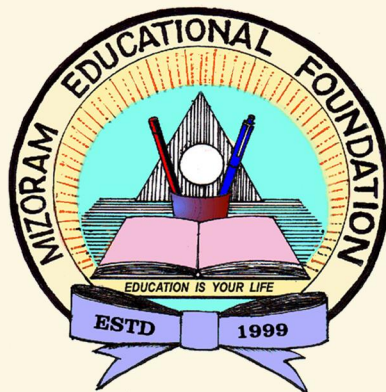


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From the Desk of the Chief Editor :

The University Grants Commission (4th Amendment) Regulations, 2016

The University Grants Commission (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) **(4th Amendment)**, Regulations, 2016 gets published on 11 July, 2016 vide notification No.F.1-2/2016(PS/Amendment) and is publicly available in UGC's official site. Clauses 3.3.1, 3.4.1, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.2.2, 4.4.2.3, 4.5.3, 4.6.3 etc. have been amended in the notification.

We may recall that the All India Federation of University & College Teachers' Organizations (AIFUCTO) submitted its demands for scrapping of API a number of times to UGC and MHRD claiming that the API for CAS has been damaging the quality of higher education in our country. In spite of the demands for scrapping API, the UGC recently notified its 4th Amendment to the Regulations wherein API still plays important role for career advancement of university and college teachers. Let us have a gestalt view on the minimum requirements for API for promotion and direct recruitment of university and college teachers as provided in the UGC (4th Amendment) Regulations 2016.

APPENDIX - III TABLE - II (A)

MINIMUM APIS AS PROVIDED IN APPENDIX - III TABLE I TO BE APPLIED FOR THE PROMOTION OF TEACHERS UNDER CAREER ADVANCEMENT SCHEME (CAS) IN UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS AND COLLEGES, AND WEIGHTAGES FOR EXPERT ASSESSMENT

Category	Activity	Asst. Professor/ Equivalent cadres: (Stage 1 to Stage 2)	Asst. Professor/ Equivalent cadres: (Stage 2 to Stage 3)	Asst. Professor (Stage 3) to Asso. Professor/ equivalent cadres (Stage	Asso. Professor (Stage 4) to Professor /equivalent cadres (Stage 5)	Professor (Stage 5) to Professor (Stage 6)
I	Teaching-learning, Evaluation Related Activities	80/Year <i>(75/Year)</i>	80/year <i>(75/Year)</i>	75/year <i>(75/Year)</i>	70/year <i>(75/Year)</i>	70/year <i>(75/Year)</i>
II	Professional Development and Extension activities - Minimum score required to be assessed cumulatively	50/ Assessment Period <i>(15/Year)</i>	50/ Assessment Period <i>(15/Year)</i>	50/ Assessment Period <i>(15/Year)</i>	50/ Assessment Period <i>(15/Year)</i>	100/ Assessment Period <i>(15/Year)</i>

III	Research and Academic Contributions- Minimum Score required - to be assessed cumulatively	20/Assessment Period (10/Year, 40/assessment period for University Teachers) (5/Year, 20/assessment period for College Teachers)	50/Assessment Period (20/Year, 100/assessment period for University Teachers) (10/Year, 50/assessment period for College Teachers)	75/Assessment Period (30/Year, 90/assessment period for University Teachers) (15/Year, 45/assessment period for College Teachers)	100/Assessment Period (40/Year, 120/assessment period for University Teachers) (20/Year, 60/assessment period for College Teachers)	400/Assessment Period (50/Year, 500/assessment period for University Teachers)
II + III	Minimum total API score under Categories II and III*	90 /Assessment period	120 /Assessment period	150 /Assessment period	180 /Assessment period	600 /Assessment period
IV	Expert Assessment System	Screening cum evaluation committee	Screening cum evaluation committee	Selection Committee	Selection Committee	Expert Committee
V	Percentage Distribution of Weightage Points in the Expert Assessment (Total weightage = 100. Minimum required for promotion is 50)	No separate points. Screening committee to verify API scores	No separate points. Screening committee to verify API scores	30% - Research Contribution 50% - Assessment of domain knowledge & teaching practices. 20% - Interview performance	50% - Research Contribution 30% - Assessment of domain knowledge & teaching practices. 20% - Interview performance	50% - Research Contribution 50% - Performance evaluation and other credential by referral procedure

*** Teachers may score the balance of points from either Category II or Category III to achieve the minimum score required under Category II + III.**

Note: Figures & words in parentheses indicate API requirements as per UGC Regulations 2010 which are given for the purpose of comparison)

The minimum requirement of API scores in teaching learning evaluation related activities is raised from 75/year to 80/year for promotion of teachers from stage 1 to 2 and from stage 2 to 3 whereas it remains the same for promotion from stage 3 to 4. However, the minimum requirement of API scores is reduced from 75/year to 70/year for promotion of teachers from stage 4 to 5 and from stage 5 to 6. Under category II and III, the minimum requirements of API scores are now prescribed for the whole assessment period only and not per year. This is expected to open more avenues for promotion to teachers. Moreover, teachers may score the balance of points from either Category II or Category III to achieve the minimum score required under Category II + III. In all the cases, the minimum requirements of API scores under category III have been reduced for university teachers whereas they remain the same for promotion from stage 1 to 2 and from stage 2 to 3 but they are increased for promotion from stage 3 to 4 and from stage 4 to 5 in the case of college teachers.

APPENDIX - III TABLE - II(B)
MINIMUM SCORES FOR APIS FOR DIRECT RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS
IN UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS / COLLEGES AND WEIGHTAGES IN
SELECTION COMMITTEES TO BE CONSIDERED ALONG WITH OTHER
SPECIFIED ELIGIBILITY QUALIFICATIONS STIPULATED IN THE
REGULATION.

	Asst. Professor (Stage 1)	Asso. Professor (Stage 4)	Professor (Stage 5)
Minimum API Scores	Minimum Qualification as stipulated in these regulations	Consolidated API score requirement of 300 points from categories II & III of APIs (cumulative)	Consolidated API score requirement of 400 points from categories II & III of APIs (cumulative)
Selection Committee criteria / weightages (Total Weightages =100)	a) Academic Record and Research Performance -50% b) Assessment of Domain Knowledge & Teaching Skills (30%) c) Interview performance (20%)	a) Academic Background (20%) b) Research performance based on API score and quality of publications (40%) c) Assessment of Domain Knowledge and Teaching Skills (20%) d) Interview performance: (20%)	a) Academic Background (20%) b) Research performance based on API score and quality of publications (40%). c) Assessment of Domain knowledge and Teaching Skills (20%). d) Interview performance:(20%)

As per this new regulation, acquiring consolidated API score requirement of 300 and 400 points for direct recruitment to Associate Professor and Professor respectively become easier in the sense that the points can now be acquired from both categories II & III whereas in the regulation 2010, the points could be acquired only from category III.

APPENDIX-III - TABLE: III
MINIMUM ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS
FOR PROMOTION OF TEACHERS IN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

S. No.	Promotion of Teachers through CAS	Service requirement	Minimum Academic Performance Requirements and Screening/Selection Criteria
---------------	--	----------------------------	---

1	Assistant Professor/ equivalent cadres from Stage 1 to Stage 2	Assistant Professor in Stage 1 and completed four years of service with Ph.D. or five years of service who are with M.Phil / PG Degree in Professional Courses such as LLM, M.Tech, M.V.Sc., M.D., or six years of service who are without Ph.D/M.Phil / PG Degree in Professional courses	(i) Minimum cumulative API scores using PBAS scoring proforma developed by the UGC as per the norms provided in Table II (A). (ii) One Orientation and one Refresher / Research Methodology Course of 2/3 weeks duration. (iii) Screening cum Verification process for recommending promotion.
2	Assistant Professor/ equivalent cadres from Stage 2 to Stage 3	Assistant Professor with completed service of five years in Stage 2.	(i) Minimum cumulative API scores using the PBAS scoring proforma developed by the UGC as per the norms provided in Table II(A) (ii) One course / programme from among the categories of refresher courses, methodology workshops, Training, Teaching-Learning-Evaluation Technology Programmes, Soft Skills development Programmes and Faculty Development Programmes of 2/3 week duration. (iii) Screening cum Verification process for recommending promotion.
3	Assistant Professor (Stage 3) to Associate Professor (Stage 4)	Assistant Professors with three years of completed service in Stage 3.	(i) Minimum cumulative API scores using the PBAS scoring proforma developed by the UGC as per the norms provided in Table II (A). (ii) At least three publications in the entire period as Assistant Professor (twelve years). However, in the case of College teachers, an exemption of one publication may be given to M. Phil. holders and an exemption of two publications may be given to Ph. D. holders. (iii) One course / programme from among the categories of methodology workshops, Training, Teaching-Learning -Evaluation Technology Programmes, Soft Skills development Programmes and Faculty Development Programmes of minimum one week duration.

			(iv) A selection committee process as stipulated in the regulation and in Tables II(A).
4	Associate Professor (Stage 4) to Professor (Stage 5)	Associate Professor with three years of completed service in Stage 4.	(i) Minimum cumulative API scores using the PBAS scoring proforma developed by the UGC as per the norms provided in Table II (A). Teachers may combine two assessment periods (in Stages 2 and 3) to achieve minimum API scores, if required. (ii) A minimum of five publications since the period that the teacher is placed in stage 3. (iii) A selection committee process as stipulated in the regulation and in Tables II (A).
5	Professor (Stage 5) to Professor (Stage 6).	Professor with ten years of completed service (universities only)	(i) Minimum cumulative API scores for the assessment period as per the norms provided in Table II (A). (ii) Additional credentials are to be evidenced by: (a) postdoctoral research outputs of high standard; (b) awards /honours / recognitions / patents and IPR on products and processes developed / technology transfer achieved; and (c) Additional research degrees like D.Sc., D.Litt., LL.D., etc., (iii) A review process by an Expert Committee as stipulated in this regulation and in Tables II (A)..

Minimum academic performance and service requirements for promotion of teachers in universities and colleges remain the same as they were in the pre-revised regulation.

After UGC notified its 4th Amendment Regulation, 2016, AIFUCTO continued to press the UGC for scrapping of API for university and college teachers. However, the UGC remains silent on the demand. It appears that the UGC is determined to continue its insistence of API scores for promotion and recruitment of teachers in universities and colleges in the country. As teachers, it is our duty to keep ourselves abreast of new developments and demands in the field of our profession and to prepare ourselves to be able to meet the demands.

Lalhmasai Chuaungo,
Chief Editor.

Perceptions of Stakeholders on Medium of Instruction at Elementary Schools in Mizoram

Ellie Lallianpuii*

R.P.Vadhera**

Abstract

The Education Policy of 1968 examined the question of the development of languages in detail and states that the first language to be studied must be the mother-tongue or the regional language. The report of the Working group on the study of Languages constituted by NCERT in 1986 states that the medium of early education should be the mother tongue(s) of the learners. Thereafter, though all policy documents have reiterated this fact, even after 61 years of independence, this is not yet a reality! The perception of the policy makers, the recommendations and guidelines of the educationists and the legal implications of the official guidelines as regards language choice and medium do not jibe well with the perception of the stakeholders. India has the largest middle class family and this middle class family has demonstrated its desire to go in for English as the medium of instruction. This has led to an incompatibility between the policy and its effective implementation. If we look into the scenario of Mizoram, like many other parts of our states, we find an increasing opening of privately managed English medium schools and an increasing demand for conversion of first language medium school to English medium school irrespective of the quality! The present study aims at finding out the perceptions of stakeholders ie., students, parents and teachers on medium of instruction at elementary schools in Mizoram.

Key words: *Perception, Medium of Instruction, Students, Parents, Teachers.*

Introduction

Medium of instruction is the language that is used in teaching; it may or may not be the official language of the country or territory. Language has always remained

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central to human existence. It is a medium through which human emotions, views, ideas and interests are expressed. It has also been recognised as a natural medium of acquiring knowledge, literacy and understanding. In olden days, language instruction has usually been regarded synonymous with more or less total education. Though in modern times, 'education is not restricted to the knowledge of languages alone yet, the importance of language instruction cannot be less than what it has been before, for even now, it is the language or languages which are the chief media of all education from beginning to end. Hence importance of language instruction is self evident as there can be no formal education in its absence. There is a complete unanimity that education should be imparted in mother tongue which should be a natural medium of instruction. One of the most important principles of educational psychology is first to ascertain what the child already knows, and then to start accordingly (Ausubel 1968, as cited in Srivastava & Khatoon, n.d.). Education in the mother tongue is believed to facilitate richer classroom interaction because it ensures participation of the learners. It also provides them with an opportunity to express themselves freely thus encouraging them to develop their creativity. This in turn ensures a shift from rote learning to constructivism, critical thinking and problem solving attitudes. Hence, learning becomes a joyful experience. The UNESCO report (1953) writes, "Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful sign that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically it is the meaning of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium". The National Curriculum Framework-2005 recommends that the children's home language should be their medium of understanding at school so that they move away from rote learning and construct their own knowledge. Education should not be a burden but a joyful experience. The principle of teaching through mother tongue was also strongly recommended by the Education Commission (1964-66).

Even though mother tongue is considered as the ideal instructional medium, the child today cannot afford to remain unilingual and he has to learn more than one language which is especially true in our country. English was the language of industrialization and modernization, and now it is the language of globalization. English will continue to enjoy a high status as long as it remains the principal medium of education at the university stage and the language of administration at the centre and in many of the states. Even after the regional languages become media in higher education in the universities, a working knowledge of English will be a valuable asset for all students and a reasonable proficiency in the language will be necessary as English is the foremost language of international communication and learning. Many perceive mother tongue or regional language education as having failed to create market value

for itself in our country and knowledge of English is seen to be the key to economic prosperity. Parents, (especially the middle and upper classes), expect that their children should get the best type of education and they conclude that it is possible only through English medium. This is also true in our state as very few parents sent their children to govt. elementary school. The state govt. invest huge amount of money for the education of very few children in terms of infrastructure, salary of teachers etc. One thing common to all is the consistently low standard of achievement in languages as well as subjects. The fact is that most children are taught in a language neither they nor their teachers master, resulting in poor education outcome. Instead of learning subjects through languages, subjects are used to learn languages. Today teachers' language proficiency is also in question and most parents cannot support their children in their studies when English is used as a medium of instruction. Therefore, students are poor both in subjects as well as language.

Viewing English as a ticket to success has also resulted in seeing the objective of education as being primarily to learn English. As such there are misconceptions among policy makers, parents and the general public that the best way to teach/ learn English is to use it as medium of instruction. Today we even find a determined effort on the part of government to impose English at the cost of mother- tongue as medium of instruction. It is indeed very tragic to note that the government of Mizoram has issued an order of the use of English as a medium of Instruction from CI-VI onwards in all the government schools and government-Aided Schools commencing from the academic session of 2017-2018! (Govt. Notification No. B.12011/1/2012-EDN(SC). Now, it needs no convincing that the medium of instruction is a crucial issue, and any solution suggested should be based on research studies.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the perceptions of students towards the medium of instruction at elementary school in Mizoram.
2. To find out the perceptions of parents towards the medium of instruction at elementary school in Mizoram.
3. To find out the perceptions of teachers towards the medium of instruction at elementary school in Mizoram.

Delimitation of the study

Stakeholders in the present study ie., students, parents and teachers of English and Mizo medium elementary schools are delimited to the three districts of Mizoram ie., Aizawl, Lunglei and Champhai District.

Methodology

- a) *Method of study:* The present study employed survey method of research, wherein, primary data relating to the objectives are collected from relevant sources. Analyses and interpretation of data are done by blending descriptive and analytical approaches to survey research.
- b) *Population:* Samples are drawn from the following 3 populations-
- Population-I: All students of Class VIII of both English and Mizo medium elementary schools in Mizoram.
- Population-II: All parents of Class VIII of both English and Mizo medium elementary schools in Mizoram.
- Population-III: All teachers of Class VIII of both English and Mizo medium elementary schools in Mizoram
- c) *Sample:* Samples are drawn by identifying 24 English and Mizo medium schools comprising of good, average, and below average schools and then included all the class VIII students and teachers of these schools. One of the parents of the selected students are included in the sample of parents. Details of the various samples used in the study are given in Table-I.

Table-1
Details of Samples of Students, Teachers and Parents.

Sampling Unit	Mizo Medium Schools	English Medium Schools	Total
Students	300	300	600
Teachers	150	150	300
Parents	300	300	600

- d) *Tools:* Opinionnaire developed by the investigator relating to the perceptions of students, parents and teachers towards medium of instruction in elementary school was used.
- e) *Statistical Treatment of data:* Keeping in view the objectives of the study and nature of data. The data collected are tabulated and calculations of percentages are done for the analyses and interpretation of data.

Analysis of Data and Findings

Objective-wise analysis of data and findings are presented below:

TABLE: 2
Perceptions of Stakeholders on Medium of Instruction at School Level in Mizoram
(Sample: 600 + 300 + 600 = 1500)

Sl. No.	ITEM/ ISSUES	Response	Students Perceptions		Teachers Perceptions		Parents Perceptions	
			Mizo Medium	English Medium	Mizo Medium	English Medium	Mizo Medium	English Medium
1	Teaching, at least up to Class-VIII should be done in Mizo medium	Agree	142 (47%)	112 (37%)	114 (76%)	41 (27%)	166 (55%)	119 (40%)
		Disagree	158 (53%)	188 (63%)	36 (24%)	109 (73%)	134 (45%)	181 (60%)
2	English spoken class in Mizo medium school should be stressed rather than English medium teaching	Agree	221 (74%)	220 (73%)	116 (77%)	76 (51%)	234 (78%)	180 (60%)
		Disagree	79 (26%)	80 (27%)	34 (23%)	74 (49%)	66 (22%)	120 (40%)
3	Teaching in English medium kills creativity among students	Agree	147 (49%)	125 (42%)	108 (72%)	54 (36%)	140 (47%)	130 (43%)
		Disagree	153 (51%)	175 (58%)	42 (28%)	96 (64%)	160 (53%)	170 (57%)
4	English medium teaching is responsible for weaknesses in mathematics and science among the Mizo	Agree	112 (37%)	100 (33%)	115 (77%)	58 (39%)	132 (44%)	129 (43%)
		Disagree	188 (63%)	200 (67%)	35 (23%)	92 (61%)	168 (56%)	171 (57%)
5	English can be learned anytime but first understanding of content is more important	Agree	282 (94%)	246 (82%)	129 (86%)	94 (63%)	253 (84%)	216 (72%)
		Disagree	18 (6%)	54 (18%)	21 (14%)	56 (37%)	47 (16%)	84 (28%)
6	To be educated, one needs to go to English medium school	Agree	89 (30%)	199 (66%)	40 (27%)	67 (45%)	109 (36%)	141 (47%)
		Disagree	211 (70%)	101 (34%)	110 (73%)	83 (55%)	191 (64%)	159 (53%)
7	Mizo medium school has lost its market values	Agree	87 (29%)	120 (40%)	84 (56%)	117 (78%)	135 (45%)	201 (67%)
		Disagree	213 (71%)	180 (60%)	66 (44%)	33 (22%)	165 (55%)	99 (33%)
8	The Government should transform all the Mizo medium school to English medium school	Agree	111 (37%)	181 (60%)	25 (17%)	85 (57%)	144 (48%)	158 (53%)
		Disagree	189 (63%)	119 (40%)	125 (83%)	65 (43%)	156 (52%)	142 (47%)
9	Students from Mizo medium are not fluent in English even at maturity	Agree	42 (14%)	90 (30%)	13 (9%)	45 (30%)	65 (22%)	103 (34%)
		Disagree	258 (86%)	210 (70%)	137 (91%)	105 (70%)	235 (78%)	197 (66%)

10	Being taught in a foreign language and having to use that language as communications throughout the day in school can create anxiety and tension among students	Agree	165 (55%)	122 (41%)	105 (70%)	31 (21%)	178 (59%)	118 (39%)
		Disagree	135 (45%)	178 (59%)	45 (30%)	119 (79%)	122 (41%)	182 (61%)
11	A child must learn in English medium school for his future vocation	Agree	49 (16%)	95 (32%)	10 (7%)	32 (21%)	47 (16%)	85 (28%)
		Disagree	251 (84%)	205 (68%)	140 (93%)	118 (79%)	253 (84%)	215 (72%)
12	Teachers themselves who are not fluent in English teach in English medium hampers students' understanding of content	Agree	258 (86%)	262 (87%)	117 (78%)	120 (80%)	280 (93%)	270 (90%)
		Disagree	42 (14%)	38 (13%)	33 (22%)	30 (20%)	20 (7%)	30 (10%)

Analysis of Data and Findings

Analysis of data vide Table-2 shows that:

1. a) Students of Mizo medium schools did not differ much in their opinion on item 1 that *teaching, at least up to Cl-VIII should be done in Mizo medium* as 47% agreed to it and 53% disagreed to it. However, a large percentage of students (63%) from English medium schools disagreed to it.
- b) Whereas, there is a big clash of opinion among the school teachers as 76% of Mizo medium school teachers agreed, while 73% of English medium teachers disagreed to it.
- c) Again, 55% of parents of Mizo medium students agreed to it, whereas, 60% parents of English medium students disagreed to it.
2. a) A very high percentage of students from both English and Mizo medium schools (74% and 73% respectively) expressed their agreement with the issue of giving more emphasis on *Spoken English class in Mizo medium school rather than using English as a medium of teaching*,
- b) Likewise 77% of Mizo medium and 51% of English medium teachers also agreed with this statement.
- c) Opinion of parents on this issue was also not much different as a large majority of parents i.e. 78% from Mizo medium and 60% from English medium expressed their agreement with this issue.
3. a) More than half of both Mizo and English medium school students (51% and 58% respectively) disagreed that *teaching in English medium kills creativity among students*.
- b) While in the case of teachers, 72% of Mizo medium teachers agreed to it. On the contrary, 64% of English medium teachers disagreed to it.
- c) The point of difference of opinion is not that significant among parents as 53% and 57% of both parents of Mizo and English medium disagreed, while 47 % and 43% parents of Mizo and English medium agreed to it.
4. a) A large majority of students from both Mizo and English medium schools (63% and 67% respectively) disagreed that *English medium teaching is responsible for weaknesses in mathematics and science among the Mizo*.
- b) However, there was a great variation between the opinion of teachers as 77% of teachers from Mizo medium schools, and only 39% from English medium schools agreed with this statement.

