

Student Study Project

on

SCHOOL IN RURAL AREAS IN MAHABUBNAGAR DISTRICT CHALLENGES AND ISSUES OF CONCERN

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the present work titled "School in Rural Areas in Mahabubnagar District – Challenges and Issues of Concern" is the bonafide work of Ayesha, Barigala Chandra Shekar, B Naresh, Boddu Mahesh, Bolgam Bhargavi, Bolgam Naresh under the supervision of Vijay Kumar PVS Asst. Prof. of Political Science, Dr. BRR Government Degree College, Jadcherla. No part of this work has been submitted to any other University for the award of any Degree.

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the investigation results incorporated in the present project titled "School in rural areas in Mahabubnagar district – Challenges and issues" of concern" were originally carried out by us under the supervisor of Vijay Kumar PVS Asst. Prof. of Political Science, Dr. BRR Government College, Jadcherla. No part of this work has been submitted to any other university for the award of Degree.

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SCHOOL IN RURAL AREAS IN MAHABUBNAGAR DISTRICT – CHALLENGES AND ISSUES OF CONCERN

Description of the research problem

Schooling in rural Telangana is currently faced with serious challenges with changing preferences and perceptions about government schools. Changing trends in favor of private schools gives rise to concerns of quality, equity, and inclusion. Telangana state planned to close 4,481 schools in the academic year 2021-22, which include 398 schools with zero strength, 980 schools with 1 to 10 students and 2,333 schools with 11 to 20 students. It also planned to introduce a two-tier education system – primary (Class I to V) and high school (Class VI to X), merging 3,244 upper primary schools with the high schools.

Importance of the study

Understanding of the trends in favor of private schools and perceptions prompting the choice of the parents help to devise effective strategies to strengthen the government schools. Detailed study also helps identify how different social segments are affected by the changes in favour of private schools. Besides, the study also helps identifies and the costs and hardships faced by the children moving into schools. These insights will help the government to introduce measures to regulate and strengthen the government schools to serve the interests of the rural poor with regard to their entitlements for free and compulsory elementary education.

Review of literature

Education, as defined by Durkheim is one which ‘consists of a methodical socialization of the younger generation’¹. Education comprising deliberate inculcation, transmission of values, norms, culture, behavioral patterns and socially accumulated knowledge, assumes increasing importance as societies grow larger and more complex, and increasingly depend upon literacy and access to schooling. Hence, the school also becomes a homogenizing process in terms of framing the goals and accepted means to achieve them.

Neglect of National Policy on Education - 1968 recommendation to build a National System of Education based on the Common School System, reflects the nature of the state to promote class

¹ Education & Sociology, translated by S D Fox, Glencoe 1956.

stratification in school education.² Thus, exclusion of the poor and the oppressed is part of the goals of the education system and structural constraints with regard to schooling and literacy are deliberate means of maintaining the status quo.

Infrastructure gaps are also a serious issue with the schools. District Information System for Education (2015-16), an annual report on school education released by the HRD ministry revealed that 95 per cent schools in Telangana including government and private schools are functioning without a full-time headmaster or principal in Telangana. The report highlights that out of the 42,632 private and government schools in Telangana, 40,507 schools don't have a regular principal, while nearly 16,313 schools in the state have just two or fewer teachers. Of the 10 Telangana districts, Adilabad has 559 schools with zero teachers. The schools with zero teachers in other erstwhile districts are: Medak (327), Mahabubnagar (301), Ranga Reddy (298), Khammam (155), Nizamabad (126), and Karimnagar and Warangal (101 each)³.

At least 11,295 schools have less than two classrooms with 175 institutions functioning with zero classrooms in the state. Districts with zero classroom schools are Adilabad, Khammam, Mahbubnagar, Ranga Reddy and Warangal. The report also revealed that 3,588 schools function without electricity, 2,558 have no drinking water facility and 4,539 schools have dysfunctional toilets. Besides, a meagre 4,870 of the 14,710 schools have kitchens for mid-day meals while 12,613 out of 27,978 schools have no boundary walls and 16,068 out of 24,750 schools have no playground.

