



ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS OF WESTERN ORISSA: CONSTRAINTS AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was aimed at critical analysis of the constraints and prospects of elementary education in rural Western Odisha. This study was delimited to the students, the parents, the teachers and the headmasters of the rural schools of Western Odisha only . For this study, descriptive survey method was employed. The study analyzed the data for. a sum total of 720 students , 600 parents ,180 Headmasters have been selected. Also, A total No. of 20 experts who are working for the cause of elementary education have been included under the present study on the basis of purposive random sampling. In order to collect the data in the present study, the investigator used the Self-made Questionnaires for Headmasters, Interview schedules for Parents as well as Students and Questionnaires for experts . Data has been analysed with the help of simple percentage, tabulation and graphical representation. Finally, it was found that ,More than 80 percent headmasters parents and experts suggested that monitoring and supervision of all activities in schools should be done regularly. Also, More than 90 percent headmasters, students, parents and experts suggested that all primary school should be equipped with basic facilities like water, toilet, playground play materials, all weather roads. The school timing, holidays and vacation should be arranged as per the local needs.

Key words: Elementary Education, Rural Areas, Western Orissa , Constraints, Prospect

INTRODUCTION

Western part of Odisha especially the rural areas are the most neglected part of Odisha. Most of the areas are inaccessible pockets. Most of the districts are having poor physical connectivity, people are poor, illiterate and lead miserable life with superstition, blind beliefs and taboos. They are very conservative and never accept change. Though the Govt, is planning developmental programmes for them, the benefit never reach to them. Most of them are not aware of developmental plans and policies. They speak their own dialect and it is different from the state language. Thus , the children at primary level face difficulties in understanding lessons in classroom. The teachers also speak regional language which the children cannot understand.

Education plays a key role in developing socio-economic development of the rural people. Thus all the children should be admitted in primary schools to get education. Basing upon this Right to Education Act 2009 has been enacted to include all children under elementary education.

Literature Review

Roma (2005) studied on status of the elementary education in rural areas of Chamoli district of Uttarnchal. He found that there is a disparity of the school completion rate on account of heavy school drop-out, resulting from economic deprivation In remote and rural areas. Also, Dash and Panda (2009) studied on effectiveness of Village Education Committee on promoting universal elementary education in Nabarangpur district of Orissa. They concluded that Most of the VECs worked excellently well for all round development of primary schools. VECs organized different awareness programmes satisfactorily for altitudinal change of villagers, and Proper care and management of primary schools, taking steps to increase enrolment and reduce drop-out rate, organizing different cultural activities in schools, working for development of school environment and helping the teacher to prepare TLM were significant works of VEC, which significantly affected the environment of the local primary schools. Similarly, Rao (2009) studied on the working of the School Management Committee in a tribal area of East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. He Found that , the community participation in improving education is negligible and that members of the school education management committees have limited awareness on various interventions of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Patra and Pati (2010) conducted a study on "Comparative status of Elementary Education in Orissa and Kerela: An Analysis. They concluded that , there are on an average six class rooms at primary schools and ten classrooms per upper primary schools in Kerela in contrast to average three classrooms in primary and less than three in upper primary schools in Orissa. Jadal (2012) studied on Community Participation in elementary Education. He found that all the members of the VECs supported on mid-day meal scheme . Seventy percent of the members of the VECs were making an effort to locate the problems of those children who were not attending the school regularly. Seventy percent of the members of the VECs were making efforts to solve problems of such children who were not attending the school regularly. Sixty-eight percent members of the VECs were making an effort to make the school attractive, and only 53 per cent member of VECs was trying to bridge the gap between the parents and the teachers. Finally, Patil (2013) studied on intervention of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in changing academic performance of primary school students. It concluded that, there is a significant increase (decrease) in achievement of students when increase in the number of teachers, number of residential schools and teacher-student ratio .But , number of classrooms, basic facilities in schools, number non-residential schools, and total number of schools has not influenced on the achievement of students.

Need of The Study

Education is the most important instrument for Human resource development. Elementary education being one of the basic requirements of each and every citizen in the country. This is rightfully the area where the state should give major concentration. From 1950 till date, various educational plan and policies, different organisations have come up for achieving the target of universalisation of elementary education. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the latest intervention undertaken by the government of India. It is an attempt to provide an opportunity for quality elementary education for all children including girls through various interventions.

The national programme for education of girls of elementary level (NPEGEL) is a focused intervention of government of India, it is launched in July 2003 it is an important component of SSA. The prime focus through various interventions for enrolling and retaining all eligible girls at elementary level.

There have been numerous studies conducted to identify various problems of elementary education in India. But all these studies individually highlighted one or the other problem of elementary education. But no study has looked at the problems of elementary education in its larger rural ecological context particularly in Western Odisha. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a research study on the constraints and prospects of elementary education in rural areas of Western Orissa.

The present study will be an attempt to look at the constraints and prospect of elementary education in rural areas of western Odisha.

Research Questions

1. What is the status of elementary education in Western Odisha ?
2. What is the states of elementary schools of rural areas of Western Odisha ?
3. What are the constraints faced by the elementary school of rural areas of Western Odisha ?
4. What are the possible prospects viewed by the various stake holders of rural elementary schools of Western Odisha ?
5. What are their role in eradicating the constraints of rural elementary education in Western Odisha ?

Objectives of the Study

The followings objectives are formulated for the proposed study.