- c) On the contrary almost same percentage of parents from both types of schools i.e. 56% from Mizo medium and 57% from English medium disagreed to it and 44% and 43% agreed to it.
5. a) A very high percentage of all stakeholders viz. 94% of students from Mizo medium and 82% from English medium schools, 86% of teachers from Mizo medium and 63% English medium, and 84% parents from Mizo medium and 72% from English medium agreed that *English can be learned anytime but first understanding of content is more important*.
6. A very high percentage (70%) of students from Mizo medium schools disagreed that *in order to be educated, one needs to go to English medium school*, whereas, 66% of students from English medium schools agreed to it. While the rest of the stakeholders i.e. 73% of teachers of Mizo medium schools and 55% of English medium schools as well as 64% of parents of Mizo medium and 53% of parents of English medium expressed their disagreement with this statement.
7. a) A large percentage of students from both Mizo and English medium schools (71% and 60% respectively) disagreed that *Mizo medium schools have lost their market value*.
- b) On the contrary 56% of teachers of Mizo medium and 78% of English medium agreed with this statement.
- c) In case of parents, a slightly higher percentage i.e. 55% of them from Mizo medium disagreed with this statement, whereas, 67% of them from English medium agreed to it.
8. a) 63% of students of Mizo medium disagreed that *the Government should transform all the Mizo medium school to English medium school*, whereas 60% of them from English medium schools agreed to it.
- b) Further, 83% of teachers of Mizo medium schools and 43% teachers of English medium disagreed with this issue.
- c) Again, a slightly higher percentage i.e. 52% of parents of Mizo medium disagreed to *the transformation of all Mizo medium schools to English medium schools*, while 53% of parents of English medium school agreed to it.
9. Interestingly, majority of all the stakeholders viz. 86% Mizo medium students and 70% English medium students, 91% of Mizo medium teachers and 70% of English medium teachers, 78% of Mizo medium parents and 66% of parents of English medium had disagreed to the statement that *students from Mizo medium are not fluent in English even at maturity*.

10. a) 55% students of Mizo medium schools agreed that *being taught in a foreign language and having to use that language as communications throughout the day in school can create anxiety and tension among students*, whereas 59% of English medium students disagreed to it.
b) There is a clash of opinion here among the teachers as 70% of Mizo medium teachers agreed to it, whereas 79% of English medium teachers disagreed to it.
c) Here also, 59% of parents of Mizo medium agreed to it while 61% of parents of English medium did not think so.
11. A very high percentage of all stakeholders viz. 84% of students from Mizo medium and 68% from English medium schools, 93% of teachers from Mizo medium and 79% English medium schools, and 84% of parents of Mizo medium and 72% of parents of English medium school disagreed with the statement that *a child must learn in English medium school for his future vocation..*
12. Evidently, yet again, majority of all the stakeholders viz. 86% of students Mizo medium schools and 87% of English medium schools, 78% of teachers of Mizo schools and 80% of English medium schools, as well as 93% of parents of Mizo medium and 90% of parents of English medium schools agreed to statement *that students' understanding of content in English medium schools is hampered as most of the teachers teaching in such schools themselves are not fluent in English.*

Suggestions and Conclusion:

The above analysis clearly pointed out that stakeholders are aware of the indispensability of English language in today's world, and the strong attachment felt towards English could also be seen which may be due to the fact that Mizos are Christians and the missionaries who started education and bring about development to the Mizo society used English. Stakeholders also felt that transformation of all Mizo medium schools to English medium schools is not feasible due to lack of competent teachers. At the same time, they also realized the significance of specific achievement of different subjects which is best possible through mother- tongue medium of instruction.

What strategies can be devised in our context, since Mizo medium of instruction is not available at higher levels of education? We must ensure that English as a language in education is fully realised in terms of the basic conditions for learning the language and those educated through mother- tongue medium schools attain the proficiency that would not hamper them to move forward to higher education and employment. It must be remembered that English as a supplement to mother- tongue education is strength; as substitute it is debilitation.

Skutnabb-Kangas (1976) as cited in Srivastava & Khatoon, n.d.) argues that it is the responsibility of the state to provide an educational system where multilingualism is treated as a necessity. It is therefore, suggested that urgent steps be taken for implementing the mother tongue as medium of instruction in elementary schools where English (or any other language) as a subject of study should not be neglected. This clearly necessitated a strengthening and an improvement of the conditions under which English as a subject is taught. By the time the child reaches high school and college, he would be bilingual with mastery over English. To ensure successful implementation, the following points may be further suggested:

- Development and enrichment of the local language, by borrowing terminology from English and other languages.
- Strengthening of teachers training programmes.
- Allocation of more time/ sessions to practice and reinforce the target language (for interaction and communication).
- Improvised teaching methods (through modern teaching technology).
- Enhanced teaching/reading resources like computers, books, internet access, story books, educational games, etc.
- Specific material content (specific strategies such as speaking, reading comprehensions and writing skills).
- Krashen (2009) as cited in Qorro (2013) pointed out: forcing students to speak English will not improve their ability to speak English. The best way to improve speaking is therefore to increase the amount of comprehensible listening and reading that students do, and the easiest and most cost effective way to make this happen is to develop libraries of interesting and comprehensible English books and recordings to supplement English class.

There is nothing as dangerous and damaging as giving people education that is not relevant to their lives or functional in their understanding and domination of their environment. Most leading countries of the world such as England, France, Italy, Germany, China, Japan and so on must have realized that effective teaching-learning condition requires discussion and interaction between pupil and teacher and among pupils themselves which is best possible through the mother tongue, and hence, adopted their own regional language or mother-tongue as medium of instruction. Skutnabb – Kangas (1976) as cited in Srivastava & Khatoon, n.d. on the basis of her study of 700 Finnish immigrant children claims that unless a child has his mother-tongue as the instructional medium he cannot learn a second language properly. In fact, forcing second

language in place where the mother-tongue has lost status will result in double semi-lingualism in which neither of the two languages will be proficiently acquired. Now the big question is...Is the state government aware of the fact that we are in a threatening state of semi-bilingualism too, and felt the need to address this condition when it plays a very major role in the development of education?

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Vocational Education at Higher Secondary Stage of Education in Mizoram: A Status Study

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to throw light on the status of vocational education at higher secondary stage of education in Mizoram. Vocational education refers to skilled learning and work experience. It is also sometimes referred to as technical education as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology. In Mizoram, the first phase of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education was implemented in the year 1988. Presently, 14 higher secondary schools in the state offer 8 different vocational subjects. All these schools constituted population as well as sample of the present study. Primary data were collected from Higher Secondary Schools offering Vocational Courses by administering Observation Schedule cum Questionnaire for higher secondary schools offering vocational courses constructed by the investigators. Secondary data were collected from annual reports of SCERT. Descriptive statistics i.e., percentages were applied for treatment of data. It was found that the courses offered were limited to 8 different trades in 14 higher secondary schools. Computer Technique was the most popular course offered at 6 higher secondary schools and enrolment of students was also highest in this. The instructional time allotted for vocational subjects (theory and practical classes) in some schools were less than the specified requirement. Apart from Lecture and Practical, Home Assignment, Project Work and Experiment were the methods of imparting the skills. Methods of evaluation employed for most of the courses were continuous and comprehensive.

Key Words: Vocational Education, Vocational Courses, Higher Secondary Stage of Education, Status.

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Introduction

Vocational education refers to skilled learning and work experience. It has several differing concepts which mostly arise from the tradition. One concept is that it is a craft-oriented education or training where the learners learn with manual activities rather than intellectual activities. Those who are unable to profit from the traditional academic learning generally opt for this sort of industrial training. There is the concept that vocational education is education for productive purposes or socially useful productive work. Vocational education for productive work basically provides learning experience of a vocational nature, training learners to fit the requirement of a hierarchical work force. It imparts education with practical activities to prepare a person for a socially useful employment and a proficient worker. It is also sometimes referred to as technical education as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology (Mohankumar, 2008).

In Mizoram, the first phase of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education was implemented in the year 1988. Here six schools were selected for introduction of two vocational trades. Repair and maintenance of television and radio receivers were introduced in two schools, and steno typing in four schools. But these trades were discontinued due to unavailability of fund for salary and qualified teachers except for two schools where steno typing is still continued. The second phase was implemented on 2002 in which one vocational trade- Computer Technique was introduced in three selected higher secondary schools. In the third phase eight vocational trades were selected in sixteen selected higher secondary schools. (SCERT, 2009)

Presently, 14 higher secondary schools in the state offer 8 different vocational subjects (SCERT, 2013). In this regard, many questions arose in the minds of the investigators, the answers of which could be obtained only through research. A number of states in the country have conducted evaluative studies of vocational courses to find out the weaknesses and strengths of the programme whereas, in Mizoram, no research has yet been conducted. To know the status of vocational education in Mizoram and to suggest certain measures for its improvement, an intensive research needs to be undertaken. It is, in this context that the present study has been undertaken.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the present study is to analyze the status of vocational education at the higher secondary stage of education in Mizoram with reference to:

- (a) Courses offered and year of introduction
- (b) Students enrollment
- (c) Instructional time allotted.
- (d) Methods of imparting the skills and,
- (e) Procedure of evaluation.

Operational Definitions of the Terms Used

The following are the operational definitions of the different terms used in the present study:

- a) **Vocational Education:** Vocational education refers to the education in vocational subjects or courses implemented under the scheme 'Vocationalization of Secondary Education'
- b) **Higher secondary stage of education:** This implies the stage of education that comprises of classes XI and XII.
- c) **Status:** The term 'status' in the present study means the present position or existing condition.

Methodology of the Study

- a) **Research Approach:** A descriptive survey approach was used to conduct the present study.
- b) **Population of the Study:** At the time of data collection, i.e. 2014, there were 14 Higher Secondary Schools in Mizoram where vocational courses were offered. All these schools constituted population of the present study.
- c) **Sample of the Study:** The question of sample selection did not arise as the number of Higher Secondary Schools offering vocational courses was few. As such, all these 14 schools constituted sample of the present study.
- d) **Tool Used:** Observation Schedule cum Questionnaire for higher secondary schools offering vocational courses constructed by the investigators was used for collection of data.
- e) **Data Collection:** For the present study, primary data were collected from Higher Secondary Schools offering Vocational Courses by administering the tool mentioned above. Secondary data were collected from journals and annual reports of SCERT.
- f) **Statistical Treatment of Data:** Descriptive statistics i.e., percentages were applied for treatment of data.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: School-Wise Distribution of Vocational Courses Offered and Year of Introduction

School	Computer Technique	Computer Software Application	Commercial Garment Design and Making	Auto Mobile Engineering Technology	Medical Laboratory Technician	Horticulture	Sericulture	Office Secretaryship
Gov't.Mamawii HSS, Aizawl	2009		2009					
Khawzawl HSS,	2010						2010	
Gov't. Republic HSS, Aizawl		2009						
Gov't.KM HSS, Aizawl	2008			2008				
Helen Lowry HSS, Aizawl	2006			2008	2007			
Gov't. HSS, Saitual,							2009	
Baptist HSS, Lunglei					2007			
Gov't. HSS, Serchhip						2007		
Gov't. G.M. HSS, Champhai	2009					2009		
Gov't.Zemabawk HSS, Aizawl			2009				2009	
Gov't. HSS, Saiha						2007	2008	
Modern English HSS, Aizawl		2008						
Gov't.Mizo HSS, Aizawl	2002							
Gov't. Central HSS, Aizawl								2009

As shown in Table 1, Vocational Courses introduced in Higher Secondary School (HSS) in Mizoram are as follow:

- (i) Computer Technique: This is the vocational course firstly introduced in Mizoram. It was introduced way back in 2002 at Gov't.Mizo Higher Secondary School (HSS), Aizawl. It was again started in 2006 at Helen Lowry Higher Secondary School (HSS), Aizawl; in 2008 at K.M Higher Secondary School, Aizawl and in 2009 at Gov't.Mamawii Higher Secondary School, Aizawl and G.M Higher Secondary School, Champhai; and lastly in 2010 at Khawzawl Higher Secondary School, Khawzawl. This is the most popular course and is offered at 6 Higher Secondary Schools.
- (ii) Computer Software Application: This was firstly introduced in 2008 at Modern English HSS, Aizawl and again in 2009 at Gov't. Republic HSS, Aizawl.
- (iii) Computer Garment Design and Making: This course was started in 2009 at 2 higher secondary schools namely, Gov't.Mamawii HSS, Aizawl and Gov't.Zemabawk HSS, Aizawl.
- (iv) Automobile Engineering Technology: Only 2 higher secondary schools namely, Gov't. KM HSS, Aizawl and Helen Lowry HSS, Aizawl offer this course which was started in these schools in the same year, i.e, 2008.
- (v) Medical Laboratory Technician: This course, introduced in the year 2007, is offered at two schools namely, Helen Lowry HSS, Aizawl and Baptist HSS, Lunglei.
- (vi) Horticulture: This course was firstly introduced in 2007 at two schools- Gov't. HSS,Serchhip and Gov't. HSS,Saiha and secondly in 2009 atGov't. GM HSS, Champhai.
- (vii) Sericulture: Sericulture is offered at 4 higher secondary schools. It was startedfor the first time at Gov't. HSS,Saiha in 2008; at Gov't. HSS,Saitual and Zemabawk HSS, Aizawl in 2009 and at Khawzawl HSS, Khawzawl in 2010.
- (viii) Office Secretaryship: This is the only vocational course offered at one school only, i.e, Gov't. Central HSS, Aizawl. It was started in this school in the year 2009.

Table 2: Students Enrollment in 2014, 2015 and 2016

S. No.	Course	Class	2014	2015	2016	Total	Total of XI and XII	% of total of XI and XII
1	Computer Technique	CI-XI	179	149	138	466	816	36.71
		CI-XII	117	121	112	350		
2	Computer Software Application	CI-XI	17	23	19	59	107	4.81
		CI-XII	18	11	19	48		
3	Commercial Garment Design and Making	CI-XI	25	21	35	81	136	6.12
		CI-XII	15	21	19	55		
4	Automobile Engineering Technology	CI-XI	43	15	17	75	136	6.12
		CI-XII	22	27	12	61		
5	Medical Laboratory Technician	CI-XI	66	57	61	184	353	15.88
		CI-XII	57	63	49	169		
6	Horticulture	CI-XI	84	83	91	258	435	19.57
		CI-XII	54	67	56	177		
7	Sericulture	CI-XI	26	25	56	107	181	8.14
		CI-XII	25	23	26	74		
8	Office Secretaryship	CI-XI	18	4	9	31	59	2.65
		CI-XII	8	16	4	28		
	TOTAL		774	726	723	2223	2223	100

It is clear from Table 2 that Computer Technique has the highest enrollment of students as compared to other courses with the percentage of 36.71 percent. Horticulture has the second highest enrollment with 19.57 percent of students. Medical Laboratory Technician comes in third place with 15.88 percent followed by Sericulture which has 8.14 percent of students. Both Commercial Garment Design and Making and Automobile Engineering Technology are in fifth position having 6.12 percent each. Computer Software Application comes in sixth position with 4.18 per cent. Office Secretaryship has the lowest student enrollment with the percentage of 2.65.

The decline in the number of class XII students from the number of class XI students in the previous years i.e., 2014 and 2015, indicates that in 2015 and 2016, there were drop out students in every course except in Sericulture and Office Secretaryship in 2016. Moreover, the overall enrollment went down in 2015 from 774 to 726, 48 lesser than 2014 and went on decreasing by 3 students in 2016.

Table 3: Percentage of Time Allotted for Total Instructional Time

Vocational Courses	Total Instructional Time Alloted for theory and practical		
	Below 68%	68% to 70%	Above 70%
Computer Technique (6 schools)	2 (33.33%)	3 (50%)	1 (16.67%)
Computer Software Application (2 Schools)	0	2 (100)	0
Commercial Garment Design and Making (2 schools)	0	2 (100%)	0
Automobile Engineering Technology (2 Schools)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0
Medical Laboratory Technician (2 schools)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0
Horticulture (3 Schools)	1 (33.33)	0	2 (66.66%)
Sericulture (4 Schools)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	0
Office Secretaryship (1 school)	1 (100)	0	0

The Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education published by Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, New Delhi states in page 11 that the vocational theory and practice in an integrated form would be given nearly 70 per cent of the total instructional time. The rest would be allocated to study of languages and the foundational subjects related to the vocational course. Out of 6 HSS that offers Computer Technique, 3 schools allot 70 per cent of the required total instructional time for practical and theory class. One school allot more than 70 per cent which is more than the requirement whereas 2 schools allot less than 70 per cent which are less than the specified time.

Among the schools that offer Computer Software Application, 100 per cent Higher Secondary Schools allot 70 per cent of total instructional time for theory and practical as required by the scheme of vocationalisation of secondary education. The total instructional time allotted by 2 schools offering Commercial Garment Design and Making are as per the requirement as they allot exactly 70 and nearly 70 per cent.

There are 2 schools that offer Automobile Engineering Technology. The total instructional time allotted for both theory and practical by 1 (50%) HSS is 70 per cent of the total instructional time which is in agreement with the requirement specified in the Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education. However, the total instructional time allotted by 1 (50%) Higher Secondary School is less than the required time.

Out of 2 schools that offer Medical Laboratory Technician 1 (50%) HSS allot 70 per cent of the total instructional time for theory and practical which is in accordance with the specification whereas 1 (50%) HSS does not allot the required instructional time. Two schools (66.66%) HSS out of 3 schools that offer Horticulture allot more than 70 per cent of the total instructional time for both theory and practical classes. 1 (33.33%) HSS does not allot the required time at the time allotted is less than 68 per cent of the total instructional time. This means that they give too much time for theory and practical classes for Horticulture leaving too less time for languages and foundational subjects related to the course.

Only 1 HSS offering Sericulture allot the total instructional time for both theory and practical which is in agreement with the specified requirement whereas the total instructional times allotted by 3 HSS are less than the required time. Only 1 (100%) HSS offers Office Secretaryship and it allots the required total instructional time for theory and practical which is in accordance with the specification.

Table 4: Methods of teaching

Methods of teaching		Computer Technique (6 Schools)	Computer Software Application (2 Schools)	Commercial Garment Design and Making (2 schools)	Automobile Engineering Technology (2 schools)	Medical Laboratory Technician (2 schools)	Horticulture (3 schools)	Sericulture (4 Schools)	Office Secretaryship (1 school)
		No.& %	No.& %	No.& %	No.& %	No.& %	No.& %	No.& %	No.& %
1	Lecture	6 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)
2	Practical	6 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)

3	Demonstration	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (100)	1 (50)	0 (0)	1 (33.33)	0 (0)	0 (0)
4	Project work	4 (67)	2 (100)	2 (100)	1 (50)	1 (50)	3 (100)	2 (50)	1 (100)
5	Experiment	1 (17)	2 (100)	1 (50)	0 (0)	1 (50)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)
6	Home assignment	5 (83)	2 (100)	2 (100)	1 (50)	2 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	0 (0)

Table 4 shows the different methods of teaching adopted for teaching different courses:

- i) For teaching Computer Technique course, lecture and practical methods are used by 100 per cent schools. No school uses Demonstration method. Home assignment by 83 per cent, project work is used by 67 per cent and experiment methods by 17 per cent of the higher secondary schools offering the subject/course.
- ii) The methods of teaching used by higher secondary schools for teaching Computer Software Application are all the same – lecture, practical, project work, experiment, assignment are used by 100 per cent of the schools and no school uses demonstration method.
- iii) 100 per cent of the schools offering Commercial Garment Design and Making use the methods of lecture, practical, demonstration, project work and home assignment. 50 per cent of the schools use experiment method for teaching the course.
- iv) None of the schools offering Automobile Engineering Technology course uses experiment method for teaching while 100 per cent use lecture and practical methods of teaching. 50 per cent use demonstration, project work and home assignment as methods of teaching.
- v) Lecture, practical and home assignment methods of teaching are used by 100 per cent of the schools for teaching Medical Laboratory Technician course. Project and experiment methods are used by 50 per cent of the schools. No school uses demonstration method.
- vi) In higher secondary schools that offer Horticulture course, lecture, practical methods, project work, experiment and home assignment are used by 100 per cent and demonstration method by none of the school for teaching the course.
- vii) Four methods of teaching i.e. lecture, practical; experiment and home assignment are used by 100 per cent of the schools for teaching Sericulture Course. 50 per cent use project method and no school uses demonstration method for teaching the subject.

- viii) For teaching Office Secretaryship course 100 per cent higher secondary schools use lecture, practical, project and experiment. None of the schools use demonstration and home assignment methods for teaching the course.

