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Progress of Elementary Education in West Bengal

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ABSTRACT: The main purpose of the paper was investigated the historical perspectives as well as present position of elementary education in West Bengal which includes Govt. Primary schools and upper primary schools affiliated to West Bengal. The study was conducted on sample of 100 students (50 each primary schools and govt. Upper primary schools affiliated to West Bengal of secondary education) and it was found that:-

- To compare elementary education among students of govt primary schools students and upper primary school students of secondary of district Kolkata.
- To compare elementary education among female students of Govt. Primary schools and students of govt. Upper primary schools.
- To study elementary **education** among the male students of govt. Primary schools students and students of upper primary schools

KEYWORDS: Elementary education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Any person in modern society requires knowledge and skill to participate in various social processes in the public domain and associated with gainful economic activities. In keeping with that, system of education has been evolved for developing knowledge and related skill from childhood. The modern society is becoming more knowledge based and ability to acquire knowledge and skill also decides the opportunity the individual gets to have his or her economic entitlement. Swami Vivekananda said, "Education is the main frustration of the perfection already in man". The economic and social development of a country will largely depend on the level of education of the citizen of the country. To state the same in a different way-failure to acquire education at par with members of the society from richer section enhances in equality in the society. Status of education is related to nature of employment and income. Elementary education is a goal set by the National Policy on Education, 1986. The national policy on education 1986, as revised in 1992, had indicated three thrust areas in elementary education:

1. Universal access for enrolment,
2. Universal retention of children up to 14 years of age, and
3. A substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.

These objectives were addressed during the Tenth Plan period mainly through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The mid day meal and teacher education schemes have also contributed towards progress in the above objectives. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan (RMSA) is an extension of SSA in the sense that it promises universal access to secondary level education to all (in the age group of 15-16 years) by 2017 and universal retention by 2002. The scheme was launched in March, 2009 throughout the country to universalize the secondary education.

II. PRESENT CONDITION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT, 2009 AND RIGHTS BASED FRAMEWORK FOR SSA

To make elementary education compulsory the 86th Amendment of the constitution in the year 2002 made provision of the Article 21-a, which state that "the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6-14 years in such manner as the state may, by law, determine and its consequential legislation". The same has come in to

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force with introduction of the Right of Children to free and compulsory education (RTE) Act, 2009 throughout India with effect from 1st April, 2010. The salient features of the RTE Act are mentioned below.

1. The right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in neighborhood school.
2. The RTE Act mandates that eventually elementary education must be provided by formal and recognized schools. All existing EGS centre, Sishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK) and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendra (MSK) in West Bengal should be converted to regular schools or closed down when children are main streamed into neighborhood schools.
3. It specifies the duties and responsibilities of the appropriate Govt. local authority and parents in providing free and compulsory education and sharing financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Govts.
4. It lays down the norms and standards relating to pupil teacher Ratio (PTRs) building and infrastructure, school working days, teacher- working hours and many more.

III. FREE TEXT BOOKS

In all government primary and upper primary schools free text books are distributed to all enrolled students. SSA norms provide for distribution of free text book to all students SC/ST/OBC, Dress and midday Meals etc. and construction of school building for Sishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK). Paschim Banga Rajya Sishu Shiksha Mission (PBRSSM) during 2005-08 was appointed by the Government of West Bengal: computer Aided Learning was started since 2004-05 in primary and upper primary Schools under SSA.

IV. DECENTRALIZATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Decentralized planning and management of Elementary education is a goal set by the National policy on Education 1986. The plan of Action of 1992 emphasized the co-planning as a process of designing a family wise and child wise plan of action by which every child regularly attends school or Non Formal Education (NFE) centre, continues his/her education at the place suitable to him / her and completes at least eight years of schooling or its equivalent at the NFE centre. State was expected to evolve institutional arrangements both in rural and urban areas for undertaking these activities, those bodies with regards to location and relocation of existing primary and upper primary schools on the basis of micro planning and school mapping.

