

PRESENT EDUCATION STATUS IN LONGLENG DISTRICT OF NAGALAND: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract: *Education is one of the most important tools for the development of any individual or society. The development of a region depends upon its ability to create skilled human resource through the promotion of quality education among its people. It is with this objective that the educational programmes had been initiated to promote education envisaging special interventions for children belonging to the urban and rural areas of Longleng. This paper identifies and analyses institutional gaps and constraints that keep the school system from acquiring a professional orientation. The educational institutional in Longleng has been hampered from obtaining a professional orientation by institutional gaps and constraints. The sample of the study comprised of 30 schools and was selected through random sampling methods. The paper examines the drawbacks of education system and also highlights the problems of low literacy rate, and low gross enrolments ratio of government and private run institution. The paper argues that recent initiative in democratic decentralization that has a positive impact on basic infrastructure such as buildings, drinking water, toilets, electricity etc. The results show poor performance of educational achievement in rural Longleng block gender disparity in terms of pass percentage and also the level of infrastructure development. Therefore, development policy of planned measure may help to improve the condition of education system in the district.*

Keywords: *Education, Communitisation and Infrastructure*

Introduction

Education is one of the most significant tools for the development of any individual or society. Inclusive education not only provides knowledge but teaches discipline, morality, traditional values to the norms of the society (Gray, 1950; Nambissan, 2002.). It guides, enlightens and empowers to achieve its desire goals. Any society which is lagging in the field of education cannot develop and lies in the state of backwardness (Kirk, 1950). Educational backwardness is the main factor of social degradation. In this regard Laski expressed his view; that the citizen who lacks education is bound to be slave of others as a result it has become necessary to educate everyone in the society (Rita, 2004). Education is also self perpetuating. Once a few members of any family are educated in any way, the next generation onwards generally has a tendency of achieving higher and higher level of education with a wider based (De, 2004; Govinda and Kothari, 2000). Education can help people in knowing their weaknesses or gaps of knowledge and enabling them to gain necessary knowledge in order to achieve progress in all spheres of their life in a systematic manner. It also strives to higher ideals, obtains higher positions of prestige, formation of good

habits and inculcation of permanent values. It is generally believed by the people that axe of education can cut down the thick roots of the traditions, superstitions, ignorance, backwardness, parochialism etc. Education is capable of promoting the growth and removes the backwardness of the society. Thus, education is a process which helps in the achievement of the purposeful living in the society (Teichler, 2005). Education is generally regarded as a key driver of social, political and economic progress in the country (Lewin, 1946). This is one reason why reforming education is so high on the political agendas of most countries in the world today (Chandrasekhar, et.al 2001; Dreze, and Sen 2002). However, some governments that invested considerable time and resources into reform have found little or no improvement in educational outcomes for students. The clear lesson is that reforms have to be thought of, planned and implemented carefully, with 'buy-in' from the main stakeholders and a clear understanding of why such changes are necessary for students and society as a whole (Quinn, 2012).

Communitization of education in Longleng

The concept of Communitisation Model was introduced in 2002 under the 'Nagaland Communitisation of Public Institution and Services Act of 2002'. Communitisation consists of a distinctive agreement between the government and the community in rural sector involving transfer of ownership of public resources and assets, control over service deliverance empowerment, decentralization, delegation and building capacities (Pandey, 2010; Singh and Jha 2009). In the education sector, the Department of Education in 2002 framed the 'Nagaland Communitisation of Elementary Education Institution and Service Rules'. The rules declared all government-run primary and middle schools in the state to be communitised. This, in essence, transferred day-to-day management responsibilities of the schools in all aspects-academic, administrative and financial into the hands of the local community. (Chakraborty, 2012; Karmakar and Banerjee, 2009).

Objectives of the study

1. Examine the development of education since the attainment of district status.
2. To examine the overall soft and hard infrastructure development of education institutions.
3. To identify the educational problems and challenges being faced in the district.