Table 5: Procedure Used for Evaluation of Students

Procedure of Evaluation		Vocational Courses							
		Computer Technique (6 schools)	Computer Software Application (2 Schools)	Commercial Garment Design and Making (2 schools)	Automobile Engineering Technology (2 Schools)	Medical Laboratory Technician (2 schools)	Horticulture (3 Schools)	Sericulture (4 Schools)	Office Secretaryship (1 school)
		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1	Class test	6 (100)	1 (50)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)
2	Weekly test	2 (33.33)	2 (100)	2 (100)	0 (0)	1 (50)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)
3	Monthly test	1 (16.67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
4	Internal test	2 (33.33)	1 (50)	1 (50)	2 (100)	2 (100)	1 (33.33)	1 (25)	0 (0)
5	Assignment	3 (50)	2 (100)	2 (100)	1 (50)	0 (0)	2 (66.66)	1 (25)	0 (0)
6	Seminar	1 (16.67)	0 (0)	1 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
7	Project work	2 (33.33)	2 (100)	2 (100)	1 (50)	1 (50)	3 (100)	2 (50)	1 (100)
8	Practical	4 (66.67)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	2 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	1 (100)

The above table shows the procedure of evaluation used for different courses in different schools:

- i) For evaluation of students offering Computer Technique course, 100 per cent schools use class test, 66.67 per cent schools practical, 50 per cent schools assignment, 33.33 per cent schools weekly test, internal test and project work. Only 16.67 per cent school use seminar as one of the procedures of evaluation.

- ii) The procedures of evaluation such as weekly test, assignment, project work, practical and annual examination are used by 100per cent schools for students offering Computer Software Application course. Class test and internal test are used by 50per cent of the schools.
- iii) Class test, weekly test, assignment, project work, practical and annual examination are used by 100per cent of the schools for evaluating students offering CommercialGarment Design and Making course. Internal test and seminar are used by 50per cent of the schools. No school uses monthly test.
- iv) Internal test, class test, practical and annual examination are used as evaluation tools by 100 per cent schools for students of Automobile Engineering Technology course. Assignment and project work are used by 50 per cent whereas monthly test, weekly test and seminar are used by none of the schools.
- v) For students of Medical Laboratory Technician, 100 per cent school use class test, internal test, practical and annual examination. 50 per cent use weekly test and project work. No school uses monthly test, assignment and seminar.
- vii) For evaluation of students of Horticulture, class test, weekly test, project work, practical and annual examination are used by 100per cent schools. Assignment is used by 66.66per cent and internal test by 33.33per cent. No school uses monthly test and seminar.
- vi) No school uses monthly test and seminar while 100 per cent of schools offering sericulture used class test, weekly test, practicaland annual examination for evaluating students of Sericulture course. 50 per cent of the schools use project work, internal test and assignment by 25 per cent.
- viii) Project work, class test, weekly tests, practical and annual exam are used by 100per cent schools for evaluating students of Office Secretaryship course. No school uses monthly test, internal test, assignment and seminar.

Findings of the Study

Courses Offered with Year of Introduction

1. There were eight vocational courses offered at 14 higher secondary schools in Mizoram.
2. Computer Technique was the most popular course offered at 6 higher secondary schools.
3. Computer Software Application was firstly introduced in 2008 and again in 2010.

4. Computer Garment Design and Making was started in 2009 at 2 higher secondary schools
5. Two higher secondary schools offered Automobile Engineering Technology which was started in 2008.
6. Medical Laboratory Technician was introduced in the year 2007 at two schools.
7. Horticulture was firstly introduced in 2007 at two schools and secondly in 2009.
8. Sericulture was offered at 4 higher secondary schools. It was started for the first time in 2008 and again in 2009 and 2010.
9. Office Secretaryship was the only vocational course offered at one school only. It was started in this school in the year 2009.

Students Enrollment

1. Computer Technique had the highest enrollment of students during the last three consecutive years i.e. 2014, 2015 and 2016 and Office Secretaryship had the lowest student enrollment.
2. The decline in the number of class XII students from the number of class XI students in the previous years i.e., 2014 and 2015, indicates that in 2015 and 2016, there were drop out students in every course except in Sericulture and Office Secretaryship in 2016. Moreover, the overall enrollment went down in 2015 from 774 to 726, 48 lesser than 2014 and went on decreasing by 3 students in 2016.

Instructional Time Allotted for Theory and Practical Classes

1. The time allotted for both theory and practical classes in Computer Software Application and Commercial Garment Design and Making courses were both 70 or nearly 70 per cent of the total instructional time as desired by the Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education published by Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, New Delhi.
2. The time allotted for both theory and practical classes in rest of the vocational subjects were not in accordance with the specification.

Methods of Teaching

1. Lecture and Practical methods were employed for imparting the skills for all the vocational courses. Apart from these, Home assignment, Project Work and Experiment methods were popularly used.

Procedure of Evaluation

For evaluation of students offering vocational courses, Practical, Tests, Project Work and Assignments were popularly used. The use of class test, internal test and weekly test indicates that the evaluation system was continuous. Seminar for evaluation of students was not popularly employed. The evaluation system employed taken as a whole indicates that it was comprehensive in many cases.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the status of vocational education at higher secondary stage in Mizoram and its strengths and weaknesses. It has been found that the progress of vocationalization of higher secondary school in the state has reached a stage of stagnation. The number of students' enrollment goes on decreasing each year. The total instructional time required is not allotted in some schools. Attempts need to be made for creating more awareness about the significance of vocational education. Methods of teaching and procedure of evaluation need to be modernized so as to meet the requirements specific for vocational courses. School time table needs revision to make the total instructional time 70 per cent or nearly 70 per cent as desired by experts in the field of vocational education.

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Personality of the Gifted and Creative College Students in Mizoram

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Abstract

The study aims to find out the gifted and creative college students of Mizoram and compare the personality of the gifted and creative students. It also aims to compare the intelligence, creativity and personality of college students with reference to their gender and stream of study. Findings show that there are significant differences in certain personality factors between the gifted and creative college students. Significant differences in certain personality factors are observed between the male and female students and between students belonging to different stream of study. Findings also show that there is no significant sex difference in intelligence, but males are superior to females in creativity. The study also found that science students are superior than the commerce & arts students in both intelligence and creativity, and that commerce students are also superior to arts students in both intelligence and creativity.

Key words: *Intelligence, Creativity, Personality, College students, Mizoram*

Introduction

In the past, people have always been interested in men and women who have superior ability. In every generation, many gifted individuals pass through life unidentified and uncultivated. Now, of course, one finds practically all societies greatly concerned with identifying talents and providing opportunities for its upward mobility. The national planners in India, have also emphasized the development of human resources through the cultivation of talents through special educational programmes (National Education Policy, 1986). It has rightly pointed that the talent needs to be assessed, and nurtured through effective educational endeavours. The Education Commission (1964 -66) has also observed that the talent has to be identified early and allowed to grow in the best atmosphere and under the best teachers. However, not

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much attention seems to have been paid to the education of the gifted and the creative individuals in India.

It is needless to emphasize that the gifted and talented individuals are required to be identified and nurtured as early as possible, because the destiny of a nation is largely determined by the extent it utilizes its talents. The planet's survival depends on how successfully the potential of the gifted and talented children is realized and integrated. The exceptionals, with superior intellectual and creative abilities are badly neglected in India. One should realize that neglected gifted and talented individuals could greatly harm the society by becoming anti-social elements.

The development of a nation depends upon the vision and insight of a relatively few exceptionally able people. When people have no vision, they perish. Much of the vision necessary for the promotion of human welfare must come from the gifted individuals. Therefore, full recognition and adequate opportunities for the maximum development of the gifted and talented is essential. It is also essential that they should be made aware of their responsibilities, not only to develop their giftedness, but to use their abilities constructively.

Understanding the personality of the pupil is extremely essential for any teacher entrusted with the education of any type of children whatsoever. Such an understanding about exceptional individuals is particularly indispensable for a teacher obviously because their individual differences are all the more sharply drawn in certain significant respects. With a complete understanding of the personality of the talented individual, his education becomes a relatively smooth, progressive and even pleasant process.

Until recently, very few systematic studies have been done on the gifted and creative students. In India, not much work seems to have been done in the area of giftedness and creativity. In a tribal and remote area like Mizoram, there is not much investigation undertaken in this field of special education. Also the education of the talented children has not been paid much attention. Therefore an attempt has been made in this study to identify the gifted and creative college students of Mizoram. Personality differences with respect to gender and stream of study of the gifted and creative college students are also analyzed.

Objectives of the Study:

The major objectives of the present study are:

1. To identify the Intellectually Gifted and Creative students from the Colleges of Mizoram.
2. To compare the Personality factors of Gifted(G), Creative(C) and Gifted-Creative(GC) College Students of Mizoram.

3. To compare the Intelligence, Creativity and Personality factors of Male and Female College Students of Mizoram.
4. To compare the Intelligence, Creativity and Personality factors of the different streams (Arts, Science and Commerce) of College Students in Mizoram.

Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses are formulated in respect of objective no's 2, 3 and 4 stated above.

1. There is no significant difference in the 16 personality factors of college students grouped on the basis of gifted, creative and gifted-creative
2. There is no significant difference in the intelligence, creativity and personality factors of students grouped on the basis of gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the intelligence, creativity and personality factors of students grouped on the basis of different stream of study.

Sample:

The total sample for the study consisted of 600 college students (286 males and 314 females) selected at random from different colleges in Mizoram. Out of the 600 students, 372 students belong to arts, 81 students belong to science, and 147 students belong to commerce streams.

Tools used:

The following tools are used for collecting data

1. Standard Progressive Matrices (J.C.Raven)
2. Creativity Test (Khangte)
3. 16 PF Questionnaire (Cattell and Cattell)

The 16 personality factors are :

- 1) Factor A - Reserved-outgoing
- 2) Factor B - Dull-bright
- 3) Factor C - Affected by feelings-emotionally stable
- 4) Factor E - Humble-assertive
- 5) Factor F - Sober-happy go lucky
- 6) Factor G - Expedient-conscientious
- 7) Factor H - Shy-venturesome

- 8) Factor I - Tough minded-tender minded
- 9) Factor L - Trusting-suspicious
- 10) Factor M - Practical-imaginative
- 11) Factor N - Forthright-astute
- 12) Factor O - Self assured-apprehensive
- 13) Factor Q1 - Conservative-experimenting
- 14) Factor Q2 - Group dependent-self sufficient
- 15) Factor Q3 - Undisciplined self conflict-controlled
- 16) Factor Q4 - Relaxed-tense.

Major Findings:

A *Identification of Gifted, Creative and Gifted-Creative college students:*

The identification of the gifted and creative students is done following a standard criterion. The students who have the score equal to 75 percent and above of the maximum possible score in the tests of Standard Progressive Matrices (SPM) and creativity are considered to be Gifted and Creative. The number of male and female students found to be Gifted(G), Creative(C) and both Gifted and Creative (GC) are depicted in Table I.

TABLE NO: 1

Gender wise distribution of the three groups of students

Gifted (81)		Creative (93)		Gifted-Creative (48)	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
45	36	53	40	29	19

From 600 students, 81 students are identified as Gifted (G), and 93 students are identified as Creative (C). It is also found that there are 48 students who are both Gifted and Creative (GC)

B. *Comparison of the 16 Personality factors between the Gifted, Creative and Gifted-Creative college students of Mizoram*

The personality factors of the Gifted(G) students, the Creative(C) students and the Gifted-Creative(GC) students are compared applying the 't' test. and the results of the analyses are presented in Table 2.

TABLE NO: 2

Comparison of Gifted (G), Creative (C) and Gifted Creative (GC) college students on the scores of 16 Personality Factors

Personality Factor	Mean/SD	G N=81	C N=93	GC N=48	t G vs C	t GC vs G	t GC vs C
A	Mean	9.93	10.12	9.44	0.467	0.895	1.264
	SD	2.67	2.68	3.19			
B	Mean	6.85	6.16	7.15	2.459*	0.926	3.023**
	SD	1.76	1.94	1.79			
C	Mean	12.05	12.47	12.67	0.781	0.883	0.293
	SD	3.58	3.49	4.01			
E	Mean	10.01	10.24	11.29	0.403	1.885	1.579
	SD	3.74	3.78	3.72			
F	Mean	10.7	12.28	10.44	2.521*	0.375	2.801**
	SD	4.23	4	3.53			
G	Mean	13.4	12.92	13.4	1.026	0	0.779
	SD	3.12	3.03	3.67			
H	Mean	8.63	9.98	10.77	1.992*	2.975**	1.131
	SD	4.45	4.47	3.62			
I	Mean	10.22	10.68	10.54	0.936	0.527	0.231
	SD	3.18	3.37	3.42			
L	Mean	9.62	10.03	10.21	0.887	1.124	0.348
	SD	3.03	3.13	2.79			
M	Mean	8.95	10.01	10.65	2.107*	2.848**	1.13
	SD	3.42	3.18	3.19			
N	Mean	11.3	10.47	10.6	1.808	1.222	0.229
	SD	2.96	3.09	3.25			
O	Mean	14.9	14.72	14.75	0.303	0.222	0.045
	SD	3.88	3.95	3.6			
Q₁	Mean	9.07	10.46	9.67	3.028**	1.006	1.41
	SD	3.2	2.8	3.32			
Q₂	Mean	10.07	9.58	10.5	1.069	0.708	1.543
	SD	3.01	3.03	3.51			
Q₃	Mean	10.96	10.68	11.31	0.642	0.742	1.319
	SD	2.73	3.02	2.5			
Q₄	Mean	14.63	13.73	13.54	1.466	1.525	0.332
	SD	4.14	3.92	3.79			

*Significant at .05 level ** Significant at .01 level

The above table no. 2 reveals that the Creative(C) students have significantly higher mean scores than the Gifted (G) group on personality factors F, H, M and Q₁. However, on factor B, the mean personality score of the Gifted(G) students is higher than the mean score of the Creative(C) group.

The result also reveals that the Gifted-Creative(GC) students have significantly higher mean score than the Gifted(G) group on personality factors H and M. The result further shows that while the Gifted-Creative(GC) students have significantly higher mean score than the Creative (C) group on factor B, the mean personality score of the Creative(C) students is higher than the mean score of the Gifted-Creative(GC) on factor F.

This implies that the Creative(C) college students of Mizoram are cheerful, active, talkative, frank, expressive, happy go lucky, and impulsive. They are socially bold, ready to try new things, spontaneous, uninhibited and venturesome. Further, they are unconcerned over everyday matters, self motivated, imaginatively creative and careless of practical matters. They are skeptical and inquiring regarding ideas, either old or new and are inclined to experiment in life generally and more tolerant of inconvenience and change. The Gifted(G) college students on the other hand, are found to be more intelligent, quick to grasp ideas, abstract in thinking and bright as compared to the creative college students.

The comparison of the Gifted(G) and the Gifted-Creative(GC) students illustrates that college students who are both Gifted and Creative (GC) are more venturesome and imaginative than the Gifted (G) group of students.

When personality of the Creative (C) and the Gifted-Creative (GC) are compared, the college students who are both Gifted and Creative (GC) are found to possess higher intelligence than their Creative (C) counterparts, but the Creative (C) groups are found to be more serious than the Gifted-Creative (GC) groups.

C. Comparison of the 16 personality factors, Intelligence and Creativity between the Male & Female, as well as the Science, Commerce and Arts college students of Mizoram

Gender differences of students in the colleges of Mizoram as well as differences in Science, Commerce and Arts students in personality, intelligence and creativity tests of the total sample (600) are also compared. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 3.

TABLE – 3

Comparison of Male, Female, Science, Commerce and Arts college students on the scores of 16 Personality Factors, Intelligence and Creativity Test

16 PF	M/SD	Male N=286	Fem N=314	Sc N=81	Com N=147	Art N=372	t M/F	t S/C	t S/A	t C/A
A	M	9.39	10.59	9.49	9.72	10.25	**		*	
	SD	2.97	2.56	2.49	3.23	2.7	5.277	0.599	2.451	1.761
B	M	6.41	6.46	6.99	6.47	6.2		*	**	
	SD	1.91	2.75	1.56	1.79	1.86	0.261	2.284	3.983	1.531
C	M	12.26	10.57	12.9	12.59	10.53	**		**	**
	SD	3.71	3.64	3.57	3.3	3.72	5.623	0.644	5.373	6.175
E	M	10.09	8.94	11.22	11.27	8.38	**		**	**
	SD	3.79	3.46	3.79	3.81	3.1	3.869	0.095	6.301	8.188
F	M	11.73	10.92	11.12	11.64	11.2	**			
	SD	3.59	3.75	3.45	3.38	3.86	2.702	1.097	0.185	1.282
G	M	13.4	13.82	12.94	12.37	14.26			**	**
	SD	3.31	3.15	3.17	3.46	2.97	1.588	1.257	3.434	5.828
H	M	9.81	7.99	11.41	10.59	7.59	**		**	**
	SD	4.13	4.05	3.62	4.06	3.87	5.441	1.567	8.498	7.685
I	M	9.82	12.02	11.68	9.65	11.34	**	**		**
	SD	2.87	2.86	3.17	3.19	2.84	9.394	4.617	0.891	5.605
L	M	10.13	9.73	9.94	10.07	9.86				
	SD	2.81	2.99	2.9	2.89	2.92	1.689	0.324	0.225	0.744
M	M	10.45	9.02	10.33	10.67	9.18	**		**	**
	SD	3.07	3.11	2.79	3.43	3.03	5.663	0.81	3.309	4.605
N	M	10.63	11.84	10.73	10.71	11.59	**		*	**
	SD	3.1	3.07	3.28	2.96	3.12	4.797	0.046	2.157	3.005
O	M	14.6	17.09	13.91	13.62	11.69	**		**	**
	SD	3.83	12.02	3.49	3.74	3.44	3.482	0.585	5.201	5.416
Q₁	M	10.35	9.04	10.03	10.01	9.43	**			*
	SD	2.92	2.79	3	2.85	2.9	5.606	0.074	1.668	2.079
Q₂	M	9.6	9.61	10.73	10.61	8.95			**	**
	SD	3.21	3.01	3.3	3.25	2.83	0.039	0.264	4.507	5.419
Q₃	M	11.37	10.9	11.26	11.25	11.04				
	SD	2.9	3.2	2.42	2.84	3.27	1.887	0.028	0.692	0.726
Q₄	M	13.34	14.88	12.77	12.82	14.99	**		**	**
	SD	3.78	3.65	3.37	3.59	3.71	5.067	0.105	5.274	6.146

IN	M	39.3	37.76	44.72	41.32	36.03	1.67	*	**	**
	SD	10.91	11.68	10.81	9.97	11.19		2.336	6.515	5.32
CR	M	221.54	205.42	269.1	233.04	193.03	3.326	**	**	**
	SD	64.84	52.52	66.22	58.08	46.2		4.107	9.83	7.47

*Significant at .05 level

** Significant at .01 level

The above table no 3 reveals that the male students in Mizoram colleges had significantly higher mean score than the females on personality factors C,E,F,H,M, and creativity test while the females had significantly higher mean score than the males on personality factors A,M,N,O and Q₄.

Also, the result reveals that the science students have significantly higher mean score than the commerce students on personality factors B and I, and also in intelligence and creativity tests. The result also shows that the science students had significantly higher mean score than the arts students in personality factors B,C,E,H,M,O,Q₂, and in intelligence and creativity tests, while the arts students have significantly higher mean score than the science students on personality factors A,G,N and Q₄.

The result also exhibits that the commerce students have significantly higher mean score than the arts students in personality factors C,E,H,M,O,Q₁,Q₂, and in intelligence and creativity tests, while the arts students had significantly higher mean score than the commerce students on personality factors G,I,N and Q₄.

The result reveals that the male college students are more emotionally stable, assertive, happy go lucky, venturesome, imaginative and experimenting, while the female college students are more outgoing, tender minded, shrewd, apprehensive and controlled. Males are also found to be more creative than the females. But it is found that there is no significant difference with regard to intelligence between male and female students.

Scores on personality factors, standard progressive matrices (SPM) and creativity tests of the science and commerce students are also compared, and the findings show that the science students are more tender-minded and possess higher intelligence and are more creative than the commerce students.

The science and arts students in the colleges of Mizoram are also compared in respect of their scores in personality factors, standard progressive matrices (SPM) and creativity tests. Here, the result signifies that the science students are more intelligent, emotionally mature, assertive, venturesome, imaginative, apprehensive, and self sufficient than the arts students, while the arts students are more outgoing, conscientious,

shrewd and tense as compared to the science students. The findings also indicate that the science students are more intelligent and more creative as compared to the arts students.

When scores in personality factors, standard progressive Matrices (SPM) and creativity tests of the commerce and arts students are compared, the result denotes that commerce students are more emotionally stable, assertive, venturesome, imaginative, experimenting, and self sufficient than the arts students, while the arts students are more conscientious, tender minded, shrewd and tense than the commerce students. The findings also signify that the commerce students are superior in intelligence and creativity than the arts students.

Discussion:

Superior cognitive abilities affect the total behavior of an individual which includes many aspects of an individual's personality. Many professionals of the field are of the view that superior personality and character traits are found in gifted children. Gottfried and Gottfried (1996) found that the gifted enjoy learning, they like to accept challenges and want to study deeply any subject or situation and thus like to get mastery in the field. Cox (1926) also found that gifted at a very early age develop the ability to know what should be done and what should not be done. Very easily they can differentiate between right and wrong. Baker (1949) says that superior learners tend to learn by complex associative methods rather than by simple, direct rote drill. By such associative processes, they are able to make many connections or to use many mental facets upon which they may draw when putting meaning into learning. Also superior children look for the abstract or generalized rules underlying all school subjects. Terman and Oden (1947) reported that parents can recognize their gifted child on the basis of curiosity, quick understanding, good grasping power, extensive information, retentive memory, large vocabulary and unusual interest in such things as number relations etc. These research findings correspond with the present findings that the gifted are more intelligent, quick to grasp ideas, abstract in thinking and bright as compared to their counterparts.