Education for all in west Bengal The fast approaching 2015 deadline for developing nations to meet internationally set targets for universal elementary education and gender equality has caused Government and development agencies around the world to examine what has and has not been achieved to date. The main objective of SSA is to ensure that all children in the age group 6-14 years will not only attend the school but also complete elementary education and receive quality education. In order to provide education of satisfactory quality an important requirement is that teachers teach as they are supposed to and students remain in the classroom (or in the schools) when the teaching is going on as learning is a continuous process filling the gap in the process. It not only adds to his/her load of non-comprehension leading to lower achievement but also increases retention and dropout rates. Studies have shown that Learner achievement is highly correlated with time spent on teaching learning (Govinda and Verghese, 1991). The year 2007 was crucial not only for the target year to realize the names set for SSA programme and goal of the 10th Plan education for all by 2010.

MOTHER TEACHER MEETING

Out of 10 schools, the meeting was held once in a month. It is imperative that the mother teacher association be formed for the benefit as well as improvement in education system and progress of students.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All the students of elementary education were found in uniform.

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HEALTH CHECK UP OF STUDENTS

Health check up of students was carried out by the health department of govt. of West Bengal.

Methodology

A study team was constituted to undertake the study of SSA programme in the state of West Bengal. The team visited the following offices/ Schools:

1. State Project Office (SPO), Salt Lake City, Kolkata.
2. Two District Project Office (DPO) viz. Murshidabad District and South 24-parganas District.
3. Three Circle Resource Centre(CRC) namely, Kandi and Sadar west in Murshidabad District and Diamond Harbour South in South 24- Parganas District.

Basic records maintained by the SPO, DPOs, CPCs, Village Education Committees (VECs), Schools, Population surveys etc. physical verification of construction activities of Primary and upper Primary Schools was carried out.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Elementary education is an integral part of national system of education. It represents the first and essential steps to achieve the goal of "education for all". It aims at physical, cognitive and social development of the child before entering elementary education. In India, the sergeant Report, the Secondary Education Commission Report of 1986 has laid emphasis on the provision of elementary education. There are several studies that emphasize the need for elementary education for a variety of purposes as follows:

1. There is a general feeling that the prevailing education backwardness of a large section of our children is due to the lack of a proper educational environment.
2. Provision of equal educational opportunities to all is a fundamental principal on which a truly democratic society can be built up.
3. It is well known that the age about 6 to 14 years is the most impressionable period of children's growth and that the foundations of future adult personality are laid down in these impressionable years. Future social adjustments are removed by the provision of a properly" controlled environment for the children when they are at this stage"

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The significance of elementary education comprises:

1. PHYSICALLY FITNESS

Physically the child benefits from the education and balanced diet, hygienic habits and free movement.

2. SOCIALLY, MORALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY

Socially, morally and psychologically benefits the opportunity for self independence and co-operative living of social life. The special environment reaps to make personal adjustment. The importance of elementary education signifies to the physical, emotional and intellectual development of the children.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Progress of elementary education in west Bengal"

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To compare elementary education among students of Govt. Primary Schools and students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools affiliated to West Bengal Board of Secondary of District Kolkata.
2. To compare elementary education among female students of Govt. Primary Schools and students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools.
3. To study elementary education among male students of Govt. Primary Schools and students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools.

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HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There exists no significant difference in elementary education among students of Govt. Primary Schools and students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools affiliated to West Bengal Board of Secondary Education of District Kolkata.
2. There exists no significant difference in elementary education among female students of Govt. Primary Schools and Students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools.
3. There exists no significant difference in elementary education among male students of Govt. Primary Schools and students of Govt. Upper Primary Schools.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has been delimited to 5 Govt. Primary and 5 Govt. Upper Primary Schools of District Kolkata (West Bengal).

SELECTION OF SAMPLE

The study was conducted on a sample of 100 students .Each sample of 50 students was equally divided on the basis of sex (25 male & 25 female students). Govt. Primary schools affiliated to West Bengal Board of primary education and Govt. Upper primary schools affiliated to West Bengal board of secondary education were selected for the study.

Table- 1.

Govt. Primary & Upper Primary schools Students
100 students

50 students from primary schools
25 boys and 25 girls

50 students from primary schools
25 boys and 25 girls

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The investigator visited various government primary and upper primary schools with the prior permission of headmaster/Headmistress of these schools.