1. To find out the status of elementary schools in rural areas of Western Odisha.
2. To find out the constraints in the field of elementary education is rural areas of Western Odisha.
3. To identify the visible prospects in the field of elementary education in the rural areas of Western Odisha.
4. To make a critical analysis of the constraints and prospects of elementary education in rural Western Odisha.
5. To study the role of the visible prospects in eradicating the existing constraints of the elementary education in rural areas of Western Odisha.

Delimitation of the Study

The present study is delimited in the following areas-

1. The rural areas of Western part of Odisha.
2. The elementary schools (primary and upper primary) of rural areas of Western Odisha.
3. The study is delimited to the students, their parents, teachers and headmasters of those rural schools of Western Odisha .

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology of the study comprises of Research Method, Population, Sample, Tools, Procedure of data collection, Procedure of data analyses.

Research Method

Descriptive survey method has been adopted for the present study.

Population

All the elementary schools situated in rural areas of all 9 (Nine) districts of Western Odisha such as Bargarh, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Boudh and Sonepur have been constituted the population under the present study. All the students reading in those schools, all the Headmasters working in those schools, all the parents of those students and experts working for the elementary education constituted the population under the present study.

Sample

A total No. of 180, elementary schools 20 schools of educationally backward blocks of those districts have been selected on the basis of random sampling procedure on the basis of lottery system. Again, Out of those 20 schools 4 students from class-V (2 boys and 2 girls) a sum total of 720 students , 600 parents ,180 Headmasters have been selected. Also, A total No. of 20 experts who are working for the cause of elementary education have been included under the present study on the basis of purposive random sampling.

Tools

To collect the required data, The investigator have been used Self-made Questionnaires for Headmasters, Interview schedules for Parents as well as Students and Questionnaires for experts . All the tools were prepared in consultation with experts.

Procedure of Data Collection

The investigator has visited to all schools, tried to establish rapport, explained the objectives of conducting research activities and tried to clarify their doubt through discussion for collecting data.

Procedure of Data Analysis

Data has been analysed with the help of simple percentage, tabulation and graphical representation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

ANALYSIS OF DATA ON VIEWS GIVEN BY DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS ON CONSTRAINTS FACED BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF RURAL AREAS OF WESTERN ODISHA

CONSTRAINTS RELATED TO SOCIETY AND SOCIAL FACTORS

Table no.1. Showing the constraints related to society and social factors

(Table no.1)

Views/stakeholders	Headmasters				Students				Parents				Experts			
	Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Most of the parents are illiterate and never show interest towards education of their children	140	78	40	22	320	86	100	14	300	50	300	50	18	90	2	10
Society looks negatively towards the education of children especially to girls	100	56	80	44	600	83	120	17	350	49	250	51	12	60	8	40
Jati Mahasabha never discuss about the educational problems of their children	110	61	70	39	50	69	220	31	410	57	190	43	18	90	2	10
Community believes that education in school will create unemployment among their children	108	60	72	40	480	67	240	33	400	56	200	44	17	85	3	15
Community never encourage their children for education	100	56	80	44	445	66	245	34	410	57	190	43	18	90	2	10
Blind believes, superstitions regulate the rural community for which they never send their children to school	110	61	70	39	470	65	250	35	408	57	192	43	17	85	3	15

From the above table, it can be observed that, Seventy eight percent headmasters agree that most of the parents are illiterate and never show interest towards the education of their children and it is supported by 86 percent students, 50 percent parents and 90 percent experts. Sometimes society and local community also look negatively towards the education of their children. They criticise their children for education. Instead of encouraging them, they discourage the children for attending school regularly. Fifty six percent headmasters, 83 percent students, 49 percent parents and 60 percent experts agree with the statement. Ninety per cent experts agree that community never encourage their children to attend the school regularly and it is supported by 56 percent headmasters, 66 percent students and 57 percent parents. Rural villages of Western Odisha is full of blind believes, superstitions. They consider education is not necessary for children rather they think that they should engage in various Jobs for livelihood. They consider girls should not be educated as they have to marry and they should learn how to manage household activities. Sixty one percent headmasters, 65 percent students, 57 percent parents agree to this statement. Eighty five percent experts also agree to this views. Caste plays a major role in controlling the social behavior of rural people. They have their own Jati Mahasabha who regulate and control their social behavior. Jati Mahasabha frame rules, regulations for their members and if any

members violate the rules, regulations there is punishment like financial punishment, out caste which is very painful. Thus the villagers never go against the order impeached by Jati Mahasabha. In the meeting of Jati Mahasabha education of children has never been an agenda for discussion. They never discuss the problems relating to education. Sixty seven percent students agree to this statement which is supported by 60 percent headmasters, 56 percent parents and 90 percent experts.

CONNSTRAINTS RELATED TO ECONOMIC FACTORS

Table no.2 . Showing the constraints related to economic factors

(Table no.2)

Views/stakeholders	Headmasters				Students				Parents				Experts			
	Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Most of the parents are poor and cannot afford for the education of their children	160	89	20	21	680	94	140	6	320	53	280	47	18	90	02	10
Children have to look after the household work when their parents go for work to earn livelihood	165	92	15	8	660	92	60	8	315	52	285	48	17	85	02	15
Most of the children cannot go to school as they engage in different work for money	160	89	20	21	650	90	10	10	300	50	300	50	18	80	02	20
Due to poverty children have to work as child labour	180	100	00	00	600	83	120	19	420	70	280	30	19	95	01	05
Parents do not prorotise education as it involves economic investment	100	89	20	21	590	82	130	18	410	68	290	32	18	90	02	10
parents consider investment in education is a useless investment	162	90	18	10	400	56	320	44	400	67	200	33	19	95	01	05

