.1	4.4

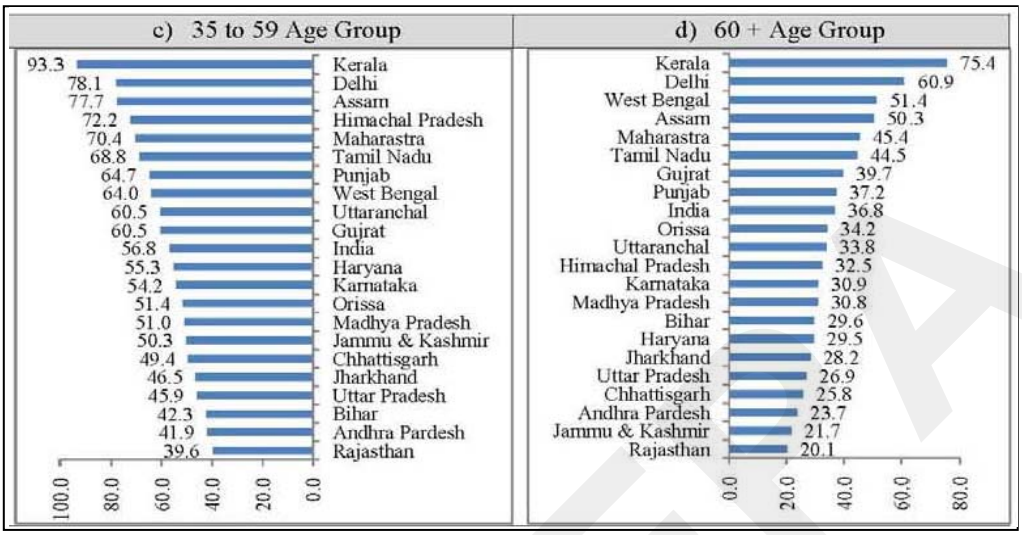
Note: Figures presented are percentages.

Source: Based on the unit record data of NSS 52nd (1995-96) and 64th Round (2007-08) Surveys on Literacy and Participation in Education (Sch. 25).

FIGURE 1.4

Age Specific Literacy Rate across Major States in India, 2007-08 (%)





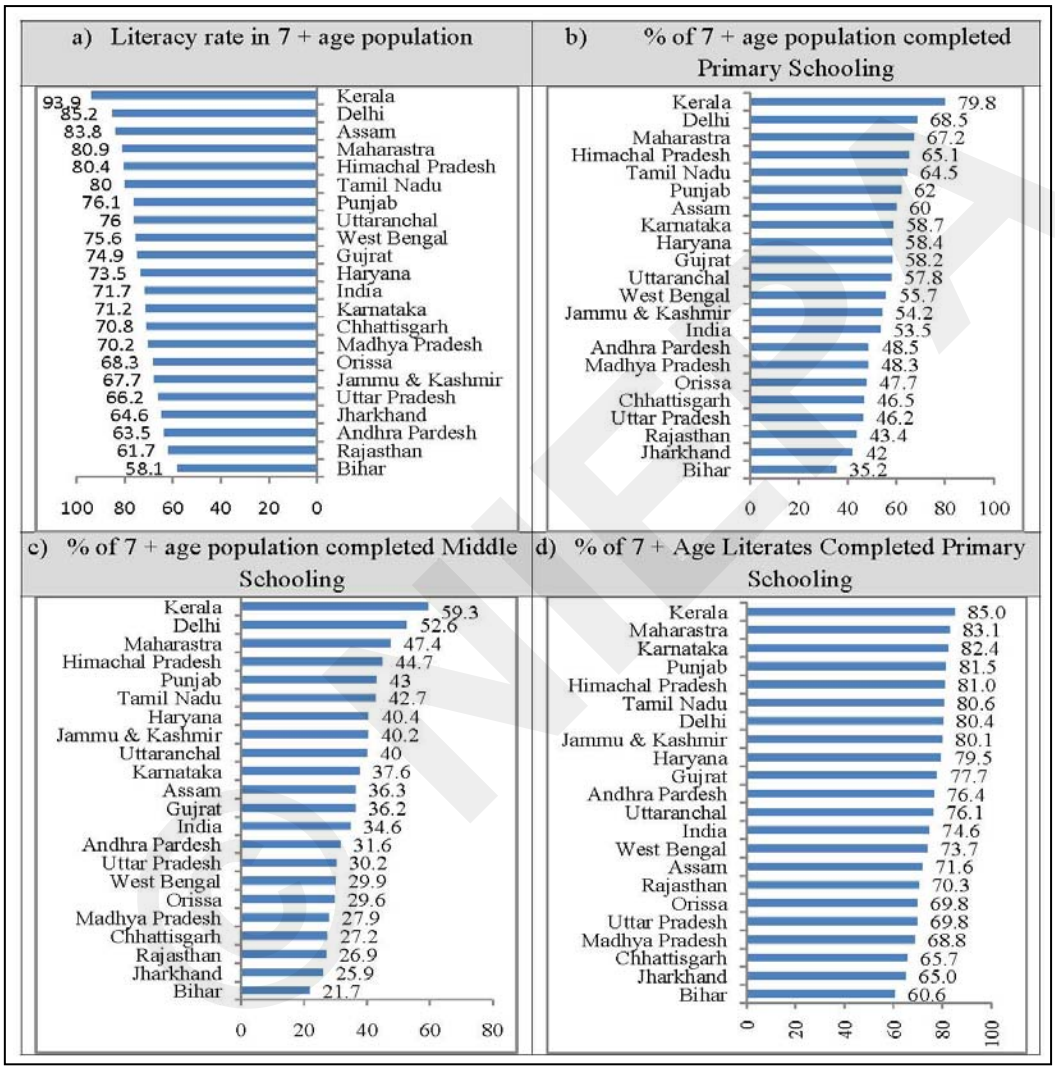
Note: Age specific literacy rates.

Source: Based on the unit record data of NSS 64th Round (2007-08) Surveys on Literacy and Participation in Education (Sch. 25)

The recent policy effort in universalising elementary education and the consequent progress could not undo the historical variations in the schooling levels of the population across states. With respect to the schooling levels of population, it is observed that a little above half of the population in India in the age 7 year and above had completed primary schooling in 2007-08. Variations across states are considerable wherein there is a 50 percentage point gap in state-specific primary completion rates. While Kerala is on top of the list with about 80 per cent of its 7+ years age population having completed primary schooling, Bihar figures at the bottom with only 35 per cent of its corresponding population group completing primary schooling. In terms of middle school, the percentage of the respective population that has completed it is the highest (59%) in Kerala and the lowest (22%) in Bihar, with the national average standing at 34.6%, thereby indicating that only one-third of the population (7+ year age) in India has completed middle schooling.

On examining the quality of literacy in terms of percentage of literates, who have at least completed primary schooling, which is almost equivalent to functional literacy (see UNESCO, 2005), it is seen that only about three-fourth of the literates in the country (in the 7+ years age group) had completed primary schooling in 2007-08 (Figure 1.5d). There are huge variations across states in this regard too. While Kerala state is having the highest (85%) percentage of its literates completing primary schooling, Bihar, expectedly, has the lowest percentage in this regard at 61%. There is an about 24 percentage point gap in state-specific percentage of literates completing primary schooling. It indicates that variations across states in functional literacy would be more intensive over a simple literacy rate.

FIGURE 1.5
Schooling Completion Rate (in 7 + Age Population)
Across Major States in India, 2007-08 (%)



Literacy through Informal or Non-formal Adult Education Mode

There are different means i.e. formal schooling, informal or non-formal educational programmes that impart basic literacy skills (reading, writing and numeracy) to make an individual literate. Formal schooling is the most common mode to acquire such basic literacy skills. However, in this mode, the chances of acquiring literacy skills through formal schooling are higher in the younger ages and cease to exist with rising age. When formal schooling is the only means of acquiring literacy skills, the literacy rate observed for an

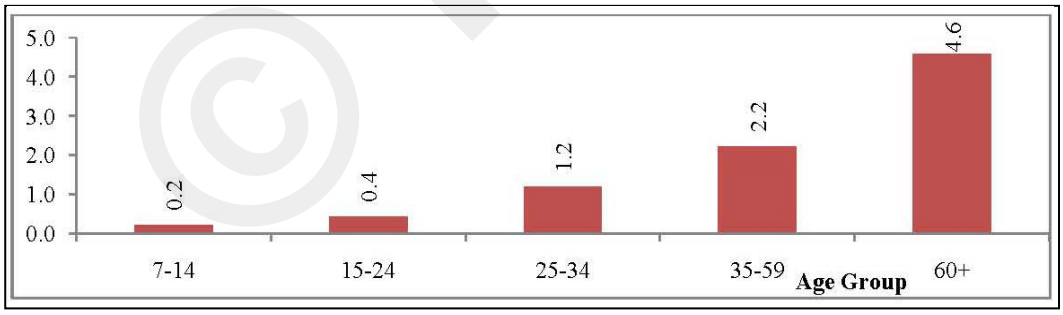
younger age cohort remains the same throughout the cohort's lifetime, if one assumes mortality rate among the literates and illiterates in that age cohort to be the same.

The other mode of acquiring literacy skills is through the informal or non-formal adult education programmes. Such initiatives have been there in many countries across the world. In India too, there have been such initiatives; particularly the establishment of NLM in 1988 and its TLC, initiated in 1989, is the largest initiative in terms of its spread all over the country. In this mode, there is age relaxation in participating in the acquisition of literacy skills. It provides a second chance to those adults to acquire such literacy skills (for illiterates in any particular age cohort) who missed the first chance of acquiring literacy skills when they were young. With such initiatives, depending on the programme intensity and participation rate, age-specific literacy rates can be improved over time, even if we assume that mortality rate remains the same for both literates and illiterates.

To examine the impact of such adult literacy programmes in India, it can be observed that the percentage of those literates who have become literates (i.e. acquired literacy skills) through informal ways, such as non-formal educational programmes or adult literacy programmes, to the total literates in the country is marginal (below one percent among 7 + years age literates). In so far as this referred percentage of literates without formal schooling is concerned, it is seen to be increasing, although marginally, while subsequently moving to progressively older cohorts. The percentage is higher (around 4.6%) among the older age groups (60 + years age population) (Figure 1.6). It might be a pointer to the fact that the intensity and performance of such programmes of adult literacy/education in India, particularly the NLM, over time is below or less than what it once was. It also indicates that adult literacy programmes implemented in India have become ineffective, particularly in the recent past, in raising adult literacy rates.

