

A Comparative Study of Students of Government and Non-government Schools in Reading and Writing of Mother Tongue

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Abstract

The quality of education and its determinants remain a topic of attention since the beginning of formal education. Though there are a number of factors which determine the quality of education, the most vital one that attracts the attention of all is the level of achievement. For any nation of the world these levels of achievement are so important that they need to be known periodically to keep a tab on the general health of the education system. But there is a big gap in the level of achievement in different types of schools. Factors, such as semi qualified teachers, very high student-teacher ratio, inappropriate teaching-learning materials and out-dated teaching methods result in a low quality of education. As a result, there are many students who even after completing primary schooling lack even in rudimentary reading and writing skills. Governing body of the schools is also other prominent factor for this. In India a large population of children study in the government schools and researches indicate that the outcome of the government schools is not up to the mark. The following paper investigates this perception in the context of reading and writing skills of children in their mother tongue.

INTRODUCTION

In the area of primary education a rapid growth has been seen since

the global meeting in Dakar in year 2000. It introduced renewed urgency into the international movement to

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provide basic education for every child in the world. Keeping the appeal of Jomtien, some countries made progress in reducing disparities of their countries in the distribution of educational opportunity which were based on gender, disability, ethnicity, residential area and income of family.

These disparities can be easily seen in developing and undeveloped countries. More well as large numbers of children are out of schools than developed countries. In South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, fewer than three out of four pupils reach Grade 5 (Final Report Dakar, 2000). Situation of education is not very much dissimilar now these days also. Although in the classes number of students has been increased but they are not getting good quality of education. Also in India condition of primary education is not well and maximum numbers of students are getting a poor quality of education. Achieving a real change in the situation of primary education is really a much more demanding task in the country (Drèze and Sen, 1995).

Government schools cater education to a large population. But several recent papers point out, private fee-charging schools increasingly cater to a substantial fraction of the primary-schools going population in India (Muralidharan, n.d). The main cause of attraction of parents for private or non-Government schools is poor quality of education in Government schools. A number of researchers believe that

private schools provide a better quality of education than the public ones as many findings show that student achievement has been considerably higher in non-Government schools (Bedi and Garg, 2000; Corten and Dronkers, 2006; Braun, Jenkins and Grigg, 2006; Muralidharan, n.d.). The Probe Team sought to answer this question by visiting, unannounced, 195 government schools and 41 private schools in 188 villages of four, educationally backward states. In half of the government schools they found no teaching activity at all at the time of the visit. Moreover, this pattern of idleness 'is not confined to a minority of irresponsible teachers—it has become a way of life in the profession' and is characteristic even of government schools with good infrastructure, adequate books and a relatively low pupil/teacher ratio. In contrast, they found a 'high level of teaching activity in private schools, even makeshift ones where the work environment is no better than in government schools' (Probe Team 1999; Willmore, 2004).

Also in rural areas of country preference for non-government or private schools is increasing. Studies, present results from nationally representative samples of rural India to show that 28% of the population of rural India has access to fee-charging private primary schools (Muralidharan and Kremer 2006, and the Pratham, 2005). At present every parent wishes to enrol his child in non-government schools/private

schools but low income of family is like a barrier for it. Every child is not in position to enrol in private schools (Hawley, 1995).

To uncover the status of quality of education in primary schools of India researcher has done this study. Language is prime factor to understand other subjects. In the absence of language (reading, writing and symbolic) no one can go on smoothly. So the investigator has tried to explore the proficiency of students in their mother tongue. Basically there are nine basic skills in language: listening, speaking, reading, writing, comprehension of ideas (through listening and reading), functional grammar, self-learning, and language use and vocabulary control. First four competencies are related to the four language skills that are universally known and well established. So researcher tried to assess the competencies of students especially in reading and writing which are major two competencies of first four competencies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Whether the students of primary schools are proficient in reading and writing of mother tongue?
- Whether the students of Government primary schools differ from students of Non-Government primary schools in proficiency of reading of mother tongue?
- Whether the students of Government primary schools

differ from students of Non-government primary schools in proficiency of writing of mother tongue?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of proficiency in mother tongue reading and writing at the end of the class.
- To study the differences in proficiency in reading of mother tongue in the government and Non-government primary schools.
- To study the differences in proficiency in writing of mother tongue in the government and Non-government primary schools.

