

THE INCLUSION OF MULTICULTURALISM IN SCHOOL EDUCATION:
A STUDY OF THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Dissertation

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MAY 2020

DECLARATION BY THE SCHOLAR

This is to certify that the M.Phil. Dissertation being submitted by me on the topic entitled '*The Inclusion of Multiculturalism in School Education: A Study of the Policies and Practices*' has been completed under the guidance of Prof. Avinash Kumar Singh. It is declared that the present study has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship or Fellowship to this or any other University.



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CERTIFICATE OF THE SUPERVISOR

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled '*The Inclusion of Multiculturalism in School Education: A Study of the Policies and Practices*' is the work undertaken by Mr. Priyank Sharma under my supervision and guidance as part of his/her M.Phil. degree in this University. To the best of my knowledge, this is the original work conducted by him/her and the dissertation may be sent for evaluation.

Supervisor's Signature

(Avinash Kumar Singh)

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ABSTRACT

India is a home to an enormous cultural diversity. This enormous cultural diversity always stands in conflict with equality of representation as well as acceptance as part of the society. Nevertheless, the Indian constitution makes special provision for ensuring this equality of representation. The socialization that students undergo in school is of vital importance since it is the primary place where their first interaction with diverse peers takes place. Multicultural education thus proves to be an effective strengthening tool in such a situation. Thus subsequent Indian education policies have advocated for the inclusion of multiculturalism in schools. Yet there is an observed gap between the policy and its implementation taking place in the schools. The research is undertaken in three phases: first, an in depth theoretical understanding of multicultural education is built; next, National Education Policies were analyzed to see if and how much they incorporate the multicultural elements and finally a primary research was conducted to see the ground reality of inclusion of multicultural elements in schools. James Banks' framework for multicultural education was used to assess the Indian education policies and practices observed. The main research methods are policy analyses and focused group discussion with the students. The results though indicate an absence of policies specifically for multicultural education yet it cannot be denied that the major education policies are informed by multicultural concerns; although it's only the recent Draft National Education Policy (DNEP) 2019 which comprehensively includes all elements of multicultural education. The practices happening at the school level were highly devoid of any multicultural understanding. Students were found to be unaware of the strengths drawn from multiple cultures; in fact, some students advocated for a single culture across country. They corroborated that curriculum had under-representation of some regions. Students were found to be less informed about the north-east region. And even though there was some discussion of different elements of multicultural education, there was none for prejudice reduction – an aspect which was touched only by DNEP 2019. A web of theory (critiqued), analysed policies and ground practices were created to better understand the scenario of multicultural education and recommendations were made.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

“If diversity is a source of wonder, its opposite - the ubiquitous condensation to some blandly amorphous and singularly generic modern culture that takes for granted an impoverished environment - is a source of dismay. There is, indeed, a fire burning over the earth, taking with it plants and animals, cultures, languages, ancient skills and visionary wisdom. Quelling this flame and re-inventing the poetry of diversity is perhaps the most important challenge of our times.”

— Wade Davis (2010), *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World*.

The world is a diverse place; every other place is different in terms of its natural environment which in turn affects the social environment. Therefore it can be assumed that no two places are similar on the earth. In the modern times after industrial revolution there has been an increased mobility among humans which has led to an increased mixing of culture whether it is across countries or regions or even in the city. This intermix of cultures has though contributed to raised economic output but comes with a problem of its own in terms of one culture becoming dominant of the others, the total loss of the subjugated culture or discrimination with people of that culture.

It is very subjective to every individual how one tries to define culture. Culture if loosely defined refers to the pattern of thought and behaviour of people. It includes values, belief systems, rules of behaviour, and guide of social, political and economic institutions. It is passed on from one generation to the next by official as well as unofficial processes. Culture comprises of the methods in which we think and act as a part of the society. Culture is the outcome of such an association and expressed through philosophy and religion language and art. It also manifests itself through economic organisations, social habits, customs, and political institutions. According to Wade Davis (2010):

“Culture is not trivial. It is not a decoration or artifice, the songs we sing or even the prayers we chant. It is a blanket of comfort that gives meaning to lives. It is a body of knowledge that allows the individual to make sense out of the

infinite sensations of consciousness, to find meaning and order in a universe that ultimately has neither. Culture is a body of laws and traditions, a moral and ethical code that insulates a people from the barbaric heart that lies just beneath the surface of all human societies and indeed all human beings. Culture alone allows us to reach, as Abraham Lincoln said, for the better angels of our nature.”

Wade Davis (2010) writes

“We have this extraordinary conceit in the West that while we've been hard at work in the creation of technological wizardry and innovation, somehow the other cultures of the world have been intellectually idle. Nothing could be further from the truth. Nor is this difference due to some sort of inherent Western superiority. We now know to be true biologically what we've always dreamed to be true philosophically, and that is that we are all brothers and sisters. We are all, by definition, cut from the same genetic cloth. That means every single human society and culture, by definition, shares the same raw mental activity, the same intellectual capacity. And whether that raw genius is placed in service of technological wizardry or unravelling the complex thread of memory inherent in a myth is simply a matter of choice and cultural orientation.”

The above two quotes by Wade Davis tend to exemplify the purpose of culture in our lives. However, it raises a very significant concern of our times of how the west has colonised the diverse ideas, the meanings the traditions and everything. Thus it becomes imperative on the part of us to learn to distinguish between the practices that preserve and protect diversity rather activities that let them organically grow without intrusion or criticism. Respecting cultural diversity and providing proper recognition to the enriching nature of multicultural society is the basis of a sustainable coexistence that is the need of the future. And education is the significant tool to promote a multicultural sustainable society.

The purpose of the research is to explore this interaction of cultural diversity and education. The research starts with the aim of understanding the various forms and meanings of cultural diversity and the concept of culture itself. It traces the history, as of the origins of multiculturalism and the need of multicultural education with respect

to India as well as the world. The research entails a list of all the policies and legislations by the Indian state, including the Constitution of India, that tend to promote and protect the enormous cultural diversity as well as ensure equality of opportunity. In the light of the findings through literature review, the research explores the theoretical framework on multicultural education, propounded by James Bank and carefully analyses three major education policies in the light of the five dimensions of multicultural education.

The rigorous analysis of the policies under the James Bank theoretical framework to an extent reveals the effort on the part of the policies. The education policies might not be clearly based on the foundations of all the five dimensions but their meanings are explored to see if they are informed with the different dimensions of the multicultural education. The research study also draws from a field study that was conducted in order to make a comparison between the policies and the practices on the ground. Several factors that affect or are an indicator for the multicultural practices taking place at the school level are studied.

Lastly, a web of theory (critiqued), analysed policies and ground practices were created to better understand the scenario of multicultural education. Analysing the policies and practices on the basis of the dimensions of multicultural education, the study makes certain recommendations which could be acted upon to initiate the process of acceptance of the larger cultural diversity by the children of school going age who remain mostly uninformed and misinformed. These children could act as agents of change in the society, by providing them multicultural education, to remove all the prejudices and accept every culture in its own right.

1.2. Background and Justification of the study

India is undoubtedly one of the most diverse countries in the world. It extends about 3.2 million square kilometres and hosts a population of more than 1.3 billion people. The religious fabric of India ranges with about 82% of the population identified as Hindu, 13% Muslim, 2.3% Christian, 1.9% Sikh, 0.76% Buddhist, 0.4% Jain, and 0.01% Zoroastrian. The census of 1961 listed as many as 1,652 languages and dialects. Since most of these languages are spoken by very few people, presently, 22 languages are recognized as official languages, including Hindi and English, which are the so called link languages. This approach to integrate this vast diversity of India is based on

the idea of participatory pluralism. Based on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi this approach builds on and questions older practices that fostered plurality through distinction between groups and the hierarchy of society. Participatory pluralism seeks to preserve diversity while dismantling inequality and fighting social justice. Ideally, this form of multiculturalism involves bridging the gap between communities, which needs to include sincere attempts to embrace identities other than one's own. India's efforts towards integrating its multiple cultures began before it attained independence from Britain. During the 1920s, there were several policies in place to ensure that minority religious groups were represented in the organization of the government. At present, Indian policies related to diversity comprise of aims associated with secularism, social justice, and the evolution of a national character that is inclusive of diversity. The Constitution of India endorses a strong commitment to equality, and it envisions building up an overarching national identity while safeguarding minority identities drawing on the principle that strong identification with subgroups is a significant building block for identification with the nation as a whole. Yet there are concerns that the specific focus to group rights and intragroup equality has led to intragroup disparity, particularly based on caste, class, and culture.

The theoretical foundations of Multicultural education are laid on the ideals of equality, liberty and justice. It establishes the necessity to prepare students for their tasks in a world that is interdependent. It identifies the role schools can take part in this interdependent world. It starts with challenging all shapes and forms of discrimination in society and the school itself through the endorsement of democratic values of social justice. Multicultural education can be called as a process that permeates all parts of school practices and policies, as a mechanism to ensure highest level of academic achievement by students of different backgrounds. It assists students in developing a positive self-concept by giving information about histories and cultures of diverse groups. It trains all students to actively work toward achieving structural equality in institutions by imparting the skills for the rearrangement of power among diverse communities. Thus it requires the school curriculum to directly address issues of sexism, classism, racism, linguism, heterosexism, xenophobia and religious intolerance. Multicultural education stresses the fact that the cultural histories and experiences of the students should be central to all teaching learning activities taking place in school and that the pedagogy should be structured in manner which is familiar

to the student and take a note of his or her diverse way of thinking. It also emphasizes that teacher and students should be critical in analysing the existent power relations in the society. Multicultural education endeavours to offer all the students an equitable opportunity in education, at the same time, encouraging students to evaluate society in the need of ensuring social justice. Multicultural Education encourages the transformation of the education system in such a manner that it reflective of the democratic principles within culturally diverse society.

Hence, students are taught using instructional methods that value cultural knowledge and differences. There are teachers who adopt the Social Reconstructionist framework and go to the extent of teaching students about oppression and discrimination. Making students understand their role as social change agents can be a first step towards creation of an equitable society.

Multicultural education is thus a particular form of teaching and learning practices that are based on democratic values and that reaffirm cultural pluralism within multicultural societies like India. Multicultural education embraces cultural pluralism as indicator of an ideal and healthy state that promotes equality and reverence among the existing cultural groups. Therefore, inclusion of multiculturalism in school education is a significant inclusion, and an important precursor to inclusive education.

In the present educational environment of competition between the states for central funds and the right to education act where accountability is highly emphasized and expected, there are documented evidence of the glaring gap in the achievement levels among the various subgroups of students in Indian schools. It is thus of critical importance to explore and use all avenues and instructional strategies that will enhance student academic achievement and also focuses on acceptance of diversity. Multicultural education in case of India as envisaged in the policies has actually not translated into practice. The emphasis of the recent times of making education at par with the global standards only tends to forget the cultural aspect that education should have attached to it. It somewhere through competition is trying to nullify the aims of multicultural education practices that aimed at maintaining these diversities. The central examination patterns, the incumbent concept of one single board of education, the importance attached to English in some of the most prestigious jobs etc. only make the goal of a multicultural education system more unrealizable. The proponents of

multicultural education (Banks, 1994; Bennet, 1990; Coelho, 1994; Davidman & Davidman, 1994; Nieto, 1992) overtly state that addition of multicultural education in the curriculum of schools generates an environment where attitude to diversity and academic achievements of students from different backgrounds are improved simultaneously by practicing the aspects of multicultural education.

1.3. Rationale of the study

The rationale behind the research comes after identifying the existing research gaps in the area in the Indian scenario. The concept of multicultural education has not been analyzed much by the Indian scholars as much of the Indian education research still focuses on the accessibility issues. Through this research, I want to understand multiculturalism and multicultural education in Indian context. India is a country with humungous diversity and to imagine an inclusive education in such a pluralistic society effective multicultural education is a primary component. The research shall bring out the problems faced by the students entering the education system from diverse and varied background and how their potential remains untapped because of the mismatched education system which does not appreciate their ideas and experiences, rather forces on them the dominant knowledge which is alien to them. Thus, thereby forcing them to accept the dominant notions of culture or the mainstream society in order to become a part of it and then putting structures of examinations, language and other barriers which they are unable to overcome and thus remain trapped in the cycle of inequality.

Now, the question comes, whether schools understand the importance of multiculturalism? And, before that do policies which are supposed to guide schools reflect aspects of multicultural education comprehensive? This research begins with the same question. An attempt is made to examine various Indian educational policies to see if they convey the importance of multicultural education comprehensively, and then study is conducted to see the ground reality, that is, practices in the school.

1.4. Theoretical framework

The study will employ the theoretical and analytical framework formulated by James Bank (1993). Banks in his book “Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society” (1993) gave five features of multicultural education:

Content integration: it deals with the level to which teachers incorporate examples and the content that they teach from the diverse culture and the contexts to explain key concepts or the subject matter of a discipline.

Knowledge construction: entails teaching activities that facilitate the students to perceive information in their own creative ways rather than in the perspective or ideas given by the teacher.

Prejudice reduction: under this dimension it is aimed to counsel students regarding prejudices that they may bring with themselves while coming to school as they are part of a larger society. It takes an approach which is neutral and does not intimidate rather explains the students against such practices which help in developing positive attitude.

Equity pedagogy: this dimension generally advises on improvising teaching materials as well as the approach by teachers so that the learning happens equally for all the students and the learner diversity is catered. It focuses on increasing the academic achievement of all students irrespective of their sociocultural association.

Empowering school culture: as the name suggests the dimension encourages an environment in school which promotes equality not in terms of policies and objectives rather it is significantly visible in the practices. It calls upon the school staff, teachers and the management to reform around activities that are prejudiced and discriminatory against some students.

1.5. Objectives of the study

1. To develop an in-depth understanding of multiculturalism in school education

2. To examine national education policies in the context of multicultural education;
3. To find out the nature and extent of implementation of multicultural education in schools;
4. To identify gaps in the inclusion of multicultural education in schools; and
5. To suggest suitable measures for effective multicultural education in schools.

1.6. Research Questions

- What is multicultural education and its important components?
- How comprehensively have the policies incorporated features of multicultural education?
- What is the extent of inclusion of multicultural education in schools?
- What are the existing gaps in the implementation of multicultural education in schools?
- What can be the suitable measures to effectively employ multicultural education in schools?

1.7. Significance of the study

The study can be a very significant one in the absence of similar studies in the Indian context. The findings could be helpful in informing the practioners, the planners and the policymakers and all those concerned with the issue of making schools more inclusive and improving the academic output of students.

Accordingly, educational stakeholders, researchers and practioners are likely to benefit from the study in the following ways;

- School teachers can use the findings in making their teaching methods more inclusive
- Banks (2004) emphasized that research and practice that needs to be undertaken in relation to the five dimensions of multicultural education given by him, which are **“(1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) an equity pedagogy, and (5) an empowering school**

culture and social structure.” The dimensions of multicultural education form the bench mark of evaluating policies and practices in the fields of multicultural education.

- The importance of the study thereby lies in its emphasis on linking the theoretical framework with the findings on the ground and also critiquing the unachievable components of the theory and trying to make subsequent improvement to it by adding a new dimension.

1.8. Limitations of the study

The research conducted in this dissertation has two major limitations. Firstly the limited time that restricted me to take a large and more diverse sample size or more than one school which could have made a better comparison and the findings could also have triangulated. The study would have been more profound if views of teachers, parents, and school administrators would have been taken into account which wasn't feasible given the paucity of time. The other limitation to the study is that since the study was conducted in a limited time, therefore there are limitations upto which the findings can be generalised.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

2.1. Introduction

The review of literature has been done under various themes of multiculturalism, multicultural education, the theoretical foundations of multicultural education and the current scenario of implementation of multicultural education in Indian schools. Through this schematic review of literature, the research gaps are identified and research paradigm developed and discussed in further chapters.

2.2. Multiculturalism

Dominic (2014) defines 'Multiculturalism' as a state of mutual existence of diverse cultures. Culture consists, racial, religious, linguistic, etc. that have dissimilarity and differences in customary behavioural pattern, cultural suppositions and importance, ways of thinking and communication. It aims at the conservation of diverse cultures and identities that exist together as a nation-state. The ambit of multiculturalism has manifold increased in the recent times, it not only encompasses the disadvantaged and marginalised sections like disabled, linguistic-cultural-religious minorities, tribals, LGBT, etc., rather also immigrant who have migrated from an altogether different nation and that their culture is under threat. Multiculturalism as an idea is by applied philosophers, the government functionaries, writers, academicians, scholars and almost everyone not only for the human society but also the non-living things, the plants and other very kind of diversity.

The initial years 1970s were marked by the rise of the multicultural movement in first Canada followed by Australia later in U.S.A., U.K., Germany and other places. It began to dominate the political scene of countries like France, which had the strongest bastion of nation state thereby not taking an official note of the ethnicity and religion or any kind of diversity of its citizens. The movement sprang up at different places and by different groups thereby the movement lacked a coherency in thoughts, philosophy and idea, it lacked a clear focus and centrality of issue. Therefore I would begin by explaining what multiculturalism means and stands for and thereby go on to explain the problems faced by a multicultural society under this theme of the literature review.

Multiculturalism can be best perceived neither as a political ideology of the state with programmatic content nor as a school of philosophy explaining the distinct place of man in the world, rather is it an understanding of the way of looking at human life. It has three central principles which are more than often misinterpreted by its advocates and need to be carefully examined if it is to carry meaning, firstly that human beings are culturally embedded right from the moment they are born in a manner that they grow and live in a culturally structured society and organize their lives around the social relations and meanings derived from such cultural construct.

It does not imply that everything that they do is determined by the cultural construct and that they cannot rise above that or critically evaluates its values and systems of meanings. Rather it can be put that things are greatly shaped by it, can overcome certain influences partly and view the world from a different culture perspective, be it the culture that they have inherited, uncritically accepted or in some cases have made a conscious decision of adopting the culture.

Second, diverse cultures showcase altered systems of beliefs and ideas of the good life. A particular culture can realise on a part of human emotions and existence within the limited range of human capacities therefore other cultures are required to help it expand its knowledge, understand itself better, stretch its imagination and save its self from falling into narcissism to safeguard its absolutism. As long as there is a multitude of culture to reflect in the way of living human life there is room for growth which is positive. This certainly cannot be interpreted as one cannot live life inside one's own culture but rather one's way of life tends to be richer as they has access to others and more over living a self-contained life is impossible in this modern dependent world. This also does not imply that all the cultures are inherently good that they cannot be compared or critically assessed that they deserve equal respect or are equally enriching. This simply means that no culture is totally value less, ther are god things as well as bad things, that a culture deserves some amount of respect because it is important to it followers , that no culture is perfect or has a right to dominate other and that cultures are best if the evolution change is from within .

Third, each and every culture is inherently plural and represents a continuous dialogue between its diverse traditions, customs and schools of thought. It does not imply that lacks of coherence and identity, rather the identity is fluid, diverse and open. Cultures

germinate out of cognisant and incognisant interactions, defines its identity in terms of what it assumes the other culture, therefore they are partially multicultural in their origins. Every culture carries bits of the other cultures within it and cannot be totally *sui generis*. This does not mean that the culture cannot self-determine its principles or structures, rather a culture is porous and can be influenced by external factors in its own unique ways.