FIGURE 1.6

% of Literates without Formal Schooling (through Informal/Non-formal Education) to the Total Literates in India by age groups, 2007-08



Note: 1. Age group specific percentages; 2. Informal/Non-Formal Education includes Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), NFEC, AIEP, AEC, and others.

Source: Based on the unit record data of NSS 64th Round (2007-08) Surveys on Literacy and Participation in Education (Sch. 25).

Adult Literacy: Would India be able to meet EFA 4th Goal?

Having said that, if one examines whether India would be able to meet the 4th Goal of Education for All (EFA) initiative, one can say it is very difficult if not impossible. The EFA initiative's fourth goal is to achieve 50 % improvement in adult literacy rate (ALR) by 2015 over the base in 2000. In this context, if we consider the historical trend, it, in fact, indicates an accelerating progress in adult literacy rate till 2001, with the rate of improvement being the highest between 1991 and 2001. Nevertheless, even if the decade 1990s' rate of improvement were to be replicated between 2000 and 2015, achieving the EFA target would still not be possible. Considering that the rate of improvement registered for the 1990s decade could not be sustained for the subsequent decade (between 2001 and 2011), the situation is a cause of concern.

To set the base year (2000) value, the percentage point of improvement in adult literacy rate per annum during the 1990s is taken into account and, consequently, set at 59.7% for the year 2000. This implies that in order to meet the EFA goal of 50% improvement by 2015 over the base in 2000, the target for India would be to achieve adult literacy rate at 89.6% in 2015 (see Table 1.3). This, on its part, would translate to an acceleration of the adult literacy rate in India at 2% percentage points per annum during the period between 2000 and 2015. It also means that irrespective of the rate of growth of the adult population during 2000-15, the rate of growth in adult literates must be 2.7 times higher than that of the adult population during the period. Moreover, in order to achieve the aggregate of adult literacy rate at 89.6 per cent so as to meet the EFA goal in 2015, by gender disaggregation, male adult literacy has to be almost universalised (100%) while female adult literacy has to be at not less than 79 per cent (see Table 1.3).

TABLE 1.3

Adult (15+ Age) Literacy Rate in India: Actuals, Base and Target estimates for EFA, and Projections

Year	*Female*	*Male*	*Persons*
Census of India			
1961	13.2	41.5	27.8
1971	19.4	47.7	34.1
1981	25.7	54.9	40.8
1991	33.7	61.6	48.2
2001	47.8	73.4	61.0
2011	59.3	78.9	69.3
NSSO based Estimates			
2004-05	49.6	73.6	61.8
2009-10	58.3	79.0	68.9
Author's estimates to reflect on EFA base and target			
2000 – Base	46.4	72.2	59.7
2015 – Target (to meet EFA goal)	78.5	100	89.6
Author's Projections			
2015 – Projections (Census based)	64.6	81.2	72.9
2015 – Projections (NSS based)	67.5	83.5	75.6

Note: Adult Literacy – for the 15 years above age population.
Source: 1. Census of India; 2. NSSO-EUS unit record data; 3. Author's Estimates.

Our projections in case of business as usual scenario (BUS) indicate that the rate of improvement observed during 1990s was at 1.28 percentage points per annum. If such a rate of improvement in adult literacy would have been sustained for the period 2000-15, India could have achieved a maximum adult literacy rate of 80 per cent by 2015, or 34 per cent improvement over the base. However, the observed adult literacy rate in India at 69.3 per cent for the year 2011 (Census of India) shows that the literacy rate improved at 0.83 percentage points per annum during the period 2001-11. If this rate of improvement continues, our business as usual scenario projections indicates that India will have an adult literacy rate at a maximum of 73 per cent in 2015. It would be equal to 22 per cent of improvement over the base year (2000). Besides, if we consider NSSO's Employment and Unemployment Survey based estimates, the rate of improvement between the two latest rounds (61st and 66th) of NSSO Surveys is about 1.42 percentage points per annum during half-a-decade period between 2004-05 and 2009-10. If this rate of improvement is maintained during 2011-15, the adult literacy rate in India would be at a maximum of 76 per cent by 2015; representing 27 per cent of improvement over the base. While this represents a better prospect, it still falls short of the EFA goal target. It indicates the country needs greater attention for policy intervention and better initiatives towards improving adult literacy rate not only to meet the EFA goal but also for universalising adult literacy in the near future.

Summing up the above analysis in section I, it is observed that India fares poorly in respect of literacy rate with deceleration in the progress in the literacy rate especially during the last decade when compared to that of the previous decade. There are rural-urban differences, gender gaps and social group disparities and regional variations across states in terms of literacy rate. Although disparities in literacy rate across these sub-population groups are getting narrowed over time, they are still found to be considerably high. The recent policy initiatives with regard to primary schooling have reduced disparities in literacy rate among the young across states but the dearth of policy attention towards the historical disparity in literacy rate among adults has left it to continue. The initiative for improving literacy rate through informal/non-formal adult education programmes, especially in the context of NLM and its initiative of TLC, yielded very poor results. Moreover, such initiative has become ineffective over time in improving literacy rate. Finally, when we assess India's prospects of meeting the EFA goal with regard to adult literacy, the scenario that emerges is not so encouraging. It would require greater policy attention and better initiative for the improvement of adult literacy. In this context, an attempt is made in the following section to explore the impact of certain policy interventions, if initiated, on the prospects of literacy, given certain determinant demographic factors.

Prospects of Literacy in India

In this section, we present the variants of literacy rate projection models involving a policy variable and demographic factors. It is an attempt to explore the prospects of literacy rate for India through the simulation exercise.

Demographic factors affecting literacy rate

One must also note the demographic factor i.e. age-specific mortality rate as an important factor affecting the literacy rate, in general, and age-specific literacy rate, in

particular. In other words, if the mortality rate is higher among the illiterates than literates, its rate of growth in literates would be higher than that of illiterates. The literacy rate as the result of such a demographic factor increases. The case is the other way around when the mortality rate is higher among the literates than that of illiterates, wherein the literacy rate declines. Similarly, for a particular age cohort in its transit across different age structures, if the mortality rate is higher among literates compared to illiterates in that cohort, the literacy rate of the cohort declines. On the other hand, if the mortality rate is higher among the illiterates compared to that of literates, the literacy rate in that age cohort increases. In this respect, the increase or decline in the age-specific literacy rate in a particular age cohort is purely a demographic effect. However, we do not have sufficient information on age-specific mortality rates among literates and illiterates.

Besides, the factor of migration, especially external migration, the literacy levels of the net migrants do affect the overall literacy rate of a country/state/region. If the net migration is positive, indicating surplus of in-migrants over out-migrants, and the literacy level is higher or lower among these net in-migrants than that of the non-migrant population, then the overall literacy rate improves or declines respectively. If the net migration is negative indicating the out-migrants and the literacy level are lower (higher) than non-migrant population, then the overall literacy rate improves (declines). But it all depends on the size of the migrants and their share in the population. In India, however, the share of external migrants in the total population is small (below 1%) so that the literacy status of net migrants may not significantly affect overall literacy rate in the country.

Policy Initiatives and Literacy

As mentioned earlier, there are different means i.e. formal schooling, informal or non-formal educational programmes that impart basic literacy skills. Formal schooling is the most common mode. The other means are informal/non-formal modes of adult education programmes, which are complementary and provide second chance of acquiring literacy skills for those who have missed the first chance of formal schooling when they were young. All these means are associated with the policy initiatives.

Assumptions

For population projections, the birth rate continues to decline beyond our base years but the age-specific mortality rate of the base year continues to prevail during our projection period. With regard to literacy projection, the basic assumption of the literacy model is that age-specific mortality rate is the same among both the literates and illiterates of that age group. With regard to external migration (in or out), the literacy rate among the net migrants is equal to that of the non-migrant population. Besides these basic assumptions, the other assumptions, along with policy variable prescriptions considered for the simulation exercise, are specified in Table 2.1.

Source of Data for the Base Year

We have used RGI projections based on 2001 Census data for the age group-wise population. In respect of age-specific mortality rate, we have used SRS estimates for the year 2008. As regards the age-specific literacy rate, we have used our estimates taking unit record

data of NSSO 64th round (2007-08) survey on Literacy and Participation in Education (Sch. 25).

Projection Models

Both the population and literates projections are made using following simulation model by taking year 2008 as the base year for the required parameters. The model specifications are as follows:

Age Group-Specific Population projection model specification:

$$P_{i,j} = \{[(P_{i-1,j-1})/Z_i) \,.\, (Z_{i-1} - (Z_{i-1} - 1))] + [(P_{i,j-1} - (M_i \,.\, P_{i,j-1})) \,.\, (Z_i - 1)]\} \quad \text{..... (1)}$$

Age Group-Specific Literate population projections model specification – Without any policy intervention:

$$L_{i,j} = \{[(L_{i-1,j-1})/Z_i) \,.\, (Z_{i-1} - (Z_{i-1} - 1))] + [(L_{i,j-1} - (M_i \,.\, L_{i,j-1})) \,.\, (Z_i - 1)]\} \quad \text{..... (2)}$$

Age Group-Specific Literate population projections model specification – With policy intervention in school education and in terms of adult literacy programmes:

$$L_{i,j} = \{[((L_{i-1,j-1})/Z_i) \,.\, (Z_{i-1} - (Z_{i-1} - 1))] + [(L_{i,j-1} - (M_i \,.\, L_{i,j-1})) \,.\, (Z_i - 1)] + [PI_{i,j}]\} \quad \text{..... (3)}$$

$$PI_{i,j} = (x_{i,j} \,.\, ILP_{i,j})$$

P – Population; L – Literates

PI – Policy Intervention i.e. Number of Illiterates made as Literates through PI

ILP – Illiterate population;

x – Percent of Illiterates targeted for literacy programme

i - ith age group (0-6, 7-9, 10-14, 15-19, ..., and 75 +)

j – jth Year (2008, 2009, ... 2050)

Z – age-group interval (mostly 5 years' age interval except 0-6, 7-9 and 75+ age groups)

M – Age-specific death/mortality rate (ASDR) of population (based on SRS)

i-1 and j-1 refer to immediate preceding age group and year

Given the projections of population and literates by age groups, the age- specific literacy rates (ASLR) can be simply computed as:

$$ASLR_{i,j} = L_{i,j} \,/\, P_{i,j} \,.\, 100 \quad \text{..... (4)}$$

Finally, the overall literacy is the summation of age-specific literacy rates:

$$LR_{(7+\ pop),j} = \sum^{n}_{i} ASLR_{i,j} \,.\, SP_{i,j} \quad \text{..... (5)}$$

ASLR – Age-specific Literacy Rate

LR – Overall Literacy Rate

SP – Share of the 'i'th age group in the total population

Having specified the simulation models, there are five variants of simulation model that are programmed. The basic motive and specificities of each one of five variants are as follows:

Variant I – It is a status quo situation wherein there are no new policy intervention programmes to improve literacy levels in the country; whatever are there they will continue. The other assumptions that apply to Variant I simulation model are presented in Table 2.1.