According to the UNESCO definition, “inclusive education” or “inclusive learning” refers to the inclusion and teaching of ALL children in formal or non-formal learning environments without regard to gender, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, cultural, religious, or other characteristics⁴. It means that all students, irrespective of caste or creed and any other social attribute, have equal access and are welcomed by the school “in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school”⁵.

² Education system in colonial India aimed at fostering intelligentsia brown in colour but white in thought and taste. Education system in India “is based on the colonial approach to create ‘babus’ for running a political economy, which is totally exploitative”, according to Anil Sadgopal, All India Forum for Right to Education (AIF-RTE). See *Education system based on inequality: Sadgopal*, The Assam Tribune, 4 November 2014.

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=nov0414/city054>

³ 95% schools in Telangana headless: MHRD report, Times of India, TNN, May 10, 2016

⁴ UNESCO (2004). Embracing Diversity- Tool kit for Creating Inclusive, Learning- friendly Environments, Thailand

<file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/UserXP/My%20Documents/Downloads/ILFE%20Tool%20kit%20UNESCO.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.inclusionbc.org/our-priority-areas/inclusive-education/what-inclusive-education>

Other issues of concern to schooling relate to high drop out rate among children from Scheduled castes, Scheduled Tribes and landless households. High dropout rates among the ST students are seen at Secondary level (I-X). High drop out rate among certain social categories is believed to be a result of differences in language, alien curriculum (Devasena 2007 - Narender Reddy 2014), social adjustment problems, academic load (Hari Prasad 2005), attitudes of parents (Ram Manohar Rao 2006), poverty, migration, sibling care, domestic work and practice of child labour (Lingaiah and Ashok 2010).

Social and economic inequalities and growing phenomenon of different forms of schools is aggravating exclusion of children from poor households. These findings of the Young Lives study based on 3000 children and families in Andhra Pradesh from 2002 to 2010-11 indicates “a growing shift towards private schooling, not only in urban areas but also across rural India, where low-fee private schools have mushroomed, carrying the fashionable tag of ‘English-medium’⁶”. Young Lives study recommends that interventions aimed at ensuring Education For All (EFA) must go beyond mere universal enrolment and emphasis on ‘common school system’ to ensure that the education system promotes equity and social justice.

The current challenge in the country with regard to schooling and exclusion is arresting the trend of privatisation of school which is based on three major features viz., proliferation of multi-layered system with several inferior quality parallel layers segregating the poor from those who buy education as a commodity in the market, affect quality education by diluting norms and standards in the government schools, and closure of government schools which is also termed as ‘rationalization’.

Objectives and Research methodology and objectives

The study aims to identify the schooling choices by rural poor in Telangana and its impact on the rural households. It aims to understand how the changing preference school education affects different social categories of rural Telangana. The study more specifically aims at the following:

- Social background of the children attending different schools- government and private,
- What are the changing preferences of parents about child’s education,
- What is the cost (tuition fee and other costs) of education in private schools and how that amount is mobilized by the households, and
- Are there gender differences with regard to who is studying in which type of school.

⁶ Young Lives (2013). Need for Systemic Reform in Education: Ensuring Poorest Children Are Not Short-changed! India Policy Briefs, No. 1 <http://www.younglives-india.org/files/policy-papers/need-for-systemic-reform-in-education>

Methodology of the study includes review of secondary data, interviews with key informants of the village, and quantitative data on school choices from the parents in the village. Structured interview schedules were used to collect the information from the respondents.

It is a case study of one village viz., Gangapur Pally in Jadcherla mandal of Nagar Kurnool district in Telangana.

Quantitative data from 51 households whose children (aged 5 to 14 years), representing varied castes and economic classes of the village form the sample. Simple percentages of frequency varied responses are presented in discussion of the data.

