
SELECTION OF ISSUES DISCRIMINATING HIGH AND LOW LEVEL OF ATTITUDE AMONG PARENTS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SARVA SHIKSHA MISSION IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

After successful implementation of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), a demand had been generated at the upper primary level. To meet the demand, Sarva Shiksha Mission (SSM) was launched in the year 2002 across the whole country. Initially the programme was supposed to continue up to 2010 but to universalize elementary education, SSM has been continuing beyond 2010. To depict the attitude of parents towards successful implementation of SSM, 18 variables, viz., Age of father (X_1), Age of mother (X_2), Father's occupation (X_3), Mother's occupation (X_4), Family size (X_5), Home facility (X_6), Monthly expenditure towards student (X_7), Reasons behind drop out (X_8), Financial condition (X_9), Interest towards society (X_{10}), Use of mass media (X_{11}), Government support towards children (X_{12}), Satisfaction towards the Institution (X_{13}), Necessity of Private tuition (X_{14}), Protection from various diseases (X_{15}), Health consciousness (X_{16}), Monthly family income (X_{17}), and Social interaction (X_{18}) were found to bear substantial impact on the high and low level of attitude towards successful implementation of SSM (Y) of parents of elementary students of Hooghly District of West Bengal.

Keywords: SSM, Universalization of Elementary Education, Discriminant analysis, Social participation, etc.

INTRODUCTION

It is the international declaration that every country will take necessary steps towards Universalization of Elementary Education. The developed countries took the initiative in this regard long before. India has been started its initiation since 1990's with the induction of DPEP. The Sarva Shiksha Mission attempted to secure the right to quality basic education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. The targets of the SSM are: i) Enrolment of all children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate school, 'Back-to-School' camp by 2005, ii) Retention of all children till the upper primary stage by 2010, iii) Bridging of gender and social category gaps in enrolment, retention and learning, iv) Ensuring that there is significant enhancement in the learning achievement levels of children at the primary and upper-primary stage.

In West Bengal, there are four types of schools viz. i) Government Schools which is purely run by the Government, ii) Government Sponsored Schools where 100 per cent financial support comes from Government Exchequer but it has its own Managing Committee as per with regulation of West Bengal Board of Secondary Education which is again an autonomous statutory body under State Legislative Act, iii) Dearness Allowances getting Private Schools, and iv) Private Schools. Again depending on the number of classes, Schools are divided into seven types namely, i) Primary Schools, ii) Primary with Upper Primary Schools, iii) Upper Primary Schools, iv) Upper Primary with Secondary Schools. v) Primary with Upper Primary and Secondary Schools, vi) Upper Primary with Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools and vii) Primary with Upper Primary, Secondary, and Higher Secondary Schools. From District Elementary Education Report Card 2002-03, it has been revealed that the total number of schools in Hooghly district was

3404 of which 614 were upper primary schools. The Elementary Education Report Card 2014-15 showed that the total number of schools in Hooghly district was 4839 of which 1038 were upper primary schools. In the study of Shruti Sharma (2014), she found that even after the completion of the target period of Sarva Shiksha Mission, India still had a very long way to go towards the girls' education. Kumar, Manoj (2013) found that purposive sampling was used for the present study to select one district out of 28 districts of Jharkhand i.e. East Singhbhum, then random sampling was used to select 4 blocks of East Singhbhum by lottery system. In order to collect data, the researcher needed an attitude scale to measure the attitude of teachers towards in-service training programme. The major indicator of quality of training is its relevance to the needs of teachers. The potential for radical shifts in the school practice and programmes via effective in-service education programmes has been acknowledged by most education committees and commissions. They have articulated their concern regarding the neglect and inadequacies of current in-service education practice. In addition to the recommendations and programmes of the various All-India Committees that stressed the need for in-service education, several organizations such as educational institutions, teacher organizations, educational department of the state, and private organizations have arranged, from time to time, in-service education programme of one type or another. These activities have been varied in nature in the different states of India. Ghosh and Deb (2017) in their study conducted in Jalpaiguri, a Sarva Shiksha Mission (SSM) district of West Bengal to evaluate and assess the level of achievement earned by the Elementary Teachers from the SSM and found that the level of attitude of school teachers have a strong significance towards Universalization of Elementary Education. In the study of Kusum (2016), she found the attitudinal behaviour of elementary school teachers towards Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Keeping in view the nature of the study the investigator developed and standardized the attitude scale.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on intensive individual survey conducted during January to August 2016 in 40 different secondary schools of Hooghly District of West Bengal which were selected on random basis out of 1038 elementary schools. A structured schedule containing of 25 different cluster of questions were placed before respondents. Generally, Parents of the School going children at the upper primary level were selected as respondents. For the purpose of the study, two blocks from eastern part of Hooghly Districts namely, Chanditala-I and Mogra-Chinsurah and two blocks from western part of the Districts namely, Khanakul-II and Pursurah were selected on random basis. From each block, ten schools were identified and from each school, ten students were selected whose parents were being considered as respondents. While calculating the high and low level perception, the district with highest literacy, that is, Pursura and Khanakul-II blocks were taken as high level of perception among its respondents and Chanditala-I and Mogra-Chinsuraha blocks of the Hooghly District were chosen to close proximity to low level of perception among its respondents. The data as collected through structured schedules were quantified and subsequently statistically analyzed by adopting Mean, Correlation, and Mahalanobis D-Square analysis method.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To assess the level of attitude of parents of students of elementary classes towards successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Mission (Y);
- i. To examine the role of parents' socio-economic and educational background on the Educational process of their children;
- ii. To assess the socio-personal and attitudinal casual variable viz. Age of father (X_1), Age of mother (X_2), Father's occupation (X_3), Mother's occupation (X_4), Family size (X_5), Home facility (X_6), Monthly expenditure towards student (X_7), Reasons behind drop out (X_8), Financial condition (X_9), Interest towards society (X_{10}), Use of mass media (X_{11}), Government support towards children(X_{12}),), Necessity