Variant II – In this simulation model, policy intervention programmes in the school education of the 5-14 years' age group is assumed to improve literacy levels in India. The assumptions of the Variant II simulation model are presented in Table 2.1.

Variant III – In this simulation model, policy intervention through adult literacy programmes, especially for the 15-35 years age group, along with policy intervention programmes in the school education of the 5-14 years' age group is assumed to improve literacy levels in India. The assumptions of the Variant III simulation model are presented in Table 2.1.

Variant IV – It is similar to the Variant III. In this simulation model also, policy intervention through adult literacy programmes, especially for the 15-35 years age group, along with policy intervention programmes in the school education of the 5-14 years' age group is assumed to improve literacy levels in India. However, the rate at which the percentage of illiterates in the 15-35 age group who will becomes literates through adult literacy programmes will be higher. All the assumptions of the Variant III remain constant in this simulation model but the rate at which the percentage of illiterates in the 15-35 age group who will be made literates through adult literacy programme would vary (see Table 2.1).

Variant V – In this variant of simulation model, the policy intervention through adult literacy programmes applied to the 35 to 60 years' age group along with 15-35 age group and the policy intervention programmes in the school education of 5-14 years age group, is assumed to improve literacy levels in India. In this variant of simulation, all the assumptions of Variant IV remain constant. Besides, the other assumptions are related to the rate at which the number of illiterates in the 35-60 years' age group will be made literates (see Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1

Assumption of the Simulation Models

Sl. No.	*Assumptions*	*Variants of Simulation Models*				
		I	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*
1.	0-6 years age population continue to decline over a period of time as the current (negative) rate of growth (i.e. between 2001-2011) indicates.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
2.	Age-specific mortality (death) rates of the population are applied to both the literates and illiterates in the relevant age group, without difference.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
3.	Equal distribution of population within the age group cohort	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
4.	Within the age group cohort same literacy rate for each single year age cohorts.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
5.	Literacy level of the net migrants is same as that of the non-migrants.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
6.	Literacy rate within the age group cohort is frozen.	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
7.	There is near impossibility of a person acquiring literacy skills once he/she moves out of 7-9 age group brackets.	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

Table Contd...

Sl. No.	Assumptions	Variants of Simulation Models				
		I	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*
8.	Literacy rate within the younger age groups (especially for the 7-9 and 10-14 age groups) will improve from the current levels of around 96%.	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
9.	The literacy rate of 96% among the 7-9 and 10-14 age group will grow at 5% per annum till it reaches 100%.	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
10.	There is no chance of a person acquiring literacy skills once he/she crosses 14 years' age group bracket.	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
11.	10% of the illiterates in the age group 15-35 years will be targeted under adult literacy programme and thus they will be made as literates.	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
12.	The chance of acquiring literacy skills for those illiterates in the age group 15-35 opened with a policy intervention through adult literacy programmes.	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
13.	There is no chance for an illiterate person acquiring literacy skills once he/she crosses 15-35 years age group bracket.	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
14.	20% of the illiterates in the age group 15-35 years will be targeted under adult literacy programme and thus they will be made as literates.	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
15.	5% of illiterates in the 35-60 age group per year till no illiterate in the age group left out, will be made literate in 2012.	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
16.	After 2012, the percentage of illiterates in the 35-60 age group, who will be targeted for the adult literacy programmes, will increase from the base 5% in 2012 at a rate 5% per annum till no illiterate in the age group left out.	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

Source: Author's Calculations.

Projection Results

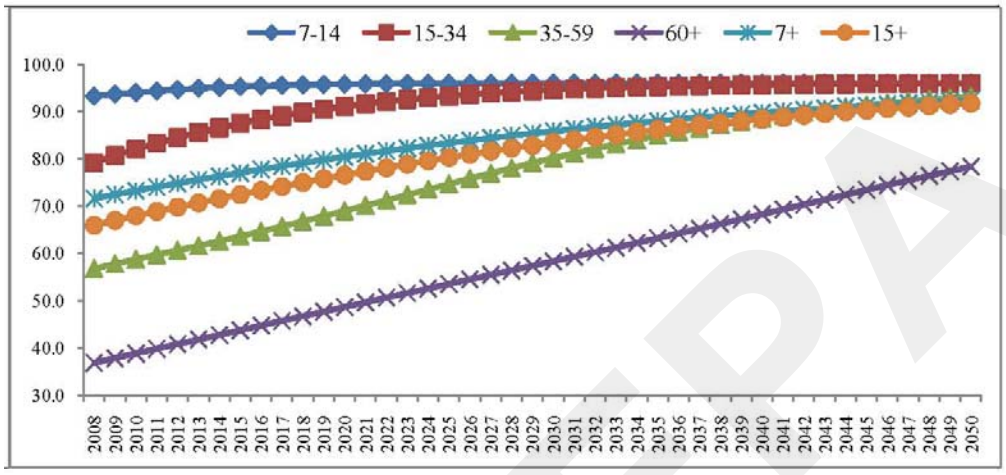
Based on the above models and model-specific assumption, projection results for all India can be summarised as below.

The trend in the projected literacy rate for India till 2050 based on the simulation model Variant I, which is about no policy intervention with respect to adult literacy, is presented in Figure 2.1. Projections based on this model variant indicate that India will not achieve 100% literacy rate even by the year 2050. The maximum possible literacy rate in the 7 + years age population will be around 91% in 2050.

Instead of presenting results of model Variants II and III, which are about policy interventions in universalising school education, and the same is considered for Variant IV, we present the results of model Variant IV. The simulation model Variant IV is about policy intervention through adult literacy programmes targeting illiterates of 15-35 years age group only. The result presented in the Figure 2.2 indicate that although achieving 100% literacy rate even by 2050 is not possible, it can be improved through school education and adult literacy programmes for the 5-14 and 15-35 age group. The maximum possible literacy rate in the 7 + age population will be around 98%.

FIGURE 2.1

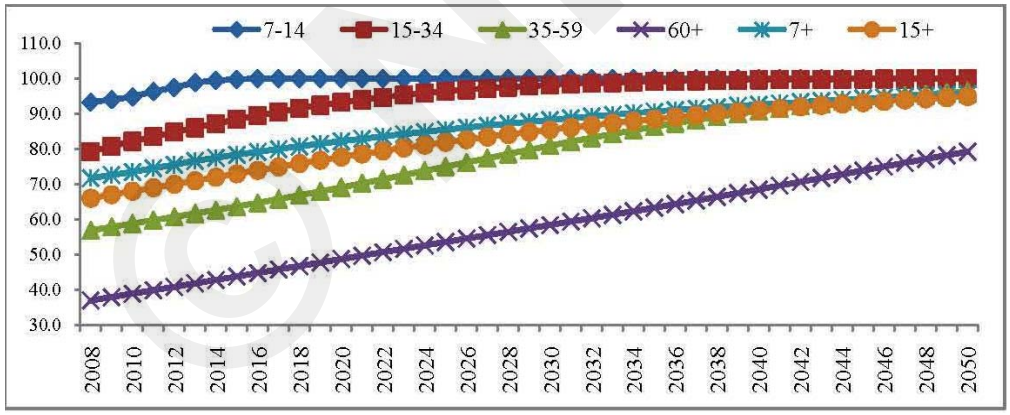
Projected Literacy Rate in India based on Simulation Model Variant I



Note: Age group-specific Literacy Rates.
Source: Author's Projections.

FIGURE 2.2

Projected Literacy Rate in India based on Simulation Model Variant IV

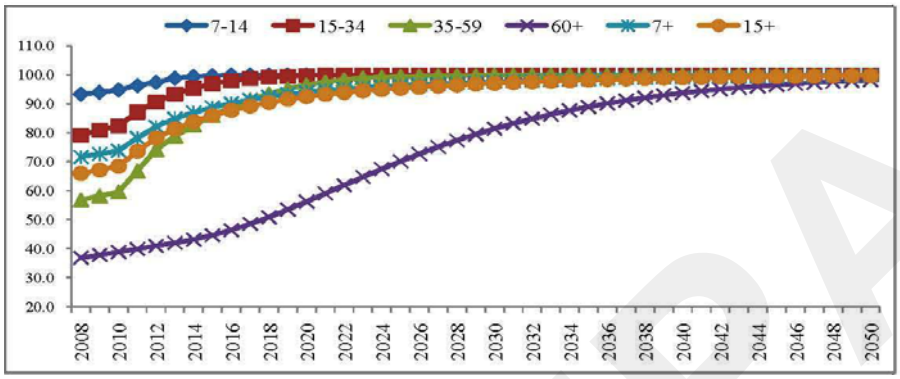


Note: Age group-specific Literacy Rates.
Source: Author's Projections.

The simulation model Variant V is about policy intervention through adult education programmes targeting all the illiterate in the 15-60 years age population. The results presented in the Figure 2.3 indicate that 100% literacy rate possible by 2050. In this respect, literacy levels have to be improved through school education for the 5 to 14 years' age group and adult literacy programmes for 15 to 35 years' and 35 to 60 years' age groups.

FIGURE 2.3

Projected Literacy Rate in India based on Variant V Simulation Model

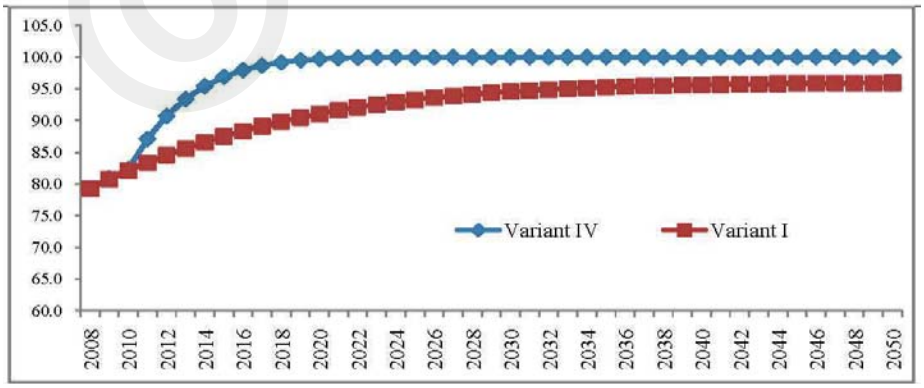


Note: Age group-specific Literacy Rates.
Source: Author's Projections.

