



Assessment of Primary Education System in Rural India: A Case Study on Chikana Village of Tonk District in Rajasthan, India

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This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The case study aims to highlight the existing problems and challenges in the primary education system prevalent in Rural India, from the lens of Chikana Village, in the Tonk district of Rajasthan, India. The case study brings to light prevalent practices, concerns and beliefs that govern the process of imparting primary-level education to the children of Chikana. The points made in the course of the study, though derived from this particular village, can be used as a general idea for most schools in rural India. The researchers have taken into consideration the prevalent schemes started by state and central governments for the enhancement of the quality of education in Rural India and have built points on the impact and significance these schemes have made so far. The study is qualitative in nature and uses both secondary and primary data sets.

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Secondary data is used in the form of old schemes and impact reports on Indian primary education, while primary data is incorporated in the form of observation and interview schedules. The time frame of all secondary data is limited to the last 5 years (February 2018- February 2023). The sample size for the interview schedule is 40 participants, these included students from ranging age groups, teachers and school authorities of the 'Rajkiya Ucch Prathmik Vidyalay, Chikana'. The study aims to raise considerable awareness among the readers of this study about the existing trends in education in rural India and to highlight the gap in urban and rural education systems. The study goes on to find major loopholes in the ongoing educational practices prevalent in rural India. It brings to light the different dimensions of the primary education system and the opinions of different stakeholders on the progression of the sector. It comments on the implementation of policies designed to cater to the needs of children. The study also offers the author's conclusion derived from the curated data sets which clearly presents the condition of the sector as more bad than good, however, stressing enough of the good and stating that progress is expected in the years to come. The study is a comprehensive work, which gives a 180-degree view of the education provided to children in rural parts of the country.

Keywords: Education; rural India; schemes; students; primary education system; educational challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of India as an independent nation, it has put in a significant amount of attention into improving the basic standard of living of the common man. To say that all that, 'India', a freshly independent, naive, raw and extremely downtrodden nation dreamt to be 74 years ago has been achieved, would be to say an obvious lie. Having that said, India does deserve due credit for the mile it has covered from the list of a downtrodden, third-world, under-developed nation to transform itself as the 5th largest economy [1] beating its colonizers, the British. With a 10-year average growth rate of 6.79, India for one is surely anything but 'helpless' anymore. Simultaneously, India has also grown to be the most populous country [2] beating the reigning highest China; whether this is an example of failure of population control plans or a strategic global-political move, is difficult to confirm. 50% of the 1.417 billion people of the Indian subcontinent are under the age of 30. That makes India a predominantly youth country. For a country with a rising economy, brewing international relations, high market standing and a population that stands at 17.7% of the world population it has a surprising literacy ranking on a global level. India has an overall literacy rate of 74.04% on the global ranking scale. The measure is surely a reasonable hike from where India began 74 years ago, but to compare it to other countries India stands at the 169th position in the list of 204 countries. India has experienced an increase from the 63% literate population it had in 2000. India has a higher share of the

educated population than other developing countries due to effective government efforts to promote access to education and academic enrichment. Despite these advances, India still has more than 281 million illiterate people, suggesting that much effort is needed to improve education levels in the country. The widening gap between rural and urban literacy rates, and metropolitan areas which offer significantly higher levels of schooling than more remote areas contribute to the lower literacy rates in rural India.

As of 2021, the rural literacy rate stood at 73% [3]. This percentage consists of 81% males and 65% females belonging to rural India. Over the years both the NDA and UPA governments have had one thing in common which is their intentions of supporting the education sector. Year after year the budget has focused extensively on upskilling the youth population of the nation and aimed towards producing individuals who had a basic level of primary education for the least. As for the budget for the financial year 2023-24, education happens to be the sector to receive the highest investment yet again. The finance minister announced an allocation of 1.12 Lakh crore in this sector and aimed towards digitalizing the whole sector. Though these allocations and figures sound elaborate and impactful, they are only numbers if not implemented the way they are processed on the 1st of February every year. Since Independence, the changing governments have come up with 10 plus different education policies, but the percentage of rural literacy itself bears witness that these policies are not being

implemented the way they are planned. On the state level, governments come up with more policies for their geographical population. All these cumulatively aren't working enough for India to rise higher than its stagnant 169th position. India's rural economy [4] contributes to roughly 50% of the national income yet, urban literacy stands at a rate of 87.7%, 14.2% higher than the rural literacy rate.

