

Educational Status of the Children of Daily Wage Workers - A Review

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Abstract: The Review of Educational Research gives you an excellent overview of the work that has been done in the field and helps you keep with recent development." The phrase "Review of Related Literature" consists of two words "Review" and "Literature". The term "review" means to organize the knowledge of the specific area research to evolve an edifice of knowledge to show that the proposed study would be an addition to the field. "Literature" refers to the knowledge of any discipline which included theoretical, practical and its research studies. Review provides a researcher the knowledge and insight regarding what is to start, where to start and how to start. Bearing this mind the researcher studied the related literature before starting the field work, concerning the problem under investigation.

Keywords: Literature, Review, Educational, Status, Daily, Wage, Workers etc.

INTRODUCTION

The state of West Bengal was once the beacon of India's education system. Famed universities such as Visva-Bharati and celebrated scholars including Noble Laureate Rabindranath Tagore could proudly claim West Bengal as home. However, such plaudits are no longer to be trumpeted due to the abject failure that constitutes the modern West Bengal education system. Specifically, its primary education system lies in splintered ruins depriving Bengali children of their future. The West Bengal primary education system seemingly suffers from a perfect storm of maladies including: gigantic rates of teacher absenteeism, a daunting lack of trained teachers, impossibly difficult assignments facing teachers, the evil necessity of private tuition, crippled and antiquated infrastructure of West Bengal primary schools, incentive schemes that are woefully under by the state government, and rampant discrimination against children of Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, and Muslim origin by school authorities. This amalgamation of calamities has created a situation in West Bengal where only 6.8% of the students who enter the primary education system later reach universities. It is the purpose of this paper to comprehensively review the challenges facing the West Bengal primary education system and argue for action on the part of the West Bengal state government where it is needed. This issue is at the heart of India's future. The robust economic growth India has recently enjoyed is not sustainable and the stability of the Indian state cannot be assured if millions of supposedly free and equal citizens are left mired in poverty shackled by the lack of an education.

Illiteracy is a common phenomenon of our country, because of the people migrates from one place to another in search of different kinds of jobs. So, a lot of research has been made on the effects of education on their children. In India we have a large number of daily wage workers who migrate from one place to another in search of work. Studies have been made on different effects of education on the children of daily wage workers. It is worth looking at these studies.

So before going into the details of studies, researcher thought to look into some of the theoretical propositions that the earlier studies have made in the field of poor children's education. A theory supposed to have functions namely, explanation and prediction of a phenomenon. Many have tried to give explanation to this phenomenon of the effect on education.

Some of the reviews taken for the research work are:

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen [1] in the book "*India Economic Development and Social Opportunity*" of chapter six – 'Education as a political issue', describe as literacy is a basic tool of self-defence in a society where social interaction often involves the written media. An illiterate person is that much less equipped to defend herself in court, to obtain a bank loan, to enforce her inheritance rights, to take advantage of new technology, to compete for secure employment, to get on the right bus, to take part in political activity, in short, to participate successfully in the modern economy and society. Similar things can be said about numeracy and other skills acquired in the

process of basic education. Basic education is also a catalyst of social change. The contrasts between different states of India, on which we have already commented in chapter 3, provide ample illustration of this elementary fact. For instance, the historical analysis of Kerala's experience presented by V.K. Ramachandran in the companion volume powerfully brings out the dialectical relationship between educational progress and social change: the spread of education helps to overcome the traditional inequalities of caste, class, and gender, just as the removal of these inequalities contributes to the spread of education. Kerala made an early start down that road, in the nineteenth century, leading to wide-ranging social achievements later on.

Rajaram S. [2] in his research study "*Educational level, school attendance and school continuation in India: evidence from the National Family Health Survey 1992-93*" examined the level of education, school attendance and school continuation in India. Analysis of data showed that in about 1/3 of Indian households, no adult member ever completed grade one. In more than half Indian households, no adult female had ever completed formal education. The highest grade completed by a usual adult member among males was maximum in Delhi and among females it was maximum in Kerala. About 23% children aged 6-14 years never attended school. Percentage of children attending school was above 90 per cent only in 5 states, namely Mizoram, Manipur, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Goa. Lowest attendance was observed in BIMARU states. More than 5% children dropped out in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. The states where the maximum number of children never went to school were Andhra Pradesh (28%), Arunachal Pradesh (28%), Assam (23%), Bihar (44%), Karnataka (22%), Madhya Pradesh (36%), Meghalaya (22%), Orissa (24%), Rajasthan (37%), West Bengal (28%), and Uttar Pradesh (34%). The total percentage for India, who never attended school was 22.98%. The most disadvantaged group of children in terms of school attendance were from non-electrified, muslim headed, SC headed, ST headed households and those who lived in kachha (non-permanent) dwellings. Educational discontinuity was very low in the first years of schooling. In India as a whole, 75% of the children continued to study till the tenth grade. Sex of the child was an important factor in educational continuity. The level of education attained by a usual adult male/female had substantial impact on school attendance and continuation of children in school. The study recommended that formal education should be provided to all sections of the population to ensure educational continuity particularly of the vulnerable sections of society.