The trend in projected literacy rates in India for the 15 to 35 years' age population, based on the simulation model Variants I and IV, is presented in Figure 2.4. The illiterate population in the 15 to 35 years' age group will be the target age group for the adult literacy programmes in India. The projections with Variant IV simulation model indicate that when around 20% of the illiterates in the age group 15 to 35 years will be targeted per year under adult literacy programme and be made literates, the literacy rate in this age group would be distinctively higher than the literacy rate projected with Variant I (with the condition that there will not be any new policy intervention for improving literacy rate in this age group). If the target of imparting literacy skills to 20% of the illiterates in the 15 to 35 years age group per year is made possible, there is a chance of achieving 100% literacy rate in this age group in India by 2020.

FIGURE 2.4

Projected Literacy Rate for 15-34 age group in India based on Variant I and IV Simulation Models



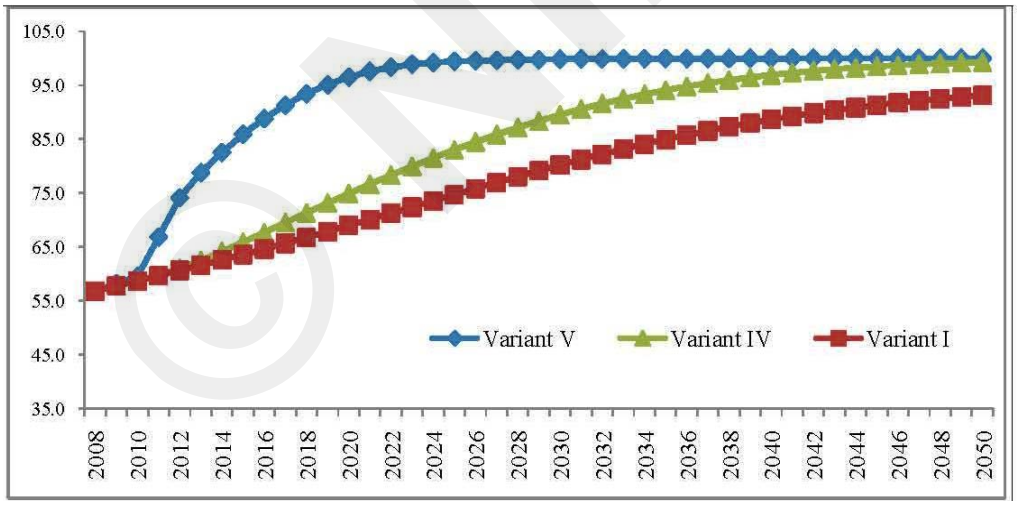
Note: Age group-specific Literacy Rates.
Source: Author's Projections.

Similarly, the trend in projected literacy rates for the 35-60 years' age group in India, based on the simulation model Variant I, IV and V, is presented in Figure 2.5. The projections with Variant V simulation model indicate that when around 5% per year of the illiterates in the age group 15-35 years will be targeted under adult literacy programme and be made literates, the literacy rate in this age group would be distinctively higher than the literacy rate projected with Variant I and IV (with the condition that there will not be any new policy intervention for improving literacy rate in this age group). If the target of imparting literacy skills to the 5% of the illiterates in the 35 to 60 age group per year will be made possible, there is a chance of achieving 100% literacy rate in this age group in India by 2020.

Having said that, given the policy intervention through school education for the 5-14 years' age group and adult literacy programmes for the 15-35 and 35-60 years' age groups, there will be improvement in the literacy rate in these two age groups. However, the concern is regarding what the improvement in overall literacy rate would be. The trend in projected literacy rates for the 7 + age group in India, based on the simulation models Variant I, IV and V, is presented in Figure 2.6. It indicates that the country, given the policy intervention, will achieve 100% overall literacy rate (for 7 + years age population) at least by 2050.

FIGURE 2.5

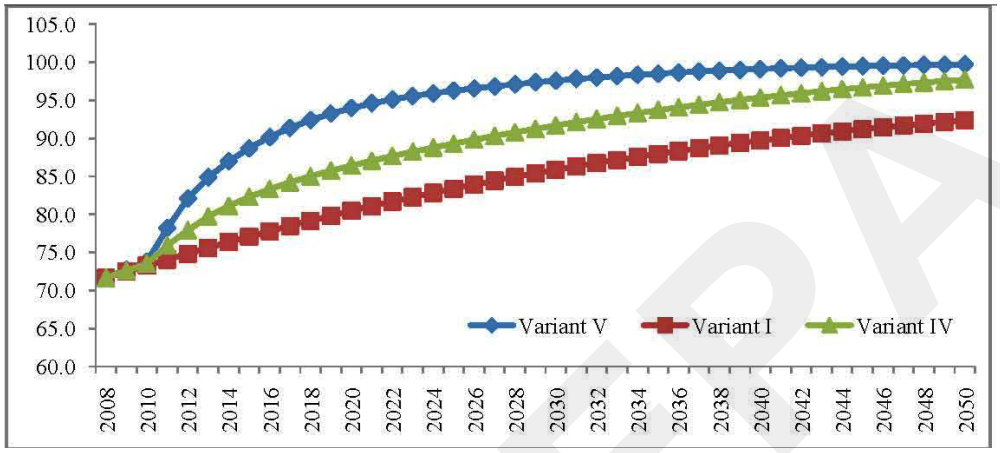
Projected Literacy Rate for 35-60 years' age group in India based on Variant I, IV and V Simulation Models



Note: Age group-specific Literacy Rates.
Source: Author's Projections.

FIGURE 2.6

Projected Overall Literacy Rate (for 7+ age Population) in India based on Variant I, IV and V Simulation Models

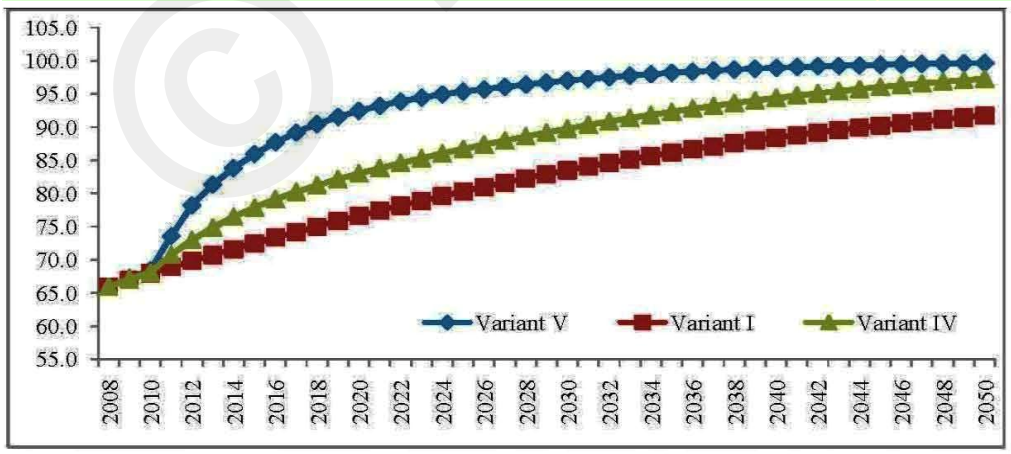


Source: Author's Projections

Similarly, the concern is about the adult literacy rate of the country. The trend in projected literacy rates among adults (i.e. for the 15 + years age group) in India till 2050, based on the simulation model Variant I and IV, is presented in Figure 2.7. The adult literacy (of 15 + years age population) will be improved over that of the Variant I simulation model, with policy intervention through adult literacy programmes.

FIGURE 2.7

Projected Adult Literacy Rate (for 15 + age population) in India based on Variant I, IV and V Simulation Models



Source: Author's Projections

TABLE 2.2

Prospects of Literacy Rate in India

Age-Group/ Model Variant	*Base Year*	*Projections for the Year*				
	2008	*2015*	*2020*	*2030*	*2040*	*2050*
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Variant I						
7-14	93.3	95.3	95.8	96.0	96.0	96.0
15-34	79.2	87.5	91.1	94.6	95.6	95.9
35-59	56.8	63.6	69.0	80.2	88.6	93.1
60 +	36.8	43.7	48.6	58.3	68.3	78.4
7 +	71.7	77.1	80.5	85.9	89.7	92.4
15 +	66.0	72.5	76.6	83.5	88.4	91.7
Variant II						
7-14	93.3	100	100	100	100	100
15-34	79.2	88.4	93.2	98.2	99.6	99.9
35-59	56.8	63.6	69.0	80.9	90.7	96.3
60 +	36.8	43.7	48.6	58.3	68.4	79.2
7 +	71.7	78.3	82.1	88.2	92.6	95.7
15 +	66.0	72.9	77.6	85.4	91.0	94.8
Variant III						
7-14	93.3	100	100	100	100	100
15-34	79.2	94.5	98	100	100	100
35-59	56.8	66.1	74.0	88.1	96.0	98.9
60 +	36.8	43.7	48.7	59.8	72.9	85.2
7 +	71.7	81.4	85.6	91.2	95.0	97.4
15 +	66.0	76.8	81.9	89.1	93.9	97.0
Variant IV						
7-14	93.3	100	100	100	100	100
15-34	79.2	96.9	100	100	100	100
35-59	56.8	65.9	74.9	89.5	96.9	99.3
60 +	36.8	43.7	48.7	59.7	73.6	86.3
7 +	71.7	82.3	86.4	91.7	95.4	97.7
15 +	66.0	77.9	83.0	89.8	94.4	97.3
Variant V						
7-14	93.3	100	100	100	100	100
15-34	79.2	96.9	100	100	100	100
35-59	56.8	85.9	96.5	99.8	100	100
60 +	36.8	44.6	56.2	81.4	93.7	98.1
7 +	71.7	88.7	94.0	97.6	99.1	99.7
15 +	66.0	85.9	92.5	97.0	98.9	99.7

Note: 1. Age group specific Literacy rate (percentage of literates to the population within the specified age group); 2. 2008 is the base is year.

Source: Author's Estimates based on Simulation Models.

