

## A Critical Analysis of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) Schools of Mizoram: A Case Study

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### Abstract

*The present study investigated schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) in Mizoram. These schools were situated in Lunglei District under the Tlabung Sub-division in the Southern part of Mizoram close to the Bangladesh border. Secondary School was the main target of the study and four schools were randomly selected. A self-developed case study Proforma and a Checklist for School observation were used to collect data. The study was purely qualitative in nature, and analyses of the schools were done in the light of selected parameters. The teaching-learning process in Educationally Backward Block (EBB) Schools in Mizoram was basically child-centric. Teachers and students were working hard to catch up with others students in different parts of the state. Instead of having some fundamental obstacles in terms of communication between students and teachers, lack of ICT assistance and unavailability of SMDC.*

**Keywords:** Critical analysis, Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs), Case study.

### Introduction

Mizoram ranks third in the country in terms of literacy, with a rate of 91.3 per cent (Business Standard, 2019). Nonetheless, Mizoram has one Educationally Backward Block, which is not ideal for the state, which is the most literate in the country. The only Educationally Backward Block (EBB) in Mizoram is situated in Lunglei District under Tlabung Sub-division in Lungsens Rural Development Block in the southern part of the state, close to the Bangladesh border. Though there is little information and it appears that no research is being conducted in the field of Educationally Backward Block (EBB), a study and analysis of the schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) is both necessary and important.

Tlabung Sub-division in Lungsens Rural Development Block is Mizoram's only

Educationally Backward Block and Mizo people alone did not live in that area or block; other tribes such as Chakma and Bru are also there. One could say that it is a very mixed area where people use their own mother tongue for communication. For example, Chakma people do not know the Mizo language and Mizo people do not know Chakma language — communicating with one another seems really difficult, and can be thought that because of the language barrier, most students' parents drop out which increases low literacy rate that leads to only Educationally Backward Block (EBB) in Mizoram. Having Researched on Educationally Backward Block (EBB) is very important because it will be able to notify their weaknesses and difficulties and once those are identified, steps can be taken to eliminate their backwardness. Research might help and develop their living and that

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can be a good benefit for the local people and for the nation as well. People living in that area are having a very low income on average and they really need help from the Government. Even today, some villages are not like even in jeep roads also and they used boats for transportation one can imagine that if there are no roads for transportation and communication, how will they receive adequate education? Research should be done in such a way that the State Government will know their difficulties and can take some measures to improve and solve problems in that area so that one day the local people and Mizoram might earn emancipation from Educationally Backward Block (EBB). It is very clear that it cannot be done in a very short period of time like two to three years, but at least the State Government needs to know the exact situation, and at the very least, the Government needs to devise some procedure, and start working on that. If not, it will remain as it is always and will still be deformed of Mizoram.

India has a total of 6701 blocks of which 3453 are educationally backward blocks as per the Department of School Education and Literacy under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. While elementary education is taken care of by the RTE Act in all the blocks including Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs), secondary and higher secondary education needs special focus. The educationally backward blocks constitute 51.5 per cent (Sanghi & Sinha, 2014) of the total blocks in the country and 74 per cent (MHRD, 2016) of such blocks are concentrated in the eight states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

Lungsen Rural Developed Block is one of the numerous Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) in India. Because of the importance placed on the Block, the State government opened a new Education Sub Division at Lungsen on November 3, 2008 (School Education: Mizoram, 2016) which is an important step toward educational

improvement. Furthermore, when the mid-day meal program was made available to the Middle School Sections, Lungsen Block was the first to benefit from it. During the tenth Plan, a program called the Scheme for Upgrading Female Student Residential and Hostel Infrastructure was in place. Lungsen Village was chosen for the establishment of a Model School and Girl's Hostel under the Scheme.

A case study is a detailed investigation of a particular individual, organization, or event. A case study looks at almost every aspect of the subject's life and history in order to find patterns and causes for their actions. Case studies may be employed in a variety of fields, including psychology, medicine, education, ethnography, political science, and social work, to name a few (Bassey, 1999). The idea is to be able to apply what has been learned from one example to a variety of others. Unfortunately, case studies are sometimes subjective, making extrapolating results to a larger population challenging.

Education is the only way for human beings to do more than forage or hunt. Education is the only way civilization survives more than one generation. People living in Educationally Backward Blocks really need a much better education than they have right now in order to improve their Backwardness and that can be done best effectively by the state Government.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To study the challenges of schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram with respect to the teachers and students.
2. To analyse the teaching-learning practices in the schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.
3. To identify the infrastructural challenges of schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.

## Delimitation of the Study

1. The study was conducted only in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) schools of Mizoram.
2. The study was done only in the high schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.
3. The study was done on the selected parameters of the Educationally Backward Block (EBB).