From the above table , it can be observed that , most of the parents are poor and face difficulties in managing their daily needs. They have to work in agricultural field or to go for wages. Some of them also collect minor forest product, sell them and earn money for their family. As they poor, they cannot afford money for education of their children. It is interesting to note that 94 percent students agree that it is difficult for their parents to meet the expenses of their education and it is supported by 89 percent headmasters, 53 percent parents and 90 percent expert. For this reason most of the children cannot go to school regularly and they engage in different work for money. Ninety percent children and 80 percent parents agree to this view. It is also supported by 89 percent headmasters and 50 percent parents. Sometimes the rural children go to other places in search of job and engage themselves in hazardous job and work as child labourer. All the headmasters agree that poverty is the main reason for child labour and it is supported 83 percent students, 70 percent parents and 95 percent experts. Parents consider investment in education is a useless investment and do not priorotise education of their children. Ninety percent headmasters, 56 percent students, 67 percent parents, 95 percent experts agree to this statement

Most of the parents are labourer and they have to go outside in search of job from the early morning. Thus in their absence the children have to look after their younger brothers and sisters, have to attend the household activities. They have to fetch water, have to arrange firewood for cooking. Sometimes they also cook the food. Especially girls have to attend all these activities for which they cannot go to school regularly even if they have been enrolled in school. Ninety two percent children agree that they have to attend household activities for which they cannot attend school regularly. Ninety two percent headmaster agree that children are not regular

in attending schools because they have to attend the household activities. Fifty two percent parents and 85 percent experts agree to this statement.

CONSTRAINTS RELATED TO POLITICAL FACTORS

Table no.3 . Showing the constraints related to political factors.

(Table no.3)

Views/stakeholders	Headmasters				Students				Parents				Experts			
	Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Facilities related to toilet and drinking water are not sufficient in schools	140	78	40	22	510	71	210	29	350	58	250	42	17	85	03	15
Infrastructure facilities related to building and classroom is not sufficient	130	72	50	28	410	57	310	43	340	57	260	43	18	90	02	10
Lack of trained female teachers in school	120	67	60	33	320	46	400	54	330	55	270	45	17	85	03	15
School timing, vacation, holidays are not as per the local needs	110	61	70	39	330	46	390	54	320	53	280	47	16	80	04	20
Connecting roads to school in rural areas are not safe during rainy season	110	61	70	39	340	47	380	53	310	52	290	48	17	85	03	15
Playground and play materials are not sufficient in schools	120	67	60	33	480	67	240	33	290	48	310	52	16	80	04	20

The above table reveals the fact that ,various stake holders are not aware about the educational rights of children especially Right to Education Act 2009. It is supported by 67 percent headmasters, 58 percent students, 58 percent parents. Ninety percent experts agree that rural people do not know about the plan and policies related to education for which they do not send their children to schools. Panchyat Raj Institutions should plan various programmes to make aware about the educational rights of children. Sarpanch and ward members should conduct meetings in villages. But they never do this and 61 percent headmaster, 46 percent students, 59 percent parents and 85 percent experts view that this is the major constraints in the path of universalization of primary education in rural areas of Western Odisha. Not only Panchayat leaders but local leaders as well as tribal leaders also do not focus on educational rights of children and this is supported by 67 percent headmasters, 52 percent students, 75 percent parents and 90 percent experts. Officers from block and district level should go to the villages to discuss with the villagers about the successful implementation of policies related to education. But 69 percent headmasters, 51 percent students, 75 percent parents and 85 percent experts agree that officers from block and district never come to villages to discuss about the problems faced by the villagers in the field of education. Interesting to note that officers from the dept, of education from district also never supervise the educational activities of school. They never come to villages to discuss about the educational problems. Sixty eight percent headmasters, 51 percent students, 52 percent parents and 85 percent experts expressed their views that officers from education dept, also never discuss educational issues with the villagers.

CONSTRAINTS RELATING TO SCHOOL FACTORS

Table no.4 . Showing the constraints related to political factors.**(Table no-4)**

Views/stakeholders	Headmasters				Students				Parents				Experts			
	Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parents and community are not aware about the plans and policies of Government relating to education	120	67	60	33	300	42	420	58	350	58	250	42	18	90	02	10
Panchayat Raj Institutions never focus on any educational activities in villages	110	61	70	39	320	46	400	54	352	59	248	41	17	85	03	15
Gram Sabha never discuss about the education of children	140	78	40	22	370	51	350	49	350	58	250	42	16	80	04	20
Local leaders and tribal leaders never encourage the education of rural children	120	67	60	33	372	52	348	48	450	75	150	25	18	90	02	10
Officers from Education Dept. never discuss the problems relating to education	125	69	55	31	370	51	350	49	452	75	148	25	17	85	03	15
Other officers seldom supervises educational activities of the school	123	68	57	32	370	51	350	49	310	52	290	48	17	85	03	15

