

ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN VERNACULAR MEDIUM SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF TWO SCHOOLS AT GUWAHATI CITY OF ASSAM.

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Education is a key in human capital formation. Quality of human resources depends upon the quality of education of a country. Sustainable economic development needs skilled manpower which is raised through productivity and efficiency of individuals that is only possible through education. But education also reflects the structural inequalities in the social system. Schools are not accessible to everyone and the education system brings about a division between elite and the masses and it serves to perpetuate the existing inequalities. Therefore despite all these achievements in India, the dream of an egalitarian society continues to be far from realization. We have still to go a long way to realize the path of equalization of educational opportunity, the universalization of primary education, women empowerment through education, improvement of cultural environment of the marginalized and oppressed population, solution of unemployment problem etc. Wide spread inequality of educational opportunity remains despite the introduction of free and compulsory state education including India. Many children coming from working class and poor families face a number of obstacles and disadvantages to success on education, this means that they do not do as well as their ability should allow them to. The chances of upward mobility are thus restricted. Those who hold positions of wealth and power can make sure their children have the best available education, and this often leads them to prestigious and lucrative jobs. Hence it is to be said that education is not a homogeneous kind of institution. There is stratification within education. In education system different hierarchy and different levels of stratification or qualities of education exists in the market today like different elite or private schools to good government schools or to poor vernacular medium government schools. Hence the present study aims to unearth the problems, challenges and also suggest remedial measures to address these issues particularly in vernacular medium schools in Guwahati city of Assam. Both qualitative and quantitative information is collected from two schools namely Dispur Government H.S school and Gopal Boro H.S School which are selected purposively is one of the highest enrolled schools and is situated in the heart of Guwahati city. The data is collected with the help of participant observation and interview method. The study is focused to find out the overall status of education, infrastructure in these vernacular medium schools as the level of hygiene in toilet, teacher student ratio, attendance of teachers and students, number of trained teachers, classroom infrastructure, laboratory, playground, auditorium, library, language lab, status of syllabus, security etc.

Review of the Related Literature:

1) **Iqbal Mahammad (2012) finds that** public schools have better facilities, spacious buildings, highly qualified staff and people oriented management styles as compared to private schools.

2) **Das Santanu (2013)** highlighted how people who are unequal in property, power and prestige always differ in their life chances, their institutional pattern of conduct, their lifestyles or cultural patterns and their attitudes, ideologies and beliefs. Although education seems to promise a bright future, widen horizons and ensure social mobility the role of education too under scanner today.

3) **Singh T. Surendra (2014)** also established difference between the school-wise academic achievement at the HSLC examination between Government and Private Schools during 2009 to 2011 in Manipur.

4) **Shing Shailendra, Sridhar Kala Seetharam, (2002)** focuses on the disparities across government and private schools in two cities of Uttar Pradesh – Firozabad and Deoria. The study considered varied parameters – enrolment rates, retention rates, and gender differentials – in an attempt to estimate out-of-school children in these districts. While the proportion of students in private schools has been consistently rising, the study found that government schools still score over private ones in several aspects, for instance attendance rates and issues of gender sensitivity.

5) **Akhtar Misbah,(2013)**, compared the different reasons of absenteeism between private and public school teachers at secondary level in district Bahawalnagar, Punjab,Pakistan. The study holds that government teachers avail more leaves than private teachers. Teachers of private schools avail less leaves because they feel insecure and are unsatisfied with their jobs and working environment.

6) **Ademola Rafiu Olatoye and John kayode Olasehinde**, compared senior secondary school student's science achievement in public and private schools in Katsina State, Naigeria. They find that private school students in Katsina State are better in science achievement than their counterparts in the public schools..

7) **Adeyemi Sunday B. June (2014)** compared pupils' academic performance between the private and public primary schools and established that pupils in the private primary schools performed better than their counterparts in the public schools and therefore calls for improvement in the public schools to enhance the learning opportunity of the vast majority of pupils attending the public schools.

8) **World Bank Discussion Papers, (1995)** holds that although students in private schools come from more privileged families than those in public school, on average, there is a significant overlap between the two groups. Moreover, students in private schools outperform students in public schools on a variety of achievement tests.

Methodology

The study will be both descriptive and analytical in nature. The universe of the present study is two schools namely Dispur Government H.S School and Gopal Boro Government H.S School which are selected purposively as it is located in the heart of the city where we can expect best facilities and infrastructure. Both qualitative and quantitative information is collected. The data is collected with the help of participant observation and interview method. Interviews are taken from 20 students selected with the help of convenient sampling, each from both the schools and the principals of the schools. The tools of data collection is interview guide, field notes and camera.

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the overall status of infrastructure in these vernacular medium schools.
2. To unearth the problems, challenges in these vernacular medium schools
3. To suggest remedial measures to address these issues.

PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL

Teacher Student Ratio:

Quality of education depends mostly on the qualification, skills and the knowledge of using diverse techniques of teaching in diverse situation and topics by the teacher. Teacher student ratio plays a significant role in judging the quality of education. A class is generally expected to be effective when we have ideal teacher student ratio. The study reveals that

In Dispur H.S vernacular medium government school for secondary level the total number of students is 179 i.e. for class xi-100 and xii- 79. There is only one stream (Arts) in the school. Total no of faculties are 13. Though all 13 faculties are permanent but all are not properly trained teachers. Among 13 faculty's only four faculties having B.Ed degree which is considered as trained teachers and other 9 faculties does not have B.Ed degree. The teacher student's ratio is 1:80. We have not seen any separate section in secondary level for class xi and xii. So it is not possible for the teacher to control the students for whole period and he is failure to give an effective class. The teacher student ratio reveals comparatively a poorer quality of class i.e. disperse to the students.

On the other hand in Gopal Boro H.S school the total number of student in secondary level is 279. There are two stream (Arts & Science). Arts stream comparatively is larger then the science stream i.e. for class xi -105, xii-102 and 35 and 37 students in the science stream respectively for class xi and xii. The total no of teacher is 16 which is 3 male and 13 female teachers. Though all the faculties are to be appointed as a permanent teacher but we have seen that among 16 faculties there are only 3 trained teachers having B.Ed degree and others does not have any B.Ed degree. The teacher student ratio is 1:100 for arts classes and 1:35 for science stream (due to less enrolment). We have not seen any separate section for both of the streams. Hence in both the schools we may conclude that the same poor quality of education can be expected from these schools as it will be very difficult for teachers to address the requirement of diverse quality of students in a big class as in the study area.

Classroom Infrastructure:

We can never expect quality education without proper infrastructure in the classroom. In our study it is found that in Dispur H.S School we have not seen any conducive environment in any classroom for secondary levels. They have not even proper blackboards, though blackboard is available but it is very small and for the last benchers it is not visible or clear. So students become absent minded and unconscious about the matter whatever the teacher is teaching. The classrooms are very dirty. It motivates deprivation in the quality of education due to lack of proper classroom environment. In our study it is also noticed that though two smart class rooms were available in this school but in reality these two smart classrooms were not practically used. Every time it is locked and proper trained teacher is not available to run these classroom.

On the other hand in Gopal Boro H.S School we have found the similar class room environment. The classrooms were very dirty. In a class more than 100 students sitting together and one teacher taking a class. It is not possible for the teacher to control over the class for the whole period so the teacher is incapable of giving their quality education. Hence most of the (78%) students also reported of boredom and demotivated to attend the class. Here also we have found two smart classrooms but every time it is locked. No one have the knowledge how to take class with the help of smart classroom. So we may say that in both of the vernacular medium government schools the students are deprived from quality education and it is not possible for the teacher to collect the positive feedback of the class

School Infrastructure:

A Sound education always depends upon the school infrastructure. Toilet, urinal, playground, laboratory, library, building, etc. all comes under the school infrastructure. By describing under the following heads we are trying to give overall outlook of the vernacular medium government school infrastructure and depict a clear picture on social exclusion.

- ***Toilet and Urinal Facility:***

After surveying these two schools it is found that though Dispur H.S School has toilet and urinal facilities for both boys and girls but it is not clean as well as there is no proper water provision, and proper drainage and sanitary system, daily clean up provision. We have not seen any permanent sweeper appointed for the school to clean up the toilet and urinal. As a result the environment of that the school becomes very dirty, stinking and unhygienic for the students. Hence it adds to the poor infrastructure in the school. On the other hand Gopal Boro Govt H.S has also similar poor toilet and urinal facility for the students. Here also we have not found any permanent sweeper to clean up the toilets.

Laboratory: After studying these two schools it is found that we have not seen any laboratory facility in the Dispur H.S School because there is only one stream i.e. Arts. On the other hand though laboratory facility is available in Gopal Boro H.S. Schools but it is not well equipped, have not seen any systematic arrangement. It is just for showing and unusable.

Playground: It has been found that in Dispur H.S school they have not sufficient spaces for playground, only school campus open space of about 100 sq ft is being used for sports activities but in Gopal Boro H.S school though they a playground but it is not often used for extracurricular activities because the playground of the school is situated quite far from the school. It is also noticeable that the playground of the school is basically used for commercial purpose like theater show exhibition etc. The area of the playground is very small and not well planned. So the students do not get the opportunities for their all-round development and deprived from quality improvement and quality education in secondary level.

Auditorium: Auditorium plays an important role for proper development of quality of education and all round development of the student's personality. By studying both of the school we have found that in these two schools there is no facility of auditorium. Sometimes a classroom is used for multipurpose activities as like auditorium. The students of these schools are hence deprived from this platform due to the lack of AUDITORIUM. And student do not get the platform to develop their inner potentialities,

Library: In any educational institution library plays a key role in disseminating knowledge related to different subjects together with the cultural and social life to the students and teachers. It can be a central point for engagement with all kinds of reading, cultural activities, access to information, knowledge building, deep thinking, and lively discussion. In Dispur H.S school we have seen a very small room which is used as a library. There is no reading room or any sitting arrangement for the students and only academic books are available which is related to their course. Different books journals periodicals novels general knowledge books are not available in this library. On the other hand in Gopal Boro H.S School the library is comparatively quite improved with much more books and also a meager sitting arrangement for readers, but except course related books other books are not available. Though there is a few seats allotted for the students but it is not sufficient for the whole 279 students. So we may say that these vernacular medium schools' students are really excluded from these facilities and hence finally deprived from the quality education.