A culture's association to itself is structured and is in turn restructured by its relation to other cultures, and their inner and outer differences presume and reemphasize each other. It is impossible for a culture to appreciate the worth of others if it is not appreciative of differences within; the converse is equally true. Closed cultures do not wish to communicate to others as each of them tends to define in terms of the differences they have from the other and feels threatened and thereby seeks to safeguard it by resisting communication with other cultures. A culture cannot easily accept the differences outside until it is accommodative of its own internal differences. A dialogue between cultures presuppose that they are willing to open themselves influence of other and this primarily is based on the understanding of its ability to engage in a self-critical dialogue within itself.

Generally the multiculturalists' perspective can be called as the creative interplay of three essential things that are the cultural embeddedness of human beings, the inescapable need of cultural plurality and that each culture is also inherently plural. When we look at the world from a particular vantage point, our approach towards others and to ourselves undergoes significant changes. All notions that a particular system of beliefs or thought process or way of living is ideal or necessitated by human behaviour itself appear incongruent and even misfit, for they go against the well understood conviction that each way of thinking and living are intrinsically limited and are insufficient to embody the extensive range of the complexity, richness and grandeur of human existence. We impulsively try to homogenize a culture and inflict an identity on it, even though we are aware that cultures are highly differentiated and plural. We are sceptical of attempts that present it as one that has originated within itself, as self-generating as we feel convinced that all the cultures have originated due to interactions and absorbs external influences and are structure by wider economic and political forces. Therefore this proposition negates the very foundation of ideas of Eurocentrism

Afrocentrism, Sinocentrism Indocentrism, and other kinds of centrism, all of which tend to attribute their achievements to their culture in isolation of the effect of any other culture on them.

From a multiculturalist viewpoint, there is no political ideology or philosophy that can represent the extensive reality of human life. All of them whether liberalism, socialism, capitalism, nationalism is socially embedded in a particular culture and each have different notions and the visions of a good life. For example Liberalism is an inspiring political ideology which emphasizes on values such as human dignity, liberty, equality, freedom, criticality of thoughts. However, these could be examined in multiple altered ways, of which the liberal just one.

And it also disregards or marginalizes other great morals like human solidarity, sense of attachment, altruism, profound and self-effacing modesty and happiness. Since it clinches to only a few aspects of the incalculably compound human existence and loses a great deal on what offers value to life, liberalism, socialism or any political ideology cannot give the sole source of attaining a good society. Political doctrines are means of shaping political life and cannot offer a inclusive philosophy for good life. More so as much as political life is concerned, it needs to be interpreted and described in the view of the wider culture and the distinctive history and political state of affairs of the community related.

From a multiculturalist standpoint the good societies appreciates diversity and promotes a creative discourse between its diverse cultures and their ideas of life. Such social orders not only appreciates its members' rights and enlarge their choices but also encourages their right of self-criticism, critical thinking, intellectual and ethical sympathy, and adds to their growth and welfare.

If some communities wish to stay in self-contained manner and shun communication with others, it must respect their preference so long as they fulfil the agreed basic conditions of the good life. A multicultural society ought not to repeat the gaffe of its monocultural counterpart emphasizing that all communities become multicultural. Rather, it is in particular because it cherishes plurality that it incorporates those that do not share dominant cultural traits.

A multicultural society in order to be stable and last long needs to develop a common sense of belonging amongst its citizens. This sense of belonging need not be ethnic or based on any mutual cultural characteristics, as a multicultural society is far too diverse in that sense; rather it must be political and founded on a united commitment to serve every citizen.

The allegiance to a political community is extremely complex in character and simply misunderstood. It does not entail commitment to shared goals, as members of a society might totally disagree about these, nor to a general view of its history which each one might read very differently, nor to its structure of government regarding which they may consider very dissimilar views, nor to its overriding cultural ethos to which some are committed because of their own association to a common historical community. They matter and it should be this way because they are bonded together by a common interests and attachments of leading a good life. The obligation to the political community entails commitment to its progressing existence and welfare and means that one is concerned as much as necessary for it not to damage its interests and destabilize its integrity. It is a matter of extent and could take shape as a quiet apprehension for its welfare, deep attachment, fondness, and intense love.

While diverse citizens would grow different feelings towards their community, what is essential to sustain it and could legitimately be anticipated of them is an indispensable commitment towards its integrity and welfare, what one may call as patriotism or political allegiance. Guided by such allegiance, they may criticise their government, institutions, planning, policy, the ideas and dominant self-understanding in the best possible terms if they consider that it is important its survival and welfare. Their criticisms do not need to arouse agitation or provoke unfaithfulness as long as their fundamental commitment to the community is clear. Patriotism or nationalism is not the cartel of the conservatives, and that the socialists, the radicalists and the communists can also be equally committed to their community rather more at times.

Dedication or belonging is reciprocal in character. A citizen cannot be expected to be obligated to her political community until and unless it too is committed towards their welfare, and that her acceptance it lies in the extent of her acceptance by the political community. Therefore a political community cannot one-sidedly expect its members to develop a sense of belonging without in turn belonging to them equally without any

biasness towards a certain dominant powerful section and only working in their interests. Thus it necessarily should give importance and value and cherish every member irrespective of their differences equally and try to reflect this equality in its policies, structure of government, representation in administration, in self-understanding and self-determination of their wants. This entails conceding to them equal rights of citizenship, a respectable standard of living, the equal opportunity to develop and take part in and make respective contributions to the collective sphere of life.

It is important to note that in a multicultural society diverse communities might essentially have different needs, and that some maybe structurally and historically disadvantaged or lack the confidence and means to participate in the functioning of the mainstream society and take advantage of its opportunities. Both social justice and the necessity to foster a mutual sense of belonging thus require measures like equal opportunity rights, differentiated applications of policies and law on the basis of culture, support to minority institutions, and a judicious plan of affirmative action.

Even though equal citizenship is essentially required to promote a common sense of belonging, mostly it is not enough. Citizenship is more about status and rights; but belonging takes a different sense it reflects acceptance, feeling well treated, a sense of recognition. The two ideas of citizenship and belongingness do not necessarily coincide. One may benefit from all the rights of citizenship granted to them as a part of the political community but it may not guarantee a feeling of being accepted towards them and thus they may relatively feel like an outsider like Afro-Americans in America, the Arab people in France and Israel, African-Caribbean and Asians in United kingdom and recently Muslims in India.

This emotion of being recognised as a citizen and yet being treated as an outsider is difficult to comprehend and explain, rather it can be yawning and real and had the potential to seriously damage the value of one's citizenship more so their commitment to the sense of belongingness to the political community.

It is a resultant of, among other things, the way in which the broader society defines itself, the undignified manner in which the other members of the community discuss and converse about these groups, and the trivializing or denigrating ways in which they

are treated. Even though members of such groups are by law free to participate in the public sphere, they often choose to stay away for fear of being rejected and ridiculed or because of a profound sense of alienation.

When the overriding/ dominant culture characterizes the minorities in a humiliating or degrading way and systematically strengthens it through all institutional and other mechanisms at its disposal, they deliberately or without thinking internalize the negative self-worth, lack confidence and feel estranged from the mainstream society. It is correctly observed, that social recognition is fundamental to the individual's identity and self-esteem and that degraded identity might austere damage both. This raises the important question as to how can we secure proper recognition for the demeaned minorities. There have been several falter arguments that take the rather naive liberal view which believes that the dominant group can be rationally persuaded into changing their views and attitudes through intellectual discourse and moral and ethical appeals. This argument seriously disregards the dynamics of the process of recognition.

Misrecognition is founded on both cultural and material basis. The white supremacy to a large extent is justified on this premise as by taking a demeaning view of the blacks to an extent justifies their domination and also because sometimes the blacks display characteristics that confirm to white stereotypes which is not appreciated by them. Misrecognition, thus, could be only be responded by undertaking a meticulous critique of mechanisms of misrecognition by the dominant culture and rigorously restructuring the widespread inequalities of political and economic capabilities.

In view of the fact that the dominant group normally welcomes neither, thus recognition is not given eagerly as an act of grace. Thereby it essentially requires to be fought for and includes a cultural and political revolution and sometimes even aggression. The protests in Britain by the Muslims after the publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. The more Hindu orientation of India's political scene, consequent marginalisation of the minorities, has led the Muslims to assert their identity in the recent times. The astuteness of a multicultural society comprises of its ability to predict, reduce and administer such demands.

Multicultural societies in their recent form are novel to our age and heave up theoretical and political issues that have not been experienced in history ever. The political

doctrines, institutions, terminologies, virtues and skill that have come up in the path of consolidating and managing the interactions of a culturally homogeneous state are of limited help, and are often a handicap, in managing with multicultural societies. There is an urgent need to find means of integrating the justifiable demands of achieving unity amongst diversity, of accomplishing a political agreement without cultural homogeneity, and promote among its citizens a universal sense of belonging and an enthusiasm to value and cherish even profound cultural differences.

This is a difficult theoretical and political undertaking and there is no multicultural society that has achieved this success yet. The erstwhile Soviet Union and Yugoslavia met their destined fate because their wisdom did not allow them imagination of such a society which was tolerant of diversity. Even developed, stable and mature democracies like the U.S.A. and the U.K. and France have only met limited success and have strong emotional and moral disorientation in the face of rising minority demands and protests for equality of rights and representation. The wisdom of the founding fathers of India can be attributed for the judicious balance power and rights in the Indian constitution to each and every citizen irrespective of their differences and is one of the major reasons that India has survived for nearly seven decades as a territorially intact and a humbly successful polity.

The political scene during which the constitution was drafted though has undergone substantial changes. The constitution assumed a much higher economic growth and a better equitable redistribution of resources and more equal representation in the public sphere than has been the case in reality. It has been conscious of the religious differences but had a limited awareness of the cultural ethnic diversity. It assumed, paradoxically, that India had minorities it sought to cherish the former's cultural self-expression but completely ignored the presence of a majority. It encouraged the minorities to act as collective ignoring the weak probability of the majority to come together and act in collective.

Generally it is assumed that a culturally unbiased and a state above social differences, competent enough to ensure political neutrality, was not able to predict that a majority would try to impose its superiority over the others. But now that these realities have validated the possibilities it is time for a radical reconsideration of the political doctrine of Indian state and devise a historically more sensitive and improvised way of evolving

a political unity out of the diversity. There is a very limited evidence that we have still come into terms with the problem facing us let alone exploring ways to tackle it.

2.2.1. Multiculturalism in India

The constitution of India reflects that it firm believes in the multicultural values. The constitution of India makes necessary provisions to protect the plurality of the country. The preamble starts with the words “we the people of India...” the very phrase is reflective of the fact that the constitution is not specifically for any one community rather each and every citizen of India is covered and protected under it irrespective of caste, creed, race or religion. This feeling of oneness is further exacerbated by the insertion of the word fraternity and unity in the constitution that aims to encourage the feeling of brotherhood among the citizens and fostering tolerance among them towards each other’s differences. It is apparent that the framers of the constitution made a very judicious use of words as at that time the county was going through the critical phase of partition on the basis of religions and thus they had to be extra cautious in terms of not hurting the sentiments of any particular community as the loss was both sided. India is a land of enormous diversities; therefore there was an enormous challenge in front of the framers of the constitution to incorporate the specific provisions in such a manner to prevent majoritarian influence over the minorities. The preamble to the constitutions includes words like Justice (which comprises of social, economic and political), Liberty (of expression, belief, faith etc.) and Equality (in representation and opportunity) Fraternity (regarding unity and integrity of the nation). The fundamental rights that are non negotiable and justifiable guaranteed to even foreigners’ are-

- **Right to Equality (Article 14 to 18)**

- a. Article 14 provides for “equality before law.”
- b. Article 15(1) provides that “the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them.”
- c. Article 16(2) provides that “no citizen shall on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be eligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State.”.

- d. Article 16(5) provides that a law may prescribe that "the incumbent of an office in connection with the affairs of any religious or denominational institution, or any member of the governing body thereof, shall be a person professing a particular religion or belonging to a particular denomination."
- **Right to Freedom (Article- 19 to 22)**
 - **Right to Against Exploitation (Article 23 & 24)**
 - **Right to Freedom of Religion (Article- 25 to 28)**
 - **Cultural and Educational Right (Article 29 & 30)**
 - a. Article 29(1) says that "any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same."
 - b. Article 29(2) restricts any "discrimination against any citizen on the basis of religion, race, caste or language in the matter of admission into educational institutions maintained or aided by the state."
 - c. Article 30(1) says that "all minorities, whether based on religion, or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice".
 - d. Article 30 (2) says that "the State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language."
 - **Right to Constitutional Remedies (Article- 32).**

The **fundamental duties** elaborate the other mechanism of protection of rights and ensuring equality under (**Article-51-A**),

- "It shall be the duty of every citizen of India- to up hold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India,"
- "To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities;"
- "To develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform, to abjure violence."

- “To value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture.”

To ensure equality of representation in the political sphere, **Article 325** grants universal adult franchise whereby every citizen of India is granted right to vote and choose representatives who would work in the welfare of them and their community and no person is ineligible for being included therein on the ground only of religion, race, caste or sex.

Article 330 and **Article 332** protects the interests of the minorities by reserving seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the parliament as well as the legislative assemblies.

Fifth Schedule, Articles 164 and 338 and makes provisions for setting up a tribal advisory council and separate departments in the state to promote welfare and safeguard their interests.

Article 339 (1) ensures for provisions under which the president can appoint a commission at any point of time to report on the situation of scheduled tribes and the administration of scheduled areas.

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 to ensure the protection of scheduled tribes.

Article 331 provides to protect the interests and their ensure representation in the parliament of the Anglo Indian community who are a religious, linguistic and social minority.

Article 350A directs each state makes provision for imparting education at the primary level in the mother tongue of the children belonging to minority groups. Language is well thought-out to be the most notable facet of culture in deciding ethnicity. Linguistic homogeneity tends to act as a binding phenomenon in countries that are multicultural, but it can be equally used as a divisive force as one can have examples like the breaking of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) where Urdu was imposed on the minority Bengali population; in Sri Lanka where Sinhalese was imposed on Tamils leading to decades of war and bloodshed; in Belgium between the French and the Flemish speaking population, etc. In order to give the importance to the regional languages of

India as much as 22 languages are recognised under the **Eighth Schedule** of the constitution.

Article 345 empowers a state legislature to adopt any one or more language in the state for official purpose and administration.

Article 347 also empowers the president of India to direct any state to adopt a particular language for official purpose in the whole or part of the state, if he is not satisfied on the representation of rights of a substantial proportion of linguistic or any other minority. This provision thus ensures ample scope of encouragement and enhancement of languages of the diverse communities.

Article 350 entitles every person to get redressed their grievances of any officer or authority regarding representation of specific languages used in the state or the union as the case may be.

Article 210 and 120 provide for transaction of the business of parliament in the language of the state, or in English or Hindi but in case the legislator is unable to express he can chose to speak in his or her mother tongue. In India, as contrasting to the western belief, multilingualism is considered as a cornerstone of multiculturalism.

By containing the above said provisions The Constitution of India makes it obvious what kind of nation we are expected to be, stressing our similar past and similar destiny. The Constitution of India also includes numerous institutional safeguards for the conservation of diversity. The various provisions for safeguarding have been discussed above but what is important is that only cultural rights or institutional mechanisms are not sufficient for the proper accommodation and the representation of diversity rather what is simultaneously necessary is the political will to implement, recognise and solve conflicts through which the which the identities ally themselves to a common political system.

India as country has always been welcome to policies, laws and systems that propagated legal pluralism whether concerned with religious family law or territorial autonomy for different minority groups, as well as reserved quotas in the legislature, government institutions, and educational institutions for caste and tribal minorities. It illustrates the insufficiency of the liberal framework in comprehending multiculturalism. In the Indian

political scene considerations regarding national unity, secularism and democratic values of equality and dignity to all occupy a central theme. The Indian scenario highlights the requirement to differentiate between multicultural rights in general and minority rights specifically. India's multinational federalism has been aware of the claims to self-government by some linguistic and tribal groups and is an example of a multicultural policy which is not group differentiated right and more so has resulted in the weakening of protection and safeguard of minorities in several cases (Bajpai, 2015).

Beteille (2003) describes how cultures after culture have harmoniously accommodated themselves in India each occupying their specific place. She explains that some of the major religions of the world whether it be Hinduism or Buddhism have originated in India and Christianity and Islam though came from outside have remained and flourished now for thousands of years. She also marks that "This great profusion of linguistic, religious and other customs and usages was associated with a multitude of castes, communities and tribes each of which was bearer of a particular sub-culture or even sub-culture which is transmitted from generation to generation".

The inclusive growth of an extremely diverse country like India relies on the fact of how much minority groups are part and participant in the development process. They imply that the development process cannot be exclusionary and requires that all social groups receive equal opportunities for economic and social and individual development. The exclusion or marginalisation of these groups might lead to conflict that do not go well with the idea of India (Mishra & Kumar, 2014).

The multicultural concerns have long informed India's policies, practices and political arrangements. He marks that most of the texts on Indian history and culture are informed on the vast diversity and have a certain multicultural concern. Bhattacharyya (2003) explains further that "the Indian Constitution as the source of these policies can be said to be a basic multicultural document, in the sense of providing for political and institutional measures for the recognition and accommodation of the country's diversity."

Pattanayak (2012) writes that "in the context of Indian diversity consisting 3000 mother tongues, 4600 castes and communities, 4000 faiths and beliefs, 45000 plant/biological species, 65000 animal varieties, one would expect that the Indian Development Planning would be based on multiplicity of approaches and practices. One would expect

that Indian celebrates its diversity, diversity of its languages, cultures, world views and creativity. But unfortunately the reverse is the case”.

2.3. Multicultural education

Multicultural education came out of the struggle for political power, liberty, and economic integration at the time of the civil rights movement during the 1960's. It was during that time that various oppressed and subjugated groups demanded for public schools to incorporate cultural and ethnic content (Banks, 1989).

Consequently in the later part of the 1960s and early 1970s, feminist groups advocated for this type of educational reform and asked learning institutions to make available educational opportunities and provide work for people of colour. Moreover, women activists and feminist academicians pushed for a curriculum that mirrored and integrated more minority narratives, philosophies, and histories. In a related manner, the other disadvantaged groups— like the elderly, disabled and homosexuals— organized themselves to push for human rights and socio-political status. Schools and other educational institutions hurried away to take care of these concerns of the historically disadvantaged groups and make changes to traditional curriculum. These activities, throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, facilitated to decide multicultural education's earliest idealization (Gay, 1994).

In the 1980s, James Banks, one of the pioneer scholars of multicultural education, examined the schools as social systems from a multicultural society. Multiculturalism is “A philosophical position and movement that deems that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms, the values, the curriculum, and the student body”(Banks, 2005) .

This philosophical notion was the keystone of his idea of multicultural education, with the ambition that every child has an equal opportunity for education, irrespective of his social allegiance. Consequently, multicultural education was the means and the end through which the goals of equity can be realized (Banks, 1989). In the late 1980s, scholars like Carl Grant, Geneva Gay, Christine Sleeter and Sonia Nieto worked on the foundations of multicultural education. By developing deep frameworks ingrained with

the objective of social change and equal opportunity of education, they invented models of education standing on the bedrock of equality, justice, and critical thinking (Banks, 2001).

2.3.1 Multicultural Education in India

The challenge of accommodating the needs of enormous learner diversity has always remained the concern of Indian educators. Due to the increasing regional mobility schools in India are experiencing a diverse population more than ever, thus it is important on the part of the school educators to bring in reforms that meet the needs of the students. Under this section we historically trace the Indian education policy in the context of multicultural education.