- of Private tuition (X_{14}), Protection from various diseases (X_{15}), Health consciousness (X_{16}), Monthly family income (X_{17}), and Social interaction (X_{18});
- iii. To estimate the nature of interdependency between and among the causal and consequent variable as postulated in the above segment;
 - iv. To isolate the causal variable's substantial effect on the level of attitude of parents of students of elementary classes towards successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Mission (Y) out of these 18 causal variables for formulating a strategy of intervening Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE);
 - v. To evaluate the difference of their level of attitude among parents of eastern and western regions of Hooghly District; and
 - vi. To identify the factors responsible for the high and low level of attitude.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table - I: Values of Linear Discriminant Coefficient against 18 casual variables (df = 398)

Variables	Linear Discriminant Coefficient
Age of father (X_1)	-0.36099
Age of father (X_1)	-0.36099
Age of mother (X_2)	0.34324
Father's occupation (X_3)	-0.52834
Mother's occupation (X_4)	0.12035
Family size (X_5)	0.07148
Home facility (X_6)	-0.06196
Monthly expenditure towards student (X_7)	-0.05607
Reason behind drop out (X_8)	0.53305
Financial condition (X_9)	0.33473
Interest towards society (X_{10})	0.36667
Use of mass media (X_{11})	-0.01565
Government support towards children(X_{12})	0.43743
Satisfaction towards the Institution (X_{13})	0.00762
Necessity of Private tuition (X_{14})	0.10886
Protection from various disease (X_{15})	0.06395
Health consciousness (X_{16})	-0.11934
Monthly family income (X_{17})	-0.13274
Social interaction (X_{18})	-0.14063

Table I shows the D^2 based statistics on the eighteen variables. Values of coefficients and Discriminant function of factors which discriminate parents of two different regions of Hooghly District of West Bengal in terms of their the level of attitude of about the activities adopted during Sarva Shiksha Mission and its utility towards fulfillment of the objectives of Universalization of Elementary Education. The tabulated D^2 values at 398 degrees of freedom have implied that the 18 variables considered in distinguishing the two levels of parents having high and low attitude level were influential.

Table - II: Means, their differences and 'r' values of variables with respect to attitudinal levels.