It is also important that we mention that a significant increase in the interest towards education has been seen coming from children and parents of rural India, this interest often fuses out due to the lack of infrastructure in remote areas and the lack of institutions to implement the designed policies.

India's growth as an economy today is a global spectacle and makes it almost necessary for the Indian government to accelerate their efforts towards Indian education, especially rural education. In 2002, in the 86th Constitutional Amendment, the Right to Education was incorporated as a Fundamental Right, under the State and law, making it mandatory for all children between the age group 6-14 years to access free and compulsory education. This law highlights the importance of 'primary education', even more in the Indian context. Not only is primary education believed to be the bedrock of development, but it is also believed to be the ground for a child's first hand at learning life skills. It is also noticed that a strong inclination is often developed in children of primary schools to attend secondary education even in limited resources. This law proves to be groundbreaking for India as the compulsion part makes it a no-brainer for children to attend school. Yet, after all these efforts India is among the least literate 40 countries of the world. This means that even after making primary education a 'law' there is a decent population of uneducated young adults. These statistics make India's standing and growth in the education sector a serious grey area.

1.1 Indian Primary Education Policies

In 2002, the 86th amendment brought into Indian society a revolution in the education sector, a revolution which was long delayed in terms of its advent in the Indian structure of societal functioning. The 86th Amendment included Article 21-A [5] to the Indian Constitution. The article aims to guarantee free of cost as well as mandatory basic education to all children within

the age group of 6-14. The article was formulated to be a Fundamental Right guaranteed by the State and determined by law for the children of this age group. Under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, every child was given the right to access a full-time primary education of respectable quality in a well-designated school which satisfied the basic norms and standards required to educate young individuals.

It was on the 1st of April, 2010, that the RTE Act and Article 21-A formally went into action. The terms "free" and "compulsory" were mentioned in the RTE Act's title itself. No pupil, apart from the one admitted by his or her parents to a school which isn't run or supported by the government, would be liable to pay any fee, charges, or expenses which might come in the way of them pursuing and completing their deserved elementary education. The term "compulsory education" mentioned in the act, refers to the obligation which entails to the requisite government and local authorities to look after the admission, attendance, and completion of primary education for all children between the age group of 6 to 14. As a consequence of this progressive law, India has unlocked for itself new levels of a progressing modern society. This law also shaped Indian education into a rights-based framework, which imposes a legal duty on the Central and State Governments in regard to the fulfilment of the fundamental child right outlined in Article 21A of the Constitution under the RTE Act.

This was a broad mention of the successful steps India and the government took towards educating every Indian child. Prior to this pioneering effort, back in 1949, the seeds of an educated India were already sowed. Article 51 A [6] of the Indian Constitution, lists down the fundamental duties of the citizens to the State. Among the few duties that an Indian citizen is obligated with, number (k) of Article 51 A, states that "who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, between the age of six and fourteen years". This duty as in the Indian Constitution obligates every Indian citizen who is a parent/guardian to a child within the age group of 6-14, to make sure that there was the duly completion of their child/ward's formal primary education. This duty, though not governed under the shadow of any law might enforce its dutiful

completion. It surely did set the tone of what the Indian constitution framers expected of every Indian adult.