OTHER PROVISIONS:

Syllabus: Syllabus is an integral part of quality education. In our study it is found that both of the schools follows the same syllabus and same course i.e. SCERT Syllabus which has been continuing from last 10 years. The

syllabus is not updated. So we may say that vernacular medium school students are deprived from the up-to-date knowledge. Because the syllabus which is following is not revised one and has no link with the present day society. So they are excluded from the quality education. Hence the students most of the time after having the degree from these schools finds themselves unemployable.

Fees Structure: Fees structure plays an influential affect among the parents and students. Basically we have seen that those who are belonging to a lower economic family they are compelled to go to these public schools. But in private schools the fee structure is very high. It is possible for those students who are belonging from a higher economic status family, even for a middle class families student is not possible. In this study it has been found that some of students are very brilliant but due to poverty they are deprived as well as excluded from quality education. Now a days in both of the school the admission procedure or fees structure is totally free as per State Government rule.

Security: Modern civilized family is always concern about the security of their child so that their child became safe. This security carries a more weightage to the whole education environment. We cannot deny this security system. In my study it is found that there is no security provision in both the schools even they have not any gate keeper or security gourd, as a result any student can go outside the campus without hesitation during their off time and it will be difficult for the school management to trace these incidents. As a result the student of the public school is more unsecured. Thus we can conclude that these vernacular medium schools' students are deprived from security of life during the schooling time.

Conclusion:

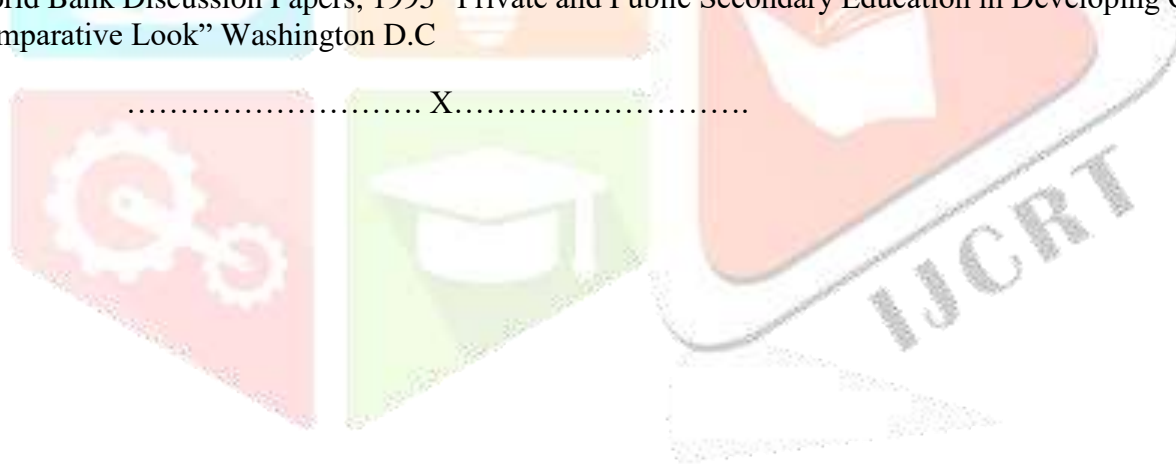
Social exclusion is a serious concern in contemporary society. After analyzing the data it is clear that public school students are really deprived from quality education. Though students have the capability to learn but in reality due to lack of economic support they are not able to get the opportunity to develop themselves and get the best environment to realize their education. They are not getting chance for the fullest development of their personality, public school students never get the opportunity to play in badminton, basketball, volley ball, lawn tennis, debating, presenting presentations on field trips and to hear renowned academicians etc. rather student of private school get these opportunities and thus they became advanced and up-to-date and consequently are much more competitive in the job market. Moreover because of lack of imperative facilities as hygienic toilets for both sex, proper class room infrastructure, labs and library with reading rooms students of these public schools cannot get the minimum imperative environment for attaining education and the lack of these facilities act often as demotivation to achieve their dreams.

Apart from above discussion it is also evident that public school's education system is very flexible. There is no any hard and fast rules for the students and teacher which can be implemented to install discipline in the campus. Quality of teaching strategy is also found very poor. But in case of private schools all the teachers and students have to maintain a strict discipline. Whatever teachers are going to teach they are fully prepared and they can deliver their lecture in a systematic way, which is reflected in the quality education in both these type of institutions.

So, we can say that education is no more equal or no longer equal. Those who are having resources are getting the best education, and by attaining that confirming their birth in the best jobs of the country, on the other hand the students of these vernacular medium schools are only adding to the number of educated unemployment or underemployment.

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