METHODOLOGY

1. Tools

As per objectives of this study mainly two tools were developed by the investigator to determine the proficiency of the students in reading and writing of mother tongue. Reading test has two sections; section-A which was related to prose and section-B which was related to poetry. Same as there are two sections of mother tongue writing section-A and section-B which were related to prose and poetry respectively. The last paragraphs and stanzas of the last chapter of prose and poetry were taken to assess the reading and writing competency of students because all types of diacritics (matarayen) were included and the difficulty level increased with each chapter; the last chapter being the most difficult. After selection of the

paragraph for reading the researcher proceeded to select difficult words, for which students face problems in reading and writing. A pilot test of reading ability and a dictation test for writing ability was conducted on 40 students. There were 45 items in the mother tongue reading test and 50 items in the mother tongue writing test, which broadly covered all types of diacritics (matarayen). Test items were made according to the syllabus prescribed by NCERT.

2. Sampling

There were four types of schools selected for the study; these schools were broadly related to the different categories which are as follow;

- (i) Government schools (Hindi medium)
- (ii) Government schools (English medium)
- (iii) Non-government schools (Hindi medium)
- (iv) Non-government schools (English medium)

For the study an appropriate number of students were selected

from these schools. Students of Class IV were selected for the study.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

For the study four types of schools were selected by the investigator for the collection of data. The tests of reading and writing were administered on 80 students of government schools (Hindi medium), 58 students of government schools (English medium), 80 students of non – government schools (Hindi medium) and 44 students of non-government schools (English medium).

The reading and writing mother tongue proficiency test which consisted of 45 and 50 items respectively were scored by allocating 1 mark for each correct answer and 0 mark for each incorrect answer. Subsequently, the mean, SD and ‘t’ values of the scores were computed as per need of the study.

The analysis and interpretation of the results are presented and discussed below:

Table 1 indicates about the performance of students of all

Table 1
Mean Performance of all Students in Reading and Writing of Mother Tongue

| N | Reading | | Writing | |
|-----|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 262 | 34.07 | 10.62 | 26.54 | 12.80 |

schools in reading and writing of mother tongue. There were total 262 students from different types of schools which are government Hindi medium schools, government English medium schools, non-government Hindi medium schools and non-government English medium schools. Total number of words which were read by these students correctly, were 8926 out of 11760 words and total number of words which were written by all students, were 6953 out of 13100 words. These were 75.90 per cent and 53.08 per cent respectively. The mean of reading of mother tongue at the end of Class IV found to be 34.07 with standard deviation 10.62

whereas mean of writing of mother tongue at the end of Class IV found to be 26.54 with standard deviation 12.80. It shows that students were more proficient in reading of mother tongue than writing of mother tongue. We learn speak or read first rather than writing. It may be a factor that students were more proficient in reading rather than writing.

Table 2 indicates about the achievement of students of different type of schools in reading of mother tongue. It shows clear picture of students' achievement in reading. Students who stand between the range of 0-5 were 13, 3 students fall within the interval of 5-10 and 10-15,

Table 2
Scores of Students in Reading of Mother Tongue

| Score | Number of Children in Different Types of schools | | | | Total number of Students |
|--------------|--|----|----|----|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| 0 - 5 | 13 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 13 |
| 5 - 10 | 03 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 03 |
| 10 - 15 | 03 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 03 |
| 15 - 20 | 07 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 07 |
| 20 - 25 | 10 | 00 | 00 | 03 | 13 |
| 25 - 30 | 08 | 00 | 10 | 01 | 19 |
| 30 - 35 | 13 | 03 | 18 | 08 | 42 |
| 35 - 40 | 18 | 24 | 24 | 14 | 80 |
| 40 - 45 | 05 | 31 | 28 | 18 | 82 |
| Total | 80 | 58 | 80 | 44 | 262 |

1. Government Schools (Hindi Medium) 2. Government Schools English Medium
3. Non- Government Schools Hindi Medium 4. Non- Government Schools English Medium

7 students stand between the interval of 15-20. 13, 19 and 42 students fall within the interval of 20-25, 25-30 and 30-35 respectively. 80 students stand between interval of 35-40 and 82 students which were maximum in any range, stand between class interval 40-45.

