



Analysing the Status and challenges of Education in Bahukhandi Slum at Lucknow Uttar Pradesh: An Anthropological Insight

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Abstract

Present study conducted on 200 houses of urban slum at Balu Adda in Lucknow, delineates the structure of the population on the basis of variables like composition of age and sex, socio-economic pursuits, educational and marital status, challenges and problems. Education in its broadest, general sense is the means through which the aims and habits of a group of people sustain from one generation to the next. This paper represents the status of education in Bahukhandi slum at Lucknow. This paper also focuses the key challenges of education in children of Bahukhandi slum.

Key words: *Education, Slum, Challenges.*

Introduction

Education in its broadest, general sense is the means through which the aims and habits of a group of people sustain from one generation to the next. Generally, it occurs through any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts. In its narrow, technical sense, education is the formal process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, customs and values from one generation to another, e.g. instruction in schools.

A right to education has been created and recognized by some jurisdictions: Since 1952, Article 2 of the first Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights obliges all signatory parties to guarantee the right to education. At the global level, the United Nations' International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 guarantees this right under its Article 13.

Meaning of Education

"Education is that process of development which consist the passage of human being from infancy to maturity, the process whereby he adapts himself gradually in various ways to his physical and spiritual environment."

- T. Raymont

Etymological Meaning

The word 'Education' is derived from the Latin word 'Educatum' means to train. 'E' means from inside and 'Duco' means to draw out, to lead out or to bring up.

- (1) Educatum-to train, Act of teaching or training
- (2) Educere-to leadout, to draw out
- (3) Educare-to bring up, to raise, too educate

Need of Education

The new born infant is a helpless human being. He is not aware of the social customs and traditions. But as he grows older, he is influenced by the informal and formal agencies of

education. In this way he develops his physical, mental, and emotional self and social feelings also develop in him gradually. In short, education is able to instil in the child a sense of maturity and responsibility. Education bestows upon the child immense benefits. It brings up the child as the parents do. It guides him like an affectionate father and serves him faithfully like a wife. A well educated person is known all over the region. Education cultivates the individual and helps him in his needs all over the world. Thus education develops the individual like a flower which distributes its fragrance all over the world. Education develops to the full the personality of an individual in all fields and aspects making him intelligent, learned, bold, and courageous and possessing strong good character, it contributes to the growth and development of society also. It is only through education that morals, ideals and spiritual values, the aspiration of the nation and its cultural heritage is transferred from one generation to another for preservation, purification and sublimation into higher and higher achievements. In other words, with growth and development of the individual, the society also develops to development of individual as well as society.

Key Challenges for the Indian Education System

25% of the Indian population is illiterate. Only 7% of the population that goes to school managed to graduate and only 15% of those who enroll manage to make it to high school and achieve a place in the higher education system.

A few reasons why education in India is given less importance in some areas are as follows:

- 80% of schools are managed by the government. Private schools are expensive and out of reach of the poor.
- More hands to earn remains the mentality amongst many families and therefore little kids are set out to fend for the family over going to school to garner an adequate education, in the most literal sense of the word.
- Infrastructure facilities at schools across rural areas and in slums dispense very poor quality of education.
- The teachers are not well qualified and therefore not well paid and therefore are not willing to work hard enough. This has been a classical Catch-22 problem that the government has been trying hard to fight against.

Aims and objectives

The following have been the main objectives of this research work:-

1. To analyze the condition of education at Bahukhandi slum,
2. To analyze the challenges of education at Bahukhandi slum,
3. Present an analytical frame based on the analysis of family characteristics, school and the student related factors.

Methodology

This research paper is based on primary data collection with the help of interview schedule and personal in depth interviews. The sampling used in this paper is random sampling. The targeted population is those families having children.

Demography of Bahukhandi Slum

Socio-economic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, occupation and other variables.

A. Population:

This slum 'Bahukhandi' is situated at Balu adda near Fun Republic. They all are migrated from Assam in search of jobs. This slum is situated here from past 18-20 years ago. There are about 1200 people residing here and around 200 houses there. The main work of these people are rag picking.

Table showing the no. of males & females

S. no.	Sex	No. of persons	Percentage
1	Males	334	58%
2	Females	240	42%
	Total	574	100%

The total number of population in Bahukhandi is 574 out of which 334 are males & 240 are females. This table shows that the numbers of male members are more in comparison to female members.