Getzels and Jackson (1962) found that the creative group was less stimulus bound by instruction, was more open to expressing and receiving experiences and feelings, and enjoyed the risk of relating elements in conventional ways more than did the IQ group. Also the creative group was better able to tolerate incongruous associations, ambiguity, aggression and violence. They seemed to want to please themselves with the productions rather than others.

Getzels and Jackson (1960) also found that the creative adolescent seems to enjoy the risk and uncertainty of the unknown than the high IQ adolescents. This is

reflected in the occupational choice of the two groups. More creative adolescents chose unconventional occupations, such as adventurer, inventor, writer etc while more highly intelligent adolescents chose conventional occupations such as doctor, lawyer, engineer etc. Hammer (1961) found that the truly creatives exhibited greater original responsiveness, stronger determination and ambition, greater independence, stronger needs for self expression, greater tolerance for discomfort, preference for the observer role over the participant role etc. These findings also shows the similarity of other research findings with that of the present findings about the creative's personality among the college students of Mizoram.

While some researchers such as Miles (1954) and Tiwari (1977) found that boys were superior to girls in intelligence, the present investigator found that there is no significant difference between the male and female college students in their level of intelligence.

Although no significant difference was found in intelligence between the male and female college students of Mizoram, it was found that the male students are more creative than the females. The reason for this difference may probably be due to the traditional Mizo society, which was strictly based on extreme patriarchal society that relegated women's status in the society. It was the men who controlled and dominated the entire administration of the society. This is what happens in the pre-modern society. However, with social change, the number of educated women is increasing and women began to excel men in certain professions. Despite this fact, there are only few women holding important administrative posts in government jobs. All the political and village administrations are still controlled by men. The attitude of the present society seems to confine women's job to the realms of the home and consider household activities as the most important duties for them. Women themselves also have in general, accepted this attitude without question. Therefore, the traditional ideologies of women's status in the society look as if it had not changed much, and therefore foundations might have been laid among the Mizo society with the outcome of females probably being not as creative as the males. A number of researchers also indicated male superiority to females in creativity (Srivastava (1982); Singh (1982); Trimurthy (1987) etc

It was also found that the college science students possessed significantly higher intelligence and creativity than both the commerce and arts students, and that the commerce students are also significantly better in intelligence and creativity than the arts students. The reason for this difference could possibly be because most students who obtain better marks in HSLC examinations opted for the science stream and those whose achievements are lower were admitted either in the commerce or arts stream. Most of the weak students would take admission in the arts stream. Science subject had better scope for future employment and commerce subject is gaining recognition

due to development in business and industry. Therefore, the findings does not necessarily mean that taking arts or commerce subjects would lower an individual's intelligence and creativity, rather in all probability, it means that there are perhaps more academically weak students who take up the arts stream. The superiority of science students on creativity in comparison to their counterparts in the arts and commerce group has also been established in a number of studies (Singh,1982; Mishra 1978; Usmani 1981; Passi 1982 etc)

Suggestions for Special Education schemes for the gifted and creative students in the state of Mizoram

Till date, no special educational provision for the academically talented students has been undertaken by the state of Mizoram at any level. The scholarships provided to meritorious students are too meager to give them stimulation for advancement. Proper educational arrangements for such students will have to be made.

One of the first steps in giving proper educational arrangements is to identify the gifted and creative students. This identification can be done by the teachers with the help of marks obtained in tests and examinations. Teachers can also identify them by giving them psychological tests or by observing their personality.

Every educational institution should be assisted to develop a programme for identifying the talented students for providing them with special enrichment programme to suit their needs. The nature of these programmes which may vary from one type of institutions to another would have to be carefully designed. The gifted students may be encouraged to study a variety of books and study materials. Teachers would also have to be given special training in identifying the gifted and creative and in implementing these programmes for the talented students.

Their performance and their special abilities in these enrichment programmes may be recorded in special certificates. It should be observed that this enrichment programmes should not be reduced to coaching for passing examinations with higher marks.

In these day and age, many psychologists are of the opinion that the gifted students should be educated individually with the teacher generally acting as a guide without unnecessary intervention. Essentially, the proper development of the gifted students depends to a large extent upon the intelligence, wisdom and the sense of responsibility of the teacher. He should try to make arrangements for developing special qualities in his more talented students. The students may be given a specific assignment to carry out without any fixed time. The teacher would observe on their development and provide them with innovative and creative programmes as they proceed. This method

of education has been proved to be the most useful in the case of gifted children elsewhere.

Another way of developing the qualities of the gifted and creative students in Mizoram is to have winter camps or institutional activities organized during winter vacations. Academically talented students, selected from different institutions on the basis of psychological tests, observations, interviews and previous academic records will be brought together for a special educational programme which is very challenging and planned under the expert guidance of talented teachers. The programme would emphasize on creative and experimental projects where students will learn skill of investigation, stressing initiative and originality with a high standard of accomplishments. The programme would also emphasize cooperative planning and activity that provides opportunity for leadership training and experiences in social adjustment and a deep concern for community responsibility. The students will be provided with the best available books to consult for writing their project report and for holding discussion in the class. Different subjects in science, commerce and arts can be covered. The students would return to their regular institutions after the programme is over.

To conclude, the investigator feels that the state of Mizoram should take additional effort to make proper arrangements for the education of the gifted and creative students so that their talents are not wasted.

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Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

-Nelson Mandela

Learning Outcomes of Class IV children of Mizoram in Mizo Language in Relation to MLL.

C.Lalremruata*

Abstract:

The present study is an attempt to reveal the quality of our primary school education in terms of learning outcome or competencies as identified by the MLL for the subject of Language (Mizo). A sample of 808 Class IV children from all the districts of Mizoram were taken for the sample. A Competency-based Achievement Test in Language (Mizo) was administered to the sample students. It was found that only 11.76% of children achieved mastery level of learning. In terms of achievement at mastery level, Kolasib (18.4%) district occupies the first position seconded by Saiha district (15.4%) followed by Mamit (12.4%), Champhai (11.9%), Serchhip (10.9%), Aizawl (10.4%), Lawngtlai (10.0%) and Lunglei (8.4%) districts. However, the level of achievement is not satisfactory as there are as many as 88.24% of children who do not achieve mastery level of MLL.

Key words: Assessment, Learning Outcomes, Competency, Mastery Level of Learning, Minimum Levels of Learning.

Introduction:

Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning. On the other hand, Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) may, perhaps, be defined in a variety of ways. For example, one may define MLL as expected learning outcomes in term of observable terminal behavior. Others may also define it on the basis of a taxonomic analysis of learning objectives such as knowledge, comprehension, application,

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analysis, synthesis, evaluation and so on. One can also state the MLL in terms of learning competencies expected to be mastered by every child by the end of a particular class or stage of education. These different approaches for stating the MLL are not mutually exclusive. Of the various alternatives available, the Committee which was constituted by the MHRD on 5.1.1990 has chosen to state the MLL in terms of terminal competencies (NCERT, 1991).

In the present study, performances and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Language (i.e. Mizo) have been analyzed and interpreted in relation to MLL. The main concern is to find out how many Class IV children in Mizoram have attained mastery level of learning which refers to achievement of 80 per cent and above marks in an MLL based achievement test in Language (Mizo) for Class III. In operational terms, MLL requires that 80 per cent or more children should be able to master at least 80 per cent of the prescribed learning levels or skills.

Objectives of the Study:

The study has been taken up with the following objectives:

1. To assess the overall performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children of primary schools in Mizoram in Language (Mizo) in relation to Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL).
2. To assess the District wise performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Mizo in relation to MLL.
3. To assess the performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Mizo on the basis of MLL Competencies identified.
4. To compare the performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Mizo in relation to MLL on the basis of management i.e. Government and Private.
5. To compare the performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Mizo in relation to MLL on the basis of locality i.e. rural and urban.
6. To compare the performance and levels of achievement of Class IV children in Mizo in relation to MLL on the basis of gender i.e. boys and girls.

Method of the Study

The present study is an evaluative study as it evaluates and assesses class IV children of primary schools in Mizoram based on Language competencies and skills prescribed for Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) for class III children in the country. Descriptive method of research has been adopted as the investigator had to describe the status of primary schools in Mizoram with regard to achievement of MLL or learning outcomes in the subject of Language (Mizo) by class IV children.

The population under consideration in this study comprised of all class IV children of primary schools in Mizoram who had recently passed class III from such schools. Decision was made to draw a sample of not less than 2% of the population from each district by following stratified random sampling technique. Accordingly, samples were drawn from class IV children from all the eight districts of Mizoram. Consequently, the data were collected from the sample size of 808 class IV students which was found quite satisfactory and reliable as per the formula given by R.V. Krejcie and D.W. Morgan (1970) in *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607 – 610 .

The Competency-based Achievement Test duly constructed by the investigator was used as the tool to collect the required data from the sample population. The test materials were finalized and printed in a book-let form only after validity and reliability of the Test on the subject was established satisfactorily. The Achievement Test materials consisted three parts: Question sheets, Answer sheets and Practice sheets. Practice-sheets were prepared for the purpose of practice and trial so that children might not face difficulties owing to unfamiliarity of the test. The medium of the test was Mizo, which is the spoken language of most of the children in Mizoram. Children of non-speaking Mizo, if any, were left out in the test. The question sheets of the test in the subject was printed in only 100 copies as they were meant for re-use whereas answer sheets were printed in 1000 copies. Data collection was carried out and completed within three months of commencement of the academic session. Generally, a single day was spent to complete the test in each of the selected schools. At first, a rapport was established between the children and the test administrator followed by explanation, clarification and instructions with the help of practice Book-let which took approximately 30 minutes beginning at around 9:30 AM.

The scored data so collected on the basis of the performances of the students have been analyzed with the help of measures of variability such as mean and standard deviation, and 't' calculated value has also been used to find out whether the differences between the performances of children are significant at 0.1 and 0.5 levels or not. Performances are also analyzed in terms of levels of achievement, that is, the ranges

of percentage of marks obtained by the students, to know if the students have achieved mastery level of learning expected in MLL.

Analysis of data and interpretation:

1) Overall performance and level of achievement

Table 1
Overall performance of Class IV
children in Language (Mizo)

	Mizo
Cases	808
Mean	23.65
SD	6.62

Table 2
Overall Level of Achievement in
in Language (Mizo)

	Mizo	
	N	%
Mastery 80% and Above	95	11.76
60-79%	305	37.75
45-59%	237	29.33
30-44%	143	17.70
Below 30%	28	3.47
Total	808	100

The performance of class IV children in terms of mean scores and Standard Deviation (SD) in the subject presented in Table 1 has been supplemented by Table 2 which presents the percentage levels of achievement of the children. The facts reflected by the above two tables are as given below:

- (i) The overall performance of class IV children in Mizo is very low and far from satisfactory as the mean score obtained out of a total mark of 40 is 23.65 which is equivalent to 59.12% average mark score. In other words, the average percentage score is only 59.12 in Mizo whereas at least 80% mark is required for achievement of MLL. With regard to the level of achievement in this particular subject, 88.24% have failed to attain mastery level and only 11.76% of sample children attained the said level.

- (ii) The largest number of children is found within the given range of 60%-79% of marks in the subject.
- (iii) The above tables reflect that the performance and achievement levels of Class IV children in Language (Mizo) are far from satisfactory.

2) District-wise performance and level of achievement.

Table 3
District-wise performance in Language (Mizo)

Subjects	Aizawl		Champhai		Kolasib		Mamit		Lawngtlai		Lunglei		Saiha		Serchhip		Overall Total	
	N =	222	N =	118	N =	98	N =	89	N =	80	N =	107	N =	39	N =	55	N =	808
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mizo	23.29	6.67	23.11	6.89	25.78	5.51	23.60	7.01	23.03	6.59	23.59	6.46	24.09	7.21	23.28	6.64	23.65	6.62

The above table 3 shows the result of district-wise analysis of data. Children from Kolasib District score the highest mean score (25.78) in Mizo whereas Lawngtlai scores the lowest mean score (23.03). It may be noted that whereas Kolasib derives the highest mean score in Mizo it also scores the lowest Standard Deviation (5.51) at the same time. This reflects that lesser disparity of learning achievement in this particular subject is observed in Kolasib District when compared with the rest of the districts.

Table 4
District-wise Level of Achievement in Mizo.

District	Below 30%		30-44%		45-59%		60-79%		Mastery (80% & above)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aizawl	6	2.7	53	23.9	62	27.9	78	35.1	23	10.4	222	100
Champhai	5	4.2	23	19.5	38	32.2	38	32.2	14	11.9	118	100
Kolasib	0	0.0	7	7.1	30	30.6	43	43.9	18	18.4	98	100
Mamit	4	4.5	17	19.1	24	27.0	33	37.1	11	12.4	89	100
Lawngtlai	7	8.8	8	10.0	25	31.3	32	40.0	8	10.0	80	100
Lunglei	4	3.7	18	16.8	32	29.9	44	41.1	9	8.4	107	100
Saiha	1	2.6	8	20.5	7	17.9	17	43.6	6	15.4	39	100
Serchhip	1	1.8	9	16.4	19	34.5	20	36.4	6	10.9	55	100
Total	28	3.5	143	17.7	237	29.3	305	37.7	95	11.8	808	100

Data in Table 4 reveal that in Mizo language, 11.8% of children attained mastery level as a whole. In terms of achievement at mastery level, Kolasib (18.4%) district occupies the first position seconded by Saiha district (15.4%) followed by Mamit

(12.4%), Champhai (11.9%), Serchhip (10.9%), Aizawl (10.4%), Lawngtlai (10.0%) and Lunglei (8.4%) districts. However, the level of achievement is not satisfactory as there are as many as 88.24% of children who did not achieve MLL. Of the total sample children (808), 3.5% of them obtain below 30% of the total mark. The largest number of children obtaining less than 30% marks is found in Lawngtlai district followed by Mamit district.

3) Competency-wise performance and level of achievement:

Table 5:
Competency-wise performance in Mizo.

	Listening	Pronunciation	Writing	Reading	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Overall Total
N	808	808	808	808	808	808	808
Mean	7.854579	1.43255	3.768564	4.28651	1.792698	4.516708	23.65161

As per the data shown in Table 5 above, very poor performance of children is found in the areas of pronunciation and comprehension where the mean scores are only 1.43 and 1.79 respectively. The highest mean score is found against the MLL competency area of listening. Theoretically, children are able to think in terms of a set of interrelated principles rather than single bits of knowledge since they are mostly within the age group of 8-10 years which falls within the Piaget's Concrete Operational stage (i.e 7 – 11). However, it is apparent from the data that the children are least developed in the areas which require the children to use their reasoning and imagination.

Table 6:
Competency-wise level of achievement in Mizo

Selected MLL Competencies in Mizo.	Below 30%		Mastery (80%&above)	
	N	%	N	%
Listening	8	0.99	494	61.14
Pronunciation	250	30.94	33	4.08
Writing Skills	56	6.93	316	39.11
Reading Skills	402	49.75	1	0.12
Comprehension	344	42.57	76	9.41
Vocabulary	147	18.19	64	7.92

Table 6 also reveals that in Mizo (Language), 61.14% of sample children attain mastery level in the MLL competency area of listening whereas only 0.99% of them have scored less than 30% of the total marks in the same area. Only 1(one) child (i.e.0.12%) attains mastery level in the area of reading whereas nearly half (49.75%) of the sample children have scored less than 30% in the same area. Reading includes questions/items involving reading of other's handwriting, road signs, notices and simple story with understanding. During field work, it was disheartening to see that children who appeared to be good in speaking and listening had returned their answer sheets blank on the items that required original thinking. This is, perhaps, the result of missing conceptual understanding on their learning.

4) Management-wise performance and level of achievement:

Table 7
Management-wise performances
in Language (Mizo)

Mangements	Mizo		
	N	Mean	SD
Govt.	384	25.38	6.56
Private	424	22.09	6.30
Total	808	23.65	6.62
t'		15.61	
Df		806	

It is striking to note from Table 7 that when comparison of performance of children is made between government schools and Private schools, significant difference is established in the subject. In this particular Mizo subject, government Schools are significantly better than Private schools wherein the 't' calculated values are more than the Table value of 't' both at .01 and .05 levels. This implies that the difference of the mean scores between government schools and Private schools in this subject can be said as real difference, which is not by chance and hence significant.

Table 8
Management-wise Level of Achievement in Mizo

Ranges	Type of School				Total	
	Government		Private			
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mastery(80% and Above)	71	18.49	24	5.66	95	11.76
60%-79%	157	40.89	148	34.91	305	37.75
45%-59%	100	26.04	137	32.31	237	29.33
30%-44%	47	12.24	96	22.64	143	17.70

Below 30%	9	2.34	19	4.48	28	3.47
Total	384	100	424	100	808	100

A cursory glance at Table 8 above tells us that in Mizo, 18.49% of sample children of government schools attain mastery level whereas 5.66% children in Private schools attain the same level. The percentage of children securing marks less than 30% of the total mark is larger in Private schools (4.48%) than government schools (2.34%). The largest number of children is found securing marks which fall within the range of 60%-79% both in the case of government and Private schools. By considering the level of achievement in Mizo as shown in the above Table, children from government schools are slightly better than children from Private.

Table 9:
Mangement-wise level of achievement in Mizo items
corresponding with MLL Competencies.

Area of MLL competencies covered in the test.	Govt (N=384)				Private (N=424)			
	Zero correct responses		Mastery level		Zero correct responses		Mastery level	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Listening	1	0.26	266	69.27	0	0.00	228	53.77
Pronunciation	92	23.96	23	5.99	114	26.89	10	2.36
Writings	9	2.34	176	45.83	13	3.07	140	33.02
Reading	15	3.91	1	0.26	26	6.13	0	0.00
Comprehension	54	14.06	52	13.54	89	20.99	24	5.66
Vocabulary	1	0.26	37	9.64	2	0.47	27	6.37

Table 9 reveals that children of government schools are much better than that of private schools so far as their level of achievement in Mizo is concerned. The percentages of children of government schools achieving mastery level are higher than that of private schools in all the 6 areas of MLL competency. At the same time, the percentages of those children who fail to give any correct response are lower in 5 out of the 6 areas, in government schools than those of private schools.

In Mizo (language), the percentages of children achieving mastery level in all the items corresponding with MLL competencies are higher in government schools than in private schools. The items concerning correct pronunciation appear to be the

most difficult items for both government and private schools since 23.96% and 26.89% of children respectively from these schools fail to answer correctly all the questions/items relating to this MLL competency. Level of achievement is found very low in reading competency wherein only 0.26% children of government schools and no one (0%) from private schools achieve mastery level in this particular item of MLL competency. Questions/items concerning to reading competency include question-answer from a given short-story. Level of achievement is found mostly high in listening competency in which 69.27% and 53.77% of children from both types of schools achieve mastery level.

5. Location-wise performance and level of achievement:

Table 10:
Location-wise performance in Language (Mizo)

	Mizo					
	Rural			Urban		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
	305	22.41	6.70	503	24.40	6.46
t' value	-9.20					

Table 10 depicts that in the Mizo subject, children belonging to urban schools significantly perform better than their counterpart in rural schools. It may be noted that the 't' calculated value of -9.20 in Mizo are greater than the table 't' values at .01 and .05 levels. This implies that the difference of the mean scores between urban schools and rural schools in this subject can be said as real difference, which is not by chance and hence significant.

Table 11:
Location-wise Level of Achievement
in Language (Mizo)

Ranges	Locality				Total	
	Rural		Urban			
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mastery(80% and Above)	31	10.2	64	12.7	95	11.8
60-79%	94	30.8	211	41.9	305	37.7
45-59%	94	30.8	143	28.4	237	29.3
30-44%	73	23.9	70	13.9	143	17.7
Below 30%	13	4.26	15	2.98	28	3.47
Total	305	100	503	100	808	100

A casual look at Table 11 reveals that 10.2% of sample children in rural schools attain mastery level whereas 12.7% children in urban schools attain the same level. The percentage of children securing less than 29% marks is higher in rural schools (4.26%) than in urban schools (2.98%). In both the cases, the percentage of children securing marks between 60%-79% is largest. When the children of both rural and urban schools are compared based on their level of achievement in Mizo, children of urban schools are better than that of rural schools.

Table 12 :
Location-wise level of achievement in Mizo items
corresponding with MLL Competencies.

Area of MLL competencies covered in the test.	Rural (N=305)				Urban(N=503))			
	Zero correct responses		Mastery level		Zero correct responses		Mastery level	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Listening	1	0.33	172	56.39	0	0.00	322	64.02
Pronunciation	94	30.82	17	5.57	112	22.27	16	3.18
Writings	12	3.93	115	37.70	10	1.99	201	39.96
Reading	20	6.56	1	0.33	21	4.17	0	0.00
Comprehension	65	21.31	24	7.87	78	15.51	52	10.34
Vocabulary	1	0.33	21	6.89	2	0.40	43	8.55

Table 12 reveals that pronunciation and comprehension are the two areas of MLL competency in which there are higher percentages of children who get zero correct responses. As the said percentages are higher among the children of rural schools, these children are considered to be poorer with regard to their level of achievement than urban school children. Besides, listening and writing are the two MLL competency areas where the percentages of children getting mastery level of achievement are highest for children of both the rural and urban schools. In these areas and the rest, except pronunciation and reading, the achievement level of children of urban schools is higher than that of rural schools.

6) Gender-wise performance and level of achievement:

Table 13:
Gender-wise performance in
Language (Mizo) .

	Mizo		
	Boy	Girl	Total
N	383	425	808
Mean	24.30	23.06	23.65
Std. Deviation	6.30	6.86	6.62
t'	5.90		
Df	806		

Table 13 depicts that in gender-wise comparison of the performances of sample Class IV children, boys are significantly better than girls in Mizo. In other words, the 't' calculated value in Mizo at 5.90 are found greater than the table 't' value at .01 and .05 levels. Hence, it can be assumed that the differences between mean scores of boys and girls in the subject, i.e Mizo, is real difference and not by chance.

