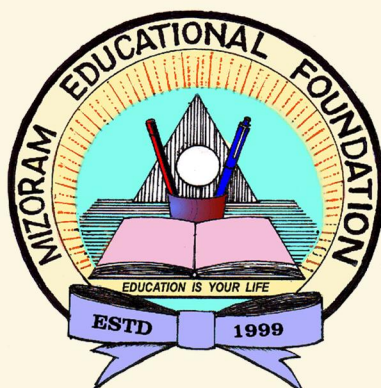


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Access to Higher Education in India: An Overview

Lalhmasai Chuaungo*

Abstract

This paper attempts to present an overview of higher education in India in terms of access and expansion. It highlights the number of universities and colleges available and the distribution of these institutions to different states of the country. One may think that the numbers of universities and colleges in our country and enrolment therein are large enough. But in terms of population and gross enrolment ratio, the number of our higher education institutions and enrolment of students are very low. Around 75% of our youths in the age group of 18-23 are outside our higher education system. Looking into this situation, India still needs more access and expansion in terms of number of higher education institutions and enrolment. Equity still needs to be taken care of.

Key Terms: access, equity, universities, colleges, gross enrolment ratio

Introduction

Access to higher education in India before independence was very limited with enrolment of less than a million students in 20 universities and 500 colleges. The post independence era saw the higher education system grow at a noteworthy pace, such that currently it is the third largest system in the world after China and the United States. Higher education institutions in the country are mainly categorized into Universities and Colleges. This paper attempts to present an overview of access to university and college education in India.

1. Universities

The university education system in India includes both private and public universities. Public universities are supported by the Government of India and the state governments, while private universities are mostly supported by various bodies and societies. Universities in India are recognized by the University

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Grants Commission (UGC), which draws its power from the UGC Act, 1956. In addition, 15 Professional Councils are established, controlling different aspects of accreditation and coordination.

Total No. of Universities in the Country as on 31.05.2015 as per UGC Website is as under:

•	Universities	Total No.
•	Central Universities	46
•	State Universities	330
•	Deemed to be Universities	128
•	Private Universities	215
•	TOTAL	- 719

Distribution of universities in the country can be found from the following tables:

**Table – 1. Top Ten States Having Largest Number of Universities
(as on 31 May 2015)**

Sl. No.	State	No. of Universities
1	Rajasthan	68
2	U.P	63
3	Tamil Nadu	52
4	Karnataka	49
5	Gujarat	47
6	Maharashtra	46
7	Haryana	38
8	M.P	37
9	W. Bengal	29
10	A. P & Uttarakhand	25 each

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India retrieved 4.7.2015

The types of universities include:

Central Universities:

These are established by an Act of Parliament and are under the purview of the Department of Higher Education in the Union Human Resource Development Ministry. The UGC lists 46 central universities.

Table – 2. States/UT Having More Than One Central University (as on 31 May 2015)

Sl. No.	State	No. of Central Universities
1	Delhi	5
2	U.P	5
3	Bihar	3
4	Telengana	3
5	Assam	2
6	J & K	2
7	M.P	2
8	Manipur	2
9	Tamil Nadu	2

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India retrieved 4.7.2015

State Universities:

These are run by the state government of each of the states and territories of India, and are usually established by a local legislative assembly act. As of 15 May 2015, the UGC lists 330 state universities. The oldest establishment date listed by the UGC is 1857, shared by the University of Mumbai, the University of Madras and the University of Calcutta. Note that most State Universities are “affiliating universities” in that they administer a large number of “affiliated colleges” (many located in very small towns) that typically offer a range of undergraduate courses, but may also offer post-graduate courses. More established colleges might even offer PhD programs in some departments with the approval of the affiliating university.

Table-3. Top Ten States Having Largest Number of State Universities (as on 31 May 2015)

Sl. No.	State	No. of State Universities
1	U.P	25
2	Gujarat	24
3	Karnataka	23
4	Tamil Nadu	22
5	West Bengal	21
6	A.P	20
7	Maharashtra	20
8	Rajasthan	20
9	Madhya Pradesh	18
10	Telengana	16

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India retrieved 4.7.2015

States like Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Puducherry do not have any state university.

Deemed University, or “Deemed to be University”, is a status of autonomy granted by the Department of Higher Education on the advice of the UGC, under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 for work of high quality in specialized academic fields. Two famous deemed-to-be universities are Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. The UGC lists 128 deemed universities in the country.

**Table- 4. Top Ten States Having Largest Number of Deemed Universities
(as on 31 May 2015)**

Sl. No.	State	No. of Deemed Universities
1	Tamil Nadu	28
2	Maharashtra	21
3	Karnataka	14
4	Delhi	11
5	U.P.	10
6	Rajasthan	8
7	Haryana	6
8	Andra Pradesh	5
9	Uttarakhand	4
10	M.P.	3

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India retrieved 4.7.2015

States without any deemed university, are Assam, Chhatisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

Private Universities are approved by the UGC. They can grant degrees but they are not allowed to have off-campus affiliated colleges. The UGC lists 215 private universities as on 31 May 2015.

**Table-5. Top Twelve States Having Largest Number of Private Universities
(as on 31 May 2015)**

Sl. No.	State	No. of Private Universities
1	Rajasthan	39
2	U.P	23
3	Gujarat	20
4	Haryana	17
5	Himachal Pradesh	17
6	M.P	14
7	Karnataka	11
8	Punjab	11
9	Uttarakhand	10
10	Chhatisgarh	8
11	Meghalaya	8
12	Arunachal Pradesh	7

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India retrieved 4.7.2015

The states and union territories of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, J & K, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telengana are without any private university.

India currently has 719 universities. There are universities of some kind in each and every of the 29 states of India as well as three of the union territories, Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry.

Institutions of National Importance: Apart from the above universities, other institutions established by Acts of Parliament are granted the permission to autonomously award degrees. However, they do not affiliate colleges and are not officially called “universities” but “autonomous institutes” or ‘Institutes of National Importance’. They fall under the administrative control of the Department of Higher Education. These Institutions undertake teaching and research in areas that are critical to national development. They include the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the National Institutes of Technology (NITs), the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER), the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and other autonomous institutes. According to AISHE 2012-13, there are **61 Institutes of National Importance** in the country.

Besides these, there are institutes which are under the control of the professional councils, without approval of the UGC, e.g. Agricultural Universities, which are under

the control of the Agricultural Education Division of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), one of the professional councils.

In terms of their structure and organization, the universities in India can also be classified into three categories: Unitary University, Federal University and Affiliating University.

Unitary University: In a unitary university, teaching and research are conducted on a single campus (sometimes with subsidiary campuses). There is a provision for both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, as also for research. The bulk of the students reside in hostels or within the prescribed jurisdiction of the university. Teachers are appointed by or under the control of the university. It has full control over its administration, teachers and techniques.

Famous unitary universities in India are: Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University, MS University of Baroda, Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Hyderabad, Pondicherry University etc.

Federal University: It is a university where teaching work is shared by the university with its constituent colleges. Eg. Delhi University. Its main characteristics are:

- The university and its constituent colleges are situated in close proximity of each- other.
- Each constituent college is actively engaged in a work of a University standard.
- Each constituent college is prepared to forge some measure of its autonomy in order to share and contribute to the type and governance of the university as a whole.
- The actual teaching as far as possible is provided by the constituent colleges under the guidance of the university.

Affiliating University: Affiliating Universities are those that have central campus on which there are departments or schools that impart postgraduate instruction and conduct research. They have a variable number of colleges affiliated to them and these may be distributed over a number of districts, in accordance with the jurisdiction of the university. The colleges mostly do undergraduate teaching though some of them may be permitted to conduct postgraduate classes in selected subjects.

Most Indian universities are of the affiliating types with the larger ones having more than 700/800 affiliated colleges. Some universities with large number of affiliated colleges are:

Osmania University, Hyderabad, AP	-	901
Pune University, Pune, Maharashtra	-	811

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RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur, Maharashtra	-	800
Rajasthan University, Jaipur, Rajasthan	-	735
University of Mumbai, Mumbai, Maharashtra	-	711
Bangalore University, Bangaluru, Karnataka	-	687

These colleges are under the academic control of the university (but not administrative and financial control).

2. Colleges in India

Table – 6: Growth in Number of Colleges

Sl. No.	Year	No. of Colleges
1	1980 - 81	4,722
2	1990 – 91	7,346
3	2000 – 01	12,806
4	2007 – 08	21,170
5	2011 – 12	33,023
6	2012 – 13	35829

Source: FICCI Higher Education Summit 2013 & MHRD, DHE 2014

The above table reveals that the number of colleges in the country by 2012-13 is 35829. However, the website of MHRD, Government of India (retrived on 23.2.15) shows that the number of colleges has increased to **37,204 in 2013**.

Table – 7: Top Ten States Having Largest and Least Number of Colleges

Sl. No.	State having Largest Number of Colleges	No. of Colleges	Sl. No.	State having Least Number of Colleges	No. of Colleges
1	U.P	4986	1	Daman & Diu	3
2	A.P	4801	2	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	5
3	Maharashtra	4658	3	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	6
4	Karnataka	3199	4	Sikkim	12
5	Rajasthan	2681	5	Arunachal Pradesh	26
6	Tamil Nadu	2499	6	Chandigarh	27
7	MP	2277	7	Mizoram	29
8	Gujarat	1863	8	Tripura	46
9	Odisha	1097	9	Goa	53
10	Haryana & Kerala	1062 each	10	Nagaland	59
All India			35829		

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

The top 10 States in terms of highest number of colleges in India are Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Haryana & Kerala. While the state of UP has 4986 colleges, Daman & Diu has only 3 colleges.

Table – 8: Top Ten States Having Largest and Least Number of Colleges per Lakh Population (18 – 23 years)

Sl. No.	State	Colleges per lakh population (18-23 yrs)	Sl. No.	State	Colleges per lakh population (18-23 yrs)
1	Puducherry	61	1	Bihar	6
2	A.P	48	2	Daman & Diu	6
3	Karnataka	44	3	Jharkhand	7
4	Himachal Pradesh	38	4	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	9
5	Maharashtra	35	5	Delhi	9
6	Kerala	34	6	W. Bengal	9
7	Tamil Nadu	33	7	Tripura	10
8	Goa	33	8	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	14
9	Haryana	33	9	Assam	14
10	Uttrakhand & Rajasthan	32 each	10	Sikkim	15
All India					25

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

College density, i.e. the number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age group 18-23 years) varies from 6 in Bihar and Daman & Diu to 61 in Puducherry as compared to All India average of 25. It may be noted that the state of **Mizoram has 22 colleges per lakh population of 18 – 23 years.**

3. Enrollment in Universities and Colleges

The current higher education system in India is massive with over 30 million students enrolled across 45,000 institutions including distance and open institutions.

Table – 9: State wise Enrolment at PG, M.Phil and Ph.D Levels

Sl. No.	State with high enrolment	Ph.D	M. Phil	PG	Sl. No.	State with low enrolment	Ph.D	M. Phil	PG
1	Tamil Nadu	13216	13606	496447	1	D & Diu	0	0	0
2	A.P	7915	1176	432639	2	Lakshadweep	0	0	25
3	U.P	7889	1309	380972	3	D & N Haveli	0	0	271
4	Maharashtra	5236	2491	364906	4	A & N Islands	25	0	904
5	Karnataka	7450	748	246201	5	Mizoram	148	56	2680
6	MP	2931	2252	206585	6	Manipur	901	0	3788
7	W.B	3303	814	152531	7	Sikkim	17	71	4153
8	Rajasthan	3533	1245	141681	8	Meghalaya	292	52	4742
9	Gujarat	2435	611	119668	9	Goa	49	0	5039
10	All India	84058	35123	3374311	10	Tripura	148	0	7364

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

The state of Tamil Nadu has the highest enrolment at Ph.D, M.Phil and PG levels. Its enrolment at Ph.D, M.Phil and PG levels are 15.7%, 38.7% and 14.7% respectively of the all India enrolment at each level.

Although there are no Universities in UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep, small enrolments at PG level are found in these UTs except Daman and Diu probably as some colleges run both UG and PG courses.

Table-10: Top Ten States Having Largest and Least Average Enrolment per College

Sl. No.	State	Average Enrolment per College	Sl. No.	State	Average Enrolment per College
1	Jharkhand	2243	1	Daman & Diu	367
2	Bihar	1688	2	Nagaland	380
3	Chandigarh	1651	3	Karnataka	429
4	West Bengal	1535	4	Himachal Pradesh	441
5	Delhi	1081	5	Andra Pradesh	473
6	Uttarakhand	1076	6	Puducherry	486
7	UP	1068	7	Sikkim	491
8	Arunachal Pradesh	1056	8	Chhatisgarh	521
9	Manipur	1046	9	Kerala	525
10	Tripura	981	10	Odisha	545
All India			699		

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

Average enrolment per college is highest in Jharkhand followed by Bihar whereas it is lowest in Daman & Diu followed by Nagaland. While average enrolment per college is 699 at All India level, it is 2243 in Jharkhand and 367 in Daman & Diu.