## Design of the Study

The study is basically a qualitative study. Therefore, the study has made use of the qualitative analysis technique for achieving the objectives of the study. The study has used the case study technique to study the challenges and another related aspect of the schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram. As well as a checklist to analyse the schools in EBB.

## Population and Sample of the Study

### Population

For the present study, the schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram were taken as a population.

### Sample

For the present study the selected schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram have been taken as sample. Here, in this study, four different schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) were selected randomly as a sample. Out of which three schools were from Tuichawng and one from Tlabung Village.

## Tools used in the Study

In the present study researcher has developed the following tools:

1. A Case Study Proforma.
2. A Checklist for school observations.

## Development of Case Study Proforma

Proforma for a case study of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) schools in Mizoram was developed by the researcher. The proforma was developed on the basis of certain criteria like: About the schools, learners' enrolment and characteristics, the profile of the teacher, the teaching-learning process, community ownership, and best practices of the schools. With the help of this case study proforma study of all four schools was done.

## Development of a checklist for school observations

A checklist for the observation of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) schools was developed by the researcher. The checklist was developed on the basis of selected dimensions for school observation. The checklist contains a total of 31 items related to the infrastructure of the schools, the teaching-learning process, the school environment, learner assessment/evaluation, and innovative practices in the school.

After the final development of the checklist, the first draft of the checklist was given to the experts for suggestions and validation. After incorporating the suggestions given by the experts into the checklist, the final draft of the checklist was developed.

## Data Collection

In the present study, data was gathered with the help of the case study proforma as well as with the help of a checklist. A case study is used for overall critical inspection related to selected schools, whereas a checklist is used for observing the teaching-learning process, school environment, and infrastructure facilities of the schools.

Findings of the Study

## Findings of Objectives I

### *To study the Challenges of schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram with respect to the teachers and students.*

Educationally Backward Block (EBB) schools are faces lots of problems in communication with the students and the lack of students' previous knowledge is still a big challenge. Though, in this block, there are a few schools that did not face problems in communication but faced problems with the lack of regular teachers and untrained teachers, especially in private schools and mission schools. The challenges in this block for schools are different from every angle and are believed that it can be improved accordingly based on their needs.

## Findings of Objective II

### *To analyse the teaching-learning practices in the schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.*

The teaching-learning practices in the Educationally Backward Block schools of Mizoram are students-centric teaching-learning processes and are very conducive to the learning environment so that students may find more interest in their learning. The transfer of information, the conveying of skills, and the molding of attitudes, values, and conduct are the main goals of teaching-learning practices in the school. Teacher pays keen interest in every activity done by students as a whole and there is a close link between teachers and students. Students are found motivated by social values and self-discipline. The teachers are working very hard and they try different approaches for the learner to catch up with their present syllabus like taking extra classes and remedial teaching.

## Findings of Objective III:

### *To identify Infrastructural challenges of schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram*

Finding related to School 1 Infrastructure

The school has satisfactory infrastructure facilities in order to enhance the teaching-learning process and provide support to the overall teaching-learning process. This school can improve some of the infrastructural facilities like creating learner corners and developing the garden within the school premises in order to improve the overall infrastructural facilities. The overall existing infrastructural facilities in the school are listed in the table.

**Table: 1**

**Infrastructure of EBB School 1**

Sl. No.	Infrastructure		Numbers
1.	Classrooms		2
2.	Library		1 (well functional)
3.	Learning corners		0
4.	Laboratory		1
5.	Play Ground		1 (volleyball court)
6.	Toilet	Boys	4
		Girls	4
7.	Drinking water availability		1 (filter)
8.	Garden		0
9.	Electricity		Good Electricity connection

## Finding related to School 2

### Infrastructure

School 2 has good infrastructure facilities order to improve the teaching-learning process and teachers are learners are making full use of the infrastructure. The school has

a good classroom but some of the facilities were missing like lack of a learning corner and if this thing is improved the learner will have much more interest in their learning. The following are the existing infrastructure facilities of the school:

**Table: 2**

**Infrastructure of EBB School 2**

Sl. No.	Infrastructure		Numbers
1.	Classrooms		3
2.	Library		1 (well functional)
3.	Learning corners		0
4.	Laboratory		1
5.	Play Ground		1 (Badminton court) & (1) Table Tennis
6.	Toilet	Boys	2
		Girls	2
7.	Drinking water availability		1 water cooler
8.	Garden		School surroundings
9.	Electricity		Good electricity collection

## Finding related to School 3

### Infrastructure

School 3 has adequate infrastructure and they utilised it very well with the teachers and the learners. Also, the location of the school was perfect i.e., it is situated near the

main road. If the school can improve some of its infrastructural facilities, then they can enhance their teaching learning process and learning. Government High School, Tlabung have the following infrastructure facilities:

**Table: 3**

**Infrastructure of EBB School 3**

Sl. No.	Infrastructure		Numbers
1.	Classrooms		6
2.	Library		1 (well functional)
3.	Learning corners		0
4.	Laboratory		1
5.	Play Ground		2 (Volleyball courts)
6.	Toilet	Boys	2
		Girls	3
7.	Drinking water availability		1 water cooler
8.	Garden		School surroundings
9.	Electricity		Good electricity collection

## Finding related to School 4 Infrastructure

The school has a moderate infrastructure and a good study environment which supports

the overall teaching-learning process to be satisfactory as compared to other EBB schools in Mizoram. School 4 has the following infrastructure facilities:

**Table: 4**

**Infrastructure of EBB School 4**

Sl. No.	Infrastructure		Numbers
1.	Classrooms		4
2.	Library		1 (well functional)
3.	Learning corners		0
4.	Laboratory		1
5.	Play Ground		1 (volley Ball court)
6.	Toilet	Boys	4
		Girls	4
7.	Drinking water availability		3 filter
8.	Garden		School surroundings
9.	Electricity		Good electricity collection

## Summary

The present study was done for knowing and understanding the situation of the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) School in Mizoram. In this research, the main objectives were to study the challenges of the school, teaching-learning practices and infrastructural challenges of the school, learning enrolment and characteristics, community ownership, and innovative and best practices of the school. The study basically used the qualitative analysis technique for achieving the objectives of the study. The study makes use of the case study technique to study the challenges and other related aspects of the schools in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram. Along with this, checklist was also used to analyse the infrastructural aspect. School 1 and School 2 are both located in Tuichawng village and the major challenges of these schools are language and communication. Learning and teaching suffer when there is a breakdown in communication. School 3 has a lot of

experience, and being situated in Mizo village, it does not have the same communication issues as the other schools. This school suffers from regular teachers and adequate instructional arrangements. Due to the availability of guest teachers, the children do not suffer much. Apart from that, the schools suffer from a lack of adequate infrastructure. The School 4 also located in Tuichawng Village is a completely private residential school administered by Buddhists. All of the students and teachers are Chakma, so communication is not an issue.

Students are at the core of the teaching-learning process in Educationally Backward Block (EBB) schools, and teachers have a thorough comprehension of the students. They are also given full attention, and students receive assistance and support from all sides. The teaching-learning process is the same as others in the state but the difference is the students. Lack of previous knowledge is an immense issue for teachers. Teachers are also highly qualified and have great experience as well but the problem

arises because of the inadequacy of basic knowledge, especially in the field of science and mathematics.

The schools in Educationally Backward Block (EBB) also have good infrastructure the condition of the classrooms is really good and some schools are using green/whiteboards

instead of black so that the students can have a clear sight and all the schools are having good electricity connection, proper drinking water, library, laboratory, toilets, etc. It is pretty fair to say that they got what they need in terms of infrastructure.

**Table: 5**  
**Master table**

Sl. No.	Dimensions Observed	School 1 Tuichawng	School 2 Tuichawng	School 3 Tlabung	School 4 Tuichawng
1.	Availability of proper drinking water.	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	Availability of proper sitting arrangement for the learner.	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	Do the Headmaster and Teachers maintain school discipline?	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	Does the school have a Library?	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	Is there an SMDC (School Management Development Committee)?	✓	✗	✓	✓
6.	Does the school have a Science Laboratory?	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	Availability of Science Practical Equipment.	✗	✓	✓	✓
8.	Does the school have a Computer Laboratory?	✓	✗	✓	✗
9.	Does the School have good toilet conditions?	✓	✓	✓	✓
10.	There is a special toilet for Physically Disable people.	✓	✗	✗	✗
11.	Learner enjoys teaching and learning.	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Conclusion of the Study

Teachers and students in Mizoram's Educationally Backward Block (EBB) are working hard to catch up with pupils in other regions of the state. Students in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) School in Mizoram attend remedial sessions to improve their academic performance. Despite the fact that some schools have obstacles in terms of communication between students and teachers owing to language barriers, others face infrastructure issues as well as a lack of ICT assistance for teaching and learning. One school in the Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram is also suffering from the unavailability of the School Management and development Committee (SMDC), which appears to be one of the reasons affecting school operations. With the exception of a few schools, all schools in Mizoram's Educationally Backward Block (EBB) have enough certified instructors. In addition, teaching-learning processes in Educationally Backward Block (EBB) Mizoram schools must be enhanced, and new and relevant teaching approaches must be used.

## Educational Implications of the Study

### *Major educational implications of the study are as under:*

- The findings of the study can be used for the betterment of the schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.
- The findings of the study can be used for providing suggestive measures to improve the existing gaps among the schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.
- The findings of the study can be used to rectify the issues in the teaching-learning in schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.
- The findings of the study can be used to improve the communication issues within the classroom and during the instructional process in schools of Educationally Backward Block (EBB) of Mizoram.

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