B. Educational Qualification:

S.no.	Option	Male	Female	% of male	% of female
1	Literate	101	33	30%	14%
2	Illiterate	233	207	70%	86%
	Total	334	240	100%	100%

This table shows that in comparison to literate people illiterate people are more in numbers and in comparisons to women literacy rate men literacy rate is higher and female illiteracy rate is high in comparison to male.

C. Marital Status:

S.no.	Status	Male	Female	% of male	% of female
1	Married	131	122	39%	51%
2	Unmarried	183	109	55%	45%
3	Widow / Widower	20	9	6%	4%
4	Total	334	240	100%	100%

This table shows married persons are more in numbers and widower percent are very less.

D. Occupation:

S. no.	Types of occupation	No. of male	No. of female	% of male	% of female
1	Rag picker	205	155	61%	64%
2	Domestic servant	4	9	1%	4%
3	Garage worker	9	-	3%	-
4	Hotel worker	9	-	3%	-
5	Rickshaw puller	6	-	2%	-
6	Domestication	6	2	2%	1%
7	Labours	12	9	4%	4%
8	Station worker	7	-	2%	-
9	Farming (horticulture)	3	1	1%	1%
10	Works at shop	8	-	2%	-
11	Painter	3	-	1%	-
12	Stiching	-	4	-	2%
13	Recycling	3	2	1%	1%

This table shows that number of people working as rag pickers are high as compare to other given occupation.

E. Religion:

S.no.	Religion	No. of families	Percentage
1	Hindu	32	32%
2	Muslim	68	68%
3	Total	100%	100%

This table shows Muslim families are more in numbers about 68% of total families.

F. Age-Composition:

S. No.	Age	No. of person	Percentage
1	0-10 Years	80	14%
2	10-20 Years	223	39%
3	20-30 Years	71	12%
4	30-40 Years	87	15%
5	40-50 Years	55	10%
6	50-60 Years	18	3%
7	60-70 Years	21	4%
8	70-80 Years	19	3%
9	Total	574	100%

This table shows there are high populations in the age group of 10-20 years about 39% of person are there in this age group and the least population is of age group of 70-80 years.

Factors Effecting Educational Progress of Children at Bahukhandi Slum (Urban) Lucknow

There are some key challenges in every slum regarding education. In Bahukhandi slum lots of factors are directly responsible for education. These challenges are given below:

1. Education Attainment of the Parents

The education of the parents and other elder siblings has an impact on the educational progress of the child. The data on education attainment of the father is given in Figure

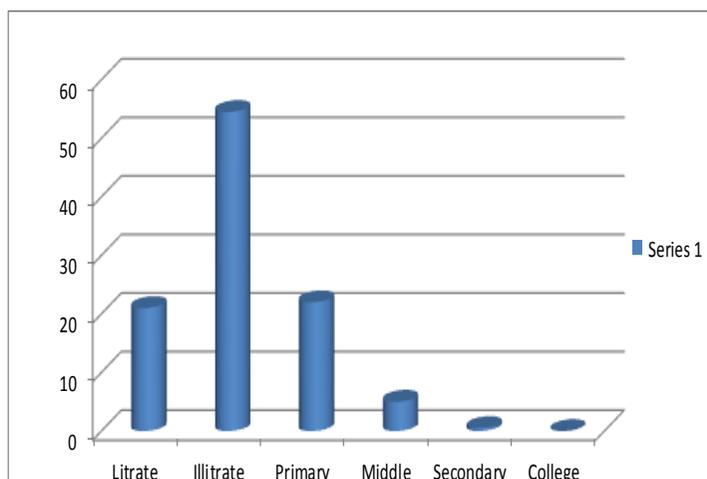
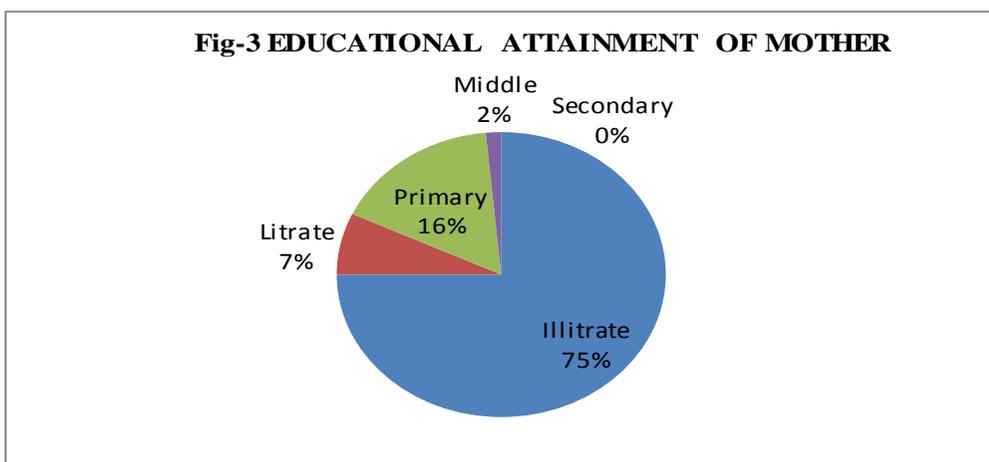