Table 14:
Gender-wise level of achievement in Mizo

Level of Achievement in Mizo	Gender					
	Boy		Girl		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mastery(80% and Above)	51	13.32	44	10	95	11.8
60-79%	146	38.12	159	37	305	37.7
45-59%	121	31.59	116	27	237	29.3
30-44%	60	15.67	83	20	143	17.7
Below 30%	5	1.305	23	5.4	28	3.47
Total	383	100	425	100	808	100

The above Table 14 shows that the percentages of boys who achieve the mastery level of learning and who secure 60-79% of marks and also 45-59% is higher than that of girls. At the same time, the percentages of boys securing lesser marks are lower than that of girls. These imply that boys' achievement level in Mizo subject is higher than that of girls.

Table 15 :
Gender-wise level of achievement in Mizo items
corresponding with MLL Competencies.

Area of MLL competencies covered in the test.	Boys (N=383)				Girls (N=425)			
	Zero correct responses		Mastery level		Zero correct responses		Mastery level	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Listening	0	0.00	258	67.36	1	0.24	236	55.53
Pronunciation	102	26.63	14	3.66	104	24.47	19	4.47
Writings	10	2.61	165	43.08	12	2.82	151	35.53
Reading	15	3.92	0	0.00	26	6.12	1	0.24
Comprehension	57	14.88	40	10.44	86	20.24	36	8.47
Vocabulary	2	0.52	31	8.09	1	0.24	33	7.76

Table 15 reveals that in Mizo (language), boys perform better than girls as the percentages of boys having zero correct response are less than that of girls in 4 out of 6 areas of MLL competency and the percentages of boys achieving mastery level are higher in 4 out of 6 areas, than that of the girls. In terms of zero correct response, listening, writing, reading and comprehension are the areas in which boys do better and listening, writing, comprehension and vocabulary are the areas in which more boys achieve mastery level of learning. Amongst boys, however, there is no one achieving mastery level on reading competency item involving question-answer from a given short-story whereas 0.24% of girls attain mastery level in this particular item. Level of achievement is highest in listening competency in which 67.36% and 55.53% of boys and girls respectively achieved mastery level.

Major Findings and Conclusion:

1. Overall performance and level of achievement:

- 1) The overall mean score of children in Mizo was 23.65 out of the total mark of 40 in each subject. The mean score so derived was equivalent to the average percentage score of 59.12 only. Thus, the mean score of children in the test fell below 60% of the total mark which was far from satisfactory and also from the desired mastery level of 80% and above.
- 2) Nevertheless, the null hypothesis which states: "Class IV children of primary schools in Mizoram do not achieve mastery level of MLL for Class III in

Language (Mizo)” is rejected on the ground that 11.76% of children achieved mastery level of learning in the subject.

2. District-wise performance and level of achievement:

- 1) In Mizo, the performance of children from Kolasib District was found highest whereas children from Lawngtlai District performed poorest.
- 2) On the basis of overall level of achievement of all the children in all the districts, it was observed that 96% of children failed to attain mastery level. Thus, it was apparent that the overall levels of achievement of children in the tests on the three subjects were found very low and far from satisfactory.
- 3) The largest homogenous group of children (37.7%) were also observed within the mark range of 60%-79%. As a whole, performance of children from Lawngtlai District was found lowest and followed by Saiha District.

3 Competency-wise performance and level of achievement

Out of the 6 different areas of MLL competency identified in Mizo, the performance was lowest on the area of pronunciation and comprehension with a mean score of 1.43 and 1.79 respectively indicating that this skill was least developed. Although the mean score was not too low, reading was another area which emerged as hard spot since only 0.12% attained mastery level in this particular area.

4. Management-wise performance and level of achievement:

- 1) The null hypothesis which states: “There is no significant difference between the performance (mean scores) of Class IV children of government and private primary schools in Mizo” has been rejected on the grounds that the performance of children from government primary schools were found significantly better than children of private primary schools in the subject of Language (Mizo).
- 2) Although the mean score of children from government schools was significantly higher than that of private schools in Mizo, only 18.49% of children attained the desired mastery level from government primary schools. The largest group of children i.e 40.89% and 34.91% both from government and private primary schools respectively fell within the mark range of 60%-79% only.
- 3) Out of the 6 different areas of MLL competencies in Mizo, the highest percentage of children with zero correct responses was found against pronunciation (speaking) both in government and private primary schools. In this particular

area, percentage of children with ‘zero correct responses’ in private primary schools was found higher than government primary schools. From the perspective of the level of achievement, the least developed area was in reading competency for both in government and primary schools against which only 0.26% of children attained mastery level in government primary schools and no one achieved this level from private primary schools.

5. Location-wise performance and level of achievement.

- 1) The null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference between the performance (mean scores) of Class IV children of rural and urban primary schools in Mizo” has been rejected due to the reason that children of primary schools located in urban areas were significantly better than children of primary schools located in rural areas. In other words, urban schools were significantly better than that of rural schools in the test.
- 2) Only 10.2% and 12.7% of children from rural and urban primary schools respectively attained mastery level. The largest group of children i.e. 30.8% and 41.9% of children in rural and urban primary schools respectively secured marks which fell within the mark range of 60%-79%.
- 3) Amongst the 6 different areas of MLL competencies, a higher percentage level of attainment of mastery in urban primary schools was observed in all the 4 areas like listening, writings, comprehension, vocabulary. The percentage level of attainment of mastery in rural schools was slightly higher than urban schools in the remaining 2 different areas like ‘pronunciation’ and ‘reading’.

6. Gender-wise performance and level of achievements:

- 1) The null hypothesis which states “There is no significant difference between the performance (mean scores) of boys and girls of Class IV in primary schools in Mizo” has been rejected on the ground that boys were significantly better than girls.
- 2) Nevertheless, only 13.32% of boys and 10% of girls only attained mastery level. 1.3% of boys and 5.4% of girls secured mark less than 30% of the total mark. The largest groups 38.12% boys and 37% of girls derived marks within the mark range of 60%-79%. Out of the 6 different areas of MLL competency in Mizo, the percentage level of attainment of mastery amongst boys was higher than girls in the 4 different areas. Moreover, the percentage level of ‘zero correct responses’ of girls was also higher than boys against the 4 different areas of MLL competency. In reading competency, no one from amongst boys

attained mastery level whereas 0.24% of girls achieved this level. However, the overall mean score of boys was found significantly better than girls.

Recommendations and Suggestions:

On the basis of the major findings given in the preceding para, the following discussions and suggestions are given:

1. Our Primary Schools needs to give suitable intervention for improving in the competency areas of pronunciation and comprehension since these competency skills were found least developed. Although the mean score was not too low, reading was another area which emerged as hard spot since only 0.12% attained mastery level in this particular area.
2. Contrary to the other studies carried out in other countries evident that pupil in the high socio-economic status (SES) group consistently outperformed those in the low SES group (Rao, et al, 2001,p.40), the present study revealed that low SES group (i.e. Children of Govt. Primary School) outperformed high SES group (i.e. Children of Private English Medium School). Therefore, it is suggested that mastery learning approach must be emphasised especially in those private schools and discard learning through rote-memorization completely. Moreover, the government should consider compulsory training scheme for those teachers working in private schools.
3. As a whole, Competency-based activity-centred or learning outcome approach should be emphasised and followed as a teaching and learning approach right from the elementary level. Learning outcomes and structures should be formulated to facilitate the sequential development of the concepts. In order to attain the specified competencies or mastery levels, pupils have to be active, not passive participants in learning. Rote memorization should be discarded completely at any ~~cause~~ cost as is also desired by NCF 2005 and RTE Act, 2010.
4. With the introduction of C.C.E as required under the recently published Right to Education Acts, MLL approach of learning should be encouraged in the State in order to raise the standard of achievement and necessary steps should also be taken up at appropriate level to implement the action plan for introduction of MLL. The SCERT in the State may be entrusted to follow up action plan which was already prepared by the MHRD, N.Delhi way back in 1990.
5. Mastery based learning need to be emphasized with determination. The traditional concept of '30 per cent pass mark' prevalent at the primary stage is, indeed, an impediment in creating the condition for success and raising the

standard of learning. At this stage, it is absolutely essential that the mastery level of learning is aimed at. One can be sure of substantial improvement in quality without sacrificing equity, only when achieving the basic skills of reading, writing, computation, etc., as given in the MLL statements.

6. Teacher education, teacher training and their working conditions require special considerations to attain an Education of Quality for All. Teachers are required to train and made them acquainted with Mastery based learning approach. Hence, the syllabi of the DIET and B.Ed College should be re-examined and revised so as to cater adequately the required skills in mastery based learning method.
7. A relationship was found between the level of reading at age 7 and the level of achievement in examination at age 16. Reading predictor at age 7 proved to be an equally accurate predictor at age 16 (MacGilchrist, 1997). Thus, greater emphasis should be given to reading ability of children at primary stage and appropriate innovative schemes of an intervention should also be formulated and provided to help those pupils who are found weak in reading right from the primary stage. In other word, special attention must be given to the progress of pupils especially in reading ability at primary stage.
8. More attention should be given to curriculum planning and the provision of adequate and relevant materials for improving the teaching and learning processes. The course structure or objectives of curriculum should be reviewed so as to cater at least all the competencies or skills listed out in the MLL statement. Even if textbook may not adequately cover, Teacher should be able to take care of those competencies or skills through interaction and co-curricular activities inside and outside the classroom.
9. More efforts are needed in order to integrate and facilitate the teaching and learning of basic knowledge, skills, values, behaviours as well as self-learning and critical-thinking habits right from elementary stage. All these efforts must be directed and guided by systematic and continuous learning outcome assessment.
10. Concrete measures and steps must be taken up so that percentage of teachers with professional degrees can be improved both in government and private primary schools. The State should introduce 'License for teaching' and only those who hold such license should be allowed to work in private schools. Such license should be issued only to those who hold at least D.T.Ed degree from a recognised DIET for teaching in private primary schools.

11. The government should formulate desired or expected minimum learning facilities for all the primary schools irrespective of managements. Those schools failing to comply such minimum learning facilities should not be allowed to continue as a recognised school.
12. Textbook development and construction should be done properly under the initiative taken by the SCERT in the light of NCERT Guidance. The course structure and objectives must be made exactly alike between English Medium School and Mizo Medium School. Even the content of information of all the textbooks must be made exactly alike between the two types of schools. The printing and paper quality of textbook must also be made equally alike for the two types of school.

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Effectiveness of Interventional Packages in Fostering Cognitive Development of Pre-School Children

Lalhlimpuii*
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Abstract

Cognitive skills, which are vital skills that enable children to process sensory information and eventually enable them to evaluate, analyze, remember, compare and understand cause and effect, to a great degree is dependent on a child's genetic makeup, but many are learned, which means that thinking and learning skills can be improved with practice and proper training. Children learn many things including cognitive skills through play; as play is second nature to children. It aids in their development of language, creativity and motor and social skills among many others. When these developments coincide with early childhood period, they can have lasting positive effects in later years. The present study thus, is an attempt to foster the cognitive development of preschool children through the use of play-based interventional packages developed by the investigators and thereby test its effectiveness.

Keywords: *Interventional Packages, Cognitive Development, Preschool Children, Experimental Group, Control Group, Effectiveness*

Introduction

The mental act of gathering, storing, elaborating, reducing, retrieving, reasoning, and recalling sensory inputs, that are results of perception and learning which help us to know and understand our environment, is called cognition. The development, as such, of these mental skills is known as cognitive development.

The rate of growth during the first six years of a child's life is very rapid, as such; a child should be exposed to the most stimulating environment during this crucial period. Cognitive development depends on inputs like vision, hearing, touch and smell

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and adult-child relations. The chances for characteristic cognitive development in language, thinking and vision can be lost when crucial periods in brain development are ignored. These facts emphasize the significance of early relationships and stimulation. Furthermore, scientific studies confirm that prolonged difficulty in early childhood can result in lethal stress and lasting impairments in learning and behaviour (Shonkoff, et.al., 2000). Supportive environments with opportunities for meaningful and enriching interactions go a long way in developing the cognitive skills of children

Children have an insatiable curiosity about things and phenomenon around them. A child who grows up in a bilingual/multilingual family speaks the different languages he is exposed to, regardless of whether the child's intelligence leans towards genius or average. The kinds of activities and the quality of play the child engages in, all has bearing upon the overall nature of the child. When young children are presented with an environment full of opportunities to constantly use their cognitive skills, they acquire the essential building blocks for later learning. On the other hand, when a child enters school without these requisite skills, they run significant risks of lagging behind.

Underprivileged children can be particularly deprived due to lack of material comfort and facilities, and this often leads to adverse effects on their intellectual development. Many children worldwide do not achieve their expected level of cognitive development due to poverty, stunting and associated lack of early learning opportunities (Grantham, et. al. 2007). Various studies suggest that there should be stronger emphasis on tackling the roots of disparities in early childhood than on attempting to alter adolescent and adult behaviours linked with poor learning.

The earlier efforts of preschool education saw young children being treated as miniature adults; they were forced into the formal schooling system without any real prior school readiness. They were compelled to follow the patterns of the existing system wherein they crammed much of the relevant information and then later reproduced them at a future designated time. They were considered as cognitively capable if they could successfully reproduce the fed information.

Since the habits formed during early childhood periods are hard to undo, the present system now sees evidence of the impacts of these disastrous learning habits. Millions of students today have become accustomed to cramming notes and information without having any in-depth understanding of the contents learnt. They have become apprehensive and fearful of using their reasoning skills or of applying their previous knowledge.

Human beings instinctively learn those things which naturally arouse their curiosity. Not surprisingly, children also learn best the things that they are interested in and children are, for the most part, always interested in play. Ironically, it is also children

who have more opportunities for manipulation of their senses that have cognitive advantages. For reasons stated as such and many more, the present study is an attempt to provide preschool children scope for true and positive cognitive development through the medium of play-based activities.

Objective of the Study

The present study was conducted with the following objective:

1. To find out the effectiveness of the interventional packages for fostering cognitive development of preschool children

Hypothesis

1. Interventional packages have significant effectiveness in fostering the cognitive development of pre-school children.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms Used

Cognitive development: Cognitive development means a development of mental skills like knowing, reasoning, memorizing, imagining, language acquisition and thinking.

Interventional packages: These imply a combination of verbal or performance type play-oriented and discovery-learning activities designed specifically for fostering the cognitive development of pre-school children.

Methodology and Procedure

Research Approach

The present study is an experimental study which adopts Randomised Groups Pre-test-Intervention-Post-test Design. It was conducted to find out the effectiveness of interventional packages developed by the investigators for fostering cognitive development of preschool children. The experimental group comprised of the preschool children of Anganwadi. The experimental group was given a pre-test and interventional packages were then administered for a period of six months. Post-test was given again at the end of the intervention period and results were then analysed and compared.

Population and Sample

The population of the present study comprised of all preschool children of Anganwadis and English medium schools. The sample comprised of 50 children from Dawrpui Anganwadi Centre, Aizawl.

Tool Used

- 1) Pandey's Cognitive Development Test for Preschoolers was used for pre-test and post-test.
- 2) Interventional Packages developed by the investigators were used for fostering cognitive development of preschool children

Statistical Treatment of Data

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics like t-test were calculated using SPSS and used for analysis of data.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Data obtained from pre-tests and post-tests were analysed and interpreted as follows:

Table 1
Effectiveness of Interventional Package for Conceptual Skills
 (Pre test and Post test Mean Differences for Experimental Group)

Sl. No	Conceptual Skills	Experimental Group				Paired Differences			Percent	
		Pre Test		Post Test					Increase	t
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Std. Er. Mean		
1	Concept of Shape	1.3	1.4	2.9	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.1	28.4	3.1**
2	Concept of Colours	3.1	2	6	0	1.1	1.5	0.2	34.4	4.8**
3.	Concept of Time	0.9	0.7	2	0	0.8	0.7	0.1	86.4	7.2**
4.	Classification	0.8	0.8	2	0	0.6	0.8	0.1	69	5.2**
5.	Concept of Numbers	1.1	1.3	3.5	1	2.3	1.3	0.2	207.1	12.9**
6.	Concept of Seriation	0.7	0.5	1	0	0.1	0.4	0.1	14.7	1.9
7.	Concept of Weight	0.3	0.5	1	0	0.5	0.5	0.1	153.3	6.0**
8.	Concept of Size	1.1	0.8	2	0	0.5	0.6	0.1	41	5.0**
9.	Concept of Texture	0.3	0.6	2	0	1.5	0.8	0.1	486.7	13.6**
10.	Concept of Coins	0.4	0.9	3.8	0.6	3.5	1.2	0.2	921.1	20.6**

Source: Computed

** P<0.001

* P<0.05

1. As per table 1, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group with regard to concept of shape is 3.1, whereas the desired value at 0.01 level to declare this difference as significant is 2.63. Since the calculated value is more than the desired t-value, the directional hypothesis with regard to concept of shape is retained. On the basis of this finding, it can be concluded that the interventional package for conceptual skills is effective for fostering the cognitive development of the preschool children.

2. As per the table, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group with regard to concept of colour is 4.8 at 0.01 levels. This indicates that there is significant difference between the pretest and posttest performance of the experimental group. Based on this finding, it can be said that the experimental group performs better in the posttest than in the pretest. Thus, the directional hypothesis has to be retained. We can therefore conclude that the interventional package is effective for fostering the concept of colour in preschool children.
3. With regard to concept of time, the t-value for the experimental group between their pretest and posttest is 7.2 which is significant at 0.01 level. As this figure is higher than the required t-value, the experimental group is found to be better at telling time in the posttest than they were during the pretest. Therefore the directional hypothesis is to be retained. This indicates that the interventional package is effective for fostering the concept of time in preschoolers.
4. As far as classification skills are concerned, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is found to be 5.2, which is significant at 0.01 level. This means that the directional hypothesis is retained because there is significant difference between the experimental group's pretest and posttest; the experimental group was weaker in skills of classification during the pretest. This implies that the interventional package is effective for fostering the classification skills of preschool children.
5. It appears from the table that the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 12.9. But the desired t-value at 0.01 levels is 1.6 in order to be declared significant. Since our calculated t-value is much more than the required value, the directional hypothesis in relation to numbers is retained. In conclusion, we may say that the interventional package is effective for fostering the concept of numbers in preschool children.
6. The t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest score and posttest score of the experimental group as regards seriation skills is 1.9 at 0.05 levels. But the required value to be declared significant at this level is 1.99. This implies that there is no significant difference between the experimental group's pretest and posttest. The directional hypothesis thus cannot be retained as the experimental group has not done better in the posttest in this skill.
7. So far concept of weight is concerned, the calculated t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is found to be 6.0 which is significant at 0.01 level. As there is significant difference between the experimental group's pretest and posttest scores, it may be concluded

that the interventional package is effective for fostering the cognitive development of preschool children.

8. Regarding concept of size, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 5.0 which is significant at 0.01 level. Since this calculated t-value is more than the required t-value, the directional hypothesis is to be retained and the interventional package is effective for fostering the development of concept of size in preschool children.
9. The t-value for the significance of difference between the experimental group's pretest and posttest for conceptual skills in relation to texture is 13.6. The required t-value i.e., 1.99 is less than our calculated value. We therefore, retain the directional hypothesis as there is significant difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group with regard to texture.
10. With regard to concept of coins, the derived t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 20.6, which is significant at 0.01 level, because the required t-value is 1.99 at 0.05 level. This indicates that the interventional package for conceptual skills is effective in enhancing the development of concept of coins in preschool children.

Table 2

Effectiveness of Interventional Package for Information and Comprehension

(Pre test and Post test Mean Differences for Experimental Group)

Sl. No	Skill	Experimental Group				Paired Differences			Percent Increase	t
		Pre Test		Post Test						
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Std. Er. Mean		
1	Information	3.2	1.5	6.8	1.1	4.1	2	0.3	126.9	14.2**
2	Comprehension:	1.9	1	4.8	0.4	2.7	1.1	0.2	141.5	17.7**
	Verbal Perception									
3	Comprehension:	1.6	0.8	2	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	13.4	2.4**
	Listening Comprehension									

1. Regarding the skill of information, the required t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest mean of the experimental group is 1.99 at 0.01 level whereas the calculated t-value is 14.2. This implies that the interventional package is effective for fostering the skill of information among preschool children.

2. As per the table, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group for verbal perception is 17.7 which is significant at 0.01 level. This finding proclaims that the interventional package is effective for fostering comprehension – verbal perception in preschool children.
3. For listening comprehension, the calculated t-value for the significance of difference between the experimental group's pretest and posttest is 2.4. This t-value shows very significant difference at 0.01 level. This shows that the experimental group's performance has improved significantly from pretest to posttest with regard to this skill. This exposes that the interventional package is effective for fostering the skill of comprehension-listening comprehension in preschool children.

Table 3
Effectiveness of Interventional Package for Visual Perception

Sl. No	Skill	Experimental Group				Paired Differences			Percent Increase	
		Pre Test		Post Test						t
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Std. Er. Mean		
1	Visual Perception: Differentiation/Dissimilarities	1.1	1	3	0.1	1.2	0.9	0.1	107	9.3**
2	Visual Perception: Copying button pattern	0.9	1.1	3.9	0.4	2	1.4	0.2	221.7	10.4**

1. With regard to visual perception- differentiation/dissimilarities, the calculated t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 9.3 which is very significant at 0.01 level. This insinuates that the interventional package is effective for fostering this cognitive development of preschool children.
2. On visual perception - copying button pattern, the t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 10.4 which is very significant at 0.01 level. This implies that the posttest score is higher than the pretest score. This proposes that the interventional package is effective for fostering the cognitive development of preschool children.

