

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)
IN PROVIDING BASIC EDUCATION: A STUDY OF NGOS
IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) IN PROVIDING BASIC EDUCATION: A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my original work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**.

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To

My Parents

for their constant demonstration of love...

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CONTENTS

	Page Number
Glossary	vii
Content of Tables	viii

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background of the study	3
1.2	Theoretical Frame work	5
1.3	Literature Review	6
1.4	Objectives	9
1.5	Hypothesis	9
1.6	Research Questions	9
1.7	Methodology	10
1.8	Scheme of Chapters	11

Chapter II

POVERTY, BASIC EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES

2.1	Poverty	13
2.2	Poverty among Children	14
2.3	Dimensions of Child Poverty	15
2.4	Ill Effects of Poverty on Children	16
2.5	Impact of Education on Poverty and Development	19
2.6	Strategic Importance of Basic Education	20

2.7	Analysis of Basic Education in India	21
2.8	Development in relation to poverty reduction and basic education	23
2.9	Developmental Approaches towards Poverty Reduction	24
2.10	Poverty and Capability Approach	25
2.11	Top-down Approach and People-centred Approach	26
2.12	Basic Needs Approach and Human Rights Approach	26
2.13	Phases of Development Approach and Basic Education	28

Chapter III

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND NGOS IN BASIC EDUCATION - A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

3.1	Plural Institutions in Governance	31
3.2	Non Government Organizations	32
3.3	Merits of NGOs	34
3.4	NGOs and Government	35
3.5	NGOs in the Developmental Paradigm	36
3.6	Basic Education	37
3.7	Government Initiatives in Basic Education	38
3.8	Drawbacks of the initiatives	40
3.9	Role of NGOs in providing Basic Education	44

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF NGOS ROLE IN BASIC EDUCATION IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

4.1	Scenario of Education in Chennai	51
4.2	Don Bosco Beatitudes	53
4.3	Brotherhood Mission	54
4.4	Determinants to measure the effectiveness	55

4.4.1	Steps taken for the Economically Underprivileged Children	55
4.4.2	Innovative Activities	56
4.4.3	Steps regarding Enrolment, Retention and Mainstreaming	58
4.4.4	Facilities in School	60
4.4.5	Extra Curricular Activities	61
4.4.6	Mid day Meal	62
4.4.7	Training to Teachers	63
4.4.8	Satisfaction Level of Teachers	64
4.4.9	Awareness of Parents	66
4.5	Identification of Critical Gaps	67
4.5.1	Parental Behaviour	67
4.5.2	Family Structure and Size of the Household	68
4.5.3	Number of Offspring and Amount spent for education of children	68
4.5.4	Economic Status of the family	69
4.5.5	Educational Status of the Family	70
4.6	Narratives from the Field	72

Chapter V

Conclusion	77
References	83
Appendix	

GLOSSORY

ABL	Activity Based Learning
AIE	Alternative Innovative Education
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CSCB	Chennai Slum Clearance Board
CWC	Concerned for Working Children
DIET	District Institutes of Education and Training
DISE	Directorate of School Education
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DPSP	Directive Principle of State Policy
EFA	Education For All
HDR	Human Development Report
MAYA	Movement for Alternatives and Youth Awareness
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDMS	Mid Day Meal Scheme
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resources Development
MVF	Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Taining
NFE	Non Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPE	National Policy on Education
OBB	Operation Black Board
PRI	Panchayat Raj Institutions
PROBE	Primary Report on Basic Education
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
UEE	Universalization of Elementary Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WDR	World Development Report
WEF	World Education Forum

List of Tables

Table Number	Title of the Table	Page Number
Table-1	Developing countries with over 500,000 Out-of-school children, 2004	17
Table-2	Numbers of out-of-school children in selected countries in 1999, 2002 and 2004 (thousands)	18
Table-3	Observation Schedule for Infrastructure in Schools	42
Table-4	Frequency of NGO Activities in Relation to Specific Goals	45
Table-5	Percentage of NGO Activities in Relation to Specific Activities	45
Table-6	Profile of the NGOs	47
Table-7	Districts performance on Literacy Rate in Tamil Nadu for the year 2001	52
Table-8	School Age Children and Enrolment in Tamil Nadu 2003-2003	58
Table-9	Satisfaction Level and Educational Qualifications of Teachers and NGO Instructors	64
Table-10	Amount Spent for the Education of the Children	68
Table-11	Nature of Occupation of the Parents	69
Table-12	Economic Status of the Family	70
Table-13	Educational Status of the Family	71

Chapter - J

Introduction

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story: it did not work. Moreover, the historical conditions which catapulted the idea into prominence have vanished: development has become outdated (Pieterse, Jan Nederveen: 2001).

- Wolfgang Sachs

Development in the present day context is not concerned with economic development alone. Development is not what used to be once. The paradigm of development keeps on changing with the change in the mental make up of the human being and the way they interpret development. Development that takes place without paying heed to the human and social dimensions cannot be termed development as it neglects the human aspect and the many number of issues that go with it and one such issue being poverty.

Poverty is a state of deprivation in mankind that retards the growth and development of an individual. Poverty is often seen as a reflection of inequality as some section of the society is deprived of their basic needs and rights in certain aspect. In order to bring a person out of this deprivation one should be empowered and to eradicate poverty, there should be promotion of equality. To set right the inequalities of poverty, the seed of equality of opportunities and equality of access should be sown. In this regard, education serves as a means to attain equality.

Education is one of the most important agents of social change. The spread of education in a vast country like India has always been a challenging task. Focus on equity and social justice is important for any country. Social justice and equity are by themselves a strong argument for providing basic education for all and it is a

constitutional commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14. And in this regard, the current challenge of our country is to effectively address the key issues of equity and quality in education with a view to accelerating progress - not just towards education for all, but towards quality education for all.

It is widely accepted that the government should shoulder the primary responsibility for elementary education, a view that is rarely debated in the dominant discourse on basic education. The government is taking various initiatives to promote education and special programmes are introduced by the government to reach out to some sections of the population. But by and large it is obvious that the government does not have the capacity to work simultaneously on several fronts - access, quality and relevance (Ramachandran, 2003).

There is a growing public recognition that other players such as educational trusts, citizens group and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) could make a difference if given the space to do so to meet the requirements of the marginalised in terms of education. And also it is difficult for the government to stretch public resources beyond a point. New sources for financing of basic education have to be explored. Enhancement of NGOs in education will help promote the basic education sector in the country. Mobilizing resources from non governmental sources becomes imperative not only to sustain the system of basic education at its present level, but also for its further expansion both quantitatively and qualitatively. Even different international agencies like World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, European Commission etc in many ways encouraged and persuaded the government of India towards decentralising educational management through Panchayat Raj and NGOs. This study therefore intends to focus on the role of NGOs in providing basic education.

As India enters the twenty-first century, the lives of a majority of its citizens continue to be blighted by endemic poverty, under nutrition, ill health, educational deprivation, and wide-ranging social inequalities. In particular, the condition of the marginalised living in the urban locality has been deteriorating. Compared to the rural

poverty, urban poverty has moved to a worse state as more and more rural poor migrate to urban cities to earn their living. The cities in India are thus unable to cope up with the rising number of migrants, particularly the poor coming from the rural areas to metropolitan areas who live in sub human conditions in the slums (Atal, Yogesh 1997).

In this scenario, growth alone is not enough to improve the quality of life. It is essential to tackle directly certain issues of equity – in education, especially basic education and such investment will contribute to a deepening of the growth process. Hence special attention needs to be paid to the state of affairs of education prevailing in the Below Poverty Line (BPL) areas of the urban backdrop in the country so as to initiate change in the quality of their life.

1.1 Background of the study

Economically deprived classes, who form a substantial part of India's population, suffer a lot in our country. The economically deprived classes are almost deprived of all the basic necessities such as like financial resources, quality education, good health, adequate nutrition, proper sanitation etc. The children from such background are the most vulnerable and they start to play the role of an adult at a very young age who in order to support their family drop out from school. If primary education is imparted to such classes, though it takes years to bear fruit it is sure to make a difference in their life which would help them in deriving all that they are deprived of.

The economically deprived classes or the people living in poverty have got the right to development which forms part of the human rights and that right cannot be denied to the people. It becomes the duty of the government to recognize the right to development and also the right to education and it is the responsibility of the state to deliver the rights and impart education to the people.

Many programmes are initiated by the government to address the problem of the poor. But unfortunately, it fails to reach them because it is not implemented in the

manner prescribed. The deadlines fixed for achieving the target are postponed every time and the recent target has been fixed as 2015 for universalising elementary education. Various schemes like Operation Black Board, Non Formal Education, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan etc were launched so as to promote basic education. And also the allocation for primary education has, over the years increased significantly. The plan outlay for primary education has increased from Rs. 870 crore in the First Five Year Plan to Rs. 28750 crore in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) (Five Year Plan Documents, Planning Commission)

In spite of all such measures no major change has been achieved. PROBE¹ survey (1999) reveals the pathetic condition of government schools which clearly highlights that nothing substantial has been done to improve the infrastructure and other facilities since a long number of years. Apart from the infrastructure of the schools, the quality of education is also not so good. Survey conducted by Pratham, an NGO in the field of primary education states that 80% of children who pass class V from government schools do not know to read or write their names. Though steps are taken by the government, these measures are not sufficient.

These days the private schools are mushrooming in number and they play a significant role in promoting primary education. The education provided in private schools and the infrastructure and environment available in such schools might act as a motivating factor for children to go to private schools. But unfortunately, most of the private schools are only accessible to the elites. Though there are many private schools it does not cater to the economically deprived and moreover private schools are driven by profits. Therefore to fulfill the objectives of government a participatory and a decentralised approach in realising the goals is necessary.

¹ Public Report on Basic Education (PROBE) portrays the reality of basic education in India and the survey was conducted by the PROBE Team Jean Dreze, Anuradha de et.al.

A participatory and decentralised approach has been recognized as an essential component in meeting the goal of Education For All (EFA) and NGOs are believed to be a catalytic agent in imparting education and promoting development since the Jomtien Conference in 1990 to the Dakar Declaration in 2000. NGOs indeed play a very significant role in reaching the target groups in terms of basic education especially the urban poor who are found living in sub standard conditions in the slums of metropolitan areas in India. The requirements of the rural poor are acknowledged and taken care by the rural local institution of Panchayati Raj. But the needs of the urban poor living in the slums are not given due consideration by the government as those areas are beyond access by the government and the government fails to reach such people. NGOs make an attempt to address the concerns of the underprivileged in such locality through developmental activities. NGOs taking their problems into consideration handle the children in those areas with proper care and reach them. NGOs facilitate the programmes of the government and assist the government schools. Where the government schools and private schools fails to step in NGOs makes its imprint and brings success.

In the southern state of Tamil Nadu, especially in the metropolitan city of Chennai, the NGOs are rapidly growing in number in recent years. The prime aim of this study is to analyze the role of the NGOs in the poverty stricken areas of Chennai in expanding educational opportunities to the deprived children and the measures taken by NGOs to assist the government schools and programmes towards Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) which has been dealt in the forthcoming chapters.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Development has been constantly debated by various theorists in every decade since 1960s witnessed the emergence of a new kind of perception in the development discourse. Development is of no use when it does not reach various sections of the people and improve their life. Hence a state must resort to that kind of development which ameliorates poor conditions of the marginalized and thereby leading to sustainable development. In this sense, Amartya Sen (2002) brings out the expansion of human

capability which he pursues as the central feature of the development process. He suggests that though economic growth should be considered as an essential feature of development it should also lead to enhancement of human capabilities. Capabilities are options to achieve valuable functionings.

But improving the capability of the people alone will not bring the desired outcome in developing the people. The ability of the people to be well nourished and to step forward in life, though instrumental for development, it cannot be realized unless the rights of the people are recognized and investment is made in human resources. Human Rights-Based approach seeks to empower the people as it deals with issues that affect human life. But emphasis on human rights-based approach alone would have a political face as the discussion would shift to making it a right, making provisions in constitution, framing policies by the top officials etc. losing the human face. Hence a right combination of the capability approach and the rights-based approach is essential to meet the requirements of all the sections of the society thus leading to development.

Hence applying the above approaches to the discourse of basic education would generate the desired result. Investment in basic education is sure to yield high return than the investment in other human resources. Investment in human resources in general and basic education in particular is an attempt towards improving the capability of the people and also in realizing the right of the people to be educated. By doing so the State would be able to improve the quality of life of the people.

1.3 Literature Review

As one of the primary service sectors that contribute to development of a nation, education has always been the subject of academic attention. In particular, with regard to primary education a vast literature is available in the form of books, journals and reports. Immense writings are also available on the role of NGOs in general, but there is very small literature regarding NGOs role in the discourse of poverty, development and basic education.

There are various factors that facilitate or impede the successful primary school completion of children. While the three major sectors - health, nutrition and education - facilitate the development of a child, poverty serves as a stumbling block in the development of a child (World Bank Report, South Asia Human Development Sector, 2004). In this regard, NGOs can play a crucial role by concentrating on the facilitators of education by removing the stumbling blocks. The NGOs can play an effective role in addressing such issues through its developmental programmes.

The government had tried to reach out to certain sections of the people through its various schemes and programmes but not all people have benefited from such schemes. Though the schemes of the government have been framed effectively, the government lacks capacity when it comes to implementation part of it. There is growing public recognition that other players, such as educational trusts, NGOs, citizen's groups and corporate bodies come up to facilitate the schemes of the government (Ramachandran, 2003).

The earlier educational policy prior to the Educational Policy of 1986 was rigid in itself. It failed to incorporate most of the recommendations made by various committees and showed considerable resistance in accepting certain innovative ideas. But in the New Policy a decentralized management structure has been suggested to ensure popular participation in education (Rao, 2002).

Since the time decentralized management of education was regarded as a key factor in promoting basic education the need for the participation of the local people in education was also felt. Community participation in education was also stressed by the government policies which makes the realization of the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education easy. NGOs are maintaining a better rapport with the local communities and make them more effectively involved in educating their children. This shows the necessity of partnership between state, civil society and NGOs in the pursuit of universalization of primary education (Govinda and Diwan, 2003).

Poverty and deprivation have stood in the way of realizing the universalization of primary education. There have been difficulties faced in bringing different groups of children, like the ones belonging to rural areas, *dalit* community, tribal groups, religious minority, girls and urban slum, to the mainstream education and retaining them in the frame work (Jha and Jhingran). This fact throws light on the issue that large inequalities and the resultant powerlessness of people have to be removed in order to bring universalization of primary education.

But it is argued that poverty cannot be the chief culprit for achievement in education and to authenticate this, examples of various countries are shown where the per capita income is low but with significantly high literacy rates (Wazir, 2000). Per capita income alone cannot be regarded as a component to measure poverty. In India, where the population has crossed 1027 million, poverty acts as a major constituent that influences literacy rates. Sinha also argues that poverty and quality of schools are not adequate reasons for children staying away from school (Sinha, 2000). In my opinion, poverty serves as a strong reason for dropping out of school. Where millions of people live below poverty line, where struggle for survival never ends people do not think about education which is only an extra comfort for them. NGOs act as better agents of change who plays a significant role in improving access of economically deprived children to basic education.

The critical gap created by the failure of policy makers is being filled by the NGOs and their intervention facilitates and reaches the vulnerable groups. Some examples of this are *Pratham*, Mumbai, MV Foundation, Andhra Pradesh, CINI-ASHA, Kolkata, CRREDA, Uttar Pradesh, CWC, Karnataka, Prachiti, Maharashtra, Udaan, Sarvodaya Ashram, Uttar Pradesh and MAYA, Bangalore (Jha and Jhingran, 2005).

On the basis of the available literature the growing need for a supplementary actor to facilitate the programmes of the government has been felt and also to address the problems of vulnerable groups. This can be better done by the NGOs who are organizations that work for the welfare of the people and for the upliftment of the people.

The various sectors of basic education in which the NGOs work are pre-school, formal primary schooling, non formal education for the out-of-school children etc. The NGOs also keep their focus on the key areas like mobilizing community, literacy, enhancing quality addressing underprivileged children and training teachers. The purpose of this study is to focus on such NGOs that promote basic education and to make an evaluation of their working in reaching the goal of universalization of education.

1.4 Objectives

- i. To study the role of NGOs in promoting primary education.
- ii. To understand the methodology adopted by the NGOs in spreading education.
- iii. To analyze the interaction between NGOs and Government in education sector.

1.5 Hypotheses

- i. Government programmes have failed to meet the requirements of the economically deprived in terms of primary education.
- ii. NGO participation has revitalized, innovated and added speed to government programmes.