In order to turn the dream of an educated Indian population into a reality, there have been significant laws and acts for the implementation of accessible elementary education for children from all sections of the society. The Indian Constitution, as it is in shape today, contains one of the most integral parts of the book. Part IV (Article 36-51) of the Constitution states the Directive Principles of State Policy. The Directive Principles of State Policy of India are the rules to be followed by the public authority of India for the administration of the country. They cannot be enforced by a court, but the principles outlined therein are regarded as "Fundamental" to the country's governance, making it the responsibility of the State to apply these principles when drafting laws to create a just society.

It is in this part of the Constitution, that Article 46 states that, "The State shall promote with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of social exploitation". Another part of the Directive Principles that advocated the idea of an educated India was Article 30. This article safeguarded the right of all minorities, whether classified so based on religion or language, to have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. One of the founding aims the Constitution aimed to achieve by its existence is a state of prevailing equality. In light of that equality it was Article 350 A of the Indian Constitution which speaks on behalf of linguistic minorities aimed to establish a sense of equality in the education sector as well. The article states that "It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups, and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities". Time and again, with these laws and acts, the importance of elementary education has been reinstated in the minds and lives of Indian society.

In the arena of elementary education, two of the most important and successful policies

implemented have to be the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Mid-Day Meal.

The Indian government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, or SSA, is a program which aims to make primary-level education available to all "in a time-bound manner." In accordance with Article 21A of the 86th Constitutional Amendment, free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 (206 million in 2001) is a fundamental right. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a former Indian prime minister, was the first to introduce the program. On its advent, it aimed at educating every child between the age group of 6 to 14 by the year 2010. Though that was a long shot in the dark, the program has worked extensively and achieved a great deal it had left to achieve.

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme is a school meal program in India which introduced the provisions of free lunches between school days for children enrolled in government primary and upper primary schools, government-aided Anganwadis, Madarsa, and Maqtabs. The scheme was launched with the goal of improving the nutritional status of all school-age children nationwide. The program has been renamed the POSHAN Scheme. An underlying intention of the scheme was also to encourage children from backward sections of society to attend school disguised under the initiative of offering them free meals. As per its current standing, the Midday Meal Scheme provides meals to 120 million children in over 1.27 million schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centres, making it the largest functional program of its kind.

From as early as the 1930s, the French administration's Midday Meal Scheme had been a continuous program in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The Mid-day Meal saw the light of the day for the first time under the Indian government when it was implemented in Tamil Nadu by former Chief Minister K. Kamaraj in the early 1960s. Inspired by the success, the Supreme Court of India directed for the plan to be put into action in all of the states by 2002.

In September [7] 2021, the Ministry of Education (MoE), changed the scheme's name to PM-POSHAN (Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman) Scheme. To better the effectiveness of a great scheme like this one, the Central Government announced that the program would cover an additional 24 lakh pre-primary students enrolled in government and government-aided schools by 2022.

1.2 Literature Review

India since independence has grown exponentially in terms of child education in both rural and urban parts of the country. As per the Annual Status of Education Report (2021), there have been major fluctuations in the condition of primary education in rural India. The report records the percentage of children not enrolled in school declined from 9.9 per cent in 2020 to 6.6 per cent in 2021 [8]. A positive hike recorded was the increasing enrollment of girls in government schools going from 70 per cent to 71.9 per cent between 2018 and 2021.

Things that worked as catalysts to these hikes and declines have been the constantly changing education policies and efforts made at the end of the management to impart fair education to all children.

1.3 Objective

- To understand the problems and challenges of the primary education system in Rural India.
- To understand the points of failure of government schemes which aimed at bettering the education system in rural India.

2. METHODOLOGY

The case study is based on the ground of both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected via the methods of observation and interview schedule, while secondary data is comprehended from the government made available data on policies introduced and implemented in the sector of education. The case study attempts to paint the true picture of the condition of primary education in rural India, with Chikana village as a representative of rural India. The interview schedule has been conducted on a strength of 40 people via random sampling and consists of a mix of individuals, namely children and adults.