Fig.2 Educational attainment of father

Around 19 % of the fathers of sampled children are educated and thus can pursue or help their children in their study and around 52% of the fathers are uneducated, 21% fathers studied at primary level, and 0.5 at secondary level. Due to this, the achievement level of the children was low. Most of the parents reported that fathers come back home tired after long working hours and have more than one school going children. Therefore, they do not help the children.

Mothers take major responsibility in the upbringing of their children. Therefore, the education level of mothers is more important for the education of the children. The educational status of the mothers of sampled households is given in **Figure 3**



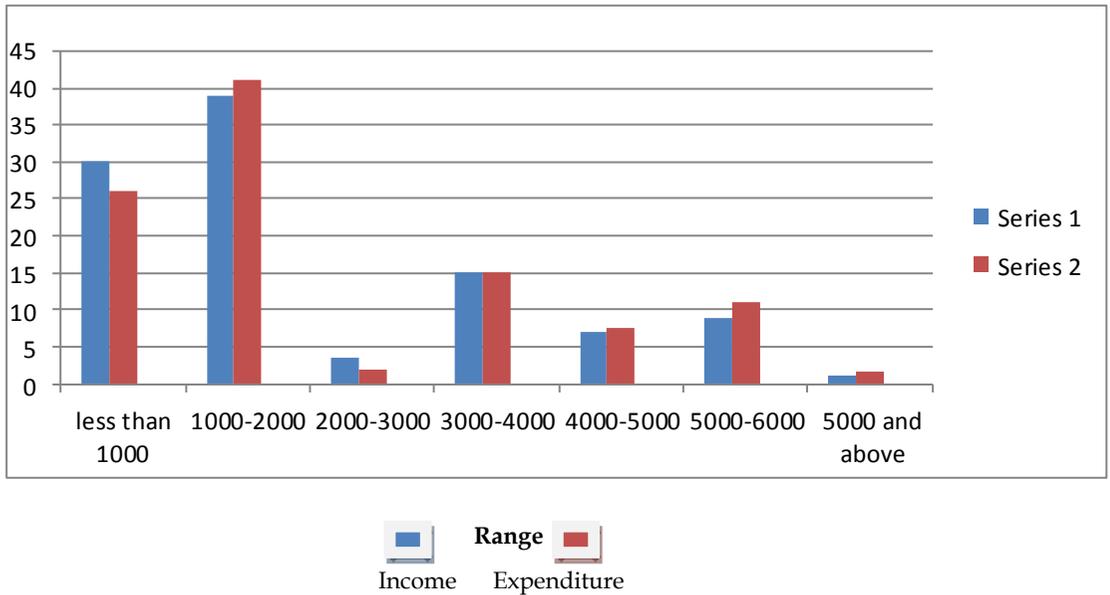
The above data speak sufficiently about the educational backwardness of women. Around 75% mothers are illiterate, only 7% are literate in which 16% were at primary level and 2% middle and 0% at secondary level. Thus they cannot help the children in their studies; as such it reflects on the achievement levels of children. The schools of these areas need to take additional responsibilities and work more efficiently to help these children. But in reality, they are malfunctioning with low teacher motivation and no accountability.