1.6 Research Questions

- i. What are the governmental programmes available for primary education?
- ii. What is the reason for failure of governmental programmes in addressing the issue of equity in primary education?
- iii. What was the initial impetus for NGO participation in basic education?
- iv. What are the steps taken by NGOs in facilitating government programmes?
- v. Is there a system that monitors and coordinates NGO participation in government programmes, and how effective is it?

1.7 Methodology

It is an empirical study for which both primary and secondary data was used. Primary sources included Government reports, research reports, policy pronouncements, information derived from questionnaire etc while the secondary source included books, journals and newspapers. Secondary data for the field study was gathered from the Chennai Slum Clearance Board, Directorate of School Education, and Corporation of Chennai through the official reports prepared by the government officials.

The study presents the profile of 2 NGOs in the Chennai district of Tamil Nadu one from the North of Chennai and the other from the south of Chennai. The setting for the study is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a scheme that was implemented by the government in 2000. This is not to make an analysis of the effectiveness of SSA but to make a study of the role of NGOs in assisting and supporting government schemes as both the actors are working in partnership in this scheme to mainstream the out-of-school children.

The field study was primarily based on qualitative assessment tools and first hand information was obtained from two government schools and also from two NGO run schools. The data pertaining to NGOs were obtained from the secondary sources like the information on websites, reports stating the partnership from the government office in Chennai and also from primary sources by way of direct visit to the NGOs, their area of operation and from discussion with their functionaries. There was a focused group discussion with the children studying in the government schools and NGO run schools. Semi-structured interview was conducted with the teachers and NGO instructors. Structured interviews were conducted with the school principals, NGO directors and parents. Structured questionnaires were also addressed to the government officials in the education bureaucracy. The main idea was to get the perception of various stakeholders and to make an assessment of the role played by the NGOs, government, NGO instructors and teachers. The empirical data collected from the field are analyzed in the fourth chapter under various indicators.

Observation sheet was also used for the study to make an assessment of the infrastructure, electricity facility, toilet, playground, library etc for use of the children in the government and NGO schools.

1.8 Scheme of Chapters

The entire work has been divided into five major chapters, each trying to explore the various linkages in terms of basic education, NGO participation, government initiative, issues of poverty and development

Chapter II, 'Poverty, Basic Education and Development: Perspectives of Developmental Approaches' brings out the issue of poverty and development and highlights the strategic importance of basic education in order to eradicate poverty and move towards sustainable development. The chapter then moves further to discuss the various approaches and highlights the Capability Approach and Human Rights-Based Approach in particular, as the study proceeds further having those two approaches as the base for analyzing the role of NGOs.

Chapter III 'Role of Government and NGOs in Basic Education: A Critical Appraisal' starts with elucidating the plural institutions in governance and thereby moving on to the role of the NGOs in general. It further makes an analysis of the initiatives of government and the drawbacks of their efforts are also discussed. This chapter also highlights the role played by NGOs in relation to basic education and it further makes a critical appraisal of their role.

Chapter IV 'Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Providing Basic Education: A Study of Chennai District of Tamil Nadu' makes an analysis of the role of both government and NGOs in basic education, which is based on a study conducted in Chennai. For the purpose of making an assessment of the role it plays, the study has focused has come up with some determinants in order to analyse the effectiveness of the two service providers in educational governance.

Chapter V 'Conclusion' is the concluding chapter which makes a summary of the study highlighting the capability approach and right-based approach in the context of basic education. The chapter further brings out the role of NGOs in improving the capability of people and the role of government in recognising rights of the people and how the combination of two can help the marginalised people to participate in development process. This chapter also makes some suggestions with regard to steps to be taken by the service providers in the process of UEE.

Chapter – II

***POVERTY, BASIC EDUCATION
AND DEVELOPMENT:
PERSPECTIVES OF
DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES***

CHAPTER II

POVERTY, BASIC EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES

2.1 Poverty

Poverty is perhaps the most serious challenge in terms of human rights and human development, faced by the developing countries in the world. The multi dimensional nature of poverty affects the lives of millions of people making them deprived of all the basic necessities of life. The magnitude of poverty in today's world is indeed alarming. Human Development Report (2000) points out that about 1.2 billion people continue to live below the poverty line on less than \$1 a day; more than 2.4 billion people are without basic sanitation; about 100 million are homeless; about 1 billion adults are illiterate; nearly 100 million children live or work on the street.

Poverty does not mean lack of income or lack of consumption alone, which is one of the aspects of poverty. Poverty is multi-faceted that encompasses all forms of deprivation in the state of social, economic and political conditions. People lose the capacity and capability to fight for their rights in all these fronts and they are unable to participate in the developmental process. Dealing with poverty is a precondition for India's survival as a democratic nation. Staggering poverty afflicts a large proportion of the population, which is denied basic rights as citizens by their deprivation (Ludden, 1997).

Analysis of poverty is done at two levels: One goes on to define poverty and the other involves in measuring poverty (Khan, 1996). There is no universal definition of poverty. The World Development Report (WDR) 1990 defines poverty as the 'inability to attain a minimal standard of living'. The United Nations views poverty as " a human condition, characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate

standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights (Human Development Report, 2000). Measuring poverty seeks to put the aggregate of people living in poverty in statistical terms.

The issue of poverty is in constant debate for the past few decades. While some differentiate it as urban poverty and rural poverty, there are some people who make the distinction between income poverty and non-income poverty. Income poverty is the deprivation in monetary terms which denotes the lack of purchasing power to secure the basic needs and non income poverty is the deprivation in the elements of well being like shelter, food, nutrition, education, ill health etc. Apart from this, there is one more type of deprivation, that is, social exclusion. When people are marginalized, discriminated or left out in social relations, they lack basic security and the capability to lead a life of value. With or without adequate income or human development, a socially excluded individual is unable to access the basic amenities of life or participate in social life (Sengupta, 2007).

The pressing need of the hour is to eradicate poverty which acts as a stumbling block to development. In the process of eradicating poverty, there is no single recipe available that leads to poverty reduction on the whole. There are various indicators that lead to its eradication like employment, education, sound health etc. Among these indicators, providing basic education serves as an indispensable tool that contributes to poverty reduction in the long run, as it helps in treating the root cause of poverty. It helps in breaking the vicious circle of poverty and also it builds the capability of the poor people thereby making them participate in the developmental process.

2.2 Poverty among Children

The severity of poverty is more aggressive when it comes to children. Poverty is so harsh on children that it pushes them into the modern forms of slavery like child labour, bonded labour and child prostitution. Poverty threatens all aspects of a child's life by depriving children of the capabilities needed to survive, develop and thrive. Children

in the developing world spend most of their childhood struggling to survive, without much hope for a secure, productive life. They have limited access to education, which limits opportunity and reduces potential.² Children living in poverty are deprived of many of their rights - survival, health and nutrition, education, participation and so on.

A child's experience of poverty is different from that of the poverty of an adult. UNICEF has long argued that children are often hardest hit by poverty. Poverty in childhood does not end with one generation, it often continues to the next one as well.

2.3 Dimensions of Child Poverty

The dimensions of poverty in children are multi-faceted. Children living in poverty experience various types of deprivation. The notion of deprivation implies the various aspects in life that a child is denied, including material and emotional resources. One form of deprivation accentuates another form of deprivation and such deprivation cause suffering in the short run and hinders individual development in the long run. The forms of deprivation are of various kinds like health deprivation, nutrition deprivation, education deprivation, shelter deprivation and information deprivation. Over 16 percent of children under five in the developing world are severely malnourished. Nearly half of these 90 million children live in South Asia and they remain among the poorest of the poor throughout their lives. In case of basic education, over 140 million children in developing countries have never attended school. Worldwide, 16 per cent of girls and 10 per cent of boys miss out on school completely (UNICEF, State of World's Children, 2005).

Poverty in childhood perpetuates poverty in adulthood. In order to break the generational cycle of poverty, poverty reduction must begin with children. For this purpose the children should be drawn out from education deprivation. Education keeps the children aware of the opportunities available at their disposal which helps them to build up their capabilities thereby breaking the cycle of poverty. The development of the

² <http://www.care.org/campaigns/childrenpoverty/index.asp?source=170740250000&WT.srch=1>, visited on 24th September, 2006.

human capabilities in childhood depends greatly on the ability of the family and of the State to ensure that children are free from deprivation (Ibid).

Thus, the various types of deprivation faced by children can be addressed by way of providing access to basic education. The developing countries spend most of their money for repayment of debt or for maintaining the military forces. Even if fraction of the amount spent on it is diverted to the basic education of children it would be a step forward in wiping out poverty.

2.4 III Effects of Poverty on Children

Children are perhaps their mother's best helpers, especially girl child, who assist the mothers in her household work, collect fuel wood and water and take care of their younger siblings, which affects their education and often results in dropping out of school. Children leave school prematurely for a variety of other reasons also, including the cost of schooling, the need to supplement family income, or unfriendly school environment and poor education quality. Though the number of children not in school has declined in recent years, it still remains much too high.

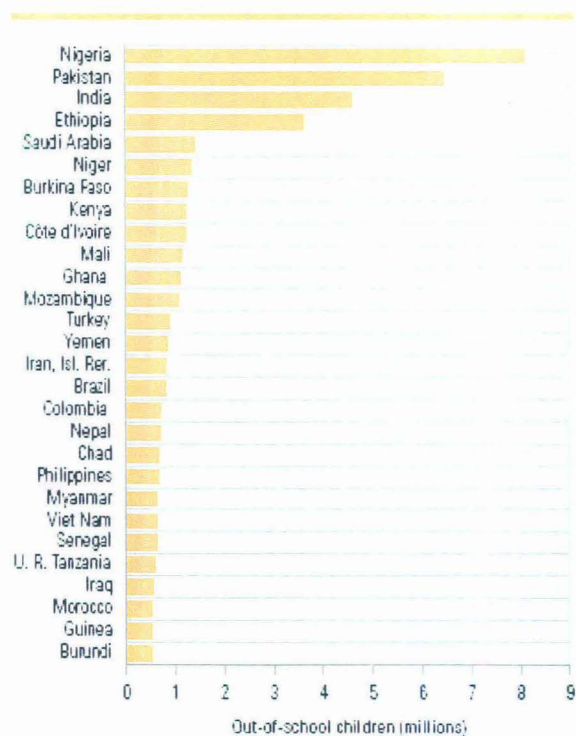
The Education For All Report (2007) brings to light that, while all other developing countries had common reasons like family background, gender bias, household wealth, and mother's education for children being out-of-school, in India in addition to the above mentioned reasons other reasons were also responsible like orphans, child labourers, children of scheduled tribe household, children belonging to a particular state, class, caste or religion and so on.

The EFA Report states that among 112 developing countries for which information was obtained, 4 countries alone accounted for about 23 million children out of school. The largest number of out of school children in 2004 was in Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Ethiopia (Ibid). Table 1 and table 2 give a picture of the number of out-of-

school children in the world and the position of India in relation to out-of-school children.

Table: 1

Developing countries with over 500,000 out-of-school children, 2004



Note: These countries together account for 43.3 million out-of-school children, out of the global estimated total of 76.8 million.
 See source table for detailed country notes.
 Source: Annex, Statistical Table 5.

Table: 2

**Numbers of out-of-school children in selected countries in 1999, 2002 and 2004
(thousands)**

	1999	2002	2004
Mali	1 113	1 089	1 172
Cote d'Ivoire	1 253	1 144	1 223
Kenya	1 833	1 868	1 225
Burkina Faso	1 205	1 264	1 271
Niger	1 393	1 381	1 326
Ghana	1 329	1 307	1 357
Saudi Arabia	1 345	1 371	1 630
Mozambique	1 602	1 572	1 089
Ethiopia	4 961	4 633	3 615
India	...	15 136	4 583
Pakistan	6 463
Nigeria	8 110

Note: See source table for detailed country notes.

Sources: Annex, Statistical Table 5; UIS database.

Street children are also found in substantial numbers in India. Street children are the most commonly visible sight in the metropolitan cities of India who are found on the streets selling toys, books, flowers and newspapers. They are also the most difficult group to reach as the cruelty of exploitation and poverty makes them tough and aggressive.

The challenge for governments regarding these groups is to increase opportunities and incentives for them to re-enter the education system, which often necessitates new forms of initiatives in meeting their needs. The country has to continue its relentless struggle, to eradicate illiteracy and ensure that every child will benefit from the provision of basic education without exception of caste, creed, language, religion, or any other social, economic and regional consideration (Govinda, 1995).

Education can be made acceptable to the children and adults of poorer classes only when it is accompanied by other things which fulfill their immediate and vital needs (Neal, 1953). Hence basic education must correspond to the actual needs, interest and problem of the children in the learning process. Investment in education at any one time has a multiplier effect, yielding additional benefits in the future. In summary, education is a powerful tool for reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality, improving health and nutrition and promoting sustained human development led growth (World Development Report, 2004).

2.5 Impact of Education on Poverty and Development

Poverty is the central objective of the Millennium agenda. The primary aim is to reduce income poverty by cutting in half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day (UNDP Millennium Declaration, 2000). For this purpose a massive push is needed to boost access to essential services for the children which will provide a vital kick-start to human development and poverty reduction.

Basic education is the key to sustaining growth and poverty reduction. All over the world basic education has been given its due recognition which is very well evident from the Declaration on MDG, Conference on EFA and World Education Forum. Hence it can be said that basic education would facilitate in contributing to social, economic and cultural progress free from hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Education is an indispensable tool for personal and social improvement.

Education not only enriches the life of an individual but also enriches the whole nation. A nation cannot be said to have developed only if few of its elite groups are educated. It is considered to be developed only if education is imparted even to the poorest of the poor sections of the society. The poor people, having education as a means come up in life acquiring other aspects of life like sound health, secure job etc. But we cannot expect a sudden change in the way of life of the people (McMahon, 2001).

Education takes its own pace of-time to develop the people which can be realized only in the long term.

Assurance of basic minimum need found an expected and prominent place in the Fifth Plan period for the first time in India. The basic minimum need not only meant the day to day needs of the people in terms of income and consumption but it also meant education for all children up to 14 years of age, minimum public health facilities, nutrition for children, protected water supply etc. However there has always remained a gap between so called motivations to remove poverty and the slogans made about it (Mishra, 2006).

Poverty is both a cause and effect of insufficient access to quality education. Lack of education perpetuates poverty and poverty constrains access to schooling. In order to get rid of poverty there should be access to education. The relationship between education and poverty reduction is thus quite straight and linear as education is empowering; it enables the person to participate in the development process; it inculcates the knowledge and skills needed to improve the income earning potential and in turn the quality of life (Venkatasubramanium, The Hindu, 2001).

Hence the powerful instrument of education which makes its impact in poverty reduction and human development should be improved qualitatively and it should be very well designed keeping in mind the poverty issue, the prime objective of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and it should be made accessible to all the children in the country.

2.6 Strategic Importance of Basic Education

Basic education brings about a remarkable change in the society as it acts as a facilitator of social change and also it is an element for bringing about values and quality in life. A firm commitment to the spread of basic education is vital because of its strategic importance. The strategic importance that basic education offers can be understood in five distinct ways as put forward by Sen and Dreze (2002: 38).

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- a. ***Intrinsic Importance:*** Basic education is a valuable factor for development and it can bring about a direct change and a positive change in a person's life. The art of learning has got its own intrinsic values that help an individual in the realization of his personal goals, in building confidence and moving towards self improvement.
- b. ***Instrumental Personal Roles:*** A person's education motivates him to generate and utilize his potential to the fullest as it makes a drastic change in his personality also. If a person is educated he can be more confident of getting a well secured job that would make him economically sound and that makes him to participate actively in various activities in the society.
- c. ***Instrumental Social Roles:*** Basic education also enables a person to take part in various activities and issues that are raised in the society. As information is well furnished to an educated person he is able to take part in the discussion in relation to the social needs and he is able to voice out his stand in it, which makes him to make full use of his privileges and rights in a democracy.
- d. ***Process Roles:*** The process of schooling, apart from individual gains extends its benefits to the society in other consideration also. Process of schooling helps in expanding its activities to all type of children thereby tries to help child labourers and offers education to them. Apart from this schooling helps on widening the horizon for the children.
- e. ***Empowerment Roles:*** Educational achievements of poor children and other disadvantaged group empower them and help them to come out of poverty trap. It helps in reducing inequalities and serves as a means of attaining equality as it promotes equal opportunities to all sections of the people.

2.7 Analysis of Basic Education in India

India has understood the strategic importance that basic education offers to an individual and how it helps in motivating the people to take part in development process. Recognizing its importance the framers of our Constitution has made elementary

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education free and compulsory for children from 6 to 14 years of age under Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act was passed to make the Right to Elementary Education a fundamental right and a fundamental duty.

Right from the Jomtien Conference in 1990 to the Dakar Framework in 2000, education has been given a prime consideration which contributes to human development and it is a global concern and commitment to universalize elementary education. Education for all has become an obligation and a prerogative for India to accomplish the goal by 2015.

