

# TEACHING LEARNING PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS UNDER SHIKSHA VIKASH SAMITI, ODISHA: PERCEPTION OF MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS

By

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## ABSTRACT

*This study has aimed to seek the perception of stakeholders (HMs, Teachers, and Parents) on quality of education in schools under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha with reference to the teaching learning practices. The Convergent-Parallel Design under Mixed Research Method has been followed for carrying out the study. The study is delimited to coastal Odisha, so the population of the study comprised all the stakeholders of such schools, such as: HMs, Teachers, and Parents and Community Members. Tools used for data collection are interview schedule for Head Master/ Pradhan Acharyas; Questionnaire for teachers; and interview schedule for parents-cum-community members. The findings are: HMs reported globes, maps, charts, science kit, math kit, and computers were used frequently in classroom teaching process. Majority of teachers (>60%) reported the same. Majority of parents (>60%) also reported aware of availability of globes, maps, charts, science and math kits, computers, and audio-visual instruments and majority of them (>65%) were satisfied with availability of these equipments. In case of 50% schools, LCD projector were not used for teaching purpose and the same was agreed upon by the teachers. On the other hand, one-fourth of parents did not know about availability of computers and LCD projectors in the schools. Half of the parents (49.24%) under study reported that Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) corner was available and 69.23% among them were satisfied with TLM corner. Majority of parents (72.73%) reported, group discussion was practiced in the schools. Half of those (52.08%) reported group discussion was effective for their children. Majority (64.40%) of parents reported that the teachers used to write lesson diary. Out of these parents, 76.47% reported that writing lesson diary had apposite effect on their children.*

*Keywords: Teaching Learning Practices, Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha, Perception, HMs, Teachers, Parents.*

## INTRODUCTION

Quality of education denotes to certain parameters those provide excellence in each of the dimensions, such as learners, teachers, content, teaching-learning processes, learning environments, and outcomes. Studies reveal that students are retained in schools, but they do not learn what they are supposed to learn. As revealed, low levels of learning at the primary stage are almost a universal phenomenon in India (Dave, 1988; Shukla et al., 1994; Varghese, 1994). Most of the people view quality of education as the learning outcomes of students, which are the primary concerns of all stakeholders (Mukhopadhyay

and Parhar, 1999). The quality education can be achieved only if quality is ensured at each level of the educational process from setting, learning environment, teacher training, teaching-learning process, student evaluation, assessment, and monitoring. It is only possible in schools, i.e., from primary levels.

Elementary schooling covers from class I to VIII (6 to 14 years of age). India is bestowed with a rich and marvelous culture and heritage, our great seers and sages have tried their level best to emancipate our illiterate masses to literate and intelligences by freeing them from the bondage of ignorance and blind beliefs. Our great

educational thinkers like Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and many others also took a great effort to keep the diversified and rich cultures and values within our hearts, mind, body, and soul. In this context, the efforts of Saraswati Sishu/Vidya Mandir are really praiseworthy as they tried to develop a national system of education, fully saturated with the feelings of Hinduism and patriotism. The students of such schools are attaining all-round development by bringing out their own potentiality, which enables them to face the new challenges of their life.

### ***Saraswati Shishu/Vidya Mandir: Its Evolution***

The foundation stone of Saraswati Shishu Mandir was laid by Shri M. S. Golwalker, revered Shri Guru Ji in 1952 with some RSS workers at Gorakhpur, UP to provide quality education to the children, to educate children about Hindutva (the nationalistic Hindu way of life), and to prepare good citizen of India. And within a short of span of time, a lot of such schools were established in different parts of India looking at the success of the first school in Gorakhpur. In 16 September, 1977, the first school named "Saraswati Sishu Mandir" was established in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. By 1980, there were nearly six schools in different parts of Odisha. Real growth of schools was felt during 1990-2000. This period was mostly devoted for experimentation in various aspects those led to maintenance of quality in academic field. As a result at least one student could occupy a position among the best ten lists in HSC examination conducted by BSE Odisha consecutively for 10 years starting from 1997. In such examination during 2004, ten students of such schools qualified to be in "Best Ten" list. Besides this, most of such schools score 100% pass result in HSC examination. These schools also excel all other government and private schools in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> scholarship exams. Hence, the quality of education in these schools is maintained as observed because of its performances.

### **1. Review of Related Literature and Rationale of the Study**

Education at the schools run by Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha is quite different from other schools of Odisha because of its achievements. The education of these schools, includes physical education, yoga training, moral

and spiritual education, Sanskrit language teaching, music teaching, etc., for the children apart from regular subjects or courses. Ideological training through extra-curricular activities is the unique one. Students participate in various development works and disaster management, leadership education, linking it to social services. Hinduism is the gospel of education as observed (Chatterji, 2003).

