INTERACTION OF MICROPOLITICS AND EDUCATION QUALITY: COMMENTARY ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to uncover the interactional patterns between ‘micropolitics’ and selected factors of ‘education quality’ in two rural settings of Karnataka. These interactional patterns obtained are used to analyse existing policies relating to ‘quality frameworks’ for rural schools as envisaged in The Right to Education Act of 2009 through mission mode program of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This ethnographical exploration uses the micropolitical perspective on schools as descriptive and analytical lenses to understand the manifestation on quality parameters. It examines the current strategies of improving school quality through better infrastructure facilities, curricular materials, and analysis of concomitant micropolitical behaviours.

Field immersion to the selected villages, educational institutions, and district and sub-district level units helped the process of triangulation and insights to get concretised. Though the findings from the study are not fit for generalisation, they raise important questions relating to visualisation of education quality at the Meta-Policy level and associated interpretation of larger vision of quality at the implementation sites. For understanding, micropolitical designs at school and sub-district levels empirical works of Kelchertemans, (2007); Iannaccone L (1975) and Blasé (1991) have been contextually used to explore the interactional patterns. Descriptive reasoning for resultant quality expressions have been provided though interactive frame of quality and micropolitics.

Data, information, and evidences were subjected to variety of ‘theoretical immersions’ to explain how macro level programs of educational quality gets caught up in the ‘black box’ of micropolitics. Thus demonstrating the resultant interpretation, derivation of meanings having latent impact on implementation as well as outcomes related to quality improvement processes. Narratives, case studies, and limited statistical evidences were used to examine educational quality processes, outcomes at the micro-social contexts.

KEY WORD: Micropolitics, Education Quality, Infrastructure, Curriculum.

1.0. Introduction

“As is the State, so is the School”

James S Coleman (1965), Education and Political Development.

Educational policy affirmations are reactions to the existing societal situations. Thus, they are contextual responses to stimulate medium and long-term changes in educational systems in general and schools in particular. The ramifications of these policy intentions could only be understood through the effective observation of implementation strategies at the school and sub-district levels. Micropolitical perspective of school education is one of the fine-grained approaches, which helps to observe the complex policy processes. This perspective provides a powerful conceptual lens to reconstruct and analyze the policy implementation related to school quality improvements (Kelchertemans, 2007).

In India education of ‘equitable quality for all’ is an important promise made to the constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). It is often portrayed, as one of the urgent responsibilities needed to prioritize in order to realize country’s constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). It is often portrayed, as one of the urgent responsibilities needed to prioritize in order to realize country’s constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). It is often portrayed, as one of the urgent responsibilities needed to prioritize in order to realize country’s constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). It is often portrayed, as one of the urgent responsibilities needed to prioritize in order to realize country’s constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). It is often portrayed, as one of the urgent responsibilities needed to prioritize in order to realize country’s constitution by its people (Article 21A, Article 45). 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the behaviors of stakeholders in education system through a psycho-sociological analysis of educational processes and concurrent political actions, at the local level, its impact on the administrative processes and teaching learning processes. This was a tradition largely emended in qualitative research approach and ethnographical methodologies. Hence, more emphasis was on processes and interpretation through constructivist approaches. Least priority was provided to find out causal relationship between variables. Present research uses elements of this novel framework, which results in ethnographic examination of interactions in educational governance system at the school, and sub-district levels affecting quality of education. This study has the objectives of

a. Examining the existence of micropolitics in rural school systems, and to explore nature of micropolitical relationship between the stakeholders.

b. Constructing the definition of education quality from the knowledge, attitudes, and perspectives of actors, institutions, and organizations in the rural education system.

c. Building an understanding on interactional patterns between micro politics and education quality in different rural contexts.

d. Probing on the micro political processes, which have significant impact in determining the education quality at the school, village, panchayat, cluster, and block levels in rural areas of Karnataka.