But though the importance of education is felt, it has not been given the due consideration that is needed for bringing the Constitutional obligations into reality. There is one field in which India has done worse than even the poorest of the poor countries in the world and that is elementary education. India has been left behind in the field of basic education even by countries which have not done better than India, than many other developmental achievements such as Ghana, Zambia, Kenya and Phillipines (Ibid).

A major objective articulated by Jomtien was universal access to and completion of basic education. The number of children enrolled in school rose from an estimated 599 million in 1990 to 681 million in 1998 (UNESCO World Education Forum, 2000). This means that some 10 million more children have been going to school every year, which is nearly double the average increase during the preceding decade. But this statistics is for the whole world and India has to catch up with its neighbouring countries in the field of basic education.

In order to achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015, at a global level two steps are needed.

- a. identifying all hard-to-reach children and assessing their characteristics and the obstacles to their attending school; and

- b. devising strategies and policies to reach them, and obtaining and allocating financial resources.

As per the goal of Education For All (EFA) discussed in the World Education Forum (WEF) the above mentioned steps are to be taken by India to universalize education within 2015. A firm commitment to the widespread and equitable provision of basic education is the first requirement of rapid progress in eradicating educational deprivation in India.

2.8 Development in relation to poverty reduction and basic education

Development can be regarded as an activity, a process, an event or a condition that often takes the form of reaching a better position from the state of being. Traditionally development meant only the growth of a nation in terms of per capita income or economic stability. Measuring development in terms of money fails to recognize other aspects of human life that are very crucial to the growth of people that builds the quality of one's life. Economic growth alone cannot be regarded as development. A society can be called developed only if sufficient opportunities are available to an individual that contributes to his empowerment, participation and job security.

The human development approach is gaining predominance in the human development paradigm in the recent years (Alexander, 2005). This can be very well understood by making an analysis of the Human Development Reports (HDR). While the earlier HDR of 1992 and 1997 is concerned about opportunities available for human development and political freedoms for human development the recent HDR 2000 is concerned about the human rights for human development. The human rights approach started gaining momentum as it serves as a base for providing opportunities to the people.

At the global level, development regime focuses on various issues for women, poor people, indigenous people, environment, health, micro credit, basic education and

governance and so on. In the international arena people take up a particular issue and they specialize in it and work towards it. The poor people now represent a global population living in countries saddled with MDG performance targets under global surveillance (Ludden, 2005). Poor people are thus no longer conceived primarily as national citizens. They are targets, beneficiaries, and participants in a development process.

The notion of poverty as well as the notion of basic education has both been taken up in the development agenda worldwide. Whether it be poverty reduction or providing basic education, both depends upon the provision of opportunities to the people that makes them take part in the development process with improvement in quality of their lives. When talking about making opportunities available to the people in the development paradigm the aspect of poverty reduction or basic education that contributes to development should not be viewed in isolation as they are interrelated to each other.

In the process of development, scholars from the various fields of economics, sociology and governance talks about various approaches in expanding the opportunities for the people. When one argues about increasing the per capita income, others talk of expanding the capabilities of people. When one set of intellectuals are concerned about the basic needs of the people others are worried about the human rights of the people. The various approaches to development in the context of poverty reduction and basic education are as follows.

2.9 Developmental Approaches towards Poverty Reduction

The current discussion in the debate of development discourse is not simply about development but about sustainable development. The nagging problem of poverty also stresses on sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development which may be seen as an alternative to the traditional concept of development implies an interlinking and balanced relationship between economic, social and environmental factors (Khan, 1996). Development strategies based on industrialization may help in satisfying

economic needs of the poor people but not in reducing poverty in the long run. There should be an integrated mix of economic, social and environmental dimension so as to move towards sustainable development.

2.10 Poverty and Capability Approach

Sustained development requires development of capabilities in people so that they are eventually able to take care of themselves (Pawar, et.al, 2004). The human capability approach has intrinsic value for the well-being of people and plays an indirect role in influencing social change and in influencing economic output. Sen argues that the expansion of human capability can be seen as the central feature of the process of development. Capability refers to the alternative combinations of 'functionings' from which a person can choose. Functionings refer to the sequence of things that a person does to achieve something (Sen and Dreze, 2000). Hence the capability approach is focused on the individual's capabilities and functioning. But the marginalized people are ignorant even to realize their capabilities, no matter how hard the government or voluntary organizations try to empower them. Therefore participation by the poor has to be at the collective level. Without collective action, the voices of the poor can rarely be heard (Mehrotra, 2005). Various institutions and NGOs should come forward in support of the poor and give a voice to the voiceless.

Capability approach focuses on improving people's capabilities over a period through the design of 'human development' strategies and it leads to the improvement of access to health and education services, to adequate nutrition and safe water supply, thus improving the level of human capital on the whole. Development paradigm should include a broad range of freedoms or rights such as the basic capabilities to avoid starvation, undernourishment or premature mortality, as well as rights to education and being able to engage in participation in the political process (Sen, 1999).

2.11 Top-down Approach and People-centred Approach

There was the practice of top down approach in the mid 1960s which was more towards centralization in which the bureaucrats would design the policies for the poor. But the poor for whom the policies are actually meant are only regarded as objects who don't have a say in the policies. This approach relied on the liberalization approach which was oriented towards economic development and this approach was looked upon in reducing poverty. Though the liberalization approach helped in making the people economically self sufficient in certain respect, the pace of movement towards development was very slow to meet the needs of the growing population which was increasing in geometric progression while the step towards economic stabilization moved in arithmetic progression and it had adverse effect on the poor people.

Most of the poor people in India are living below the subsistence level which hampers the growth and economic development of the nation as such. At this juncture, there is a need to develop new approaches and policies in contrast to the top down approach to combat poverty. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act which stresses on decentralisation and empowerment of people at the grass root level is the first step towards people-centred approach in which the local people are allowed to frame their own policies for the betterment of their panchayat or municipality. With that as the base people should be allowed to take care of their needs and decentralised planning should be stressed upon in the developmental process. Any change or development process which is designed for pro-poor growth should consider them as the subject and not as an object of development. Hence people should be regarded as the central subject of development process and their participation should be considered crucial to the national development.

2.12 Basic Needs Approach and Human Rights Approach

The basic needs approach was put forward by Streeton and Stewart who argue that development can be realized only if it is focused on the needs of the people. Under

this concept households are defined as poor if their food, clothing, medical, educational and other needs are not met. Basic needs approach do not seem to attempt to put various aspects of basic needs in to a single welfare indicator. This approach involves some elements of subjectivity in determining 'satisfactory' levels of health care, housing, education, cultural amenities and other aspects (Khan, 1996).

In contrast to the need based approach human rights-based approach focus on the empowerment of the people as a core strategy in ensuring that the system of governance is reformed to respond to issues that affect their lives, including poverty (Kumar, The Hindu, 2007). Poverty recognized only as a matter of satisfying basic needs reflects on economic factors alone and calls for the response of only the government officials at the top level. When poverty is regarded as a human rights approach economic, social and political factors are considered and it gets a wider response from the various actors in the society like the government, private players, NGOs, local communities etc.

A rights-based approach has wider advantages when compared to the need based approach. In the right based approach the focus shifts from the government to the citizens. Human rights-based approach recognizes that poverty is not just a matter of being economically deprived. It is defined and sustained by a sense on the part of the poor of helplessness, dependence, lack of opportunities, and lack of self confidence and self respect. The language of rights makes clear that poor is not subject of charity and benevolence by governments or rich people. They are entitled to a decent standard of living and that rights are the vehicles for their participation and empowerment (Hyden and Court, 2006).

These discussions are raised having the development discourse in relation to poverty reduction alone. Approaches in relation to basic education can be understood by analysis of the various phases of development approaches.

2.13 Phases of Development Approach and Basic Education

As affirmed earlier, development refers to the process of building up the quality of the human well being. There are various approaches to development that developed in different phase.³ In the 1960s development was more oriented towards projects and the project approach was an exercise which was developed for the people by the officials at the top level. This approach focuses more on the *development for the people*.

The next phase in late 1960s created the sectoral approach to development, in which various programmes were developed by the government for the development of the people. This approach stressed the value of decentralizing authority to lower levels of government organization in order to enhance the management of the sectoral programs. There was growing emphasis on education, training of masses, adult education and universal primary education. The main idea of this approach was *development of the people*

The growth of basic education during the 1960s was more based on the rules and regulations of the government. Based on the constitutional commitment of providing free and compulsory education to all children under 14 years of age, The top officials in the government framed the educational policies and the government chose to educate the children through a vast, centralized machinery designed by the government with superstructure, staff, infrastructure and resources (Sarawati, 1998). But the project approach failed to realize improvements especially in the conditions of the poorer segments of the population in terms of basic education. The analysis of the educational developments in India in the late 1960s from the point of view of the phases of development brings out clearly that it was more based on the sectoral approach. The Kothari Commission, popularly known as the Education Commission set up in 1968 made many recommendations to the improvement of education in India and the committee stated that there should be intimate contact between the schools and the local communities. (Ahmed and Garg, 2000) Mid day meal schemes were also launched in

³ Ibid, This paper has elaborated in detail the different phases of development.

some states and the educational programmes were designed for the *development of the people*.

The third phase of development was oriented towards policy approach which was developed by the end of 1970s. Under this approach the challenge was no longer on how to administer or manage the development; it was much on identifying the incentives that may facilitate it. Market, private and voluntary organizations could play a more significant role in working with people to realize their aspirations. NGOs were able to do with the people what the government had failed to do for the people. The perception of development under this approach is an exercise done *with the people*

The fourth phase of development, the Political approach or bottom-up approach in 1990s realized that development is not only about the projects, programmes or policies but also about politics. People must be given the right incentives and opportunities not only in the economic but also in the political arena. Development is the product of what people decide to do to improve their livelihoods. People constitute the principal force of development and must have the chance to create institutions and organizations that respond to their needs and priorities. Development in this stage was regarded as something done *by the people*.

The development of education system in India started gaining momentum only after 1980s. The National Educational Policy was set up in 1986 which has been guiding education all through. Many programmes like Operation Black Board, District Institutes on Educational Training (DIET), Non-formal Education, Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was established after the policy was framed. Educational development was viewed from the point of view of the needs of the people. As per the human rights-based approach, the Right to Education Bill 2005 has made it a right to every child to have compulsory education. From the Jomtien Conference to the Dakar Framework, various actors other than the government took part in the conference to voice out the needs, aspirations and rights of the poor people in the World Education Forum.

Thus it can be said that the right-based approach applied to development regime would make a significant contribution to poverty reduction. Basic education acts as a catalyst for social change and development of the nation as a whole. In order to eradicate poverty and promote development, imparting basic education to the children is essential. The role of various institutions is pivotal in eradicating poverty and the entire mechanism of the State, NGOs and other actors should be geared together in order to respond to the needs of the society and to reach the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Among the multi-players in the educational governance, it is essential to make a study of the contribution of each player so as to make an assessment of each player's role in building the capability of poor people and also in empowering them to realize their rights. The role of private actors in providing education is beyond the purview of the current study as their services are inaccessible to the marginalized sections of the society. The forthcoming chapter starts with elucidating the plural institutions in the governance set up and gives special focus to the role of NGOs in general and further makes a critical appraisal of the role played by government and NGOs in basic education.

Chapter – III

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND NGOS IN BASIC EDUCATION: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

CHAPTER III

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND NGOS IN BASIC EDUCATION - A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

3.1 Plural Institutions in Governance

Governance is the base for a democracy on which functions the entire machinery of government. Governance as a term reflects more than government. Governance is not what government is or what a government does. The Oxford Dictionary defines governance as the way in which a country is governed. But the contemporary usage of this term has become far encompassing. In the recent years there has been wide discussion on how to improve the governance and new thinking has emerged on restructuring governance. In the process of restructuring of governance various actors and institutions have mushroomed because it is not possible for the institution of government alone to manage the development process and there has been the emergence of pluralisation of government.

Even until two decades back, the principle of command, control and hierarchy were the guiding factors of governance. But in the present context where there is multiplicity of other players the government becomes one among the various actors and the principle guiding them is more of coordination, horizontal linkage of relationship having a flexible interaction unlike the rigid bureaucracy. The government has joined hands with multi-players of the society like the market, civil society and other organizations in delivery of services to the people. Hence spanning out of the state, the privatization of State and Para-state institutions, and the subcontracting of State functions, is what governance is about in the present context (Chandhoke, 2003).

Today's state is no longer a welfare state which took care of all the welfare programmes and development schemes. Too much of demands mounted on the government by the public, overloaded the state making the government more ineffective.

The modern government thereby has reduced its role as a service provider and facilitates the activities of other actors which make its contribution in various developmental activities and concentrates on providing basic services for the people and aims at poverty reduction thereby moving towards development.

It is in this context that the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have emerged from among the plural institutions and has become important agents in civil society. NGOs play a very important role in development work and also in delivery of services. They work with the grass roots movements, work in partnership with the government and people, make people aware of their rights and responsibilities and thereby try to empower them.

3.2 Non Government Organizations

The existence of civil society organizations such as the NGOs is not new in India. They have been in operation for a long time now, however initially they were known either as non-profit or voluntary organizations. The term NGO was officially brought into being by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1950. The term was coined by the UN mainly to indicate the difference between the sovereign nation-states, which happen to be its direct members, and the organizations that collaborate with or receive grants from its agencies to implement developmental programmes (Nawani, 2000). In India the NGOs are registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1861. The organizations that come under this Act are not expected to make profit on their activities and they are considered as non-governmental.

The participation of NGO sector in general since independence has been impressive and they have made a significant contribution in welfare programmes, development-oriented initiatives, empowering women and weaker sections, protecting the rights of marginalized, protecting the environment and in spreading literacy and education (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade, 2001). The activities of NGOs are heterogeneous in nature because of the wide and complex set of activities they undertake

and also because of the differences in their organization, ideology, objectives and the target groups they serve.

Some NGOs are welfare oriented and aim at protecting the welfare of the people where as some others aim at bringing a radical change in the society. Some rely on foreign sources and there are other NGOs who depend on the indigenous sources. Some of the organizations directly deliver services to the poor people while others organize people in helping themselves and it tries to build the capabilities in people. Among these NGOs there are some who involve themselves in replicating the policies and programmes of the government or other NGOs and some other organizations innovate and demonstrate new programmes themselves (Ibid).

The early voluntarism was regarded as conventional voluntarism in which the focus of the voluntary organizations was mainly welfare oriented or oriented towards social reform and they were functioning only as charitable trusts. They were inspired by idealism. Later in the 1990s there was a transformation in the focus of the NGOs and the modern voluntarism concentrated on various aspects and they were concerned more about the development of the people and addressed the issue of basic needs and human rights of the people. The modern voluntarism aims at achieving development and social justice and they are inspired by ideology rather than idealism (Bhatt, 1995). This paradigm shift from the welfare of the people to the rights of the people is justified as an expression of the emphasis on popular participation or participatory development. The principal advantage of NGOs lies in their proximity to people and their sensitivity to the needs of the community (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade, 2001). A prominent feature of the nongovernmental sector is its capability of bringing people together and motivating them to participate in the developmental process.

The role of the NGOs can be classified based on the activity undertaken by the NGOs or based on who has initiated the activity like whether they are government initiated or donor organized or independent local NGOs or foreign NGOs. Based on such classification the tasks of the NGOs are numerous like advocates, educators, monitors,

whistle blowers, mediators, lobbyists, activists, mobilizers and protectors of human rights (Ibid).

3.3 Merits of NGOs

NGOs are found to be in a better position than the government in aspects like flexibility in operation, scope for innovation etc unlike the government whose operation is limited by rigid hierarchy, red tapism and lengthy procedure. In terms of creating a better rapport with the people, the relationship of NGOs to that of their beneficiaries is based on the principle of voluntarism while the relationship with government is governed by the principle of command and control. NGOs are usually not large in their staff strength, but that often is also an advantage as they can work more efficiently at the micro level and it becomes easy for the NGOs to devise the strategies to achieve the goal by experimenting with innovative ideas.

Flexibility in approach helps NGOs to think of appropriate solution to the issues they handle. Size of the NGOs makes them flexible to the needs and requirements of the people for whom they work and they adjust accordingly. Hence people find in NGOs an effective alternative for implementing programmes without middlemen, bureaucratic tangles and red tapism (Nawani, 2000).

One of the major advantages of the NGOs is the space that they get for innovation and experimentation. As their activities are at the micro level they can easily experiment an innovative idea which if found successful can be replicated at the macro level by the government. In fact, NGOs capacity for innovation has enabled them to acquire a special place of their own among the various development actors, and therefore many observers consider innovation a special and separate role of NGOs. Innovations in community health, basic education, indigenous medicine, micro finance and evolving appropriate credit systems that benefit the poor all have had wider repercussions in the society at large (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade, 2001).