When we see the reading proficiency of students according to their schools, table 2 indicates that the condition of students of government Hindi medium schools was worst. 13 students fall in the interval of 0-5. The mode of ungrouped data of this category was zero, which shows that in this category maximum number of students scored zero. These students

were unable to read any single word of their mother tongue in the end of the class. In comparison to students of government Hindi medium schools there was not any student of government English medium schools, non-government Hindi medium schools and non-government English medium schools scored zero and stands in the interval of 0-5. As well as there was no any student who stands in the class interval of 5-10, 10-15 and 15-20 whereas, from government Hindi medium schools 3 students scored between 5-10, 3 students scored between 10-15 and 7 students scored between 15-20. Performance of students of government English

Table 3
Scores of Students in Writing of Mother Tongue

| Score | Number of Children in Different Types of schools | | | | Total number of Students |
|--------------|--|----|----|----|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| 0 – 5 | 23 | 00 | 00 | 01 | 24 |
| 5- 10 | 08 | 01 | 00 | 01 | 10 |
| 10- 15 | 10 | 00 | 04 | 03 | 17 |
| 15- 20 | 12 | 03 | 14 | 05 | 34 |
| 20-25 | 10 | 03 | 07 | 08 | 28 |
| 25-30 | 08 | 08 | 17 | 03 | 36 |
| 30-35 | 04 | 12 | 12 | 09 | 37 |
| 35-40 | 04 | 10 | 12 | 10 | 36 |
| 40-45 | 01 | 17 | 12 | 02 | 32 |
| 45-50 | 00 | 04 | 02 | 02 | 08 |
| Total | 80 | 58 | 80 | 44 | 262 |

1. Government Schools (Hindi Medium) 2. Government Schools English Medium
3. Non- Government Schools Hindi Medium 4. Non- Government Schools English Medium

medium schools is best than their counterparts. Students of non-government Hindi medium schools showed better competency in reading of mother tongue than students of government Hindi medium schools and non-government English medium schools.

Reading proficiency of students of different types of schools is not up to the norm of NCERT. : Kurien's (1991); Jangira (1994); also found in their studies that 80 per cent students didn't achieved 80 per cent of their syllabus of Reading. This is also consistent with finding of Shanbhag (1992); UNESCO (2001) and Pratham (2006-10) in which they found poor reading ability of students.

Table 3 shows the writing proficiency of students in mother tongue. Collectively all students performed better in reading than writing. Table also shows overall performance of students in writing of mother tongue of all four type of schools. 24 students scored between 0-5, 10 students scored between 5-10, 17 students scored between 10-15 and 34 students scored between 15-20. There were 28, 36, 37, 36 and 32 students fall in the class interval of 20-25, 25-30, 30-35, 35-40 and 40-45 respectively. Only 8 students scored between 45-50; which is very low than their performance in reading of mother tongue.

When we see students' performance as their schools wise, students of government Hindi medium schools performed worst

among all. From government Hindi medium schools 23 students scored between 0-5 and 1 student from non-government English medium schools scored zero. No one student of government English medium and non-government Hindi medium schools was in this group. Between the range of 5-10; 8 students were from government Hindi medium schools, 1 student from government English medium schools, 1 student from non-government English medium schools and none of student was from non-government Hindi medium schools in this group. As reading test of mother tongue students of government English medium schools also performed best in the test of writing of mother tongue than their counterparts. Only 1 student from government Hindi medium schools stands in the range of 40-45, 12 students from non-government Hindi medium schools and 2 students from non-government English medium schools stand in this group. Between the interval of 45-50 no one student is from government Hindi medium schools. In this range two students were from non-government Hindi medium schools, 2 students were from non-government English medium schools and 4 students were from government English medium schools. Table indicates that the students of government Hindi medium schools performed worst and students of government English medium schools performed best in writing of mother tongue.

Table 4
Mean Performance of Student's of Class- IV Studying in Different types of Schools

| Type of schools | Groups | Scores | |
|-----------------|--------|---------|---------|
| | | Reading | Writing |
| 1 | N | 80 | 80 |
| | Mean | 24.80 | 15.26 |
| | SD | 13.85 | 11.65 |
| 2 | N | 58 | 58 |
| | Mean | 40.10 | 35.48 |
| | SD | 2.68 | 8.48 |
| 3 | N | 80 | 80 |
| | Mean | 37.09 | 30.05 |
| | SD | 5.23 | 9.48 |
| 4 | N | 44 | 44 |
| | Mean | 37.48 | 28.86 |
| | SD | 5.87 | 10.6 |

1. Government Schools (Hindi Medium) 2. Government Schools English Medium
3. Non-Government Schools Hindi Medium 4. Non- Government Schools English Medium

Proficiency of students in writing of mother tongue is not up to the norm of NCERT. Kurien's (1991); Dave (1988); Roy, Mitra, Ray (1995); Bhatia (1997) also found in their studies that 80 per cent students didn't achieved 80 per cent of their syllabus of language. This is also consistent with findings of Shanbhag (1992), Ramkalyani (1993), Ved Prakash et al (1999); UNESCO (2001) and surveys of Pratham (2006, 20007, 2008, 2009 and 2010) in which they found poor performance of students in language.