From the above table, it is revealed that most of the schools are lacking of toilet and safe drinking water facilities for which children are not attending the school regularly and it is supported by 78 percent headmasters, 71 percent children, 58 percent parents and 85 percent experts. Besides this there is lack of sufficient number of classroom, building is not attractive and 72 percent headmasters, 57 percent students, 57 percent parents and 90 percent experts agree to this statement. In all primary schools lack of trained female teachers are also a major Percentage of School Factors constraints. Due to lack of proper communication, lack of quarters to livelack of proper accommodation and unhygienic condition female teachers never prefer to stay in rural areas of Western Odisha. Sixty seven percent headmasters, 85 percent expert, 46 percent students and 55 percent parents agree to this statement and opine that this is the constraints of primary education. As the life style of rural people are completely different, they don't like to send their children to school for 10 am to 4.30 pm. The timing of school is not suitable for them. Again they dislike the pattern of vacation and holidays as prescribed by Govt, of Odisha. They demand holiday on weekly market date not on Sunday. They demand vacation during rainy season not in summer. They demand holiday as per their local festivals and it is supported by 53 percent parents, 61 percent headmasters, 46 percent students and 85 percent experts. During Rainey season the connecting roads from villages to schools are destroyed and the children face difficulties in coming to schools. Sixty one percent headmasters, 47 percent students, 52 percent parents and 85 percent experts consider it as the one of the important constraints in attending schools on the part of children. Children are fond of play. Instead of learning in the classroom by chalk and talk method they like to play in the playground, move here and there instead of sitting at one place. But most of the primary schools have no playground and no play materials also. This is the reason for which children one not interested to come to school regularly. Sixty seven percent students agree to this statement. Sixty seven percent headmasters, 48 percent parents and 80 percent experts also agree to this statement.

CONSTRAINTS RELATING TO ACADEMIC FACTORS

Table no.5 . Showing the constraints related to academic factors

(Table no-5)

Views/stakeholders	Headmaster				Students				Parents				Experts			
	Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive		Negative	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Language spoken by teachers, book language is difficult to understand by the students	110	61	70	39	610	84	100	16	350	87	250	42	18	90	02	10
Curriculum, Textbook, time table are not prepared as per local needs	120	67	60	33	620	86	100	14	340	57	260	43	17	85	03	15
Time table and timing of school are not as per local needs	140	78	40	22	610	86	100	16	320	53	280	47	18	90	02	10
Teaching is boring and unattractive and confined to classroom only	110	61	70	39	620	86	100	14	310	52	290	48	17	85	03	15
In Classroom dance, music, stories are not used frequently by the teachers	100	56	80	44	670	93	50	07	300	50	300	50	16	80	04	20
Curriculum is not flexible and uninteresting	80	44	100	56	620	86	100	14	310	52	290	48	17	85	03	15
Co-curricular activities are not organised on regular basis	80	44	100	56	670	93	50	07	450	63	250	37	16	80	04	20

From the above table, it is derived that language spoken by teachers and medium of instruction used by the teachers in the classroom is different from the language spoken by the children. The children of rural Western Odisha speak Sambalpuri dialect which is different from the standard Odia language. So they do not understand by reading the text book. Language is the major constraints of children to understand lessons in elementary schools in rural areas of Western Odisha. Ninety percent of students, 87 percent parents, 61 percent headmasters and 90 percent Percentage of Academic Factor experts agree to this factor. Curriculum at elementary schools is very rigid and full of academic activities. Text book and time table have been designed accordingly. There is continuous and comprehensive evaluation but it is not maintained properly. Children during primary schools experience boredom with the classroom teaching and 86 percent students, 67 percent headmasters, 57 percent parents, 85 percent experts agree that curriculum is not attractive for children at the elementary stage. There is little scope for dance, music story telling in the class. Teachers are trained to use all these elements in the classroom but in reality it is not found. Eighty-six percent students do not like the classroom teaching and without dance, music, play stories. It is supported by 56 percent headmasters, 50 percent parents and 85 percent experts. Besides curricular programme co-curricular programme should be organised regularly as small children like it more. But co-curricular programme are not organised on regular basis. Children do not get chance to participate due to lack of provision. Thus they are not attracted to attend school regularly. Eighty nine percent students agree that they do not get chance to participate in various co-curricular programme. This is supported by 93 percent student, 44 percent headmasters, 89 percent parents and 80 percent experts.

ANALYSIS OF DATA ON VIEWS SUGGESTED BY DIFFERENT SHAREHOLDERS ON PROSPECTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF RURAL WESTERN ODISHA

SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO SOCIAL FACTORS

Table no.6 . Showing the Suggestions Relating to Social Factors

(Table no-6)

Suggestions/ stakeholders	Headmasters		Students		Parents		Experts	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Local community should be made sensitive towards the education of children	140	77	650	90	520	86	100	100
Local environment should encourage to make the children aware to attend the school regularly	130	72	620	86	480	80	18	90

From the above table , it reveals the fact that local community are very apathetic towards the education of their children. As most of them are illiterate and wage labourer, they are busy in attending their livelihood activities. They are illiterate and give less importance to education of their children. Their children are the first generation learners, they cannot guide their children in educational activities. Thus they should be made sensitive the following activities.

- 1-Importance to education in human life
- 2- Primary education is the stepping stone of all higher education.
- 3- Education can only help them to build a quality life.

Various measures like dance, drama, music, discussion, focus group discussion, traditional folklore, stories can be composed and organised relating to importance of education. Seventy-seven percent headmasters, 90 percent students, 86 percent parents and all experts viewed that local community should be made aware, sensitive towards the education of children. So that the local environment should be conducive for education of the children. They should be encouraged to attend school regularly and this is supported by 72 percent headmasters, 86 percent students, 80 percent parents and all 90 percent experts.

SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO ECONOMIC FACTOR

Table no.7 . Showing the Suggestions Relating to Economic Factors

(Table no-7)

Suggestion/stake holders	Headmasters		Students		Parent		Teachers	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Poor parents should be provided with incentives for the education of their children	160	88	700	97	580	97	20	100
Child labour should be banned strictly	152	84	680	94	572	95	18	90
Free accommodation facilities with free supply of books, uniform should be provided	170	94	662	91	580	97	17	84

Besides incentives free accommodation facilities with free supply of books and uniform should be provided and 94 percent headmasters, 91 percent students, 97 percent parents and 85 percent experts agreed to this statement. Due to poor economic standard the children are forced to work as child labour and earn money for their family which create obstacles on the path of univeralisation of Primary Education. The small children cannot attend primary schools. Instead of that they work in field. Thus all Percentage of Economic Factors the stake holders are of the view that the child labour should be banned

strictly. In India legally there are laws which prevent child labour provision. But it is in theory. There are lakhs of children who are forced to work in the field. They should be rescued and should be placed in the schools. Eightfour percent headmasters, 94 percent students, 95 percent parents and 90 percent experts agree that child labour should be banned.

SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO POLITICAL FACTORS

Table no.8. Showing the Suggestions Relating to political Factors

(Table no.8)

Suggestions/stake holders	Headmasters		Students		Parent		Experts	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Panchayat should look after the education of children in village	152	84	500	69	572	95	18	90
Grama sabha should see that all children in the age group of 6-14 are attending school regularly	150	83	450	63	580	97	17	85
Monitoring and supervision of educational activities by officials should be made regularly	160	88	400	55	420	70	20	100

The above table reveals the fact that, all the stake holders agree that panchayat should take initiative towards primary education of children and it is supported by 84 percent headmasters, 69 percent students, 95 percent parents and 90 percent experts . Gram sabha regularly plan and execute all development activities in the village. But it never plan for education of children. If Grama sabha will plan and see that all children in village are attending school regularly then it will be successful and it is supported by 83 percent headmasters, 63 percent students, 97 percent parents and 85 percent experts. In order to make all educational programme in schools success monitoring of officials should be done regularly and it is supported by 89 percent headmasters, 85 percent students 70 percent parents and all experts.

SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO SCHOOL FACTORS

Table no.9 . Showing the Suggestions Relating to school factors

(Table no.9)

Suggestions/stake holders	Headmaster		Students		Parents		Expert	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
All schools should be made attractive with building and other facilities.	160	88	450	63	572	95	20	100
Trained female teachers should be appointed in primary schools	170	94	400	55	420	70	20	100
School timings, holidays, vacation, festivals should be based on local needs.	152	84	662	91	480	97	20	100
Playground and play materials should be provided in all schools	152	84	680	94	580	97	20	100
All weather roads should be arranged	160	88	662	91	572	95	20	100

The above table reveals for fact that in order to make attractive the primary schools should be provided with all facilities and it is supported by the mane 88 percent headmasters, 63 percent students, 95 percent parents and all experts.

1. The primary school building should be made more attractive.
2. The primary schools have playground and play materials as students of primary are found of play during childhood.
3. Trained female teachers should be appointed in all Primary and Upper Primary Schools.
4. Schools timing, holidays, vacation, should be made flexible and it should be as per the local needs. 5. All weather roads should be provided so that children can attend school regularly.

SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO ACADEMIC FACTORS

Table no.10 . Showing the Suggestions Relating to Academic Factors

(Table no.10)

Suggestions/stake holders	Headmaster s percent		Students percents		Parents percent		Experts percent	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Medium of instruction should be mother tongue, text book should be prepared in mother tongue and it should be local specific	166	92	97	97	580	97	20	100
Curricular, teaching materials should be children specific	166	92	680	94	572	95	20	100
Music, Dance, activities, stories should be adopted in class room teaching	170	94	662	91	580	97	20	100
Various co-curricular activities should be designed to attract the children to school	166	92	680	94	572	97	20	100

Besides school environment academic atmosphere of elementary school should be child friendly and it should be prepared as per the psychological principles. All the stake holders have suggested to look after the following factors

Medium of instruction, language of text book should be prepared as per the local dialect or the mother tongue spoken by the majority of the students in schools

Curriculum should be flexible, lessons should be prepared as per the local situation, local specific, Dance, Music, Stories, outside activities, nature study, and community visit should be organised regularly instead of chalk and talk method in the class room. Various co-curricular activities as per the interest of the community should be organised to attract the children to school. Local youth should be trained to involve in educational activities of the elementary schools of rural areas. More than 90 percent headmasters, students, parents and experts view in favour all these factors. The following table shows the suggestions suggested by the various stake holders.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRAINTS AND PROSPECTS OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN RURAL WESTERN ODISHA

Inspite of so many measures, adopted by Central Government as well as by State Government the goal of Universalisation of Primary Education is still a distant dream. Indian constitution has promised to fulfill the goal of Universalisation of Primary Education within ten years from the Commencement of India Constitution in 1950. But India has passed more than 65 years of Independence. But all the children in the age group of 6- Percentage of Academic Factors 14 have not fully enrolled in primary schools. India has not only committed

to provide primary education to all children but also there is pressure from International agencies to provide education for all where India is a signatory of all International treatise.

India lives in villages. More than 75 percent population live in rural areas. The life of rural people is different from urban life. The villagers fully depend on nature and lead a natural life. They depend on agriculture for their economic subsistence. Their life concentrate around agricultural activities. Some of them depend on forest and product of forest. They collect those product, sell and depend on forest for economic subsistence. They depend and regulate their lives as per the natural principles. The same curriculum and syllabus adopted in urban areas is also adopted in rural areas. Which is not related to live and needs of rural people. It does not teach the child of adopt himself to his social and material surrounding because it is diverted from their life cycle. The Zakir Husain Committee remarks" today when quick and far reaching changes are reshaping both national and international life and making new demands on the citizens, it continues to function lifelessly and apart from the real currents of life, unable to adopt itself to the changed circumstances'. The serious drawbacks is that it is too literary and does not train individuals to become useful productive members of society. A useful productive member should participate effectively in its work. The rural children who are educated from the present primary schools have been proved useless by the community for which community members do not encourage them to attend schools regularly. The system benefits only urban people not the rural mass. Gandhi while delivering his speech in Wardha Educational Conference in 1937 highlighted, "The present system of education does not meet the requirement of the country in any shape or form English having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many.... Absence of vocational training has made the educated classes almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spend on primary education is a waste of expenditure in as much as what little is taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of the villages or cities. For all round development of boys and girls, all training should, as far as possible, be given through a profit-yielding vocation.... The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial vocation"