The questionnaires were randomly distributed to 50 students of 5 Govt. Schools and 50 students of 5 Govt. Primary schools separately. The students were motivated and instructions and guidelines for answering the questions were given . They completed the questionnaires for collection of data.

T-ratio means of students of Govt. Primary and upper primary schools under West Bengal of sec. Education on elementary education.

TABLE-2.

STUDENTS OF GOVT. PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B. OF P.E. N =100		STUDENTS OF UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B. OF S.E. N = 50			
MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D	S.E.M.	T cal
10.69	2.39	12.4	3.91	1.76	25.00 **

** SIGNIFICANT AT 0.01 % LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE.

The table -2 shows that the mean score of primary students of Govt. Schools under West Bengal Board of primary education is lower than mean score of students of upper primary schools affiliated to West Bengal Board of sec. Education. The 't' score 25.00 is significant at 0.01% level of significance. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference of elementary education among the students of govt. Primary and upper primary schools. Thus,

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the hypothesis-1 that there is no significant difference in elementary education among students of primary and upper primary schools has been rejected in this study

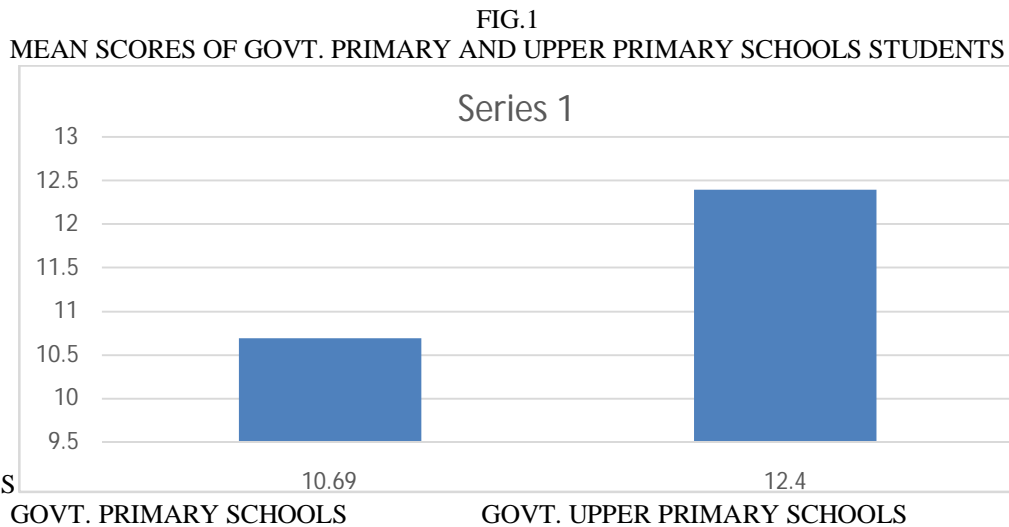
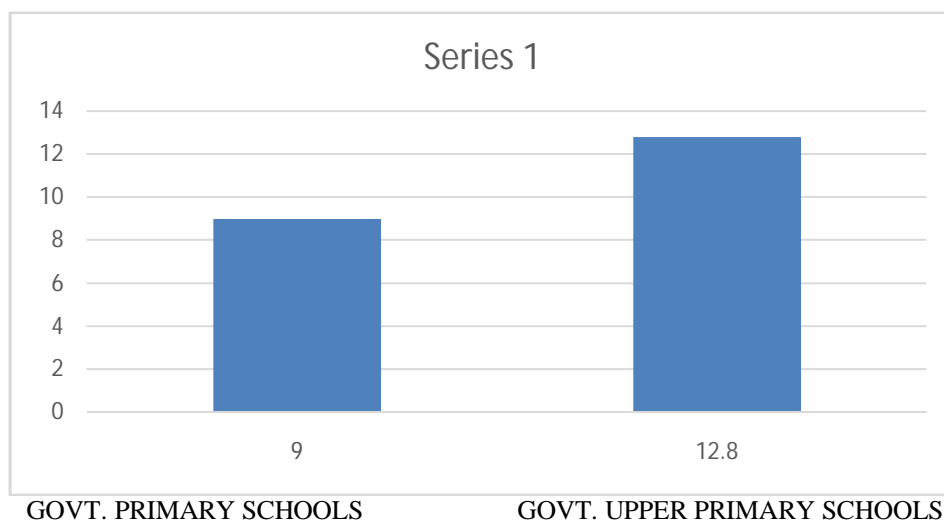


TABLE -3

T-ratio means of FEMALE students of Govt. Primary and upper primary schools under West Bengal of sec. Education on elementary education.