Table 4 specifies about mean performances of students of different

types of schools in reading and writing of mother tongue of students in different types of schools. In government Hindi medium schools mean of reading mother tongue is found to be 24.80 and mean of writing mother tongue was 15.26 with standard deviation 13.85 and 11.65 respectively. Scored mean of students of government English medium schools in reading of mother tongue is found to be 40.10 with standard deviation 2.68 and 35.48 with standard deviation 8.48 in writing of mother tongue. Mean proficiency of students of non-government Hindi

medium schools in reading is found to be 37.09 with standard deviation 5.23 and in writing mean is found to be 30.05 with standard deviation 9.48. Mean score of students of non-government English medium schools in reading of mother tongue is found to be 37.48 and SD was 5.87. In writing of mother tongue mean of non-government English medium schools is found to be 28.86 with SD 10.60.

Students of each type of schools showed more proficiency in reading of mother tongue than writing of mother tongue. Before writing a child learns to read first and it may be a cause of better performance of students of all type of schools in reading of mother tongue.

Table 5 indicates towards significant difference between

different groups in reading of mother tongue. It is clear by the table that in the proficiency of students in reading mother tongue there was significant difference between government Hindi medium schools and government English medium schools at 0.05 level. A significant difference was also found between government Hindi medium schools and non-government Hindi medium schools as well as non-government English medium schools at the same level of significance. Table exposes that a significant difference was found between government English medium schools and non-government English medium schools. There was also significant difference between government English medium schools and non-government Hindi medium schools. No significant difference was

Table 5

't' Value of Proficiency of Students of Different types of Schools in Reading and Writing of Mother Tongue

| 't' Value at 0.05 Level of Significance | Competency | Government Schools English Medium | Non-Government Schools Hindi Medium | Non-Government Schools English Medium |
|--|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Government Schools Hindi Medium | Reading | 9.81 | 7.49 | 7.12 |
| | Writing | 11.69 | 8.76 | 6.49 |
| Government Schools English Medium | Reading | | 4.63 | 2.92 |
| | Writing | | 3.49 | 3.37 |
| Non-Government Schools Hindi Medium | Reading | | | 0.32 |
| | Writing | | | 0.64 |

found only between non-government English medium schools and non-government Hindi medium schools.

Table 5 also explains about the significant difference in achieved score in writing of mother tongue by students of all four types of schools. This result was same as result of reading of mother tongue. A significant difference can be seen between students of government Hindi medium schools and students of government English medium schools. Same difference can be seen between students of government Hindi medium schools and non-government Hindi medium schools and also between government Hindi medium schools and non-government English medium schools. The significant differences can be seen in

all other cases except between non-government Hindi medium schools and non-government English medium schools.

Table 6 indicates towards difference in reading proficiency in mother tongue of students of government schools and non-government schools. This table presents a clear difference between students of government schools and non-government schools in reading. In the range of 0-5 there were 13 students and in the range of 5-10, 10-15 and 15-20; 3, 3 and 7 students were respectively but there was no one student of non-government schools from the range of 0-5 to 15-20. Between the intervals of 20-25 there were 10 students from government schools and 3 students

Table 6
Scores of Students of Government Schools and Non- Government Schools in Reading of Mother Tongue

| Score | Number of Children in Different Types of schools | |
|--------|--|------------------------|
| | Government Schools | Non-Government Schools |
| 0 – 5 | 13 | 00 |
| 5- 10 | 03 | 00 |
| 10- 15 | 03 | 00 |
| 15- 20 | 07 | 00 |
| 20-25 | 10 | 03 |
| 25-30 | 08 | 11 |
| 30-35 | 16 | 26 |
| 35-40 | 42 | 38 |
| 40-45 | 36 | 46 |
| Total | 138 | 124 |

from non-government schools. From government schools, 8 students fell in the range of 25-30 and in the same range 11 students fell from non-government schools. In the next interval which was 30-35; 16 students were from government schools and 26 students were from non-government schools. Maximum numbers of students of government schools were in the interval of 35-40. There were total 42 students of government schools stand in this range where as from the non-government schools maximum numbers of students were in the range of 40-45 which was highest range of mother tongue reading. The number of students of non-government schools in this range was 46 whereas 36 students of government schools were in this highest range.