Banerji Rukmini [3] in her paper "*Poverty and primary schooling: field studies from Mumbai and Delhi*" analysed the hurdles which have to be crossed in order to achieve universal primary education. NSS (1993-94) data revealed that out of 185 million children aged 5-14 years, nearly 58 million (one-third) were not in school. The study revealed that the reason for so many children not being in school had less to do with their families economic circumstances than with the school system's shortcomings. The inadequacy of the school system to attract and keep children is more crucial than households' economic conditions. School enrolment has risen dramatically in cities and villages, but the ability of the government school system to retain and adequately educate children has been less impressive. The study also revealed that achievement levels in primary schools were the same between Classes III and IV. It was observed that children who had been to school for several years are not permanently literate. The study suggested adopting a flexible approach, accountability to the community, innovative actions at the local level whether in the classroom or in the community must be recognized for the universalization of primary education in India. Commitment on the part of schools and communities to the education of all children must be publicly rewarded.

Gandhe SK [4] a research study on externally aided projects in the field of elementary education in Rajasthan attempts to analyse, conceptualise and understand the operationalization and programme implementation techniques of LokJumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects of Ajmer District of Rajasthan. Information about age, sex, marital status, occupation, educational status of functionaries and primary schools was collected. The Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects are innovative in the educational scenario, particularly in the field of primary education in Rajasthan. Besides being an effective strategy for improving the situation, these initiatives redress problems in remote, socio-economically backward villages where facilities for primary education have not reached, and also in areas where the existing primary education system has proved ineffective. Equipped with innovative strategies and active involvement of the people, these projects with specific focus on girls' participation in education, hope to pave the way for faster educational development. The innovations adopted include micro-planning, retention (and monitoring) register, low cost hostels for children of migrants, night classes, repairing school buildings with community involvement, minority education and teacher training. There is need to raise consciousness among rural women for educating their daughters, and also deal with the issue of child marriage, which is a stumbling block to girls' education.

Aparna Banerjee [5] in her paper "*Socio Economic Status of Rickshaw Pullers*" explains about

the social status of the rickshaw pullers is not satisfactory. They themselves consider that their socio economic status is not so good. In the social status of the rickshaw pullers I want to highlight the family life of the pullers, their educational level, health condition, responsibility for their children, their awareness about environment and whether they are alcoholic or not. The educational qualification of the puller is not very well. As they all came from poor families and where their parents have no such awareness regarding education. That is why, most of the cases they do not get any education or very low level of education. For this lack of sufficient education and skill, they take this type of works. A maximum percentage of people is illiterate. And 25 % have primary level and 21% people have class VIII level education. It is observed that the maximum pullers live in joint family or they live in nuclear families. The pullers are maximum married. The number of their children varied from 3 to 5. Sometimes the pullers are the only earning member of the family. They take all the responsibility for their family. The pullers, who detached from their family and work in the town, send money to their family. And they go to their own houses within one or two months. In maximum cases, as their financial condition is very poor, their wives also do work and earn money for their family. In past the pullers were not aware about the good side of education. But now they understand the necessity of education. So, they are more willing to give education to their children. Considering the earning of a puller it can be said that most of them can send their wards to school for basic education. But it is observed that they can provide their children's basic education only. Although they are interested to provide higher education for their children but their income is not so sufficient to provide their wish. It is observed that most of the puller living in the slums and the living condition of their dwelling place is not good and the environment is not supportive for the education of their children

Kumar Rana *et al* [6] in their paper “*State of Primary Education in West Bengal*” outline the successive efforts initiated by the Left Front government have played a positive role in the expansion of primary education in West Bengal. However, as the findings of this study establish, certain problems still prevail. Poor attendance, perceived class differences, poverty and gender discrimination prevent socially underprivileged groups from accessing education opportunities. On the other hand, the success of the government's experiment in providing cost-effective primary education, particularly to the most underprivileged sections of society must be recognized.

Anna D. Johnson [7] in her paper “*The Effects of Early Education on Children in Poverty*” presents the evidence to substantiate calls for the widespread implementation and funding of quality early education-based interventions for children in low-income families.

When programs are administered early and comprehensively, and meet recognized standards of quality, early education programming can produce lasting gains in a variety of developmental domains for children who otherwise may fall behind in school as a result of growing up in poverty with families who cannot provide the necessary resources and support for school success.