4. Gross Enrolment Ratio

Table – 11: Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education (18 – 23 Years)

Sl. No.	State	GER (2012-13)	Sl. No.	State	GER (2012-13)
1	Chandigarh	51.3	1	Daman & Diu	4.3
2	Puducherry	42.1	2	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	6.3
3	Tamil Nadu	42	3	Jharkhand	10.1
4	Delhi	38.5	4	Bihar Sikkim	11.2
5	Uttarakhand	33.1	5	Chhatisgarh	11.8
6	Manipur	30.3	6	Lakshadweep	11.8
7	AP	29.1	7	Assam	12.8
8	Haryana	28.7	8	Nagaland	13.9
9	Maharashtra	25.6	9	Tripura	14
10	Karnataka	25.5	10	W. Bengal	15
All India			21.1		

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

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The country's growth of GER in recent years is commendable. While the country made a target of achieving GER of 15 per cent during 11th plan, 18.8 per cent could be achieved. By 2013, the GER came up to 21.1 per cent and by 2014, it became 24.8 per cent. However, the population in the age group of 18 - 23 years who has no access to higher education is still around 75 per cent. The following table depicts how low is the position of India in terms of GER as compared to other countries of the world:

Table – 12: GER in Higher Education in Some Countries -2014

Country	GER in Higher Education*	Position in the World
USA	94.30%	3 rd
Argentina	78.60%	15 th
Russia	76.10%	19 th
Sweeden	70.00%	27 th
UK	61.90%	36 th
Canada	58.90%	45 th
China	26.70%	85 th
India	24.80%	87th
S.Africa	19.20%	93 rd

**as per the Global Competitiveness Report 2014-15, World Economic Forum, UNESCO Institute for Statistics*

GER in India is very low in comparison with other countries. While in USA, 94.3 per cent of youths are enrolled in higher education institutions, only 24.8 per cent Indian youths (18-23 years) are enrolled. A quantum jump in the student enrolment is required to achieve the target set by Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), of 30% GER by 2020.

5. Stream-wise Split for Enrolment

Majority of students in higher education are enrolled in traditional courses such as Arts, Science and Commerce. Statistics on Indian Higher Education 2012-13 prepared from UGC report by DrEducation.com shows that enrollment of Indian students by fields of study was 37% for Arts, 19% for Science, 18% for Commerce and Management, 16% for Engineering and Technology, 4% for Medicine, 4% for Teacher Education, 2% for Law and 1% for others. Thus, about 74% students' enrolment is in traditional courses and only about 26 % enrolment is in technical and professional courses.

6. Teachers in Universities and Colleges

Table – 13: No. of Professors & Equivalent in University Teaching Departments & its Constituent Units/Off campus

Sl. No.	States with largest no. of Professor	Professor & Equivalent			Sl. No.	States with least no. of Professor	Professor & Equivalent		
		Male	Female	Total			M	F	T
1	Tamil Nadu	3173	1000	4173	1	A & N Islands	0	0	0
2	Maharashtra	2400	689	3089	2	D & Diu	0	0	0
3	Karnataka	2374	542	2916	3	D & N Haveli	0	1	1
4	U.P	2357	469	2826	4	Lakshadweep	2	1	3
5	A.P	1651	410	2061	5	Goa	28	4	32
					6	Tripura	33	5	38
					7	Nagaland	39	1	40
	All India	75743	25577	101320	8	Mizoram	42	3	45

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

Tamil Nadu has as many as 4173 professors & equivalent in university teaching departments and constituent colleges while Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Daman & Diu do not have even a single professor or equivalent. The top five states having largest number of teachers in this rank are Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, UP and AP. Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep have only 1 and 3 professors respectively. The above table shows that Mizoram has 42 males and 3 females of professor rank or equivalent.

Table-14: No. of Readers & Associate Professors in Universities & their Colleges

Sl. No.	State	Reader & Associate Professor			Sl. No.	State	Reader & Associate		
		Male	Female	Total			M	F	T
1	Maharashtra	18242	8086	26328	1	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
2	A.P	13865	5714	19579	2	D & N Haveli	1	0	1
3	Karnataka	14164	5236	19400	3	D & Diu	22	12	34
4	U.P	12916	6103	19019	4	A & N Islands	31	5	36
5	Tamil Nadu	10872	7709	18579	5	Sikkim	96	38	134
					6	Arunachal P & Mizoram	164	18	182
	All India	120444	61880	182324	7	Tripura	201	82	283

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

The number of Readers and Associate Professors in universities and their colleges in the top five states namely, Maharashtra, AP, Karnataka, UP and Tamil Nadu ranges from 26328 to 18579. On the other hand, the number of teachers of this rank in Lakshadweep, D & N Haveli, D & Diu and A & N Islands ranges from 0 to 36.

Table – 15: No. of Lecturers or Assistant Professors in Universities & their Colleges

Sl. No.	State	Lecturer or Assistant Professor			Sl. No.	State	Lecturer or Assistant Professor		
		Male	Female	Total			M	F	T
1	A.P	76312	43335	119647	1	Lakshadweep	14	11	25
2	Tamil Nadu	54873	57252	112125	2	D & Diu	51	19	70
3	U.P	69370	33585	102955	3	A & N Islands	67	29	96
4	Maharashtra	60306	37674	97980	4	D & N Haveli	57	55	112
5	Karnataka	31649	24967	56616	5	Arunachal P	312	189	501
					6	Mizoram	285	225	510
	All India	487899	332671	820570					

Source: MHRD, DHE 2014

The number of Lecturers or Assistant Professors ranges from just 25 in Lakshadweep to as many as 119647 in Andhra Pradesh. In the top-five list, AP is seconded by Tamil Nadu followed by UP, then by Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Conclusion

Credits go to National Knowledge Commission (2005-2008) for the remarkable achievements made by India during XI Five Year Plan (2007-2012) as well as the current XII Plan. The three crucial aspects of higher education: access, inclusion and excellence focused by NKC were addressed during XI Plan with great success. However, considerable issues and challenges still remain. As a result, the current XII plan has the same crucial aspects such as further access and expansion, equity and inclusion and, quality and excellence as its main objectives. Thus, the country is striving to have further achievement in these aspects of higher education.

One may think that the numbers of universities and colleges in our country and enrolment therein are large enough. Yes, the numbers are large but India is a big country with large population. In terms of population and gross enrolment ratio, the number of our higher education institutions and enrolment of students are very low. Around 75% of our youths in the age group of 18-23 are outside our higher education system. Looking into this situation, India still needs more access and expansion in terms of number of higher education institutions and enrolment. With the implementation of RUSA which has been proposed to address the issue of access along with equity and excellence in a coordinated manner, let us hope that more and more number of our youths get access to higher education and improve their quality as well as of the country.

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Inclusive Education: Challenges and Practices

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Abstract

Inclusive education is for all, irrespective of any social community, caste, class, gender and disability of the child. So, inclusive education means, “the act of ensuring that all children despite their differences, receive the opportunity of being part of the same classroom as other children of their age, and in the process get the opportunity of being exposed to the curriculum to their optimal potential”. Although there is widespread support for inclusion at a philosophical level, there are some concerns that the policy of inclusion is difficult to implement because teachers are not sufficiently well prepared and supported to work in inclusive ways. Inclusion requires teachers to accept the responsibility for creating schools in which all children can learn and feel they belong. In this task, teachers are crucial because of the central role they play in promoting participation and reducing underachievement, particularly with children who might be perceived as having difficulties in learning. Teachers who work with CWSN should undergo specific training in special education. As part of the curriculum they should be made familiar with effective strategies for teaching special children. Thus the focus of this paper is to discuss strategies which will enhance learning and the teaching skills of a classroom teacher and make them more effective.

Introduction:

Inclusion is not just about placing students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. It recognizes that all children have individual needs, and that teachers who are trained to facilitate an inclusive classroom, can better meet the needs of all children. It is not only accommodating children in the regular or general school rather it goes beyond that. It is a focus on creating environments responsive to the differing developmental capacities, needs and potentials of all children. An inclusive classroom

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welcomes, nurtures, and educates all children regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other characteristics. They may be gifted children or children with physical or learning disabilities. They may be street or working children, children of remote or nomadic peoples, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, or children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.

Inclusive Teaching embraces diversity in order to meet the varying learning needs and styles of students. It encompasses a broad range of best teaching practices that, used properly, changes the perspective on teaching students from a more reactive approach (often teacher-centered), to a more proactive approach (more student-centered). Also, inclusive teaching supports the current change in roles for educators, from information provider (e.g. lecturing) to guide and facilitator to learning (e.g. active learning).

Small changes can make a huge difference: *A key realization (is) that small changes could have an important impact. Faculty who initially (feel) overwhelmed by the prospect of redesigning their whole course structure (become) enthusiastic about making small revisions based on (inclusive teaching) principles within the context of their own course content and teaching styles..* Educators may start from their current practices and strategies and add a few changes at a time, respecting their own pace, with the resources at their disposal. Organizing their teaching to vary the ways that the material is conveyed optimize student learning.

Challenges in Developing Effective Practices

The challenges in developing inclusive practices primarily could start when the child is enrolled in the classroom and faces barriers to learning which may be due to impairment which affects his way to learning. The new challenge to inclusive education is to meet the needs of all children with and without disability in the general classroom. It is not an easy process and requires a lot of struggle and commitment to overcome attitudinal and social barriers. It becomes the responsibility of the teachers for creating a learning environment where ALL children can learn, ALL children want to learn, and ALL children feel included in our classrooms and schools. In order to develop effective practices it means seeking all available support—from school authorities, the community, families, children, educational institutions, health services, community leaders, and so on—for finding and teaching ALL children.

Getting all children into our classrooms is only half of the challenge. The other half is in meeting all of their different learning and behavioural needs so that they want to stay in our classrooms. All classrooms are diverse in terms of the types

of children we teach and the ways that they learn. We need to consider what each child needs to learn, how she or he learns best, and how we – as teachers – can build positive relationships with each child so that they want to actively learn from us. Equally important is that we need to discover how to get all of the children to want to learn together.

Classroom practices

Today's classrooms represent students of all ability levels. Such diversity has made many educators aware that not all students will be successful with the same educational activities. Students have different strengths, needs, interests, and educational backgrounds. Differentiated instruction has been identified as an effective teaching method that can address this issue for a variety of students. This educational method is based on the premise that all learners are different, that learning requires a connection of a student's own abilities and interests, and that lesson planning requires providing students with the type of instruction that can address their needs and the educational objectives simultaneously.

The challenge of most inclusive environments is in meeting the needs of all learners according to their strengths, ability levels, and needs, without separating students homogeneously (according to their ability levels). Differentiated instruction is one method that allows teachers address this situation while maintaining the intent of inclusion. Teachers are able to create lesson plans based on educational objectives for the entire class, while modifying the delivery, product, or assessment for classroom learners. By providing instruction in this forum, classroom learners recognize that they are all learning the same material; however, it is presented in the way that meets their unique needs.

The skills and capacity of the teacher to meet the diverse needs of children is extremely important as the classrooms may not have the same ability children and they could be from different backgrounds. A final important issue at the teacher and classroom level is teacher's sensitivity and skills in order to enhance significant social relations between pupils. Particularly for children with special educational needs (and their parents), meaningful interactions with non-disabled peers are of utmost importance. The teacher should have the right attitude, and also a good understanding of how to develop these interactions and relationships. In summary, teachers' attitudes, available instruction time, the knowledge and skills of teachers and teaching methods and materials seem to be important prerequisites for developing effective classroom practices for special needs education within mainstream settings.

Steps in Making Effective Classroom Practices

Understanding the Needs

Identification of diverse needs and planning accordingly is an essential component for inclusive practices. An understanding of the needs of CWSN with the help of parents can provide a considerable amount of helpful information about the child needs. The needs of CWSN can be categorized under two categories learning / academic (curricular and extracurricular) needs and supportive needs (medical or supportive aids and appliances). The child who has sensory loss may not be able to hear or communicate in a normal pattern. S/he may not be able to learn or participate in the class as other children without impairment. A child with intellectual disability or learning disability may have difficulty in learning at the same pace or may not be able to learn some competencies as expected of other children in same class. First the teacher has to identify learning needs in relation to curriculum, so that s/he can develop effective lesson plans and classroom practices. Second, in terms of supportive measures and medical rehabilitation/therapy, the child may require specialized equipment and training. The child with hearing impairment may require a hearing aid depending on the degree of hearing loss which will help in hearing and facilitate learning. The supportive need can be organized with the help of parents or resource support teachers in the community.

Educational Planning

Simple way to initiate planning is by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the child so that the plans can be developed on the strengths rather than the weaknesses. A child with hearing loss may be intelligent. Similarly, a visually impaired or an intellectually disabled may have interest in learning or potential for other activities as sports, cultural activities, etc. It is important to identify the learning gaps due to impairment or other problem and initiate education plans to overcome the problem from the educational perspective specially keeping in view the curriculum objective rather than medical diagnosis. Planning needs to be done in terms of curriculum and learning needs and not just disability, the basis should understand the gaps in terms of learning in the context of curriculum and not just the text book. The teacher should be able to understand the objectives /competencies in relation to the subject for the particular class the child is studying rather than just concentrating on text books as the objective/competency of the particular subject can provide her with an open mind to develop a baseline and identify the gaps. The teacher can use his/her creativity to develop plans and methods which finally meets the learning outcome.