Higher Education Commission (1948) emphasized the use of regional language in teaching learning practices. It encourages students to participate in socio-cultural activities so that they may become aware to the needs of society of which they are a part of. The committee on “Concept and Framework of the community college scheme” reported that higher education is not sensitive to the cultural diversity of the country whether it is art, music, handicraft or architecture and that they need promotion.

Secondary Education Commission (1952) highlighted the role of education in understanding the cultural diversity and creating awareness regarding it. It points out that “if a democracy like ours is to survive- a democracy which harbours so many faiths, races, and communities- education must cultivate in our youth an openness of mind and largeness of heart which would make them capable of entertaining and of blending harmonious pattern of differences of ideas and behaviour. It suggested the ways school can create understanding among its citizen. It is possible for every school to do so, not only through the proper presentation of the various school subjects-particularly the humanities and social studies – but also by utilizing resources and opportunities provided by the fact that its students are drawn from different castes, creeds and classes.” This would prepare the student to live harmoniously within the school community and later in the wider community outside the school.

The Indian Education Commission’s (1964-66) report pushed for a “Common School System” for amalgamation of cultural values in the schooling practices. It emphasized the need of school curriculum to be structured in such a manner that it

would bridge the cultural barriers and bring students together irrespective of their differences and provide them education of comparable quality.

National Policy on Education (1986) calls for the building connection between the formal schooling system and the cultural diversity, most essentially in case of countries like India that are diverse to the core. It states that “Deculturalisation, dehumanization and alienation must be avoided at all costs”. It aimed at propagating a understanding among the students of the diverse cultural and social ethos of India. It also stressed on promoting link languages and the translation of a substantial amount of text books into regional languages and publishing a multilingual dictionary. It emphasized the need to reorienting the curriculum and the course content. It said that in a culturally plural society like India, education could prove very important in fostering universal values that are important for promotion of unity in the country.

Programme of Action (POA) 1992 accentuated the importance of linking of education and culture to promote all round development of a child’s personality in terms of discovering the inner potentials. It recommended ensuring steps towards incorporation of diverse images, natural and cultural heritage in the school curricula.

In 1995 the government of India launched a programme to provide nutritional support to students in the line with the idea of universalization of elementary education. The thought behind operation of mid-day meal programme other than child nutrition was advancement of social equity that helps children to sit together and share a common meal.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) a flagship programme launched in 2001 by the central government to provide universal access to basic education for children to attain grade appropriate levels of learning and aimed at eliminating gender differences and gaps within social categories.

It cannot be undermined that the change in the education scenario would large rest on the academic excellence and the professionalism of the teachers. **The Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, (2004)** stressed that the curriculum transaction should be culture specific. “The input derived from cultural anthropology, social psychology and social-linguistics need integration with the educational theories and practices.” It further adds that the unity even in multicultural context of India, the

different ethnic, religious, art and literature should find a significant place in teacher preparation. It emphasized on encouraging teachers to devise culture specific pedagogic practices.

National Curriculum framework (2005) marked that the enormous cultural diversity is one of the greatest gift to the country and we should try to harness as much as knowledge from it. It also added that there is a urgent “need to radically change the center verses periphery perspective on intercultural relationships in our country. Cultures on the so called periphery must receive must attention as cultures in the center. As for education, its implication is that ways of life other than one’s own must be imaginatively and effectively presented as deserving of as much respect as one’s own”.

CABE’s committee report (2005) on the integration of cultural in curriculum, points out that the chalk and talk approach in the class room does not provide students with ample opportunity to develop a multicultural attitude. It does not ensure a space to children to work in groups and learn together. It advocated that children should be encouraged from the beginning only to work in groups so that the any kind of biasness related to grades or gender or any other difference does not gets embedded in their mind rather they are upfront on exploring and solving things collectively. Working collectively promotes tolerance among them to accept the viewpoint of others. It also suggests that the primary and pre-primary education should be imparted in the mother tongue so that the learning experiences of the child are not burdened by the stress to understand an alien language. This ensures that the thought process of the child does not get hindered as it tends happen in the mother tongue. It showed concern regarding increasing the cultural awareness of students towards their peers and that student also lacked an understanding of the strengths of their cultural background, thereby it advocated that the entire schooling should be based on the culture of the community.

National Knowledge Commission (2007) considered that the universalisation of primary education was the corner stone of development and that it would help India into becoming a knowledge society. It advocated that school education should be provided to all and it results into the necessary integration of children from diverse background or any other differences on the basis of disability or gender. It also underlines that there should be no difference in terms of the schooling experiences for children in the government schools based on their diverse socio-economic background.

It further emphasized that that the school system should be flexible enough to accommodate the specific need of students. The commission elaborated on the importance of language as not as a medium of instruction rather a means that affects the rate of participation as well. The commission suggested the introduction of teaching English language and also simultaneously increase the availability of English language teachers.

NCTE (2009) recommended introduction of courses that engage teachers in contemporary issues in a interdisciplinary framework and locates the education process in the socio economic and cultural context with emphasis on accommodating the diversity. It also suggested introduction of practical courses that would also allow the student to understand real context with personal experiences. It also stressed on the fact that pre service training of teachers should draw from immediate classroom context, learner diversity and keep in mind the wider social context.

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) 2009 was enacted in order to provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age group of six to fourteen. Children belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) or educationally backward class, or such groups that have disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economic, geographical factors were ensured education opportunity as important an obligatory on the part of the state as the right to life.

Detachment from the socio cultural milieu is not possible for any education system. The constitution and educational policies in India have tried to provide a balanced model of multiculturalism that inhibits separatist agenda and rather works towards the recognition and representation of diversity. Multicultural education proves to be that one method which could successfully help in eliminating these inequalities and addressing the other shortcomings of the education system. The humongous diversity of India calls for an education system that is reflective of the diversity and is not exclusionary in its approach and respects the learner diversity. Diversity in schools is both an opportunity as well as a challenge. The nation is benefitted by the variety of diversity among its citizens. However, whenever interaction between diverse group also results into conflicts at times. Thus, it is an important imperative on the part of the schools to indulge in practices that respect the diversity of their students as contribute towards creating a unified nation state for which all the citizens have allegiance.

2.4 Theoretical foundation for Multicultural Education

While exploring the theoretical framework as propounded by James Banks, firstly the principles and the goals of multicultural education will be outlined. Secondly the theories schools as a social system briefly and the dimensions of multicultural education would be analyzed in depth.

2.4.1 Principles and Goals of Multicultural Education

In this section I aim to outline the different goals of multicultural education given by several authors. The various goals outlined are,

- Banks (1997) defined it as an educational reform movement that is reflective of the diversity in the society as well as the classrooms of the country.
- Nieto & Bode (2008) term it as an important for all education that helps in achieving social justice and is rooted in critical pedagogy.
- Nieto (2009) calls it an education that moves beyond the walls of the classroom to implicate social changes.
- Sleeter & Grant (1987) call the teacher an agent of school change and that education needs to be social Reconstructionist and multicultural in order to teach the different and exceptional.
- McCann (2003) states that multicultural education promotes equity and achievement for every child specially those coming from communities that have been historically underserved.
- Grant (2001) explains that multicultural education dress the unique needs of a culturally diverse students and ensures equity and social justice.

The idea behind multicultural education is to create equal opportunities of education for each child irrespective of their association to any community based on the categories of “gender, ethnicity, race, culture, language, social class, religion, or exceptionality”. It aims at improving the opportunity of education by changing the school environment so that it becomes reflective of the diversity. In the words of Banks (2010) “Multicultural education is a process because the idealized goals it tries to actualize can never be fully achieved in human society. A major goal of multicultural education is to help students to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and the skills needed to function

within their own micro cultures, the U.S. macro cultures, other micro cultures, and the global community”.

2.4.2 School as a social system

“The school as a social system represents one part of the human habitat of students, teachers, special service personnel, and administrators. It is created and controlled for the purpose of enabling young people to become more effective in the life situations in which they must participant” (Jensen, 1954). More so he also stated that “the school in its social aspects represents a system of human interaction in which the participants--in this case, students, teachers, special service personnel, public representatives, and possibly parents--are oriented by expectations concerning individual rights and obligations. In accordance with these expectations, which are based on the value standards shared by members of the system, each member tries to establish and maintain an optimum balance between the possible gratifications and lack of fulfilment of his needs”

Banks (2004) recommended that in order to successfully implement multicultural education, the school system should be conceptualised as a social system in which all the major variables are interdependent. The idea of viewing the school as social system would help the planners to draw ideas of school reform activities(Banks, 2009, p26) and would lead to successful intervention towards improving the academic achievement of students from all backgrounds (Lee, 2007) and also develop democratic social behaviour and values (Banks and Banks, 2004; Stephan and Vogt, 2004).

The requirement to conceptualize a school as a social system is dependent on initiating a change strategy by education planners that is able to reform the whole school environment and leads to unobstructed implementation of multicultural education (Banks, 2009, p26). The fore in order to create an effective and sustainable multicultural education change should take place in each and every variable.

The school system clearly marks that very single or two or more variable form the basic components of multicultural education. The school environment, hidden curriculum, policy and culture form the part of the element of empowering school culture. It can also be said that it is not necessary that all the variable fit in one dimension, some can

equally be a part of two or more components of multicultural education. Likewise, according to my understanding the essence of all the dimensions of multicultural education is also to an extent overlapping.

2.4.3 Dimensions of multicultural education

Banks (2004) states that “Multicultural education is a broad concept with several different components”. He marks that “practicing educators can use the dimensions as a guide to school reform when trying to implement multicultural education”.

The five dimensions of multicultural education are

- Content integration
- Knowledge construction process
- Prejudice reduction
- Equity pedagogy
- Empowering school culture

The five dimensions of multicultural education as pointed out by Banks prove to be an essential guide while categorizing literature on multicultural education as well as analysing them. These dimensions could also be used as a guideline for the process of school reform and explore if the functioning of the school and process of promoting multicultural education.

(1) Content integration

Banks (2004) explained content integration as “the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, generalizations, and issues within their subject areas or disciplines”. It was also pointed by Bank (2004) that multicultural education should not be only seen as content integration as most of the studies perceive. He explains how this belief forms a major part of the ignorance of science and maths teachers. He explains that multicultural education is more about how we transmit knowledge and not what is contained in the curriculum. Thus under this dimensions teachers are encouraged to integrate several

diverse approaches in the curriculum stressing on positive multicultural attitude, which would encourage students to develop critical thinking and explore ideas that are new, diverse and enriching.

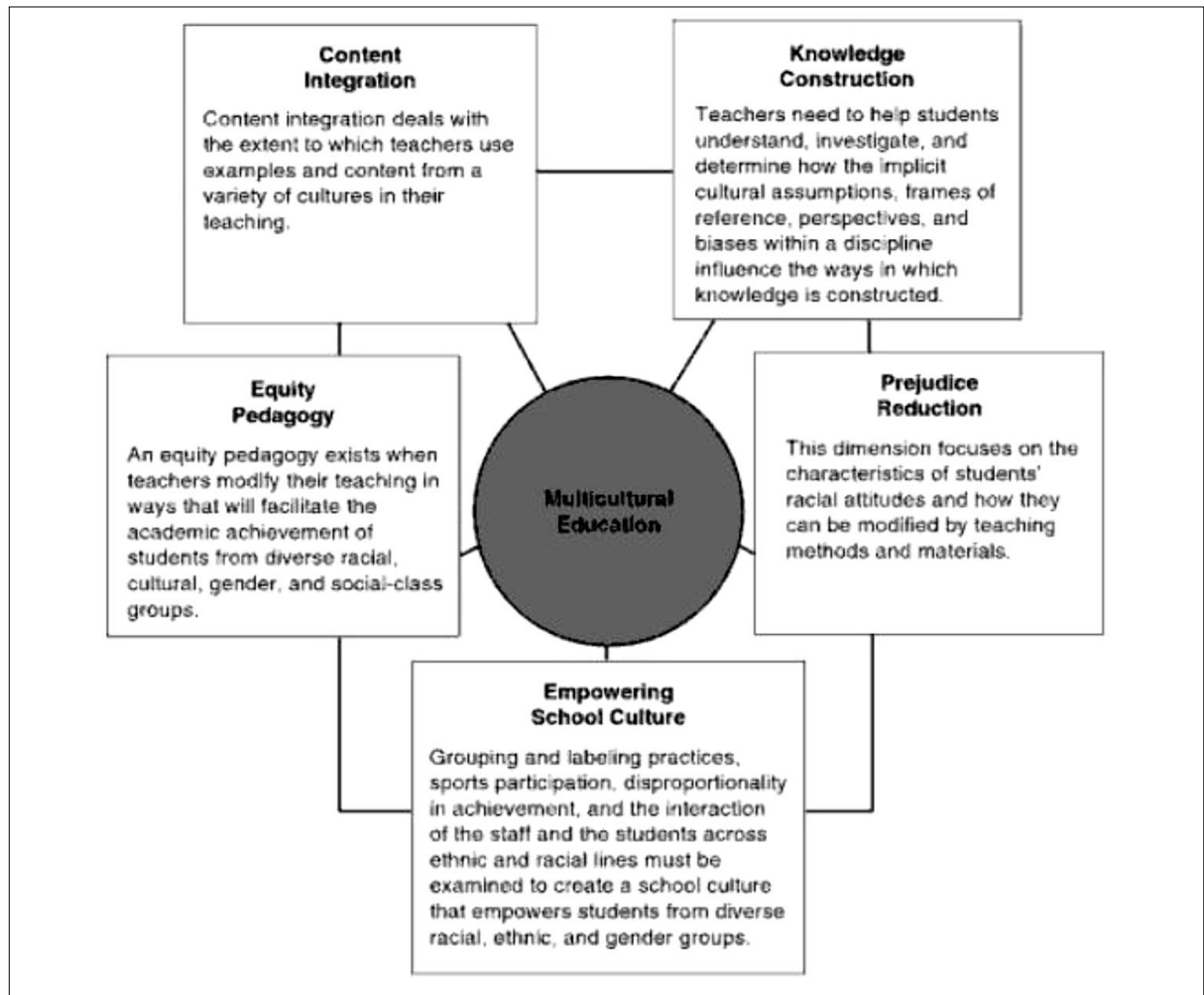
(2) Knowledge construction process

Banks (1995) explains the knowledge construction process as to “how teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the biases, frames of reference, and perspectives within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it”. Under the dimension student is also taught to construct knowledge by themselves without any prior prejudices conditioning them.

Multicultural teaching does not only incorporate ethnic content in the curriculum rather it also focuses on changing the structure of school knowledge and invigorating it with knowledge that is diverse and new. It also consist of changing the manner in which teachers and students interact and envision knowledge and visualises student as also knowledge producers not only knowledge consumers (Banks, 1996).

For the purpose of this research, the ambit of knowledge construction is being broadened. In order to see how the knowledge is constructed, the gap between the real life and schooling system needs to be bridged; which is possible only when students and teachers have discussion about different cultures, and they affect our understanding, our construction of knowledge in real life.

Figure 2.1: Dimensions of Multicultural Education



Source: *Multicultural education: Issues and Perspectives*, (Banks, 2010)

(3) Prejudice reduction

Prejudice reduction includes practices and learning by students that help them to rightfully modify their behaviour and attitude and embrace diversity without prejudices. It incorporates activities that help students develop a positive attitude. Studies in this direction have indicated that students bring to school their negative perception or strong beliefs regarding various communities. Banks (1995) suggests that in such a situation teaching content about diverse racial and ethnic groups could facilitate students to incorporate more positive attitudes. Stephan and Vogt (2004) said that this particular dimension encourages students to “develop democratic racial attitudes”. It provides students with perspective on how ethnicities are affected in the context of schooling subjected to the beliefs and practices of the dominant group.

(4) Equity Pedagogy

Equity pedagogy are means and manners of teaching improvised and adapted by the teacher keeping in view the learner diversity that will augment the academic achievement of the student. Banks (2009) cites Kleinfeld (1975) described equity pedagogy as “using a variety of teaching styles and approaches that are consistent with the learning characteristics of various culture and ethnic groups and being demanding but highly personalized when working with students such as Native Americans and Native Alaskans”. It accommodates learning styles which are supportive and flexible in maths and science teaching that help to improve the achievement of minority students.

In several studies like Gay (2000); Lee(2007) and many other cultural theorists have pointed out that the communicative styles of the teachers as well as the identities are often in conflict with the communicative styles of the students coming from the marginalised sections. Therefore building equity pedagogy by teachers often requires them to use instructional materials and activities that incorporate the specificities based on community and family characteristics. A culturally aware teacher as Gay (2000) points out uses “cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.”

(5) Empowering school culture

Bank (2004) explained that in order to create an empowering school culture and social structure the management and the organisation of the school should be reformed in a manner that facilitates students from diverse background to also experience equality. In this process of changing and restructuring the organisation of the school the school teachers play the most important role.

Banks (2009) culls out “grouping and labelling practices, sports participation, gaps in achievement among groups, different rates of enrolment in gifted and special education programs among groups, and the interaction of the staff and students across ethnic and racial lines are important variables that are examined and reformed.” Under this dimension there is a demand to create relationships on a different level and means of

different communicative way which are sensitive to the emotional needs of the child. This dimension provides the school with opportunity of reform through by collective planning and also shared governance and responsibility of the school which includes all parents, teachers and the school staff equally (Banks, 2009). An empowering school should empower the individual such that it imbibes values of pluralism and a sense of citizenship is developed. For this research, empowering school culture and social structure shall encompass aspects of diversity appreciation, national integration and pluralistic values so that we could create an empowering, equitable and knowledgeable society.

While concluding the theoretical framework it becomes important to point out what Foster (1990) argued and more importantly cannot be ignored and rather is an important condition before the dimensions of multicultural education are worked upon. He pointed out that “there are two principles at the heart of multicultural and anti-racist education, which are firstly equality of opportunity, and secondly how we work towards the realization of a multicultural society. As I understand, equality of opportunity includes both equal access to school and equal treatments after being enrolled. Therefore, it would be meaningless talking about the reform movements within schools if students are enrolled unequally”. Thus it is important to keep in mind the dimensions propounded for multicultural education to be successful but the precondition to it is accessibility and equality of opportunity to at least reach the school in the first place.

2.5 Current scenario of multicultural education in India and abroad

Let’s examine some specific case studies and researches which shall help us understand the scenario multicultural education in India and abroad.

In a scientific research study conducted by Ogo Okoye-Johnson (2011), studying the effectiveness of multicultural education on the racial mind-set of students from prekindergarten to the twelfth grade it was found that multicultural education has several beneficial measurable impacts. He concluded on the basis of his research study that; “The effect sizes of curricular intervention and reinforcement dimensions of multicultural education in suburban and urban settings among age groups 3-8 and 9- 16 were compared to see the relative effectiveness of multicultural education on students' racial attitudes. The mean effect size of 0.488 from a total of 60 effect sizes calculated using 30 studies shows that exposure to multicultural education led to a reduction in

students' racial attitudes. However, the mean effect size of 0.645 from curricular intervention studies was higher than the mean effect size of the reinforcement studies at 0.08, indicating that the curricular intervention dimension of multicultural education was more effective in reducing students' racial attitudes". In the school where he conducted the study Multicultural education was imparted as curriculum content specifically based on discussing racial and cultural diversity.