Variables	High Level	Low Level	Mean Difference (MD)	Mean 'r' value
	N ₁ = 200 Mean Value	N ₂ = 200 Mean Value		
Age of father (X ₁)	39.35	37.5	1.85	-.0561
Age of mother (X₂)	31.81	30.25	1.56	-.1060*
Father's occupation (X₃)	2.21	8.25	-6.04	0.2531**
Mother's occupation (X ₄)	1.22	2	-0.78	-.0195
Family size (X ₅)	4.32	4	0.32	-.0429
Home facility (X₆)	4.91	3.5	1.41	0.3663**
Monthly expenditure towards student (X ₇)	7.49	11.25	-3.76	-.0513
Reason behind drop out (X₈)	1.63	0.75	0.88	-.3806**
Financial condition (X₉)	2.1	2.25	-0.15	-.1794 **
Interest towards society (X ₁₀)	1.64	1.5	0.14	0.0608
Use of mass media (X₁₁)	2.64	1.75	0.89	0.2112**
Government support towards children(X₁₂)	1.75	2.25	-0.5	-.4779**
Satisfaction towards the Institution (X₁₃)	1.61	1.5	0.11	0.2467**
Necessity of Private tuition (X ₁₄)	1.43	1.75	-0.32	0.0313
Protection from various disease (X ₁₅)	1.54	2	-0.46	-.0426
Health consciousness (X ₁₆)	1.30	2.25	-0.95	0.0673
Monthly family income (X₁₇)	10.22	11.4	-1.18	-.1297**
Social interaction (X₁₈)	1.84	1.25	0.59	0.1986**

*Significant at 5% level ($r = 0.098$)

** Significant at 1% level ($r = 0.128$)

The results in the above table give the mean values and their differences with significance of 18 variables for high and low level of attitude among parents of Upper Primary students of eastern and western region of Hooghly District of West Bengal. The high attitudinal level means the higher involvement and deeper understanding about the overall activities of Sarva Shiksha Mission and on the other hand, low attitudinal level means the lower involvement and superficial understanding about the activities of SSM. Here, in this table, high level of attitude does not always necessarily to carry the high value and the same is true for the low level of attitude to carry the low value.

The mean values of the variable Age of mother (X₂) for the two regions of Hooghly District are 31.81 and 30.25 years respectively. The corresponding correlation coefficient has shown its negative bearing which indicates that the lower age group mothers are capable of understanding the programmes and activities under SSM and it signifies the differences between high and low level of attitude of parents.

Out of these eighteen variables, 10 variables viz. Age of mother (X₂), Father's occupation (X₃), Home facility (X₆), Reasons behind drop out (X₈), Financial condition (X₉), Use of mass media (X₁₁), Government support towards children (X₁₂), Satisfaction towards the Institution (X₁₃), Monthly family income (X₁₇), and Social interaction (X₁₈) show their significant level of impact in differentiating the high and low level of attitude among the parents of Hooghly District of West Bengal.

The parents of eastern region of Hooghly District have the higher mean value in their occupational level than their counterparts of western region of Hooghly District. Higher occupational level means the higher level of income which enables them in providing the expenditure towards the education of their children. The

coefficient of correlation between the level of attitude (Y) and the variable X_3 shows the strong significance. From Census report 2011, it is revealed that most of the population of western part of Hooghly district are associated with agriculture related works where as the eastern part of the same district are associated with industry related works. Thus the finding of the study corroborates with the census report.

The adequate facilities available at home that is, electricity, drinking water, home environment etc. would ultimately determine the quality up-gradation of students. Thus the high value of the variable X_6 determines that western part of Hooghly district plays a prominent role than the eastern part of the district. Hence, the variable (X_6) has strong positive impact on the level of attitude to discriminate between its high and low value.

Again, the mean value of Reasons behind drop out in western part of Hooghly District is 1.63 and the same for eastern part of the District is 0.75. The coefficient of correlation of the variable X_8 has strong negative impact on the level of attitude which ultimately determines in discrimination of the high and low level of attitude towards successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Mission. The negative sign indicates that the higher role of parents towards successful achievements of SSM would diminish the chances of drop-out.

Similarly, low mean value of family income corresponds to the low mean value of the involvement of parents with the programme and activities of SSM. Thus the factor X_9 shows its negative effect on the dependent variable that is, the level of attitude which eventually determines the discrimination of the high and low level of attitude towards SSM.

The mean value of use of mass media (X_{11}) in western part of the district is 12.64 whereas that in eastern part of the district is 1.75 which indicates that the parents of western part are much more comfortable and they are in regular touch with the mass media like News paper, radio and Television etc. than their counter part of eastern part of Hooghly district. The more use of mass media would lead the parents with the day to day upliftment related with the education. The correlation value shows its strong positive significance on the dependent value which ultimate determines the discrimination between of the two regions of the district

The mean value of the Government support towards children (X_{12}) has high value in eastern part of the district (2.25) than the western part of Hooghly district (1.75). Since the occupational level of the western part is more than that of the eastern part hence from the part of the Government, students of eastern part received more support than their counter parts of other sides of the district. Thus the correlation value shows its negative bearing towards predictor variables.