Curriculum adaptation

Curriculum is not limited to learning objective, methodology and the learning outcome. But curriculum adaptations may be necessary to remove barriers to learning and participation, Curriculum adaptations can be divided into accommodations which basically assist the child to adjust to learning adaptation mainly by changing the methodology of teaching, concessions in providing omissions for 2nd language or discouraging visual impaired to take science or maths.

Peer Support

Support from peer groups enables the child to develop confidence and social inclusion. It is observed that most of the time CWSN depend on peer support to overcome their learning problems. Therefore developing peer support measures makes inclusive practice effective.

Physical Environment

Developing Inclusive Learning Environment in terms of facilities, furniture, and materials currently available and in use is also an important factor. What changes you might make to the classroom or the school environment (buildings etc.) to make it easier for the child to come to school and to learn.

Teachers who work with the children with special needs should undergo specific training in special education. As part of the curriculum they should be made familiar with effective strategies for teaching special children. The following strategies will help all the teachers and parents alike in supporting their children.

Be an effective listener

A teacher should be an effective listener to help solve the problems of children rather than suggesting solution or offering sympathy or making derogatory remarks.

Do not label or criticize

Sometimes children in the class do not respond satisfactorily. Your comment ‘your behaviour is as if you are in the first class and not like in the fourth class or you are an idiot’ will not help a child to respond better. Labeling a child or criticizing a child will only close up the possibility of improvement in child. A teacher rather needs to make grounds for useful discussion for improving child’s performance.

Identifying children who are at risk

Identifying children who are working at lower level than their peers and helping them to improve is the responsibility of a teacher. A teacher should watch out for poor

attention span, negative self image, difficulty in number work, lack of expression in the class. Working out where the problem lies followed by a plan of action will help the child to become better integrated and work towards selected goals.

Tackle poor esteem problem

There are some children in the class who have poor self esteem. A teacher should identify children and think of the ways to help themselves as we know poor self esteem setting tasks that are relevant and at the right level is a complex task. However, a teacher needs to achieve this. Planning ahead for written home work, explaining the purpose of homework and value their homework are few strategies a teacher can use to help children do their homework.

Use all senses simultaneously

Once areas of strengths and weaknesses have been identified a teachers should device a series of teaching strategies that may help them in reading, writing & arithmetic. Multi-sensory methods means, simultaneous use of ears, eyes, speech, fingers & muscles. Generally this comes naturally but with children having learning difficulty, they should be taught how to use these skills together.

Use kinaesthetic sense more often

Make use of kinaesthetic sense in learning where a child remembers through movement and actions of body what has been taught. Involve children in activity that is kinaesthetic. This will help them all the more as it is 'hands on' learning.

Incorporate thinking skills

Incorporate 'thinking skills lessons' in the class and encourage development of observation skills. Play games that teach these skills for example let children sitting in a group in a circle close their eyes, meanwhile change the appearance of one child either by making him wear earrings or goggles and ask the rest of the group what is different in the group.

Use "task analysis" correctly

We all are aware of teaching methodology called 'task analysis in which the task is taught in sequential steps. It is very easy to understand task analysis in theory but often found difficult in practice. Sometimes, the task is not presented in proper sequence with the result that the child is unable to master the task. For example while teaching alphabets teach one alphabet at a time and that alphabet should be taught in sequential steps that is matching, identification, and naming. Even while teaching

matching identification the teacher has to follow the sequence of steps. For example once the child has mastered matching the identification, s/he has to be taught in one choice, two choices, and then finally in multiple choices followed by generalization. However, contrary to this teachers often tend to teach in incorrect manner. Matching is used with naming and then identification. The correct sequence of teaching is very essential for effective learning.

Use peer tutoring

This technique is a way of encouraging and improving the performance of the child by getting a better performer to pair with this child to help him complete the task. The selection of peer who will help the child should be carefully done. He should not ridicule or make a mockery of a child rather should understand the needs of the child. Train the tutor and supervise until the tutor – tutee interaction is satisfactory. Reward both of them for successful completion of the task.

Use cooperative learning

Another effective technique to involve all children in the class is cooperative learning. In this the group is divided into small groups and each group will have combination of children with different abilities such as high, average, low achievers. Together they are required to finish the task given. A teacher should teach English, math and other subjects in a group and this will not only help the child with special needs to improve academically but also improve in social skills.

Some tips for teachers of inclusive school

1. Communication to the student with disabilities should not be in a loud and condescending tone. Speak to a student with disabilities in the same way you would any student.
2. Do not talk about the student's problems and disabilities in their presence. Maintain respect and dignity at all times.
3. Peers should be taught to respect and support the students with disabilities.
4. Students with disabilities should be given a chance to share their ideas and answers in similar ways as their peers. Remember to call on the student with a disability too.
5. Students with disabilities should not sit next to each other and should not be in the same group for activities. Spread students out in the class and create heterogeneous groups.

6. Students with disabilities should have the same supplies and materials as all other students.
7. Transitions or changeover should happen with other students. Students with disabilities should not leave early for recess, the end of the day, or for other activities.

The development of inclusive education not only entails a constant change in teachers' values, attitudes, professional expertise and knowledge, but also on those responsible for their training and support. To deal with this, a continuous and coherent programme of professional development is needed for all educational personnel. Since the teacher will be primarily responsible for bringing about this radical change, in practice it is vital that careful planning is undertaken to provide the required capacity building and make inclusive education a reality.

Although educators may profess a more learner centred approach to education, the methods of teaching and learning employed in teacher education may contradict that commitment and the teacher trainers may remain unconvinced. In many teacher education courses, inclusion is considered as an add-on module, usually associated with learners with impairments or those categorized as having 'special educational needs', rather than permeating the approach to education in all courses for all students. Thus issues of gender, ethnicity, language differences etc are silently brushed aside. There is need for urgent reflection and introspection of both general and special education courses in order to pave the way for a dynamic 'inclusive education course' that meets the challenge of the day. Educating students in an inclusive setting, therefore, will succeed, when it is pedagogically equitable and when the focus is on the inclusion of all learners to be taught using diverse ways of learning.

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Challenges Faced by Elementary Schools in Mizoram in the Implementation of Right to Education Act 2009

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Abstract

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 popularly known as RTE Act, 2009 has come into force with effect from 1st April 2010 in the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. To achieve the aims set out in the Right to Education Act 2009, elementary schools are assigned responsibilities where the schools within the state of Mizoram are not an exception. But fulfilling the assigned responsibilities may not be an easy task for many elementary schools due to certain problems or challenges. As success of the implementation of the Act depends to a great extent on the schools, the present study was undertaken to find out the challenges faced by elementary schools in this regard and to suggest certain measures for improvement in the implementation of Right to Education Act 2009 in elementary schools in Mizoram. The study found that both government and private elementary schools in the state were confronted with problems and challenges in the implementation of some provisions of the Act. Certain recommendations for improvement in the implementation of the Act are given at the end.

Key words: Right to Education Act 2009, Elementary Schools, Challenges, Implementation.

Introduction

The right to free and compulsory education for children in the 6-14 age groups was enshrined in the Indian Constitution as a Directive Principle of State Policy in Article 45 before the 86th Amendment, 2002. The 86th Amendment introduced new Article 21A, making the right to education of children from 6-14 years of age a fundamental right. Consequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill was passed in 2008 and the Bill was made an Act in 2009.

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The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 popularly known as RTE Act 2009 has come into force with effect from 1st April 2010 in the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. To achieve the aims set out in the Right to Education Act 2009, elementary schools are assigned responsibilities where the schools within the state of Mizoram are not an exception. But fulfilling the assigned responsibilities may not be an easy task for many elementary schools due to certain problems or challenges. As success of the implementation of the Act depends to a great extent on the schools, the present study was undertaken to probe into the challenges faced by elementary schools in this regard.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To find out the challenges faced by elementary schools in Mizoram in the implementation of Right to Education Act 2009
2. To suggest measures for improvement in the implementation of Right to Education Act 2009 in elementary schools in Mizoram

Operational Definitions of the Terms Used

Challenges: Challenges in the present study refers to difficult and demanding tasks or problems.

Elementary Schools: The term refers to primary and middle schools having classes from I to VIII.

Implementation: Implementation means making something that has been officially decided, start to happen or be used.

Right to Education Act 2009 : The term means the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 which gives provision of free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years in the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Delimitation of the Study

The present study was delimited to Aizawl District of Mizoram.

Research Methodology

The present study mainly adopted descriptive approach to research. All elementary schools in Aizawl District formed the population of schools for the purpose

of studying the problems faced in the process of implementation of RTE Act, 2009. Out of these schools, 21 Government and 6 private unaided elementary schools were selected as samples. While visiting schools for data collection, data about the problems faced by the schools were collected by administering questionnaire prepared for the Headmasters. Apart from this, secondary data were collected from books, journals, office documents and other relevant sources.

Major Findings

1. All the Government Elementary Schools faced a challenge in providing free and compulsory education to all children admitted in their schools as it was difficult for them to make education completely free. They had to let parents contribute or spend money on stationary items for conducting activities required for Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). Besides, parents had to buy some textbooks and exercise books as free text-books and exercise books could not be provided for all the students for each subject.
2. All the Private Unaided Elementary Schools faced a challenge in fulfilling the provision of RTE Act 2009, which insists them to admit in class 1, to the extent of at least 25% of the strength of that class, children belonging to weaker and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory education till its completion. Private schools could not fulfil this provision. However, they were not compelled by the state government to do so.
3. All the Private Unaided Elementary Schools (100%) faced a challenge in complying with the provision of no screening procedure for admission. Schools receiving more applications for admission felt the need of screening applicants as the state government was also not that particular about implementation of the provision.
4. All the Government Elementary Schools faced a challenge in determining the age of some children due to non-availability of birth certificates whereas Section 14 (1) of RTE Act, 2009 states that for the purposes of admission to elementary education, the age of a child shall be determined on the basis of birth certificate issued in accordance with the provisions of Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, 1886 (6 of 1886) or on the basis of such other document, as may be prescribed.
5. All the Private Unaided Elementary Schools (100%) faced a challenge in giving admission to a child when such admission was sought subsequent to the extended period although section 15 of RTE Act 2009 states that *no child shall be denied admission if such admission is sought subsequent to the extended period.*

6. Both Government and Unaided elementary schools (100%) faced a challenge due to the provision of RTE Act, 2009 which prohibits holding back in any class or expulsion of a child from school till the completion of elementary education. Neglect of studies and neglect of duties in general by students were the main challenges in this regard which were considered to be the result of this provision. Besides, 61.90% of government and 48.15% of unaided schools felt that students became more undisciplined after knowing that they would not fail or they could not be expelled from school.
7. Both Government and Unaided elementary schools (100%) faced a challenge in ensuring the RTE Act provision which prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment to a child. In this regard, the biggest challenge faced by elementary schools in Mizoram was that teachers were not convinced by the provision. The other big challenges were the feeling among teachers that 'their lives were no more free' as they were in constant fear of violating the provision and the increase in cases of misbehaviour and indiscipline among students.
8. All Government and Unaided elementary schools (100%) faced a challenge in conforming to the norms and standards for a school prescribed by RTE Act, 2009. Absence of provision of teaching learning equipment for each class as required; library and play materials, games and sports equipments for each class as required were the biggest challenges. Other prominent challenges faced by Government elementary schools were absence of magazines and books on all subjects including story books in the book shelves of the schools, absence of office-cum-store-cum-Head teacher's room, too less number of teachers, lack of play ground attached to school building, absence of separate toilet for boys and girls and access to school not barrier-free. Absence of kitchen shed and play ground attached to school building were the big challenges faced by private unaided elementary schools apart from the ones already mentioned.
9. Problem of giving remedial teaching was a biggest challenge for 81.48 per cent (85.71% of Government and 66.67% of private unaided schools) of elementary schools due to RTE provision of admitting a child in a class appropriate to his/her age.
10. Conforming to the norms of working days and instructional hours in an academic year set for the schools under the RTE Act, 2009 was found difficult and became a big challenge for all Government and private unaided elementary schools in Mizoram. No primary school could fulfil the norms of 200 working days and 800 instructional hours per academic year for classes I to V. Besides, the norms of 220 working days and 1000 instructional hours per academic year for classes VI to VIII could not be fulfilled by 100 per cent of middle schools. In Mizoram, only five working days are observed in a week

as all schools are closed on Saturdays. Therefore, teachers and children have only about 170 days to attend schools per academic year which is much less than the RTE norms.

11. School Management Committees (SMCs) in all Government elementary schools faced a challenge in performing the functions stipulated by RTE Act 2009. They could not properly perform the functions like monitoring the working of the school, preparation and recommendation of school development plan, monitoring the utilisation of grants received from the appropriate Government or local authority or any other source and such other functions prescribed under section 12(2) of RTE Act 2009. The SMC members were not expert enough to prepare school development plan and could not spare time to monitor the working of the schools as they were busy in their occupation.