Kurrien (1983) while studying elementary education in India quotes a study that was conducted by the Homi Bhaba Centre for Science Education (HBCSE), Mumbai, - and the findings of which suggested that "when teachers were aware of the linguistic difficulties of first generation students and were given specific guidance to overcome disabilities, the performance and participation of students in the classroom improved". The HBCSE consequently carried out a programme to better the achievement of SC/ST students in the secondary school board examinations. There were 33 students selected who had an average of 40 per cent upto class eight from the Bombay municipal corporation schools. It was found that with some differential pedagogic input of just two and a half hours a week for about 30 days in a year, improved the performance of the students to 80% in the board examinations. Thus, the paper very well establishes the fact that when dalit and other 'educationally backward' pupils are provided with learning opportunities as well as effective pedagogic supports to acquire specific language, numerical and other competencies, they perform better; thereby highlighting the importance of incorporating equity pedagogy. The paper highlights the issue in adoption of varied pedagogical practices more suitable to needs of students belonging to these subgroups.

Nambissan (1996) draws attention to the importance of learning environment on the education of children. She specifically studies the effect of formal learning environment on the dalit pupils. She argues that other than poor infrastructural facilities, it is the lack of effective pedagogy that would have supported linguistic and cognitive competencies unfavourably affects the education of dalit children. She marks that despite active encouragement from poor family members, it is the apathetic treatment by teachers and school staff that largely shape the learning experiences of these marginalised children. She further elaborates that inadequate inputs (including teaching) and consequently the poor quality of education has meant that "the vast potential for children to benefit from

early learning is barely tapped.” On the other hand, the paper also depicts that there can be significant improvement through conscious efforts at pedagogy. The paper again marks the how the education system suited to the needs of mainstream population and unaccommodative to the needs of the minority diverse population can play a hazardous role of destroying the potential of these students. It brings out the discouragement students from culturally diverse backgrounds face at each level of schooling ultimately leading them to dropout.

Most of the studies (Sachidananda 1967; Sujatha 1987, 1992; Talesara 1989) have pointed out that teachers from the non-tribal society do not know the tribal culture, life, ethos and language and therefore, there is a wide gulf in interaction between the teacher and the student. Teacher's behaviour also determines students' enrolment and dropout.

Bennett (2001) in her article tries to bring out a conceptual framework of research genres that illustrate the complex multidisciplinary roots of multicultural education. The paper provides an important outlook to researchers and teachers on how they should redesign the process of teaching and learning, the method of enquiry and critical thinking to teaching practitioners going to enter the field of multicultural education.

Bindu (2014) in her paper on the quality of education in the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh elaborates through her primary study that Medium of instruction is one of the issues faced by the tribal children. Tribal children usually speak their mother tongue. When it comes to the school, they always feel the burden of learning mainstream languages such as Telugu, English, and Hindi and most of the time they leave the school since they become unable to understand the course content after a given level. The paper also highlights how the lack of teaching learning materials has also affected the successful integration of multicultural education system.

2.6 Research Gap

The research gap reveals the extensive lack of studies that study the level of awareness among students regarding diversity and different dimensions of multiculturalism. There is an absolute dearth of studies that have ventured into understanding the level of knowledge regarding diversity in students through the current curricular framework and course design. This thesis will make a contribution to evidence by highlighting not only the gaps at the policy level but also what the school practices on the ground reflect; and,

further, try to recommend ways in which schools can become more inclusive and make the perspective of students regarding culture more broadened, unbiased and vigorous.

2.7 Summary and Conclusion

The literature review has helped us understand the concept and meaning of culture, origins of multiculturalism in the world and India, the consequent beginning of multicultural education as a means to protect and grant equal rights to cultural minorities in the increasing wave of domination by the mainstream and the powerful cultures. In one sense multicultural education is a way to advance the need of students coming from different sociocultural backgrounds, it is also found that multicultural education aims at solving the larger equity issues of a diverse society at large. The plethora of literature has indicated the manifold and the larger goals of multicultural education that emerge beyond the boundaries of school.

The review depicts that the studies on multicultural education draw from a wide range of fields and methodologies. The sources of this review itself entail literature from journals of psychology, ethnic studies, history and political science, and education. These studies are quantitative and qualitative as well as anecdotal. The literature review reveals the vast majority of research organized around the dimensions of multicultural education given by James Banks, who is considered the “Father of the Multicultural Education”. The theoretical outline of different dimensions of multicultural education by James Banks gives ample scope to study and examine the multicultural aspects in the policies and practices.

The review presents wide range of researches; from scientific tests on students’ academic performance to studies that have lasted years, to studies that have historically traced the evolution of multicultural education. However the existing nascent research does indicate the need to study the integration of policies and practices, particularly in the case of India, as it has hardly received the scholarly attention it deserved.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

“A research strategy entails a broad orientation to social research, and the research design “represents a structure that guides the execution of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data” (Bryman, 2008). Varied research strategies fulfil varied purpose; there is no single approach to obtain significant findings and results. However, Bryman (2008) noted that there are two widely used and dominating research strategies used in social science research which are namely the quantitative and the qualitative research strategies. Both the strategies comprise different methods to social investigation and bring with them essential epistemological and ontological consideration.

Bryman (2008) categorizes quantitative research methods as an idiosyncratic research strategy. He explained it “as entailing the collection of numerical data, as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive and a predilection for a natural science approach (and of positivism in particular), and as having an objectivist conception of social reality”.

However in the case of qualitative research methods tend to differ significantly from quantitative research methods. It is concerned more with words, meanings and subjectivity than quantified numbers or values Bryman (2008). There are three particularly noteworthy features as pointed by Bryman (2008).

1. Qualitative research method undertakes an inductive approach and moves in the direction of theory formulation.
2. It involves an interpretivist commitment which requires researchers to unearth the hidden connotations of specific social processes.
3. It adopts a constructivist approach, which represent the analysis of social reality as a continuously shifting and emergent’s from individual action.

Besides these two methods, mixed research strategy had become increasingly predominant in the early 1980s. Mixed methods generally are investigative methodologies that take into account both quantitative and qualitative research tools.

The current study applies the qualitative research strategy for three primary reasons;

Firstly, the primary reason is to understand the policies in the context of multicultural education and investigate the ways in which a school dedicated to multicultural education is practising it in reality. It is pointed out by Bryman (2008) that a qualitative research represents “static view of social life that is independent of people’s lives”, but it also views social life as a process marking a strong sense of dynamism and flux. Therefore, it is evident that qualitative methods can be useful to examine the process of policies formulation, and implementation.

Secondly, the study investigates the schooling experiences of students of school situated in a multicultural setting and having students from diverse background. The qualitative research method is predominantly helpful while accumulating data on subjective perceptions and experience. It is very importantly pointed by Bryman (2008) that the primary preoccupations of qualitative researchers should be to understand from the point of view of the people that are being considered.

Thirdly, this research makes an attempt to examine the policies and their implementation from a comprehensive perspective. Thereby qualitative research provides an opportunity to do a detailed study of the setting that is investigated, and takes into account the context which modifies the behaviour of the people (Bryman, 2008).

3.2 Research Context and Participants

The research strategy of this study was based on both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources were largely employed to find out existing research in the area. The secondary sources were drawn from several journals, books, online databases from the field of education and sociology. The materials collected were evaluated on the basis of their significance in the area of multicultural education and recency and also tracing historical evolution of the reform movement.

Bryman (2008) explained that “most samplings in qualitative research entail purposive sampling of some kind”. Sampling that is not random and the participants are carefully

chosen with respect to the requirements of the study is defined as purposive sampling. Under purposive sampling, people, organisations, sites are selected and the researcher is expected to be clear with the evaluation criteria. Bryman (2008) pointed out that, sampling issues are intricately associated to the units of analysis.

School Setting: Due to paucity of time, the research focuses on one particular school. The school chosen is a charitable trust school in semi-urban location in Delhi named Yoga Way Public School. Since the school has very low fee, it's accessible to students of all socio-economic backgrounds.

Sample Size: A sample size of 26 eighth grade students was taken using purposive sampling.

Students' Profile: The age of group of students lied in 13-15 years. There were 17 boys and 9 girls in the sample. All the students belonged to low income families as informed by the principal (since students' didn't have a clear idea of their family income). Though parents of some children belonged to the state of Bihar but they migrated to Delhi long back, and all the students were either born or came too early to Delhi for education. Out of 26 students, 14 belonged to the SC Category, 10 belonged to the General category and 2 belonged to the OBC Category.

3.3 Research methods

Research methods are means of collecting data. In the words of Bryman (2008) "It can involve a specific instrument, such as a self-completion questionnaire or structured interview schedule, or participant observation, etc". Thus the two major research methods adopted by the study to fulfil its objectives was content analysis of the documents and focus group discussion with students. It is found that multiple methods are useful in pointing out complementarities and contradictions.

3.3.1 Document analysis

The term document can refer to variety of different kind of sources which can range from personal documents such as letter, papers, and diaries to photographs; and then they also connote official government documents like plan of action, policy document,

the constitution, the rulebook etc. The various documents analysed in the study to achieve its objectives were the national education policy 1968, the national education policy 1986, the national curriculum framework 2005 and the national education policy 2019.

The most widespread approach of analyzing documents is the qualitative content analysis. As for evidence Bryman (2008) quotes Atkinson and Coffey “that rather than viewing documents as ways of gaining access to an underlying reality, documents should be viewed as a distinct level of ‘reality’ in their own right, though it is tempting so assume that documents reveal something about an underlying social reality, so that the documents that an organization generates (minutes of the meetings, newsletters, mission statements, job definitions, etc.) are viewed as representations of the reality of that organization”

In this study, initially all the official documents by the government of India advocating for multicultural approach to education was briefly analysed and then these were analysed under the various dimensions of multicultural education, that is to what extent the policies are informed of the theoretical basis of multicultural education and whether they draw from it or not. Later, evaluation of policies and practices on each dimension of multicultural education is done, which facilitates the discussion on the question of whether the practices are informed by the policies on multicultural education.

3.3.2 Focus Group Discussion with students

As there was a paucity amount of time allocated to me in the school and students didn't respond well in personal interviews without proper rapport building, therefore, the focussed group discussion was a suitable method to study the issue at hand. The data is collected through Focused Group Discussions. 5 groups were made; 4 groups had 5 students each and one group had 6 students. Students in every group were asked to sit in a circle facing each other. The researcher acted as the moderator as well as observer. A recorder was used to record the discussion.

3.4 Procedure of Data Analysis

After a brief review of all the official documents related to multicultural education, I returned to the research objectives of my study and tried to organise them categorically. A tabular framework listing a policy according to the various categories of multicultural

education was formulated which recorded the deficiencies and the included aspects. The data was coded from the extensive notes and observations made during the focused group discussions in the school with the children. After having done this the findings and the conclusions from the policy review were tried to be located within the policy framework and understood. Various narratives by students were also recorded and taken note for analysing the prejudices students face or harbour.

3.5 Reliability and validity of data

While explaining about the essential need of reliability and validity of a research study Bryman (2008) said that “reliability and validity are important criteria in establishing and assessing the quality of research for the quantitative researcher, as well as they are for the qualitative research with little change of meaning, and they are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm”. Therefore validity of a research connotes the extent to which the findings of the study can be generalised or the appropriateness of the methods used to extract the results.

In a qualitative research there are primarily only two variants of validity, first one being external validity and the second one is internal validity.

Internal validity takes into observation the amount of coherence between the findings observed by the researcher and they theoretical ideas that they conceptualize. In order to be in alignment of this concern of the research, the objectives of the research were formulated in such a manner that they tend to correspond well with the purpose of the research.

External validity can be explained as that part of reliability of the findings of the study which refers to the degree or extent to which the findings can place in the wider social context. The wider applicability of my research guided me to adopt the Banks framework for analysis of the inclusion of multicultural education in policy and practice, I am confident that my research findings have wider acceptability in context of many Indian schools and colleges. I also hope that the recommendations of this research could also be used, in a wider social context for promoting a culturally diverse environment, rather than only in schools.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Bryman (2008) recommended that ethical issues should not be ignored as they are the reflection of the integrity of piece of research and the disciplinary confines in which it has been studied. The discussion on ethical consideration in social sciences research revolve around four major issues as explained by Diener and Crandall (1978, as cited in Bryman, 2008): 1. If there was any harm to the participant; 2. Whether informed consent was taken; 3.If there was any breach of privacy; and 4. If there was any kind of deception with the participants.

I accessed school with the help of the reference letter from the NIEPA. The research is specifically focuses on firstly, the practices taking place in one particular school and secondly the name of the school was important in order to explain about the locality in which it is situated, hence the name of the school can be hardly kept anonymous and written permission by the school principal was obtained for that. The anonymity of the participants in their opinions while the focussed group discussion was maintained which helped them freely share their views and opinions but the while studying and hearing the narratives of the students regarding prejudices the anonymity had to be compromised in order to situate the participants own social background while considering his or her narrative. The students were informed regarding the purpose and goals of the research and the further discussions were carried on with their consent.

Chapter 4: Policy Analysis

4.1. Introduction

Post-independence the India's immediate focus was on secondary and higher education; thereby, setting up University Education Commission (also known as Radhakrishnan Commission) 1948-49 and the secondary education commission (Mudaliar Commission) 1952-53. However, the most significant commission was the Kothari Commission 1964-66; which was followed by the first National Policy on Education 1968. The next National Policy on Education came in 1986, which was revised in 1992 on recommendations of the Ramamurthy Committee 1990-92 and Janardhan Reddy Committee 1991-92.

Multicultural education has found its place in Indian education policies in bits and pieces. This study attempts to trace its inclusion in various policies, particularly in the National Education Policies of 1968, 1986 and draft National Policy on Education 2019 by examining these policies in the context of dimensions of multicultural education given by James Banks which are explained in detail in Chapter 2. The policies are analysed by searching for *meaning* of the key concepts rather than focusing on the key words and terms.

4.2. Kothari Commission 1966

India's literacy was around 30% and accessibility was still a big question in 1960s. Therefore, accessibility was the big focus. The Kothari Commission report is an important precursor to the National Policy Education 1968. The report does talk about multicultural education without a direction mention of it. For instance, the commission identifies the need to develop cultural appreciation:

“mutual understanding of and respect for the culture, traditions and ways of life of different sections of the nation” (p. 13)

The report also talks about national integration when it says:

“Social and national integration is crucial to the creation of a strong, united country, which is an essential pre-condition for all progress” (p. 13)

The commission identified the social segregation being prevalent in society and recommended a common schooling system to counter the segregation.

“In a situation of the type we have in India, it is the responsibility of the educational system to bring the different social classes and groups together and thus promote the emergence of an egalitarian and integrated society. But at present instead of doing so, education itself is tending to increase social segregation and to perpetuate and widen class distinctions” (p. 14)

The commission identified cultural diversity as strength and recommended education spaces to take advantage of it.

“the population of India consists of persons who profess different religions, speak different languages, belong to different races, castes, classes and communities. It is precisely in such a situation that democracy can make its most significant contribution. A healthy development of democratic trends will help to soften the impact of this division into social, economic and cultural groups. The task is admittedly difficult; but it can convert the differences of language, cultural pattern, religion, etc., into the warp and woof of a very rich and rewarding social and cultural life” (p. 25)

The commission suggested community living in schools and colleges. In order to provide important experience, students should be given opportunities to feel closer to the community and develop mutual respect.

4.2.1. National Policy on Education 1968

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1968 delineated 17 principles for the development of education in the country. Those principles are briefly outlined below:

1. Free and Compulsory Education:

Immediate and intense efforts should be made to realize the directive principle under Article 45 of the Constitution that requires state to provide free and compulsory education to every child up to the age of 14. It was stressed that every child should be enrolled in schools at the earliest.

2. Status, Emoluments and Education of Teachers:

Teachers are the backbone of the education system. They should be honoured with adequate emolument and status in the society. Teacher education should be received due emphasis and rights of teachers to pursue independent studies, write and publish on various national and international issues must be protected.

3. Development of languages:

The development of Indian languages is indispensable for the educational and cultural development of the country. It was recommended that the way regional languages are a medium of instruction at the primary and secondary level of education, strenuous efforts should be made to make regional languages medium of instruction at the university stage. It was also recommended that Hindi, Sanskrit and International languages get promoted. Also, the use of three-language formula was emphasized: Use of a modern Indian language, apart from English and Hindi in the Hindi-speaking states, and of Hindi, English and regional language in the Non-Hindi-speaking states.

4. Equalization of Educational opportunity:

- a. Provisions should be made to equalize the Educational opportunity across different regions.
- b. Adequate facilities need to be provided in rural and other backward areas.
- c. Intense efforts should be made to improve education levels among girls, people with disability and backward classes, especially the tribal groups.

5. Identification of Talent:

Talent across different streams should be identified as early as possible and should be given right opportunities and support for development.

6. Work Experience and National Service:

For character formation and developing social commitment, work experience and national service should be made an integral part of the school education; programmes for community development should be strengthened.

7. Science Education and Research:

Special emphasis needs to be put on the sciences and mathematics which will help in growing the economy of the country.

8. Education for Agriculture and Industry:

Development of education should be such that it caters to the agriculture and industry. In every state, there should be at least one agricultural university. And, industry training should be made an integral part of the technical education.

9. Production of Books:

The quality of books needs to be improved by employing best writing talent through providing attractive incentives and remuneration. University books in regional languages and children books ought to be given special attention.

10. Examinations:

It is important to improve the reliability and the validity of examinations, and to incorporate a comprehensive and continuous evaluation which aims at improving the achievement levels of students.

11. Secondary Education:

Secondary education is a tool of social transformation, and every effort should be made to promote secondary education in areas where it is still inaccessible. Provisions for technical and vocational education should be increased and diversified to cover a number of fields such as home management, industry, agriculture, trade and commerce, etc.

12. University Education:

Ensuring proper standards, efforts should be made to start new universities with provision of proper funding and resources. In order to improve the standards of

research and training, efforts should be made in the organizing of postgraduate courses.

13. Part-time Education and Correspondence Courses:

At the university stage, part time education and correspondence courses should be promoted on a large scale. This will provide opportunities to people who want to educate themselves but are unable to do on a full time basis. And the part time education should be given the same status as full time education.

14. Spread of literacy and adult education

It is vital for the literacy levels to increase across people of different domains and regions. Adult education can have a significant impact for incrementing literacy levels. Training youth for self employment and education of young practising farmers should receive special emphasis.

15. Games and Sports:

In order to improve the physical fitness and sportsmanship of the average student sports and games should receive adequate cognizance. Facilities should be provided to build a nationwide programme of physical education.

16. Education of Minorities:

Educational interests of the minorities should be protected and promoted.

17. The Educational Structure:

The 10+2+3 pattern should be adopted across the states. Having a uniform educational structure will be advantageous.

Indian population across its lengths and breadths is visibly diverse. Having an educational structure which speaks of embedding this diversity is significant. However, the National Policy on Education 1968 touches aspects of multicultural education scarcely.

The policy expresses concern about protecting the rights of minorities and promoting their educational interests. The excerpt from the policy:

“Every effort should be made not only to protect the rights of minorities but to promote their educational interests as suggested in the statement issued by the Conference of the Chief Ministers of States and Central Ministers held in August, 1961.”

The policy exclaims that “a radical reconstruction of education” is required for the economic and cultural development of the country, and national integration.

“The Government of India is convinced that a radical reconstruction of education on broad lines recommended by the education commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realising the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society.”

“..in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening the national integration.”

The policy has emphasized on the development of Indian languages and its literature.

“The energetic development of Indian languages and literature is a sine qua non for educational and cultural development. Unless this is done, the creative energies of the people will not be released, standards of education will not improve, knowledge will not spread to the people and the gulf between the intelligentsia and masses will remain if not widen further. The regional languages are already in use as media of education at the primary and secondary stages. Urgent steps should be now taken to adopt them as media of education at the university stage.”

The Policy particularly emphasizes on development of Hindi.