The projected literacy rates for India, based on five variants of simulation models across age groups, are summarised in the Table 2.2. It indicates that without any new policy intervention, the improvement in literacy rate will be very slow in the country. Even by 2050, it can achieve only 95% adult literacy rate (Variant II in Table 2.2). This improvement in literacy would be due to achievements in school education and demographic change. When policy intervention through school education programmes ensures 100% school attendance rate, especially for those in 5-14 years' age group, thereby ensuring universal literacy in the age group 7 to 14 years, the overall literacy can be improved marginally in the absence of policy interventions through adult literacy programmes. It is because when the chance of becoming a literate is only possible through formal schooling during 7 to 14 years age and, thus, those crossing the age of 14 years and missing such a chance forego the chance of acquiring literacy skills. The second chance of acquiring literacy skills through informal methods without any targeted adult literacy programmes, meant for 15 + years age illiterates, is very meagre. Thus, universal adult literacy would be achieved when the current 7-14 age cohort with 100 literate becomes old that to if universal schooling once achieved would be sustained forever for the subsequent cohorts. It means it takes such a long time, almost a cohort's lifetime, to achieve universal adult literacy through universal school education.

Therefore, the policy intervention through adult literacy programmes are sine qua non as it can change the situation and improve the literacy levels among adults. Herein, an important aspect is its target group. So far, while implementing adult literacy programmes, especially under the NLM, the illiterate population of 15-35 years' age has been the target age group. A large stock of illiterates, who were not in this age group and crossed 35 years of age to enter the 35 + age population group, will remain illiterates till their death. Therefore, the policy intervention has to aim at all the adult (all 15 + years' age) illiterates, while implementing the adult literacy programmes. Our projections, based on Variant V of simulation model, indicates the 95% of adult literacy rate in 2050, projected in case of Variant II, can be achieved during 2020s itself, much earlier, through a proper policy intervention by means of targeted adult literacy programmes.

Our projections are, however, conservative while taking into account usual missing rigor in the implementation of any policy intervention. As per these conservative projections, a shortfall in achieving universal adult literacy even by 2050, following Variant II model, indicating through the means of universal formal schooling can be fulfilled by the time (2050) with a policy intervention through adult literacy programmes targeting all illiterates irrespective of age criterion. If a well-designed policy intervention of adult literacy programmes is taken seriously and implemented rigorously, universal adult literacy can be achieved in India much before 2050.

Need for Revitalised Adult Education/Literacy Programmes

The projections indicate that unless there is a policy intervention, India will not be achieving 100% literacy even by the end of the 21st century. Hence, there is a case for policy intervention through school education programmes and adult literacy programmes with the latter being the need of the hour for improving adult literacy levels in the country. Literacy rates among the 7-14 age group is reaching a saturation point – about to reach 100% school attendance rate within few years ahead and thereby primary completion rate of 13-15 years

age group. However, its contribution of younger age group's achievement in the overall or adult literacy is marginal, as there is a huge stock of adult illiterates who cannot undergo formal school education to become literate. Of course, there is a need for school education programmes to sustain the 100% enrolment and retention so that no child remains illiterate before crossing the age of 15 years. It takes a long time (at least a century) to achieve 100% literacy rate for the total population. It becomes possible when 100% literacy in the school age population is perpetually sustained and this 100% literacy rate age cohort grows older progressively.

To address the phenomenon of adult illiteracy, the policy intervention through adult literacy is a necessary condition. In this context, there have been initiatives at the global and national levels for a long time. In the Indian context at the national level, eradication of illiteracy has been an area of concern since Independence. However, most of the policy emphasis was on literacy through formal schooling only. The complementary nature of informal adult education programmes never attracted policy attention. However, since mid-70s, policy initiatives took place in the form of the Non-Formal Education for the Youth in 1975 and the National Adult Education Programme in 1978. There were initiatives wherein a few adult education programmes were implemented at the national and state levels but the result was not encouraging due to various reasons (see Rambrahmam, 1989; Rao, 2002). Thereafter, the establishment of the NLM in 1988 was an important policy intervention in this regard.

The NLM has, in fact, three components in the forms of the TLC, Post-Literacy Programme (PLP), and Continuing Education Programme (CEP). They are continuously interlinked programmes for improving adult literacy. The TLC is meant to turn as many illiterate adults into literates as possible by motivating and facilitating them in the acquisition of basic literacy skills (reading, writing and numeracy). The PLP is meant for retaining the literacy skills of the neo-literates. The CEP is meant for those who have acquired literacy skills and retained the skills through PLP and are interested in further education and vocational education, occupational skills etc.. Initially, the implementation of NLM was done in a selective manner, with the success of the selective implementation ensuring the scaling up of the Mission into a massive programme.

However, the execution of NLM and implementation of its three-tier programmes had a mixed outcome (see Rao, 1993; Banerjee, 1993 & 1994; GoI, 1994; Ghosh, 1997; Mishra, 1998; Saldanha, 1999; Karlekar, 2004). The NLM's initial strategy of implementing TLC at the district level with wider public participation, on pilot basis, in southern states was observed to be successful (Ghosh, 1997). But the success of the TLC faded away when it was scaled up to cover many other districts across states, especially to educationally backward states and regions (Ghosh, 1997, Saldanha, 1999). Although one cannot ignore the success stories of the NLM in different parts of the country, its shortcomings have led to poor outcomes in general.

It is observed that a promising and intrinsically good programme was afflicted with serious deficiencies (GoI, 1994; Banerjee, 1994). The initial wider public participation was replaced with over-bureaucratisation (Ghosh, 1997). The target-obsessed bureaucratic implementation resulted in fudging of the number of neo-literates (GoI, 1994; Banerjee, 1994). Many times, the implementation process could not ensure adequate acquisition of literacy skills for the neo-literates (ibid). Further, there was a problem of relapse into illiteracy - the loss of newly-acquired fragile literacy skills due to long delays between the

initial literacy programs and the start-up activities of the PLP (Karlekar, 2004). Besides, there was a problem of loss of interest in continued learning because of a paucity of relevant materials in native languages and the lack of a perceived value of further education as a means of social and economic development (ibid). Such a problem of relapse into illiteracy led to fragility in the literacy achievement through TLC. (GoI, 1994; Banerjee, 1994). From the learners' point of view too, there was a failure of many adults to acquire initial literacy skills due to lack of perceived need, work schedules, or family needs (Karlekar, 2004).

Despite all the weaknesses and problems, many adults acquired initial literacy and a useful percentage among them did sustain and advance their literacy and education into post-literacy and continuing education (Karlekar, 2004). Besides, there were 'externality' and 'multiplier' effects of the literacy campaign (ibid). One of such externality of TLC was the social mobilization, especially of the women (Ghosh, 1997). One of such success stories was the women's mobilization as an unintended outcome of the TLC's literacy primer in Andhra Pradesh. It began with a fight against the distribution of arrack in a village in Nellore district before spreading across the state, eventually resulting in the invocation of prohibition law in the state (Pattanaik and Reddy, 1993; Ghosh, 1997). Likewise, the multiplier effect can be seen through the increase in children's education and better health care behavior (Ghosh, 1997; Karlekar, 2004). Notwithstanding these developments, the overall intended impact of the programme on improving the literacy rate in India was very meagre. It might be due to deficiencies in the programme in promoting and assessing the acquisition of initial literacy and the need for post-literacy and continuing education programmes for sustaining literacy and promoting continued learning and knowledge development (Karlekar, 2004).

The NLM and its TLC activities in India, in the meantime, are in a subdued and dormant state. The initial strategy of NLM transforming all the illiterates targeted into the neo-literates through TLC was a one-time initiative and not on a continuous basis. It was to have the literacy movement graduate to the CEP level. The strategy of providing continuous education for the neo-literates is on a continuous basis. Despite the fact that many of the residual illiterates still remain so and there is a fresh flow of illiterates too, many of the TLC and PLP centres in many states are removed. In contrast, the number of CEP centres in the country are more than PLP and TLC centres. In fact, the CEP transition phase evolves through TLC and PLP. What does the increasing presence of CEP centres and withdrawal of TLC and subsequently PLP centres indicate? Is it that the literacy moment in India has graduated from TLC to CEP? Had the TLC initiative of the country achieved its goal? One may not get an answer but one can opine that there is a need for continuance of these adult literacy programmes in the country as a whole.

The simulation exercise indicates that unless India's policy-makers concentrate on improving adult literacy and design and rigorously implement appropriate programmes, especially for illiterates of both the 15-35 and 35-60 age groups, achieving 100% literacy rate in the country would simply not be possible even by 2050. Hence, it indicates that there is a strong case for rejuvenating the NLM and revamping of TLC and PLP type of adult literacy programmes. It is necessary if the policy-makers in the country intend to achieve 100% literacy rate in the near future. Moreover, there is a great need to target the 35-60 age group illiterate segment and even the hitherto ignored older illiterate population, along with the 15-35 years' age group, under the adult literacy programmes in order to achieve 100% literacy rate in the country in the near future.

There is a policy endeavour in this regard in the form of the recent mission *Saakshar Bharat* mission, a centrally sponsored scheme[2] (CSS) launched in 2009 to promote and strengthen adult education with particular focus on women. It extends educational options to illiterate adults[3] for any type of learning that includes imparting basic (functional) literacy[4] skills. Assessment of the field-level and macro-level implementation of the scheme and evaluation of its impact on improving adult literacy is yet to be undertaken.

Literacy is an important factor for determining human development index (HDI) and ranking of countries based on the index. Education is one of the three components (with each of them having one-third weightage) involved in the computation of HDI. Adult literacy is one of the two sub-components and accounts for two-thirds weightage of the education component. Improvements in adult literacy and child schooling can improve the human development ranking of India. Moreover, the marginalised and illiterate segments require the enabling skills of literacy to cope with the unprecedented changes in economic systems, such as globalisation, information and communication technology, and to be able to demand and benefit from equitable and democratic entitlements.

Concluding Remarks

The performance of India with regard to literacy rate in the developing world is relatively poor. The progress in literacy rate, especially during the last decade, had decelerated when compared to that of the previous decade. There are rural-urban differences, gender gaps and social group disparities and regional variations across states in terms of literacy rate. Although disparities in literacy rate across these sub-population groups are getting narrowed over time, they are still found to be considerably high. The recent policy initiatives in respect of primary schooling have reduced disparities in literacy rate among the young across states but the dearth of policy attention towards the historical trend of disparity in literacy rate among the adults, has left it to continue. The initiative for improving literacy rate through informal/non-formal adult education programmes, especially in the context of NLM and its initiative of TLC, yielded very poor results. Moreover, such an initiative has become ineffective over time in improving literacy rate. Finally, the prospects of India in meeting the EFA goal in respect of adult literacy are not so encouraging. It would require greater policy attention and better initiative for attaining the desired improvement of adult literacy.