Table 4**Effectiveness of Interventional Packages for Memory and Object Vocabulary**

Sl. No	Skill	Experimental Group				Paired Differences			Percent Increase	t
		Pre Test		Post Test						
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Std. Er. Mean		
1	Memory:Digits	0.6	0.8	1.7	0.5	0.6	1	0.1	93.3	4.2**
2	Memory:Words	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.1	69.6	4.2**
3	Memory:Objects Removed	0.5	0.6	2	0.2	1.2	0.8	0.1	236	9.8**
4	Memory:Story	1.2	1.3	4.8	0.6	3.4	1.4	0.2	286.4	16.6**
5	Object Vocabulary	4.5	1.3	6	0	1.6	1.2	0.2	34.3	9.1**

- Regarding memory of digits, the derived t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 4.2 which is significant at 0.01 level. This resonates that interventional package is effective for fostering memory of digits in particular and cognitive development in general, of preschool children.
- For memory of words, the derived t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group is 4.2 which is very significant at 0.01 level. This indicates that the experimental group was weaker during the pretest. Hence, the interventional package is effective for fostering memory of words thereby enhancing cognitive development of preschool children.
- As per our table, the calculated t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group in their 'memory of objects removed' is 9.8 which is significant at 0.01 level. This value shows that significant difference exists between the experimental group's pretest and posttest, and indicates that the experimental group has become better in this aspect. Thus, the interventional package is effective for fostering the cognitive development of preschool children.
- The t-value for the significance of difference between experimental group's pretest and posttest, for memory of story, based on the table is calculated as 16.6, but the calculated t-value is much more than the required value at 0.01 level. This shows significant difference that exists between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group which echoes that the interventional package is effective for fostering the cognitive development of preschool children.
- The last part of the table highlights that the calculated t-value for the significance of difference between the pretest and posttest of the experimental group in object

vocabulary is 9.1, in contrast, the desired t-value at 0.01 level of significance is 1.99. This shows significant difference between pretest and posttest of the experimental group. Therefore, the interventional package is effective for fostering object vocabulary thereby bringing about cognitive development in preschool children.

Table 5
Effectiveness of Interventional Packages for Cognitive Development

Sl. No	Skill	Experimental Group				Paired Differences			Percent Increase	t
		Pre Test		Post Test						
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Std. Er. Mean		
	Cognitive Development	26	10.2	62.1	2.6	28.3	7.5	1.1	109.1	26.8**

Overall, the mean of the experimental group during the pretest was calculated as 26.0 while during the posttest it was 62.1. Moreover, the t-value for the significance of difference of the experimental group from pretest to posttest is 26.8 which is significant at 0.01 level. This resonates that the interventional package is effective for fostering the cognitive development of preschool children.

The above table shows significant improvement from pretest to posttest and suggests that the experimental group had improved for the better in the post-test. Furthermore, the t-value for the significance of difference for the overall mean difference for the experimental group is 4.30 at 0.01 level. Therefore, the hypothesis that states, *“Interventional packages have significant effectiveness in fostering the cognitive development of pre-school children”* is retained.

Major Findings

1. The preschool children of Anganwadi showed remarkable improvements, as indicated by significant t-values, at 0.01 and 0.05 levels observed in their concepts of shape, colour, time, classification, seriation, weight, size, differentiation/dissimilarities, copying button patterns and in their memory of digits.
2. Safe for conceptual skills in seriation, the experimental group showed improvements significant at 0.01 level of significance in conceptual skills such as shape, colour, time, classification, numbers, weight, size, texture, coins, numbers and texture. They were also better at information, verbal perception and listening comprehension. They further highlighted better prowess in memory for words and objects removed, as indicated by higher mean values during the posttest stage.

3. Interventional packages as a whole had significant effectiveness in fostering the cognitive development of preschool children. In other words, the hypothesis that states, “*Interventional packages have significant effectiveness in fostering the cognitive development of pre-school children*” was accepted.

Discussion

Studies have shown that not only the type of programme, but also the duration of the preschool programmes itself have impact on the cognitive development of preschool children, indicating that the longer the duration of the preschool programme, the better their cognitive development. In the present study, due to many intervening variables, the duration of the administration of the interventional package had to be shortened. The duration of the preschool programme in the Anganwadi centre was also only two (2) hours. The length of the session also had to be drastically shortened and was only from July to early November.

The above variables leaves one to wonder whether a longer duration programme if provided to the Anganwadi preschool children would have had a different or higher impact on the final results.

Conclusion

Numerous studies on the impact of early childhood care and education have focussed on the effects on children from socio-economically disadvantaged families and have found that the incidence of the start of the programme, intensity, and duration could establish equal educational opportunities for children from different social backgrounds. Although early childhood programmes cannot entirely make up for developmental deficits due to unfavourable learning conditions in disadvantaged milieus, the findings indicate that the vast majority of recent early education programmes had substantial positive short-term effects and some smaller long-term effects on cognitive development and that children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families made as much or slightly more progress than their more advantaged peers.

Interventions are useful and they leave positive impacts on the cognitive developments of children, whatever socio-economic background they hail from. The present study also confirms this fact. The issue however is, how early, interventions should be given and for how long, so that lasting implications can be expected at a later time.

Early childhood programmes enhance cognitive development and school success and also narrows the achievement gap between children from low-income families and their more privileged peers. Early interventions can also alter the course of neural

development and avert the development of resultant handicaps linked with socioeconomic disadvantage.

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A Study of the Attitude of the Secondary School Teachers Towards Inclusive Education in Relation to Rural- Urban Background

Lallianzuali Fanai*

Abstract

Attitudes greatly influenced one's personal life. The positive or negative attitude of teachers has a significant impact in teaching learning activities. The declaration of education for all results in the introduction of Inclusive education where education is open for all the normal and the disabled children in one class. Understanding the new innovative idea in general and in particular its implementation is a new phenomenon for teachers. The present study attempts to find out the attitude of Secondary School teachers towards Inclusive education in relation to their location in different aspects- Administrative, Psychological, Social and Co-curricular and curriculum related activities. These aspects are studied in relation to their positive and negative attitudes. There are no significant difference between the Rural and urban in their attitude towards all the dimensions of inclusive education except in favourable psychological aspect.

Key words: Attitude, Inclusive Education, Location, Secondary School Teachers, Administrative, Psychological, Social and Co-curricular and Curriculum related Activities.

Introduction

The teacher's attitude in the classroom is very important in teaching and learning as it influences one's personal life. The positive attitude of the teacher motivates and encourages the students in their learning. It imbibes in them the urge for learning and creates determination on students' life. Contrary to this when a teacher has negative attitude towards the students, learning comes to a standstill resulting in drop out or misbehavior in the class and consequential failure. Therefore, attitudes are very important when introducing new Policy or Subject or method of teaching. The declaration of 'Education for all' brings forth the introduction of Inclusive education

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where education is open for all - the normal, the marginalized, and the disabled irrespective of castes, sex, place of birth, creeds and religion. Understanding the new innovative idea in general and its implementation in particular is a new phenomenon for teachers.

Besides the Government of India has declared elementary, secondary and higher secondary education as Inclusive education. Research findings reveal that backwardness in education results in poverty and ignorance; in that, various steps are taken up at the national and international level for education for all. This means education is not restricted for the selected few but for all children and thereby various steps have been taken; one action is making education Inclusive. Government Policy decrees all institutions to admit the disabled children to their school failing of which is a severe offence. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. Again article 45 is changed and substituted by new a article 45 which states “the State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”. So now article 45 seeks education and early childhood care for children up to 6 years or till reaching 6 years of age, later article 21A seeks free and compulsory education for children from 6 years up to 14 years, and also a new clause “k” was added after to clause “J” of article 51A which seeks parents to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years. Thus constitution article 45, 21A and 51Ak all seeks for education of children but at different set of ages. The passing of RTE (Right to Education) Act 2009 which came into force in April 1, 2010 is another great milestone in the field of education for all.

In view of the tender stage of formal education, and the geographical remoteness to the rest of the country, Mizoram has witnessed many a great achievements in various aspects of Education. While there are good elementary and secondary teachers training institutes, there is no training institute for teachers of the disabled. There used to be a distance mode training for teachers of the disabled, which had been terminated. The disabled are mostly children with a variety of disabilities or special needs. Unfortunately there is no properly trained expertise who could accomplish the rising casualty of the present concern. In the present scenario in Mizoram there are 321 high schools with 4394 teachers and the number of disabled children are 899. Of these children with multiple disability are 31, blindness and low vision 625, hearing impaired 122, locomotors disability 67, mentally retarded 31, autism 2, speech problem 22, learning disability 4. Further the number of disabled among girls is 508 and boys is 391. The numerical data here clearly reveals the urgent need for equipping teachers in the area

of different type of disabilities towards Inclusive education as teachers play a fundamental role in implementing an inclusive environment for all children in the classroom. If the teachers have positive attitude towards inclusive education, the differently-abled children would enjoy their learning. This necessitates the need for knowing the attitude of teachers so that government can formulate strategies to improve the education of the disabled, and the goal for education for all will be fulfilled.

Keeping the above in view it is imperative to find out the attitude of Teachers towards inclusive education so this study will provide information to facilitate the successful implementation of the Government policy. Hence, the present study is taken up.

Research Questions

The study attempts to find out the answers to the following questions:-

Are there any differences between rural and urban Teachers in their attitude towards Administrative, Psychological, social and parent related and Curricular and Co-curricular aspect of Inclusive Education?

Objectives of the Study

To find out the attitude of Teachers towards Inclusive Education in relation to their rural- urban back ground in the aspects of Administrative, Psychological, Social & family related and Curricular and Co-curricular.

Hypotheses of the Study

There is no significant difference in the attitude of Teachers towards Inclusive Education in relation to their Rural-Urban background in the aspect of Administrative, Psychological, Social & family related and Curricular and Co-curricular.

Research Design

The present study falls within the category of descriptive research, and since it is scaled down into smaller sample with a specific population, it can also be termed as descriptive sample survey research. The descriptive research is a type of quantitative research that involves making careful descriptions of educational phenomena. The present study is also analytical in nature as it tries to analyze the difference in the attitude of teachers towards (1)Administrative (2) Psychological / Behavioural Aspects of Inclusive Education, (3) Social and parents related Aspects of Inclusive Education, (4) Curricular and Co-curricular Aspects of Inclusive Education, (5) and Administrative Aspects of Inclusive Education in relation to their rural-urban background.

Population of the Study

Overall population 193 (One hundred and ninety three) who attend the in-service Teacher Education held at Institute of Advanced Study in Education.

Tools and its Description

In the present study, Teachers Attitude Scale towards Inclusive Education (TASTIE-SA) developed and standardized by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Mrs Arti Anand was used to collect data from the subjects.

Procedure of the Data Collection

The investigator personally approached the Principal of IASE and the State Project Director, RMSA and told them the purpose of collecting data from the teachers who attend the In-service Teacher Education. After receiving approval from the concerned authority, the investigator personally conducts and administered the questionnaires among the headmasters and teachers who undergoes in-service Teacher Education at IASE. The investigator developed a good rapport before administering the questionnaire among the trainees.

Procedure of Data Analysis

The mass of data relating to the teachers attitude towards inclusive education was properly edited and classified before tabulation. All the raw data were properly checked on the basis of the purpose for which it was collected and the appropriate descriptive statistic's were run on the data. The result of each questions were tabulated. To compare the different variables the investigator used SPSS 16.00 to calculate the 't'-value.

Analysis of Data:

Attitude of Urban and Rural Headmasters and Teachers towards Favourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 1: Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	17.08	1.87	0.24	0.29	-1.02	NS
Rural	132	17.38	1.9	0.16			

A perusal of the data vide Table 1, shows that there are 132 Rural and 61 Urban teachers who undergo In-Service Teachers Education among the Secondary Schools

in Aizawl District. The Table also indicates that the 't' value for the significance of difference between Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be -1.02 which is statistically not significant. This finding implies that urban and rural teachers are not different in their attitude towards the stated aspect of Inclusive Education.

Hence, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference ~~on~~ in the attitude of Teachers towards Favourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their location is accepted.

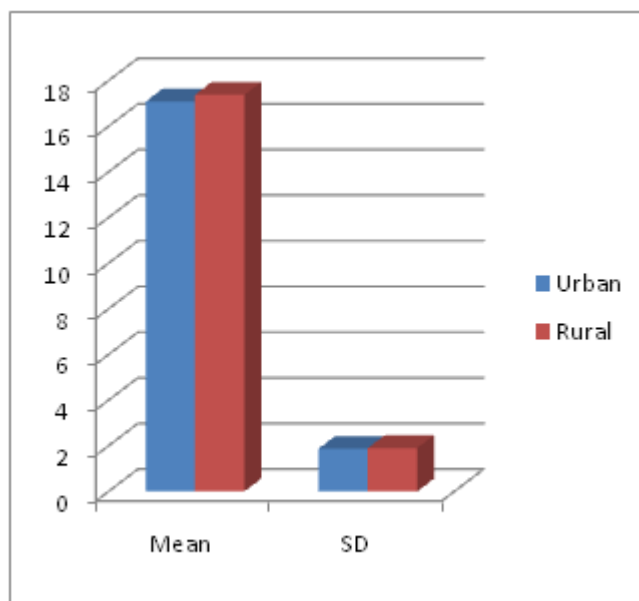


Figure 1 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 2 Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	11.69	1.48	0.19	0.21	0.21	NS
Rural	132	11.64	1.35	0.11			

Analysis of the data vide Table .2 reveals that there are 132 Teachers in rural and 61 in urban areas who undergo In-Service Teacher education. The Table also reveals

that the 't' value for the significance of difference between rural and urban teachers towards Inclusive Education is found to be 0.21 which is not significant at any level. The finding implies that urban and rural teachers are not different in their attitude towards the stated aspect of Inclusive Education.

Thus, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers towards Unfavourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education in relation to their location is retained.

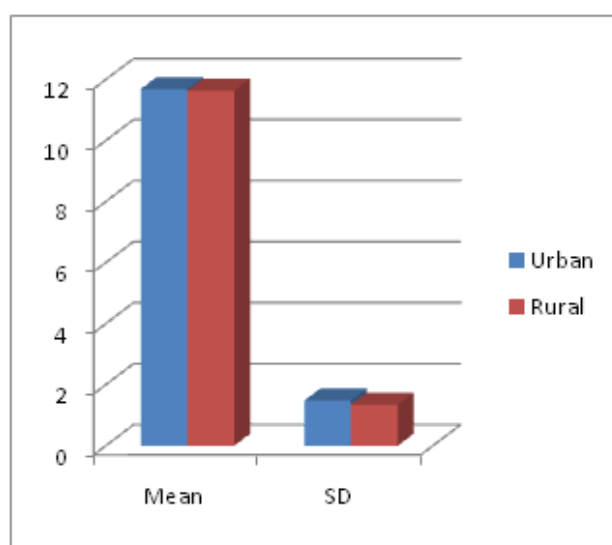


Figure 2 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Unfavourable Administrative related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Psychological/ Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table3 Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Psychological/ Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	12.93	1.85	0.23	0.25	2.6	At 0.01 level
Rural	132	13.58	1.49	0.13			

A perusal of the data vide Table 2 shows that there are 132 Rural and 61 Urban Teachers who undergo In-Service Teachers Education among the Secondary Schools in Aizawl District. The Table also indicates that the 't' value for the significance

of difference between Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be 2.60 which is statistically significant at 0.01 level. This finding implies that rural teachers are more positive in their attitude than the urban teachers with respect to favourable psychological/behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Hence, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the attitude of Headmasters and Teachers towards Favourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their location is rejected.

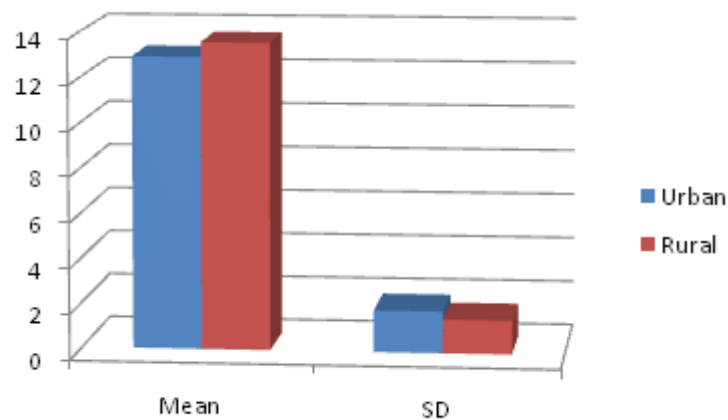


Figure 3 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 4 Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	9.98	2.62	0.33	0.42	1.42	NS
Rural	132	9.38	2.8	0.22			

Analysis of the data vide Table 4, bring to light that there are 132 Teachers in rural and 61 in urban areas who undergo In-Service Teacher education. The Table also reveals that the 't' value for the significance of difference between Rural and Urban

Teachers towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be 1.42 which is not significant at any level. The finding implies that no significant difference was found between the rural and urban teachers in their attitude towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Thus, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference on the attitude of Teachers towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education in relation to their location is retained.

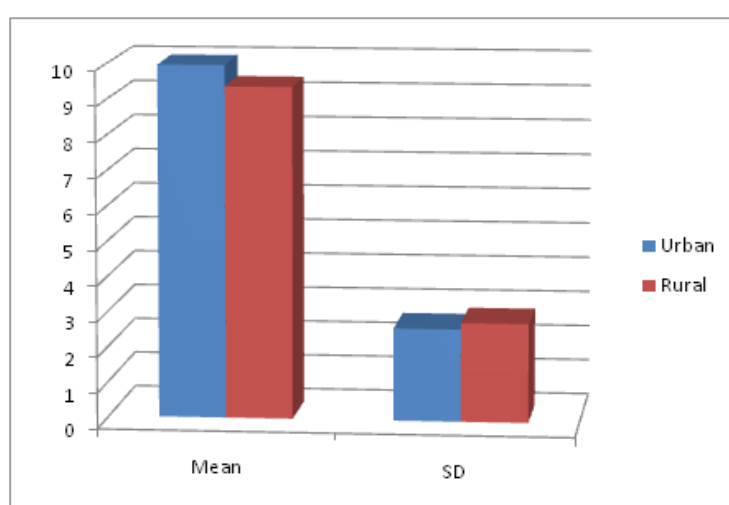


Figure-4. Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 5 Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	22.66	3.36	0.43	0.45	-1.37	NS
Rural	132	23.27	2.67	0.23			

A perusal of the data vide Table 5 shows that there are 132 Rural and 61 Urban Teachers who undergo In-Service Teachers Education Aizawl District. The Table also indicates that the 't' value for the significance of difference between Rural and Urban

Teachers towards Favourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be -1.37 which is not significant at any level. This finding implies that there is no significant difference in the attitude of urban and rural teachers towards the stated aspect of Inclusive Education.

Hence, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference on the attitude of Teachers towards Favourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their location is retained.

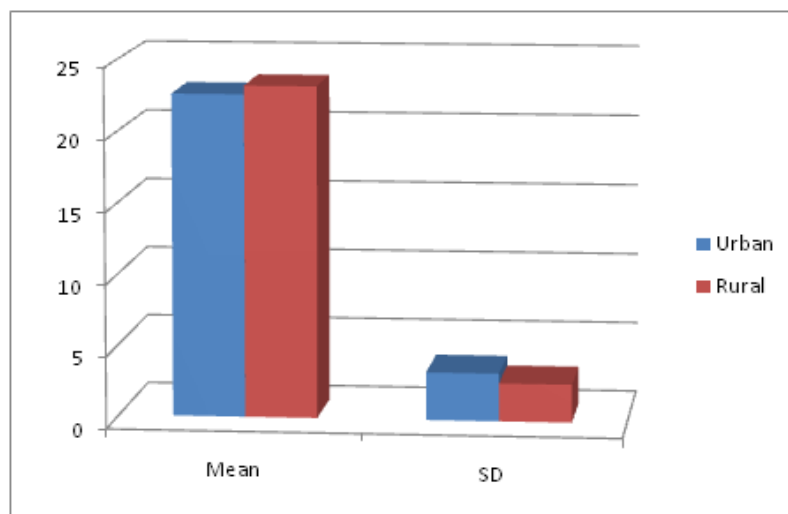


Figure 5. Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural towards Unfavourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 6 Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	5.3	1.5	0.19	0.25	1.08	NS
Rural	132	5.02	1.67	0.14			

Analysis of the data vide Table 6 shows that there are 132 Teachers in rural and 61 in urban areas who undergo In-Service Teacher education. The Table also reveals that the 't' value for the significance of difference between Rural and Urban Teachers towards Inclusive Education is found to be 1.08 which is not significant at any level.

The finding implies that no significant difference was found between the rural and urban teachers in their attitude towards Unfavourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Thus, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference on the attitude of Headmasters and Teachers towards Unfavourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their location is retained.