“Every effort should be made to promote the development of Hindi. In developing Hindi as the link language, due care should be taken to ensure that it will serve, as provided for in Article 351 of the Constitution, as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India. The establishment, in non-Hindi states, of colleges and other institutions of higher education which use Hindi, as the medium of instruction should be encouraged.”

4.3. National Policy on Education 1986-92

The National Policy of 1968 was an important development in post independence India not just in the field of education but overall. The aims and objectives of the policy were sense of common citizenship, national integration and national development. It emphasized for a complete overhaul of the Indian education system with focus on science and technology, cultivation of moral values and better interpersonal relationships.

However, there was a need to revisit the National Policy on Education and another policy was formulated in 1986, which was revised in 1992 based on recommendations of Ramamurthy committee and Janardhan Reddy committee.

NPE 1986 identified education's role of acculturation and national integration.

“Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit - thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution.” (p. 4)

The policy advocated a National System of Education which makes sure that up to a certain level, students of all castes, creed and location have access to quality education. Also, understanding of different cultures and social systems was emphasized.

“Steps will also be taken to foster among students an understanding of the diverse cultural and social systems of the people living in different parts of the country” (p. 6)

It pointed the need to remove disparities and equalize education opportunities for those who were denied equality thus far.

“The new Policy will lay special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far” (p. 7)

The policy had particularly mentioned about the scheduled tribes and the distinctive characteristics of their socio-cultural milieu:

“The socio-cultural milieu of the STs has its distinctive characteristics, including, in many cases, their own spoken languages. This underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise instructional materials in tribal languages at the initial stages, with arrangements for switching over to the regional language” (p. 9)

The gap between the formal system of education and the country’s cultural heritage needs to be bridged.

“The existing schism between the formal system of education and the country’s rich and varied cultural traditions need to be bridged.” (p. 26)

The policy emphasized on including cultural content as much as possible. It suggested identifying resource persons in the community who could potentially contribute to the cultural enrichment of education.

“The curricula and processes of education will be enriched by cultural content in as many manifestations as possible. Children will be enabled to develop sensitivity to beauty, harmony and refinement. Resource persons in the community, irrespective of their formal educational qualifications, will be invited to contribute to the cultural enrichment of education, employing both the literate and oral traditions of communication” (p. 26)

Further, policy laid the importance of fostering universal values towards integration of people.

“In our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism” (p. 27)

It also pointed out the need to create culturally compatible programmes.

“The generation of relevant and culturally compatible educational programmes will form an important component of educational technology” (p. 28)

4.4. The National Curriculum Framework (2005)

“Education must be able to promote values that foster peace, humaneness and tolerance in a multicultural society.” (p. 2).

The national curriculum framework begins with acknowledging the fact that India is a multicultural society and that for a country as diverse as India the most important goal of providing education needs to be developing a sense of tolerance for other cultures as harmonious coexistence is one of the foundational needs on the path of economic development. In his study on multicultural education Dr. Blis (2008) had pointed out that both conflict resolvers and champions of human rights find that prevention is a much better way to resolve conflicts that are violent and are based on ethnic cultural and social issues where political tensions run high and thereby multicultural education providing the best possible prevention.

“In this context, disadvantages in education arising from inequalities of gender, caste, language, culture, religion or disabilities need to be addressed directly, not only through policies and schemes but also through the design and selection of learning tasks and pedagogic practices, right from the period of early childhood.” (p. 5).

The national curriculum framework does not fail to acknowledge the disadvantages of following a mainstream education system that leads to arising inequities based on gender, caste, language, culture, religion and disability. It talks about the direct targeting of these inequities through the approaches to multicultural education as given by James Bank which explicitly focuses on knowledge construction and content integration and pedagogic practices to be multi-culturally inclusive and start these practices in school from the period of early childhood.

“Curriculum design must reflect the commitment to Universal Elementary Education (UEE), not only in representing cultural diversity, but also by ensuring that children from different social and economic backgrounds with variations in physical, psychological and intellectual characteristics are able to learn and achieve success in school.” (p. 5).

The point emphasized here by the National Curriculum Framework (2005) tries to draw from the equity pedagogy where by the instructional methods are framed in such a

manner that they are equally effective to the level of capabilities possessed by students from different background. It emphasizes on the fact that in a classroom all the students are learning at an equal pace, no one child is in a position of disadvantage because of his or her socio cultural affiliations.

“Education often plays a passive or even insidious role, allowing young minds to be indoctrinated into a culture of intolerance, which denies the fundamental importance of human sentiments and the noble truths discovered by different civilisations. Building a culture of peace is an incontestable goal of education.” (p. 6).

The national curriculum framework by stating the aforesaid arguments underlines the importance of education in a multicultural society. If historically seen the National Curriculum Framework (2005) is one of the most important policy document that argues for the case of implementation of multicultural education in schools. The world has been a witness to several conflicts and several of them still continuing within the country or outside globally, the call for peace can only be fruitful if there is a common agreement on the peaceful coexistence of all the cultures of the world and not one trying to dominate or subjugate the other. Therefore the National Curriculum Framework (2005) successfully recognises and sates the importance of multicultural education in the most emphasizing way.

“India is a multicultural society made up of numerous regional and local cultures. People’s religious beliefs, ways of life and their understanding of social relationships are quite distinct from one another. All the groups have equal rights to co-exist and flourish, and the education system needs to respond to the cultural pluralism inherent in our society.” (p. 7).

The above statement marks a reassurance that the primary goals of the Indian education system have to be in coherence with constitutional principles that provide right to equality to every individual irrespective of their differences in any terms.

“We need to train teachers to help them cultivate an understanding of the cultural and socio-economic diversity that children bring with them to school.” (p. 23).

The NCF clearly recognises the difference on the level of the community and even family, therefore it asked the teachers to develop instructional material which are

informed with these differences and fruitfully cater to the needs of the children. The NCF (2005) clearly understands this problem and there marks an important procedural need of training teachers to understand and manage the diverse needs of children.

“For education to remain a nurturing experience for all children, irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, concrete steps are needed in teacher education, curriculum, and in the procedures used for syllabus and textbook preparation” (p. 103).

The curriculum framework here specifically talks about the knowledge construction dimension of multicultural education whereby it encourages teachers to develop a pedagogy such that the students are able to look at the knowledge through their different perspective and make additions and critiques rather than the a imposes perspective.

“There are several linguistic and sociolinguistic features that are shared across languages that bear witness to the fact that different languages and cultures have coexisted in India for centuries, enriching each other.” (p. 36).

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) here emphasizes the connection that we need to draw between the cultures. It highlights the importance of linking every kind of diversity instead of seeing them in isolation which would simply help students in understanding the importance of coexistence and how every culture is interdependent for its survival and enrichment.

“Experiences of the socio-cultural world also need to become a part of the curriculum. Children need to find examples of the plurality of peoples and ways of life represented in the textbooks. These portrayals need to ensure that no community is oversimplified, labelled, or judged” (p. 32).

The policy here specifically talks about the first dimension of multicultural education, which is the content integration.

“The need to integrate art education in the formal schooling of our students now requires urgent attention if we are to retain our unique cultural identity in all its diversity and richness. Celebrate the cultural and religious diversity of India in schools.” (p. 54).

The NCF (2005) goes a long way for preserving and safeguarding cultures by making this statement as it highlights how there is an urgent need of mainstreaming art education into formal schooling. Art education tries to capture the unique expressions of a culture and art education can be an important way of propagating such expressions and ideas.

“In elite schools, children do not take on any such responsibilities, and cleaning activities are often meted out as ‘punishments’ for misdemeanours. Such practices stem from and reinforce cultural norms of the division of labour, and the association of distasteful jobs with traditional hereditary occupations of lower – caste groups.” (p. 81).

The NCF (2005) explains here how the process of discrimination starts at school. It takes a note of elite schools do not foster a culture that is in tandem with the basic principles of Indian education system and that of the education system propagated by Mahatma Gandhi which advocates for manual work at school. Education system is needed to synchronise the head, heart and hand and that is what the NCF (2005) tries to reinforce by making this point. The NCF advocates against attaching any kind of symbolism to work regarding which is greater or which one is lower and that work in school should not be meted out as punishments as they reinforce cultural division of labour.

“Activities for developing critical perspectives on socio-cultural realities need to find space in curricular practices.” (p. 126).

One of the foremost goal that education prepares an individual for is to differentiate between the right and wrong, to think critically; the NCF (2005) emphasizes on how the curriculum development should be, in a manner that student are able to develop critical insights themselves about culture, the social realities that surround them, to accept the good things in other culture and even discarding ill practices in their own culture after critical reflection. Thus it emphasizes to minimise the gap between the curricular practices in school and the sociocultural realities.

4.5. Draft National Education Policy (DNEP) Draft 2019

The policy mentions about the need to learn to live together, that is, to understand other people and develop values of pluralism, cultural appreciation and peace

“Learning to live together – developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace”

The vision of the policy is:

“The National Education Policy 2019 envisions an India centred education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all” (p. 41)

The policy entails the need for the medium of instruction to be mother tongue. This is a departure from the previous policies where medium of instruction was said to be “regional language” instead of “mother tongue”.

“When possible, the medium of instruction - at least until Grade 5 but preferably till at least

Grade 8 - will be the home language/mother tongue/local language” (p. 80)

Unlike previous policies on education, DNEP 2019 identified needs of children with special needs (CWSN). It suggests for making Indian sign language to be standardized across country.

“Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardised across the country, and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment. Local sign languages will be respected and taught as well where possible and relevant” (p. 81)

“Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning materials (e.g. textbooks in accessible formats such as large print and Braille) will be made available to help CWSN integrate more easily into classrooms and engage with teachers and their peers” (p. 155)

Further, policy mentions that all Indians should be aware of the number of languages in the country and their literature.

“For purposes of cultural enrichment as well as national integration, all young Indians should be aware of the rich and vast array of languages of their country, and the treasures that they and their literatures contain” (p. 85)

The policy asks to uphold constitution values of equality, embracing diversity, plurality and inclusion. This is important for unity and integrity of the nation. Also, policy mentions the need to include local and tribal knowledge systems in curriculum and textbooks.

“Local and tribal knowledge systems will also be included in more detail in regions where such knowledge systems may hold a greater relevance with respect to local needs and customs”

The policy urges teachers to learn to incorporate local cultures, arts and traditions in their pedagogy.

“Consultations will be held with leading educators, cognitive scientists, artists, and architects on Learning Space Designs that optimise learning and are inviting, and that take into consideration and incorporate local cultures, arts, and traditions” (p. 125).

The policy identifies the need to bridge the gap between formal schooling and students’ own lives. It further adumbrates the biasness of the existing curriculum and textbooks, and need to revise them.

“...school curriculum and textbooks often also play a role. For some communities, the connection between formal schooling and their own lives is unclear, e.g. in cases of exclusionary curricula that do not refer to what is familiar, valuable, or relatable to them. Indeed, any analysis of the existing curricula, pedagogy or textbooks exhibits a biased picture of life where the view of the “powerful” prevails: for example, the earning member of a family is almost always male in our textbooks; names of children in stories might not reflect all communities; there are almost no references to people that are differently-abled.” (p. 139)

Also, the policy emphasizes on the need to include material on human values.

“The school curriculum will include material on human values such as respect for all persons, empathy, tolerance, inclusion, and equity early on; any biases in school curriculum will be removed, and more material will be included that is relevant and relatable to all communities, and which develops these human values” (p. 140)

For the first time, national education policy mentions about the role of education in prejudice reduction, which is a significant component of multicultural education

“All students will develop sensitivity and appreciation of the diverse cultures and traditions to which we belong. A concerted set of actions on various fronts will be implemented, e.g. through inclusion of narratives around different socio-economic situations in the curriculum, questioning simplistic labeling of individuals on the basis of their community or beliefs, etc.” (p. 143)

“School curricula, syllabi and teaching learning materials (especially textbooks) will be reviewed to identify and remove overt or hidden bias and stereotyping” (p. 143)

The policy does mention about the need to promote Indian languages; in fact, it also recommends setting up of higher education institutions (HEIs) for the promotion.

“True inclusion and preservation of culture and traditions of each region, and true understanding by all students in schools, can be achieved only when suitable respect is given to all Indian languages, including tribal languages. It is thus absolutely critical to preserve the truly rich languages and literatures of India, just as other technologically advanced countries (such as South Korea, Japan, France, Germany, Holland, etc.) have so deftly preserved their languages in the face of internationalisation” (p. 385).

“Specific plans for the promotion of classical Indian languages and literature must be developed by HEIs. The existing institutions, including National Institutes, for these languages will be strengthened and expanded. A National Institute for Pali, Persian and Prakrit will also be set up. All institutes supporting language programmes will be affiliated with and preferably located in universities, and will be funded to study comparative literature” (p. 387)

4.6. Policy Analysis

The analysis of the policies is done using the James' Banks theoretical framework of multicultural education. Out of the five dimensions of multicultural education, National Policy on education 1968 includes only two dimensions: Equity Pedagogy and Empowering School Culture; National Policy on Education 1986-92 mentions four dimensions: Content Integration, Knowledge Construction, Equity Pedagogy and Empowering School Culture; and the National Education Policy 2019 has mention of all five dimensions including prejudice reduction.

The following matrix further displays each dimension and the examples of the dimension included in the National Policies:

Table 4.1: The Matrix of theoretical dimensions and inclusion in policy

	NPE 1968	NPE 1986	DNEP 2019
Content Integration		Include different culture's content in as many manifestations as possible	Students should be made aware of vast array of languages of their country Indian sign language to be standardized Inclusion of local and tribal knowledge systems in the curriculum Include material on human values i.e. empathy, tolerance, inclusion and equity
Knowledge Construction		The existing schism between the formal system of education and the country's rich and varied cultural traditions need to be bridged	Discuss connection between formal schooling and their own lives

Prejudice Reduction			<p>Curriculum should be free from overt or hidden bias and stereotyping</p> <p>Inclusion of narratives around different socio-economic situations in curriculum, questioning simplistic labeling of individuals</p>
Equity Pedagogy	<p>Development of Indian languages</p> <p>Regional Languages as medium of instruction</p>	<p>Regional languages as medium of instruction</p> <p>Instructional materials in Tribal languages</p> <p>Culturally compatible educational programmes</p>	<p>Promotion of Indian languages</p> <p>Medium of instruction - mother tongue</p> <p>Assistive devices and tools for Children with special needs</p>
Empowering School Culture	<p>National Integration</p> <p>Sense of Common Citizenship and culture</p>	<p>National Integration</p> <p>Sense of common citizenship</p> <p>Value education</p>	<p>National Integration</p> <p>Cultural Appreciation</p> <p>Transform nation into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society</p> <p>Value education: Embrace diversity, plurality and inclusion</p>

Source: Conceptualized by the Author

The matrices above clearly depict that the policies, initially, were not comprehensive with regard to multicultural education. However, with time, the policies have become more comprehensive and the latest policy has been successful in including all five dimensions of multicultural education. The question which arises from the analysis is: when we have taken 70+ years post-independence to come up with a comprehensive education policy, then how much time would we require to effectively include multiculturalism in our education practices? The study undertakes a small qualitative study to further comment over the practices on ground.

4.7 Conclusion

The Indian education policies are definitely informed by the multicultural concerns of the society. It can be pointed out from the above analysis of the policies that there have been efforts on the part of both the constitution framers as well as the education planners to harmonize this extensive cultural diversity with and through education. The analysis of the policies reveals the fact that there has been a gradual evolution of policies from the 1968 National Education Policy that incorporated only two dimensions of multicultural education to Draft National Education Policy 2019 which has incorporated all the five dimensions. In the earlier policies though there was a general acceptance of the vast enormous diversity of India, there was a lack on the means and mechanism to achieve that goal; which are significantly addressed by the latest Draft National Education Policy 2019. Having said that, it would be imperative to critically view the practices on ground; and the next chapter includes analyses of the findings from the field to determine how fair we're doing in terms of the practices on the field.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

5.1. Introduction

Multicultural education has long informed the concerns of the Indian education planners. India being devoted to a constitution that builds on unity in diversity, policies have had an orientation that takes into account of the diverse needs of the population or one can safely say that the concern of diversity is included in the policy making process. This research study set out from the beginning to make a comparison between the policies and the practices that are being conducted on the ground level.

The initial assumption in the mind was that there would be a significant disconnect between the policy and the practice which to a certain extent was proved but there were also findings from the field research which somewhat also found some dimensions of multicultural education being practiced in the school, though not consciously recognised as an effort in that direction. The chapter comprises of the analysis of the findings from the field. The study aimed at analysing the policies in the multicultural context and then the data from the field research was extrapolated to see the situation in schools. Findings from the focused group discussions are coded and put on graphs for better understanding.

5.2 India as a Multicultural Society

The policies talk extensively about strength of having diverse cultures and the need for national integration and sense of common citizenship which is part of the fifth dimension of multicultural education given by James Banks which is: Empowering School Culture. For a school culture to be truly empowering, the first step would be students' acceptance of the multiple cultures in the country. In order to understand students' views on visualizing India as a multicultural society; students were asked whether India should have multiple cultures?

19 students out of 26 students agreed that India should have multiple cultures. However, there were 7 students who said that India should not have multiple cultures; and that there should be only one culture that we all should follow.

Figure 5.1



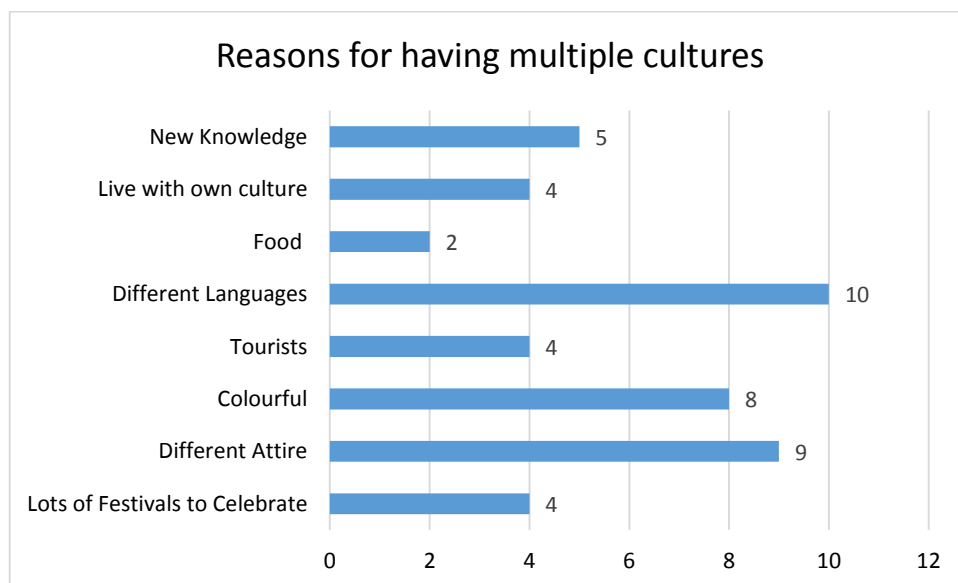
Students were then asked reasons for their choices. Students who said that India should have many cultures gave multiple reasons. 10 students said that having different languages was interesting; 9 students said that different attire of people was fascinating; 8 said India looks more colourful owing to multiple cultures; 5 students said that cultural diversity increases knowledge base; 4 students said that people should be allowed to live their own cultures and there are lots of festivals to celebrate when we have different cultures; and lastly, different cultures have different cuisines and 2 students mentioned about the variety in food because of multiple cultures.