Easy availability of funds makes the NGOs financially sound which helps them to concentrate on their activities towards their goal which prevents them from suffering for scarcity of funds. Availability of funds is one of the major reasons for the proliferation of the voluntary agencies in the country. Most of the NGOs are funded by external agencies and others are financed directly by the government of India.

3.4 NGOs and Government

The relationship that exists between government and NGO is more complex and diverse. At the global level the relationship between the two institutions may vary from nation to nation. For example in Ethiopia NGOs have a strong relation with the central government agencies but are greatly resented by local authorities. African governments are suspicious of NGOs. In Kenya the government originally had a favourable attitude to NGOs but it has transformed dramatically over the last decade (Turner and Hulme, 1997). But in India the government continues to provide direct support to NGOs.

In India the role of the NGOs in fulfilling their objectives was given recognition by the government for the first time in the Seventh Five Year Plan. After that in the mid 80s Indian State increasingly recognized the role of voluntary agencies in promoting grassroots democracy and people's participation in developmental programmes (Nawani, 2000). Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) has been operating a special scheme of financial assistance with a view to promote experimentation and innovation for the achievement of goals set for UEE and now there are more number of NGOs that receive grants from the MHRD. (Anand, C.L., 2001)

In India, the government is perhaps the major source of finance for the NGOs apart from the institutions of World Bank, UNDP and other international donors. Government renders a constant financial support to NGOs that takes care of developmental programmes and welfare schemes in India. The weakness of governments can be matched by corresponding strengths of NGOs and *vice versa*. At the macro level a government cannot experiment a particular idea for development of the people. In such

cases, the government can adopt certain innovative programmes of the NGOs and incorporate them in their major programmes for the whole nation.

3.5 NGOs in the Developmental Paradigm

As discussed in the previous chapter, the right-based approach applied to development regime would make a significant contribution to eradicate poverty and basic education acts as a catalyst for social change and development of the nation as a whole. NGOs have a catalytic role to play in this dimension which as an institution covers the aspects of poverty of people, basic education and development. So the major challenge facing the NGOs today is how to bring about development that is responsive, accountable, equitable and sustainable which gives people greater control over their own lives.

In order to have a sustained self-development, the NGOs need to build the capabilities of people which would help them to cope with the changing dimensions of development thereby making the poor people participate in the development process and also in the political arena.

People-centred development and human rights based approach in relation to the multiple agencies in the society expect these institutions to be accountable to the poorest, the most powerless and the indigenous in the society whether it be the government, private actors or the NGOs (Heyzer, 1995). Most NGOs are mostly development actors who have tried to build local capacities. NGOs having such focus make its contribution to empower groups so that their needs and perspectives can be incorporated into a more people-centred development (Ibid).

In the developmental process, change can take place quickly and at a low cost if people come forward to participate in their own development. That is, people should be mobilized to share the burden of their own development. So development cannot take place until and unless the people have the capability to participate in the process of

development. NGOs directly work with the targeted or intended beneficiaries of development and try to build their capabilities. The role of NGOs is not so much to get involved in taking up specific developmental activities but to mobilize and organize the poor and weak so that they can demand their rights and fight for equality and justice. The forthcoming pages in this chapter analyze the role of NGOs in providing basic education.

3.6 Basic Education

Basic education started gaining momentum in India after 1990s. In the international arena, the commitment was made in the Jomtien Conference to provide basic education to all and in this scenario the country saw the emergence of large multi-players who started to play a significant role in providing basic education apart from the government agencies and one such player in this regard is the NGOs. In 1990s basic education got a prime place in the development discourse as a component of the Human Development Index brought out by UNDP.

Basic education refers to a whole range of educational activities that take place in different settings and aim to meet basic learning needs as defined in the World Declaration on Education for All in Jomtien. Basic education is an indispensable 'passport to life' that will enable people to choose what they do to share in building the collective future and to continue to learn (Nawani, 2000). Basic education is essential if inequality is to be successfully challenged. The significance of basic education especially to the downtrodden was recognized in the Jomtien Conference which stated that education should be imparted to the socially, culturally and economically deprived groups. It further stated that focus of basic education must be on actual learning acquisition and outcome rather than exclusively upon enrolment and continued participation. The forum also underscored the need for strengthening partnerships of all kinds including government and non government organizations (UNESCO World Conference on Education For All, 1990). Before analyzing the role of NGOs in basic education and the strength of partnerships a brief overview of the initiatives of the

government would be helpful in understanding the emergence of NGO sector in basic education.

3.7 Government Initiatives in Basic Education

The hope that education can become free and compulsory in India is strengthened by experiments in basic education. The scheme was first outlined by Gandhi, at the National Educational Conference at Wardha in 1938. The philosophy of basic education is that education is life and it should be concerned with self-sufficiency of the individual and of the community (Earnest. E. Neal, 1953).

Since independence, India has been paying considerable attention to the system of basic education. But the goal of achieving universal elementary education is still a distant dream. Though the steps are taken by the government, the efforts of the government are only at the superficial level. Initially provision was made in the Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) to provide free and compulsory education to all children below 14 years of age. But since it was placed under the non-justiciable part of the Constitution the state or the central government failed to recognize its importance as it is not enforceable under any court of law. This can be very well understood from the fact that after a long period of 21 years since independence, India framed its first National Policy on Education in 1968. Later when education was brought under the concurrent list in 1976 it became an obligation for both the state and the central government to work in partnership towards basic education. But on the contrary, it has become a no mans land as both the state and central government tries to shed their responsibility. Though the centre assists the state financially in initiating new schemes towards education, after a point of time it is a burden on the state government which has to manage it independently.

However there have been improvements and change in the educational development of our country on the whole. With the adoption of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968, there was a remarkable change that was brought about in the system of education. It established the uniform pattern of education all over India with

the 10+2 pattern and three years of under graduation. It also stated to provide education to all children within 14 years and to give special care to enroll girls and weaker sections in school. But the policy could not be implemented fully due to lack of proper programme of action for implementation, shortage of funds, unaccountable organizational structure etc (Sudha Rao, 2002). And the second National Policy on Education was adopted in 1986 and Plan of Action was established in 1992 which was framed to implement the recommendations of the policy. The second policy was oriented towards the needs of the people unlike the first policy which according to Marmar Mukhopadhyay (2002) is based on the Expert Modelling Approach.

Various programmes have been implemented by the government so as to promote education at the basic level. Myron Weiner believed that India's emphasis on higher education had not changed since the Nehruvian era; importance is to be laid on basic education at this juncture because the efficiency of primary education system has a direct implication on higher education. That is, higher level of education cannot be expanded in isolation of primary level (Kaul, 2001).

Quality of Education is at present in the focus in all programmes relating to basic education. The Union Government initiated a number of projects and programmes under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes most of which have been initiated after the National Policy of Education of 1986 and World Conference on Education for All held at Jomtien in 1990. Various Programmes were initiated by the government and to mention a few would be scheme of Operation Black Board, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET), Non Formal Education (NFE), National Programme for Nutritional Support and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

But mere schemes and programmes from the government are not sufficient to achieve the goal of UEE. Efforts should be made to mobilize community participation by innovative approaches at the field level where the operation is to take place and schemes should be worked out based on the local conditions and economic background of the people living there. In this regard the recent programme of the government, SSA initiated

in 2001 is a step towards participatory approach as it concentrates on involving Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), School Management Committees, Parent's Teachers Association, NGOs and other grass root level structures in the management of elementary schools (Kumar, 2005: 5). The success of the SSA has also been brought out by the recent study conducted by the Indian Institute of Management – Ahmedabad (IIM-A) which states that there has been a progress made by the SSA in quantitative terms though not qualitatively. There has been improvement in the enrolment rate and retention rate. (The Hindu, July 2007).

But improvement in quantitative terms alone will not be sufficient to meet the goal of UEE as put forward by the EFA Conference in Jomtien. Quality of education is of great significance as it contributes to improve the cognitive skills of a child. But education in both qualitative and quantitative terms greatly depends on certain aspects like the school environment, infrastructure of the school, academic facilities available in school, commitment of teachers, quality of text books and so on which serves as essential indicators in analyzing the role played by various educational service providers whether it be a government, private or a NGO run school.

There are various indicators that helps in assessing the role played by service providers in education which is explained in detail in the next chapter, which made an assessment of 2 government schools and 2 NGO run schools one each in two zones in the areas of Vyasarpadi and Taramani of Chennai. Empirical data gathered from the field tries to make an analysis of the education provided by the government schools and NGO run schools at the micro level.

3.8 Drawbacks of the initiatives

Though the government takes a lot of effort to improve primary education it is not up to the mark. Since the time of independence, the goals are set up by the government for every ten years but the targets are shifted every time and the government hardly keeps its promise. The 1999 PROBE report points to the existence of "multi tracks" - different

types of schooling for different sections. The poor and the disadvantaged go to public schools; the middle-class and those in the lower socio-economic ladder to private schools that are either aided, unaided, recognized or unrecognized; the rich to the high-fee-charging private schools; the elite to schools offering international certifications; and some to informal or non-formal schools. This is a response not merely to the differentiated market demand, but to government policy. Evidence from the field also shows similar type of arrangement in which almost all the children studying in the government schools or NGO run schools are living below poverty line and they are put in different types of school based on the income level of the family. In a focused group discussion in Taramani area of Chennai, for instance, a child of 8 years old stated that

My mother is a servant maid working in a sophisticated house. Even I assist my mother in her work before school hours. In that house an *akka*⁴ is studying class IV in a big school. She goes to school by car and I like the uniform that she wears very much. I asked my mother to put me in that school. But she scolded me (Focused Group Discussion, Kavitha, February 12, 2007).

This clearly brings out the hierarchy of schools existing in the state and as put forward by Jalal (2007) such school system creates a new 'caste of educators' bringing the hierarchy of education within the education system. Thus, now not only children but also schools are socio-economically differentiated.

According to a PROBE survey (1999) conducted in five selected states of India, 63 per cent of the schools had leaking roofs, 52 per cent had no playground, 58 per cent had no drinking water, 89 per cent had no functioning toilet, and 27 per cent had no blackboards. Only 2 per cent had all the facilities while 8 per cent had none at all (PROBE Report, 1999). This is the state of affairs of the government schools all over the country. But with the commencement of the programme SSA in 2000, there has been a remarkable change in the infrastructure of the government schools. If not all, many schools have started functioning under a well equipped building which earlier had to

⁴ *Akka* is a tamil word which means sister.

function under a small shed, under thatched roof or under a tree. In the field, observation was made on the infrastructure available in the government schools as well as NGO run schools which is depicted in the following table.

Table: 3 Observation Schedule for infrastructure in schools

Infrastructure and Academic facilities	Government Schools		NGO Run Schools	
	Taramani	Vyasarpadi	Taramani	Vyasarpadi
School Building	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Compound Wall	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Cleanliness	Very satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Availability of Class Rooms	Very satisfactory	Dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Blackboard	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Furniture in class room	Very dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Electricity	Dis-satisfactory	Dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Separate toilet for boys and girls	Very satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Playground	Very satisfactory	Dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Library	Dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Field trip	Very dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Projector, TV, Computer	Very dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Map, Chart, Globe	Very dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory
Audio-Visual Aid for disabled	Very dis-satisfactory	Very dis-satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Very satisfactory

	Very satisfactory
	Satisfactory
	Dis-satisfactory
	Very dis-satisfactory

From the table it is clear that in spite of the efforts taken by the government, the government schools still lags behind even in providing basic amenities. In one of the government school though electricity facility is available it is not found to be in working condition or even if available there is power supply only for 2 hours in a day as stated by

the school teachers. While the NGO run schools are providing aqua guard filtered drinking water to the children the government schools do not have pure drinking water and most of the time the drinking water is very dirty.

Apart from this, the performance of students in the government schools is often disappointing with high dropout rates, poor infrastructure in rural schools and controversies generated over the saffronisation of the education system. While budgetary allocation for elementary education has increased at the expense of higher education, there is considerable disappointment over the returns on expenditure under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme. Nothing substantial seems to have been done by the government on the poverty alleviation front even as the rural poor bear the brunt of the liberalization policies (Samuel and Jagadananda, 2003).

The state of elementary education in India is dismal. The fact that elementary education in India remains far from universal is no secret. The PROBE report gives a wide picture of the role of teachers in schools and the consequences of teacher absenteeism in schools. The PROBE catalogues the range of non teaching tasks that teachers are expected to undertake like "the decennial census, the cattle census, antipoverty schemes, health programmes, literacy campaigns and vote counting", all of which further reduce the opportunity for the children to learn (Evans, 2000).

This was even admitted by the teachers in the field who were very much annoyed by the over load of work apart from teaching. Right from creating awareness about the use of plastic to the awareness campaign on AIDS it becomes a teacher's duty. This leaves the teachers with little time and hence they are unable to pay full attention to the education of children. The teachers are even made to clean the toilets and in one of the government school the teachers are pooling money from their pockets to pay for the conveyance of school children failing which they drop out from schools leaving the teacher's position in miserable condition who becomes answerable to the higher officials when they come for inspecting the schools. Such situations lead to teachers loosing interest in their profession creating the problem of teacher absenteeism and so on. The

condition of teachers working in the government schools should be improved so as to reach the target of UEE.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) apart from highlighting certain key issues to promote education has also advocated for adopting a participatory approach for educational management and considered the goal of EFA unachievable without the active involvement of the civil society. Building partnership between government and non-government agencies has been repeatedly endorsed by policy makers.

Hence to overcome all such flaws of the government a participatory device is a welcome note. To fulfill the objectives laid by the government, a decentralized and a participatory approach to planning and management of education is an essential pre-requisite. Nongovernmental Organizations can play an active role in this regard. At recent times the NGOs are even encouraged by the government in an attempt to shed its responsibility of providing social good.

3.9 Role of NGOs in providing Basic Education

NGOs play a key role in the field of governance and it also plays an effective role in promoting basic education. There are many NGOs in India that makes their contribution towards building a strong foundation in basic education. Some NGOs work as a parallel body whereas some gives assistance to government schools and programmes. NGOs play a specific role based on the local contexts. Their grassroots innovations need to be up-scaled by the state. This means there is a need to build up a genuine partnership between the state and civil society groups engaged in educational activity.

The pioneering initiatives of NGOs pave way for promoting new ways of teaching, framing the curriculum, new models of classroom pedagogy and so on. NGOs can play a crucial role in stimulating the participation of the community in school activities which helps in moving towards UEE. The effectiveness of NGOs in promoting basic education was very well reflected both in the Jomtien Conference and also in the

Dakar Declaration in which the NGOs also made their declaration towards the goal of EFA. Table 3 and 4 as in appendix 2 gives a picture of the initiatives taken by 23 NGOs at the global level towards the goal of EFA.

Table 4

Frequency of NGO activities in relation to specific goals

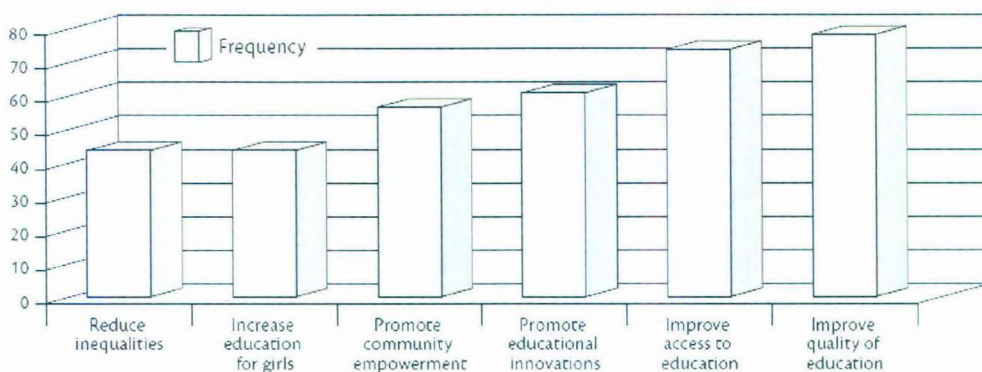
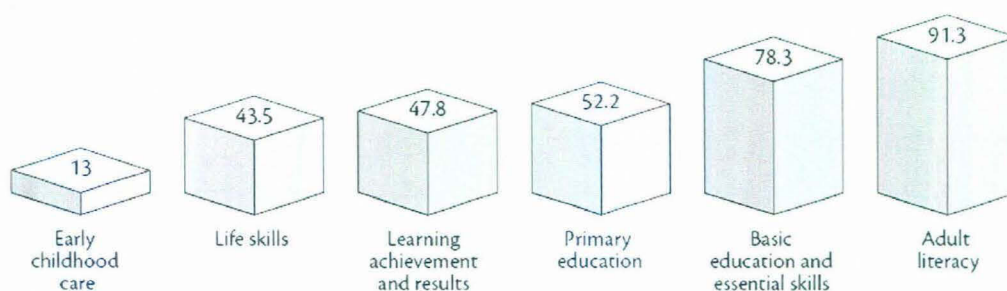


Table 5

Percentage of NGO activities in relation to specific activities



A study of 23 NGOs at the global level towards basic education in the CCNGO/EFA

source: UNESCO (2000) *Reason for Hope: The Support of NGOs to Education for All*, Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All, World Education Forum Dakar, Senegal 26 - 28 April 2000 Education for All 2000 Assessment, France.