Discussion of the research findings

Major findings of the village study are presented under broad sections reflecting the objectives of the study. Choices of schooling for one's child are influenced by the social and economic status of the household. Their choices and expectation from child's schooling are not independent of the limitations or expectations of the households. These factors also have a bearing on different expectations from their son or daughter.

Social background of the children attending different schools- government and private

Respondents of the study include seven castes viz., Madiga (SC), Golla (16 households), Sagar (7), Goud (5), Mudiraj (2), Vadla (2), and Muslim (1). Following Table 1 provides distribution of respondents by caste.

Table 1 Distribution of respondents by caste

Caste of the respondents	Frequency	Percent
BC-B	7	13.7
BC-D	25	49.0
BC-E	1	2.0
SC	18	35.3
Total	51	100.0

Around three out of every five respondents are illiterate (56.9%). Respondents with primary education constitute 9.8%. One third (33.3%) of the respondents have studied between secondary education and Degree.

Table 2 Distribution of respondents by Education

Education	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	29	56.9
Primary	5	9.8
Secondary	13	25.5
Inter	2	3.9
Graduation	1	2.0
others	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

Four out of every five (82.4%) of the respondents are farmers. Most of them are small and marginal farmers. Tenant farmers, agricultural labour and non farm labour constitute 13.7% of the respondents. Only two respondents are engaged in private employment and small business.

Table 3 Distribution of respondents by main occupation

Main occupation	Frequency	Percent
Farmer	42	82.4
Tenant farmer	1	2.0
Agricultural Labour	5	9.8
Non Agriculture Labour	1	2.0
Pvt Employee	1	2.0
Others	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

Most of the farmers are small while 13.7% respondents are landless. Those having five or more acres constitute 13.8% of the respondents. It is dry land and part of it is irrigated by Tanks or tube wells.

Table 4 Distribution of respondents by landholding

Land owned by respondents	Frequency	Percent
Landless	7	13.7

1 acre	6	11.8
2 acres	11	21.6
3 acres	14	27.5
4 acres	6	11.8
5 acres	4	7.9
6 acres	1	2.0
8 acres	1	2.0
10 acres	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

One fourth of the households (23.5%) have annual income up to Rs 20,000. Those with annual up income up to 50,000 constitute 33.3%. The Table 5 presents details of the households by their annual income.

Table 5 Distribution of respondents by annual income

Annual income	Frequency	Percent
Up to Rs 10000	1	2.0
Up to Rs 15000	2	3.9
up to Rs 20000	9	17.6
Up to Rs 30000	9	17.6
Up to Rs 40000	5	9.8
Up to Rs 50000	3	5.9
Up to Rs 60000	15	29.4
Up to Rs 70000	4	7.8
Up to 100000	3	5.9
Total	51	100.0

Nuclear family is predominant type (76.5%) among the respondents. Less than one fourth (23.5) respondents belong to Joint family. Respondents had altogether 123 children, both boys (67) and girls (56). About the respondents (45.1%) have two children, while those with only one child constitutes 15.7%. Respondents with three children constitute 27.5%. Respondents with 4 to 6 children constitute 11.8%.