There have been a lot of studies in India that have recognised the increasing intolerance in the population to diversity. While studying the various choices made by the students the most important thing implied by their choices was that none of the choice that they were making was anywhere seemed to be informed with the educational practices they were undergoing. It could rather be said on the basis of my observations that while answering most of the question and this particular question that whether India should have cultural diversity or not it was the sociocultural experiences that they kept in mind

while answering that question, which could be made out of the fact of the reasons that they gave for having cultural diversity in India or not. There was definitely a difference of opinion according to the students understanding but it could be made out that this understanding was based on the sociocultural context that they have been subjected to rather than the educational practices that they engage in schools. Students who positively voted in favour of having cultural diversity gave reasons such as cultural diversity provides an opportunity to celenbrate different festivelas, lots of places to travel, different food and other experiential elements in support of harboring a variety of cultural diversity. So it can be said that for accepting a multicultural context around themselves students need to particpate in community activities, community participation of children becomes a major step in the direction of their respect towards diversity.

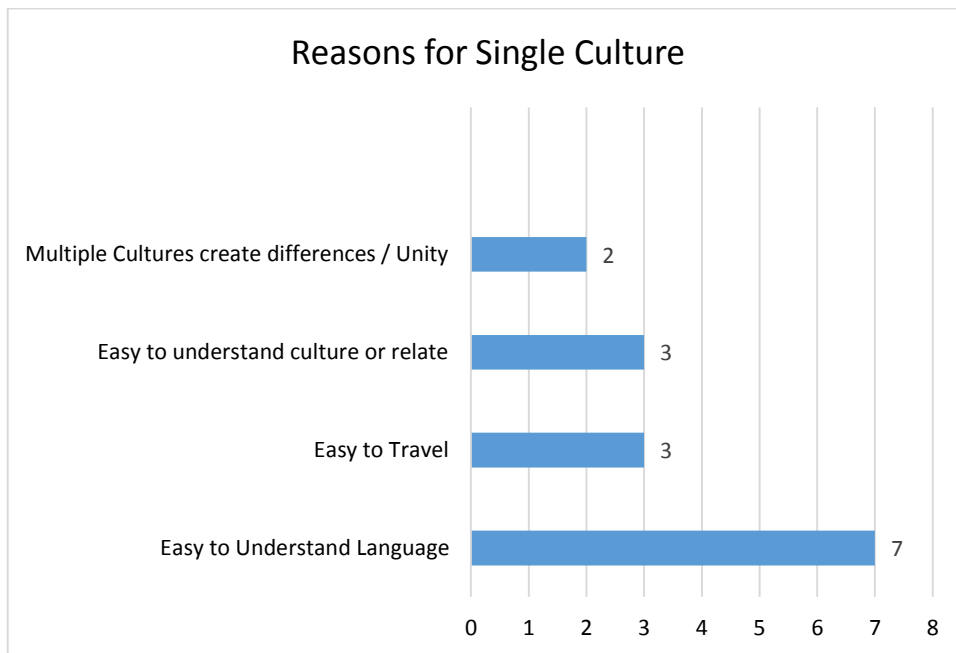
The question seems to reveal also another facet of the study which highlights that the students answering in the favour of having cultural diversity reflect the empowering school culture. As discussed earlier an empowering school culture is one where students are facilitated to embrace diversity. The school which I surveyed might evidently not be showing signs of an empowering school culture probably also because of the limited diverse population of students that come to study there but what can be made of the positive attitudes and beliefs of the students is the fact that any kind of cultural diversity is appreciated in the school, at least it is not despised at.

Figure 5.2



The graph 5.3 displays reasons given by students in support of having a single culture across the country. All 7 students said that having one culture means having a single language which will help in easier communication; 3 students said that it will be easier to travel; 3 students also mentioned that it will be easier to relate if there is only one culture; and lastly, there will be greater unity and lesser differences if we have a single culture.

Figure 5.3



As pointed out earlier all the reasons given by the students somewhere make us understand the fact that their acceptance of culture and diversity is dependent upon how their experiences are shaped within the society they live in. The reason that students give for not having more cultures come out of their difficulties like understanding too many languages, if they go in other parts of India or difficulties in understanding traditions and most importantly that a lot of cultures create differences which can be easily understood as their search for unity. However, students have not been helped by the school to dwell deeper and question their innate biases. Students are unable to recognize the strength of diversity and the mere fact that we can't have same culture in a big country like India owing to difference in geographies if not anything else.

5.3 Discussion about different cultures

In order to understand the knowledge construction dimension of multicultural education, students were asked whether they think discussion about different cultures is important; 25 students said that they do believe that discussion about cultures is important, one student, who was quiet for most of the questions, said that he doesn't know whether it is significant or otherwise. Figure 5.4 tries to explain the awareness of students regarding the importance of discussing various cultures. We try to delve deeper from whether diversity should be there or not to students' understanding of the importance to preserve the diversity irrespective of their ideas of having it or not. According to my observation there was an implicit understanding seen in the students regarding the right of each difference to propagate which could be very much associated with everyone right to live or exist. The students were quite understanding of the need to protect and be respectful towards people from diverse cultures irrespective of whether they appreciated the presence of diversity or not, and were found keen to learn more about it.

Figure 5.4

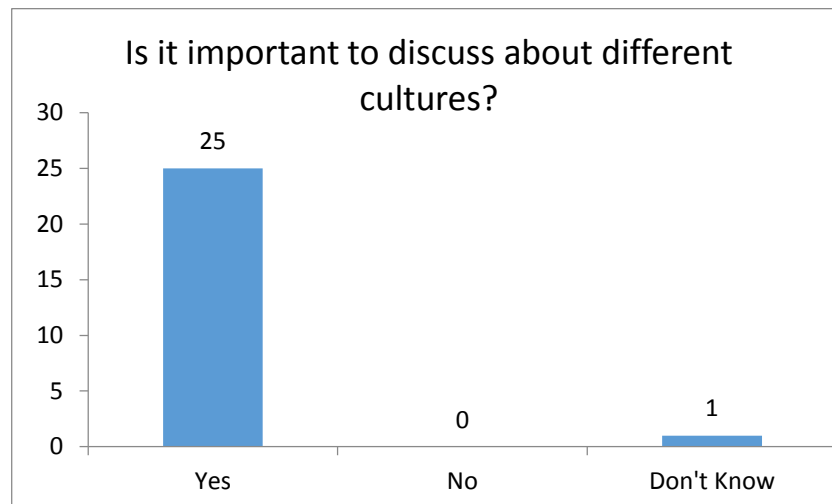


Figure 5.5 indicates the practices undertook by teachers to make the students culturally aware or to make them informed on the existing diversity of cultures that India as a country has. Students were then asked whether teachers at school discuss with them about different cultures, 8 students responded in positive, and 18 replied in negative. The students were simultaneously followed with the question on the topics discussed by the teachers: 6 students said that different languages were discussed; 4 said different

clothing were discussed; 2 students said festivals were discussed; one student mentioned about different states, cultures and variety of food each.

Figure 5.5

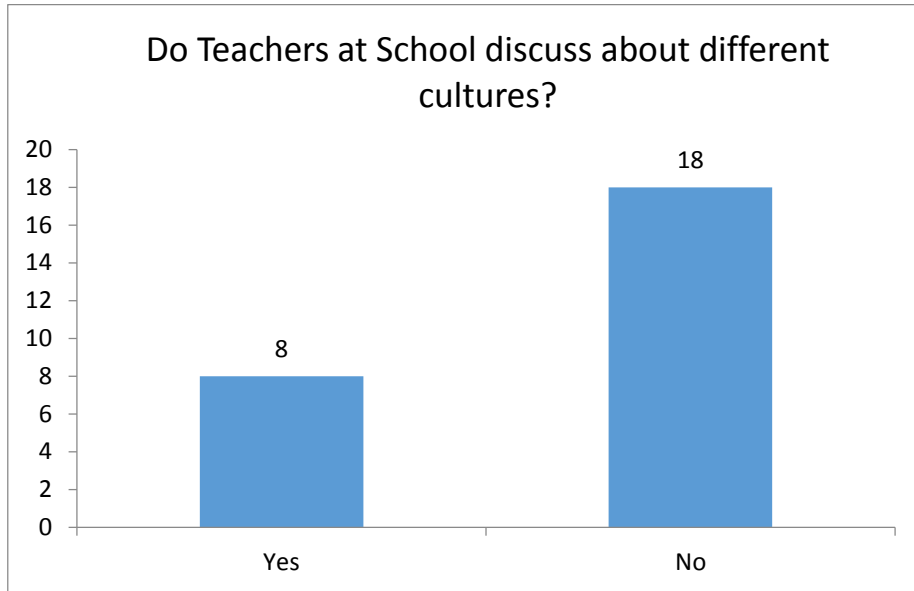
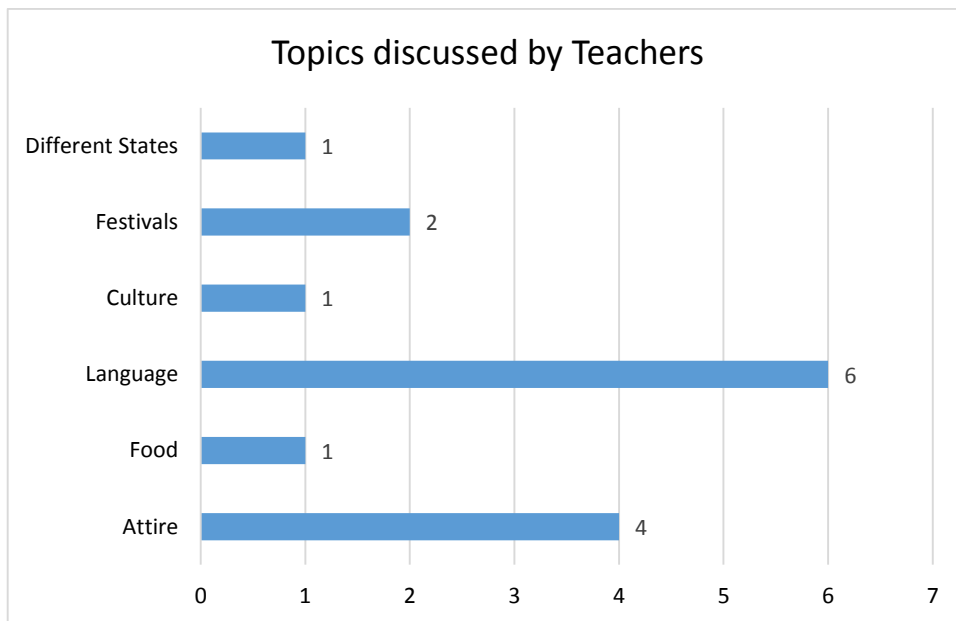


Figure 5.6



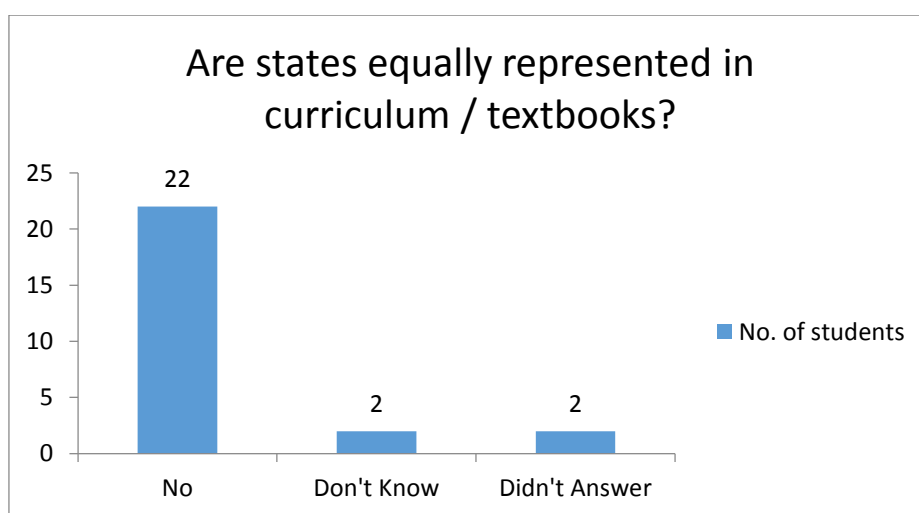
The time and the restrictions did not allow me to separately interview the teachers but through the observations made and by the discussions with the students a lot could be understood about teachers' involvement in cultural appreciation. The first question somehow looked into the fact that whether teachers discuss about different cultures to

their students. As shown in the graph, only 8 students out of 26 said that teachers do discuss about different cultures. The next question thereby was to find out the major areas that are discussed as representation of cultural diversity and the variety of languages spoken in India with the traditional dresses that different regions of India have were the most discussed topics. What can be seen as particularly missing is the explanation on the importance of diversity regardless of information about the cultural diversity which the students were receiving which was also very trivial , it is equally important on the part of the teachers to teach or rather explain the importance of diversity and the ways to accept it. The most important aspect while asking students regarding the knowledge imparted to them on cultural diversity was also the absence of any practical experiences that the students were receiving through community participation or group activities.

5.4 States representation in textbooks

Next, the content integration dimension of the multicultural education was explored. Students were asked whether states are equally represented in their curriculum or textbooks. 22 of the 26 students said that states weren't equally represented; 2 students said that they don't know and 2 students didn't answer the question.

Figure 5.7



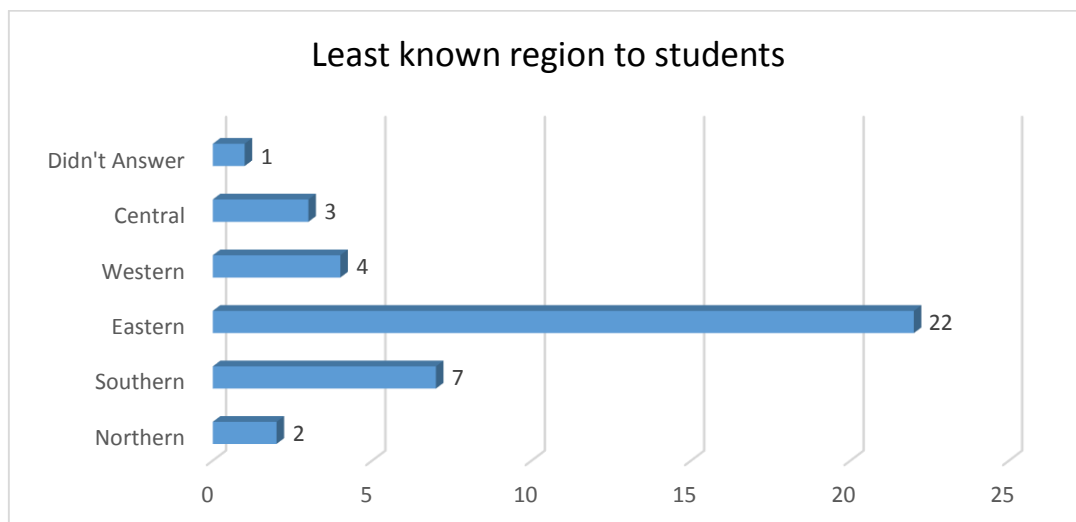
The importance of the questions asked in my survey was increased by the fact that the answers to the questions were the reflection of the students understanding of what is represented and what is overrepresented and what is absent from the school curriculum.

The students' understanding has been supported by many researchers from time to time that there is underrepresentation of some regions in the text books. Thereby, what could be positively made out of the response by the students is that they are able to identify and understand the underrepresentation of the cultural diversity of India in their curriculum.

5.5 Regions known to students

Students were further asked which region do they think they know least about. Out of 5 regions: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western and Central; 22 students said that they know least about eastern region, 7 students said that they know less about Southern region, 3 said that they know less about western region, 2 said that they don't know much about central region, and one student chose to not answer. It's thus seen that student's know less about the eastern region; students share anecdotes where they don't even know what is the culture there or how people live there. This question in conjunction with the previous one, tells us that students recognize the underrepresented regions in textbooks and also that they have limited understanding of particular spaces in India owing the bias in the curriculum development.

Figure 5.8



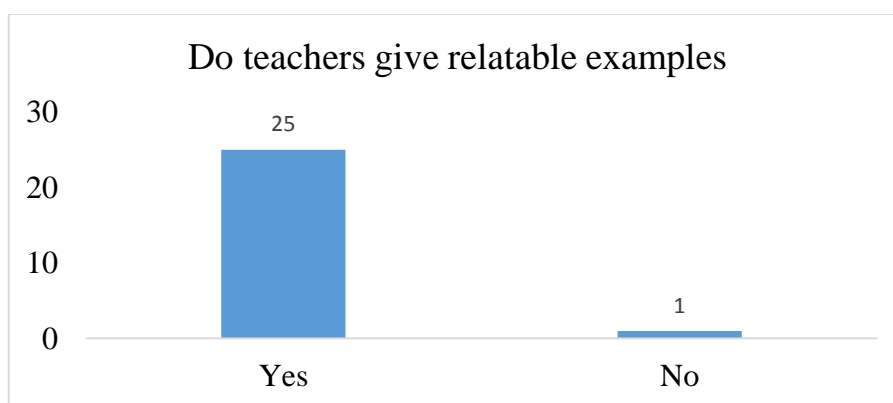
The graph and the discussion with the students revealed the general lack of awareness regarding the north eastern region of India. There is sufficient literature which talks about the prejudices and biases faced by the people of north-east in other parts of the country. These regions have places of extreme poverty and are backward in terms of

institutional development which forces people to migrate to other places. Since there's large migration from north-east to other regions, and negligible from other regions to north-east, there's less spread and understanding of people about cultures in north-east. The next least known region was the south which is also rather segregated because of the high linguistic diversity. Thus one could infer that students have not been helped to develop certain limited but significant understanding of different parts of the country.

5.6 Relatable Pedagogy

Next, the equity pedagogy aspect of the multicultural education was explored. Students were asked whether the teachers, while teaching, gave examples from real life which they could relate with? All the students responded with a yes except one. This child was the quite one, and after little bit of probing he answered in negative. However, when further asked about the reason, he didn't answer. Students shared how teachers give examples of their homes, parents and market. When they learn math, teachers relate with their going out to the market to buy something for instance. This result however has to be interpreted with caution. Since, there was not much diversity among the students and teachers, it's difficult to say that teachers took extra efforts to engage in a pedagogy which was germane to every child. The counter positive finding that can be still be inferred from the discussion is that the teachers teach relatable content to the students that might as well make the case for situation if the school had more diversity, the teachers would have been receptive to those requirements as well. Therefore, it's important to recognize that students did relate with the teachers; and hence, equity pedagogy was practised at school to some level.

Figure 5.9



5.7 Prejudices Witnessed by Students

Prejudice reduction is one of the most important dimensions of multicultural education as it is one of the dimensions that talks about repairing the damage that has already been made. Prejudices in the Indian society are of varied kind and are based on several factors like caste, gender, region, religion etc. Prejudice reduction acquires immense importance in case of India also because of the fact that the prejudices are passed on through generations, families and through traditions. It is not something which is built on the experiences of the child rather it is started to be engraved in them right from his or her birth through the practices that the elders of the families or the society in general, to which they are associated, indulge in. Thus, removing prejudices from the mindset of children require concerted efforts in that direction that not only try reforming through stricter action against those who indulge in spread of such misinformation rather also through explanations and justifications to bring self-modifications in behaviour. Prejudice reduction thus involves a significant step of facilitating the child to develop a habit of critical thinking and then make decisions based on it.