Kuntala Lahiri *et al* [8] in their work “*Beyond the boundary: middle-class women in income-generating activities in Burdwan, India*” explains that the Work is a part of the life of women irrespective of their social and class locations. Women act as agents of social change and create new social spaces for themselves through income-generating but often informal occupations. This paper looks at the increasing involvement of middle-class Bengali women in various types of informal income-generating activities, and examines how their social space is changed through their work outside of home. Burdwan, a medium-sized urban centre of India, has an urban social history of conservative tradition-boundedness typical among similarly placed towns in the state of West Bengal, India. The paper is based on ongoing empirical research in Burdwan conducted via extensive field surveys and repeated personal interviews with individual women. The data used in the work are mostly primary in nature. The paper asserts that, while the changes brought about by women through such informal work are difficult to perceive easily, they nevertheless emancipate and empower women to a great extent.

Santosh Nandal [9] in his book, “*Women workers in unorganized sector*” brings notice about the presence of vast majority of India's labour force is in unorganized sector. In the absence of economic opportunities in their own states, many workers migrate across the other states of India to seek employment. Construction industry depends almost entirely on migrant workers, majority of which are women. The main object of this paper is to shed light on the socio-economic problems being faced by a section of the women workers in construction industry. These women workers have a very tough life. In spite of being actively involved in economic activities for survival, bearing and rearing of children remain their prime responsibility, and thus they end up with playing roles in both production and reproduction.

Niraj Pandit *et al* [10] in their research “*A study of maternal and child health issues among migratory construction workers*” bring out the result that almost 73% of women were illiterate with mean age of menarche 13 years and mean age for marriage 17 years and mean age for first birth 19years. All were from tribal community. Only one child was fully immunized out of 11 children between 12-23 months. Two maternal deaths and death of two children of

less than five years were reported among 52 families in last two years.

Annette Barnabas *et al* [11] in their research work “*A Study on the Empowerment of Women Construction Workers as Masons in Tamil Nadu, India*” describe that the construction sector has the largest number of unorganised labourers in India next only to agricultural sector. Women form half the workforce and by choice or by design they are not allowed to acquire specific skills that may enable them to become masons. Women join as unskilled workers and remain unskilled till the end of their working life span. However, men get training and systematically upgrade their construction skills to graduate as masons, supervisors and contractors. A study was conducted on the career progress of 440 men construction workers and 440 women construction workers and 51 building contractors to find out the reasons why women in the construction sector were not able to acquire skills for masonry work and how they could be trained to become masons. The findings of the study show that there is an inherent gender bias against women and also the shared general belief that women construction worker are unfit to be trained informally like men in the construction sector even though they have the necessary skills, capability and desire to become masons. Though the contractors are willing to accept women as masons by giving them training and placement in the construction sector, it has been found, the social forces that have perpetuated the concept of women as inferior workers are inimical to any such move. This study also analyses the methodology of training offered to men in the construction sector in India and proposes a new methodology of training that would qualify women construction workers to become masons and empower them economically.

UNESCO, Paris [12] in its report “*EFA Global monitoring report 2009: education for all: overcoming inequality: why governance matters*” tracks annual progress towards the Education for All (EFA) Goals, and offers a comprehensive overview of the state of education in the world today. Getting young girls into school and retaining them in the education system is one of the most effective strategies for closing gender gaps in education. Income based disparities are mirrored in differences in average years of education attained by people 17-22 years. In India people from the poorest 20% have an average 4.4 yrs. of education compared to 11.1 years for people from the richest 20% of the population. In India, rising wage inequalities are closely linked to wide wage gaps between people with tertiary education and those at lower attainment levels. At the global level, the poorest 40% of the world’s population is living on less than US \$2 a day. Levels of education also have an important bearing on maternal mortality. Around 10% children of women with secondary education, 20% children of women with

primary education, and 40% children non-educated women were born without antenatal care. In India, women with secondary and higher education are having 8-9% of the severely stunted children, whereas percentage of severely stunted children was about 25% among non-educated women. Child mortality is one of the most sensitive indicators of well-being for children under 5 years. Each year around 10 million children die before they reach the age for starting primary school (UNICEF 2007). India accounts for one in three malnourished children in the world. Improved access to preschool can enhance both education outcomes and equity. A programme in India’s Haryana state resulted in a 46% decline in dropouts among lower caste children. Pre-primary enrolment ratio was 19% in 1999, which increased to 40% in 2006. Number of out of school children has been decreasing every year. India is one of the three countries who are on track to achieve TNER (Total primary net enrolment ratio) in excess of 97% by 2015. TNER for 2004-07 in India is 94%, and the projected TNER for 2015 is 99%. India invests only about 3.3% of GNP (Gross National Product) on education. In urban India around 96% of the total increase in primary enrolment between 1993-2002 is estimated to be due to growth in private schools unaided by Government, and while growth in private enrolment was slower in rural India, it still accounted for 24% of the increase in rural areas. The EFA Global Monitoring Report offers a caution to governments, donors and the international community. Current trends indicate that universal primary education will not be achieved by 2015. Too many children are receiving an education of such poor quality that they leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills. Deep and persistent disparities based on wealth, gender, location, ethnicity and other markers of disadvantage are acting as a major barrier to progress in education. If the world’s Governments are serious about Education For All, they must get more serious about tackling inequality and improving quality of education.