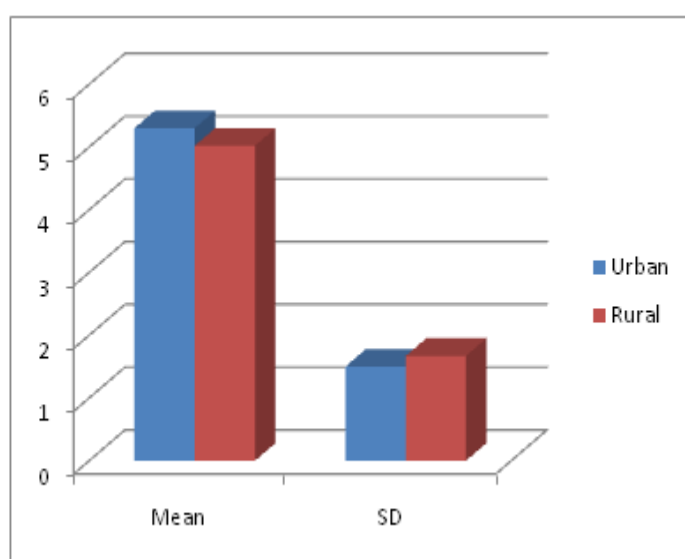


Figure 6 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Unfavourable Social and Parents related aspect of Inclusive Education

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Curricular and Co-Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 7. Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Favourable Co-Curricular and Curriculum related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	20.69	2.11	0.27	0.3	-0.76	NS
Rural	132	20.92	1.94	0.16			

A perusal of the data vide Table 7 shows that there are 132 Rural and 61 Urban Teachers who undergo In-Service Teachers Education among the Secondary Schools in Aizawl District. The Table also indicates that the 't' value for the significance of

difference between Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Curricular and Co - Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be -0.76 which is statistically not significant. This finding implies that no difference was found between the urban and rural teachers in their attitude towards the stated aspect of Inclusive Education.

Hence, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the attitude of Teachers towards Favourable Curricular and Co-Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their locale is accepted.

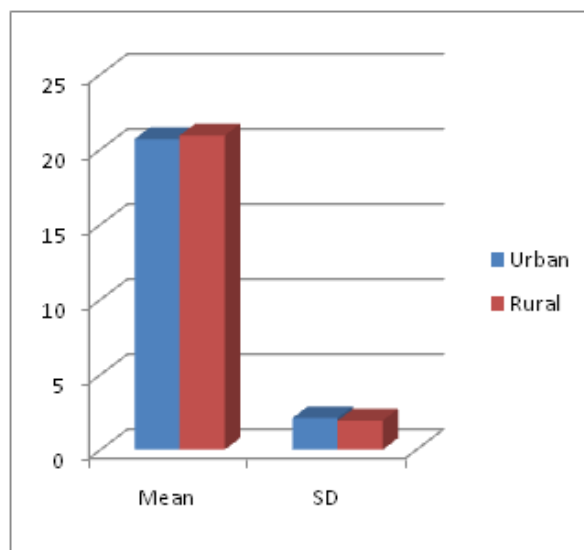


Figure 7 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Favourable Curricular and Co – Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Curricular and Co - Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Table 8. Attitude of Urban and Rural Teachers towards Unfavourable Curricular and Co - Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	t-value	Sig. level
Urban	61	10.57	2.39	0.3	0.32	-0.8	NS
Rural	132	10.83	1.97	0.17			

Analysis of the data vide Table 8, shows that there are 132 Teachers in rural and 61 in urban areas who undergo In-Service Teachers education. The Table also

reveals that the 't' value for the significance of difference between Rural and Urban Teachers towards unfavourable Curricular and Co - Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education is found to be -0.80 which is not significant at any level. The finding implies that urban and rural teachers do not differ significantly in their attitude towards Unfavourable Curricular and Co-Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Thus, the Hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the attitude of Teachers towards Unfavourable Curricular and Co-Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education with respect to their location is retained.

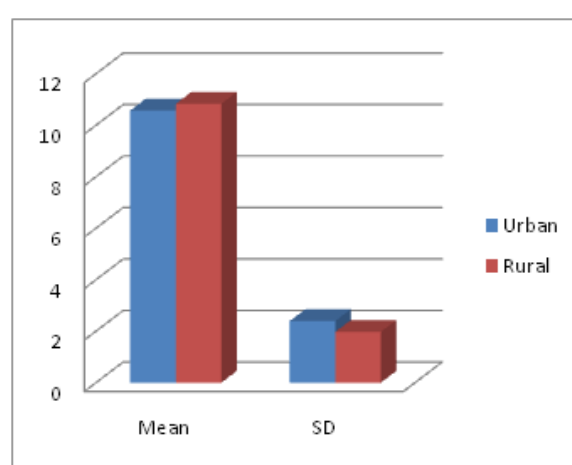


Figure-8 Graphical Presentation of Mean and S.D value of Attitude of Rural and Urban Teachers towards Unfavourable Curricular and Co – Curricular related aspect of Inclusive Education.

Discussion

It was found that with respect to locale, no significant difference was found in the attitude of the Secondary Headmasters and Teachers in all the aspects of Inclusive Education except in Favourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education. The Mean scores of the Rural respondents are found to score higher in the aspect of Favourable Psychological/Behavioural aspect of Inclusive Education. Contradicting to the present finding Nayak (2008) study revealed that Urban Teachers are found to be more positive in their attitude towards inclusive education than the Rural Teachers. Similarly, Mandeep Kaur & Khushwinder Kaur (2015) also found that there was significant difference between Rural and Urban secondary school Teachers with respect to their attitude towards inclusive education, Hammond, et al (2003) in their study on Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, found that Rural Teachers either possess a negative feeling or uncertainty toward inclusion.

Conclusion

In order to achieve the Education for All (EFA) targets and Millennium Development Goals it will not be possible without improving access to and quality of education for children with disabilities. Implementation of inclusive education immensely requires positive attitudes towards inclusion and disability among Teachers. Factors that were associated with positive attitudes included experiences with students with disabilities and exposure to special education concepts. Principals, Teachers, parents, community and administrators' attitudes play a crucial role in carrying out the programme of Inclusive Education successfully.

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- Work done with passion and sincerity has its own reward.
- The contribution of such work may not be measureable immediately but its fragrance may inspire generations to come.
- Institutions are made by the sincere work of individuals who work for the love of it.
- Let history judge the value of footprints of your work that you leave on the sand of time.

- APJ Abdul Kalam

Status of Implementation of RTE Act 2009 in Elementary Schools in Mizoram: A Study

Diana Zorinsangi*
Lalhmasai Chuaungo**

Abstract

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act which received the assent of the President of India on 26th August, 2009 came into force on 1st April 2010 in the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In order to achieve the aims set out in the Right to Education Act, 2009, State Governments are assigned responsibilities where the state of Mizoram is not an exception. What is important here is the aspect of implementation of the Act that raises some justifiable questions. As RTE Act 2009 is applicable to elementary education, the status of implementation of the Act in elementary schools has been a focus of the present study. The present study mainly adopts descriptive approach to research. The sample composed of 104 elementary schools which were selected from the sample districts through random sampling technique. Primary data about the status of implementation of the RTE Act were collected by administering a questionnaire to Headmasters of the sample schools. Findings of the study reveal that certain serious provisions of the RTE Act 2009 have not been implemented by elementary schools in Mizoram.

Key Words: Implementation, RTE Act 2009, Elementary school, Status.

Introduction

For strengthening the social fabric of democracy, provision of equal opportunities to all has been accepted since inception of the Republic. The 'Directive Principles of the State Policy' enumerated in our Constitution lays down that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen years. With the insertion of article 21A in the Constitution by the Constitution (Eighty-Sixth

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Amendment) Act, 2002 wherein it is provided that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such a manner as the state, by law, provides; it became imperative to enact a law to implement the provision of Article 21A of the Constitution. Consequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2008 was proposed which seeks to provide –

- (a) That every child has a right to be provided full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards;
- (b) ‘compulsory education’ casts an obligation on the appropriate Government to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education;
- (c) ‘free education’ means that no child ,other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education;
- (d) The duties and responsibilities of the appropriate Governments, local authorities, parents, schools and teachers in providing free and compulsory education; and
- (e) A system for protection of the right of children and a decentralized grievance mechanism.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill having been passed by both the Houses of Parliament received the assent of the President on 26th August, 2009. It came on the Statute Book as THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT, 2009 (35 of 2009). India became one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the Act came into force on 1st April 2010 (The RTE Act 2009).

In order to achieve the aims set out in the Right to Education Act, 2009, State Governments are assigned responsibilities where the state of Mizoram is not an exception. The Act is well-intentioned but certain debatable provisions and lacunae therein require significant attention. What is more important is the aspect of implementation of the Act that raises some justifiable questions. An attempt has been made in the present study to address such issues. As RTE Act 2009 is applicable to elementary education, the status of implementation of the Act in elementary schools has been a focus of the present study.

Objective of the Study

To study and compare the status of implementation of RTE Act 2009 in elementary schools in Mizoram in relation to management of schools i.e., government and private

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms Used:

RTE Act: RTE Act means the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act which provides education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years which extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Status: In the proposed study, status means the 'state' or condition with respect to circumstances

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

Elementary Education: Elementary education means the education from first class to eight class.

Methodology of the Study

The present study mainly adopts descriptive approach to research. It is also a qualitative research as the data are mainly analysed qualitatively. All elementary schools in the state of Mizoram (primary and upper primary or middle schools under government and private managements) constitute the population for the purpose of studying the status of implementation of the RTE Act 2009 in elementary schools in Mizoram. Out of eight districts of the state, four districts namely Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai and Mamit were randomly selected. The sample composed of 104 elementary schools which were selected from the sample districts through random sampling technique. The sample schools comprised of 63 Government and 41 private elementary schools. Primary data about the status of implementation of the RTE Act were collected by administering a questionnaire to Headmasters of the sample schools.

Table 1

Reservation of 25% of seats in class-I and pre-school section for children belonging to weaker and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood

Sl No	Seat Reservation	Government Elementary School		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	a)25% of seats in Cl-I allotted to children belonging to BPL family	NA	NA	0	0
	b)No. of such children admitted	NA	NA	0	0

2	a)25% of seats in pre-school allotted to children belonging to BPL family	NA	NA	0	0
	b)No. of children admitted	NA	NA	0	0
3	Amount of reimbursement per child	NA	NA	0	0
Reasons for not implementing the provision					
1	Provision not yet insisted by the State Government	-	-	41	100%
2	Not applicable	63	100%	-	-

The data found in table 1 reveals that-

- None of the Government and private elementary schools in Mizoram makes reservation of 25 per cent of seats in class-I and pre-school section for children belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) family who are declared by Mizoram RTE Rules 2011 as weaker and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood
- The provision is not implemented by 100 per cent of private elementary schools as the provision is not yet insisted by the State Government
- The schools that give 'not applicable' as the reason for not making the reservation are all Government elementary schools

Although section 12 (c) of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 states "*An unaided school not receiving any kind of aid or grants to meet its expenses from the appropriate Government or the local authority shall admit in class 1, to the extent of at least 25 per cent of the strength of that class, children belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory education till its completion*", private elementary schools do not implement this provision in the absence of instruction/insistence from the State Government to do so while this provision is not applicable to Government elementary schools.

Table 2**Procedure of admission that the school follows**

Sl No	Procedure of Admission	Government Elementary School N=63		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	First come first serve	63	100%	-	-
2	Admission test	-	-	16	39.02%
3	Admission interview	-	-	41	100%
4	Admission based on performance in qualifying examination	-	-	23	56.10%

The above table 2 reveals that-

- Cent per cent of Government elementary schools admit students on first come first serve basis.
- Admission test is conducted by 39.02 per cent of private elementary schools.
- Admission interview is conducted by cent per cent of private elementary schools
- Admission based on performance in qualifying examination is adopted by 56.10 per cent of private elementary schools

Comparison

- While cent per cent of Government elementary schools admit students on first come first serve basis, none of the private elementary schools apply this procedure
- None of the Government elementary schools adopt admission test while majority of private elementary schools adopt this method
- While none of the Government elementary schools conduct admission interview, cent per cent of private elementary schools conduct it
- While none of the Government elementary schools conduct admission based on performance in qualifying examination, majority of private elementary schools conduct it in this regard

Although section 13 (1) of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 states, *“No school or person shall, while admitting a child subject the child or his or her parents or guardian to any screening procedure. Any school or person, if in contravention of the provision of this section subjects a child to screening*

procedure shall be punishable with fine which may extend to twenty-five thousand rupees for the first contravention and fifty-thousand rupees for each subsequent contraventions”, cent per cent of private elementary schools subject a child or his or her parents or guardians to screening procedure at the time of admission by conducting admission interview and some of them resorting to admission test based on qualifying examination during the time of admission. Thus, government elementary schools are better than private ones in the implementation of this provision of RTE Act.

Table 3

Number of schools promoting all the children to the next higher classes for the new academic session

Sl No.	Promotion of Children	Government Elementary School N=63		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	Children expelled from school during the last academic session	63	100%	41	100%

According to table 3, it is found that-

- a) Majority of Government elementary schools, i.e., 80.95 per cent and private elementary school, i.e., 90.24% promote all their children to the next higher classes for the new academic session.

As per section 16 of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, “*No child admitted in school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education*”. While all the elementary schools are expected to implement this provision, there are some Government and private elementary schools which do not fully implement it due to children who are too slow in their studies and irregular in attendance as claimed by them. The percentage of schools implementing the ‘provision of not holding back children in any class’ is higher in the case of private elementary schools which implies that they are better than government elementary schools in implementing this provision.

Table 4

Number of schools expelling children from school during the last academic session

Sl No.	Promotion of Children	Government Elementary School N=63		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	All children promoted to their next higher classes for the new academic session	51	80.95%	37	90.24%

Table 4 shows that cent per cent of Government and private elementary schools did not expel children during the last academic session.

As per section 16 of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, "No child admitted in school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education". The table clearly reveals that all sample Government and private elementary schools fulfil the provision of not to expel the child from school till completion of elementary education.

Table 5

Actions taken when students bunk their classes and/or fail to do their homework and/or indulge themselves in bad habits like smoking, chewing of tobacco, drinking etc

Sl No.	Actions taken	Government Elementary School N=63		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	Make them kneel down on the floor	15	23.81%	22	53.66%
2	Make them raise up both their hands	17	26.98%	14	34.15%
3	Scold them and yell at them	-	-	-	-
4	Slap them/pinch them	-	-	-	-
5	Beat them with a stick	-	-	-	-

6	Inform the parents to meet the teacher/headmaster	48	76.19%	41	100%
7	Give them good advice not to repeat it in future	63	100%	41	100%
8	Give them special counselling	49	77.78%	30	73.17%

According to table 5, it is found that-

- a) Government elementary schools which consists of 23.81 per cent and private elementary schools comprising of 53.66 per cent take action like make the students kneel down on the floor when they bunk their classes and/or fail to do their homework and/or indulge themselves in bad habits like smoking, chewing of tobacco, drinking etc
- b) Action like making them raise up both their hands is practiced by 26.98 per cent Government elementary schools and 43.15 per cent by private elementary schools
- c) None of the Government and private elementary schools adopt actions like scolding the students and yelling at them, slap them/pinch them and beating them with a stick
- d) Majority of Government elementary schools practice to inform the parents and meet the teacher/headmaster and cent per cent of private elementary schools practice it in this regard
- e) Cent per cent of Government and private elementary schools give the students good advice not to repeat their bad actions in future
- f) Majority of Government and private elementary schools give special counselling for the misbehaviour caused by the students

Section 17 (1) of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 states: “No child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment. Whoever contravenes the provision shall be liable to disciplinary action under the service rules applicable to such person”. Government elementary schools are little better than private elementary schools in implementing the above mentioned provision which prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment. They are also little better in dealing with children by way of giving counselling to them. However, punishments like making the children kneel down on the floor and raise up both their hands often need to be adopted because of some children with unpleasant and unsavoury characters where sample private schools are a little better in taking actions. Informing the parents to meet the teacher/headmaster, giving them good advice not to repeat it in future and

giving them special counselling are practised to a large extent by majority of sample Government, and private schools where private schools are again better in this regard.

Table 6

Implementation of Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation

Sl No.	Implementation	Government Elementary School N=63		Private Elementary School N=41	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	CCE calendar prepared by SCERT is followed	63	100%	41	100%
Main activities undertaken by the students					
1	Preparation of charts	60	95.24%	41	100%
2	Colouring/painting	28	44.44%	41	100%
3	Drawing	63	100%	41	100%
4	Clay modelling	63	100%	15	36.59%
5	Flower making	41	65.08%	25	60.98%
6	Stitching	34	53.97%	20	48.78%
7	Field visit	14	22.22%	31	75.61%

The data found in table 6 reveals that-

- CCE calendar prepared by SCERT is followed by 100 per cent of Government and private elementary schools
- Majority of Government elementary schools, i.e., 95.24 per cent and cent per cent of private elementary schools adopt an activity like preparation of charts for CCE
- Government elementary schools which consists of 44.44 per cent and cent per cent of private elementary schools practice colouring/painting as an activity for CCE
- Cent per cent of Government and private elementary schools adopt activity like drawing for CCE
- Cent per cent of Government elementary schools and 36.59 per cent private elementary schools practice clay modelling for CCE
- Flower making is adopted by majority of Government and private elementary schools

- g) Government elementary schools with 53.97 per cent and private elementary schools with 48.78 per cent practice stitching as an activity for CCE
- h) Field visit is adopted by 22.22 per cent Government elementary schools and 75.61 per cent by private elementary schools

Section 29 (2) of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 states: “*The academic authority, while laying down the curriculum and evaluation procedure, shall take into consideration the comprehensive and continuous understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same*”. Government and private elementary schools are equally good in following CCE calendar prepared by SCERT. While private elementary schools are better in carrying out activities like preparation of charts, colouring/painting and field visit, government elementary schools are better in undertaking the activities such as clay modelling, flower making and stitching.

Findings:

1. RTE Act provision for ‘Reservation of 25% of seats in class-I and pre-school section for children belonging to weaker and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood’ is not implemented by any elementary schools in Mizoram due to non-insistence by the state government in the case of private schools and non applicability of the provision for Government schools.
2. While all the sample Government schools apply only first come first serve basis, majority of private schools still conduct admission test and admission based on qualifying examination during the time of admission. Admission interview is conducted by all the private schools. Whereas RTE Act 2009 prohibits any screening procedure for admission, private schools still adopt screening procedures. Thus, government elementary schools are better in the implementation of the provision of RTE Act 2009 in this regard.
3. The percentage of schools implementing the ‘provision of not holding back children in any class’ is higher in the case of private elementary schools which implies that they are better than government elementary schools in implementing this provision.
4. The RTE provision for ‘not to expel a child from school till completion of elementary education’ is implemented by cent per cent of Government and private elementary schools
5. Government elementary schools are little better than private elementary schools in implementing the provision of RTE Act which prohibits physical punishment

and mental harassment. They are also little better in dealing with children by way of giving counselling to them. However, punishments like making the children kneel down on the floor and raise up both their hands often need to be adopted because of some children with unpleasant and unsavoury characters where sample private schools are a little better in taking actions. Informing the parents to meet the teacher/headmaster, giving them good advice not to repeat it in future and give them special counselling is practised to a large extent by majority of sample Government and private schools where private schools are again better in this regard

6. All the Government and private schools follow CCE calendar prepared by SCERT. Thus, they are equally good in following CCE calendar prepared by SCERT. While private elementary schools are better in carrying out activities like preparation of charts, colouring/painting and field visit, government elementary schools are better in undertaking the activities such as clay modelling, flower making and stitching.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study reveals that the provisions laid down for schools on the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 have been implemented in both Government and private elementary schools. However, in the present scenario, effective and full implementation of the provisions is not possible. Although provision of reserving 25% of seats has been implemented in other states of India, private elementary schools in Mizoram have not implemented this provision since the State Government has not given them instruction to do so even after seven years since the Act become in force. The State Government needs to look into this matter and take remedial actions to put this provision into practice to enable many children belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) family have a chance to get admitted in good and elite private schools. Screening of children for admission is still adopted in private elementary schools since majority of the parents prefer to admit their children in these schools with the hope of getting more quality education. Since this is the case, Government elementary schools are gradually losing their children year after year. Therefore, the State Government needs to make a subtle and ingenious plan either to privatise the Government elementary schools or bring total reformation in Government schools, providing quality education, employing only trained and qualified teachers, renovation of dilapidated schools buildings, rationalization of teachers especially in rural areas, providing good and sufficient teaching learning aids and equipments, etc. If the Government elementary schools are reformed, it will do away with the denial of admission in private elementary schools. Regarding the provision of no failing allowed,

still there are some schools in Government and private elementary schools which do not implement this provision due to children who are too slow and backward in their studies and irregular in attendance causing negligence in their studies thereby resulting in the need for repetition of class. Repetition is done with the knowledge and consent of the parents as claimed by these schools. Although Schools in both Government and private adopt light punishments like making them kneel down on the floor and raising up both their hands, good practice like informing the parents to meet the teacher/headmaster, give them good advice not to repeat it in future and special counselling are practiced by majority of the schools. Some children with unpleasant and unsavoury characters need punishments to improve their character. Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) cannot be effectively implemented especially in Government elementary schools as it is cost effective, time consuming and require more teachers in the schools. Since there is never sufficient funding for its effective implementation, some activities for CCE are often left out. Since CCE is an important step for nurturing and moulding the innate inborn talents of the children, the State Government needs to take a major step by providing sufficient funds and placing requisite number of teachers needed in every school.

Maximum awareness on RTE Act needs to be given not only to the teachers but to the parents and community members as the State Government alone is not responsible for its effective implementation. In this way, quality education is sure to arise from Government and private elementary schools where Government schools can be at the same level with private elementary schools resulting in an effective implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

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Adjustment Level of Mentally Retarded Adolescents in Mizoram

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Abstract

Mentally retarded are special children. They are sub average intellectual in functioning and have problems depending on their disability. The study tries to find out the adjustment level of the mentally retarded adolescents. Personality Adjustment Inventory tools by C.P Sharma has been used amongst the 120 mild and moderate mentally retarded adolescents which consist of 64 boys and 56 girls in the age group between 13 – 19 years. The study found that the adjustment level of mentally retarded adolescents was good. There was no difference in the adjustment level amongst boys and girls in the school going students and the Adjustment level was good amongst the mentally retarded students.