Recommendations for Improvement in the Implementation of RTE Act, 2009 in Elementary Schools in Mizoram

Certain recommendations for improvement in the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 in elementary schools in Mizoram are given as follow:

1. In order to provide quality free and compulsory education for all children, sufficient financial assistance should be provided to every school so that learning activities are not affected by lack of teaching learning equipments and materials.
2. For 25% reservation of seats to children of weaker and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and providing them free and compulsory education, the Government should look into the matter on how to select those 25% of children, how to admit them in Class I and how it is going to monitor the whole process.
3. Sufficient number of teachers should be provided to every school to enable it to carry out the necessary teaching-learning activities. Special teachers/trainers to give special attention and remedial teaching should be attached to schools having children admitted after commencement of the academic session and/or children who had never been admitted before to any school but now admitted in classes appropriate to their age.
4. To meet norms and standards for a school prescribed by RTE Act, 2009; schools should be equipped with both physical and academic facilities prescribed by RTE Act, 2009.
5. Schools should be monitored and checked to see whether they meet the required number of working days and instructional hours prescribed by the State Department of School Education which are considered to be at par with the ones prescribed by RTE Act 2009.

6. Sufficient number of teaching-learning aids and games and sports materials should be provided to every school so that students can achieve their all round development through activities, discovery and exploration.
7. CCE should be implemented in its true spirit. Serious efforts should be made to make teaching-learning process activity oriented and joyful for children to prevent them from neglect of studies and indiscipline.
8. Last but not the least, teachers should be properly trained and acquainted with the RTE Act 2009 to enable them to understand the objectives and significance of the various provisions of the Act. This will enable them to take implementation of the provisions not as a burden, but as a mission to produce self disciplined and well developed citizens for the state as well as the country.

Conclusion

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 is a welcome step in ensuring that all children between the ages of 6-14 years get compulsory admission, compulsory attendance and compulsory completion of elementary education. The Act introduces a number of changes in education delivery through schools in India. Many of these changes are simply revolutionary and if they are implemented properly, they will vastly improve the system of imparting education in the country. The Act is a landmark in the history of education in the country.

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Constructivist Approach to Teaching and Practices of Elementary School Teachers in Mizoram

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Abstract

There is no disagreement with the fact that teachers play key role in the classrooms. They are the facilitators of learning of their students. Behaviouristic approach to teaching and learning has been pre-dominating the teaching-learning process since long. Developments in cognitive psychology have significantly influenced the teaching-learning processes focussing attention on teachers, researchers and educationists and on the central role that learners are required to play in creating or constructing new knowledge. The constructivists' view of learning has led to a shift from the conventional "knowledge-acquisition" to "knowledge-construction" metaphor. The study was undertaken with the major objective to assess the classroom practices of elementary school teachers in Mizoram. Observation schedules were prepared basing upon certain teaching tactics which are general and also specific to the teaching of four key subjects—Mathematics, Science, English and Social Science as per constructivist approach. In the study gender and place of work of the teachers were taken as independent variables. Teachers were observed in their classrooms. The study revealed that teacher-centred approach is still dominating in the transaction of lessons at elementary school level in Mizoram. There is urgent need to shift teacher-centric approach to child-centric approach.

Key words: Constructivist pedagogy, Teaching practice, Teaching strategy, Teaching tactic

Introduction:

The importance of teaching and the central role that teachers play in determining the quality of learning in classrooms cannot be under mined. Researchers have established that teachers can make a difference in how much students learn, and the difference depends on the approaches they follow to teach, mainly behaviourist or constructivist.

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Behaviourists' views of learning predominated in teaching-learning process for a long time. The importance of observable, external events on learning and the role of reinforcers in influencing those events were emphasised. It was the goal of behaviourists' to determine how external instructional manipulations brought about changes in students' behaviour. However, in the late 1950s a paradigm shift took place in learning psychology. Developments in cognitive psychology drew the attention of teachers, researchers and educationists and focused on the central role that learners play in creating or constructing new knowledge. The works of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, as well as many linguistics and anthropologists have greatly influenced the way in which teaching and learning is viewed today. The two approaches of teaching-learning are briefly discussed below.

Behaviourism: The behaviourist perspectives of learning originated in the early 1900s, and became dominant in early 20th century. The basic assumption of behaviourism is that learning occurs due to a change in the behaviour of an individual due to factors like acquisition, reinforcement and the application of associations between stimuli from the environment and the observational responses made by the individual. Behaviourism is mainly concerned with what can be observed and measured. Basing upon the behaviouristic theory many models of teaching have been developed.

Constructivism: Constructivism emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, popularising the idea that people actively construct knowledge when interacting with their environment by reorganisation of their mental structures, and not just passive recipients of knowledge and information. In fact, formalization of the theory of constructivism is generally attributed to Jean Piaget, who suggested that through the processes of accommodation and assimilation, individuals construct new knowledge from their experiences. Learners are, therefore, considered to make their own senses and interpretations of the world around them. Constructivists' view of learning has led to a shift from the conventional "knowledge-acquisition" to "knowledge-construction" metaphor. It advocates learner-centred approach to teaching-learning which is evident from the works of influential theorists like Jean Piaget and Jerome Bruner.

The following four epistemological assumptions are at the heart of constructivist learning (Dwivedi, 2010,/: 16).

- Knowledge is physically constructed by learners who are involved in active learning.
- Knowledge is symbolically constructed by learners who are making their own representation of action.
- Knowledge is socially constructed by learners who convey their meaning making to others.

- Knowledge is theoretically constructed by learners who try to explain things they don't completely understand.

Further, Bruner provided the following principles of constructivist learning:

- Instruction must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that make the student willing and able to learn (readiness).
- Instruction must be structured so that it can be easily grasped by the student (spiral organization).
- Instruction should be designed to facilitate extrapolation and or fill in the gaps (going beyond the information given).

According to the constructivist philosophy, learner-centred pedagogies are concerned with student involvement in learning as active participants in construction of knowledge. They are actively engaged in the teaching-learning process.

Role of teachers: In the constructivist classrooms, the teachers need to focus on guiding students by following appropriate strategies that will enable them to construct their knowledge, to draw their own findings and make their own conclusions on the subject-matters. Teaching strategy is a generalized plan for a lesson which includes structure, instructional objectives and an outline of planned tactics, necessary to implement the strategies. Thus, teaching strategies involves teaching tactics. Teaching tactics are that behaviour of the teachers which they manifest in the classes. Following right tactics the teachers try to fix new knowledge in the minds of students permanently. The teachers have to select the ones that are suitable to their subjects and topics.

The Study: As recorded in the Annual Publication 2013-2014, Statistical Cell, Directorate of School Education, Govt. of Mizoram, as on 30th September, 2013, there are 1873 Primary Schools, 1408 Middle Schools, 612 High Schools and 127 Higher Secondary Schools with 8717, 10161, 4617 and 1518 teachers respectively to cater to the needs of school education. According to the 2011 census, Mizoram holds the third highest literacy rate of 91.58% in India, next to Kerala and Lakshadweep. However, quality education is a major issue that needs serious thought if the future citizens are to make their contribution to the growth and development of the state and the country in general. Rote memorization is rampant among the students from the pre-primary up to even the higher levels of education. It indicates that behaviouristic approach to teaching-learning is widely practiced. In fact, in order to secure good grades and marks at the examinations it is undoubtedly encouraged. However, this trend does not contribute to good quality education but kills students' initiatives to be enthusiastic and creative.

Elementary stage of education is the foundation for higher education. The study habits formed at this stage is crucial in deciding the kind of learning approach that a child will develop. If the teaching practices will encourage cramming and rote memorization then the child will resort to cramming at every level of education and will solely depend on the instruction and study materials provided to him instead of putting his own ideas and knowledge about the subject matter taught to him. The child will always look for cooked up knowledge and will never put his mind, think critically, analyse, synthesise or construct his own. Therefore, the choice of teaching strategies adopted at this stage is very important for shaping the future progress of learners, and teachers play a very important and indispensable role in this context. In fact, teachers' knowledge and attitude which reflect in their practices in teaching go a long way in determining the success or failure and career of students. It cannot be generalised that all teachers follow wrong approaches to teaching. The broad research question for the study was : *Are the factors like subjects the teachers teach, their gender and place (urban- rural) of work associated with the approach followed by elementary school teachers while teaching?*

Objectives: The study was conducted with the following objectives :

1. To find out the teaching practices followed by elementary school teachers teaching mathematics with reference to their gender and place of work.
2. To find out the teaching practices followed by elementary school teachers teaching science with reference to their gender and place of work.
3. To find out the teaching practices followed by elementary school teachers teaching English with reference to their gender and place of work.
4. To find out the teaching practices followed by elementary school teachers teaching social science with reference to their gender and place of work.

Sample: The total sample of the study comprised of 480 elementary school teachers selected from rural and urban areas of two districts of Mizoram. Out of the total sample of 480 teachers, 120 were teaching each of the four main subjects - mathematics, science, English and social science. Further, out of the 120 teachers teaching specific subjects, as mentioned above, 60 were males and 60 were females and among them, 30 were from urban schools and 30 were from rural schools. Incidental sampling technique was followed in selecting the sample.

Tools: Four observation schedules were developed for assessing the classroom practices followed by elementary school teachers teaching the four key subjects – mathematics, science, English and social science. The observation schedules were prepared including

suitable tactics appropriate to constructivist teaching approach as the criteria. The numbers of tactics used in different subjects are mathematics - 11, science - 17, English - 11, and social science - 13. Brief explanations of the tactics used as criteria in the observation schedules are presented here.

Asking Questions : Asking questions in the classroom can ensure students' alertness, concentration and participation in the classroom discourses. It helps in stimulating thinking, arousing interest and curiosity, recalling facts, exercising reasoning ability, using the power of recognition and discrimination and promoting learning. Asking question, as a teaching strategy, can be used in teaching all school subjects.

Asking Students to Memorize Information : Asking students to memorize information means asking them to retain certain points that may be useful for them in understanding and applying their knowledge when they have to proceed from simple to complex situations. Though memorisation is not the focus of constructivist approach, yet there are certain concepts, formulae, facts and symbols that need to be remembered in learning new things. Memorization of important information is especially necessary for subjects like mathematics, science, social science and languages.

Asking Students to solve sums on the Board : One of the easiest ways of assessing students' understanding about the subjects like mathematics and science is asking students to solve sums on the board. It can be used in teaching languages for checking spellings and correct uses of grammar in making sentences.

Anchored Instruction : Anchored instruction is a strategy in which the teachers attempt to help students to become actively involved in learning by situating instruction around an interesting topic and may include real-like contexts such as real stories, adventures or devise problems that students can explore to find plausible answers. Anchored instruction is especially useful in teaching science subjects.

Use of Hardware and Software : The use of hardware and software would include the manipulation or application of projectors, audio-tapes, slides, filmstrips, educational films, T.V., CCTV, video cameras etc., relevant for use in the transaction of knowledge in the classrooms. Hardware and software can be used in teaching all school subjects.

Brainstorming : Brainstorming is a creative technique where the teachers provide opportunities to groups of students in such a way that they are able to come up with conclusions and suggestions for certain problems or issues by incorporating the various ideas, suggestions and inputs that each group members have contributed. Conducting brainstorming session as a teaching tactic is appropriate for all school subjects.

Collaborative Learning : Collaborative learning is a teaching strategy that involves groups of learners who work together on a common task or activity to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Here learning has a social concept of active engagement among learners through face-to-face interaction, interdependence, cooperation, individual responsibility and accountability. Students can always collaborate and learn together and develop positive habits. This strategy is appropriate for all school subjects.

Concept Mapping : A concept map generally involves the use of a diagram that depicts relationships among different concepts, situations, problems, facts, symbols, words, formulae etc. In a concept map, each word or phrase connects to another, and links back to the original idea, word, or phrase. Concept mapping is a way to develop logical thinking and study skills by revealing connections and helping students see how individual ideas form a larger whole. Concept mapping as a teaching strategy can be especially useful in teaching subjects like science and languages.

Use of Pictures, Charts and Maps : The teachers can make use of pictures, charts and maps related to the topics being taught in the classrooms. Colourful pictures, charts and maps make the learning atmosphere more interesting and enjoyable and help in drawing students' attention to the topic being taught. Such types of aids are appropriate for all subjects.

Discussion : Discussion is one of the ways in which students can express their ideas and views on controversial issues encountered in the lessons being taught in the classrooms. It also involves sharing of ideas and experiences, solving problems and promoting tolerance with understanding. Discussion as a strategy can be used for teaching, languages, science and social science.

Demonstration : Demonstration is the process of teaching through examples or experiments. It involves showing by reason or proof, explaining or making clear by use of examples or experiments. Demonstration is useful especially for teaching science.

Encouraging Critical Thinking: Critical thinking is a self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It entails effective communication and problem-solving abilities. It is the responsibility of teachers to encourage critical thinking among the students. It is appropriate for teaching all subjects.

Elaboration : Elaboration strategy involves the creation of connections or bridges, analogies, phrases, sentences and relationships to information to be taught to students. The confidence that students have in already known connected information can support their learning of new information. It is appropriate for teaching all subjects.

Experimentation : Experimentation is an orderly procedure conducted for verifying, refuting, or establishing the validity of hypotheses. Experiments provide insight into cause-and-effect relationship between / among factors. This strategy is very much appropriate for teaching science.