Figure 1: Interactive frame of Micropolitics and Education Quality

3.0. Design and Framework Questions

In the present study schools selected for examining the interactional patterns are located in two administratively different educational clusters with more or less similar ‘quality dimensions’ as defined in the SSA framework for implementation of 2011, thus it is a purposive sampling process. The selection criteria included post-facto measured quality standards and perceptions at the systemic levels. The Districts and blocks were selected based on the Educational Development Index (EDI) for the year 2012-13 as provided by the SSA planning wing. Further two educational sites are selected from among the schools in two educational clusters namely Thummanahalli in Shidlaghatta and Myalanayakanahalli in Channapatna based on the comparative criteria of higher enrolment rates, achievement levels and perceptions of the educational functionaries as measured during start of academic year 2013-14. One school in each educational clusters which fared better in terms of enrolment rates, learning outcomes and designated as ‘better performing school’ as compared to rest of the schools in the given educational cluster were selected for the study (refer Table-1).

Table 1: Sample Villages and Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tahuk</td>
<td>EDI</td>
<td>Channapatna (67th Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster</td>
<td>Perceptions of the CRPs and BEO</td>
<td>Myalanayakanahalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panchayat</td>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Mogenahalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village (School)</td>
<td>Achievement tests, perceptions of CRPs</td>
<td>Mogenahalli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.0. Micro political interactions

The concentration of power with the educational settings and among the individuals has been explained by organizational theorists (Innacome 2007, Blase 1991, Hoyle 1986); there has been consistent suggestions for the division and dispersal of power using the decentralized governance models at the local levels (Rondinelli & Cheema, 2007, Govinda 2003). Programs such as SSA called for building capacity of different institutions and individuals concerned with planning, programming, and monitoring of quality elementary education under SSA, particularly at decentralized levels of administration (Modules on Quality Dimensions, SSA 2004). The pluralist tradition gave theoretical and empirical basis in support of such suggestions (Jha, 1999). Within the institutional contexts, the theory and practice of constitutionalism, hailed as ‘an achievement of the modern world’ (Friedrich 1966) has evolved as mechanisms of division of power along different axes.

Even though SSA provided an opportunity to the districts to develop their own vision of elementary education and plan and implement district specific interventions, it had inherent control from the state level planning and monitoring authorities to adhere to prescribed standards. Thus, decentralization of power, authority, and resources in rural schools cannot be understood only within the context of limited bureaucratic institutional framework. It has intimate manifestations of local- social, political, and cultural factors in it. These expressions in the educational context would be visible through the quality outcomes of the schooling processes.

These expressions are sufficiently evident during the field immersion processes in both, Channapatna and Shidlaghatta Taluks. Each time entry into these two educational contexts to understand the processes relating to ‘quality’, one unique behavior was observed among most of the stakeholders (teachers, parents, officials). This behavior pertains to the talk about a hidden, underground world. They attribute the status, apathy of the government school and schooling processes to this hidden world. They often use a word ‘Politics’ (Raajakeeya) which is not visible in any of the official documents (such as RTE rules 2012, SSA framework for implementation 2011), nor mentioned in any local memos, circulars issued by the local authorities as a critical factor (Gram Panchayath, SDMC, BEO office). It is a matter of epistemological curiosity at the sub-district educational settings to understand this hidden world of ‘school politics’. Whether mapping of such political elements of school and schooling system at the micro level (village, school, and classroom) provide any better understanding of formal world of education quality is the core of this research exploration.

This mapping could precisely depict a process of

a. opening a ‘black box’

b. digging of school graveyard

c. harvesting the seeds of micro-innovations about schooling processes

This mapping is useful for introspection, interrogation, and internalising of quality processes at the school sites. The details would be useful during the times of conflict, coercion, and confusion over the standard package of quality. During the times of celebration the same black box acts as an ‘enthusiastic navigator’, it takes the form of appreciative enquires, enabling force, positive energy.

Some would prefer to call the ‘black box, graveyard, or seed’ as ‘assertion of local politics’ (Jha, 1999) and ‘micropolitics’ (Innacome 1975, Hoyle 1983). The conceptual issues regarding the boundaries and properties of such ‘black box’ phenomena, determining the political, psychological, socio-economic prerequisites and determinants of localness, visibility of the micro phenomenon etc., needs

a. an examination of micro quality processes within the broader context of higher (macro) institutions.

b. analysis of local socio-economic inequalities rooted through caste, class, and gender.

c. pattern analysis of leadership behaviors of head teacher, resource persons, and elected representatives.

d. understanding of linkages between local level developmental institutions and their circle of influence.