Key words: *Mentally Retarded, Adjustment, Adolescent*

Introduction:

Education for children with mental retardation began with the attempt by a French physician, Jean Marc Gaspard Itard (1775-1838), to educate an 11 year old boy that had been found living as a savage in the woods.

India imported special education in the last two decades of the 19th century through Christian missionaries. Education of the mentally retarded children began in the late thirties.

In 1964, the Kothari Commission was the first education commission which brought up the issue of children with special needs in the Plan of Action and gave strong recommendations for including children with special needs into ordinary schools.

In 1975, the government introduced the centrally sponsored scheme of Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED), which aim at providing educational

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opportunities to learners with disabilities in regular schools, and to facilitate their achievement and retention. This scheme was the liaison between regular and special school to reinforce the integration process. This scheme enunciated by the Kothari commission leads to 1. Reduction of cost of education and 2. Promotion of mutual understanding between the handicapped and non handicapped.

Mentally Retarded:

“Mental Retardation means a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person which is specifically characterized by sub normality of intelligence” (PWD Act of 1996)

Adjustment:

Adjustment means reaction to the demands and pressure of social environment imposed upon the individuals. The demand may be external to which the individual has to react. Adjustment is not passive submission to environmental conditions but a progressive modification of them to suit one's needs and purposes

Rationale of the Study:

Mentally retarded individuals are candidates for a variety of social and emotional problems. In particular, they often have problems making friends and have poor self concept.

On reviewing the research data on “social and emotional adjustment of mildly retarded children and adolescent”, Gardner's (1966) research data shows that little is known concerning the type and frequency of occurrence of behavioral adjustment problem among the mentally retarded. After taking this related study, the investigator tries to find out the adjustment level of mentally retarded adolescents in Mizoram.

Objective of the Study:

1. To study the adjustment level of mentally retarded adolescents.
2. To find out the differences in adjustment level between boys and girls.

Sample:

The sample of the study comprised of 120 mentally retarded school going adolescents ages between 13 – 19 years. Educable mentally retarded adolescents were taken whose I.Q level ranges from 40 to 69. The sample consisted of 64 boys and 56 girls.

Tools for Data Collection:

Personality Adjustment Inventory (PAI) by C.P. Sharma was used for data collection. As this tool is not meant for mentally retarded adolescents, the investigator with advice from Experts made the mentally retarded adolescents answer the questionnaire where they have to tick 'Yes' or 'No'. The mentally retarded could respond to the questionnaire. By using test retest method it was found out that the reliability coefficient of correlation was 0.69. Hence PAI of C.P. Sharma was used for data collection.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Study:

Analysis and interpretation is done in accordance with the objectives of the study as follows:

Objective 1 – To study the adjustment level of mentally retarded adolescents

Table -1
Adjustment level of mentally retarded adolescents

<i>Sl.No</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	Low	Jan-17	8
2	Medium	17- 34	105
3	High	34 - 51	7
		Total	120

Out of 120 mentally retarded adolescents, 105 students i.e 87.50 percent had medium level of adjustment, 7 students i.e 5.83 percent had high level of adjustment and 8 students i.e 6.67 percent had low level of adjustment.

Discussion: Mentally retarded adolescents can sometimes feel disappointed. However, they do not feel lonely when their friends are sitting beside them and do not feel fear when they are alone. They do not have problem in meeting and talking to unfamiliar persons. Physically also they are not generally weak or have tension. There is no restlessness and are quite active.

Adolescents with mental retardation do not often have a feeling of sadness or cry very soon. They do not get nervous in petty things nor get irritated with their family members. This shows that they can adjust themselves in educational, emotional, health and social environment.

Objective 2- To find out the differences in adjustment level between boys and girls.

Table – 2
Gender difference in the adjustment level

Sl.No	Groups	Mean	S.D	MD	SED	T-Ratio	Sig. level
1	Boys	26.2	5.37	1.12	1.062	0.15	NS
2	Girls	27.32	6.27				

NS : Not significant

Table 2 shows that Mean score of boys was 26.2 where as mean score of girls was 27.32. The Standard Deviation of boys was 5.37 and the mean score of girls was 6.27. The Standard Error of Difference between the two means of boys and girls was 1.062, and t-ratio of both boys and girls is 0.15

From the table it is found out that there is no significant difference between boys and girls on their adjustment level.

Conclusion :

Among the mild and moderate mentally retarded school going adolescents, adjustment level is average. This can be due to the positive attitudes given by their parents and society. At the same time in Mizoram, Church gives lots of importance to the disabled. Some churches even have special Sundays for the disabled persons where the disabled are honoured and are given due recognition in the Church. The disabled persons mingle and socialize at every level of church attendance. All these arrangements made by the church leaders and the acceptance shown by the society have resulted in a large degree of comfort and satisfaction amongst the mentally retarded adolescents. Thus, they do not have adjustment problems in the society.

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Language Development of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years

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Abstract

Language development is basic to not only the child's scholastic performance in all subjects but also to all cognitive processes- thinking, memory, reasoning and problem solving. It is through language that children learn about their world and then communicate their understanding to others around them. Review of some researches reveals that there have been few studies on language development of children conducted in India and abroad. Further, findings of few studies on language development of children conducted in some parts of our country are not relevant enough for children in Mizoram as the state has a totally different social and cultural backgrounds. In view of this, the present study attempts to find out the level of language development of Mizo children who are in the group of 3 to 6 years. Cross-sectional design of research was used for this study. All the Mizo children in the age group of 3 to 6 years formed the population. A sample of 300 children in the age group of 3 to 6 years was drawn from both urban and rural areas of Lunglei District in Mizoram by following simple random sampling method. Observation and Assessment Schedule for Preschool Children developed by Directorate of Teacher Education and SCERT, Orissa adapted by the investigators was used for studying language development of Mizo children belonging to 3 to 6 age group. In language skills as a whole, Mizo children between 3 to 6 years were strong in pre- reading experience, good in listening and pre writing skills but weak in speaking skill. Certain measures for further improvement of language development were proposed in the study.

Key Words: *Language development, Mizo children of 3 to 6 years of age, Listening skill, Speaking skill, Pre-reading experience, Pre-writing experience.*

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Introduction

The acquisition of language is perhaps a child's most complex and remarkable accomplishment. Language learning is vital for a child since it serves various functions. It is the main mode of communication of information, intentions, thoughts and feelings and at the same time helps to organize one's ideas and think systematically. It is, therefore, basic to not only the child's scholastic performance in all subjects but also to all cognitive processes- thinking, memory, reasoning and problem solving (Healthofchildren.com., n.d.).

A dramatic accomplishment during early childhood period is the acquisition of language. In late infancy, children learn to say a few individual words and by paying attention to context, they can also understand some of the languages used around them. The size of the vocabulary increases and they begin to string words together in short sentences. The ability to represent objects, people and events through language develops about the same time as representation in children's initiation, play and other actions (Landers, 2013).

From birth up to the age of five, children develop language at a very rapid pace. The stages of language development are universal among humans. However the age and pace at which a child reaches each milestone of language development vary greatly among children. More than any other aspects of development, language development reflects the growth and maturation of the brain. After the age of six, it becomes much more difficult for most children to learn language (Healthofchildren.com., n.d.).

It is through language that children learn about their world and then communicate their understanding to others around them. Most children talk and learn to manipulate oral language and experience with words to convey meaning. Most children by the age of four use the basic form and structure of their language appropriately. But like all developments, the combination of environmental support and individual differences in ability brings children of the same age to different language facilities. The ages from two to five years are especially crucial in the process of acquiring language (Landers, 2013).

Review of some researches reveals that there have been few studies on language development of children conducted in India and abroad. So far we in India, have been making use of the normative data of other countries conducted in totally different cultural and social backgrounds and have been basing our planning on the findings of these studies. In many cases, these findings have been found to be invalid or inapplicable in our culture (Pankajam, 1990).

Further, findings of few studies on language development of children conducted in some parts of our country are not relevant enough for children in Mizoram as the

state has a totally different social and cultural backgrounds. Following foreign norms or Indian norms of language development for child-rearing and planning of preschool education for Mizo children is not psychologically sound. The prevailing curriculum needs to be made more developmentally appropriate. Knowledge about language development of Mizo children at early childhood stage from 3 to 6 years of age is not only just an empirical quest but also an essential practical prerequisite for planning developmentally stimulating early childhood curriculum.

Findings of some studies in other parts of the country have confirmed the positive impact of attending preschools on language development of children. Whether attending a particular type of preschools has any impact in the learning of language is an issue that also stirs the mind of the investigator.

The answers to these questions could be found only through research. However, no study in this area has ever been conducted in Mizoram. It is in this context that the present study has been undertaken. The findings are expected to serve as guidelines for parents, teachers, researchers and the curriculum planners for early childhood education.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the trend of language development of Mizo children in the age group of 3 to 6 years.
2. To suggest some measures for improvement of language development in Mizo children of 3 to 6 years old.

Methodology

Cross-sectional design of research was used for this study. All the Mizo children in the age group of 3 to 6 years formed the population for the present study. A sample of 300 children in the age group of 3 to 6 years was drawn from both urban and rural areas of Lunglei District in Mizoram by following simple random sampling method. Observation and Assessment Schedule for Preschool Children developed by Directorate of Teacher Education and SCERT, Orissa adapted by the investigators was used for studying language development of Mizo children belonging to 3 to 6 age group.

For observing Mizo children's language skills, different questions along with activities revealing their listening skill, speaking skill, pre- reading and pre- writing experience were asked. Each question carried 1 tick mark and evaluation was done according to their answers. To study their listening ability, questions along with activities on identification of sound, listening span, comprehension and others were asked in order to reveal their skills. If the child was able to identify at least two or more sounds,

one 'tick' mark was given and if less than two, 'x' mark was given. In listening skill, six questions were asked and if the child was able to answer 5 to 6 questions correctly, he or she was given Grade 'A'. If he or she was able to answer 3 to 4 questions correctly, Grade 'B' was given and if a child answers less than 3 questions correctly, Grade 'C' was given. For testing their speaking skills, 11 different questions and activities revealing their pronunciation, ability to detect similar words and opposite words, making correct sentences and others were assigned and Grades were given to them based on their answers. For finding out children's pre-reading experience, children were asked to identify letters, pairs of cards, picture cards along with other activities and evaluation was done according to their answers. For assessing pre-writing skill, various activities involving movements of hand and fingers with eye-hand coordination were assigned to children and grades were given based on their performance.

Analysis of Data

Table – 1

Language Skills of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years. N=300

Language Skills	Grade A		Grade B		Grade C	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Listening	140	46.7	102	34	58	19.3
Speaking	128	42.7	127	42.3	45	15
Pre – Reading Experience	192	64	77	25.7	31	10.3
Pre – Writing Experience	181	60.3	69	23	50	16.7

Table 1 indicates that Mizo children in the age group of 3 to 6 years are best in pre-reading skills as compared to other language skills. The percentage of children obtaining Grade 'A' in pre-reading experience is as high as 64. The children are also good in pre-writing experience as 60.3 per cent of them obtain Grade 'A'. The fact that more than 50 per cent of the children not able to get Grade A in speaking and listening implies that these are the two skills in which children are weakest. Only 42.7 per cent obtain Grade 'A' in speaking and 46.7 per cent in listening.

Table - 2**Listening Skill of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years N=300**

Listening Skill	Grade A		Grade B		Grade C	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Identification of Sound	114	38	140	46.7	46	15.3
Listening Span	218	72.7	1	0.3	81	27
Comprehension	180	60	87	29	33	11

Listening skill is divided into three categories namely, Identification of Sound, Listening Span and Comprehension. The above table reveals that Mizo children between 3 to 6 years are strong in listening span as 72.7 per cent of the children obtained Grade 'A'. They are weak in identifying the sound as only 38 per cent of them scored Grade 'A'. In Comprehension, 60 per cent got Grade 'A'.

Table - 3**Speaking Skill of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years. N=300**

Speaking Skill	Grade A		Grade B		Grade C	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Clear Pronunciation and Ability to Answer	263	87.7	37	12.33	-	-
Sequential Description	207	69	4	1.33	89	29.7
Telling Similar / Another Words	14	4.7	69	23	217	72.3
Telling Opposite Words	204	68	3	1	93	31
Naming Objects and Making Sentences Using Them	241	80.3	2	0.7	57	19
Recitation	263	87.7	3	1	34	11.3
Correction of Wrong Sentences	245	81.7	46	15.3	9	3

Speaking Skill is divided into seven categories as shown in table - 3. Mizo children between the ages of 3 to 6 years are found strong in Clear Pronunciation and

Ability to Answer and in Recitation. The above table shows that 87.7 per cent of Mizo children obtained Grade 'A' in these two skills. They are very weak in Telling Similar or Another Words, 4.7 per cent of them scored Grade 'A' and 72.33 per cent scored Grade 'C'. They are also good in Correction of Wrong Sentences which is revealed by 81.7 per cent of the children scoring Grade 'A' and only 3 per cent of them scoring Grade 'C'. In Naming Objects and Making Sentences Using Them, 80.33 per cent of the children scored Grade 'A', 0.7 per cent scored Grade 'B' and 19 per cent scored Grade 'C'. In Sequential Description, 69 per cent of the children obtained Grade 'A', only 1.33 per cent obtained Grade 'B' and 29.7 per cent obtained Grade 'C'. In Telling Opposite Words, 68 per cent of the children obtained Grade 'A', only 1 per cent scored Grade 'B' and 31 per cent scored Grade 'C'.

Table - 4

Pre- Reading Skill of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years. N=300

Pre – Reading Experience	Grade A		Grade B		Grade C	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Identification of Letters	240	80	-	-	60	20
Matching Picture Cards With Objects And Words	240	80	-	-	60	20
Picking Out Picture Cards Correctly	267	89	-	-	33	11

Pre- Reading Skill is divided into three categories as shown in table - 5. In Picking Out Pictures Cards Correctly, Mizo children are found good among the three skills as 89 per cent scored Grade 'A', 11 per cent scored Grade 'C'. In Identification of Letters and in Matching Picture Cards with Objects and Words, 80 per cent of the children scored Grade 'A', and 20 per cent scored Grade 'C' as shown from the above table.

Table - 5

Pre- Writing Skill of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years. N= 300

Pre – Writing Skill	Grade A		Grade B		Grade C	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Completion of Pattern	250	83.3	-	-	50	16.7
Drawing Similar Designs	243	81	-	-	57	19
Drawing Picture Properly	225	75	-	-	75	25

Table – 5 shows that Pre Writing Skill is divided into three categories. Mizo children are strong in Completion of Pattern among the three categories, 83.33 per cent scored Grade ‘A’ and 16 per cent scored Grade ‘C’. In Drawing Similar Designs, 81 per cent of the children scored Grade ‘A’ and 19 per cent scored Grade ‘C’. Children are bad in Drawing Picture Properly as compared to other categories, 75 per cent scored Grade ‘A’ and 25 per cent scored Grade ‘C’.

Table - 6

Age-Wise Break up of Language Skills of Mizo Children in the Age Group of 3 to 6 Years

Age- Wise Break Up & Grade		Listen- ing	%	Speak- ing	%	Pre- Rea- ding Ex- perience	%	Pre- Wri- ting Ex- perience	%
3 Years = 37	A	14	37.8	8	21.6	15	40.5	9	24.3
	B	16	43.3	21	56.8	13	35.2	12	32.4
	C	7	18.9	8	21.6	9	24.3	16	43.3
4 Years = 74	A	16	21.6	12	16.2	33	44.6	20	27
	B	27	36.5	41	55.4	24	32.4	27	36.5
	C	31	41.9	21	28.4	17	23	27	36.5
5 Years = 113	A	57	50.4	50	44.2	80	70.8	81	71.7
	B	39	34.5	48	42.5	28	24.8	27	23.9
	C	17	15.1	15	13.3	5	4.4	5	4.4
6 Years = 76	A	53	69.7	57	75	62	81.6	70	92.1
	B	20	26.3	18	23.7	13	17.1	4	5.3
	C	3	4	1	1.3	1	1.3	2	2.6

Table-6 shows the year-wise breakup of scores of Mizo children in the age group of 3 to 6 years in different language skills.

- In listening skill, 6 years old children are good as 69.7 per cent scored Grade ‘A’. Children of five years old are also good in listening skill, 50.4 per cent scored Grade ‘A’. Children of 4 years old are found very weak in listening skill rather than 3 years old children as only 21.6 per cent scored Grade ‘A’ while 37.8 per cent of 3 years old children scored Grade ‘A’.
- In Speaking Skill, 4 years old children are found the weakest as compared to other ages and only 16.2 per cent scored Grade ‘A’. Children of 6 years old are found strongest in speaking skill, 75 per cent scored Grade ‘A’.
- In pre- reading experience, six years old children are found strongest as 81.6 per cent scored Grade ‘A’ and 3 years old children are found the weakest as only 40.5 per cent scored Grade ‘A’. Children of 4 years old are also found bad in pre-

reading experience as 44.6 per cent of them scored Grade 'A'. Children of 5 years old are also found good in this skill as 70.8 per cent scored Grade 'A'.

- (d) In pre- writing experience, 6 years old children are found strong as 92.1 per cent scored Grade 'A' and 3 years old children are found very weak in this skill as only 24.3 per cent scored Grade 'A'.
- (e) In listening and speaking skill, 3 years old children are found stronger than 4 years old children, this shows that age has no effect on listening and speaking skill especially between the age group of 3 and 4 years. However, in other skills, older children gets higher percentage which shows that age has effect in language development.

Major Findings of the Study

1. In language skills, Mizo children between 3 to 6 years were strong in pre- reading experience as 64 per cent of them scored Grade 'A' and they were weak in speaking skill as only 42.7 per cent scored Grade 'A'.
2. Of the three listening skills, Mizo children of 3 to 6 years were found good in listening span as 72.7 per cent scored Grade 'A' and they were weak in identification of sound as only 38 per cent scored Grade 'A'.
3. Among the seven categories of Speaking skill ,Mizo children were found excellent in clear pronunciation and ability to answer and in recitation as 87.7 per cent of them scored Grade 'A' in these two skills. They were very bad in telling similar/ another words as only 4.7 per cent of the children scored Grade 'A'.
4. Mizo children of 3 to 6 years were found strong in pre- reading experience. Out of the three categories of Pre- reading experience, they were best in picking out picture cards correctly as 89 per cent of them scored Grade 'A'. In Identification of letters and in matching picture cards with objects and words, 80 per cent of the children scored Grade 'A'.
5. Mizo children of 3 to 6 years were found good in pre writing skill. They were found strong in completion of pattern as 83.3 per cent of them scored Grade 'A'. And in another two skills, they were found good as they scored above 70 per cent.
6. In age-wise breakup of language skills, 6 years old Mizo children were found strongest in all language skills followed by children of 5 years old. Children of 3 and 4 years were found weak in language skills especially in speaking skill. In listening and speaking skills, 3 years old children were found stronger than 4 years old children as 37.8 per cent of 3 years old children scored Grade 'A' while only 21.6 per cent of 4 years old children scored Grade 'A' in listening skill and

21.6 per cent of 3 years old children scored Grade 'A' while only 16.2 per cent of 4 years old children scored Grade 'A' in speaking skill.

Suggestions for Further Improvement

The present study indicates that language development among Mizo children who are in the age group of 3 to 6 years is quite satisfactory as a whole. However, there are certain aspects of language development in which the development is not satisfactory. For further improvement of language skills among the children, the following activities and measures are suggested:

1. Activities like storytelling, conversation, instructions, language games, etc., should be carried out to broaden children's listening span and to develop their listening comprehension.
2. To develop and enhance children's speaking skills, activities like free conversation, story making and telling, dramatization, language/vocabulary games, free play and dramatic play should be organized in preschool or early childhood education centres as well as at home.
3. Children need be given experiences for those competencies which will facilitate the learning of reading when they enter class 1. These competencies include visual discrimination (which will later make it easy for the children to differentiate between alphabets), sound/auditory discrimination (which will later help the children to discriminate the sounds of different alphabets), visual-auditory association (associating sounds with visuals e.g., picture-word matching) and directionality (a habit to attend to any task in the direction of left to right). Hence, the programme for children of 3 to 6 years should include activities for each of these specific competencies for example, activities like dominoes, picture-word games, games involving identification and recognition of beginning sounds and end sounds, word cards for visual discrimination, showing an oddman out activity etc.
4. Making children of 3 to 6 years old ready for formal writing which should be introduced only at the primary stage in class 1 is a very important objective of early childhood education. To become ready for formal writing, a child should have good muscular coordination of fingers, eye and hand, and also competency to differentiate between different shapes and forms. In view of these, it is suggested that initially children should be given different creative activities like drawing, painting, clay modeling, cutting and pasting for collage etc. These should be given in addition to activities like threading beads, stringing leaves together, etc; all of which foster finer muscle control and eye-hand coordination.

By the time the child is four and a half years old, he should be given more specific writing readiness activities like colouring in enclosed spaces, joining dots, tracing, copying forms, pattern making, etc. These may be given initially with chalks and crayons and only later with pencil, the use of which requires finer coordination and control (Kaul, 1991).

Conclusion

Language is the main mode of communication of information, intentions, thoughts and feelings and at the same time helps to organize one's ideas and think systematically. It is, therefore, basic to not only the child's scholastic performance in all subjects but also to all cognitive processes- thinking, memory, reasoning and problem solving. Both teachers and parents have important roles to play for development of language in children who are in the age group of 3 to 6 years. It is their responsibility to expose children to such environment where the children have opportunity to learn more language skills. They should provide them with story books, picture books, etc and should take them for excursion to the zoo, places of children's interest, gardens, etc and tell the names of new things to increase their vocabulary. It is well known that sense of loving builds up confidence and enhance the speech development in children at this stage. It is important for the teachers and caregivers to be affectionate, loving and sympathetic towards children while teaching language or organizing activities for language development.

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