2.1 Reason/ Need for this Case Study

This case study has been conducted with the aim to identify and significantly acknowledge the problems that still linger in the primary education sector of rural India. The subject of study chosen for this case study is Chikana Village, of Tonk District, Rajasthan. The case study is a piece that paints an image of the existing issues in

regard to running a government-run primary school in the setting of Rural India. The study, though based on one school in a small district, can act as an image for most other functioning government-run primary schools in India and can be generalized as the condition they too might be undergoing. By the end of the research, the reader shall be able to identify and understand the condition of primary schools in rural India and the ratio of education in these areas of the country, even 74 years after Independence.

2.2 About the Subject of the Study- Chikana Village

Chikana village [9] is located in the Tonk district of Rajasthan, India, in the Newai tehsil. It is 14 kilometres from the sub-district headquarters in Niwai (tehsildar office) and 47 kilometres from the district headquarters in Tonk. All available data on Chikana Village is from the census reports of 2011.

The settlement is sprawled in 507.08 hectares of area. Chikana has a total population of 1,085 people, 570 of whom are male and 515 of whom are female. Chikana village has a literacy rate of 48.02%, with 63.16% of men and 31.26% of females being literate. The Chikana village roughly houses 187 households and uses the pin code 304022. Just like rural Indian administration works, Chikana too is administered by the elected head by consensus, known as the sarpanch. The sarpanch is representative of the village in higher meetings and government offices. According to the statistics released by the government of India in 2019, Chikana village hails under the assembly constituency of Newai and the parliamentary constituency of Tonk-Sewai Madhopur. The nearest town to Chikana for all major economic activities, happens to be Newai, which is approximately 14 km away.

3. RESULTS

As described in detail earlier "Of the respondents in this category, 62.5% were women and the rest 37.5% were men", who collectively comprise the 40 participants of this research from Chikana Village, all related to the functioning of the school, 'Rajkiya Ucch Prathmik Vidyalay, Chikana'. In the course of collecting data via questionnaires with the help of enumerators, certain facts have been discovered that give meaning to this research. The findings shall identify the state of the primary education system prevalent in rural India, with Chikana Village as

the subject of the study. The findings are to answer questions on the quality of education, policy implementations and successes and the existing problems in the sector. For further reference in the paper, we shall refer to the group of students from classes 1-5 as 'Group A' and the group with students from classes 6-8 as 'Group B'. Group A has 14 respondents and Group B has 15 respondents.

The other participants included 2 teachers, 1 representative head and 8 parents all from different families.

All findings shall be classified one by one in a detailed and descriptive fashion.

3.1 Students

The first point to be focused upon is that of the students, who make the most integral part of the paper. The data collected from the students are further classified into two groups. One group is the section that attends primary school (Classes 1-5) at the Rajkiya Uchch Prathmik Vidyalay, Chikana and the other that attends secondary school (Classes 6-8) at the same school. The data collected from both groups is significant for our analysis as one group is still enrolled in the group which our study focuses on and the other has already lived through it.

3.2 Quality of Mid-day Meal

Data: When asked about the quality of mid-day meals provided by the school, which is a government initiative, introduced under the Atul Bihari Vajpayee government the responses from both groups were mostly similar, as represented in the chart below.

Table 1. Quality of mid-day meal

Group	Percentage that likes the food served (of total respondents in a particular category)	Percentage that dislikes the food served (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	92.85%	7.15%
Group B	100%	-

Table 2. Distribution of books and uniform

Group	Percentage that received free books and uniform (of total respondents in a particular category)	The percentage that didn't receive free books and uniform (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	100%	-
Group B	100%	-

Observation: Considering the age group of the respondents and the nature of the research, observation as a tool of data collection has been considered in high regard. The observation of the researchers in regard to the quality and standard of food would be moderate. Cleanliness of possible standards was maintained while the food was being cooked and the quantity provided was decent too.

3.3 Distribution of Books and Uniform

Data: Both central and many state governments have time and again, formally as well as a part of their political campaigns, been seen distributing uniforms and books to students of government-led schools. On being enquired about the reality of this distribution both groups replied positively affirming the reality of the distribution shown.