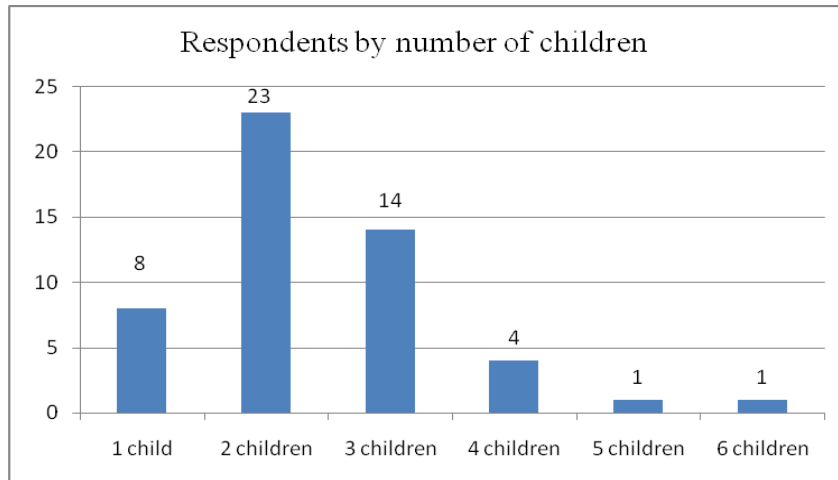


Fig. 1 Distribution of respondents by number of children

Children and schooling

Altogether 123 children are in the age group of 5 to 18 years and of them 100 are aged 5 to 14 years. While 98 children are going to school, two children have dropped out of school. About one third (34.7%) of the school going children are in Classes I to V. Distribution of the school going children by Class is provided in the Fig. 2

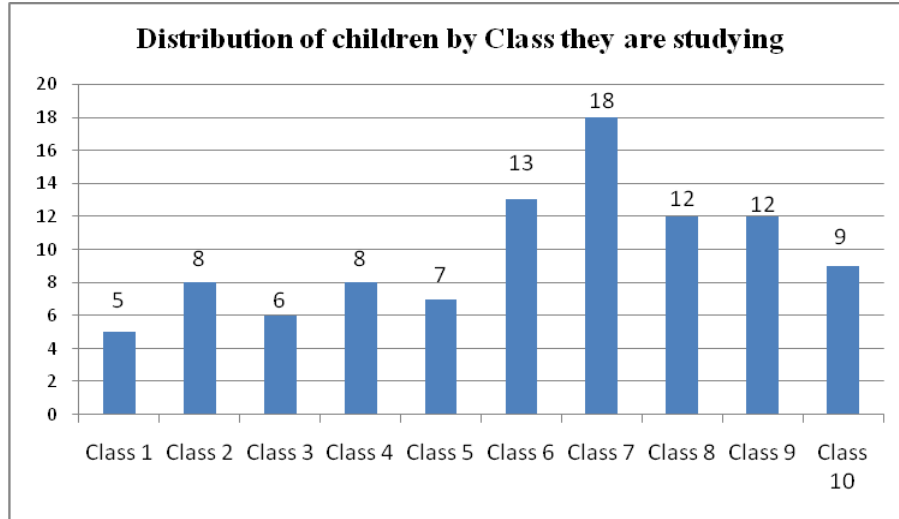


Fig. 2 Distribution of school going children by Class they are studying

Two out every three children are currently in government schools while remaining 32% attend private schools (see Fig. 3).