In this regard, an attempt is made to explore the prospects of literacy rate in the India through simulation exercises. These simulation exercises indicate the impossibility of achieving 100% literacy rate in the near future for the country. But it can achieve 95% of literacy rate by 2050 if all the states can rigorously implement the adult literacy

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[2] It is a Scheme of Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI), launched by the Prime Minister of India on the International Literacy Day, 8th September, 2009.

[3] To those adults who having lost the opportunity of access to formal education and crossed the standard age for receiving such education, now feel a need for learning of any type.

[4] The other options are basic education (equivalency to formal education), vocational education (skill development), physical and emotional development, practical arts, applied science, sports, and recreation.

programmes for at least a five-year period, beginning 2012, for the 15 to 35 years' age group, covering all illiterates in this age group. Moreover, if the adult literacy programmes can be extended to the 35 to 60 years' group and implemented for at least 5 years from 2012, India can achieve 100% literacy rate by 2050. It requires rejuvenating the NLM and revamping the adult literacy programmes of TLC and PLP.

Therefore, achieving the goal of 100% literacy rate in the country depends on the policy intervention through adult literacy programmes, their rigorous implementation and coverage. It is important because unless India improves its literacy levels significantly, it will remain one of those poor performing countries at the global level in terms of human development index (HDI) and in the ranking of countries based on HDI. Moreover, the marginalised and illiterate sections require the enabling skills of literacy to cope with the unprecedented changes in economic system in the context of the emerging knowledge-based economy and globalisation and to be able to demand and benefit from the equitable and democratic entitlements that they deserve.

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Book Reviews

MEHROTRA, Santosh (Ed.) (2014): ***India's Skills Challenge: Reforming Vocational Education and Training to Harness the Demographic Dividend,*** New Delhi: Oxford University Press, ISBN-13: 978-0-19-945277-4; ISBN – 10: 0-19-945277-6 (Hard Cover), Pages: 297, Price: ₹ 995.

This book, edited by Professor Santosh Mehrotra, is the product of research conducted at NILERD (National Institute for Labour Economics Research and Development), still better known by its former name of IAMR (Institute of Applied Manpower Research), and it brings primary survey data to bear on other available data on the training and vocational education system in India. Just as the institute itself felt the need to change its name, perhaps to reflect the emergence of the country from a system of centralised planning to a more market-oriented federal system, and thus towards a wider range of critical research, this book is titled `the skills challenge` instead of, for example, `the TVET challenge`; and the question in my mind as I started reading it was to what extent these nomenclature shifts really reflect a significant change in the economic functioning of the relevant institutions.

The book positions the skills challenge as emerging from the fact of rapid economic growth since the 1980s onward, and the increasing proportion of working age population. The latter could be a demographic dividend (increase in the proportion of the working age population to dependent or non-working population) if successfully skilled so as to fuel higher productivity and economic growth. Mehrotra et al point out that the target of skilling 500 million persons by 2022, set by the National Skills Mission, is inaccurate; the better estimate that they provide is of 265 million persons to be educated/trained between 2010 and 2020. This is still an ambitious goal. In 2011, approximately 1.33 million persons were receiving training in government and private Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). The workforce in 2010 was 460 million. Given the existing training systems, as well as the proposed and new initiatives, the book tries to assess how feasible this task might be.

The major contribution of this book is a contemporary assessment, an evaluation of the existing systems of training and apprenticeship. As it points out, the budget estimates of training schemes have increased by 85 per cent during the period 2007-2011 in nominal terms, making it important to know whether the desired impact is being obtained, and whether the known challenges have been addressed. The study is based on a sample of training institutions drawn from across the country and seven types of questionnaires have been used, including a tracer study of 2007/8 batches. The ITI system as well as apprenticeships are examined.

IAMR survey data shows that there has been a spurt of private ITIs since 2007, increasing from 3552 in 2007 to 6498 in 2010. These appear to cater to training needs of a

limited number of trades, so that while 56 per cent of the government institutes provide training in over 10 trades, this is true of only 2.9 per cent of the private institutes (page 90).

Weak employability of ITI graduates remains a concern. In late 2010, it was seen that 30 per cent of the 2007 batch was unemployed. Reasons for this included lack of jobs (33 per cent); waiting for suitable jobs (48 per cent); not accepting job because salary was too low (11 per cent); and did not opt due to job being in far-off place (8 per cent). Although the book does not explore this angle, it does appear from these responses that while skill-opportunity mismatch may be the main reason for low employment, there is also an element of voluntary choice being expressed.

Male dominance and manufacturing bias is noted in the ITIs. Even though services employment has been growing much faster, the ITIs continue to cater mainly to manufacturing. This has the further effect of excluding girls. If service sector courses such as finance, software, quality control, accounting, banking and insurance could be introduced, it would both address the services gap and also draw in many more girls whose preference is for jobs in the services sector. The Indian system has also been very centralised, not allowing for local variations in the curriculum according to presence of enterprises in the area.

Various suggestions follow from the findings of the study. It is pointed out that the present system is unnecessarily rigid in some ways. For example, the number of apprentices that an entreprise can have is limited by the number of workers; however, the definition of `worker` excludes contractual workers; this may limit the intake even when the enterprise has the capacity to take on more apprentices. Similarly, training curricula have not kept pace with technological changes.

While concluding, suggestions are made for six major areas where reform is needed. First, expanding and strengthening vocational education in schools and from class 8 onwards; second, implementing the National Skills Qualification Framework which would enable both horizontal and vertical movement of learners; third, thus far, the TVET system has been government-driven; ways need to be found to increase private sector involvement; fourth, to enable joint certification by public and private sectors, a new legal framework is needed, calling for a Vocational Educational and Training Act; fifth, a National Training Fund would enable more effective financing of skill development; and sixth, an online Labour Market Information System is needed, which will enable a direct communication between job-seekers and employers.

In the 1960s, India's planners believed that the education and training system was critical for material development, and further that such material progress rested on the adoption of better techniques, and that this technical progress depended to a large extent upon an adequate supply of technical and scientific personnel, in particular. The `manpower planning`, that was a derivative of this approach to planning in general, has shaped the TVET institutions, and from the IAMR study, continues to do so. The approach to change, suggested by the book, is largely one of incremental change and modification although it could be radical in its impact, if fully implemented.

NUEPA
New Delhi-110016

Ratna M. Sudarshan
ratna.sudarshan@nuepa.org

CHRIS, Mc Chensey; SEAN, Covey and JIM Huling (2012): ***The Four Disciplines of Execution: Achieving your widely Important Goals,*** Free Press, Pages: 352, ISBN: 9781451627053 (Hard cover).

In the past two decades, Leadership and Leadership through Strategic Management have been in focus for achieving success in the industrial, corporate, educational and developmental sectors.

So far, much has been recommended in the form of theory such as, for instance, the motivational theories, the learning theories or the leadership styles. In the long run, the theories remain as the base for thought processes in order to delineate what is required to be done keeping in view the mission and goal of the organization.

Though the title of the book sounds a bit scientific and, at the same time, philosophical, the presentation of thoughts is simple, interesting and easy to grasp by the readers.

The conclusion drawn from reading the book is that any vision without a plan and any plan without a strategy is meaningless. It is important to work out a strategy as most of the time a plan remains unnoticed and no discussion takes place towards it. It is the strategy that navigates a plan.

The book has been praised by at least 33 top level officials from across various companies. For instance, Steven R. Covey (the author of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and The 3rd Alternative; Solving Life's Most Difficult Problems) views this publication as a release-oriented, knowledge – worker – age approach to execute goals and strategies.

David Grissen, President, The Americas, Marriot International, Inc. announces that through 4 Disciplines of Execution… we have been able to give our people a powerful tool for staying focused on what is most important to us. The theory underlying the focus given in "Our guest Experience" is to take care of your employees and they will take care of your customers.

Richard Stocking, President and Chief Operating Officer, Swift Transportation, has reviewed the work of 4DX as conveying everything one needs to know to make one's Wildly Important Goals, a reality. The model is easy to understand, easy to apply and delivers results.

Terry D Scott, 10th Master Chief Petty Officer of Navy has viewed this 4Dx as a practical guide for navigating through obstacles towards success.

These are followed by the reviews of Rob Markery, Partner, (Bain and Co. and Co-author of the Ultimate Question 2.0), Andrew Frowley (President Epsilon), Walter Levey (Co-President and Co-Chief Executive Officer, NCH Corporation), Frances Hesselbein (President and Chief Executive Officer of the Franker Hesselbein Leadership Institute and founder of the Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Non-Profit Management), Mohammed Yunus (Nobel Prize Winner, 2006), Captain John W. Scanlan, USN Retired, Chief Financial Officer, Cleveland Municipal Corporation School District and Ann Rhoades (President, People Ink, and author of Built-On-Values).

Understanding the need for an explicit strategic solution to goal achievement as a success path, Chris McChensey, Covey and Jim have worked on a premise that explains not only what to do but also how to get the people to execute it at the level of excellence. The authors have worked hard to open the window frame towards the most actionable and

impactful insights into all that we have learned. All along, the authors have focused on the net outcome i.e. achieving result. The author Chris McChensey has delved into the matter as a global practice leader of execution and one of the primary developers of 4 Disciplines of Execution.

The thoughts of the author are research-based covering a wide range of population samples, which include 13000 people internationally across 17 different industry groups. The assessment was conducted on 300,000 different leaders and team members. Though the sample size appears large but the variety and number seems too small for drawing any major conclusion that could be adapted on a global scale. However, the author is confident of the Principles and Methods of 4 Disciplines of Execution working in all odd situations as well.

The author has very systematically presented the Four Disciplines of Execution viz. focusing on Wildly Important Goals, Acting on Lead Measures, Keeping a Compelling Scoreboard and Creating a Cadence of Accountability, in three sections. The first section gives an understanding as to what is 4D and its role in achieving success. Installing 4Dx in your team is the crux of the second section wherein the authors have presented a blueprint for mapping the route to success. The map has been drawn up in such a manner, by clearly citing examples, so as to ensure that a leader feels comfortable in designing his own map as per his/her own WIG. It also presents the use of hi-tech access to the online system of managing the steps clearly, flawlessly, empathically and confidently as part of a team. The last section of the book has been meticulously devoted on installing 4Dx in an organization with an empirical base.