2. Household Income

Analysis of the income is very important, especially for the economically backward people as large amount of their income is spent on meeting the basic requirements. Education of children becomes the second priority, as it is difficult for parents with low income to incur expenditure on stationery and uniform. It becomes all the more difficult if they have 2 or more school going children. The income level of the household is calculated by clubbing the total income of all members of the family. Around 4 per cent households had one family member working; around 7 per cent had 2 members working and around 89 per cent had more than 2 family members working. The details of household income and

expenditure are given in Figure 1

Fig-1 Income & Expenditure of the Sample Household.



The average household income is around Rs.2200 per month for these households. But if we relate the increasing prices of essential commodities with a family size of 6 to 7 members, it becomes difficult to provide for education for these households. Therefore, majority of them have to depend on the government schools for the education of their children. Even then, around 57 per cent households are spending more than Rs200 per month on liquor, alcohol, biddi and cigarette. As far as occupation of father is concerned, around 35% are engaged as skilled or unskilled laborers have irregular jobs and low income.

3. Environmental Conditions in Slums and Their Impact on Children

Justice P.B. Sawant has clearly mentioned that shelter for a human being is not mere protection for his limbs and life. It is in his home where he has opportunity to grow physically, mentally, intellectually and spiritually. Right to shelter, therefore, includes right to adequate living space, safe and decent structure, clean and decent surroundings, sufficient light, pure air and water, electricity, sanitation and drainage facilities. Slum people are devoid of all these essential physical facilities and they are always living under the fear of 'unsettlement'. Around 98 per cent of the sampled population has only one room and 2% population have two rooms only. Rooms are dingy, small and without proper ventilation. No one have the toilet facility at home, only around 0 % people have individual tap water supply, they dependent on the community tap and tanker water. Around 50 % spend one hour daily and around 20 % two hours daily to collect water. When asked further, it was found that 25 % students were given the major responsibility of collecting water.

Girls are supposed to help in the domestic work daily. Unless the developmental programs are initiated in slums, it would be very difficult for these children to come up to the expected level of learning.

Reasons for disinterest of Children in Studies at Bahukhandi Slum (Urban)

Although most of the parents expressed the desire that their children should study up to higher levels, however the children did not want to study due to various reasons. Some of them were interested to take up job while few of them could not understand what was taught in the school. A number of children reported against the language problem of teachers and some of them said that no teaching takes place in the school. Many of them found it difficult to meet the educational expenditure. It clearly implies that the incentive schemes like the provision of free uniform, free supply of textbooks are yet to be implemented effectively and benefit the poor.

1. Reasons for Dropping Out School at Bahukhandi

There are some reasons given below which are responsible for dropping out of school in bahukhandi slum.

S.no.	Reasons regarding Household	Reasons regarding Individual Child	Reasons regarding School
1.	To look after the younger siblings	Insufficient place to study at home	Discriminatory attitude of teachers
2.	Not able to pay school fees, uniform, instructional material and books	Sickness of the child	Medium of instruction
3.	Not able to bear cost private tuition and miscellaneous charges from school such as contribution to annual day, etc.	Sickness in the family	No effective teaching
4.	Disputes within the family Lack of time for studies at home	Lack of interest in studies	Schools appears to be far off
5.	No need of education for employment	Gained Employment	Lack of female teachers
6.	Insecurity of the child Fear of rape of girl child	Poor Comprehension	
7.	No need of education for girls Frequent break in studies	Poor Academic performance	
8.	No one at home to help in studies		

2. Distance of the School

The distance of unorganized school is not far from the slum but the govt. school which is situated at another area is far from Bahukhandi. So, the children are bound to study in semi-govt. school and not able to study in govt. school.

3. Fee structure

Fee structure of "KAILASH NATH KAOL SHIKSHA SANSTHAAN" school is Rs. 130 per student and if three children of a family take admission in school then they pay fees for two children only. And in govt. school education is free for children.

4. Pre-Primary Education

Early childhood care and pre-primary education has been greatly emphasized in National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, for the achievement of UEE. Preprimary education tends to develop the sharing of fun and pleasure among the children, which facilitate in the enrolment and retention subsequently. It has become especially an urban phenomenon and private pre-primary schools are charging high fees for preparing children for admission to the formal schools. However, in the slums, due to the non-awareness and non-affordability, very few children attend such schools.

5. Parental and Other Members' Academic Support

Considering the fact that there is high illiteracy among the slum dwellers, especially among the women, children face more difficulties in pursuing their education. Even if the children manage to attend the school, they remain deprived, as they do not receive academic help from their parents. With poor school functioning and no help from the parents, impact greatly on their academic achievement. Data from the field also reveals that around only 2% children get help from their family members in their studies. However, many a time the parents cannot fully help them and the children have to depend upon the tutors.