The curriculum, syllabus adopted in elementary rural schools do not help the rural children to solve their daily problems. The parents and community people do not find any link between their life's and school activities for which they do not feel tempted to send their children to school. Rather they find it meaningful to engage them in household activities, agricultural field and collection of forest product. All those activities not only enable them to engage in productive physical work but also contribute financial support.

The village life also do not support the timing of school, vacation and holidays. The timing of school is from 10 am. To 4.30p.m, the vacation and holidays are uniform for all over the state and country. Everywhere the same standard form is followed. But in villages the villagers do not regulate their lives as per the standard time. They have to work in the agricultural field or go to the forest for collection of forest product. When they go out for work the children remain in home and as food is not cooked in time the children are not in a position to attend school in time. So also usually the school is closed on Sunday but not on market day. In every villages

there is weekly market where the villagers have to collect vegetables rice and other daily needs. They are busy on that day and their children also prefer to attend the market than schools. Thus instead of Sunday one day holiday should be given market day. likewise there are local festivals. In tribal villages they have their own festivals but schools do not provide holidays on those days. Again the standard norm for vacation is on summer and winter. But villagers face acute problem during rainy season. Due to heavy rain the connecting roads are damaged, the rivers are overflowed, the forest roads are destroyed. Thus the children can not attend schools during these periods. Schools have to follow the standard instruction issued by the administration of the state authority. The female trained teachers do not prefer to stay in villages due to lack of accommodation, lack of communication facilities and other facilities. Thus there is lack of adequate number of female trained teachers in rural villages. The teachers do not use dance, drama, music, stories and other teaching learning materials for which the rural children are not attracted to attend schools. The school buildings are not attractive there is no playground, lack of basic facilities like toilet, drinking water which discourage children to attend schools regularly.

Panchayat Raj Institutions like Gram Sabha, Panchayats never pay attention towards proper functioning of schools. The teachers coming from urban towns, never come to schools regularly and it is not noticed by Panchayats nor by the authorities of the department.

The villagers are not aware of the plan and policies relating to education. Some times in some villages they become aware of the difficulties. They raise voice against this but their voices are not taken care of. The officials from block and district seldom visit the villages and discuss with the villagers regarding the educational problems.

VISIBLE PROSPECTS IN ERADICATING THE EXISTING CONSTRAINTS

In order to eradicate the existing constraints of the elementary education in rural Western Odisha all the stakeholders should Join hands together. Education of children is of national needs. The children are the future of the country. They will shoulder the responsibility of the country in future. Indian Education Commission has rightly pointed out, "The destiny of the nation is being shaped .within the four walls of the class room". If the children will be taken care during childhood they will grow physically strong, mentally alert and politically conscious and economically prosperous. After family, school is their second place to grow and after schooling they will be placed in the society and can participate in all developmental activities of the society and state. Thus education is an investment for human resource development. All rural children are the human resources of the country. Thus their well being, their education should be the priority of the society as well as of the state. Basing upon this massive awareness programme should be organized in local communities. Jati Mahasabha, traditional caste leaders should be involved in the process. The traditional folk artists should be identified and traditional folk songs, drama, pala, daskathia, should be organized for awareness programme. Women artists should be engaged to attract girls to come to schools. Girls volunteers should be engaged at village level to identify girls who are dropped out and has left the schools. Micro village level planning should be conducted and door to door survey should be done to identify the difficult pockets where the eligible enrolled children

are not being enrolled in schools Teachers should be trained specially to attract children to come to schools regularly. The teaching learning materials should be locally prepared with the help of local community. The school building should be attractive and should be equipped with minimum facilities like drinking water, toilets, boundary walls, kitchen shed, rams, playground and play materials. More female teachers should be appointed in villages. They should be provided with free accommodation.

Rural hostel facilities should be provided to the children of poor families so that the poor parents can send their children to schools. Special incentives should be provided to poor parents. Panchayat Raj Institutions, Sarpanch, Ward members should be made aware about the plans and policies of education. Special orientation should be given to local representatives and parents regarding Right to Education Act 2009. The government officials should visit to villages and should discuss with the villages regarding the solution of problems relating to education of children. Teachers should be trained to discuss with the villagers regarding the educational problems. They must join hands with the community people. Interested villagers for education should be identified from the village and should be involved in activities of the school. The schools Management Committee should be active and should involve the villagers in various activities of school. The school environment should be made attractive with active participation of villagers. Kitchen garden should be developed. The local games, songs, dance should be utilized in transaction of classroom activities. School timings, holidays and vocation should be organized as per local needs.

Language plays a major role in attracting children to elementary schools. The medium of instruction should be mother tongue or in local dialect. The teachers should be appointed locally and they should use local dialect while transacting lessons in the class room. The text books should be written in mother tongue of the children and the subject matter of the text book should be specific to local situation. For example, when most of the schools are not electrified and if the lesson will be based on computer, the children cannot understand the lesson. Thus lessons should be organized around their daily life and local situation.