Discipline 3, viz. Keeping a Compelling Scoreboard, focuses on lead and lag measures as a strategic bet for a team and is translated into a visible, compelling Scoreboard. The success of any lead measure is well projected through a compelling scoreboard as it gives a direction to the goal of an organization for the task assigned. Finally, creation of a cadence of accountability has been described as the Discipline 4 which is based on past performance and planning to push the score forward. The persistence of Discipline 4 has been importantly signified as the area where execution actually happens. All the results and achievements are based on this discipline. They have clearly put across the execution of the Four Disciplines in one's own organization. It seems as though the steps of conducting a science practical are being indicated.

Though the flows of thoughts have been presented in three sections, there has been some laxity in maintaining the continuity. A lot of overlapping appears when the authors elaborate on engaging the team in lag and lead measures in section 1 and installing these in section 2. These could have been discussed side-by-side in section 1.

Thus, in a nutshell, if all the Four Disciplines are put together, it proceeds on a chain reaction and once such a process is put into action, it will carry the organization through on a smooth path, switching from one discipline to another with positive results. The novelty of the book lies in spawning several queries that may arise in the minds of readers and executors. But the authors have justified this in the form of Frequently Asked Questions to the extent that tips related to corporate, development institutions and Individual and Family-Oriented Goals have also been exemplified and addressed. The presentation of disciplines in the book are done in the manner of a live visual or the screening of a movie, which makes one feel close to the real world, that one can empathise with in mapping the

route to a variety of goals. The author has tried to give vivid experiences of successful leaders who have worked on 4Dx.

Planning & Management Branch
DIET Moti Bagh, New Delhi

Meena Srivastava
srivastavameena@hotmail.com

AGRAWAL, Sarita (2014): ***Women Administrators in Higher Education,*** Serials Publications (P) Ltd., New Delhi, Price: ₹ 795, Pages ix +104, ISBN: 978-81-8387-676-6).

The book under review is a case study undertaken by the author for the M.S. University of Baroda and was sponsored by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi. The analysis is based on the structured Questionnaire canvassed to 300 women administrators of whom 210 responded. Female administrators were also personally interviewed by the author. The respondents are from teaching and non-teaching staff who have been working in the administration since 1991. The book has five chapters: (1) Introduction (2) Review of Literature (3) Women Administrators in the University of Baroda-A Profile (4) Issues and Problems of Women Administrators (5) Conclusions and Policy Recommendations. The concept of university has changed from "universal" (totality of knowledge) to commoditification of education which, according to the author, has major implications for our thinking about higher education and transmission of knowledge. This is a development in the aftermath of globalization which is circumscribed by the language of "free market". Education is measured in terms of its market value which, in turn, is subjected to cost – benefit analysis or as input-output relationship. In this context, the role of the administrators have to be contextualized-technical aspects of the functioning of an academic institution, the effective coordination and operation of the university infrastructure and bureaucracy. This coordination from academia requires a peculiar mindset to deal with academic and administrative matters, particularly when they deal with students and are concerned with institution-building. Women administrators in higher education are still a minority group as women deans, professors, vice-chancellors. Despite a policy of equals, women in universities remain crowded into low-status, poorly paid feminine jobs whereas at the higher level, men are crowded. The author cites the Gnanam Committee on Alternative Models on Management, set up to give suggestions on the administrative structures and functions of the university and recommend promotion of women's participation in the planning and management bodies of the departments/faculties of the universities.

In the first chapter, while introducing the basic theme on the subject, the author has provided the historical development of M.S. University of Baroda, which was established in the year 1949 with (late) Mrs. Hansaben Mehta as the first Vice-chancellor. The author points out the fact that both University Grants Commission (UGC) and Association of Indian Universities (AIU) hardly provide data on the gender composition of the different academic and administrative positions in the system (p.21). This also applies to M.S. University, Baroda. While analyzing the composition of women in the Syndicate and the Senate in the M.S. University of Baroda from 1981-82 through 2010-2011 (Table 1.1, p.22), she has listed one woman-member in the Syndicate (the executive council) out of 25; and 10 women–members out of 99 in the Senate (the academic council) in 2010-2011. There was only one Woman-Dean out of 20 in the University in 2010-2011. This female–member was from the

Faculty of Family and Community Sciences wherein virtually all the faculty members were females. No other Faculty in the university had a female Dean. The author further cites data to point out that the majority of the faculties had only officiating Deans. This is a disturbing aspect of the administration in the appointment of Deans in the University. The second chapter, as usual, is a review of the literature on the subject and these studies in the review pertain to private sector management. The study, according to the author, is likely to fill up this lacuna. In the third chapter, a profile of administrators in the M.S. University of Baroda has been presented by religion and caste (reported to be important factors in determining the positions of an individual as administrators), marital status, temporary position held (if any), duration of work in temporary position, duration of work in permanent position, last degree obtained, position as administrator(teaching/non-teaching), status of position as administrator (high, medium and low), Faculty of the respondents, duration in years as administrator, and criteria of selection. All the female administrators have entered administration only through normal selection procedure, either on seniority basis or through rotation system or merit or consensus. Based on the respondent's responses, many women feel that vocal and extrovert women are not easily acceptable as administrators. In chapter four, issues and problems of women administrators have been examined with regard to the decision-making process, politicization, administrative reforms and women administrators' attitude and reaction of the staff towards the changes introduced in the administrative system. The administrative problems have been analyzed with regard to student's unrest, teachers' non-attendance, poor attentiveness of the staff and working with senior administrators.

The findings of the study reveal almost in all cases that women administrators find that students are more co-operative towards them. According to the study, 54% of the women felt that their inter-personal relations with their colleagues are affected on account of their being in administration. In so far as the attitude of family members of women administrators towards them is concerned, 93 respondents found their family members cooperative, six found them indifferent while one reported a hostile attitude. It is also reported that 55% respondents faced problems as administrators. In higher administrative positions such as that of dean compared to lower administrative position of head, women do not face many problems. But in lower administrative positions, they do face some or the other kind of problem. The last chapter on Conclusions and Policy Recommendations, makes a strong case for women's empowerment since they represent one half of the active population. Human rights require that they participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres of political, economic and social life in their countries, particularly in the decision–making process (p.67). Institutions must give opportunities to women educators having the desire and ability to develop their qualifications in this field. There is a need to review appointment and promotion procedures for them. She has observed that in country after country, it has been shown that when traditional appointment and promotion practices are put under scrutiny, it becomes evident that women are being excluded for reasons that are peripheral and unrelated to their capacity to do the job (p.69). Again, there is a need to provide legislative and infrastructure support as a tangible expression of organizational recognition for women's issues. For this, the author cites references of UNESCO document (1993). Special training programmes are needed to ensure that women are well equipped to handle technical aspects of the job. Management and government support is also necessary for appropriate special programmes for women. University Grants

Commission's Programme "Capacity building of Women Managers in Higher Education "aims at capacity building of women-administrators. Gender equality in higher education should be an overall aim of the institutions and concrete measures and structures should be put in place in this regard. Guidelines issued by UGC, to make higher education more inclusive, more responsive to economic needs, and to raise quality, should be implemented by the organizations to achieve these targets. Since government allocates funds to institutions of higher education, these institutions should, therefore, be made accountable. For this, a performance-based criteria needs to be evolved wherein research should be mandatory for all. In a nutshell, the author recommends the above listed measures to empower women administrators through validation of her case study of a particular university. This could be a reference document for making policy and programme implementation for increased participation of women in the universities in managerial jobs.

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

V.P. Garg

JENA, S. Sitansu and Sushmita Mitra (Eds.) (2013): ***Schooling and Beyond: National Institute of Open Schooling,*** Noida, U.P., Pages: 142, ISBN: 978-81-928809-0-7.

Conventionally, schooling is characterized by a boundary of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment procedures, while on a broader context, Jerome Bruner (1996) considered it as an educational investment made by society to attain intended outcomes from the young. The approach of schooling, hence, has largely relied on the demands of socio-economic cultures and, over the years, India's socio-cultural and regional diversities has evolved different schooling options to facilitate educational access and participation of children in schools. This view of school as an organizational arrangement, or a social institution is, however, being debated and is slowly considered to be less and less relevant today (p. 58). It is recognized that the open school movement, driven by digital technologies, has, to a large extent, transformed the landscape of education by blurring the distinction between face-to-face and distance learning education. The philosophy of open learning is unique, since it is characterized by its openness in terms of learner's entry requisites, provides flexibility in time, educational process, learning paths and, most importantly, it provides autonomy to learners by having more control over their own learning.

The National Institute of Open School (NIOS), formerly known as National Open School (NOS), was set up as a project activity Open School in 1979 by the Central Board of Secondary Education with a concern to provide education to those who either could not attend or complete formal schooling due to a variety of socio-economic reasons. This initiative provided open entry, flexible choice of course and flexibility in the duration of course completion for such learners. Currently, this mode of education is not only sought by the under-privileged or drop-outs, but also by those who are motivated to continue and participate in life-long education. NIOS today has grown to be as one of the largest open schooling systems in the world and is also recognized as a model for replication by other developing countries too. To mark the celebration of its silver Jubilee foundation day, the NIOS organized a series of lectures delivered by renowned National and International

educationists, to especially review, analyse and synthesize: the past concepts, present contingencies and future course of action for open schools. This book is a documentation of 15 of these lectures and provides a spectrum of views from renowned educationists on their priorities and challenges in education, the current processes and amendments required to enhance the quality of education. These contributors are largely educational leaders, with the majority directly associated with open and distance learning institutions, and a very few from the political front.

The book begins with a prologue by Sitansu S. Jena, Chairman of NIOS, who highlighted the NIOS potential to benefit both the individual and society through its ability to link education to livelihood. The former Indian President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, further contributed on the achievements and uniqueness of NIOS, and shared personal incidences of how a senior woman and a driver achieved their vision to upgrade their education through the NIOS. He also emphasized on teachers' capacity to transform lives and facilitate innovation, and explained the concept of dynamic school. Member of Parliament, Karan Singh, subsequently attempted to highlight the significance of the four pillars of learning, prescribed in the Jacques Dellors report, and indicated how each of these pillars-learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be-had the capability to address emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual dimensions of life, and, hence, regarded them as indispensable to the foundation of education.