Prejudice reduction was one aspect which was touched only by the latest National Education Policy Draft 2019. Therefore, it would be interesting to note what ground realities convey about this aspect. Students were asked to discuss prejudices which they have seen in their lives and then if these prejudices have been discussed in classrooms. Students eagerly discussed about various prejudices. For the simplicity of the readers, I have divided the discussion about prejudices in three parts: Caste Based, State Based and Religion based prejudices.

5.7.1 Caste Based Prejudices

12 students shared incidences when they experienced or saw caste based prejudices. For instance, Sumit said that in his village he observed higher caste people discriminating against lower caste people.

“Maine village mein dekha h ki higher caste log lower caste logo ko neecha dikhate hain”

Shiv exclaimed that people in his area don't respect people from scheduled caste. Even younger kids of 13 or 14 years of age don't respect old people (40 years of age) because of lower caste.

“Mere area mein people don't respect shudra people. 13-14 saal ke chhote bache 40 saal ke uncle logo ki respect nahi karte”

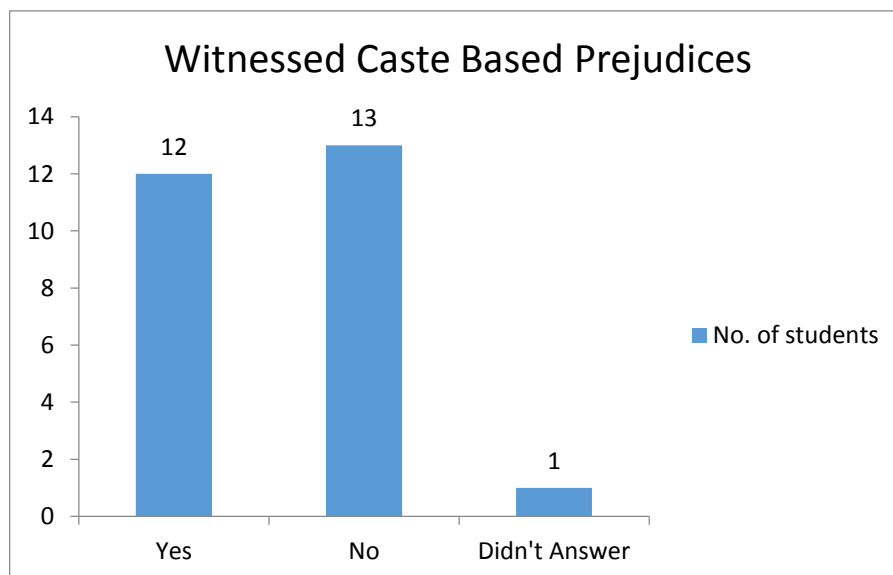
Shubham shared his experience that one day a maid was fighting with a lady because that lady didn't give money to the maid in her hands, instead she kept it on the ground.

“Ek din maine dekha ki meri gali mein ek aunty kooda uthane wali aunty ko jab paise de rahi thi to unhone paise zameen par rakhh diye, unke haanth mein nahi diya. Is par kooda uthane wali aunty gussa hui.”

Kunal said that he can't touch people from SC category as they're impure.

“Chamar ko chhoo nahi sakte kyuki wo gande hote hain”

Figure 5.10



What can be deduced most importantly from the caste based anecdotes of these children is the level to which the Indian society is plagued by the problem of caste based discriminatory practices. The practices narrated by Sumit, Kunal, Shubham and others tend to highlight how impactful these incidences are on the minds of the children. Such practices make a deep long lasting impact on the minds of children. Thereby it is often

more important on the part of the community to review its actions and discriminatory practices from time to time. What becomes important on the part of the school is the reduction of these prejudices and empowering the students with critical thinking that they themselves are able enough to identify the discriminatory and disrespectful practices and become the agents of change.

5.7.2 State based prejudices

Students also shared state based prejudices. 12 students out of 26 had seen or experienced such prejudice; 13 students didn't experience and one student chose not to answer.

Some of the excerpts from the discussions are:

Sumit said that he has heard from a lot of people that people from Bihar are very cunning.

“Maine bahot logo se suna h ki bihar k log chalaak hote hain”

Shiv shared that his neighbour is often teased because he is from Bihar.

“Ek neighbour ko bihar se hone ki wajah se bihari bol kar chidhate hain”

Deepanshu said that students in his tuition tease him by calling him “Bihari”.

“Mujhe bihari bol kar tuition mein chidhate hain”

Prashant exclaimed that when a student in class was talking in his mother tongue (bihari), then Sir was teasing him by copying his accent.

“Ek bachcha jab apni bihari language mein baat kr raha tha to class mein Sir usko copy kar ke chidha rahe the”

Kunal shared that a Punjabi boy was being teased as he was wearing turban.

“Punjabi ladke ko pagdi ki wajah se chhida rahe the”

Daksh told that he saw a tourist guide of Taj Mahal denied to become guide of people from South India.

“Tourist guide ne south Indians ko Taj Mahal ghumane se mana kr diya”

Mohini said that a shopkeeper teases her brother by calling bihari even though they are from Odisha.

“Mere bhai ko ek dukanwale uncle bihari kehte hain, hum Odisha se belong krte hain”

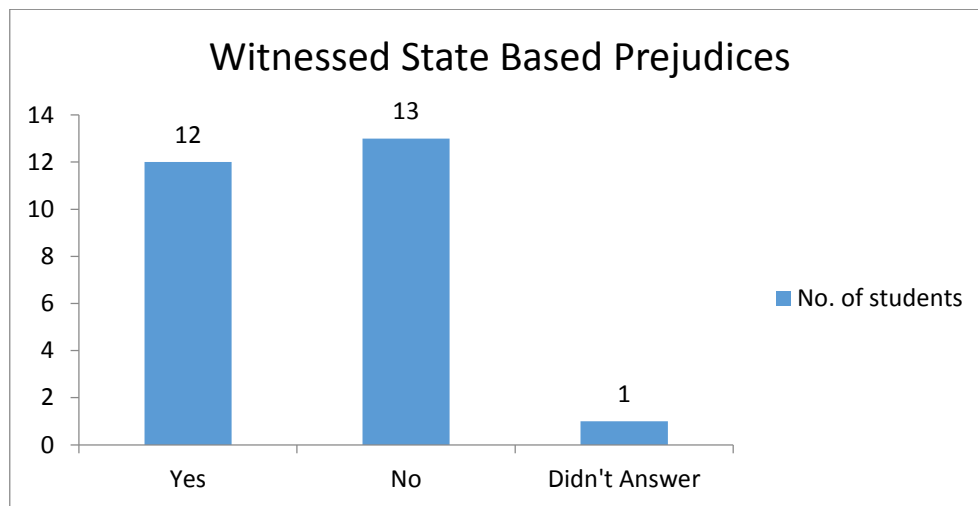
Shipra shared that there’s a brother-sister from Bihar who live in their colony. Kids tease them by calling them Bihari and my mother asks me to stay away from them as they are from lower caste.

“Meri gali mein do bhai bahen hain, wo bihar se belong krte hain aur lower caste hain to meri mummy unse door rehne ko kehti hai.. Aur gali mein bachche bhi unhe bihari keh kr chidhate hain.”

Harsh said that his close friend has asked him to not talk with boys from Bihar.

“Mere dost ne bola bihario se baat na krne ko”

Figure 5.11



The discussion with the students as reflected by the anecdotes tell us that students they are able to identify the discriminatory practices happening taking place in the society around us. This might be attributed to the empowering school culture at the school that promotes the feeling of cultural appreciation. These prejudices and biases regarding a region is because of the cultural isolation of people in India in their respective regions.

But with the increase of employment opportunity in urban areas there was an immigration from different regions. Thus instead of this serving as opportunities of cultural assimilation, urban areas got segregated on the basis of colonies with different colony based on people from different regions. The prejudices that our society harbors according to regions are deeply structured and can be removed only if children or the upcoming generations are taught about the equal importance each and every small place of India carries, and there's with equal representation in text books and curriculum.

5.7.3 Religion based prejudices

Students also shared religion based prejudices. 9 students out of 26 students talked about religion based prejudices. Some of the excerpts on religion based prejudices are as follows:

Sumit said that he has a group of 6 friends, out of which one is muslim, and his neighbours asked him to not play with the muslim friend.

“Mera 6 dosto ka group h.. Un mein se ek muslim h to mere neighbours ne mujhe bola ki uske saath mat khelo wo muslim h.”

Shiv said that in his cricket academy, kids teach muslim boys by calling them “katua” (a derogatory word used for circumcision)

“Meri cricket academy mein muslim bachcho ko katua katua bol kr tease karte hain”

Karan Kumar shared that he has heard in news that news anchors ask govt to remove muslim people from the country.

“News mein musalmaan ko nikalne ko bolte hain”

Deepanshu said that on the day of Eid festival, when he wished his mother *assalam o alaikum*¹, then his mother scolded him and told him that he's a brahmin and not muslim.

“Eid pe jab maine mummy ko assalam o alaikum kaha to mummy ne mujhe danta aur bola ki tum brahmin ho muslim nahi.”

¹ *Assalam o alaikum* is a form of salutation primarily used by muslims

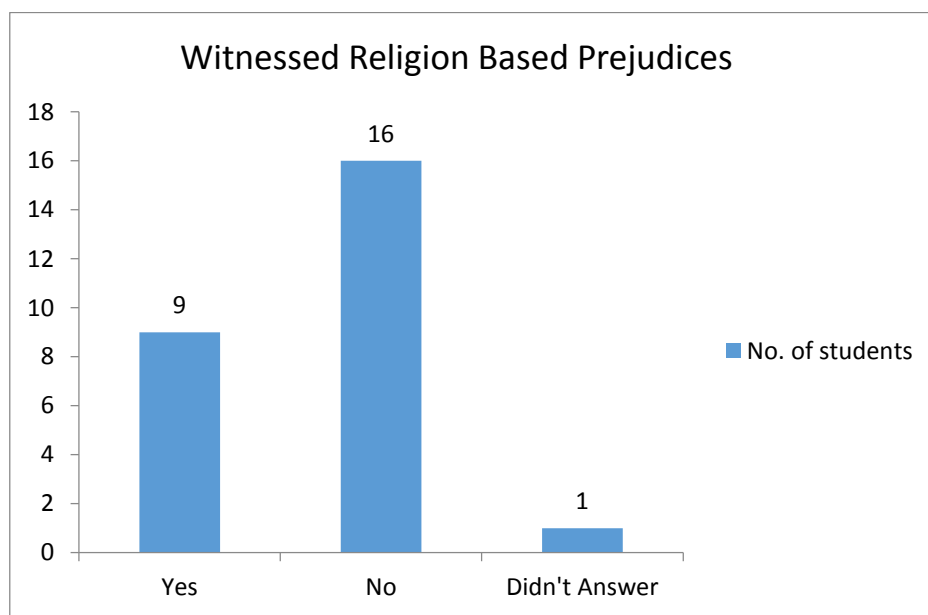
Prashant said that he heard one lady telling his son that you can marry anyone but not a muslim girl.

“Ek din ek aunty apne bachche se bol rahi thi ki chahe kisi se bhi shaadi kr lena par muslim se nahi”

Kunal shared that his parents has asked him to stay away from muslim boys.

“Muslim ladko se door rehne ko ghar par bola”

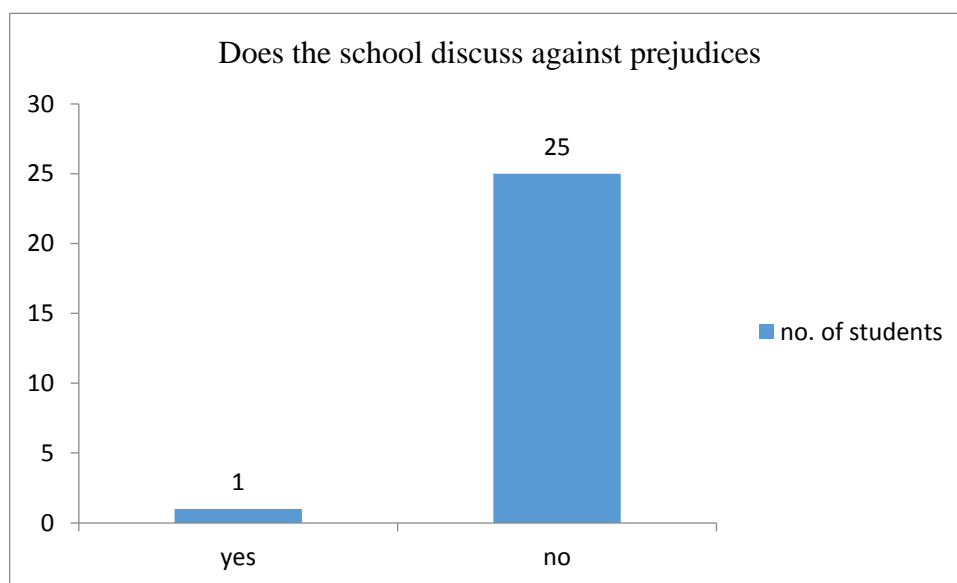
Figure 5.12



Religion based prejudices are very common in India. It is not specific to India, in the whole world a specific kind of religious intolerance is on rise and certain kinds of religions are prejudiced against. India was one of the prime examples of communal harmony or when it comes to the peaceful coexistence of seven major religions of the world together. The religious prejudices in India have risen from time to time. What is evidenced from the anecdotal examples, as also exemplified multiple studies, is that people feel that they will lose their own religion if they indulge in activities together with people belonging from other religions. It is extremely difficult to remove any kind of prejudices especially based on religion, but schools can put continuous efforts in order to at least try and explain the goodness inherent in the differences of religions. Most importantly bringing together children from different communities under one roof can itself promote the feeling of brotherhood and tolerance.

Thus in order to determine the practices that the school undertakes to tackle prejudices against students by students, I asked a question to students regarding prejudice reduction practices or if the issue is simply at least discussed. I explained the students regarding what prejudice reduction activities entail. It was learnt from the response of the students that none of these prejudices have ever been discussed in school with them, hence, not contributing in removing the existing stereotypes. The school does not specifically discuss regarding prejudices, it might inculcate a fear of action against student indulging in discriminatory practices but there are no concerted efforts in the direction of counselling students and/or explaining them the impact of such biases and prejudices on students who are at the receiving end, and society at large.

Figure 5.13

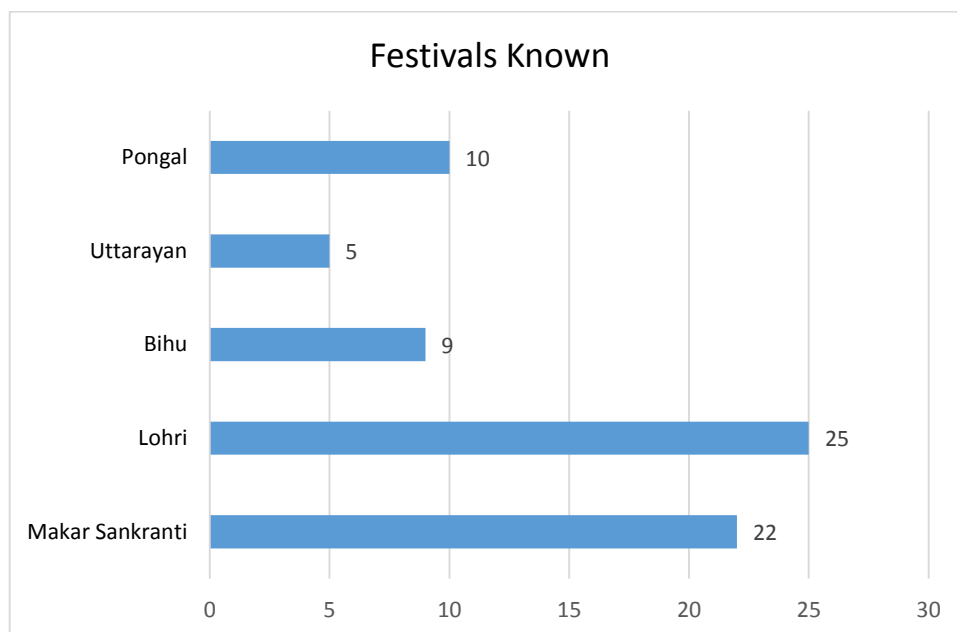


5.8 Festivals known to students

Festivals very profoundly depict the enormous cultural diversity of India. Festivals are the most important way in which several cultural groups express themselves and celebrate their traditions. Therefore 4 festivals were chosen celebrated in different corners of the country but in the same month of January: Makar Sankranti (celebrated primarily in Uttar Pradesh), Lohri (Punjab's major festival), Uttarayan (Gujarat's major festival), Bihu (Assam's major festival) and Pongal (Tamil Nadu's major festival).

Students were then asked whether they know about any of these festivals in order to understand their knowledge about different festivals across states of the country.

Figure 5.14



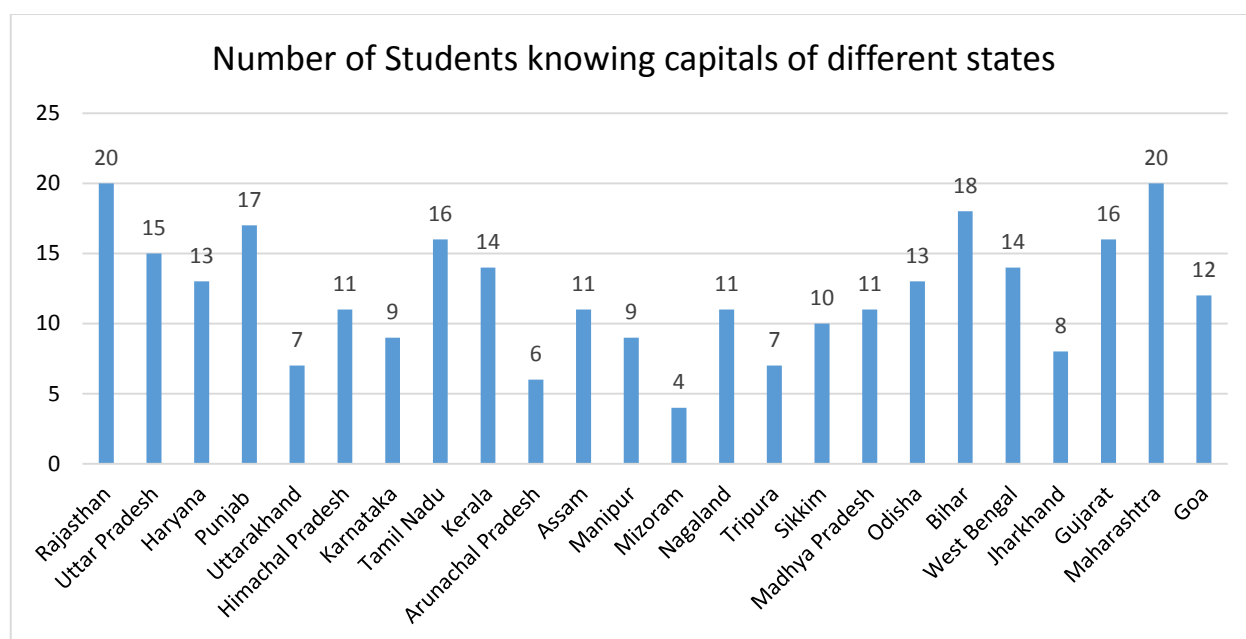
25 students (out of 26) knew about Lohri; 22 students knew about Makar Sankranti; 10 students knew about Pongal; 9 had an idea about Bihu and only 5 knew about Uttarayan. The knowledge of the students regarding the festivals indicates the same pattern that it's the north-east that students know least about. It is definitely an alarming fact that there's rise of prejudices but the constitutional principles and democratic values require us to celebrate the cultural differences. Festivals offer a unique chance to understand and assimilate and learn about the diverse cultures as they are representatives of the the good teachings, beautiful attires, delicious local quisine, and contextual stories.