Observation: In agreement with the data, the researchers also observed each student in uniform and with books, now the condition of those books and uniforms is dependent on the students' will to maintain them. On being asked about the frequency of these services being offered, the students replied that they received books and uniforms at the beginning of a scholastic year and sometimes when a minister visited the school premises.

3.4 Regularity of Teachers

Data: A lot has been said about the regularity factor of teachers in government-run schools. On being asked from students of both groups the answers came off as mostly similar, in some way defying the preconceived notion one has of a government school in a village.

Table 3. Regularity of teachers

Group	The percentage that said teachers were regular (of total respondents in a particular category)	The percentage that said teachers were irregular (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	92.85%	7.15%
Group B	93.34%	6.67%

Observation: Contrary to what the data represents the researchers observed a poor quality of teacher presence in the school. During a full day's visit to the school, only 4 teachers were present including the principal. Though the teachers seemed interactive and knowledgeable they had little to say in regard to the shortage in their strength, blaming it on the management and recruiting officials.

3.5 Punishment Practices Prevalent in School

Data: Numerous researches and studies have highlighted the significant impact any severe form of punishment has on the mind of a child, especially in the impressionable ages of childhood.

Significant laws have been formulated and enacted by the government to stop and punish those who practice child abuse of any sort. To understand the stand of this on the ground level, children of both groups were asked if teachers used methods of physical punishment or harsh verbal scolding against them.

3.6 Co-Curricular Activities

Data: Most studies in the field of child growth and holistic growth have highlighted the importance of co-curricular activities which not only enhance growth but also help the child identify any talents apart from formal education. With the National Education Policy of 2020, even the government has not only identified the importance of holistic growth but suggested methods for making it a part of formal education. In this regard, the children of both groups were inquired about the practice of co-curricular activities as a part of the student's scholastic experience.

3.7 Recreational and Student Binding Activities

Data: Even for adults, recreational activities and activities that emotionally bind them to their colleagues are highly recommended as it is said to increase productivity and make happier adults.

Table 4. Punishment practices prevalent in school

Group	Percentage that said physical punishment was practiced (of total respondents in a particular category)	The percentage that said physical punishment wasn't practised (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	50%	50%
Group B	33.34%	66.67%

Table 5. Harsh verbal scolding practices prevalent in school

Group	Percentage that said they were scolded harshly (of total respondents in a particular category)	The percentage that said they weren't scolded harshly (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	71.42%	28.57%
Group B	46.67%	53.34%

Table 6. Co-Curricular Activities

Group	Percentage that said co-curricular activities took place (of total respondents in a particular category)	The percentage that denied any co-curricular activities. (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	85.72%	14.28%
Group B	86.67%	13.34%

Table 7. Recreational and student binding activities

Group	The percentage that said they were taken for picnics (of total respondents in a particular category)	Percentage that denied to be taken for picnics (of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	35.72%	64.28%
Group B	6.67%	93.34%

In the same way, school picnics not only make an important memory but teach a child important values of social presentation, teamwork and the importance of taking a break. In order to understand how much of an understanding of this is in the teachers and school management in the rural parts of the country, the children were inquired if they are taken for any picnics or recreational activities.

3.8 School Maintenance Responsibilities

Data: There has been talk about students being made to do serious cleaning and brooming of school campuses in the rural government run schools. To check the honesty of this talk, the children were asked if they were made to do any maintenance activities in school, like cleaning.

3.9 Teachers

Though the regularity of teachers was given a positive response from students, on the visit day of the researchers only two teachers were present for the survey. The teachers were enquired about the strength of students, the gender ratio, student inclination towards academics and the ill effects of the pandemic.