There are some NGOs that act as parallel body in providing education to the children whereas there are other NGOs that support the programme of the government and they implement the schemes of the government towards basic education at the micro level. Some NGOs work with the objective of making the children self reliant and some other NGOs aims at improving the creativity of children which becomes self-enriching. In India there are many NGOs that work with various objectives and they cater their services to various target groups and to mention a few, Eklavya in Central India, the Rishi Valley Education Centre in Karnataka, Pratham in Mumbai, M. V. Foundation in Andhra Pradesh and Bodh Shiksha Samiti in Rajasthan. These groups have developed both formal and non-formal curricula, interesting learning materials and a methodology for teacher training.

But NGOs cannot be said to be the only alternative in providing basic education. In comparison to the efforts of the government NGOs role is only at the micro level and it is not easy for NGOs to handle the problem of the masses. In a nut shell they cannot take on the task of education delivery but can help enhance the quality of education in the state system (Nitya Rao, 2000). But steps should be taken by the government to recognize the role of the NGOs at the micro level.

NGOs are more systematic in their approach and they start to work having a clear focus on who should be their target group. Though their work is at the micro level, in that small area they try to cover various sections of the society and try to meet their educational requirements. Observation from the field reveals the variety of children covered by the NGOs. The profile of the NGOs that was visited for the field study as mentioned below gives an understanding of the variety of marginalized people focused by them.

Table: 6**Profile of the NGOs**

Sno		Don Bosco Beatitudes, Vyasarpadi	Brotherhood Mission
1	Target Group	Lowest strata of society-orphans, semi orphans, beggars, destitute children, lepers, out of school children	economically underprivileged children, socially underprivileged like lepers, gypsies, tribals, thrown away babies, children, out of school children, out caste children etc
2	Area of operation⁵	Vyasarpadi, Chennai	Taramani, Chennai.
3	No. of Beneficiaries	28000 children	8000 children
4	No. of centres	6 centres -	2 centres- Padur, Palavakkam in Chennai
5	Funding Agencies	Local donors and organizations; Government Funding for the project under SSA around Rs.70000	Foreign donors, fund raised from church meetings; Government funding from the Corporation of Chennai for a project on child labour under SSA around Rs.40,000 per month

Both the NGOs have tried to address the needs of the marginalized sections of the society each in their own way. Don Bosco Beatitudes (DBB) in Vyasarpadi is in the north zone of Chennai while the Brotherhood Mission (BM) in Taramani is in southern zone of Chennai. Both the NGOs work in collaboration with the government under the SSA to

⁵ The area of operation of these NGOs has spread to different parts of Tamil Nadu. Only their coverage in Chennai has been stated here.

promote the education of out-of-school children. The Don Bosco group runs transit schools and night schools for the out-of-school children and they also run a 'Home' for the poor children. Brotherhood Mission strives to uplift the street children and they provide shelter to such children in their homes and also extend its support to children of lepers, child labour, thrown away babies and tsunami affected children. NGOs though small in size they address variety of issues and the steps taken by the NGOs were found to be very systematic from the observation from the field.

At the national level there are many NGOs that are doing a marvelous job in the front of basic education and they have come up with innovative ideas which are replicated by the government at the macro level based on their success at micro level. For instance, M.V. Foundation is a NGO that works to bring the out-of-school child labourers into the schooling system and for this task they depend upon the participation of the communities and bring the local people as a part of their project in mainstreaming the out-of-school children. Such practices of NGOs are incorporated by the government in recent years in implementing their schemes and the on going programme SSA clearly brings out the initiative taken by the government in recognizing the role of communities and local people in reaching the goal of UEE.

However it should be understood that the patch work of service provided by the NGOs can never be a match for the initiatives of the government in basic education. Cases of few success stories of the NGOs do not mean that the NGOs are the chief provider of educational services.

Sometimes the government is skeptical about the work of the NGOs. Many NGOs just become the 'implementing agency of the donors' of their tailor-made programmes and they merely become a contractor to the donors. Funds from foreign agencies are irregular affecting the programmes of the NGOs in several cases. Hence the government becomes suspicious of the NGOs and thinks that the foreign funded NGOs are not independent and they become a mouth piece to their financiers (Nawani, 2000).

But the role of the NGOs should not be overlooked considering a few negative stories. There is no doubt about their contribution in taking India closer to the goal of UEE whether it be in the context of improvement in the quantity or quality of education.

Thus this chapter, at the first place has made an analysis of the role of NGOs in general. It has brought out the wide variety of functions performed by NGOs. However it should be taken into consideration that NGOs do not have a universal pattern in providing their services. The contributions of NGOs in order to have a national level acceptance should come up with their own policies and programme of action. The government initiatives and their draw backs in basic education highlighted at the macro level shows how it has contributed to the emergence of NGOs in the field of education. Initiatives of the NGOs in basic education at the national level give a wide picture of their role in general. A study of their role at the micro level will help in making an assessment of their role.

NGOs contribution to basic education or their effectiveness in assisting the government schools and programmes can be determined based on their involvement in several fronts like the infrastructure provided in schools, target group of the NGOs, innovative activities undertaken by the NGOs, steps taken regarding enrolment, retention and mainstreaming of children and so on. Such determinants also help in assessing the role of the government schools. The forthcoming chapter tries to make an assessment of the determinants in analyzing the role of NGOs and government in the Chennai district of Tamil Nadu, which is based on the empirical data collected from the field.

Chapter – IV

***ANALYSIS OF NGOS ROLE IN
BASIC EDUCATION IN
CHENNAI DISTRICT OF
TAMILNADU***

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF NGOS ROLE IN BASIC EDUCATION IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

Basic Education is the most important element that contributes to the growth and development of a nation. In a vast country like ours educating the children should be given the prime focus, especially the education to poor sections of the society. By and large the issue of poverty, basic education and development and the rôle of educational service providers mainly government and NGOs have been discussed in general in the previous chapters.

Exploration for the current study started with series of queries. In spite of the steps taken by the government why our country still lags behind when compared to our neighbouring countries in the mission towards basic education? When various programmes are available for the poor children to promote their education why more children are found on the streets in the metropolitan cities of India selling flowers and newspapers? All such queries makes one doubt the initiatives of the government - whether government has failed to meet the requirements of the poor people?

If failure on the part of the government has paved way for various other actors like NGOs to provide basic education, in what way the initiatives of the NGOs are different from that of the government? Do they assist the government schools in providing basic education to the poor children? If so in what ways does the interaction between the two actors help in meeting the target of UEE?

With such series of questions field study was conducted to analyse the role of NGOs and government with Chennai as a case study. The setting for the study is the on going programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) of the Government of India. Though it is a programme which is initiated at the macro level it cannot be effective without its proper implementation at the micro level. Though there are various programmes

formulated by the government, this study primarily focuses on the SSA as it encourages partnership of government with NGOs in executing the programme initiated by the government with regard to out-of-school children.

In Chennai district of Tamil Nadu, Vyasarpadi and Taramani was visited which are in north and south zone respectively. One government school and one NGO-run school in each area was visited. The purpose of the visit was more to get a view from all stakeholders like the teachers, children, government officials, NGO director, instructors and parents to understand how far the two service providers, government and NGOs were more keen in their operation and how far they succeeded in reaching the target.

4.1 Scenario of Education in Chennai

In general Chennai can be regarded as an education centre as people from all over Tamil Nadu come to Chennai for their higher studies. The overall picture of education scenario in Chennai shows a positive trend and especially basic education in particular are taken care by various actors. Children get themselves enrolled in various schools like Government schools, NGO run schools, Private schools, Municipal and Corporation schools, CBSE schools, Matriculation and Anglo-Indian schools and schools run by Panchayat Unions in the sub urban belt of Chennai. Now there are growing number of Residential and International Schools in Chennai where only elite classes enroll their children. The Directorate of Education in Chennai looks after the schooling system in Chennai and the Corporation of Chennai manages the education of government and corporation schools. The State Project Directorate in Chennai takes care of the execution of the schemes and programmes in Chennai. Under SSA, the government work in partnership with NGOs in mainstreaming the out-of-school children to regular schools and such projects are funded by the government.

Table: 7 Districts performance on Literacy Rate in Tamil Nadu for the year 2001

District Name	Literacy Rate			Deviation from State Average		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
STATE Average	73.47	82.33	64.55	0.00	0.00	0.00
1 Kanniyakumari	88.11	90.88	85.38	14.64	8.55	20.83
2 Thoothukudi	81.96	88.66	75.64	8.49	6.33	11.09
3 Chennai	80.14	84.71	75.32	6.67	2.38	10.77
4 The Nilgiris	81.44	89.63	73.39	7.97	7.30	8.84
5 Tiruchirapalli	79.16	87.16	71.19	5.69	4.83	6.64
6 Kancheepuram	77.61	84.82	70.21	4.14	2.49	5.66
7 Madurai	78.65	87.24	69.93	5.18	4.91	5.38
8 Coimbatore	76.95	83.82	69.80	3.48	1.49	5.25
9 Tirunelveli	76.97	85.89	68.50	3.50	3.56	3.95
10 Thiruvarur	76.90	85.59	68.36	3.43	3.26	3.81
11 Nagapattinam	76.89	85.61	68.35	3.42	3.28	3.80
12 Thiruvallur	76.54	84.62	68.23	3.07	2.29	3.68
13 Thanjavur	76.07	85.45	66.95	2.60	3.12	2.40
14 Virudhunagar	74.23	84.56	64.09	0.76	2.23	-0.46
15 Ramanathapuram	73.05	82.96	63.55	-0.42	0.63	-1.00
16 Vellore	73.07	82.67	63.53	-0.40	0.34	-1.02
17 Sivagangai	72.66	83.70	62.12	-0.81	1.37	-2.43
18 Theni	72.01	82.50	61.41	-1.46	0.17	-3.14
19 Pudukkottai	71.96	83.22	60.94	-1.51	0.89	-3.61
20 Cuddalore	71.85	82.76	60.85	-1.62	0.43	-3.70
21 Dindigul	69.83	80.29	59.30	-3.64	-2.04	-5.25
22 Karur	68.74	80.42	57.30	-4.73	-1.91	-7.25
23 Nammakkal	67.66	78.02	57.04	-5.81	-4.31	-7.51
24 Tiruvannamalai	68.22	80.14	56.31	-5.25	-2.19	-8.24
25 Salem	65.72	75.25	55.61	-7.75	-7.08	-8.94
26 Erode	65.51	75.49	55.26	-7.96	-6.84	-9.29
27 Perambalur	65.88	77.68	54.26	-7.59	-4.65	-10.29
28 Villupuram	64.68	76.02	53.16	-8.79	-6.31	-11.39
29 Dharmapuri	59.23	68.82	49.10	-14.24	-13.51	-15.45

Source: <http://www.tn.gov.in/schooleducation/statistics/table2-event.htm>

The literacy level of Chennai is 80 per cent which is higher than the State average of 73 per cent and National average of 65 per cent (Census of India, 2001). Though the statistics of the literacy rates of Tamil Nadu in General and Chennai in particular shows a progressive trend, the State and the State Capital still lags behind when compared to the neighbour state like Kerala where the literacy rate has crossed 90 per cent. Many of the children in Chennai still remain out-of-school. In spite of establishing primary schools at a distance of 1 km in each locality, the problem still persists and there are more number of out of school children. The pupil-teacher ratio for primary schools is high which is 38 when compared to the national average of 40 (Tamil Nadu Human Development Report, 2002).

The Poverty levels in Tamil Nadu have declined from 45.80 per cent in 1987-88 to 21.12 per cent in 1999-2000. However the incidence of poverty is still high which has to be given immediate consideration even though it is less than the all-India average (26.1 per cent) (Ibid). The incidence of poverty has to be treated which is the root cause for the lack of capability in the people and it affects the education of children also which retards the overall growth of the children.

At this juncture, it becomes crucial to make a study of the steps taken by the players like NGO and the government, leaving behind the private actors whose service is beyond the reach of poor children. In this study along with the information gathered from government schools and NGOs, responses were also collected from the children and parents who are at the receiving ends.

4.2 Don Bosco Beatitudes

Rough estimates indicate that nearly 60-70 million children in India in the age group of 6-14 years remain out of school and they are deprived of all the basic amenities. Because of such deprivation many children at their tender age miss their childhood and they start supporting their family by going for work, by assisting in household works and some children are thrown in the streets and are employed as child labourers.

Don Bosco Beatitudes is an NGO that is in operation in Chennai since 1965 and they have initiated many social service works with a vision benefiting the poorest. Beatitudes Centre is an organ of the Don Bosco Group of Institutions which has a hundred year history and they reach out to the lowest strata of the society by catering the needs of Orphans, Semi Orphans, lepers, children of beggars and destitute children.⁶

Apart from having their own mission in reaching the poorest section they have ties with various government agencies for a wide variety of women empowerment projects, Elementary, High, Transit and Night Schools, Home for poor children etc. Don Bosco is one among the NGOs that work in partnership with the government in Chennai in implementing the Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) Camps under SSA programme for the out of school children.

4.3 Brotherhood Mission

Every day is a matter of survival for the children who are thrown to the streets. The destitute and poor parents of such children are not in a position to coddle their children, since they are already preoccupied with trying to provide them with the bare economic necessity (McFayden, 2004: 24). Such children stray from their family, kith and kin and they are pushed to extreme conditions to meet their daily requirements.

Brotherhood Mission, an NGO which started its operation in 1991 in Chennai, mainly concentrates on destitute children of the streets.⁷ The Mission extends its support to children of lepers, child labour, thrown away babies and tsunami affected children. The Brotherhood Mission works with the vision of reaching the children at the bottom and bringing them to the top. Like the Don Bosco Group, Brotherhood Mission also assists the government in a project of implementing the Alternative Innovative Education Camp for the out of school children under the SSA programme.

⁶ www.dbbeatitudes.org visited on 19th December, 2006

⁷ <http://royalkids.org/ABOUT%20BMI%20HOME.htm> visited on 22nd December, 2006.

With this brief profile about the NGOs that was available from their respective website, the forth coming pages discuss the issues that was observed in the field and explores the contribution of both the NGOs and the Government Schools. Various themes and factors are taken into consideration and the field data is analyzed accordingly.

4.4 Determinants to measure the effectiveness

The principal focus of this study is to make an assessment of the role of the NGOs and government in order to find out whether they make substantial contribution to provide basic education to the destitute children. In order to analyse the efficiency and effectiveness of role of NGOs this study has come up with various determinants which helps in making the assessment which has been done under various criteria.

4.4.1 Steps taken for the Economically Underprivileged Children

Deprivation forms the basis for all kinds of mishap that takes place in a life of a poor child and it affects the livelihood of children. While the majority of the in-school children come from the economically well off background, majority of the out-of-school children comes from the poor and marginalized sections of the society. When such deprivation factor is analyzed a sweeping statement that income and expenditure poverty attributes to deprivation will not yield a good result. Poverty cannot be understood by looking at income and expenditure factor alone. Food insecurity, vulnerability to crisis and lack of access to basic services like safe drinking water, school or health facility are also some other aspects of deprivation (Jha and Jhingran, 2005).

Evidence from the field suggests that some of the aspects of deprivation are considered by the service providers when meeting the needs of the economically deprived classes. Don Bosco to cater to the needs of the deprived classes runs Don Bosco Primary Schools for ages 5-10, Don Bosco High School for ages 10-16 free of cost for the children. It also runs transit schools for school drop outs and runs formal and non formal institute for such children. Homes are provided to the needy children and it also holds

night schools for children who are unable to attend regular school. Free tuitions are given to the poor children in the evening and they are also provided with books, note books, meals etc.

The Brotherhood Mission approaches the deprived classes in a different way. They conduct evening classes for the children in slums and sub urban region in their locality. Awareness is also created among the illiterate parents about the importance of education of their children and the mental make up of the children is also strengthened. They run homes for the economically weak children and free books, note books and uniforms are provided to them.⁸

When the NGOs are making their contribution at the micro level, government has taken its initiative at the macro level and they provide education free of cost, free books and uniform to the children. The government officials who are sitting at the top doing paper works claim that special focused groups are given life skill programme and they are also taken to exposure visits. Night schools are also run for the needy children.⁹ But the information obtained from the children and parents in the field presents a contradictory picture. Though provisions for all such activities are available under SSA, it remains only on paper and sufficient measure has not been taken yet in providing the above mentioned services to the children. The children are rarely taken to exposure visits. But free books and uniforms are provided to the children in time.