The educational constraints of children of rural Western Odisha is both a academic as well as social problems. All the stakeholders like teachers, headmasters parents, community people, Panchayat raj representatives. Govt, officials all should work sincerely to make the goals of UEE a reality. To attend elementary schools in the age group of 6-14 is the fundamental right of all children in our country. Thus it is the duty of all concern to make the programme a success. If all will work sincerely than there is bright prospects of elementary education. All children in this age group will attend elementary education, will go for higher education and will contribute a lot towards creating a just, violence free democratic society in India. Thus ,elementary education is a stepping stone to create a better society.

FINDINGS

On the basis statistical analysis and interpretation of data, the following findings have been drawn;

- 1- All the Primary and Upper Primary sample schools are coeducational.
2. Out of all sample schools 23 percent are primary and 77 percent are Upper Primary Schools.
3. The enrolment status in all sample schools is highly satisfactory. It is more than 99 percent and Jharsuguda district the enrolment percent is 100 percent. Out of the total sample 51 percent are boys and 49 percent is girls. The sex-wise gap between enrolment of boys and girls is not so high.
4. A total no. of 774 teachers are working in all selected schools out of whom 19 percent are male teachers and 37 percent are female teachers. The percentage of female teachers in Primary and Upper Primary Schools of rural areas is less than male teachers.
5. Out of total no. of teachers 91 percent are trained teachers. In Sambalpur district more than 99 percent teachers are trained teachers.
6. The school-teachers ratio among all sample schools is 1:5 and student-teacher ratio is 1:27.
7. All the sample schools have their own building out of them 20 percent are having pucca building and 80 percent schools have mixed type building where the floor is made of cement but roof is made of tiles.
8. Only in 19 percent schools have playground and 37 percent schools have play equipments
9. In 97 percent schools have library and there are selected books supplied by OPERA (Odisha Primary Education Programme Authority). Library periods are allotted in school time table and books are issued to the students regularly.
10. Only 29 percent schools are connected by electricity. Out of them in 21 percent schools have been supplied with computers. Seventy-one percent schools have not been supplied with electricity.
11. In all schools mid-day-meals are supplied to children and most of the children of Primary and Upper Primary Schools are satisfied with the quality and quantity of foods supplied under MDM programme. 12. In 80 percent schools there are provision of ramps for disabled.
13. In 81 percent schools there are boundary walls. In 9 percent schools there is green fencing and 10 percent schools there is no permanent boundary walls.
14. In 92 percent schools there is provision of drinking water and in 87 percent schools the water is available from tube well and in rest of schools the water is supplied from well.
15. In 97 percent schools there is toilet for boys and in 92 percent schools there is toilet for girls but in 80 percent schools those toilets are not connected with running water and those are not maintained properly.
16. Thirty percent schools are not well connected with all weather roads.

17. Furniture is not available to children in any primary schools. In 20 percent Upper Primary School furniture is available to students of class-VIII.
18. Teaching learning materials are available in 80 percent schools purchased from TIM grant.
19. School Managing Committee have been formed in all sample schools. Meetings are held in every months and minutes are recorded in minutes khata.
20. Seventy eight percent headmasters agreed that most of the parents are illiterate and never show interest towards the education of their children. Eighty six percent students, 50 percent parents, 90 percent experts agreed to this statement.
21. Fifty six percent headmasters, 83 percent students, 49 percent parents and 60 percents expert agreed that the local community never encouraged the rural children to attend the Primary and Upper Primary Schools.
22. Sixty one percent headmasters, 65 percent students, 57 percent students, 85 percent experts agreed that people of rural Western Odisha believe superstitions, blind believes and do not consider children especially girls to attend the school regularly.
23. Sixty seven percent students. Sixty percent headmasters, 56 percent parents and 90 percent experts believed that Jati Mahasabha, Caste mahasabha never discuss problems relating to education and never encourage the children to attend primary schools regularly.
24. Ninety four percent students agreed that they could not go to schools because their parents were poor.
25. Ninety percent children and 89 percent headmasters agreed that the children had to work as child labour for which they could not go to primary schools.
26. Ninety two percent children and 85 percent experts agreed that children had to work in houseshad to look after their siblings for which they could not go to primary schools.
27. Ninety percent experts agreed that most of the rural people did not know the plans and policies related to education. Especially they did not know about the Right to Education Act-2009.
28. Sixty one percent headmasters and 85 percent experts viewed that ward members, Sarpanch, and Gram sabha never take interest towards the education of children in rural areas of Western Odisha. 29. Sixty seven percent headmasters, 75 parents agreed that the officials at district level especially education dept, never monitored and supervised the educational activities in rural villages.
30. Seventy two percent headmasters and 92 percent experts viewed that the school building were not attractive for which children were not interested to come to school.
31. Sixty seven percent headmasters, 85 percent experts, 46 percent students and 53 percent parents viewed that there is shortage of trained female teachers in all primary schools in rural schools for which the children were not attracted to attend schools regularly.