On being asked about the general strength of every class and how many of them attended school, she said that the average strength would be 27, of which 20-22 attended school every day. About the trends of gender ratio, the teacher said female students were higher in number in class 3, but otherwise, male students were higher in number overall. In terms of policy implementation and success, the teacher was

asked if or she felt that the mid-day meal scheme was a successful practice in her school, to which she said that it was indeed successful. Next, she was enquired if the scheme was the only motivation for students to attend school and to this she said that this wasn't the case. In fact, she added that there were a few students who attended school because they had a genuine inclination to learn. She said that of all students who attended school, a good 50%-70% of them had a serious inclination to academics. The teacher added that she wasn't burdened with any additional responsibilities from the school management apart from her duties as a teacher.

3.10 Representative Head

The liability and accountability for the success or failure of any institution is that of its representative heads. In the absence of the principal, the enumerators had to conduct the survey on the acting representative head present on behalf of the principal.

The individual was asked if the school conducted any inter-school competitions to which he said that it did but only for the senior students. On being asked about how the school makes initiatives to encourage more and more students of the village to attend school, the head replied that they take up initiative which is a continuous process.

In regards to the New Education Policy of 2020, the head was questioned if the policy was welcomed and implemented to which he said that it was duly implemented and that the students had already begun engaging in the activities introduced as per the policy.

Table 8. School maintenance responsibilities

Group	Percentage that said yes to being made to do maintenance activities (Of total respondents in a particular category)	Percentage that said no maintenance activities were made to be done (Of total respondents in a particular category)
Group A	64.29%	35.72%
Group B	93.34%	6.67%

Table 9. Percentage occurrence of parents to schoolgoers

Category	Percentage (of all respondents who were parents to schoolgoers)
Basic school education	62.5%
College degree	12.5%
Uneducated	25%

Considering the problem of girl education, the head was asked if girls attended school post reaching their menstruation age, to which he said that though the numbers did begin to dwindle most continued school. In a similar context, he was asked about the condition of the school toilets to which he said that the toilets were maintained well. The head also added that as teachers they made significant efforts in motivating the students to pursue higher education.

Towards the end, the head was asked to identify the existing problems in the school, to which he said that there was a problem with- classrooms, staff shortage, excess fluoride in water and ill-constructed toilets.

3.11 Parents

To gain an understanding of the households these children who attended school came from, a survey was also conducted on their parents. Of all the respondents who were parents, the percentage that were educated themselves was fairly moderate.

This chart further also implies that of all respondents, 75% helped their children with their education. The respondents also all said that they believed in equality of both genders in getting a basic education for the least and expressed their interest in supporting their child for higher education.

On being asked their views on the schemes of mid-day meals and uniform and book distribution, the parents said that they were impressed by the implementation of the policies and schemes and considered it a generous initiative. On being asked if they involved their child in any form of labour or household activities, all respondents vehemently denied. Of the respondents in this category, 62.5% were women and the rest 37.5% were women.

4. DISCUSSION

The detailed data collected, as represented above, draws many conclusions about the status

of the primary education system of rural India. The discussions that the data set caters to have been discussed further point by point in depth.

4.1 Observation

Considering the nature of the case study and the age group of the majority of the respondents, observation as a tool of data collection and analysis is considered in high regard. The following discussions can be adhered to as analyzed by researchers based on their observation of the school, Rajkiya Ucch Prathmik Vidyalaya.

1. The food provided to the students under the Mid-day meal program was of good quality and quantity. The preparation was being done with possible cleanliness practices in mind and basic rules of a staple meal were being abided by.
2. Unlike what the representative head said about the conditions of the toilets, the toilets in the school premises were in a very bad state with broken urinals and smelling stations. This condition of the toilet could be an underlying reason for girls of menstrual age missing school.
3. The insufficiency of classrooms was a saddening sight. As also highlighted by the head, the school didn't have enough classrooms to justify the strength and the quality of education expected of them. The condition of the school's infrastructure is so inadequate that on the arrival of the researchers, they found all students from classes 1 to 5 sitting in the same classroom.
4. There is a significant deficit in the number of faculty members required for the proper functioning of the school. Though the teachers who were present were knowledgeable and shared how they conducted science clubs and language classes for the students, their faint population made progress a long way from their reality.
5. Despite being a primary school, a lack of recreational grounds with swings and slides shows the lack of importance holistic

growth has in the eyes of the management.