Explanation : Explaining is similar to lecturing. It is one of the most commonly used skills in teaching. Through explanation attempts are made to relate a set of facts with another set of facts in order to facilitate understanding. This skill can be followed for teaching all subjects.

Evaluation : Evaluation is an important skill done in the classrooms by teachers through quizzes, tests, class works, oral questions, etc., during / at the end of delivery of lessons to ensure attainment of objectives and to monitor students' progress. It is appropriate to all subjects.

Citing Examples beyond the Textbooks : Citation of examples by the teachers helps students in getting clarified about the concepts, principles, properties etc. Teachers need to cite examples from real-life situations so that students can relate their experiences and prior learning to new situations. Further, limited examples given in the textbooks may also not be sufficient to clarify the concepts. This strategy is suitable for teaching all subjects.

Inquiry Approach : Inquiry implies seeking for truth, information, or knowledge. Effective inquiry is more than just asking questions. Useful application of inquiry learning involves several factors : a context for questions, a framework for questions, a focus for questions, and different levels of questions. This strategy is suitable for teaching all subjects.

Oral Translation : Translation as a strategy of teaching is used for teaching a new language and making the learner understand the significance of a word or sentence.

Problem- Based Learning : Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centred pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through engagement in a real problem. This approach poses challenges to students and keeps them in the active role of problem-solvers. This strategy is more suitable for teaching science.

Project Works : Assigning project works is a creative as well as productive method of involving students in carrying out worthwhile activities useful to their learning. Project works can be assigned from the textbooks and beyond while teaching and can be related to real life situations. This technique is appropriate to all subjects.

Recitation : Recitation is the art of reproducing from memory, or a formal reading of verse or other writing before an audience. Recitation activities are useful in guiding

the student's language development, use of correct grammar, pronunciations and to have a good command over the language.

Story Telling : Stories can be told to contextualize and introduce new lessons, to associate daily life experiences with children's feelings and memories, to inculcate cultural and intercultural values, to enrich and expand classroom environment. Thus story telling as a teaching tactic can be best suitable for teaching languages and social science.

Singing Songs : Songs are mainly used in teaching languages and social science. Songs can improve the four basic abilities of language learning i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They can also be used to teach grammar.

Data analysis : The data were analysed applying simple descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages for the four subjects i.e. mathematics, science, English and social science, and are presented in tables 1- 4 respectively.

Table -1: Classroom Practices of Mathematics Teachers

Criteria	Urban males (N=30)	Urban females (N=30)	Rural males (N=30)	Rural females (N=30)	Urban (N=60)	Rural (N=60)	Males (N=60)	Females (N=60)	Total (N=120)
Asking students to memorize information	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	28(93.3)	60(100)	58(96.7)	60(100)	58(96.7)	118(98.3)
Asking students to solve sums on the board	8(26.7)	11(36.7)	10(33.3)	12(40)	19(31.7)	22(36.7)	18(30)	23(38.3)	41(34.2)
Brainstorming	3(10)	3(10)	00(00)	7(23.3)	6(10)	7(11.7)	3(5)	10(16.7)	14(10.8)
Concept mapping	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Citing examples beyond the text books	13(43.3)	12(40)	18(60)	14(46.7)	25(41.7)	32(53.3)	31(51.7)	26(43.4)	58(48.3)
Explanation	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	26(86.7)	60(100)	56(93.3)	60(100)	56(93.3)	116(96.7)
Elaboration	00(00)	00(00)	2(6.7)	00(00)	00(00)	2(3.3)	2(3.3)	00(00)	2(1.7)
Evaluation	5(16.7)	00(00)	00(00)	3(10)	5(8.3)	3(5)	5(8.3)	3(5)	8(6.7)
Inquiry approach	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Solving text book sums	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	26(86.7)	60(100)	56(93.3)	60(100)	56(93.3)	116(96.7)
Using locally available resources	7(23.3)	10(33.3)	10(33.3)	7(23.3)	17(28.3)	17(28.3)	17(28.3)	17(28.3)	34(28.3)

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Table-2: Classroom Practices of Science Teachers

Criteria	Urban males (N=30)	Urban females (N=30)	Rural males (N=30)	Rural females (N=30)	Urban (N=60)	Rural (N=60)	Males (N=60)	Females (N=60)	Total (N=120)
Anchored Instruction	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Brainstorming	4(13.3)	11(36.7)	5(16.7)	4(13.3)	15(25)	9(15)	9(15)	15(25)	24(20)
Collaborative learning	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Concept mapping	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Demonstration	00(00)	00(00)	1(3.3)	00(00)	00(00)	1(1.7)	1(1.7)	00(00)	1(0.8)
Discussion	12(40)	18(60)	9(30)	17(56.7)	30(50)	26(43.32)	22(36.7)	35(58.3)	57(47.5)
Elaboration	4(13.3)	00(00)	14(46.7)	00(00)	4(6.7)	14(23.3)	18(30)	00(00)	18(15)
Encouraging critical thinking	18(60)	21(70)	4(13.3)	19(63.3)	39(65)	23(38.3)	22(36.7)	40(66.7)	62(51.7)
Experimentation	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Evaluation	3(10)	5(16.7)	6(20)	5(16.7)	8(26.7)	11(18.3)	9(15)	10(16.7)	19(15.8)
Inquiry approach	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Problem-based learning	3(10)	00(00)	4(13.3)	5(16.7)	3(5)	9(15)	7(11.7)	5(8.3)	12(10)
Project works	30(100)	28(93.3)	26(86.7)	29(96.7)	58(96.7)	55(91.7)	56(95)	57(95)	113(94.2)
Scientific models	00(00)	00(00)	2(6.7)	3(10)	00(00)	5(8.3)	2(3.3)	3(5)	5(4.2)
Text book materials	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	30(10)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	120(100)
Use of Hardware /Software	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Use of Pictures , Charts and Diagrams	20(66.7)	22(73.3)	26(86.7)	23(76.7)	42(75)	49(81.7)	46(76.7)	45(75)	91(75.8)

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Table-3: Classroom Practices of English Teachers

Criteria	Urban males (N=30)	Urban females (N=30)	Rural males (N=30)	Rural females (N=30)	Urban (N=60)	Rural (N=60)	Males (N=60)	Females (N=60)	Total (N=120)
Asking Questions	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	29(96.7)	60(100)	59(98.3)	60(100)	59(98.3)	119(99.2)
Brainstorming	3(10)	00(00)	3(10)	00(00)	3(5)	3(5)	6(10)	00(00)	6(5)
Collaborative learning	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Discussion	6(20)	6(20)	3(10)	7(23.3)	12(20)	10(16.7)	9(15)	13(21.7)	22(18.3)
Explanation	00(00)	29(96.7)	00(00)	30(100)	29(48.3)	30(50)	00(00)	59(98.3)	89(74.2)

Constructivist Approach to Teaching and Practices of Elementary School Teachers in Mizoram

Evaluation	3(10)	5(16.7)	4(13.3)	2(6.7)	8(13.3)	6(10)	7(11.7)	7(11.7)	14(11.7)
Inquiry approach	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Oral Translation	26(86.7)	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	56(93.3)	60(100)	56(93.3)	60(100)	116(96.7)
Recitation	2(6.7)	6(20)	2(6.7)	3(10)	8(13.3)	5(8.3)	4(6.7)	9(15)	13(10.8)
Singing songs	1(3.3)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	1(1.7)	00(00)	1(1.7)	00(00)	1(0.8)
Use of Hardware /Software	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Table-4: Classroom Practices of Social Science Teachers

Criteria	Urban males (N=30)	Urban females (N=30)	Rural males (N=30)	Rural females (N=30)	Urban (N=60)	Rural (N=60)	Males (N=60)	Females (N=60)	Total (N=120)
Asking Questions	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	29(96.7)	60(100)	59(98.3)	60(100)	59(98.3)	119(99.2)
Collaborative learning	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Concept mapping	00(00)	6(20)	00(00)	00(00)	6(10)	00(00)	00(00)	6(10)	6(5)
Discussion	5(16.7)	23(76.7)	5(16.7)	11(36.7)	28(45.7)	16(26.7)	10(16.7)	34(56.7)	44(36.7)
Explanation	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	120(100)
Elaboration	00(00)	6(20)	7(23.3)	8(26.7)	6(10)	15(25)	7(11.7)	14(46.7)	21(17.5)
Evaluation	1(3.3)	3(10)	2(6.7)	4(13.3)	4(6.7)	6(10)	3(5)	7(11.7)	10(8.3)
Inquiry approach	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)
Singing Songs	00(00)	2(6.7)	00(00)	00(00)	2(3.3)	00(00)	00(00)	2(3.3)	2(1.7)
Telling Stories	7(23.3)	9(30)	8(26.7)	18(60)	16(26.7)	26(43.3)	15(25)	27(45)	42(35)
Text book materials	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	30(100)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	60(100)	120(100)
Use of Hardware / Software	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	1(3.3)	00(00)	1(1.7)	00(00)	1(1.7)	1(0.8)
Use of Pictures, Charts and Maps	24(80)	27(90)	19(63.3)	24(80)	51(85)	43(71.7)	43(71.7)	51(85)	94(78.3)

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Results :

(A) Practices of mathematics teachers

- Asking students to memorise information, explanation and solving text book sums were practiced by almost all the teachers belonging to different groups.
- None of the teachers adopted concept mapping and inquiry approach to teaching.

- The tactics of asking students to solve sums on the board, using locally available resources and brainstorming were being adopted by only few teachers. The percentages of female teachers adopting these tactics in comparison to their male counterparts were more.
- A good number of teachers were found citing examples beyond the text books irrespective of their gender and place of work. However, male teachers were using this tactic more than their female counterparts irrespective of their place of work.
- Elaboration of mathematical concepts was not done by most of the teachers.
- None of the urban female teachers and rural male teachers was found evaluating their students' learning after the end of lessons. On the whole, only few teachers were found evaluating students' learning after the end of lessons.
- The overall picture about the teachers teaching mathematics at elementary school level was that constructivist pedagogies were not followed appropriately.

(B) Practices of science teachers

- Anchored instruction, use of hardware / software, collaborative learning, concept mapping, experimentation, and inquiry approach were not adopted by any of the teachers belonging different groups.
- Brainstorming, elaboration and problem-based learning were followed only by few teachers.
- Very few teachers were found evaluating their students' learning after the end of lessons.
- Demonstration and use of scientific models by the science teachers were hardly practiced.
- The use of pictures, charts and diagrams, and giving project works were very common practices among all the teachers.
- Discussion and encouraging critical thinking as teaching tactics were practiced more by female teachers as compared to male teachers.
- All the teachers belonging to different groups were making use of text book materials.
- The overall picture about the teachers teaching science at elementary school level was that constructivist pedagogies were not followed appropriately.

(C) Practices of English teachers

- Almost all teachers belonging to the different groups practiced oral translation and asking questions to the students.
- The number of female teachers practicing discussion and recitation was higher than their male counterparts. However, their percentage was not encouraging.
- None of the teachers were neither making use of hardware / software, inquiry approach nor providing any opportunity for collaborative learning.
- None of the male teachers belonging to the different groups was found explaining but it was practiced by almost all the female teachers.
- Brainstorming was practiced by only few male teachers but the percentage was unsatisfactory.
- While teaching, only one urban male teacher was found singing songs. It implies this simple tactic was not followed by the teachers teaching English.
- Evaluation of students' learning at the end of the lesson was done by very few teachers.
- The overall picture about the teachers teaching English at elementary school level was that constructivist pedagogies were not followed appropriately.

(D) Practices of social science teachers

- Asking questions, explanation, use of pictures, charts and maps, and text book materials were practiced by majority of the teachers belonging to the different groups.
- Except one rural female teacher, none was found using hardware / software technologies.
- Concept mapping was followed only by few urban female teachers but the percentage was unsatisfactory.
- Discussion approach was practiced more by female teachers belonging to the different groups irrespective of their place of work.
- Only two female teachers working in urban schools were found following singing songs as a teaching tactic but none from other groups.

- Collaborative learning and inquiry approach as teaching tactics were not adopted by any of the teachers teaching social science.
- Female teachers practiced telling stories to the students more than their male counterparts.
- The percentage of teachers using elaboration as a teaching tactic was not encouraging.
- Majority of the teachers did not evaluate their students' learning after the lessons.
- The overall picture about the teachers teaching social science at elementary school level was that constructivist pedagogies were not followed appropriately.

Conclusion :

In the present study, an attempt was made by the investigators to reveal the classroom practices of elementary school teachers in Mizoram. It was found that most of the teachers adhered to the behaviouristic approach to teaching. Hardly constructivist pedagogical approaches are traced. Though tactics like brainstorming; discussion; and use of pictures, charts and maps were practiced by some of the teachers, their percentage was not encouraging and in some subjects they were not adopted at all. Constructivist approach to teaching should be emphasised and encouraged so that students find their classroom experiences worthwhile, interesting and enjoyable and at the same time, students get the scope to construct their own knowledge with proper understanding in their school subjects instead of cramming without understanding. The textbooks should not be treated by the teachers as the only source, but as one of the sources for developing good understanding among the students.

Good teaching practices followed by teachers reflect not only on the academic results of students but also in making them knowledgeable and creative individuals who can face varied problems and situations in their life. It can be possible grounding the lessons on real natural and social contexts. They can transfer their knowledge and skills learned in one context to another.