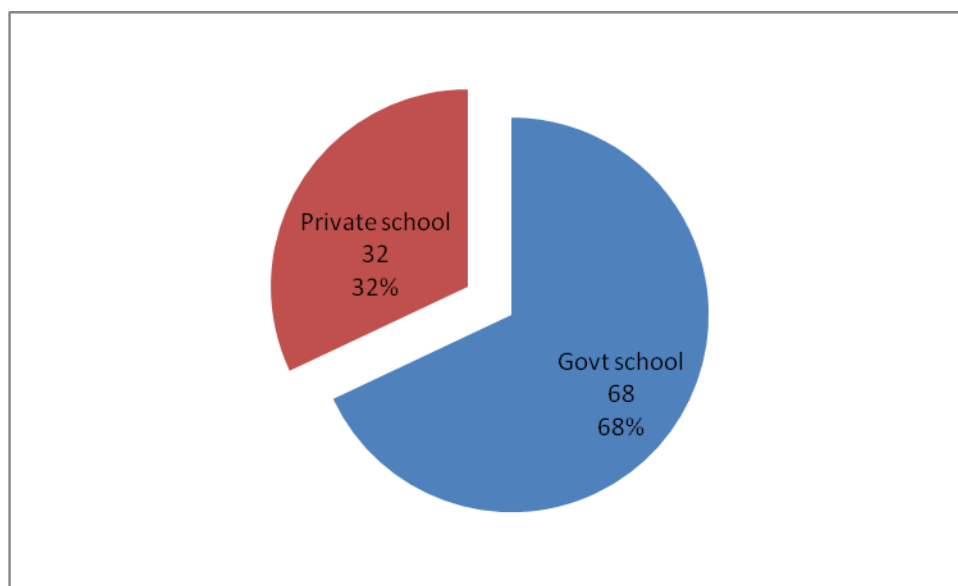


Fig. 3 Distribution of school going children by type of school

Costs of Private school education

Private school education demands incurring expenditure towards tuition fee, transportation, uniform, books and stationery, and other costs like admission fee, fee for special events, etc. Data collected about tuition fee and transportation costs per annum indicate that on an average the tuition fee paid per child is Rs 10,531 (ranging between Rs 4000 to Rs 16000). The tuition fee varies between private schools and by the Class they study. Besides they also incur expenditure towards transportation between Rs 1500 to Rs 15,000 per annum.

Table 6 Distribution of children by tuition fee per annum

Annual tuition fee	Children	Percent
4000	7	21.88
7000	2	6.25
10000	8	25.00
12000	4	12.50
15000	9	28.13
16000	2	6.25
Total	32	100.00

Average cost of transportation is Rs 3094. The cost towards tuition fee and transportation itself is around Rs 13,625 per child per annum. Including other expenses like uniform, books and stationery, etc the cost is around Rs 20,000 per child per annum.

Table 7 Distribution of children by transportation costs per annum

Annual transportation cost	Children	Percent
Rs 1500	16	50.00
Rs 2000	4	12.50
Rs 3000	5	15.63
Rs 4000	3	9.38
Rs 5000	2	6.25
Rs 15000	2	6.25
Total	32	100.00

Parents are meeting the expenses of costs of schooling by borrowing from relatives or friends. How many of them will be able to invest in child's schooling by borrowing and for how long the children in private schools will continue in those schools is also a matter of concern.

What are the changing preferences of parents about child's education

Type of school children attend and the willingness of the parents to invest on child's education is also dependent on child's sex. Parents' expectations of child's education sharply vary by child's sex. Parents expect a girl to study primarily to acquire general knowledge, life skills (39.13%) or no expectations as such (30.43%). While their expectations from boy's education is any job for secure future (55.77%) or government job (36.54%). No parent expectation boys to study only to acquire general knowledge or life skills. Only 7.69% parents had no expectation yet of boy's education. It clearly indicates that school for boys is linked with a secure livelihood and supporting the family as the main bread winner, while girls education is linked to being informed and support the family as care taker of children and the family or "educated mother". Varying expectations of the child's education and gender variations are indicated in the Fig.4 given below.