Survey methodology

The study is mainly based on primary data collected from selected respondents of Longleng. The sample representing 30 per cent of the total numbers of educational institutions in the Longleng were selected for the purpose of data collection. Selection of the sample was done covering rural and urban, private and government and different level of educational institution. The sample of the study comprised of 150 teachers, 350 students, 25 parents and 25 community leaders/elders. As the nature of study was descriptive research.

Results and discussion

Education is one of the most important social indicators which are having direct links with the level of income, employment, productive manpower and standard of living (Basu, 1989; Jamir, 2020). Given the poor base of learning at the primary level, were primary education is key for fundamental education, it is to be expected that learning levels in the secondary education will also be weak.

Table No. 1: Number of institutions covered during sample survey

Institution	No. of Schools	Percentage
Primary School	04	12.12
Middle School	07	21.21
High School	21	63.64
Higher Secondary School	01	3.03

Source: Field Survey Report, 2018-19

Table No. 2: Total enrolment of students in the Schools

Responses	Enrolment of Students	Percentage
Boys	2759	49.63
Girls	2796	50.37
Total	5559	100

Source: Field Survey Report, 2018-19

The above tables 1 and 2 indicate the total number of students from 31 institutions of Longleng as per the headmasters/principals responses. It is found that 49.63 per cent of the students were male and 50.37 per cent were female.

Table No. 3: Profile of Students by Age and Gender

Responses	Age		Responses	Gender	
	Counts	percentage		Counts	percentage
10-14	75	21.43	Male	152	43.43
15-19	233	66.57			
20-24	42	12.00			
25-29	-	-	Female	198	56.57
Total	350	100			

Source: Field Survey Report, 2018-19

The above table 3 shows the information on the age and gender of student respondents. The total number of students between the age group of 10-14 years was 21.43 per cent, for age group between 15-19 years was 66.57 per cent. While 12 per cent of respondents lies between 20-24. The above table also highlights that out of the total 350 student respondents, 43.43 per cent of the respondents were male and 56.57 per cent were female. It is clear that majority of the students in Longleng were female.

Table No. 4: Literacy rate of Male and Female of Rural and Urban

Urban/Rural	Total population	Male population	Female population	Literacy rate of male	Literacy rate of female
Longleng (Rural)	24186	12748	11438	55.54	51.69
Longleng (Urban)	7613	3991	3622	78.25	75.04
Tamlu (Rural)	18685	9763	8922	60.79	57.03
Longleng overall	50,484	26502	23982	74.48	69.63

Sources: Census report, 2011

The data presented in table 4 and shows that rural areas of Tamlu block perform better than Longleng block in terms of literacy rate, HSLC results in government and private run school and higher disparity in rural areas of Longleng and Tamlu block in terms of literacy, where the variation was almost 5.25 per cent in 2011. The results show that in terms of education Tamlu block is performing better than Longleng block.

From the table 4 show that Longleng has an average literacy rate of 72.17 per cent, lower than the national average of 72.99 per cent. The overall male literacy is 74.48 per cent and female literacy is 69.63 per cent (Census, 2011). Recognising the census 2011, the male literacy rate of rural Longleng was 55.54 per cent whereas female literacy rate was 51.69 per cent. The male literacy rate of urban areas of Longleng was 78.25 per cent and female literacy rate was 75.04 per cent. The male literacy rate of rural areas of Tamlu was 60.79 per cent and female literacy rate was 57.03 per cent. This is significantly lower than that of the general population and is even lower than the national average literacy rate comparing both rural and urban population. Education is considered to be at the heart of all development; it is evident that the education scenario among the population is in a very bad shape. It is imperative to know about the gender dimension of the child population scenario, both for the general population and for the schedule tribe community in the selected district. The above record also shows that the trend in literacy rate during 1981 to 2011 is increasing simultaneously. The improvement in education is mainly due to effective implementation of the central Government flagship programme for the achievement of universal primary education-Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or “Educational for All” and Millennium Development

Goals place special emphasis on female education and the achievement of gender parity for the last 15 years (refer table 1).