With constructivism gaining popularity as a method of teaching in different parts of the world, the NCF 2005 had suggested “ teaching for construction of knowledge “. It is high time to envision teacher training programmes that empower teachers by enhancing their capabilities. A major shift in the teacher's role of being a source of knowledge to being a facilitator needs to be emphasised. The recommendations of NCF 2005 regarding the teaching of mathematics, science, English and social science such as shifting the focus of education from achieving ‘narrow’

goals to 'higher' goals, offering conceptual challenges and examining students' abilities rather than procedural knowledge, allowing exploration, comparisons and understanding the web of relationships, developing appreciation and concern for the environment and inculcation of related values through activities, etc, are found lacking and largely ignored.

The teachers can make their classroom environment constructive by following different tactics and strategies. Teachers can encourage and allow students' autonomy and initiatives, they can provide real and authentic experiences, and ensure that contents and skills are relevant to the students' needs and goals. Importance should be given to the prior knowledge of students before embarking on new lessons or concepts. Teachers should plan activities and lessons in such a way that students are encouraged to higher level thinking. Students can also be provided with opportunities to share their ideas and engage in dialogue with the teachers. Inquiry approach can be practiced by asking thoughtful questions, open-ended questions and by encouraging students to ask questions to each other. Students should be provided time to construct relationships and create metaphors. They should be allowed to have more control over their own learning, to think analytically and critically, and to work collaboratively with increasing responsibilities. Evaluation of students' learning should be done in a continuous and comprehensive manner. This would enable the learners to go beyond the text books, to further reading and observation. Ultimately, our schools would be able to produce individuals who would be active, responsible, and reflective members of society.

In nutshell, it can be said that the elementary school teachers in Mizoram, irrespective of their gender and place of work, are not rightly empowered to transact their lessons following constructivist pedagogy. They need in-service training for which proper scope should be provided. Pedagogical skills need to be mastered by prospective teachers during their pre-service training. The teacher educators and resource persons must be well empowered to impart such trainings to both pre-service and in-service teachers. Teaching modules in various school subjects based on constructivist pedagogy need to be developed through workshops. The sooner is the better for quality education in the state.

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Level of Educational Development and the Underlying Disparities in Mizoram: A District - wise Analysis.

Lalrinmawia*

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Abstract

Education plays a significant role for human resource development as well as social development. It is a powerful catalyst for the change of the society and plays a crucial role in the development of the nation. Despite tremendous effort of the government towards ensuring equality of educational opportunities, inequality still prevails. The present paper is an attempt to analyse the regional disparities in the level of education in Mizoram at the district level. The study is divided into four sections. Section 1 comprises introduction and the main objectives. Section 2 comprises the methodology and data base. Section 3 discusses the empirical results and their interpretation and Section 4 concludes the study with some suggestions. The data for the analysis have been obtained from secondary sources. 11 variables have been selected and divided into three groups. The first group includes students' enrolment from primary to higher secondary school. The second group includes infrastructure and the third group comprises the level of literacy. The present study finds out that there exist large regional disparities in the level of education at the district level. This disparity in educational level is due to various factors like historical, social, economical and inefficient government policies.

Introduction

Regional disparity is a serious problem which the world is facing today. The word disparity means inequality or imbalances. In general regional disparity means failure of a region to exploit development potential of its initial resources endowments and resources advantages in relation to other region, comprising factors other than the natural (Waseem, Ashraf and Rawal, 2011). Regional disparity is defined as differences between economic performance and welfare between countries or region (OECD,2002-2003). These are determined by the application of quantitative methods which are identified on the basis of classes, ranges or categories. The socio- economic status of

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a country depends on economic growth, modernization, self reliance and social justice. These attributes can be achieved only through structural changes of economy, socio-cultural change in attitude and motivation of the people. Education is a vital instrument for such changes. The successful national planning and development policies for ensuring balanced development are possible only when socio cultural aspect like education is looked into from a proper perspective. Education does not merely mean the acquisition of knowledge or experience but it means the development of habits, attitudes and skills that help a man to lead a full and worthwhile life. It opens up opportunities leading to both individual and group entitlement. Education in its broad sense of development is the most crucial input for empowering people with skill and knowledge and giving them access to productive employment in future. Improvements in education are not only expected to enhance efficiency but also augment the overall quality of life.

Educational institutions which are supposed to be the first places of learning and knowledge definitely represent an important aspect of the modern society. Moreover, the spread of educational institutions certainly affects the composition of the working population particularly in an economy where otherwise children of school going age would have been included in the active list (Garnier, 1976). In this regard Moreland (1993) states that “it is only education that can create the necessary skill to achieve sustainable economic growth and to increase the quality of life”. Thus, education plays a vital role in the building up of knowledge and the diffusion of innovation. New techniques and mode of production require a minimum level of awareness which can be obtained by education (Vishwakarma,2003). With regard to the spread of educational institutions in the state, the first lower primary school was opened in Mizoram in 1901 and the first middle school in 1906 and a Mizo high school was established in 1944. College level education in the state came still later with the establishment of Aizawl College in 1958 which later came to be known as Pachhunga University College. Thereafter the number of school increases run by Government and private agencies. Keeping in view the role of education in the economic development of a region, an attempt has been made to study inter district disparities in educational sector and make an identification of these districts which are lagging behind. It is hoped that this would facilitate the task of the educational planner in formulating development plans for the balanced development of the education sector in the state of Mizoram.

Objectives:

1. To identify the differentially developed region (District level) within the state.
2. To find out the causes of disparities
3. To analyse the factors responsible for the inequalities in the level of education development among the districts.

Data Base and Methodology

Examination of the stated problems in this investigation requires a huge data from secondary sources. The secondary data have been obtained from Statistical Abstract of Mizoram 2011 Published by Directorate of Economics and Statistics Department, Government of Mizoram.

In the present study, 16 variables have been selected to show spatial variation in the levels of education in Mizoram at the district level. In all cases original data have been transformed into percentage. The study is based on the following variables:

Enrolment

1. Percentage of students enrolled in Primary Schools (X1)
2. Percentage of students enrolled in Middle Schools (X2)
3. Percentage of students enrolled in High Schools (X3)
4. Percentage of students enrolled in Higher Secondary Schools (X4)

Infrastructure

5. No. Of schools per 100 sq.kms to total geographical area (X5)
6. No.of schools per 10,000 students (X6)
7. No.of teachers per 10,000 students (X7)

Literacy

8. Percentage of total literates to total population (X8)
9. Percentage of total male literates to total male population (X9)
10. Percentage of total female literates to total female population (X10)
11. Percentage of total rural literates to total rural population (X11)
12. Percentage of rural male literates to total rural male population (X12)
13. Percentage of rural female literates to total rural female population (X13)
14. Percentage of total urban literates to total urban population (X14)
15. Percentage of urban male literates to total urban male population (X15)
16. Percentage of urban female literates to total urban female population (X16)

Methodology adopted in this paper is quantitative in nature. Quantitative approach is mainly used in analyzing different parameters regarding levels of educational development. Absolute and relative measures are unable to judge the uniformity of non- uniform indices or variables. So, realizing this critical situation Deprivation method has been used to make a parity of judgement using the formulae given below:-

Deprivation: is the deprivation indicator for jth district with respect to ith variables. Then it is defined as:

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(Max X_{ij} - X_{ij})

$$I_{ij} = \frac{(\text{Max } X_{ij} - \text{Min } X_{ij})}{(\text{Max } X_{ij} - \text{Min } X_{ij})}$$

Where X_{ij} indicates the value of the i th variables with respect to j th district. Obviously, I_{ij} range from 0 and 1.

Calculate Total Deprivation Value is

$$\sum_{i=1}^n I_{ij}$$

Obtain Deprivation Value (DI)' = (1- average deprivation value). If the deprivation value is 0.5 and above, the district will be respectively termed as Developed. When it lies between 0.3- 0.5 it is Relatively Developed and if it is less than 0.3 the district will be termed as Under Developed.

Table - I
ENROLLMENT

District	Percentage of students enrolled in primary (X1)	Percentage of students enrolled in middle (X2)	Percentage of students enrolled in high school (X3)	Percentage of students enrolled in higher secondary school (X4)	total index	1- average index		Rank
Mamit	0.95	0.99	1	1	3.94	0.01	UD	8
Kolasib	0.91	0.95	0.94	0.96	3.77	0.06	UD	6
Aizawl	0	0	0	0	0	1	D	1
Champhai	0.74	0.77	0.84	0.91	3.27	0.18	UD	4
Serchhip	1	0.98	0.94	0.31	3.23	0.19	UD	3
Lunglei	0.62	0.72	0.79	0.79	2.92	0.27	UD	2
Lawngtlai	0.56	0.87	0.93	0.96	3.32	0.17	UD	5
Saiha	0.91	1	0.94	0.94	3.79	0.05	UD	7

Table 1 shows that the highest level of enrolment is found in Aizawl district. The rest of 7 districts fall under the Under- developed category. In ranking, Aizawl

district is followed by Lunglei and Serchhip districts. The table reveals that there emerges huge gap between the developed and under developed regions. The lowest level of enrolment is found in Mamit district located in the north western corner of Mizoram. The dominance of students' enrolment in Aizawl district may be attributed to the location of the state capital. Since it is the administrative centre, it appears to be better equipped with educational facilities than other districts. As a result, it attracts school going children from different parts of the state.

Table - II
INFRASTRUCTURE

District	No.of Schools Per 100 sq.kms to total Geographical Area (X5)	No.of Schools per 10,000 Students (X6)	No.of Teachers per 10,000 Students (X7)	total index	1- average index	Status	Rank
Mamit	1	0.79	0.31	2.09	0.3	RD	6
Kolasib	0.62	0.95	0.64	2.21	0.26	UD	7
Aizawl	0	1	0.47	1.47	0.51	D	2
Champhai	0.76	0.89	0.38	2.03	0.32	RD	5
Serchhip	0.69	0.89	0.15	1.73	0.42	RD	3
Lunglei	0.76	0	0	0.76	0.75	D	1
Lawngtlai	0.43	0.96	1	2.38	0.21	UD	8
Saiha	0.86	0.94	0.06	1.86	0.38	RD	4

Infrastructure is one of the most important factors in relation to the standard of school education in rural areas as well as urban set up. Space for co- curricular activities, sufficient number of rooms for students and teachers are all directly and indirectly some reflection of infrastructural facilities. Good infrastructural set up obviously helps in attaining better educational standard (Ghatak, 2012). In the case of the 8 districts of Mizoram significant disparities exist in terms of educational infrastructure (table- II). The two most developed districts in terms of educational infrastructure are Lunglei district (having an average index value of 0.75) and Aizawl district (0.51). Other relatively developed districts in this regards are Serchhip (0.42), Saiha (0.38), Champhai (0.32) and Mamit (0.30).

Table- III
LITERACY

District	% of total literates to total population (X8)	% of total male literates to total male population (X9)	% of total female literates to total female population (X10)	% of total rural literates to total rural population (X11)	% of rural male literates to total rural male population (12)	% of rural female literates to total rural female population (13)	% of total urban literates to total urban population (X14)	% of urban male literates to total urban male population (X15)	% of urban female literates to total urban female population (X16)	total	1-average index	Status	Rank
Mamit	0.4	0.37	0.42	0.39	0.35	0.43	1	1	1	5.35	0.41	RD	7
Kolasib	0.13	0.15	0.12	0.21	0.22	0.2	0.45	0.45	0.45	2.39	0.73	D	4
Aizawl	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.06	0.09	0.03	0.28	0.97	D	2
Champhai	0.16	0.18	0.18	0.25	0.28	0.23	0.71	0.73	0.7	3.42	0.62	D	5
Serchhip	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.07	0.14	0.01	0.22	0.98	D	1
Lunglei	0.29	0.26	0.26	0.44	0.4	0.41	0	0	0	2.05	0.77	D	3
Lawngtlai	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.69	0.64	0.76	8.09	0.1	UD	8
Saiha	0.32	0.34	0.31	0.38	0.39	0.37	0.92	0.97	0.88	4.89	0.46	RD	6

Literacy is considered as one of the key indicators of human resource development. Literacy could be considered as both cause and effect of development (Rahi,1996 p593). Various dimension of socio- cultural change in any society can be understood in the light of the level of literacy and education. Education is the single most determinant of long term economic growth of a nation (Coleman,1965). Rural development is seen with the level of literacy because it is an active agent and alters every aspect of life of the people by extracting, accumulating, transforming all types of resources and after all the development and personality of an area and by making people with available essential resources for their basic needs.

For meaningful and all round development of an individual, knowledge, know-how, and efficiency with managerial qualities are the most needed resources. These developmental resources are possible to acquire only when people in any region are able to read and write. Hence the level of literacy opens new prospect for development. In these respect, it is observed that there are five districts that fall under the most developed districts. These are (on the basis of ranking order) Serchhip district (having an average index value of 0.98), Aizawl (0.97), Lunglei (0.77), Kolasib (0.73) and Champhai district (0.62). There are two districts that fall under relatively developed category. These two districts are Saiha (0.46) and Mamit (0.41). Lawngtlai district

located in the south western part of the state is the only district with very low level of literacy development.