4.4.2 Innovative Activities

Innovations made in the system of education leads to successful attainment of the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) rather than maintaining the status quo. A number of innovations and successful model has been evolved in the NGO sector. Educational innovations have been made by NGOs like Eklavya, M.V. Foundation, Rishi Valley etc based on the radical perspective of Gandhi who was

⁸ Through direct observation and interview with the focused groups in the field

⁹ Through interview with the government officials in the State Project Directorate, SSA

constantly insisting on the proposal of *nai talim*.¹⁰ Different types of innovation from different experiences need to be combined together to achieve greater effectiveness.

Breaking the regular school education system with lecture method, a system has been evolved called the Activity Based Learning (ABL). In order to make education attractive to the school children and to lure the attention of the out-of-school children, the ABL Method was evolved which is an innovation of the Rishi Valley Foundation. The underlying principle is that nothing should be taught to the children by force. This is what is stressed by Gandhi whose philosophy is to teach children by play way method.

This method of learning is actually new to the education pattern followed in Tamil Nadu and even at the National level the practice of ABL is very new. The importance of this method has been stated in the National Curriculum Framework (2005). The ABL method was recently introduced in the government schools in Tamil Nadu only in the 2006 academic year. Under this method every class is given an educational kit containing cards in which each learning unit has been developed into activities so that a child learns by actually doing it. This method is developed to attract the attention of out of school children and they are able to learn in their own pace. The government schools are provided with the equipments and cards needed for it and ladders for it are also provided so as to display the cards. But the teachers in the government schools are complaining that there is not enough space to display the ladder as the classrooms are already congested. Instructors of the NGOs who conduct bridge course for out-of-school children in the project under SSA find it very useful to attract the out-of-school children.¹¹ On the other hand it was observed that the teachers in the government schools who are used to the lecture method of teaching are interested in maintaining the status quo. They are not flexible enough in accepting the innovation even though it is very easy for both the teacher and the children to follow this method.

¹⁰ *Nai talim* is the new system of education which Gandhi insists that has something new in it to meet the needs of the people.

¹¹ Based on interview with NGO instructor working in the AIE programme which is a project in SSA undertaken in collaboration with the government.

But the NGOs do not follow the ABL Method and they follow their own methods to reach the target group which they think will be effective. Don Bosco uses the audio visual aid in teaching the children so that they understand things better and also uses play way method of learning which gives importance to the creativity of the children. Brotherhood Mission apart from imparting education to the children gives encouragement to children in their area of interest whether it is music, sports or dance. Children are also given a slot and they are made to take up a TV programme with the title *Royal Kids* in which they carry over the whole show.

4.4.3 Steps regarding Enrolment, Retention and Mainstreaming

Enrolment is the first step in the process of bringing the out-of-school children to school. From the table it is clear that the rate of enrolment in the age group of 6-14 years is very high showing a positive trend towards UEE. But the real challenge lies not in enrolment of children, but in retaining and mainstreaming of children by adopting attractive and innovative measures.

Table: 8 School age children and enrolment in Tamil Nadu - 2003-2004

Age Group	Sex	School Age Children (in lakhs)	Enrolment	% of Enrolment
6 – 11	Boys	34.45	34.10	98.98
	Girls	32.15	31.81	98.94
	Total	66.60	65.91	98.96
11 – 14	Boys	19.18	18.71	97.55
	Girls	18.98	17.30	91.15
	Total	38.16	36.01	94.37
14 - 16	Boys	12.95	9.20	71.04
	Girls	11.98	8.40	70.12
	Total	24.93	17.60	70.60

Source: <http://www.tn.gov.in/schooleducation/statistics/table2-event.htm>

In the Don Bosco Beatitudes, there is a transit school intended to prevent school drop outs and for this purpose they have field staff to identify the drop out children by going for a field visit to enroll their children. They abstain from giving physical punishment and try to retain students by using innovative methods.

In Brotherhood Mission, every weekend the instructors of the NGO go for a field visit to identify the target children and they are put in transit school or a bridge course under the SSA.¹² Parents of such children are reached and they are given counseling for their family problems. Children are retained in school by play way method¹³ followed in the transit school and they are exposed to different areas like music, TV, computer, sports, art, painting etc. In certain cases where the children are psychologically affected, they are put in homes and their needs are taken care of. Finally after keeping them in the bridge course for a short period of time they are put in regular schools.

The government officials in the field claim that necessary steps have been taken by the government for enrolment and retention. They further asserted that in the government schools, every year the teachers collect the statistical information on out of school children through survey, census and approach the children and enroll them. By way of innovative practices through colourful and attractive teaching learning material, students are enthusiastically motivated to engage in learning. There are initiatives like bridge course, back to school scheme and residential camp to enroll and mainstream the children into schools. Door to door canvass is made and enrolment campaign is also conducted. There is also convergence with other departments like labour department to enroll the child labour.

But in reality the government initiatives regarding enrolment and mainstreaming gives a passive vision. The officials at the top level assume that at the field level it is the responsibility of teacher to enroll the children and they will do it. All the initiatives to

¹² It was observed by the researcher when the researcher accompanied the NGO instructor when she went for her field visit for that week.

¹³ Play way method is used by the NGO under which children are taught by way of games. For instance, in order to familiarize rhymes, numbers and vocabulary to children such learning aids are displayed by way of games in front of children, who learns from it when they with it.

enroll and mainstream the children are taken by the teachers but only at the commencement of the academic year after which there is no regular visit to the field to bring the out-of-school children to school. When asked about the steps for enrolment and mainstreaming, every official is bothered about the provisions and highlight the provisions that is there in paper under a particular scheme. But they are not concerned about the actual situation prevailing in the field. The steps of the Brotherhood Mission give a practical solution to the problem. While the government initiative has been made only at the superficial level, the NGO initiative has been trying to give a permanent treatment to this problem which is more practical also.

4.4.4 Facilities in School

The schooling facilities form a major component for evaluating the effectiveness of schools as the school environment forms the basis for increasing the enrolment and also for minimizing the drop outs. If this aspect is not given due consideration then no purposive educational progress could be achieved. Both the physical and academic facilities should be taken into consideration and the availability of well equipped study environment is a necessary prerequisite. Don Bosco has a well constructed school building with sufficient space and rooms. Safe drinking water using aqua guards and proper toilet facilities for both boys and girls is also available. Children are also provided with large play areas. The text books and uniforms are provided by the government to the children in Don Bosco. Each section in the NGO School has got its own library and there is regular investment in purchase of books. Newspaper is provided to every section and the headlines are read out to all the students. Dedicated clinics, doctor and nurses are available in the campus for any medical assistance.

In the Brotherhood Mission, the construction of the school building is student friendly and attractive with parks around and playground with all kinds of equipment like ring ball, basket ball, cricket, foot ball etc. There is a common library available for the children. Steps are now taken here to bring a soft copy of learning material. Drinking water with aqua guard is available and well maintained separate toilets for boys and girls

are also available. The classrooms are well furnished with proper electricity facility. Note books, books and uniforms are provided to the children.

In the government schools, most of the schools started getting a proper building with water facility and toilet facility only in recent years after the implementation of SSA. A lump sum amount is allocated for the construction of school buildings so that all the government schools get a well equipped infrastructure. Electricity facility is available but it works occasionally. Both the government schools in the field area did not have either desk or chairs for the students. Drinking water is available and there are common toilets for both boys and girls and it is poorly maintained and at times there is water crisis. Proper library facility is not available to the children in government schools. There is little space for the children to play. Under the ABL method the cards are to be displayed in the ladder. But there is lack of sufficient space for displaying the ladder. For the out-of-school children, when they join a bridge course, a combined book for class I and II and class III and IV called a primer is available. Free books and uniforms are provided to the children. But this work forms part of the collaborative project with the NGOs.

In the government schools it was only after the launch of SSA programme that the schools started getting proper school buildings with other facilities. Toilet facility is there and there is a compound wall also for the schools. But the tragedy is that there is no staff to maintain it. The toilets are to be maintained by the teachers only. There is no security guard to take care of the schools at night time and common people in the locality are using the school premises to dry their clothes.¹⁴

4.4.5 Extra Curricular Activities

When education is imparted to children in the schools, apart from academics they should be trained in other areas also. As Mahatma Gandhi said knowledge undoubtedly adds grace to life, but it is in no way indispensable for man's moral, physical and

¹⁴ Through focused group discussion with the teachers in the field

material growth (M.K.Gandhi, 1947). The children should be made to engage in extra curricular activities. In the government school the children are taught to sing, dance and to draw and they are allowed to play. Moral Values are also taught to them. Hence singing, dancing, drawing and playing are the extra curricular activities available to the children in government schools.

In Don Bosco the children are trained in handicraft, drawing, garland making, basket making, dance, songs etc. In the Brotherhood Mission the children are made to engage in drawing, candle making, chalk piece and ink making, phenyl making, singing, dancing, embroidery, handicraft, basket making etc.¹⁵ Through the extra curricular activities the NGOs equip the children with life skills which would help them to apply in practical life when needed.

4.4.6 Mid day Meal

The Mid Day Meal Scheme is in operation in Tamil Nadu since 1982 which is the largest school feeding programme in the country. The main objective of the scheme is to provide adequate nutrition to the economically underprivileged children to develop their mental and physical ability and to increase the enrolments in schools and to reduce the drop outs (Swaminathan, 2004, et. al). But there are allegations of corruption, bureaucratic hurdles and mismanagement which are said to be a major obstacle behind the benefits not reaching the needy children (Chugh, 2004). And also the quality of the food supplied is sometimes so bad that some of the children bring their own food from home. But in spite of all such flaws this scheme seems to be the major scheme that covers large number of beneficiaries and most of the poor children take their meal in school only. Some of the parents when enquired in the field say that though the food is not that good, their children take lunch only from the noon meal centre as they don't have any other option as their financial position is very bad. The state government provides noon meal to both the government schools and the NGO run schools. In each

¹⁵ Through focused group discussion with the children in the field area and they showed the things made by them like candles, embroidery and baskets etc to the researcher with pride.

noon meal centre there is an organizer and every teacher takes turn to supervise whether the food is properly cooked or not. For the economically deprived children living in the 'Home' of NGOs three meals per day is provided. In terms of the Mid Day Meal Scheme the NGOs are no match for the efforts taken by the government. In the aspect of providing meal to the children the government acts as the single largest provider of this service which cannot be compared with NGOs.

4.4.7 Training to Teachers

Teachers are the integral part of the school system and one of the most important inputs to the education system. They form the back bone of the education system and they are also the source of inspiration to a number of school children. Such teachers should be trained in a proper way so that the teachers create a lively atmosphere in the classroom. Usually the training is given by the government and under SSA the teachers are taught the play way method. The government gives training also to the NGO Instructors which they find very useful when they reach the target group. Three types of training Content Based Training, Methodology Based Training and General Training is given to the teachers. Unlike the government, the NGOs both Don Bosco and Brotherhood Mission give only motivation to their instructors and no special training is given. Every weekend the instructors of the NGOs from various zones meet each other, share their experiences and learn the successful methods from each other. In the government schools the Chief Education Officer (CEO) monitors the teachers when they come for unannounced inspection to find out the real picture. But this happens only once or twice a year and as the teachers are well aware of the period of time that they would come they prepare charts and other innovative displays are made before the official pays a visit to the school.

4.4.8 Satisfaction Level of Teachers

Salary of Teachers

On the whole 16 teachers were met of which 8 were from government schools and the rest 8 were from NGO run schools. In both the NGOs, all the instructors are very much satisfied with their salary. Their salary is only around Rs.3500. But they feel very happy as they get the satisfaction and inner peace in the work that they do.

Table 9: Satisfaction Level and Educational Qualification of Teachers and NGO Instructors

Sno	Institution	Salary		Educational Qualification		
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	HSC	UG	PG
1	Don Bosco Beatitudes	4	0	1	1	2
2	Brotherhood Mission	4	0	2	2	0
	total	8	0	3	3	2
3	Government Schools	2	6	0	3	5
	total	2	6	0	3	5

The salary for government teachers usually cross Rs.10000 which differs from person to person based on their basic pay and experience. Out of the 8 teachers in government schools only 2 teachers are satisfied with their salary. The rest are unhappy with it as they feel that it is not enough for the work that they do as a teacher. They engage in extra work like population census, child labour census, animal census, plastic awareness, AIDS awareness etc.

When the educational qualification of the teachers is taken into consideration, it can be noted that in the NGOs most of the teachers have only completed their higher secondary schooling whereas in the government school all of them are either graduates or post graduates. The field data shows that the instructors of the NGOs who have only completed their schooling have taken up the profession out of personal interest. They wanted to earn their living at the same time wanted to make their contribution to the society. So they are not fatigued by the work that they do and they are ready to do any kind of work as long as it benefits the children in the bridge course and they get the satisfaction in their work.

The teachers in the government schools are either graduates or post graduates. Most of the teachers work with dedication. But they think that only teaching is their profession and that they should not be asked to engage in other activities like going for census, data collection, door to door canvass at the time of admission etc. Most of them are not satisfied with the salary that they get.

The instructors in the NGOs have come to teach the children with the service motive and they get a sense of satisfaction in their work. They are very much satisfied with their salary also. They even don't mind going for a door to door canvass, field work every week. They face abuses from parents of working children, but that does not deter them from working with the community.

In some of the government schools the teachers take special care of the needs of the economically underprivileged children. In one of the school, in order to make the students regularly attend the school the teachers in the school pool money from their pockets to pay for the auto and van for pick up and drops of the children from the slums.

Apart from this the teachers have to work under the supervision of the higher officials who do not give any information in proper time to the teachers. When the higher

officials get the pressure from their superiors, they in turn pressurize the teachers at the last moment.

4.4.9 Awareness of Parents

Parental care is the most important attribute which is very essential for a child for the proper enrolment and regular schooling of the child. As most of the parents are illiterates and as they live under the poverty line, their critical need is to have a meal per day and education becomes secondary to them. But still there are some parents who in spite of all their sufferings want to educate their children.

Most of the parents do not have awareness about the education system or the importance of education. Steps are taken by the NGOs and the government to spread awareness about the importance of education to the parents. The government reaches the parents through door to door canvass for enrolment drive, but this is done once a year at the time of admissions.

Brotherhood Mission takes their school children to various localities and organizes cultural programmes with specific themes to stimulate the attention of the parents and to spread the awareness and importance of education to them. The parents are attracted by such programmes and try to participate in the school activities. In the initial stage the parents who were very arrogant at the activity of the NGO in sending their working children to school, later became very happy when they see the improvement in their children.

Don Bosco reaches the parents by organizing parent teachers meet in which counseling is given for the family problems and they tell them the way their children should be taken care of.

Thus the various determinants which would be helpful in assessing the role of the actors has been analysed in detail which facilitate in arriving at a conclusion. But such

analysis only gives a picture of what has been done by NGOs and government. Both the actors in order to deliver their service in a more effective way should identify the gaps that have been missed out by them especially when meeting the needs of the poor people. Knowledge about the poor is a must if the government or the NGOs are to adopt sound development strategies to promote the education of the children.

4.5 Identification of Critical Gaps

4.5.1 Parental Behaviour

Most of the parents are not bothered about the education of their children. Without knowing the purpose of education they send their children to schools. They don't participate in any of the school activities. They go to the schools of their children once or twice a year for the parent teachers meet. And that too only very few parents are interested in knowing about the status of their child's education. All the rest come to schools only to sign the report card. They don't have the awareness about education. None of the parents know about any of the schemes that are there in their children's school except the mid day meal scheme. Recently in this academic year new method called ABL was introduced in which they follow a card system by which it becomes very easy for the children to learn. But the parents are not aware of it either.

Some of the parents in the slum region use the free text books that are issued to the children as fuel for cooking. The other shocking news is that a child's name is registered in 3 to 4 schools. This is done so that they enjoy the privileges available in all the schools. They get the uniform and notebooks free of cost and sell it to other person. When such things are questioned by the teachers they just quit the school and go to some other school.

Such behaviour of parents influences the children who tend to learn such characteristics from their parents. The root cause of their problem should be identified and nipped in the bud. So a thorough understanding of the social organization of these

people is very essential for any service provider in order to meet their requirements accordingly.

4.5.2 Family Structure and Size of the Household

Nearly thirty families were visited to know about the child's family background. Evidence in the field shows that majority of the dwellers in that locality live in a single nuclear family as the size of their house and the economic status of their family does not permit them to live in an extended family.