5.9 Students' knowledge about capitals of different states

The whole class was asked to write capitals of different states of the country. Figure 5.15 is representative of the knowledge children have on the capital cities of different states. The pattern as discussed in the earlier finding is predominantly represented in this figure also. As shown below, students mostly didn't know about the northeastern states in comparison to other states. The north eastern states of India are particularly

underrepresented in the text books, they are less understood by students and students’ seem to be less aware of their geography as well. These findings indicate the long path that has to be treaded by the educators in order to truly impart the multicultural education to every child in the country.

Figure 5.15



5.10 Discussion

“Wide differences of opinion in matters of religious, political, and social belief must exist if conscience and intellect alike are not to be stunted, if there is to be room for healthy growth.”— **Theodore Roosevelt, the Man in the Arena: Speeches and Essays by Theodore Roosevelt**

The above quote from one of the greatest leaders of the world exemplifies how having diversity increases the scope for growth. It enriches us through values and different meanings and perspectives to the same things thereby preserving curiosity and the spirit of human inquiry. Thus it becomes of essential importance for us to preserve and value these. In the recent times, with an increased stress towards mainstreaming of people, a lot of cultures and different ways and meanings to things are getting lost, thus it becomes of critical importance to work in the direction of safeguarding it and celebrating its differences. For a country like India approaches like multicultural

education assume importance towards preserving and celebrating our culture because most of the population is under the age of 25 which is the school going age and thus multicultural education might open important avenues of preserving and protecting the rich diversity that India boasts of. The results of the study though indicate a failure in such efforts regarding creating awareness among students about culture but still there is hope as we can deduce from the policy analysis that the planning process never underscores the importance of multiculturalism in school what needs to be more focussed upon is the implementation and the practices taking place in school.

Hence it can be claimed that there is a clear loss in improper implementation of multicultural education in the schools, which is also evidenced by the results generated through this research. The outcomes of the study clearly point that there exists a higher degree of cultural unawareness amongst students. As evidenced through the discussions, the students do not have ample opportunities to interact with diverse peers outside school. This restricts the types and profundity of multicultural experiences that students could pragmatically have if connected. Thus it highlights the vitality of multicultural efforts taking place inside the classroom. The proof provided by various studies on multicultural education also show that maximum amount of socialization that the students experience with people of different cultural and ethnic background happens in the classroom, thereby implying that school acts as a primary environment for children to become more familiar with cultural diversity. It is also important for students to have these cultural experiences within school because most of the students live in small ghettoised communities therefore minimising their chances of a different social encounter. Therefore the school can act upon the following idea and introduce students to information regarding different cultures that they might come in contact with at point in their life and prepare them to react in a better manner.

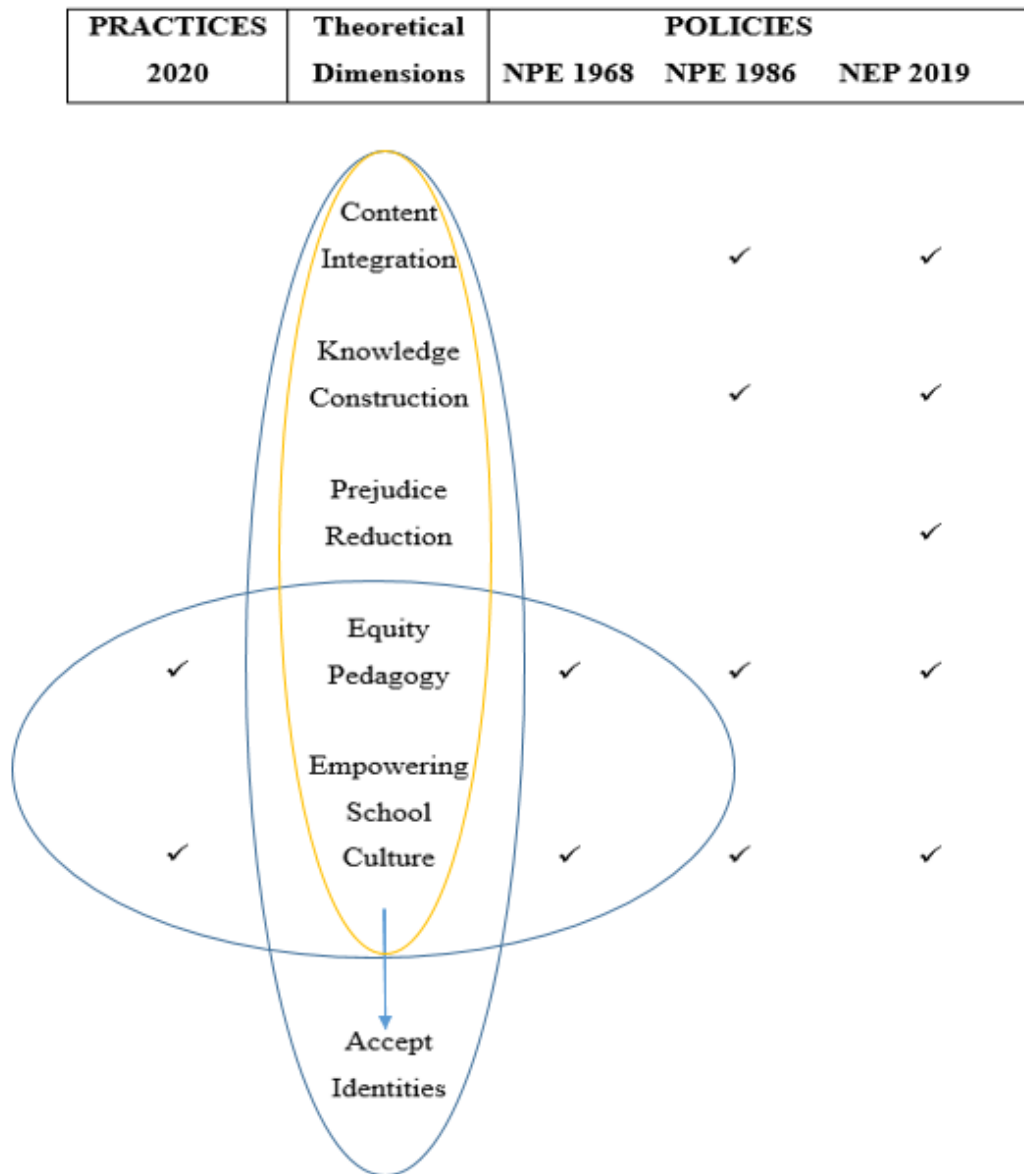
There were many other insights that were drawn from the research conducted for the study. As assumed the multicultural efforts taking place in the school were only under two dimensions: equity pedagogy and empowering school culture. Though, the policy analysis suggests that the school should undertake activities that inform the student regarding the diversity but there was clear ignorance of it. The students were unaware regarding the different type of diversity in India and for that matter some students were more in favour of having one culture across India. As testified by the discussions with

children there are limited opportunities of building interpersonal relationships with peers outside school. These less opportunities of interaction inhibit students from having knowledge about other cultures, unless these facts are essentially taught to them as part of course. Conversely, in schools of cities like Delhi, it is expected that students are more familiar to the diverse cultural makeup in cities due to high migration from different regions; adding there are greater chances of encounter for children with people of diverse communities in their localities than other regions but the results indicate a clear contrast in it. Even though cities like Delhi have diverse population it can be attributed to less interaction that takes place in urban communities that students or children remain aloof from learning about different cultures. The other findings clearly indicate that the efforts to reduce prejudices at schools just do not take place and no discussion was done by the schools with students on the issue.

It's important that schools make provisions to enhance community participation of students; in fact, community living can be encouraged at schools. A revision of curriculum for representation of states across the country can help students' learn about different societies. Further, it's vital for the school to conduct value education classes or assign activities to students which help them embrace the cultural diversity and cherish the cultural heritage. Students should also be helped to identify stereotypes around them, including their conduct, and measures to work on themselves for prejudice reduction. Many such measures need to be developed and implemented by the teachers or schools to provide multicultural education to students.

In a nutshell, I have tried to make a web of our theory, policies and practices in the figure below. First of all, the policies have not been comprehensive in the past, and it's the recent National Education Policy Draft 2019 which has comprehensively talked about multicultural education's dimensions, however, when it comes to practices, we're lagging big time. It's observed that out of five theoretical dimensions, only two seem to be incorporated by the schools i.e. equity pedagogy and empowering school culture; other dimensions need exigent cognizance and need to be incorporated in our school practices.

Figure 5.16 Web of Theory, Policies and Practices



Source: Conceptualised by the Author.

Further, whatever little we're doing is trying to kill disparities by identifying them and making provisions to counter them. But what we aren't able to do is not letting new disparities crop up, something which can only be achieved by opting for a truly multicultural education. For example, it was observed that students wear uniforms in schools, thus, they leave their multicultural attributes at the gate, which may help them in scoring higher achievement scores but tells us that we either can't celebrate diversity

or can't handle it. This aspect to accept identities first in school is something which is missing from the dimensions mentioned by James Banks in his theoretical framework. Thus, critiquing the framework, a sixth dimension: "Accepting Identities" could be added to the already existing dimensions of multicultural education as shown in the above diagram.

Further, as depicted by the diagram, we could see that where the National Education Policy was, in terms of incorporating dimensions of multicultural education, in 1968 (it included only two dimensions of multicultural education) is the same place where we stand today, in 2020, in terms of practices. This calls for exigent steps to be taken by the state and national governments to reflect on ground realities and take necessary actions as soon as possible.

5.11 Conclusion

The insightful analysis has surfaced a major disconnect between our policies and the practices. It calls for a more synchronised and detailed effort on the part of the planners and also a concerted effort in the direction of not seeing policy formulation as an end to achieve the goals of multicultural education rather a process which requires constant and continuous sustained efforts for reviewing and improvising on things that do or do not work out. The practices on the ground reveal the negligible efforts from the school in helping students accept cultural diversity, engaging students in any multicultural activities or providing them basic counselling against prejudices.

The findings reveal that students don't even understand the strength of diverse cultures, and there are some significant pedagogic lapses on the part of teachers whether it's related to successful content integration or explaining students the importance of diversity or about unequal representation of regions and cultures in the text books. It was patent that students are less informed about the north-eastern states of India. And, it was imperative to find the extant prejudices students harbour regarding certain communities and how schools or teachers aren't helping them to deal with them. It also indicates the importance of family and parental guidance for multicultural education to be successful. All of this speaks volumes which needs to be done in the area of multicultural education. If we ever imagine our education to be inclusive, multicultural education is its stepping stone, and it definitely needs immediate attention.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

“Dominant culture has tried to keep us all afraid, to make us choose safety instead of risk, sameness instead of diversity. Moving through that fear, finding out what connects us, reveling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community”.— **Bell hooks, Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope.**

We have been trapped into believing that whatever is different is not good and rather we should all strive to become someone who has established a way of becoming something forgetting the very inherent differences we as individuals possess leave alone cultural differences. Though multicultural education is not the only way it is one of the most significant way of accepting these differences, this diversity. The quote marks the most important point that this diversity allows us the power to connect, to explore and only that can lead us to become a meaningful community, one that has shared values. Multicultural education is also a means for students to learn their own culture, which would there by contribute in self development of the child. In order to explore their own self a student needs to be consciously aware of his situation in the cultural environment he or she has grown up in. This acts as a solid foundation towards self discovery, it helps then to find out their unique characteristics. Thus this facilitates self acceptance as students are able to comprehend their own specificities.

Currently, whatever little we're doing is trying to kill disparities by identifying them and making provisions to counter them. But what we aren't able to do is not letting new disparities crop up, something which can only be achieved by opting for a truly multicultural education. When students wear uniforms in schools, they leave their multicultural attributes at the gate, which may help in scoring higher achievement scores but tells us that we either can't celebrate diversity or can't handle it. This is an important component of multicultural education which is found missing in the dimensions of multicultural education given by James Banks, and thus I recommend

adding a sixth dimension: “Accept Identities”. Further, it was found that our practices reflect inclusion of multicultural education only in two dimensions: equity pedagogy and empowering school culture. These are the two dimensions which were part of the 1968 National Education Policy. Therefore, it would be safe and significant to interpret that we might have moved far in terms of the comprehensiveness of our National Education Policies (the latest National Policy on Education Draft 2019 includes all five dimensions of James Banks), but we’re far behind in terms of practices.

In general it can be said that the consequences of multicultural education are far reaching and stay with the students through time thereby helping students to use this knowledge as basis for their future interactions when they grow up. A multicultural education implemented in every process of teaching-learning is a sine qua non to create a sustainable society.

6.2 Recommendations for effective multicultural education

As discussed in Chapter 4, it’s ironical that we talk about diversity at one end and promote uniformity through “uniforms”. For multicultural education to be extant, we need to first allow cultural identities inside the schools. Therefore, the foremost recommendation would be to allow students to wear their ethnicity inside schools. Further, schools should take responsibility of finding ways and approaches that suits their students and enhance their understanding of multicultural education.

There can various ways through which schools can instil multicultural elements in their students. It’s important to train school leaders and teachers in order to imbibe dimensions of multicultural education in students. In the vision section of the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), fourth vision states that multicultural education is the need of the contemporary times; however, the whole documents seems devoid of exploring this vision or charting a pathway to realize this vision.

In a nutshell, some recommendations, strategies and suggestions for incorporating multicultural education are discussed below:

- A dialogue and thorough review of our curriculum and pedagogical practices need to be conducted to evaluate inclusion of various multicultural aspects.

- Adopt multicultural pedagogy that is sensitive to the emotion understanding of the students and does not take a superiority or inferiority approach in explaining cultures
- There should be a teacher training course specifically set up in the teacher training curriculum particularly for diverse countries like India.
- Empowering schools to undertake prejudice reduction practices.
- Organizing interregional meets among schools.
- Organizing national level quiz competitions and seminars on cultural diversity too except for what only happen for the sciences.
- Out of class learning is of vital importance too, school should undertake community visits or trips to several diverse place local surroundings.
- Counselling of parents is also of equal importance as their behavior affects the socialization behavior of the child too.
- Opening more schools similar to the central schools or the Jawahar Navodayas where there is timely intermixing of students region wise.
- Foreign language courses or regional language courses with extra credits as well as guest lecturers from people of different regions would also be beneficial.
- Unachievable curriculum standards, course contents which are too huge to be completed in the stipulated time are also some of the reasons why multicultural activities cannot be practiced, so course contents should be redesigned with more emphasis on practice.

6.3 Implications for future research

“Cultural survival is not about preservation, sequestering indigenous peoples in enclaves like some sort of zoological specimens. Change itself does not destroy a culture. All societies are constantly evolving. Indeed a culture survives when it has enough confidence in its past and enough say in its future to maintain its spirit and essence through all the changes it will inevitably undergo.” — **Wade Davis, Light at the Edge of the World**

The above quote is strategically placed in order to explain the significance of research. It is of utmost importance for future research is to find means and mechanism through which cultures can be propagated sustainably. They need not to be preserved like

specimens of what was good in them or bad in them rather they should be enlivened and be given the chance to continuously evolve like the dominant culture through research. Thus the most important implication for future research in order to preserve diversity is to find out means and ways to sustainably protect and carry forward the diversity.

The study revealed the gap between the policy and the practices taking place in Indian schools regarding preserving and explaining the importance of cultural diversity to students. A probable proposition for further research initiatives in this area would be to do the extrapolation of the current study, to understand the areas through which multicultural efforts in school should begin. It does not require huge efforts all in one go, rather the research highlights that small efforts like explaining reasons to have different cultures, explaining the basic geography and the importance of each region can also go a long way in laying the basic foundation for students developing interest to study about different cultures. It is also advised that in future research in this area should focus on assessing multicultural education taking place in schools of different areas, districts, rural or urban and possibly a comparison between public and private schools as well. It would also be equally important to study the functioning of multicultural education across different regions of India.

In order to account for the limitations of this study, it can be said that future researches can replicate an exact study in the case of higher education and then try to give insights on the functioning of multicultural education at all the level of education. This would also provide additional insight in to dynamism of the changing perception of people according to their education about the concept of multicultural education.

Future researches can also focus on studying multicultural education pedagogy, on how teachers should be trained as instructional methods play a very important role in reducing prejudices and generating awareness. Studies should also focus on how do multicultural efforts at school produce behavioural changes over time in students; impact on the academic performance of students from deprived background can also be studied. Various research initiatives should also venture into doing extensive quantitative studies that may help in find several confounding variables and provide evidence regarding which are the area that need to be worked upon for better functioning of multicultural education.

6.4 Conclusion

The research conducted in this dissertation was conducted with aim of examining means and mechanism to make us more appreciative of our differences. The dissertation sought to make a small step towards understanding and explaining the very nature of discriminatory processes and their consequent effect on the ones being discriminated. The ambit of cultural diversity or even say diversity is more than that is comprehensible. The approach of multicultural education to children forms a ray of hope among all the despair. The approach to safe guard diversity does not call us to lead people to feel equal or grant them equality, rather the approach tries to building a thinking process that does not consider anyone small or backward or forward rather a view that sees the world as equal with all communities equal and good in their own respect and sociocultural setting.

In case of countries like India the situation might be more than vulnerable and needs to be handled with utmost sincerity on the part of the policy makers as we are a host to a number of different kinds of diversity. What is more important than the equality of opportunity for each culture and community is that nowhere it should be implied that their culture is backward than other or any kind of discrimination. The very approach of clearing the misconceptions and disrespect and misrecognition suffered by certain communities could prove a long way in building a future that is culturally sustainable.

In the recent times we can see loss of harmony among the two major communities of India and that the youths are easily getting radicalised and indulging into violence that is not acceptable. Multicultural education thus in this specific context becomes of more importance since it provides the long term solution to any planner or government that would aim at reducing such instances that are an enormous loss of lives and property.

The dissertation primarily aimed at focussing on the aspects of multicultural education assimilated in the policies, school curriculum and practices. Time and again policies have talked and recommended multicultural education or rather an education system that is sensitive to the diverse needs of the diverse Indian population but as many studies have evidenced and as this research itself reports there is a lot more to be achieved in terms of incorporation of multicultural education in India.

What India needs at the current moment to solve the problems of the deeply disintegrated society can be debatable but the promises of multicultural education

surely go a long way as the demography of India reveal that India has the highest population in the school going age thereby the whole multiculturalist approach could be used to teach students, in turn facilitating them to develop positive attitude towards diversity. However I highly question the a role of education itself in preserving diversity as it is the one which is trying to homogenise, it might though prove to be solution to the undemocratic discriminatory practices that take place on the ground and help people realize the importance and strength of diversity.

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APPENDIX

Focused Group Discussion Questionnaire:

1. Should India have different cultures? Discuss reasons of your choice.
2. Does your school (teachers) discuss with you about different cultures? If yes, discuss.
3. Do you think it's important to be discussed? Why?
4. How do textbooks / curriculum represent different states / regions?
5. Which region in the country do you think you know least about?
6. Do teachers use examples from real life while teaching? Discuss.
7. Discuss religion based prejudices observed in and out of school.
8. Discuss caste based prejudices observed in and out of school
9. Discuss state based prejudices observed in and out of school
10. Has school (teachers) ever discussed about any of these prejudices with you?
Discuss.

Some photos of the school:

8th Grade Classroom



Annual Day Celebration