Overall index

Final composite or overall development index refers to aggregate development of district in respect of enrolment, infrastructure and literacy. The overall index shows that there are three districts that fall under developed district. These districts are Aizawl district (with average index value of 0.89 which is the highest), Serchhip (0.68) and Lunglei (0.64). These districts are located close to each other. Of these three districts, Aizawl and Lunglei districts had been the most important administrative centers during the British regime. They still retain their importance as administrative centers as they are located between the cross roads of the northern part of the state and apparently economically underdeveloped southern most part of the state. Comparably, however, the districts have better educational facilities that can be attributed to the common general policy of the government on education. The other districts that fall under relatively developed district are Kolasib (0.48), Champhai (0.46) and, Saiha (0.34). The most backward districts that lag far behind from other districts are Mamit (0.29) and Lawngtlai (0.14). These two districts are located in the western part of the state bordering Tripura and Bangladesh. Illegal migration of Chakma in Lawngtlai district and Reangs in Mamit district with their low standard of living may be responsible for the low level of educational development in the districts.

There are several factors that can be identified to have impeded the advancement of educational development in the state of Mizoram. Some of the districts confront severe challenges in developing their educational programmes, mainly due to lack of accessibility and educational planning. The general factors which have caused backwardness of these districts are low enrolment, poor infrastructure and low literacy percentage. Besides these important general factors, the rapid growth of private institutions also plays a crucial role. Since these institutions are mostly located in urban areas which are accessible only to the people residing in urban areas, catering only the urban population, their rapid growth is an indicator of increasing educational disparities in the state.

Conclusion

The overall index of the study reveals that there are certain factors that have hindered the progress of some districts in the educational sector such as location of the region, low enrolment of students, poor infrastructure, and low percentage of literacy. The enrolment index shows that people should be motivated to let their children get basic education to enhance the enrolment level. The infrastructural index also brings

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out very clearly the importance of improving the basic school infrastructure proportionately to the population of children in school going age to enhance the position of these districts that are educationally backward. Even in those districts which have good schooling facilities, steps should be taken to improve accessibility to high schools and higher secondary schools to those who are located far from the urban areas to pursue higher education.

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Professional Ethics Among Secondary School Teachers in Mizoram

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Abstract

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession represent a vision of professional practice. Teachers, in their position of trust, demonstrate responsibility in their relationships with students, parents, guardians, colleagues, educational partners, other professionals, the environment and the public. The main aim of the present study is to find out whether secondary school teachers in Mizoram have a favourable perception of professional ethics for teachers and how far they adhere to the professional code of ethics. Professional ethics questionnaire prepared for the teachers, by the investigators was employed for data collection. All secondary school teachers from all secondary schools in all the eight districts of Mizoram constitute the population of the study. The total sample consists of 453 secondary school teachers. Finding shows that majority of the secondary school teachers have favourable perception about practices of professional ethics. Findings also reveal that older and more experienced teachers have more favourable perception about practices of professional ethics than younger, less experienced teachers. Measures to improve teachers' adherence/practices of professional ethics are also suggested.

Key Words and Their Definitions.

Ethics:

Ethics is defined as that set of principles, rights and obligations that guide and control human relationships.

Professional ethics:

The term 'professional ethics' is composed of two words, "professional" and "ethics," It refers to the desirable code of conduct of an individual towards his or her profession. A code of conduct is a set of guidelines – a written document produced by the public authorities or by professional organizations, which details the set of recognized ethical norms (or values) and professional standards of conduct to which

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all members of a profession must adhere. Its main objective is to provide self-disciplinary guidelines to the practitioners of a profession, through the formulation of ethical norms and standards of professional conduct.

Professional ethics for teachers:

Professional ethics for teachers is a tool that aims at helping academic administration, to respond to questions related to professional conduct and at the same time to the problems arising out of relations with other functionaries in education. The code of professional ethics for School Teachers (NCTE, 2010, draft) states that “like all other professions, the teaching profession should also have its Codes of Professional Ethics to ensure its dignity and integrity... It provides a framework of principles to guide them in discharging their obligations towards students, parents, colleagues and community.”

Introduction

The average layman is not in a position to pass judgment on the quality of the professional goods he buys. He has to depend much on the integrity of the professional for a fair judgment of what he is buying. It is the duty of the professional to give the kind of service that is expected of him/her, that is, true, fair and just service. Strict conformity to the professional code of ethics is thus necessary for the teachers as well as all other professions. Such codes make the professionals self-regulating and self-governing and can resist any governmental impositions which do not seem appropriate for the profession.

Therefore, formulation and enforcement of code of ethics for a profession has twofold purpose: (1) to derive a set of rules under which its members will be enabled to provide better service to society and under which the profession can provide better protection for its members; (2) to assume responsibility for assuring the competence of its members and to prohibit the type of conduct which will bring the profession into disrepute.

Teachers in the secondary level of education deal with adolescents, and adolescence period is considered to be the most awkward and most difficult stage of all the stages of human development. Teaching this group of young people hence involves ethical decisions more than it does in other groups of students. Teaching becomes a complicated and demanding job. Its complexity involves the need to act on the spot, lack of time and performing in public among others which give the need to know and follow professional ethics all the more.

Rationale of the study:

Several studies in this field have been conducted in other parts of the world and a few in other states of the country. However, no studies have ever been conducted in the area of ‘teacher’s perception about practices of professional ethics’ in the state of Mizoram. Therefore, a study to find out the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers would provide us with an understanding of how far secondary school teachers perceive and adhere to the code of ethics in their teaching profession. Many Education Commissions in the country have emphasized the importance of teacher effectiveness in length. The investigator, through this study expects to reveal the effectiveness of teacher’s mind-set for quality education in the state.

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the perception of secondary school teachers about their practices of professional ethics.
2. To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to gender.
3. To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to teaching experience.
4. To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to their age group.
5. To suggest recommendations to improve professional ethics among secondary school teachers in Mizoram on the basis of the present findings.

Methodology:

The present study belongs to the category of ‘Descriptive Research’ with features of inter-group comparison.

Population and Sample:

The population in the present study consists of all Government and non-Government Secondary School teachers in Mizoram.

The sample is collected using stratified random sampling technique with a total of 453 teachers. (281 male teachers and 172 female teachers)

Tool used:

Professional ethics questionnaire prepared by the Investigators.

The professional ethics questionnaire is prepared on the lines of the draft code of professional ethics prepared by NCTE in 2010. There are 39 (thirty-nine) questions in

the questionnaire. Each question has three response options: 'Always', 'Sometimes' and 'Never' where the respondent is required to tick the appropriate response according to his or her view. In order to quantify the questionnaire systematically, the responses 'Always', 'Sometimes' and 'Never' are given a score value of 3, 2 and 1 respectively for each response on every item of the questionnaire. Content validity was established by giving the questionnaire to several experts. Test retest reliability was also established with a correlation coefficient of 0.76

Analysis and interpretation:

Data collected from secondary school teachers were analysed in accordance with the objectives as follows:

Objective 1 - *To find out the perception of secondary school teachers about their practices of professional ethics.*

In order to reveal teachers' perception about practices of professional ethics, the collected data were analysed in the following way. The approving response of 'Always' is treated as 'favourable' perception and the disapproving response 'Never' is treated as un-favourable' perception, while the undecided response 'Sometimes' is ignored. Thus, percentages of favourable perception as well as unfavourable perception are calculated. The following table no 1 shows the percentage distribution of secondary school teachers' perception about their practices of professional ethics.

Table – 1

Secondary school teachers' perception about their practices of professional ethics.

Respondents	Favourable	Unfavourable
Teachers	70.49%	6.26%

The above table 1 clearly shows that majority of the teachers have favourable perception about practices of professional ethics.

Discussion: Professional ethics for teachers is essentially direction and guidance to the teachers in enhancing the dignity of their professional work. Therefore, it is quite normal that majority of teachers have a favourable perception about practices of professional ethics because they understand that the dignity of their profession is going to be enhanced as long as they adhere to the code of professional ethics. Besides, many teachers find teaching intrinsically rewarding in the society and countless others have a genuine love of their profession. This could be the plausible reason why majority of teachers in the present study have a favourable perception about practices of professional ethics.

Although it is expected that all teachers must have favourable perception towards practices of professional ethics, it is interesting to find that there are some teachers with negative perception. This could be due to several teachers entering the teaching profession by chance who never put themselves in the teaching position before. These teachers do not give serious efforts into their profession. This may be the reason why some teachers have unfavourable perception about practices of professional ethics.

Objective 2 - *To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to gender.*

The gender differences in the perception about professional ethics by school teachers were compared. For this, the mean and standard deviation of the two scores were calculated. The mean differences were tested by applying ‘t’ test and the details are presented in the following table no. 2.

Table – 2

Gender difference in the perception about professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram.

Groups	Number	Mean	SD	MD	SEmd	t-value	Sig. level
Male teachers	281	101.84	7.567	1.183	0.709	1.669	NS
Female teachers	172	103.02	7.174				

NS: Not significant

Table 2 shows that male and female teachers do not differ in their perception about practices of professional ethics.

Objective 3 - *To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to teaching experience.*

The teachers were categorized into three groups on the basis of their teaching experience as follows:

Teaching experience	Categorized Groups
Below 5 years	Less experienced teachers
Between 5-25 years	Middle experienced teachers
Above 25 years	More experienced teachers

The differences of secondary school teachers’ perception about professional ethics were compared on the basis of their teaching experience. For this, the mean and standard

deviation of the scores of all three groups of teachers were calculated. The mean differences between each compared groups were tested by applying 't' test and the details are presented in table no. 3.

Table – 3

Comparison in the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to teaching experience.

Groups of teachers		Number	Mean	SD	MD	SE _{MD}	t-value	Sig. level
1	Less experienced	139	100.14	7.207	2.605	0.754	3.455	**
	Middle experienced	275	102.75	7.324				
2	Less experienced	139	100.14	7.207	6.548	1.224	5.348	**
	More experienced	39	106.69	6.626				
3	Middle experienced	275	102.75	7.324	3.943	1.149	3.431	**
	More experienced	39	106.69	6.626				

** significant at .01 level

Table 3 indicates that:

- (i) Significant difference is found between *less experienced teachers* and *middle experienced teachers* at .01 level. *Middle experienced teachers* have a higher mean score indicating that *they* have a more favourable perception about practices of professional ethics than the *less experienced teachers*.
- (ii) Significant difference is found between *less experienced teachers* and *more experienced teachers* at .01 level. The mean of *more experienced teachers* is found to be higher than the mean of *less experienced teachers* which denotes that *they* possessed a more positive perception about practices of professional ethics than the *less experienced teachers*.
- (iii) Significant difference is found between *middle experienced teachers* and *more experienced teachers* at .01 level. It was found that *more experienced teachers* obtain a higher mean score than the *middle experienced teachers* implying that *they* exhibit a higher perception about practices of professional ethics than the *middle experienced teachers*.

To conclude, it is found that the more experienced the teachers happen to be, the more favourable are their perception towards practices of professional ethics.

Discussion: It is a known fact that experiences promote professional growth. Teachers with longer teaching experience learn consciously and unconsciously many things about their students and their psychology. This perhaps gives them the ethical responsibility towards their students as well as all other persons concerned with their profession. Teachers with lesser teaching experience are only in the process of learning what their seniors have learned. This is probably the reason why senior teachers with longer teaching experience possessed a more positive perception about practices of professional ethics than the junior teachers with shorter teaching experience.

Objective 4 - *To compare the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to their age group.*

The teacher respondents were also categorized on the basis of their age groups as follows:

Age range	Categorized Groups
Below 30 years	Young aged teachers
Between 30-49 years	Middle aged teachers
50 years and above	Old aged teachers

The differences in the perception about professional ethics by secondary school teachers were compared on the basis of their age group. For this, the mean and standard deviation of the scores of all three groups of teachers were calculated. The mean differences between each compared groups were tested by applying 't' test and the details are presented in the following table no. 4.

Table 4

Comparison in the perception about practices of professional ethics by secondary school teachers in Mizoram with reference to their age group.

Groups of	Number	Mean	SD	MD	SE _{MD}	t-value	Sig. level
1	Young aged	144	99.87	2.907	0.747	3.89	**
	Middle aged	258	102.78				
2	Young aged	144	99.87	6.799	1.106	6.146	**
	Old aged	51	106.67				
3	Middle aged	258	102.78	3.891	1.037	3.752	**
	Old aged	51	106.67				

** Significant at .01 level

Table 4 indicates that:

- (i) Significant difference is found between *young aged teachers* and *middle aged teachers* at .01 level. The mean of *middle aged teachers* is higher than that of *young aged teachers* demonstrating that *they* have a higher perception about practices of professional ethics than the *young aged teachers*.
- (ii) Significant difference is found between *young aged teachers* and *old aged teachers* at .01 level. *Old aged teachers* exhibit a higher mean score than the *young aged teachers*. It is thus evident that, *old aged teachers*' perception about practices of professional ethics is more positive than the *young aged teachers*.
- (iii) Significant difference is found between *middle aged teachers* and *old aged teachers* at .01 level. Since *old aged teachers*' mean score is greater than *middle aged teachers*, it can be said that *they* have higher perception about practices of professional ethics than the *middle aged teachers*.