It is the fact that Satisfaction towards the Institution (X_{13}) by the parents of western part of the district is more than the parents of eastern part of the district. More satisfaction implies more involvement of the parents. As a result parents of western part are more attached to the functioning and activities of SSM. Hence the correlation values showed its strong positive value and it segregates between the high and low regions of the district.

It is the positional advantage of eastern part that the parents are earning their money from cultivation, labour markets and industry. Thus the mean value of the variable (X_{17}) has the higher value. On the contrary, the parents of western part are earning less in comparison to western part. Hence, the critical coefficient of correlation analysis exhibits the negative significance.

The mean value of use of Social interaction (X_{18}) in western part of the district is 1.84 whereas that in eastern part of the district is 1.25 which indicates that the parents of western part are much more comfortable and

they regularly interact with other guardians, school teachers, officials, and other related stake holders. Thus, the correlation value shows its positive impact on the predictor variable in making isolation between the high and low level of parental attitude towards successful implementation of SSM.

Table - III: Percentage Contribution of Individual Character to the Total Distance Measurement.

Code No.	Variables Coefficient(D ²)	Mean Difference	Mean Difference x D ²	Percentage	Contribution Rank
X ₁	-0.36099	1.85	0.6678315	11.07	II
X ₂	0.34324	1.56	0.5354544	8.87	III
X ₃	-0.52834	-6.04	3.1911736	52.91	I
X ₄	0.12035	-0.78	0.093873	1.55	
X ₅	0.07148	0.32	0.0228736	0.37	
X ₆	-0.06196	1.41	0.0873636	1.44	
X ₇	-0.05607	-3.76	0.2108232	3.49	VI
X ₈	0.53305	0.88	0.469084	7.77	IV
X ₉	0.33473	-0.15	0.0502095	0.83	
X ₁₀	0.36667	0.14	0.0513338	0.85	
X ₁₁	-0.01565	0.89	0.0139285	0.23	
X ₁₂	0.43743	-0.5	0.218715	3.62	V
X ₁₃	0.00762	0.11	0.0008382	0.01	
X ₁₄	0.10886	-0.32	0.0348352	0.57	
X ₁₅	0.06395	-0.46	0.029417	0.48	
X ₁₆	-0.11934	-0.95	0.113373	1.87	
X ₁₇	-0.13274	-1.18	0.1566332	2.59	
X ₁₈	-0.14063	0.59	0.0829717	1.37	

Table III showed the percentage contribution of each variable to the total discrimination. Out of the 18 variables considered, Father's occupation (52.91%), Age of father (11.07%), Age of mother (8.87%), Reason behind drop out (7.77%), Government support towards children (3.62%), and Monthly expenditure towards student (3.49%) in a cluster contributed more than 87 per cent towards the total discrimination. Hence, Father's occupation, Age of father, Age of mother, and Monthly expenditure towards student have been found to be key discriminators in separating between the high and low level of attitude among parents of Hooghly district of West Bengal towards successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Mission. It is important to note that the variable X₃ that is, Father's occupation is evolved as a significant determining factor in identifying the statement of the problem.

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to search the socio-economic and environmental factors causing the attitudinal level among the parents that is, the key stake holders of SSM, some prominent factors such as Age of father (X_1), Age of mother (X_2), Father's occupation (X_3), Mother's occupation (X_4), Family size (X_5), Home facility (X_6), Monthly expenditure towards student (X_7), Reasons behind drop out (X_8), Financial condition (X_9), Interest towards society (X_{10}), Use of mass media (X_{11}), Government support towards children (X_{12}), Necessity of Private tuition (X_{14}), Protection from various diseases (X_{15}), Health consciousness (X_{16}), Monthly family income (X_{17}), and Social interaction (X_{18}) have been identified. It indicates while low level attitude is the flamboyant consequence, observable in the micro-school environment, many more causes are enrooted into the subsystem like Father's occupation (X_3), Age of father (X_1), Age of mother (X_2), Reason behind drop out (X_8), Government support towards children (X_{12}), and Monthly expenditure towards student (X_7). To go deeper into the consequences of mutually interdependent subsystem conceding the enhancement of attitudinal level of the parents of Hooghly district of West Bengal and the fulfillment of the objectives as laid down in SSM, many more factors could have been come out as path finder in such type of studies.

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