4.2 Additional Discussions from the Collected Data

1. Making young kids between the age group of 7-14 do maintenance activities like cleaning the school premises instead of taking them on picnics can have significant ill impacts on the mind of a child of that age. There is no harm in teaching a child to take responsibility and teaching them the importance of cleanliness. However, making them clean the premises of what is meant to be a place of higher learning isn't the right way of tutoring anything.
2. Data showed that some students claimed to be subjected to physical and verbal punishments. Though a certain sense of discipline is essential and must be taught in every institution, subjecting

a child to severe forms of punishment can not only scare them but oftentimes transform them into adults who believe that physical violence is acceptable.

When stressing on the problems that existed in this school in Chikana it is essential that readers don't see it as problems that this one school faces and problems that end with a student completing their education here. The more serious issue that needs to be understood is that even though these students study in these conditions they have to step and compete with students coming from better schools with better amenities. When things are looked at with that lens, the problems of insufficient infrastructure, absence of teachers, dwindling gender ratio, and lack of co-curricular activities begin to seem like bigger issues.

Having that said, the successful implementation of the book and uniform distribution initiatives and mid-day meals scheme must be acknowledged as a golden step from the government towards promoting primary education in children and their parents.

5. CONCLUSION

As rightly articulated by the father of the Indian subcontinent, Mahatma Gandhi, "What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts, but right education." One of

the cerebral aims of India as a nation with a population of a million people has been to be an educated nation. From the time of its Independence politicians and leaders have brought policy after policy and introduced many schemes in order to witness significant progress in this sector, and in its due time, this sector has experienced significant progress. From education being a gift for those born into the upper class to education turning into a fundamental right, India has come a long way. Yet, even after major investments from the financial budgets and vigorous work in the sector there are certain problems that have existed in the arena of primary education and still very much remain a part of it.

Education even after having been turned into a fundamental right is very different for one who studies in a city school from one studying in a government school. The standard of education imparted, the atmosphere they are surrounded by, the expectations levied on them, the opportunities made available and the guidance they receive are all severely different. In spite of all these disparities, the world they have to enter and compete in remains the same. With all the mentioned disparities, how is the challenge of students hailing from a government-run school from Chikana similar to that of a student from Delhi Public School? A significant indifference and discrimination exist whether one likes to address it or not. This difference is not only in terms of the education imparted, for that can still be similar on some level, but the difference in holistic growth, exposure and opportunity stands at a heaven and hell difference.

Having that said, what needs to be acknowledged is the lengths formal education in rural India has covered in order to mitigate that gap. Today formal basic education imparted in rural India is very different from what it used to be 10 years ago, and this can be identified from a study like this one.

Of course, there are significant issues in the primary education system in rural India as identified in great detail in this paper, but one can also count on the progress that has been made. When studies like these are documented, they aim at not pointing out the flaws to look down upon in any education system. But instead to identify the flaws so that they can be worked upon for it is only when a problem is addressed that can it be solved.

India in the 21st century is an emerging economy with high-class technology and world-class tutors. This India of the 21st century in the race of its progress sometimes tends to forget that it too was once in the depths of poverty and the whole of it was one large village. Today people are so thrilled at the thought of being city people that they'd do anything to cut off their identities from their villages. Forgetting that even today India for one is heavily agrarian making it dependent on these same villages. The villages we cut ourselves from, the villages whose children we discriminate against and the villages whose children all have to sit in the same class due to a lack of infrastructural facilities. It is now time that alongside complimenting progress that the primary rural education system of India has made we also act as significant agents of change and contribute to better the overall education standard and quality of India and of all its poorest most inaccessible corners.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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