32. Fifty three percent parents. Sixty one percent headmasters, 46 percent students and 85 percent experts viewed that the school timing, vacation, holidays were not as per local needs.
33. Eighty five percent experts and 61 percent headmasters agreed that all the schools were not connected with all weather roads for which children were facing difficulties in attending primary schools regularly.
34. Sixty seven percent children and 80 percent experts agreed that they did not have playground or play materials which made them disinterested to come to schools.
35. Ninety percent children were of the view that their class room teaching was uninteresting and boring as there was no provision of dance, music, stories and other co-curricular programme.
36. Seventy seven percent headmasters, 90 percent students, 86 percent parents and all experts agreed that local community should be made sensitive towards the education of children and it should be conducted through various cultural programme with the involvement of local artists by using local dialect. So that local environment will be conducive for the education of children.
37. Eighty eight percent headmasters, 97 percent students, 97 percent parents and all experts suggested that poor parents should be provided incentives for the education of children. They also agreed that child labour should be strictly banned and such children should be kept in hostels and should be provided with free schooling.
38. All of them suggested that Panchayat should look after the education of children. Gram Sabha should discuss the problem relating to education of children. 39. More than 80 percent headmasters parents and experts suggested that monitoring and supervision of all activities in schools should be done regularly.
39. More than 80 percent headmasters parents and experts suggested that monitoring and supervision of all activities in schools should be done regularly.
40. More than 90 percent headmasters, students, parents and experts suggested that all primary school should be equipped with basic facilities like water, toilet, playground play materials, all weather roads. The school timing, holidays and vacation should be arranged as per the local needs.
41. They have suggested for the appointment of more female teachers.
42. All of them suggested for implementation of mother tongue in classroom transaction and in preparation of text books, cocurricular activities should be organised regularly. Dance, music, drama play should be organised by the teachers for the interest of children.
43. In order to make the programme a success the role of all stakeholders is important. Thus ,all of them should join hands together to make the objectives of Universalisation of Elementary Education in rural areas a success.

SUGGESTION

The following suggestions can be proposed in the context of present study to solve the problem of elementary education in rural areas of Western Odisha.

1. Wide awareness programme should be organised in villages to make aware of parents and community members about the importance of education in the life of an individual.
2. Poor families should be identified through micro-planning and door to door survey and special incentives should be provided to those families in order to send all children to elementary schools.
3. Child labour should be banned and such type of students should be kept in residential schools with free accommodation free fooding, free supply of books and uniforms.
4. More Hostels, Sevashrams, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas should be set up so that drop out children especially girls can be admitted.
5. Panchayat Raj Institutions, Ward Members and Sarpanchs should be trained to be involved in all educational activities in the villages. Educational discussion should be in the agenda of meeting of all Gram Sabhas.
6. Community members and members of School Managing Committee should be trained about various plan and policies of Govt, especially Right to Education Act 2009.
7. Teachers should be trained and should be appointed in difficult pockets with attractive incentives.
8. More female teachers from the local communities should be appointed.
9. Teachers should be trained to use local dialect in the classroom transactions.
10. The text book and medium of instruction should be either in mother tongue or in local dialect.
11. The curriculum should be flexible and should be integrated with local specific needs
12. The text book and lessons should be designed in the context of local environment and local tradition.
13. The teachers should be trained to use local dialect, dance, music, play, drama, mono action in the classroom while teaching.
14. Various co-curricular activities should be organised on regular basis so that children should not feel boredom in classrooms.
15. The school building should be made attractive with all basic facilities like toilet, drinking water, playground, play equipment, boundary wall, teaching learning materials, library books, etc.
16. Govt, officials from district/ block, from the department of education should visit the schools at regular intervals and should discuss with various stake holders to solve the problem relating to education.
17. Community people having various expertise should be invited and interact with the members of teaching staff and students.
18. Inter school and intra school competition should be organised among the students of elementary schools on regular basis to boost the spirit of children. Especially the girls should be encouraged to participate in different competitions so that they will attend school regularly.
19. Attention should be given to the education of disabled children, children of SC, ST category and students of minority communities.

20. All the stakeholders like parents, community people, political leaders, Govt, officials, Teachers school authority should join hands, together to make the programme a success.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following are the suggestions for further research work-

1. Further research can be conducted by taking a large sample across various social categories in all the districts of Western Odisha.
2. Studies can be conducted to find out the achievement of children residing in various hostels provided by Govt, of Odisha.
3. The success stories of elementary schools, girls and minority communities who have contributed towards elementary education qualitatively can be documented for wider dissemination of information.
4. Studies can be conducted to identify the difficult pockets where primary education is not successful and to adopt special measures for successful implementation of UEE.
5. Studies can be conducted to measure the teaching aptitude of teachers who are working in rural areas of Western Odisha and if they have a positive attitude should be appointed in difficult areas with special incentives.
6. Comparative study can be conducted to find out the teacher effectiveness of male and female teachers.
7. Comparative study can be conducted to find out the effect of use of local dialect in elementary education.
8. Experimental method can be adopted to find out the effect of text book prepared on mother tongue of the children.
9. Experimental method may be adopted to find out the impact of traditional plays, songs on achievement of children across various subjects.

CONCLUSION

Illiteracy of parents, lack of parents awareness, engagement of children in various domestic work were socio-economic conditions of the family play significant role in the elementary education in rural areas of Western Odisha. Lack of adequate female teachers and insufficient teaching staff which effects directly towards the better improvement of elementary education specially in rural areas. Poverty of parents also play a major role in making success of elementary education. Poor families are taking interest to engage their children in various works outside the home because they think that children are the source of income and never send their children to school. Lack of community participation, lack of awareness towards education are important problem in the way of making success of elementary education. Hygienic environment of the school environment, proper use of teaching learning materials, adequate class room has direct impact towards the education of children in rural areas. Lack of proper sanitary facility which affect quality education at elementary level. Lack of quality

teaching, lack of sufficient physical and other basic facilities, poor condition of classroom situation, unattractive curriculum and text book also discourage the children to attend elementary schools regularly.

To attract all children to elementary education is a national need. To invest money towards the education of children is an investment. Thus, government as well as all other stakeholders should join hands together to make it a success. Appropriate steps should be taken to overcome the constraints and to enable all children to attend the elementary school regularly.

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict is reported.

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