In conclusion, it is observed that the older the teachers turn out to be, the more favourable are the teachers' perception about practices of professional ethics.

Discussion: Since age brings experience and experiences promote professional growth, it can be deduced that old aged teachers would obviously have a more positive perception about adhering to professional ethics than young aged teachers. Chronologically young aged teachers have more options in terms of employment in other professions. Old aged teachers are mentally more mature and it is presumed that many of them are parents or even grandparents at this age with experiences in child rearing. They have better understanding about the children under their care in schools more than the young aged teachers who do not have this experience at all. This may be the reason why old aged teachers have more favourable perception about practices of professional ethics than young aged teachers.

Objective 5 - *To suggest recommendations to improve professional ethics among secondary school teachers in Mizoram on the basis of the present findings.*

1. A copy of teachers' professional ethics should be circulated to every teacher at the time of joining the profession and also be put up on the walls of Teachers' Rooms for easy access. Motivation seminars/workshops may be organized where queries will be cleared by the higher authorities concerning professional ethics.
2. Oath taking should be made an integral part of a newly appointed teacher, giving much weight to strict adherence to the professional ethics for teachers. Expert bodies should be set up in schools for intensive inspection and monitoring of activities.

3. Authorities should provide better working conditions in schools for the teachers. Teachers should be given respect in the society by reserving seats at social functions, giving them the opportunity to speak in public, and inviting them to contribute their expertise towards social development. Students' evaluation of teachers will help the teachers to evaluate themselves and find out in which areas they need to improve.
4. It is suggested that younger teachers are given more opportunities to participate in different types of teacher training programmes.
5. A course on teacher ethics education should be offered by teacher training institutions as a core course to all teacher trainees.

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Elementary Education in Mizoram: A Historical Perspective

Baby Lalramsiami

Introduction

Mizoram is bounded by Bangladesh and Tripura on the west and by Chin Hills of Myanmar in the east and south. In the north, Mizoram shares a common boundary with Manipur and Silchar district of Assam. It is located in the extreme end of Himalayan ranges in the North eastern region of India. Mizoram was formerly known as 'Lushai Hills District' of Assam and commanded an important strategic position. Later on it was named 'Mizo Hill District' of Assam in 1954. It was separated from Assam and given status of a Union Territory on January 21st 1972 and gained its statehood in the year 1987. According to the latest census 2011, the population of Mizoram is 1,097,206 with a density of population of 976. (census 2011) Currently the literacy percentage of the state is 91.33% and occupies the third position in the country. The first five decades of the 20th century show the expansion and growth of education and the education system which was controlled by the Christian missionaries and the supervision of the educational administration continued till the year 1952. The elementary education had a beginning which required to be traced back from 1871-72, when Mizo tribes created problems for the British by attacking the estate of Alexandarpur in Cachar. Subsequently the British annexed the Mizoram territory in 1891. Their annexation was followed by the arrival of the Christian missionaries.

Beginning of Education

The development of elementary education in Mizoram began with the coming of the two missionaries Rev. J.H. Lorrain (Pu Buanga) and Rev. F.W. Savidge (Sap Upa) who reached Mizoram on January 11th 1894. Their coming was due to the above mentioned problems created in Cachar which had reached daily news paper on 24th Jan 1871 in London. (Thanmawia, 2011). Through that they were prompted to educate the Mizo people. Their religious sentiments aspired them to come to Mizoram. Soon after they settled in Aizawl, they started making interaction with the Mizo people. They learned the sound of the Mizo language and meaning. Afterwards, they translated

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the Lushai language into the Roman script and started preaching in the local dialect. They studied vocabularies and pronunciation, then later on developed Mizo alphabet. Mizos were, at that time, illiterate and without any written language. The Mizo language was developed due to their efforts. The first school was opened at Thangphunga veng which is now called as Chaltlang, Aizawl on 2nd April 1894. Thangphunga and Suaka were the first students of this school. When four years had passed, this school was closed down as the missionaries had to leave the Lushai Hills on December 31st 1897. But their stay of four years emerged the development of elementary education. After them, their work was continued by the Welsh Calvinistic missionary namely Rev. D.E Jones (Zosaphluia) who reached Aizawl on August 31st 1897. He worked with the former missionaries Rev. S.W Savidge and Rev. J.H. Lorrain, for four months. The first formal primary school was set up in 1897 at Aizawl, as the Mizo Hills came under the British administration in 1890. Therefore, the three government primary schools were opened in Aizawl in 1898, also in Lungleh and Dimagiri during the last years of the 19th Century. In the year 1903, the government handed over the responsibility entirely to the missionaries which again set back to Government after sometime. There were non- government institutions privately managed, some with financial assistance from the government. The under graduate teacher training institutes and the Mizoram Institute of Education for teaching and training made impact and there was increase in the enrolment at the primary stage. The state has long enjoyed higher literacy rates than average literacy rates for India. In 1961, the literacy was 51%. By 2011 census, it had reached 92%, compared to 74% average for India.

Girls Education

The beginning of girls' education in Mizoram can be traced back to the year 1899, when 6 number of girls out of 56 pupils were enrolled in the only school at Aizawl. On 31st December 1898, Rev. Rowlands reached Mizoram to join Rev. DE Jones who already had come in the year 1897. So Rev. Rowlands (Zosaphthara), a Welsh Missionary made a record in 1900, by registering 11 names of girls in the roll out of 66 pupils. Later on, in the year 1901, girls registered in the roll increased from 11 to 20 out of the total pupils of 180. Records from the educational experiment 1920-1930 made by the Baptist Mission in South Lushai Girls' School reveal that vocational courses, such as weaving including the processing of cotton from seed; care including first-aid-and invalid, cooking, knitting and crochet work; gardening and farming were introduced in depth, along with other curricular activities.

Development of Primary education

As it has been mentioned, normal school was re-opened with the coming of Welsh Missionary Rev.D.E Jones (Zosaphluia) on February,1898 (Zalawma &

Vanlalzuata, 2012) after a short break of the first missionaries who had functioned for four years. By then, there were 39 students in that school. In the South, new government schools were established at Lunglei and Demagiri in 1894. At first the government did not take interest in educating the Mizos. By 1898, there were three schools in Mizoram, one school each at Aizawl and Lunglei run by government and a mission school at Aizawl. In 1904, the Government schools were amalgamated with the mission schools and the whole management of education including opening of schools in Lushai Hills was placed in the hands of the mission in both the north and the south. The government assisted the schools chiefly by making grants -in-aid of rather small dimensions. Mizoram made progress since schools were opened and also after independence. In 1980-81, there were 619 primary schools in Mizoram. The enrollment in the year 1976-1977 in class I-V was as follows: Boys 40,275, Girls-37,366, Total 77641 . Number of primary schools in the year 1977-1978 was Urban 19, Rural 497. **Mizoram had got highest percentage of literacy in 1971 in the North- East region by acquiring 53.8%.**

Prior to 1982, elementary education in Mizoram consisted of three years of primary and three years of Middle schools or Upper primary. In 1982, the new pattern, that is four years of primary and three years of upper primary or middle school was introduced in elementary education. Since then, many new schools have been opened and existing ones extended and strengthened. A number of schools have been taken over by the government, and many of them brought under the deficit system of grants-in-aid. A lot of new schools have been started to smooth the progress of education in the backward regions. These areas have their own dialects and care has been taken to provide education through their mother tongue at the primary level.

Government Provision on Elementary Education

Before the advent of British rule in India, no formal system of primary education existed in India. The indigenous institutions like forest home institution - Gurukula and religious attachment education by Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim were seen. In some parts vernacular education was arranged by the kings to the masses. Then the British took a step by giving 'The Charter Act of 1813' carrying a sum of Rs 1 lakh for education. Another recommendation by government was 'Wood Despatch of 1854' allowing improvement in indigenous schools, new government school and private enterprise providing grant-in-aid system. After that for further step up in educational system, the Hunter Commissions recommended various points in favour of primary education. Gopal Krishna Gokhale's Bill was also passed which is the beginning for rising of Free and Compulsory Education in our constitution Article 45 for children under 14 years of age. Likewise Article 28(1),(2),(3) stated no discrimination based

on minority in education and provision of funds to institutions. Gandhi's basic education too is without mention. Various Committees and Commissions of several names and times touched upon certain innovative proposals and programmes on elementary education for the advancement and quality maintenance.

Special provision as such, in order to improve the quality of elementary stage of education, a new centrally sponsored scheme called "Operation Blackboard" (OB) was introduced in 1994 in the primary schools lacking adequate facilities and resources. Under this scheme, physical facilities were provided to schools where no such facilities were available before.

The Mid-day-meal Scheme was launched in 1995, raw rice was distributed to the primary school children. The serving of cooked meal in the school was started in February 2005. Under this scheme children receive a nourishing lunch at school. The scheme aimed at boosting universalisation of primary education by improving enrolment, attendance, retention and learning levels of children

On 26th August, 2009, the United Progressive Alliance Government notified the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009. This Act provides free and compulsory elementary education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years, By 'elementary education' it means 'the education from first class to eighth class', that is up to Middle School level. This Act has provided some norms and standards for the schools to follow and the authorities will have to ensure that standards. This is important as schools in rural areas exist without basic infrastructure and facilities.

Present Status of Elementary Education in Mizoram

Mizoram started implementing the SSA during the financial year 2000 to 2001. This project must ensure provision of quality education. The 86th Amendment of Constitution of India 2002 has already made 'free and compulsory education' to all children of the age group six to fourteen years a Fundamental Right. But the centre did not provide sufficient funds enough to encourage the state governments to take up education missions. The achievement under SSA since 2005-2006 and up to 31st January, 2009 included construction of 447 school buildings, construction of 459 additional classrooms, construction of 1912 toilets, supply of 7,57,019 numbers of textbooks, opening of 235 primary schools, and 243 upper primary schools.

There were 3,894 schools in Mizoram as of 2012. Of these, 42% were publicly owned and managed by Central/State governments, 28% were private without government subsidies, 21% were private with government subsidies, and the rest were primary and middle schools that were government financed and run by three

Autonomous District Councils of Mizoram. The teacher-pupil ratio was about 1:20 for primary, 1:9 for middle School, 1:13 for high, and 1:15 for higher secondary schools. There is also EGS -Education Guarantee Scheme and AIE Alternative and Innovative Education centres where many students were enrolled to get special benefits from central government. Before trifurcation in 1989, the general education was in the hands of so called Department of Education but now it is looked after by the Directorate of School Education.

The following Table represents statistical enrollment of teachers and students at elementary level.

Table - 1

Number of Schools, Students and Teachers at Elementary Stage in Mizoram

Sl. No.	Particulars	Primary School	Middle School	Total
	No. of Schools	1873	1408	3281
2	Students' Enrollment	165051	94354	259405
3	No. of Teachers	8717	10161	18878
4	Teacher –Pupil Ratio	01:19	01:09	

Source –Government of Mizoram, Department of School Education, Annual Publication,2013-2014, Statistical Cell, Directorate of School Education

The above table reveals the present status of elementary education in Mizoram. The number of primary schools is 1873 and middle schools 1408 as per 2013-2014 data making the total of elementary schools in the state 3281. Student enrollment at primary school level is 165051 whereas it is 94354 at middle school level the total of which is 259405. As per the table, there are 8717 primary school teachers and 10161 middle school teachers who are responsible for elementary education in the state. The teacher -pupil ratio of 1:19 in primary school and 1:9 in middle school are quite low and will be lower than the national ratio.

Elementary schools in Mizoram are of different types and are run and managed by different bodies as shown in the following table.

Table - 2

Types or Management of Elementary Schools in Mizoram

Sl.No.	Types or Management of Schools	Primary School	Middle School
1	Govt.:		
	a) Central	4	9
	b) State	856	577
2	Local Body	278	69
3	Schools Aided By Govt.& District Council		
	a) Deficit	-	10
	b) Council Deficit	-	9
	c) Adhoc Aided	-	64
	d) Council Aided	7	-
	e) Lump-sum Aided	-	35
	f) New schools managed by SSA	193	238
4	Private Unaided	535	397
	GRAND TOTAL	1873	1408

Source –Government of Mizoram, Department of School Education, Annual Publication,2013-2014, Statistical Cell, Directorate of School Education

From the above table, we find that majority of the elementary schools are run and managed by the state government. The next largest numbers of schools are privately managed schools. Local bodies run as many as 278 primary and 69 middle schools. SSA also runs 193 primary and 238 middle schools. Based on their management, elementary schools in Mizoram are broadly classified into four categories such as - 1) Schools run and managed by Government: central and state, 2) Schools run and managed by Local Bodies, 3) Schools Aided by Government and District Council, and 4) Private unaided schools.

Conclusion

The state of Mizoram has achieved commendable progress in literacy. However, how far our literacy has brought actual learning in terms of competencies is an important concern. The state's education has witnessed immense progress and improvement

Elementary Education in Mizoram: A Historical Perspective

especially at elementary stage in terms of infrastructural facilities, enrolment and retention as a result of the recently launched SSA programmes. How far these improved physical condition, expansion and progress have brought improvement in the quality is another concern which requires immediate attention.

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