4.5.3 Number of Offspring and Amount spent for education of children

Almost all the people in the field area live below poverty line (BPL) who struggle to earn their basic necessity. The table gives a clear picture that children of these families will definitely be in disadvantage in meeting their educational needs. In spite of their economic position, majority of the people interviewed either have 2 children or 3 children and only 2 families followed a single child norm while there are 4 families that even have 4 children. Naturally the parents will be in disadvantage to meet the educational needs of all their children and it becomes secondary to them.

Table: 10 Amount spent for education of children

Children in the Family	Family	Amt Spent per annum		
		0 -500	500-1000	1000-2000
1child	2	2	3	1
2children	12	4	5	2
3 children	12		4	7
4 children	4		2	
total	30	6	14	10

There are 14 families who spend around Rs.1000 for the education of their children out of which only 3 families have a single child. All the rest have more than 2 children. Families with 3 children are spending nearly Rs.2000 for the education of all the three children. On an average, per family is able to spend only Rs.250 for the education of a child per annum which will definitely be not sufficient to meet the requirements of the child. Families with one child are able to spend more on the child's education which ranges between Rs.500 to Rs.1500 on an average.

4.5.4 Economic Status of the family

Nature of Occupation

Among the thirty families visited, 3 of the fathers are jobless and 11 of the mothers are housewives. Most of the fathers are addicted to alcohols and some engage in gambling. The children in 4 of the families did not have father. Most of the parents work as coolies and they depend on their daily wages who will have to forgo the wage if they don't go for work for a day. And many of the mothers work as servants maids and they are paid very meager amount as salary.

Table: 11 Nature of Occupation of the parents			
Father		Mother	
Watchman	2	Housewife	11
Tiffin shop	1	Tiffin shop	3
Tea shop	1	Servant maid	8
Coolie	12	Sell flowers	1
Rickshaw	4	Coolie	5
Vendor	3	No mother	2
No job	3		
No father	4		
Total	30		30

Level of Income

As stated earlier, most of the families depend on daily wages and the table shows the level of income of a family per month. None of the family earns more than Rs.4000 per month and there is only one family whose earning is below Rs.1000.

The monthly income of majority of the house hold is between 1000-2000 rupees. When such average income is equated with that of the family size the income will be insufficient even to meet the basic needs of the family. While most of the earning is spent on food items only a small amount remains for meeting the educational needs of their children

Level of income	No of families
0-1000	1
1000-2000	20
2000-3000	8
3000-4000	1
4000 –above	-
Total	30

4.5.5 Educational Status of the Family

The education of the parents makes a difference in the progress of education of their children. The data illustrates that majority of the parents are illiterates and the female literacy rate is poor than that of the male. Not even a single mother in the sample had passed the upper primary education while there was only one male respondent who had passed his higher secondary schooling.

Table: 13 Educational Status of the Family			
Sno	Level	Father	Mother
1	Illiterate	13	16
2	Primary education	3	5
3	Upper Primary Education	5	7
4	High School	4	-
5	Higher secondary	1	-
6	Higher education	-	-
	total	26	28

All such factors are to be taken into consideration by the NGOs and government actors when they plan out to reach the out-of-school children in such locality as all these factors definitely have an impact on the education of the children. To some extent the NGOs have been successful in reaching the target group and these factors are considered by the NGOs. They try to address the mental problems of such group by giving counseling to the parents and children and they try to set right the emotional balance of the economically deprived group before actually addressing the issue of education. Tackling such issues before addressing the educational needs of the children will have the impact in the long run.

The State also has tried to address all the factors but superficially. The psychological imbalance of the children has been completely missed out by the State. They are too ambitious and they talk about the macro issues failing to address the micro components that would actually bring some change.

Some of the stories from the field would actually give a picture of the problems faced by drop out children and the perception of various stakeholders.

4.6 Narratives from the Field

The first hand information that was gathered by way of informal talks with various stakeholders gave a deep understanding of the problems faced by the children in the study area. Informal discussion with the parents, government officials and teachers brings out their perception which gives an understanding of various issues. Some of the interesting cases are discussed below.

Name: G. Gulam Basha

Age: 11 years

Class: 3rd std

Drop out period- 3 month

Monthly income: Rs.1500

Parent: Father: kerchief stitching Mother: house wife

Primary schooling

illiterate

Siblings: 1brother, 1 sister

I was studying in a government school. There the teacher was beating me. Scared of beatings I did not go to school for 3 months. I was pulled into the bridge course by the teacher in the bridge course. Now I like to come to school as she does not beat me and she allows me to play when I want to play. The teacher meets my parents every week when she comes for a field visit.

Name: R. Manoj Kumar

Age: 14 years

Class: 7th std

Drop out period- 1 year

Monthly income: Rs.1500

Parent: Father:

Mother: cook

High school

Siblings: 1 sister

I was staying in Bangalore with my parents and my elder sister. I was attending the school over there. One day my parents quarreled with each other and my father drove us away from home. After that I did not go to school for a year and we were struggling. Without home we stayed in the streets for 3 days. The people in the church helped us and got a job for my mother. Recently I joined the bridge course. I like to study and I want to join the military and take care of my mother and sister when I grow up.

Name: Subbulakshmi

Age: 11 years

Class: 6th std

Drop out period- 1 year

Monthly income: Rs.1200

Parent: Father: coolie

Mother: house wife

High school

primary school

Siblings: 1 sister, 1 brother

I did not go to school for a year. My father takes liquor and beats my mother every day. We also get the beatings if we question him. My father does not give the money to my mother and he takes alcohol for the money. Because of financial constraints I was not able to study further and I dropped from school. Now I have got enrolled in the bridge course.

All these cases illustrate the different reasons for drop out from schools. Various factors are responsible for keeping a child away from school. While one of the case shows school related reasons for drop outs the other two cases shows a combination of various factors like a sudden change in the family, financial constraints and family problems.

Parental Perception

Both my children are going to school and they are studying well. They should not be ignorant like me and they should learn about computers and get a government job.

-Dhanalakshmi

Servant maid & mother of 2 children

Taramani

In this case the parent is very cooperative and though she is illiterate she wants her children to study well and she thinks that education will improve the status of the children. The parent was very happy to give her views to the researcher and she motivated her children who were standing next to her telling them that if you study well you can become like this *akka* and get a decent job.

But at the same time there were also negative evidence from the field. Some of the parents were not bothered about the education of their children and they were not even aware of the fact that free books are given in the school. When a parent was questioned by the researcher about the issue of free books by the government she plainly said the government does not give anything. Her child who was standing next to her contradicts by telling that free books are given in school to which the mother responded, "Oh! Is that so?"

NGO Perception

Sometimes we do not get any help from the government. Once we found a number of children selling channa in the beach. We caught them to send them to regular schools. But the gang who is behind the plot of making the children work created problem for us and thrashed us. At that time we did not get any support from the government

- Gajendran

Manager

Brotherhood Mission

Apart from SSA we do not get any assistance from the government. Many of the poor children are residing in the homes and we are trying for a long time to get the ration cards for these children. Still we have not got positive results

*- Jecintha Anthony
Coordinator
Brotherhood Mission*

These two cases show the failure of government in supporting the NGOs who work in collaboration with the government in mainstreaming the out-of-school children.

Perception of the Government Officials

NGOs are having a good rapport with the community through their different innovative activities. They are conducting camps for out-of-school children, for drop outs etc. Their role is vital in mainstreaming the children in regular schools.

*- S. Sundararaman
Consultant
SSA, State Project Directorate*

NGOs are very committed in their work and they are more focused in the field. Hence it is easy for them to reach the children.

*- R. Elangovan
Joint Director
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
State Project Directorate*

The perceptions of the government officials give their opinion about the role played by the NGOs which shows their liking towards collaboration with such committed NGOs in meeting the target groups.

Thus, the review of the various determinants helps in making an analysis of the role played by NGOs in providing basic education to the economically deprived children. It can be said that the NGOs are making a significant contribution in reaching the target groups. To meet the needs of the poor children who are not able to attend regular schools, transit schools and night schools are made available to the children. Apart from this, a number of innovative models have also been evolved by the NGOs in the field. The NGOs considered that family background was the main reason for the children to drop out schools. So rather than reaching the children, they try to reach the parents of the children and gives counseling to them for their family problems. This aspect has been neglected by the government initiatives who only try to pull out the out of school children in the streets and puts them in bridge course. It was observed in the field that the measures taken by the NGOs were more realistic and practical, while the steps of the government were based on utopian ideals. At the same time the efforts of the government cannot be blamed. Efforts are taken by the government but the issues are treated only superficially. Interaction between the NGOs and government has helped in mainstreaming the out of school children in Chennai.

Hence evolving partnership models in basic education can be the solution, as the collaboration of both the partners has proved to be successful under the SSA as the defects of each partner are rectified by each other when they work together. The findings pertaining to this study in the light of Human rights- based approach and capability approach, finds place in the concluding chapter. The next chapter throws light on certain missing links that are to be considered by the actors in governance in delivering education to the poor.

Chapter – V
Conclusion

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

*Education in its real sense is the pursuit of truth. It is an endless journey through knowledge and enlightenment. Such a journey opens up new vistas of development of humanism.*¹⁶

-APJ Abdul Kalam

The words of the President reflect the essence of education and the way it contributes to the development of humanism in the first place thereby leading to the human development on the whole. Education is indeed a fundamental right to every child and it should not be denied to any child just because of the lack of opportunities or the lack of resources to avail the service due to the condition of extreme poverty of the child.

As discussed in the earlier chapters still there are millions of people in our country who suffer from extreme poverty and every day survival is a threat to them in spite of the steps taken by the government to eradicate poverty. The people who have got the capabilities in economic terms are able to get their children educated with their economic well being. Other set of people who are deprived of their capabilities though they realise the importance of education, they are not aware of the opportunities and means available for educating their children. Apart from this, there are one more set of people who are economically weak and do not realise the value of education and hence for generations together their children are neglected and continue to live in poverty (Kalam, 2005).

Capabilities of the people need to be improved so that they are able to make their choice from the available opportunities. For improving the capabilities of people rights of the people need to be realised. Once the rights of the people are recognised steps will be

¹⁶ Based on President Dr. Abdul Kalam's address to the nation on the eve of Independence Day, 2004.

taken by the institutions in governance to empower the people based on such rights. In a world where poverty issues and human rights are much debated, the human rights-based approach combined with capability approach that helps in human development are regarded as the vital factor to enlighten the above mentioned categories of people.

Educating the poor children is the one chief way to improve the capability of people in long run. The government which is one of the actors in governance makes its contribution towards educating the children. However, the intention of the government in educating the children is not towards improving their capabilities, but towards meeting their rights as mentioned in the Constitution under Article 21A under Fundamental Rights and Article 45 under DPSP to provide free & compulsory education to all children. Although the Human Right-based approach has been recognised but the capability aspect is missed out in the efforts of the government. Thus the education the government is imparting in turns play a passive role, which does not prepare the children in realising the opportunities available to them.

But with the emergence of the new actors like NGOs, the scenario of education changed. Earlier education was regarded as a routine activity which has to be provided to the people based on provisions and rules. Though the deadlines set for achieving the goals in paper seems impressive, yet the implementation part remains half touched. But NGOs gave a humanistic perspective, which gave a new dimension to the education system as a whole. NGOs basically work with a focus on development and their intention was not only to propel the government for Human Right-based approach but also to enhance the capabilities of children. Evidence from the field clarifies this outlook. The NGO run schools improves the life skills¹⁷ of the children which develop the capabilities of children. They are able to make choice of the opportunities with the help of their capabilities. Although NGOs help in improving the capabilities of the children, but it does not make a substantial contribution towards the realization of the rights.

¹⁷ Life skills like candle making, basket making, drawing, ink and phenyl making, stitching, embroidery etc taught to children as extra curricular activities.

Thus, when the rights of the people are not recognised they will not be realised fully. And the tendency of non realization will hinder them to participate in the developmental process and they will not come forward to voice out their demands. Similarly, when people lack the capability in them they will not be in a position to understand the issue of development and participation and they will not be able to voice out their demands.

Although the role of government and NGOs in providing basic education cannot be compared to each other as they are not equal partners in providing educational services but it is necessary to see the determinants to find out the effectiveness of the their respective role. It is just to analyse where the service provider lacks in meeting the goal and how it can be rectified by using the strategy of the other player. Government has a wider role to play than the NGOs and they deal with a variety of issue other than poverty and basic education. Developmental programmes, welfare oriented programmes, rural development, sanitation, women and child development and so on has to be taken care by the government. On the other hand NGOs function at the micro level and the programmes carried out by the NGOs only meets a limited people. However bitter the truth may be regarding the functioning of the two, but the reality seems that they are complimentary to each other.

NGOs actually contribute to the vision of educating the economically deprived section and they have succeeded in their operation to certain extent. Apart from that NGOs have also given support to the governmental programmes in implementing it and it adds speed to the work of the government. This is very well evident in my fieldwork as well as in SSA where they work in the Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) and Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) project and conduct bridge course for the out of school children and later mainstream them in regular schools.

Similar is the case with the government where the evidence from the field can be found which shows the failure on the part of the government in meeting the requirements of the deprived children. Innovative approaches are rarely used by the government. Even

if it is used, the teachers who are at the executing end are not been able to get themselves adjusted to the new system. Reason being, they are fit into the old system and hardly want to change themselves. Government should take innovative steps to motivate the teachers as it is a well known fact that “Old habits die hard”. At the same time government should understand that teachers are just not teaching but executing a lot of other works like teaching, collecting census data, gathering out of school children, going for a field visit in the weekend, going for enrolment drive etc. Thus for these works the government can recruit additional people and relieve the teachers from the burden so that they can dedicate their whole time for the children. For example in the mid day meal scheme provided by the government, there is an allegation that there is mismanagement and corruption. So steps can be taken to prevent corruption by recruiting people other than teachers for monitoring the scheme till it reaches the children.

As stated earlier the NGOs help in building the capabilities of people, but not in making the children realise their rights. On the contrary government has recognised the rights of the people but failed to concentrate on the capabilities of people. Only when there is a combination of the two approaches economically deprived people will be better empowered and that empowerment helps them to participate in the developmental process voicing out their aspirations leading to human development.

Similarly if the two actors will work in collaboration they can make their contribution in educating the children which will lead to the attainment of UEE by 2015. Thus, both the NGOs and the government can help the children in realising their capabilities and rights which will thereby provide them the voice to debate in the developmental discourse in their later phase of life. NGOs have got the strength to mobilise the local communities in their project. Government can draw lessons from the successful practices of the NGOs which would help the government in rectifying their defects in its approach.

However, the government should take care in entering into partnership with the NGOs, as there are cases of certain NGOs misutilising the funds. When the government

is accountable to the citizens at least once in five years through the process of elections, the NGOs accountability is doubted (Ahluwalia and Hussain, 2004). Hence government should take steps in monitoring the work of NGOs by specifying the code of conduct to NGOs.

A zone of education can be set up for every district and the members for the zone should be from diverse sections like NGOs, government officials, teachers, parents of children, representation from the ward, representation from slums, private players and media and once in every month they can have a review meeting of the steps taken in providing education to all sections of the society. By doing so, the question of inequalities in basic education can be addressed. Government can give support to the committed NGOs that help them to deliver their services effectively.

Government's failure in certain ways to respond to the enormous challenge of poverty and deprivation created an opportunity for the NGOs to forge into areas which are otherwise the domain of the government. However NGOs can in no way balance the effort of the government as their work is carried on only in a micro level. NGOs are able to meet their target group in an effective way because of their small size which otherwise could have been very difficult for them.

But at the same time the government who are the chief provider of service to the people cannot be asked to retreat their initiatives. Bringing reform in the way in which the government function can only be the solution and not doing away with the government. It depends on the government to make effective utilization of the service of the NGOs in nation-building at the grass roots and also in delivery of development to the underprivileged segments thereby making them realize their capability and rights in relation to education and development.

Where the NGOs possess the vision, skills, capacity and commitment in realizing the goal towards poverty reduction and human development through basic education, the government also possess the resources, efficient people to formulate the policies and the

intention to facilitate the efforts of other actors towards development. Thus, what is needed is the commitment on both fronts to arrive at a strategy to work in collaboration in working towards a common goal for making our country a better place to live in with high level of human development.