Infrastructure facilities in educational institutions

Educational institution should create an environment that not only assures learning, but also pays special interest to the mental and physical well-being of the students. Studies and researches conducted to figure out the effect of infrastructure suggest that students in schools with poor infrastructure can have lower achievement scores as compared to the ones studying in schools that have better infrastructure facilities. School buildings, classrooms, playgrounds and libraries are the most important aspects of school infrastructure. Open and refurbished buildings and well-ventilated classrooms are a must in schools. Therefore, planned school infrastructure is an out-and-out key factor in effective teaching and learning (Jamir, and Ezung, 2017; Dreze and Mrinalini 1995).

Table 5: Infrastructure facilities available in the schools

Responses	Yes		No	
	Counts	Percentage	Counts	Percentage
Safe drinking water facilities	220	62.86	130	37.14
Toilet facilities for boys	250	71.43	100	28.57
Toilet facilities for girls	250	71.43	100	28.57
Auditorium/Recreational Hall	50	14.29	300	85.71
Proper electricity	250	71.43	100	28.57
Play ground	200	57.14	150	42.86
Library facilities	50	14.29	300	85.71
Computer room	250	71.43	100	28.57
Total	350	100	350	100

Source: Field Survey Report, 2018-19

The above table 5 provides information on the infrastructure facilities available in the schools. It was found that 62.86 per cent had safe drinking water facilities and 37.14 per cent did not have such facility. 71.43 per cent had toilet facilities for boys and 28.57 per cent did not have such facility. 71.43 per cent had toilet facilities for girls and 28.57 per cent did not have such facility. The results show that only 14.29 per cent had auditorium/recreational hall, while 85.71 per cent did not have that facility. 71.43 per cent had proper electricity, while 28.57 per cent did not have that facility. 57.14 per cent had play ground while 42.86 per cent did not have such facility. 14.29 per cent had library facilities while 85.71 per cent were unavailability of such facility. 71.43 per cent had Computer room while 28.57 per cent lack such facility. Whereas, 0 per cent was found in student's common room, guidance and counseling room, ramp for disabled, internet facilities, stationary and printing in all the school and college in the districts. Infrastructure of education refers to the quality of school

provision, relevance of content and curriculum, medium of instruction, etc. Large numbers of schools in Longleng run without better infrastructural facilities. The condition of the school's building was found to be very poor. The finding also highlighted schools in rural and urban areas lacked basic infrastructural facilities such as power, drinking water facilities, toilets etc. In addition to poor maintenance of the school and classrooms, inadequate teaching-learning materials such as blackboards and chalks cause problems for the teachers and students in teaching and understanding the content (Ezung, and Jamir, 2018). The study suggests that most schools are not adequately equipped with the necessary facilities. The situation is most alarming in the schools located in the areas of the district. A library is a rare facility, available only in a few schools. More efforts are required to adequately create, utilize and make available alternative facilities in all unsaved habitations and areas where out-of-school children concentrate. This clearly points out towards the need to establish a set of priorities in equipping schools with infrastructure and also the need to give urgent attention to ensuring the provision of basic facilities in tribal areas it is generally assumed that the availability of school is not a problem. With the enormous expansion that has been witnessed in recent years, research revealed that while expansion in facilities can be seen in these areas, it is quite uneven across the areas and does not fully guarantee adequate access even to eight years of elementary schooling.

Problems

Longleng continue to lag behind the general population in education level in Nagaland. The reasons for this can be classified as external, internal, socio-economic and psychological.