Diganta Mukherjee *et al* [13] in their research “*Attitude to schooling, wage premium and child labour*” finds out that Though education enhances the productivity of a worker and thereby increases the wage of an educated worker, it was found that a portion of children drop out of school before completion and join the workforce as the returns from full schooling are not high enough. This happens even when parents intrinsically value education and also because of the wage premium, which is a strictly positive function of the time spent in school. The paper examines the effectiveness of standard policies like compulsory schooling or financial incentives in reducing the incidence of child labour and finds that the effects of some of the policies are ambiguous.

Sharma S [14] in his research work “*Literacy and school attendance in India*” notices that The Indian

Constitution mandated free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14. 'Operation Blackboard' and 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan' are state sponsored movements that aimed at universal enrolment and providing the basics. The 55th Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS), was conducted in 1999/2000 and estimated primary school attendance, school attendance and primary completion rates. The study finds that the largest marginal effects are association with household living standards, access to electricity and expenditure on elementary schooling. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) was used to provide an opportunity to cross-check the results of one study against the other. Nearly 21 million children of primary school age in India were out of school in 2006, more than in any other country. According to data from the nationally representative NFHS-3, 2006 primary school net attendance rate (NAR) in India was 83%, but secondary school NAR was 53.7% only. States with the highest primary school net attendance rates between 98% and 99% are Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. 6 other states also have primary NAR values above 90%, namely Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mizoram and Uttarakhand. In 6 states, fewer than four out of five children of primary school age are in school namely: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Sikkim.

Mumbai Mobile Crèches, a NGO [15] mentions that the most of the children on construction sites are out of school children. They either stay at home or loiter around the construction site. Different factors explain this high rate of dropout children, migration being the most important one. Indeed, the families frequently move from one place to another, making it difficult for the children to attend school regularly. Some children were enrolled in their village's school but were forced to drop out when moving to the city. The lack of willingness to send their children to school is another factor. According to a survey conducted by Pratham in the city of Thane, accessibility of school does not seem to be a major issue. The Pratham team first conducted a survey in the areas to identify the children and collect data (name, age, situation of the family, daily income). Then Pratham's teachers approached the families, organized parents meeting and proposed them to conduct classes for the children a few hours a day. When the parents agreed, Pratham's teachers started daily hobby classes in the pocket. These classes, which consist of games, poems, songs, drawing or storytelling, allowed the children to become familiar with the educational environment. After a few months, the teachers started basic educational activities: holding a pen, drawing basic forms on a sheet of paper. Indeed, most of the children had never been to school before and had to start from the very beginning. Over the months, the teachers started teaching the alphabet and the basics of writing and counting.

CONCLUSION

All researches take advantage of the knowledge which has been accumulated in the past as a result of constant human endeavour. A careful review of the research journals, books, dissertation, thesis and other sources of information on the problem to be investigated is taken as data in the research. This chapter contains the review of various studies related to the topic of investigation. The purpose of this chapter is to provide information about recent research that has been conducted to examine any possible link regarding the educational status of the children of daily wage workers towards schooling and education. Most of the researches conducted in the area of academic achievement, academic motivation, school effectiveness, child rearing practices, impact of incentives schemes, dropouts, wastage and stagnation and other programme related to primary or elementary education etc.

The information collected from the few studies in this area was used to design the research instruments. Furthermore, it has been suggested that factors such as daily wage workers' (parents as well as children) own experiences and attitudes towards education and schooling are likely to have a significant impact on their children's education at present as well as in future. From the above discussion, it is evident that the socio-economic status and parents' positive attitude towards child's education is important in determining school attendance and academic achievement of the child.

The review of related literature explains that the programme of universalization of elementary has included majority of the children to the field of education. The introduction of the scheme of mid-day meal, the free supply of uniform and text books has helped to improve the attendance amongst girls and boys. It has also helped to a considerable extent in the increase of enrolment of students of weaker section.

The review of the related literature of research done in India and abroad has given comparative educational knowledge to the researcher and has also provided the global information regarding the status of socially disadvantage children in the developing as well as developed countries. It has also given the valuable information to the researcher and insight regarding his own field of work related to the topic entitled "Educational Status of the Children of Daily Wage Worker in Birbhum district of West Bengal"

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