FEMALE STUDENTS OF GOVT. PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B OF P.E N = 25		FEMALE STUDENTS OF GOVT. UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B OF S.E. N =25			
MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M.	'T' CAL
9	1.6	12.8	3.09	2.39	1.82*

*NOT SINFICANT



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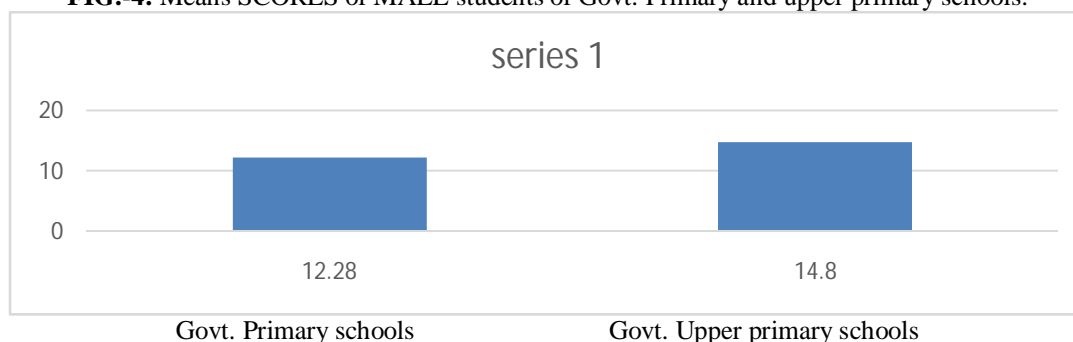
The table -3 shows that the mean score of female students of govt. Primary schools is lower then mean score of female students of govt. Upper primary schools. The 't' score is 1.82 which is not significant at any level of significance. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference of elementary education among female students of govt. Primary schools under West Bengal board of education and female students of govt. Upper primary schools under West Bengal board of education. Thus the hypothesis 2 that there is no difference in elementary education among female students of govt. Primary and upper primary female students of govt. Schools" has been accepted in this study.

TABLE-4: **T-ratio means of MALE students** of Govt. Primary and upper primary schools under West Bengal of sec. Education on elementary education.

MALE STUDENTS OF GOVT. PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B OF P.E N = 25		MALE STUDENTS OF GOVT. UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS AFFILIATED TO W.B.B OF S.E. N =25			
MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M	't'CAL
12.28	3.09	14.8	5.87	1.91	16.49**

** SIGNIFICANT AT 0.01% LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE.

FIG.-4: Means SCORES of MALE students of Govt. Primary and upper primary schools.



The table - 4 shows that the mean score of male students of govt. Primary schools is lower then mean score of male students of upper primary schools .The 't' cal score is 16.49 which is significant at 0.01% level OF significance. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significance difference of elementary education among male students of govt. Primary schools under West Bengal board of education and male students of govt. Upper primary schools. Thus the hypothesis 3 that there is no significant difference in elementary education among male students of govt. Primary and upper primary schools has been rejected in this study.

MAIN FINDINGS: Comparison of elementary education in west Bengal among students of govt. Primary schools affiliated to west Bengal board of education and students of govt. Upper primary schools affiliated to west Bengal board of education sec. Education. There is a significance difference on elementary education in West Bengal among the students of govt. Primary schools and upper primary schools of district Kolkata.

1. Comparison of elementary education among female students of govt. Primary schools and upper primary schools of District Kolkata. There is not a significant difference elementary education in west Bengal among female students of govt. Primary schools and upper primary schools.
2. Comparison of elementary education among the male students of govt. Primary schools affiliated to West Bengal board of education and govt. Upper primary schools affiliated to West Bengal Board of sec. Education. There is a significant difference on elementary education among male students of govt. Primary and upper primary schools of District Kolkata.

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