1. The external constraints are related to problems and difficulties at levels of policy planning, implementation, and administration. On the other hand, the education department is the sole authority for planning educational development at the state level. It formulates accomplishment guiding principle and directives concerning curriculum, textbooks, teacher recruitment, transfer policies, and so on. In this, the education department tends to formulate homogeneous policies for the whole state.
2. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with the school system, significance of content, academic direction, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, monitoring, and teacher-related problems, and basically well trained teachers. Schools in some areas were just functioning with bare minimum facilities.

3. The third set of problems relates to social, economic and psychological problems of first-generation learners. In a wider sense, these factors can be outlined as poverty and poor economic conditions, lack of awareness and understanding of the value of formal education, conflict and gap between the home and school etc. Studies on educational deprivation of Longleng population have inevitably linked it to their poor economic condition and poverty. The main occupation of population is agriculture where productivity remained very low. Consequently, the girl child plays an important role, contributing directly or indirectly to family income by participating in the family occupation and household works like fuel and fodder collection, and taking care of younger brother and sister, etc. Even though elementary education is deemed free, and additional incentives are given to tribal children, in practice, it is not free due to several reasons. First, the incentive schemes do not have full coverage, and thus, have limited value at the community level. Second, many of the benefits do not reach the poor people. Third, even though incentives like uniforms are given, they are of poor quality and do not reach in time, thus nullifying the entire purpose. Since education does not provide any visible and immediate benefit and rural people do not see beyond their present state, the participation of children in education also becomes limited (Behera, 2019).

Challenges

1. Accessibility of school is one significant factor affecting access to education and attendance level. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms toilets, drinking water, sanitation etc. the NSS survey (2007-08) information was obtained from all the sample households on their distance from the nearest school providing school education at primary, middle and secondary.
2. Substantial improvements in the number of schools and enrolments have been observed in the last few years. Yet a large number of children are still remains out of school education. The glaring inequality in access and participation in certain sections of the population is another problem. There is incredible need in the present context to rectify inequality through their addressable in the policy framework on education.

3. The issue of quality education is appropriate not only because Nagaland is reaching the goal of universal education but also because the SSA seeks to provide quality education and life skills. As of now learning achievements, when compared with expected national levels for primary grade students, are quite unsatisfactory as is revealed by ASER 2009. It has been that almost half of the students studying in class V cannot read and comprehend a standard II text and more than 60 per cent cannot do a simple Arithmetic. However most of the official statistics available today does not cover much information on this aspect.

Conclusion

The results clearly show the poor performance of educational achievement both in rural and urban Longleng. From 2002-03 to 2018-19, number of school such as primary, middle and high school rose rapidly in the region but not much improvement was found. The result shows the literacy rate in rural areas of Longleng block was comparatively lower than Tamlu block. The reason was because of poor economic condition of the household, household activities, early marriage, higher number of absentee of students, lack of supervision and personal guidance for girls/women education, lack of adequate incentives for women education etc. The paper also suggests that educational institutions in the districts should be allowed to provide skill development courses, focus on development of rural education, free basic computer skills classes, teacher training, educate parents, health education, making sports compulsory etc. So, it can bring about improvement in the education system in rural areas. The paper examined schooling access and quality, finding shows that there are several positive sides to basic infrastructural development in the school like electricity, drinking water supply, toilets for both boys and girls but lack of facilities include Auditorium, play ground, library, Guidance and counseling room. Most significantly, rural schooling should be considered as a preparation for secondary. It has the importance of its own in a child's learning and development and that took a crucial one. Therefore, it should be given greater focus and attention. Rigorous research should be undertaken across all the branches of primary, elementary and high education in order to highlight the areas of improvement. Program like SSA launched in 2001, do seek to address the issue of school infrastructure, teacher quality and training, filling vacancies. The reform of the public school needs both pressure from the consumer and strong "political push". A policy of planned measure may help to advance the condition of the women in their day to day life. Conditions

of the extreme poverty of the women as manifested in the case of women in the region cannot be addressed without deliberate targeted action (Bastos, et. al 2009; Jha, 2000).

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