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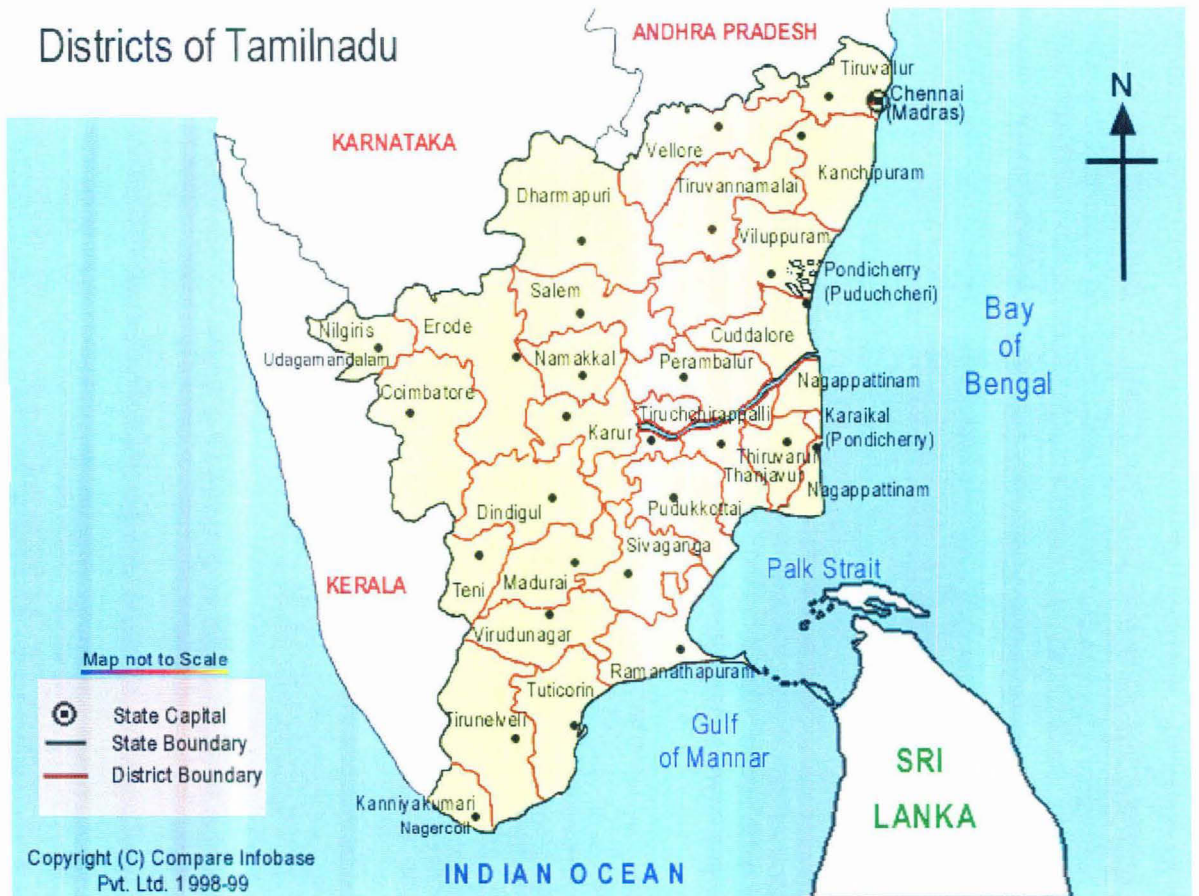
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APPENDIX

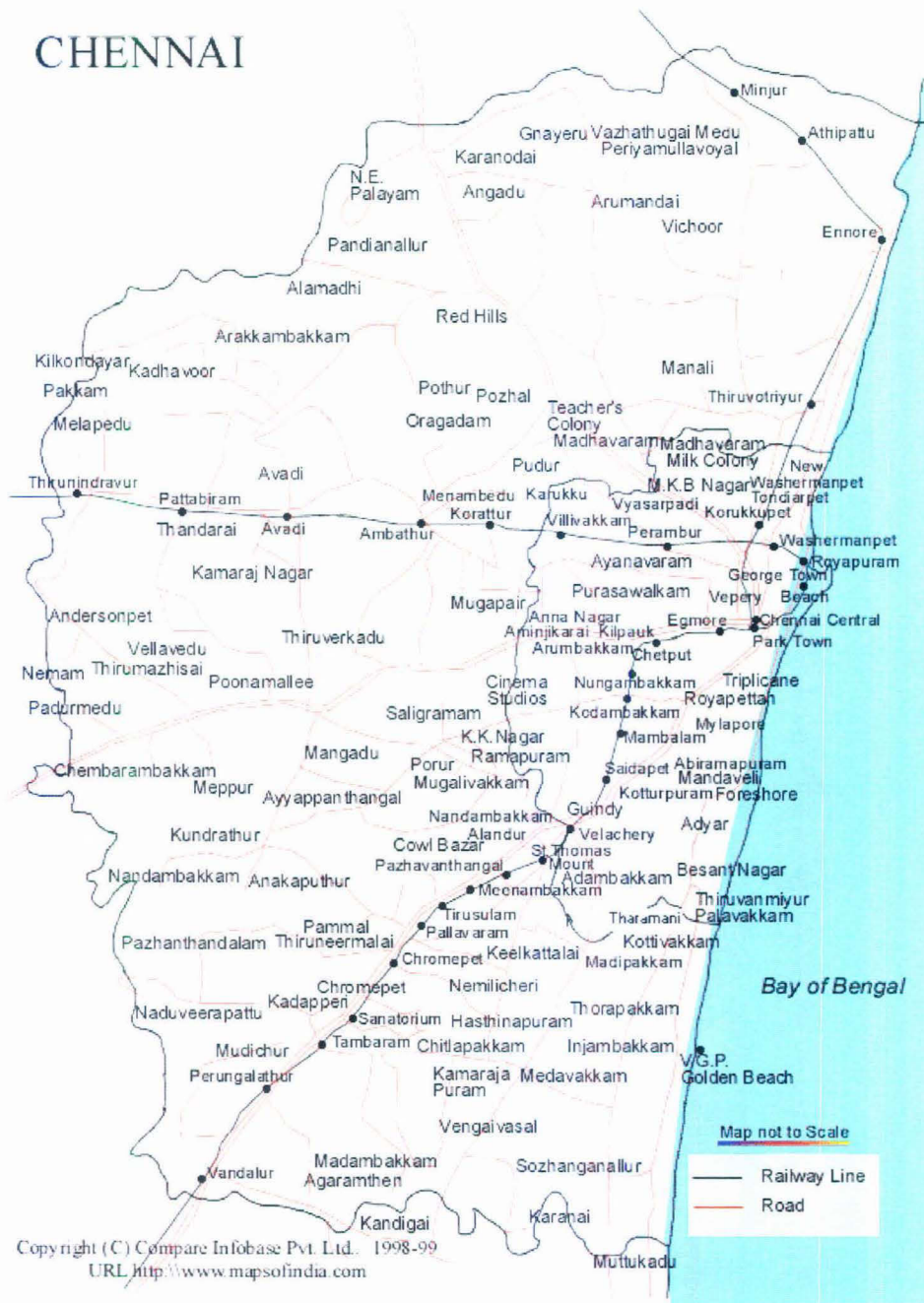
APPENDIX I



-Map of Tamil Nadu

APPENDIX II

CHENNAI

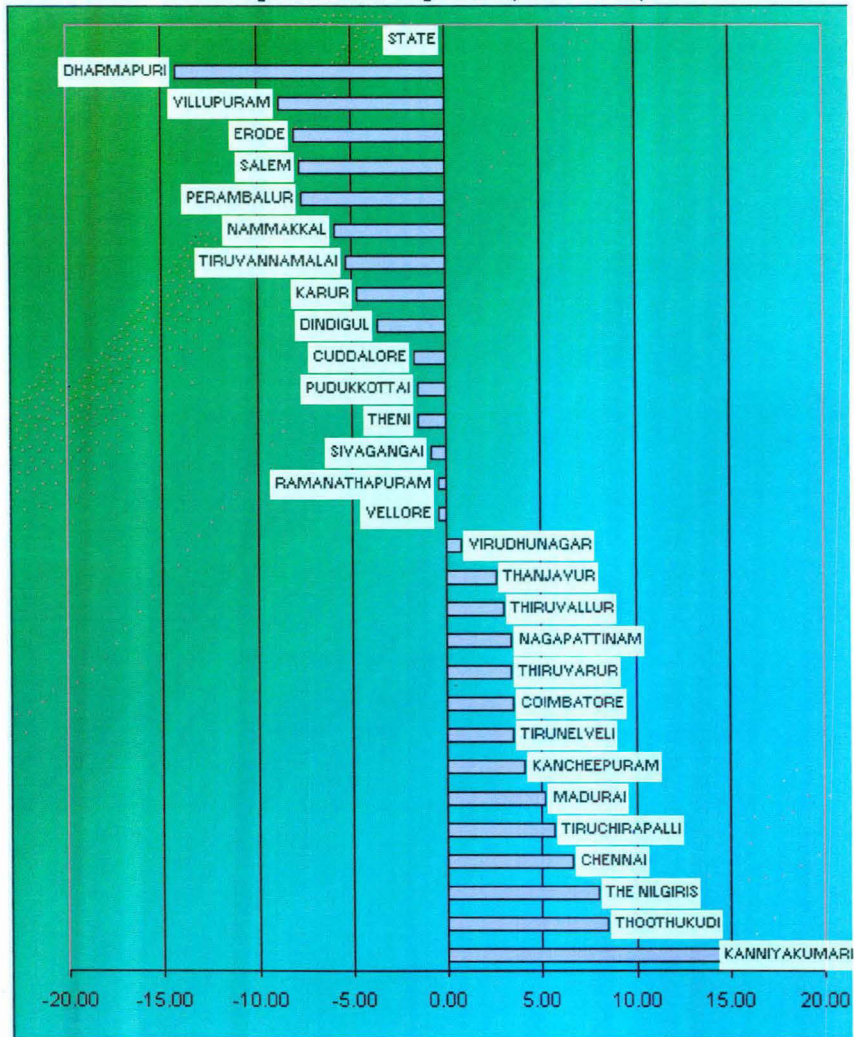


-Map of Chennai

APPENDIX III

Literacy Rate -Districtwise Performance (2001)

(First 15 districts shows poor performance and last 14 districts show good performance against State Average Literacy Rate = 73.47)



APPENDIX IV

Questionnaire

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING BASIC EDUCATION A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

Sample

- NGO – Director - 2
- Government Officials - 10
- NGO Instructors and teachers in government schools - 16
- Children from the urban, rural and slum areas chosen from various NGOs and children of 2 government schools - 60
- Parents of the economically deprived children- 30

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN
PROVIDING BASIC EDUCATION
A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU**

QUESTIONNAIRE TO NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Name of the NGO:

Target Group:

Area of operation:

No. of beneficiary:

List of centres and addresses where the NGO project is under way:

Questions

1. What is the motivating factor for you in your operation?
2. What are the steps taken to identify the problems of the economically underprivileged children and how do you reach them?
3. What is the man power and structure of your organization?
4. What are the innovative activities undertaken by you?
5. Who are your funding agencies?
6. How much funds do you get from the government?
7. Do you get the support of the government?
8. Can you tell about your relationship with policy makers, ward council and other elected representatives?
9. Do you have partnership with other NGOs?
10. Do you have a flexible timing in imparting education to the target children?

11. What are the steps taken by you to enroll the children?
12. What are the steps taken in retention and mainstreaming of learners?
13. What are the experiences and difficulties faced by you in implementing your programmes?
14. Is there any innovative curriculum?
15. Do you have your own teaching learning materials?
16. How do you train and prepare the instructors?
17. What are the reading materials, text books and library facility etc provided?
18. What are the steps taken by you to stimulate community participation? How do they make their contribution?
19. What are the facilities provided to the children?
20. How do you evaluate the learning achievement of the children?
21. Do you offer support to government schemes and schools?

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING
BASIC EDUCATION**

A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

QUESTIONNAIRE TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

Questionnaire No.:

Name:

Designation:

Office:

Questions

1. What are the initiatives taken by the government with regard to Universalization of Primary Education?
2. What are the activities undertaken under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan?
3. How does the mid day meal scheme function?
4. What is the budget allocation and utilization of funds for primary education?
5. What are the difficulties faced in implementing the scheme?

6. What are the steps taken with regard to enrolment, retention and mainstreaming of children?
7. Does the government take special care of the needs of economically underprivileged children?
8. What are the facilities provided to the poor children?
9. What are the reasons for drop out of school children?
10. Do the NGOs assist the government initiative to mainstream the out of school children? If so in what way?
11. What kind of training is provided to teachers?
12. What are the reading materials, text books, library etc provided?
13. How do you meet the needs of the poor children in slums and sub urban belt?
14. How do you spread awareness about importance of education to the parents?

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING
BASIC EDUCATION**

A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS/INSTRUCTORS

Questionnaire No.:

Name:

Age:

Education:

School/NGO:

Classes handled:

Questions

1. What motivated you to choose the teaching profession?
2. What is the kind of work that you do in your school?

3. Are you given any training by the govt. /NGO?
4. Are you satisfied with the salary given the govt. /NGO?
5. What are the working hours in your school?
6. How much time do you spend for teaching?
7. Are you over burdened with administration work also?
8. Do you take care of the mid day meal scheme also? Who is in charge of it?
9. Do you get promotions?
10. Are you frequently transferred?
11. Are you paid extra for additional work?
12. What are the facilities available/not available in your school?
13. What kind of children do you come across in your school?

14. Does the NGOs/Govt. support you? How?

15. How do you meet the needs of poor children in slums/sub urban belt?

16. What are the difficulties faced by you as a teacher/instructor?

17. Do you have any suggestions in your mind?

18. What do you think about the role of Govt.?

19. What do you think about the role of NGOs?

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING
BASIC EDUCATION**

A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

Questionnaire No.:

Name:

Age:

Address:

Occupation: Father
Mother

Education:

Income of the family:

No. of offspring:

Age of the children:

Questions

1. What is the reason for not sending your children to school?
2. What future do you see for your children?

3. What kind of school do your child/children go to?

a) Govt School b) NGO School c) Private School d) Others

4. Do you help your child in his/her studies?

5. How much do you spend for the education of your children? (school fees/tuition fees)

6. Does the government facilitate the education of your children? Do they give any grants/assistance in sending your children to school?

7. Do the NGOs facilitate the education of your children? Do they give any grants/assistance in sending your children to school?

8. How many of your girl child/children go to school? If not why?

9. What are the facilities provided by the NGOs?

10. How do you participate in the school activities?

11. Are you aware of any govt. programme run in your child's school?
12. What is your opinion about the meal provided in the government/NGO school?
13. Are you happy with the food provided?
14. What is the reason for sending you child to school?
15. Do the govt/NGOs provide any other assistance? (books, uniforms free of cost)

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING
BASIC EDUCATION**

A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

QUESTIONNAIRE TO CHILDREN

Questionnaire No.:

Name:

Age:

Class:

Occupation of Parents:

Income of the family:

No. of Siblings:

Questions

1. Do you like to go to school? Why?
2. What do you want to become when you grow old?
3. Are you interested in studying? Why?
4. Do you face any difficulty in coming to school?
5. Do your parents help you in your studies?

6. How much money do they spend for your education?
7. Do you go for tuition? How long? Where?
8. What facility does your school/NGO provide for you?
9. Do they provide free books, uniforms for you?
10. Is there proper classroom, toilet facilities in your school?
11. Does your school have a play ground?
12. Do the teachers/instructors support you in your studies? How?
13. Does the NGO/school ask you to bring your parents to school? If so why?
14. How does the school/NGO perform in making your parents participate in the school activities?
15. Does the school/NGO offer you training to improve you skills? Do they provide any vocational training?

**ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN PROVIDING
BASIC EDUCATION**

A STUDY OF NGOS IN CHENNAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOLS/NGOS

1. Buildings of the school/NGO
2. Surroundings
3. Cleanliness
4. Working hours
5. Facilities in the school/NGO
 - Infrastructure Facilities
 - Pucca Building
 - No. of rooms
 - Blackboard
 - Fan/Chair/Desk
 - Drinking water
 - Toilet for boys and girls
 - Library
 - Playground
 - Other Facilities
 - Study material
 - Teachers guide
 - Dictionary/Magazine
 - Audio Visual Aid & Equipment
 - Map/Chart/Globe
 - Projector/TV/VCR/
 - Field trip

APPENDIX V



Brotherhood Mission Director and Staff, Taramani



Children, NGO Instructor and Volunteers in Brotherhood Mission, Taramani



Children in the Government School, Vyasarpadi



Children in the School of Don Bosco Beatitudes, Vyasarpadi



Children in the 'Home' of Don Bosco Beatitudes, Vyasarpadi



Out of School Children in the Bridge Course under SSA in collaboration with NGOs

APPENDIX V



Number of Children mainstreamed in Regular Schools from the Bridge Course



Life Skill Training Provided in the Bridge Course



Activity based learning under SSA (Card System)



Activity based learning under SSA (Card System)



Playground for Children in Brotherhood Mission