Students of government English medium schools performed best but due to the performance of students of government Hindi medium schools this result was occurred.

The performance of students of government Hindi medium schools was very poor.

Table 7 shows the mean performance of students of government and non-government schools in reading of mother tongue. There were total 138 students from government schools and 124 students from non-government schools. Mean score of reading mother tongue of students of government schools is found to be 31.23 with standard deviation 6.90 and mean score or reading mother tongue of students of non-government schools is found to be 37.23 with standard deviation 5.44. The 't' value of groups was 4.93 at the 0.05 significance level which is clearly indicating that there was significant difference between students of government schools and students of non-government schools in the reading of mother tongue. Students of non-government schools performed significantly better in the reading of mother tongue.

Table 7
Mean Performance of Students of Class IV Studying in Government and Non-Government Schools in Reading of Mother Tongue

| Type of Schools | Groups | Scores | 't' Value | Level of Significance |
|------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Government Schools | N | 138 | 4.93 | 0.05 |
| | Mean | 31.23 | | |
| | SD | 6.90 | | |
| Non-Government Schools | N | 124 | | |
| | Mean | 37.23 | | |
| | SD | 5.44 | | |

Table 8
Scores of Students of Government Schools and Non-Government Schools in Writing of Mother Tongue

| Score | Number of Children in Different Types of schools | |
|--------|--|------------------------|
| | Government Schools | Non-Government Schools |
| 0 – 5 | 23 | 01 |
| 5- 10 | 09 | 01 |
| 10- 15 | 10 | 07 |
| 15- 20 | 15 | 19 |
| 20-25 | 13 | 15 |
| 25-30 | 16 | 20 |
| 30-35 | 16 | 21 |
| 35-40 | 14 | 22 |
| 40-45 | 18 | 14 |
| 45-50 | 04 | 04 |
| Total | 138 | 124 |

Table 9
Mean Performance of Students of Class IV Studying in Government and Non-Government Schools (Writing)

| Type of schools | Groups | Scores | 't' Value | Level of Significance |
|------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Government Schools | N | 138 | 3.87 | 0.05 |
| | Mean | 23.76 | | |
| | SD | 14.44 | | |
| Non-Government Schools | N | 124 | | |
| | Mean | 29.63 | | |
| | SD | 09.86 | | |

The main focus of the study was to find out the difference in learning level between students of government schools and non-government schools in terms of reading and writing of mother tongue. Table 8 discloses the remarkable contrast between levels of learning between students of these

two types of schools. There is only one student of non-government schools scored marks in the range of 0-5 whereas 23 students of government schools fall in this range. Only one student of non-government schools stands in the range of 5-10 and 9 students of government schools

stand in the range of 5-10. As score is increasing number of students of non-government schools is also increasing whereas with increasing score of writing of mother tongue number of students of government schools is decreasing. It shows that the performance of students of non-government schools is better than the students of government schools. But in the highest interval of 45-50 only 4 students from both type of schools stand in this range.

Table 9 shows the mean performance of students of government and non-government schools in writing of mother tongue. Table indicates that there were 138 students from government schools and 124 students from non-government schools. The mean score of students of government schools is found to be 23.76 with standard deviation 14.44 and mean score of students of non-government schools is found to be 29.63 with standard deviation 9.86.

As per above table the t value of writing test of mother tongue is found to be 3.87 on 0.05 level of significance; which is indicating that there is a significant difference in proficiency of writing mother tongue between students of government schools and students of non-government schools. According to mean and standard deviation of both groups' students of non-government schools performed better than students of government schools in the writing of mother tongue.

FINDINGS

The major findings of this study are as follows:

- Students of Government Hindi medium schools performed least and students of Government English medium schools performed best in reading and writing of mother tongue.
- There was significant difference between students of government and students of non-government schools in mother tongue reading.
- There was significant difference between students of government and students of non-government schools in mother tongue writing.

SUGGESTIONS

The findings of the study show, that the students of government schools Hindi medium performed worst in reading and writing of mother tongue. So many students of these schools were not capable to read or write a single word of their mother tongue correctly. So here is a need of regular inspection of these schools and a mid-term assessment of students of these schools in severely needed. As well as a monitoring committee should be to monitor the teaching style and technique as well as other behaviour of teacher in the classroom. In the absence of ability of reading and writing a child cannot study other subjects also. Thus it should be ensured that students can read or write at the end of primary schooling.

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