In successful continuance to past academic years, schools run by Shiksha Vikash Samiti (SVS) namely Saraswati Sishu Vidyamandirs have shown their dominance in school education starting from Class-I to Class-X. The results prove it in matriculation examination in comparison to schools run by Government of Odisha and other schools run by different organizations. The result proves, 62 students have cemented their positions in the top-hundred list of successful students in 2012 Annual Higher Secondary (AHSC) Examination conducted by BSE, Odisha. The credit of this success goes to the students, the teachers, parents, and SVS authorities who have made restless efforts for the dominant performance. Not only in 2012, but in subsequent years, the same performances are seen in these schools. The quality of education provided in these schools may be the cause of this success. Studies have revealed the quality dimensions have a greater role for academic achievement of learners. Farombi (1998) observed that school environment having poor school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, poor teacher quality, questionable location of school, small class size, and overpopulated classrooms have negative influence on students' academic achievement. Akande (1995) found, learning is enhanced through interaction with one's environment which includes books, audio-visual, software, and hardware of educational technology. Similarly size of classroom, sitting position and arrangement, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, shelves on which instruments for practical are arranged have a positive impact on learning (Farombi, 1998; Odeh, 2015). Learning environment determines students' behaviour and determines how a student interacts (Tsavga, 2011). Freiberg et al. (1999) observed school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, teacher quality, type of location of school, and class size produce better school leavers with high

achievement. Improved environmental condition leads to higher intelligence scores while poor environmental conditions reduce these scores (Abenga, 1995). Taylor (2009) found the relationship between environment and design within the classroom from a theoretical perspective which was regarded as "Silent Curriculum". It means that classroom environmental design can facilitate and improve the learning process like the overt curriculum.

The system of examination was inflexible. It was based on a 'one-size-fits-all' principle, wherein the individuality and creativity of the learner were not taken into account. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) observed on the existing examination system that it needs systemic reformation in context of evaluation and assessment. The high failure rates, increasing number of school drop-outs, unhealthy competition, stress, nervous breakdowns, and suicides among learners make it imperative for Indian educationists to look into the evaluation system of the country, which is at present examination oriented. The need of the hour is to prepare our young learners as innovative problem-solvers and not as rote-learners (Kapur, n.d.). To correct this distortion, NCF (2005) had proposed some guiding principles for school education, which were: connecting knowledge to life outside the school, ensuring that learning is shifted away from rote methods, enriching the curriculum to provide for overall development of children rather than remain textbook centric, making examinations more flexible and integrated into classroom life, and nurturing an over-riding identity informed by caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country (Kapur, n.d., p. 5).

NCF (2005) has proposed a shift in the approach towards teaching and learning, from the earlier behaviorist approach to the constructivist approach. Under the behaviorist approach, the student's achievement was determined on the basis of memory, as a result of which, the meta-cognitive skills, such as critical thinking; reasoning ability, and problem solving were totally neglected (Kapur, n.d.). Whether, this new approach of learning is adapted in schools?

The schools under SVS, Odisha produce the best results in comparison to schools run by Government of Odisha of

same curricular pattern. It is assumed that the success of these schools is because of the quality teaching and learning, shift of earlier evaluation pattern to current assessment pattern suggested in NCF-2005, cordial pupil-teacher relationship, parental involvement, and above all conducive environment for learning in such schools. The questions are raised, whether, really the quality of education provided in these schools are learner-centric, cordial so as to promote enhanced learning. The hidden cause of the success needs to be explored. Hence, the investigator intends to conduct a study on quality of education in schools under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha.

## 2. Objective of the Study

- To study the perception of stakeholders (HMs, Teachers, and Parents) on quality of education in schools under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha with reference to the teaching learning practices.

## 3. Research Questions of the Study

- To what extent the classroom activities are learner centric (e.g. participatory, joyful, activity based)?
- Whether the teaching learning process followed in the schools under study is appropriate so as to promote learning?

## 4. Methodology of the Study

### 4.1 Design

The Convergent-Parallel design under Mixed Research Method was followed for carrying out the study.

### 4.2 Population and Sample

Here, the study is delimited to coastal Odisha, so the population of the study comprised all the schools named as Saraswati Vidya Mandirs/ Saraswati Shishu Mandirs situated in Coastal Odisha (N=415). Nine districts covered under the study in coastal Odisha are: Balasore (50 Schools), Bhadrak (38 Schools), Jajpur (48 Schools) Jagatsinghpur (40 Schools), Kendrapara (36 Schools), Cuttack (53 Schools), Puri (51 Schools), Khurdha (43 Schools), and Ganjam (56 Schools). All the stakeholders of such schools such as: HMs, Teachers (7900 Nos.), Students (2.00 lakh), Parents and Community Members, SVS authorities, and Schools Management members concerned comprised the population of the study. The

present study was designed to assess the quality of education in schools run by SVS, Odisha in terms of the perceptions of the HMs, Teachers, and parents on teaching learning practices.