6. Age of Learners

The sample depicts that around 39 per cent children were of relevant age group for Grade IV. More than 61 per cent were over-age. It is probably due to the fact that either children are admitted late for causes like visit to native place, sickness, adverse household circumstances or they repeat the same grade.

7. Availability of Instructional Materials

The teaching-learning process in the schools is still dependent upon the text books. Teachers always refer to the textbooks as these provide prescribed syllabus. The subjects taught at primary stage include language, mathematics, science, and social studies. Each subject has a separate book. Availability of textbooks is a prerequisite for the learners to learn. Around 10 to 15% children did not have one or the other subject book. Children of government schools reported that they obtained books from the school free of cost, while children of unorganized school obtained books from shops.

8. Provision of Mid-Day Meal and Other Incentives

To enhance the enrolment and retention, Government of India has been launching various schemes and programs for the benefit of the underprivileged and poor. Supply of free textbooks, uniforms and mid-day meal are some of the incentives given to enhance the enrolment and retention, especially at the primary level. Children of the government schools reported that they are getting regular supply of

mid-day meals, uniform (per year), incentives (per year), but these are not present in unorganized school.

Conclusion

The goal of the basic education is to give students the skills to communicate adequately, to solve basic mathematical problems and to apply this knowledge to everyday situations. Level of students in primary school is poor. A large percentage of children have low achievement level and only very few children attain 80 percent levels of achievement in various subjects. Information was gathered from slum, about various input indicators like the socioeconomic and educational background of the child's family, teacher's professional and academic qualifications etc.

The analysis of the slums clearly reflects that the slums are deprived of necessary physical and civic amenities, with no schooling facilities or with poor schooling facilities. The plans have been made to provide schooling in the difficult terrains and hilly areas but no provision has been made for the marginalized population of urban areas with regard to the availability of schools to these children in the neighborhood or within slum areas. The schools, which are provided to them, have poor infrastructure, over-crowded and teachers are not trained to deal with the learners who reside in temporary settlement with poor physical facilities. Also low motivation of the teachers to teach the children of poor socio-economic background and low educational status of the mother could be another probable cause. There is a need to move from the traditional modes of teaching to modern methods of teaching.

Suggestions

Two types of suggestions are there in this study

- I. For govt.(policy options)
- II. For society

For government (policy options)

Generally, the municipal corporations are responsible for the provision of primary education facilities within the municipal boundaries. These provisions are made from the municipal budget, which is under severe constraints for most of the municipalities. Moreover, each municipality follows a different set of norms for opening and maintenance of primary schools.

For society

Many suggestions have been made to improve the school effectiveness in municipal areas. Some of these are:

- Establishment of norms for opening and upgrading of schools, provision of teachers and other facilities for the schools located within the municipal limits;
- Motivation of teachers for understanding the problems of slum children. Special training of teachers is required to ensure that the problems of urban children are properly tackled. The urban children face special problems in the form of child abuse, danger of infections due to unhygienic slum conditions. Teachers need to make them aware about the importance of personal and environmental cleanliness.
- Developing a network of government and private schools to share common resources. Co-operation of private school teachers and volunteers should be sought for helping these children in increasing their basic competencies.

- The NGOs and self-help groups operating in the slums can be mobilized to organize remedial teaching at some central locations in the slums. This will build confidence among the children who are not able to keep pace with others.
- The present scenario demands that teachers should make the children understand that classroom is a safe place to experiment. Teachers should encourage children to take risks, to have courage to explore, to keep time for thinking and reflection and to generate in them the capacity to concentrate. If the children are provided with a greater friendly space to learning through joyous activities, attractive texts and materials and free interaction with the teacher and their peer group, the learning competency would greatly improve. Teachers should be trained to manage the classroom without the use of rods.
- The slum children have a peculiar problem as they visit the hometown generally during the harvesting season with their parents and overstay there during the academic session. Remedial teaching should be arranged as most of them have the similar time and period of their absence. The school days otherwise should be adjusted accordingly.
- For improving the competencies in language, audio and video-cassettes should be used. Children should be given the simple storybooks to read and teacher should take the feedback from the children.

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