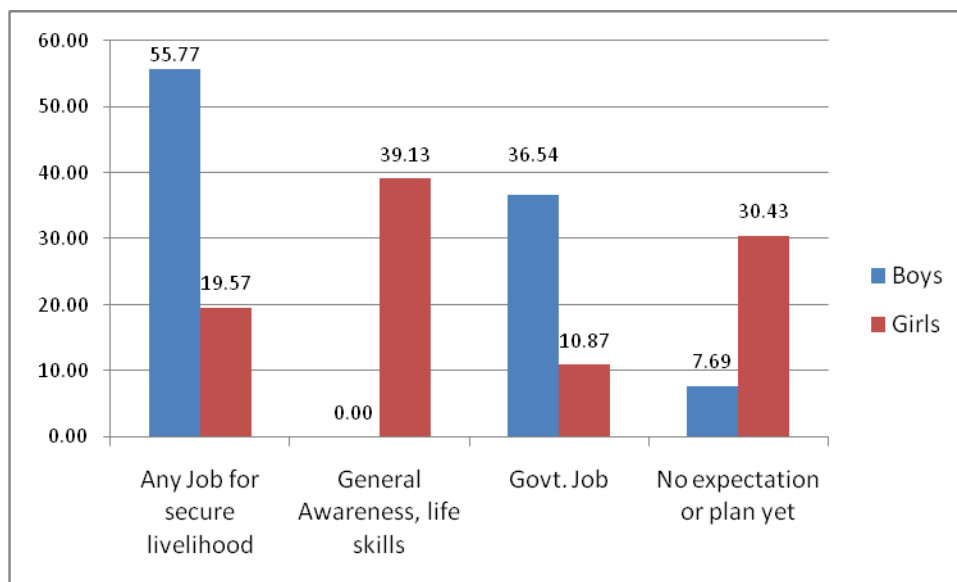


Fig. 4 Parents' expectations of child's education schooling

Gender differences in child's schooling and type of school

The difference in what is expected of girls' education from that of boy's education influences their choices for type of schooling for the child.

More girls than boys study in government schools. While 35 girls attend govt schools, boys constitute 31. Out of 32 children attending private schools, boys constitute 21 and girls 11. Parents prefer to send boys to private schools and girls to government schools. Less preference is given to send girls to private schools, as it involves investing in their education which is considered not necessary as their expectations from girl's education are different from that of boys.

Table 8 Distribution of children by type of school

School going children	Govt school	Private school	Total
Boys	31	21	52
Girls	35	11	46
Total	66	32	98

Growing shift towards private education

Out of 32 children who are studying in private schools, the trend towards private schools started since 2012. Three out of every four children going to private school have shifted from

government school since 2014. There are several reasons for the parents choice of sending their children to private schools.

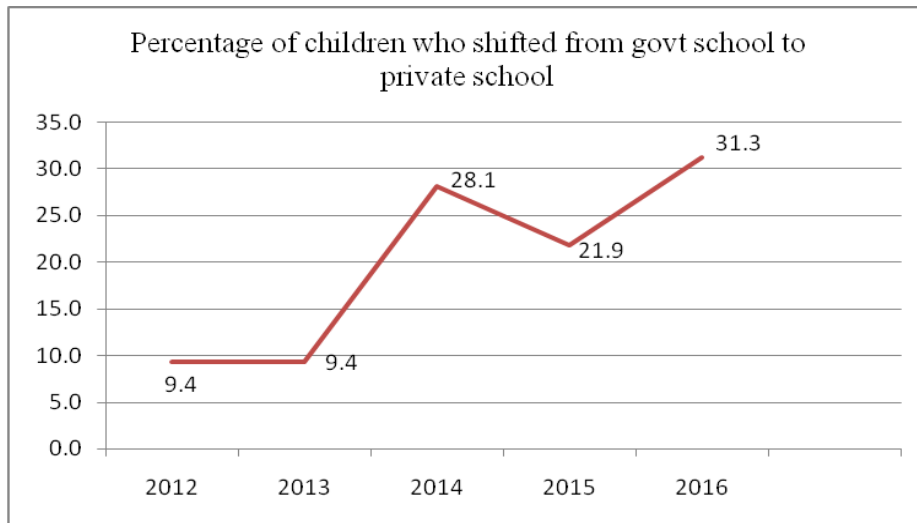


Fig. 5 Shifting of schools over the years

Reasons include that quality of education in government schools is poor compared to private schools, poor attention of teachers towards child's progress in studies, teacher's absenteeism, poor infrastructure, etc. The trend suggests that more children in future may shift towards private schools unless the image of government schools improves.

Conclusion

Growing shift of children into private schools is a serious concern. Growing shift towards private schools suggest growing burden on the rural poor and growing imbalances on in type of schooling between boys and girls. It also poses threat to RTE, child rights linked with 'free and compulsory elementary education' and results in denial of mid day meals, right to protection and development of girls and children from poor and vulnerable households and communities.

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