- In first phase, four districts were selected through simple random sampling. The selected districts are: Jajpur, Cuttack, Puri, and Khurdha.
- In second phase, schools were selected from these four districts through simple random sampling.
- In third phase, key informants in schools (HMs, Teachers, Students, and Parents and Community Members) were selected through incidental sampling procedure.
- In fourth phase, SVS authorities were selected through purposive sampling. The distribution of sample of schools and key informants is presented in Table 1.

#### 4.3 Tools used for Data Collection

- Interview schedule for Head Master/ Pradhan Acharyas (Self Developed)
- Questionnaire for teachers (Self Developed)
- Interview schedule for parents-cum-community members (Self Developed)

#### 5. Results

The data pertaining to teaching learning process or methods used for course transaction were gathered. ICT and other equipments, such as: globe, maps, science kit, mathematics kit, charts, and ICT tools like computers, LCD projector, internet facility, and audio-video facility and their uses in classroom teaching process were perceived from the HMs and teachers of the schools. Perceptions of teachers on methods followed for course transaction, such as lecture/discussions, demonstrations, field visit, group discussions, peer learning, panel discussion, self-study,

Districts/ Schools/ Informants	District-1 Cuttack	District-2 Jajpur	District-3 Puri	District-4 Khurdha	Total
Schools	08	08	08	08	32
HMs (Elementary and Secondary)	12	10	10	08	40
Teachers	80	80	80	80	320
Parents-cum Community Members	30	30	42	30	132

Table 1. Distribution of Sample (Districts, Schools and Key Informants)

guided study, project work brain storming, home assignment, and class assignments were collected. The findings of the study pertaining to the perception of HMs, Teachers and Parents are presented below:

#### 5.1 Perception of HMs on use of ICT and Other Equipments

- Three-fourth (75%) of HMs reported globes, maps, and charts were used frequently in classroom teaching process.
- Majority of HMs (62.50%) perceived science kit, math kit, and computers were used frequently for classroom teaching process.
- Half of the HMs (50%) reported that LCD projectors were not at all used for teaching purpose and there was no internet accessibility in the schools. On the other hand, 25% of HMs perceived LCD projector was used frequently and 25% perceived sometimes used.
- Two-fifth of HMs (37.50%) reported on internet accessibility as frequent. Majority of HMs (70%) reported audio and audiovisual instruments were used frequently in classroom processes.

#### 5.2 Perception of HMs Methods of Transaction and other Teaching-Learning Practices in Classroom Teaching Process

- Majority of HMs (80%) reported to demonstration, project work, and assignments as frequently used for course transaction.
- The panel discussion, self-study, and peer learning were not at all followed in schools as reported by more than the half of the HMs, i.e. > 50%.
- Most of the HMs (87.50%) reported that scope was given for learners' participation frequently.
- Majority of HMs (75%) reported that teachers used to respond to the students frequently.
- Scope for interaction among learning was practiced frequently as reported by 62.50% HMs.
- It is further revealed that only 10% HMs reported that scope for interaction among learners, monitoring and supervision, and practice of lesson note and diary were not at all followed by schools.

### **5.3 Perception of Teachers on use of ICT and Other Equipments**

- Majority of teachers (>60%) reported globes, maps, science kits, math kits, charts, computers, and audio-visual instruments were frequently used in classroom teaching.
- Half of the teachers (50%) reported LCD projector was not at all used for teaching purposes, whereas 25% reported frequently used, and 25% as sometimes used.
- Forty percent of teachers (40%) reported, internet connection was available frequently, whereas one-fourth reported 'not at all'.

### **5.4 Perception of Teachers on Methods of Transaction and other Teaching-Learning Practices in Classroom Teaching Process**

- Lecture-cum discussion method was frequently followed in schools under study as reported by 90% of teachers.
- Majority of teachers (>75%) reported demonstration, group discussion, project works, and assignments are frequently followed.
- Other methods such as field visit and brainstorming were also frequently followed as reported by >60% of the teachers.
- Peer learning and panel discussion were not all followed as reported by more than half of the teachers (>55%).
- TLMs were frequently used as reported by the 75% teachers, whereas 25% reported as sometimes.
- One-fifth (22.50%) teachers reported innovative practices were not at all followed.
- Most of the teachers (>81%) perceived scope for learner participation and teachers' response in the class was frequently practiced; 62% of teachers perceived scope for interaction among learners was practiced frequently and 72.19% teachers perceived monitoring and supervision mechanisms were followed.

### **5.5 Perception of Parents on use of ICT and Other Equipments**

- Half of the parents (49.24%) under study reported that

TLM corner was available and 69.23% from among them were satisfied with TLM corner.