The orientation of the rest, especially those associated with open and distance learning (ODL) institutions, viz., Sugata Mitra, Asha Kanwar, M.M. Pant, Shyman Menon, Francis Ferreira, Ram Takwale, Som Naidu, and Mohan Menon, has predominantly been towards leveraging technological resources for promoting access and improvement of educational experiences. Asha Kanwar deliberated on the various options for imparting secondary education and revealed that the cost per student through ODL mode was 10 per cent less as compared to conventional schooling. Another common outlook, that emerged from the academia, was related to the diminishing concept of school. As noted by Govinda, which evolved as an organizational arrangement in the past, was becoming less and less relevant, and Sugata Mitra attributed this growing 'less relevance' to the children's capability to learn on their own. His experiences showed that children reached the same levels of learning as in formal schools in the presence of a 'friendly, but not acknowledgeable mediator' (p. 46). In context of an emerging diffused space, Shyman Menon, asserts, '….this is not about school and out of school; but the realization that the distinction of school and out of school spaces are getting blurred' (p. 81). The open education movement and the impact of digital technologies on the ODL systems has been responsible for creating this diffused space between face-to-face and distance learning programmes, which was also referred to by Som Naidu and Mohan Menon. On the whole, they all largely implied that effective engagement of learners was possible beyond the traditionally prescribed school environment, which reflects the need to reconsider and derive a new outlook towards the entire notion of schooling.

Even though it is claimed that the concept of schooling is diminishing due to the diffused space between those in and out-of-school, there is a strong fear and concern that more and more space has also been created for ghettoization of schools to such an extent that schooling in India today has become quite uneven. Govinda drew attention to the issue by indicating that instead of providing inclusive spaces, schools are setting exclusive spaces for different collectives like the rich, poor, slum dwellers, including caste and faith-based

collectives (p. 64) or even the differentially challenged. The whole paradox of educational planning is that their policies have not been inclusive in its approach, especially to address the vast proportion of the Indian population who actually fall in the category of the poor. Krishna Kumar talked extensively on the issue and significance of relating poverty to education and why poverty must be considered as a relevant subject for educational decision and planning. He strongly observed that 'It is a very mortifying thought and it is a very painful thought to realize that schemes for the poor are seen as poor estimates because one believes that the poor do not need all that much' (p.39). Hence, he recommended the need to contextualize policies rather than generalizing them, and avoid scaling policies by what one believes the poor need (p. 38).

This book serves as a good educational resource to enable readers to associate with the thoughts of educational leaders, relating to the benefits of open and distance education learning system, approaching inclusive policies and understanding the concept of schooling and education as a whole. As most orientation has basically been towards the potential benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for education, it was possibly implied that the future of education is likely to be more dependent on ICTs. The potential of ICT can certainly not be debated, unless alternative resources to enhance electricity supply and low-cost connectivity are explored and made available to the rural and remote areas. Hence, more inputs on success stories, challenges of current ODL practices in different developing countries or regions, and innovative approaches adopted to overcome selected socio-cultural and technological barriers would have added value to this series. In this regard, the passage on the growth and development of IGNOU by Mohan Menon put forward significant issues for educational planners to ponder over. Further, views on guidelines for policy considerations and strategic options to facilitate connectivity, better investment in technology for education was preferred, since we are still in the process of regularizing our framework relating to Internet policies, open educational resources and defining laws governing net neutrality.

Centre for Educational Studies, Indian Institute of Education,
128/2, J.P. Naik Path, Kothrud, Pune 411 038, Maharashtra

Jyoti Bawane
jbawane@yahoo.com

Aldo GEUNA and Federica ROSSI (2015): ***The University and the Economy: Pathways to Growth and Economic Development,*** Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 208, (hard bound), Price: £ 75.00; ISBN: 978-1-78254-948-2

Originally published in Italian *L'Univeità e il sistema economic* in 2013, *The University and the Economy* focuses on diverse ways in which universities contribute to economic growth and development. The empirical base and also the examples cited are confined to European countries, though the theoretical tools and analytical framework used in the study would be of interest to many outside Europe as well.

Unlike a normal production firm, university is a complex institution and it has undergone, over centuries, tremendous transformation. Universities everywhere are being swept by the wave of marketization. One of the most important features of the market approach to universities is the absence of a systematic understanding of the operation of the university as an economic and social institution. Such an approach produces a variety of intended and unintended consequences. Yet the core functions of the universities – research,

teaching and knowledge transfer—remain unchanged; what has changed is the way these functions are performed. The contribution of the university system has also become very diverse, with it contributing to many areas that were not hitherto recognised at all or not recognised in the same way as being done now. For example, the contribution of university to the country's economic competitiveness at regional and global levels, its role in the development of the national innovation systems, its role in the development of the knowledge economy, its contribution to the process of urban regeneration, its role in the accumulation of social capital of communities, its role in the recovery of industrial and architectural heritage, etc., are somewhat important new dimensions that are being recognised now, in addition to its contribution to economic growth, distribution, and welfare, which have been well researched. The authors of the book consider some of these well-established and not-so-well- established aspects and unravel the role of universities in development.

There are eight chapters in the book, which is neither an edited volume nor can be described as collection of a closely knited set of articles. Three of the eight chapters are individually signed by authors, including six co-authors, besides the two main authors of the book. Chapter 2 starts with a quick description of Solow's technical progress and production functions, and presents the current situation in higher education, focusing on size of higher education population in the OECD counties and expenditure on university-based research; and then lists a multitude of effects of university on economic growth. Mauro Sylos Labini presents in Chapter 3 titled, "Higher Education and Economic Welfare", a methodological review examining the relationship between higher education and economic growth, at the micro level, using Mincerian earnings function, and, at macro level, the production function or the growth equation and the macro-Mincerian equation. 'Economic welfare' in the title of the chapter is defined to refer to only economic growth. In Chapter 4, the focus is on research and how the relationship between research and economic growth could be analysed. Empirical evidence on some aspects is worth noting. As documented here, the rates of return to public spending on research and development are quite high – ranging between 20 per cent and 67 per cent, as per various studies. Knowledge produced by the universities is not the main source of innovation in the economy; it is the internal sources, joint ventures/partnerships, clients and consultants who contribute more to innovations than universities. University knowledge is accessed primarily through publications, conferences, informal contacts and employment of graduates, not much through licenses and patents, or even research collaborations. The relative size of government-funded research to the total research in universities has come down gradually in most OECD countries between 1981 and 2011; and in countries like Germany, the relative share of industry-funded research has increased in the universities. This holds true for the OECD countries as a whole on average. The authors also refer to changing models of knowledge production and transfer. "Since the 1950s" (in fact, until the 1950s or until the end of 1960s), it is "public knowledge", which was considered important and whose production was funded by the state and it was produced in universities and government agencies, with there being public diffusion of research results. During the 1970s, research was conducted within a well-defined framework of intellectual property rights; the approach was to produce "appropriate knowledge", with markets entering the sphere of knowledge transfer. In the 1980s, an expanded vision of knowledge – "interactive knowledge" emerged whereby knowledge is defined to be consisting of any intangible good – codified and transmittable, and tacit, at least partially, in nature and difficult to transfer, requiring interaction between several agents among producers and transferers. New agents emerged in the areas of production as

well as distribution. Obviously greater are the incentives for its production by private agents.

A critical review of performance indicators used in the context of measurement of university performance is attempted in Chapter 5. Very few indicators are chosen and, that too, somewhat randomly in this context. They, together, do not comprehensively capture the several dimensions of productivity and quality of research, teaching and knowledge transfer, listed in the same chapter. Further, even at country level, with several indicators moving in different directions, no attempt is made, however constrained it be with limitations, to prepare an aggregate composite index. However, it is not universities whose individual performance is assessed, but country level performance is assessed. While this would serve some purpose, university-level analysis, that is being attempted in the context of global ranking of universities, would be of more significance.

While analysing university funding and research assessment in Italy and UK, Aldo Geuna, Matteo Piolatto and Mauro Sylos Labini bring out some interesting aspects of university funding. Expenditure on universities, as a percentage of GDP, has marginally increased in many OECD countries between 1998 and 2010. However, in UK, public body grants constitute only 30 per cent of the total income of British higher education institutions, despite an acknowledgment of the existence of significant positive externalities produced by university education. While student fee and education contracts account for 35 per cent in Britain, in Italian universities, fees accounts for only 14 per cent. Interestingly, only a small part of the total funds comes from industry – 1.3 per cent in Italy and 14 per cent in Germany, the OECD average being about six per cent. Further, despite recognising the need for performance-based funding, budget flows are largely determined by historical trends as in Italy, (and in other countries), where more than 80 per cent of the funds flow is based on historical trends. Among the three methods of funding research, viz., (a) funding on a historical basis, funding via quasi-market mechanism, based on the evaluation of past performance, and (c) competitive programme-based funding, which also involves some evaluation, according to the authors the latter two are justified, only if the potential efficiency gains from a competitive system are higher than the costs of evaluation. They also conclude that assessment-based funding is less expensive than competitive programme-based funding, though it is more expensive than funding based on historical trends. More than cost factor, it is also important to see which method produces better research and which promotes a better research culture. Each one has its own advantages and weaknesses. Competitive programme-based funding, though expensive, ensures funding best researchers. However, as the authors finally try to conclude, exclusive reliance on any one method may not be a desirable option; a good mix of all the three may yield better results.

In another chapter that considers the university-industry collaborations and knowledge transfer mechanisms, Federica Rossi and five of her colleagues examine the effectiveness of personal collaborations versus institutional collaborations, and also regional and non-regional collaborations. It has been found that a vast majority of the firms do not collaborate at all with universities; about 10 per cent maintain institutional collaborations and eight per cent personal collaborations. In this context, continued interactions between firms and academic researchers assume significance.

The University and the Economy presents a detailed description and analysis of selected roles being played by the universities in their multi-faceted contributions to the economic growth of nations. It discusses a number of theories, analytically describes some theoretical and methodological tools of analysis, reviews available empirical evidence on some aspects, outlines some valuable principles and policies for university managers, public policy-makers and university researchers, and, in short, gives something valuable to everybody—

academics – young students and researchers, administrators, managers, planners and policy-makers in higher education in the European countries and outside. Planned for such a mixed audience, the book turns out to be somewhat a hotchpotch collection of articles, and not a cohesive collection. Even some of the chapters depict similar styles, though each article is good and useful with useful information, some being thorough, and some rigorous, and, of course, all focusing on a major theme and its related aspects.

NUEPA
New Delhi-110016

Jandhyala B.G. Tilak
jtilak@nuepa.org

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