- Majority of parents (>60%) reported 'Yes' for availability of globes, maps, charts, science and math kits, computers, and audio-visual instruments and majority of them (>65%) were satisfied with availability of these equipments.
- One-fourth of parents did not know about availability of computers and LCD projectors.

### **5.6 Perception of Parents on Methods of Transaction and other Teaching-Learning Practices in Classroom Teaching Process**

- Majority of parents (72.73%) reported, group discussion was practiced in the schools. Half of those (52.08%) reported group discussion was effective for their children.
- Majority (64.40%) of parents reported that the teachers used to write lesson diary. Out of these parents, 76.47% reported that writing lesson diary had appositive effect on their children.
- More than 75% parents reported scope for interaction among learners and assignments followed in the schools under study was effective.
- Most of the parents (80.30%) reported assignments on projects were given to students and 89.62% from among these parents reported as effective.

## **6. Discussion**

Teaching-Learning process in the schools under study was assessed in terms of availability of ICT Equipment and their uses for students' learning. HMs reported globes, maps, charts, science kit, math kit, and computers were used frequently in classroom teaching process. Majority of teachers (>60%) reported the same. Majority of parents (>60%) also reported the aware of availability of globes, maps, charts, science and math kits, computers, and audio-visual instruments, and majority of them (>65%) were satisfied with availability of these equipments. In case of 50% schools, LCD projector were not at all used for teaching purpose and the same was agreed upon by the teachers. On the other hand, one-fourth of parents did not know about availability of computers and LCD projectors in

the schools. Perception of HMs on Methods of Transaction and others Teaching-Learning practices in classroom teaching process was gathered. In 80% of cases, demonstration, project work, and assignments are frequently used for course transaction. Panel discussion, self-study, and peer learning were not at all followed in schools as reported by more than the half of the HMs. Lecture-cum discussion method, demonstration, group discussion, project works, and assignments was frequently followed in schools under study as reported by 90% of teachers. Scope for learner participation and teachers' response in the class was frequently practiced. The findings have similarity with the findings of Cohen (1983), which notes that school effectiveness is clearly dependent upon effective classroom teaching. Similar conclusions about importance of teaching and learning at the classroom level are evident in the findings of Scheerens (1992), Mortimore (1993), Creemers (1994), and Ozgan and Toprak (2012). The same responses were also obtained from the parents. In the reviews of the studies, it was revealed that Teaching and Learning Process refers to the classroom level factors that directly affect student learning, including learning time, teaching strategies, and student assessment. High learning time, which refers to the amount of time a student spends on learning activity, positively influences academic performance. Research from a variety of countries has shown that instructional time is consistently related to how much children learn in the school (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991; Fuller, 1986; Henevald and Craig, 1996; Williams, 2001).

### Conclusion

In concluding remarks, it can be said that the quality of education pertaining to teaching learning process meets the standard parameters as prescribed in SSA guidelines. The schools run by SVS Odisha offers quality education as evident from the finding of this particular study. The schools selected from coastal Odisha represent the schools of other parts of the state. Therefore, the similar level of quality is prevalent in entire Odisha for such schools. The major drawback is less use of ICT equipments for classroom transaction. Demonstration, project work, and assignment methods are followed for course transaction. On the other

hand, as revealed from the discussion with HMs, panel discussion, self-study, and peer learning were not at all followed in more than the half of cases. While reports gained from the teachers, it was revealed, lecture-cum discussion method, group discussion, assigning project works were followed. The best practice, i.e. scope for learner participation and teachers' response in the class was practiced. The similar practices if followed in Government-run schools in the state, definitely, a better performances in learning shall be expected.

### Educational Implications of the Study

- The teachers of the schools under study use the teaching-aids and other TLMs for effective learning of students. Hence, the teachers of other schools run by Government and Non-government sectors need to be serious about using teaching-aids, and other equipments while explaining the lesson to the students.
- The teachers of the schools under study use globes, maps, science kits, math kits charts, computers, and audio-visual instruments in classroom teaching. Teachers of other schools run by government and other bodies should use globes, maps, science kits, math kits, charts, computers, and audio-visual instruments in classroom teaching.
- It was found that all the schools under study were having sitting arrangement with desk, bench, chair, table, etc., and 87.50% schools were in very good condition and 93.75% schools were having provision of electricity with fans and lights in classrooms. Computer lab and LCD projector, TV, tape recorder, and DVD players were available in majority of schools under study. Hence, for effective learning environment and enhanced learning attainment, the provisions as mentioned above need to be made available.
- It was found that lecture-cum discussion method, demonstration, project work, and assignments are frequently used for course transaction in majority of schools. Besides, scope was given for learners' participation frequently. This resulted in the learning attainment of students. Hence, schools run by Government and other private bodies may follow these methods for transaction of courses.

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