Thus, the dynamics of interaction between and among several stakeholders in negotiating and bargaining power to control and exercise authority over available educational resources to produce given set of educational outcomes depends on several contextual factors. These contextual factors are not completely separate from standard quality procedures set by the educational bureaucracy; they are integral part of the system. The ‘Street Level Bureaucracy’ (Lipsky, 1977) has no control over any of these processes, though certain forms of participation and types of talk in school would help them in arriving at certain strategies of control (Ball, 1987).

SSA framework for implementation (2011) formed the bases for understanding the standards of various quality indicators in this study. SSA framework for implementation was used as it included quality determinants of National Curricular Framework (NCF) 2005 and RTE Act, 2009. Major contributing factors of quality education as described in Modules on Quality Dimensions of Elementary Education in SSA prepared by NCERT in 2004 were used to understand the interactional and influencing factors between ‘Quality Education’ and ‘Micropolitics’ in the rural context. These contributing factors are

i. Basic Infrastructure and other Facilities

ii. Teacher and Teacher Preparation

iii. Curriculum and Teaching-Learning Material

iv. Teaching-Learning Process
The interactional patterns between ‘micropolitics’ with Basic Infrastructure and Curricular materials are discussed in following section. Various sources of data through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), field observations, and reflections are collated in a sequential manner. Where ever necessary suitable Pseudonyms are used to keep the anonymity of the respondents.

i. Micropolitics of Basic Infrastructure and other facilities
Some of the basic physical facilities, necessary in schools may be as identified by SSA are classrooms, toilets, drinking water, playground, usable blackboard, seating facilities for the children (SSA, 2011). It is assumed that these facilities play an important role in improving teaching –learning environment and consequently overall school quality. There are many research evidences those links the availability of permanent classrooms,textbooks, desks, libraries, and running water with the take up of primary education and quality (Heneveld and Craig, 1996 and Verspoor, 2003). We also find that often in India the ‘school building’ is regarded by stakeholders and many commentators as the most important ingredient after the teacher (Michael Ward, 2007, DFID).

Kabir Vajapeyi(2006) an architect from Delhi confirms the strong linkages between learning levels of the children with the infrastructural facilities. The relation between observable schooling inputs such as school infrastructure facilities and student outcomes however is not consistent and is generally weak in most studies. World Bank Study (Goyal, 2007) on school quality attributed no significant correlation between the presence of infrastructure facility with the learning levels; but has shown positive association between the presence of quality infrastructure with the students wellbeing.

The RTE act of 2009 provides a comprehensive mention of the infrastructure and facilities needed in the school. It provides norms and standards in the schedule through Section 19 and Section 25. Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) SSA has identified basic school facilities – General toilet, girls’ toilet, electricity, playground, library, compound wall, drinking water, and ramp. However, the RTE rules for Karnataka state notified in 2012 is completely mute on the facilities in the government schools, it simply stresses for facilities and infrastructure required in the private schools. The inspection schedule of SSA only refers to the facilities of the private schools for providing recognition. When enquired about this aspect BEOs in both the educational blocks (Channapatna and Shidlaghatta) inferred about ensuing of same mandate for government school as well. However, in essence there is no strict enforcement of these standards for the government schools until unless provoked by local authorities such as members of Zilla Panchayat, Members of Parliament (MP), and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA).

As evident during the field observations, all the levels of educational governance system (from SDMC meeting to Zilla Panchayat education committee meetings) are busy merely delibering the construction activities taking place in government schools. School infrastructure and facilities are only element of discussions in most of these meetings. Analysis of meeting notes of Civic Amenities Committees of Gram Panchayath to Education Standing Committee at the Taluk Panchayath to Education Standing Committees at the Zilla Panchayath to Assem- bly level, the major discussions are delimited only around educational infrastructure. MLA of Channapatna Mr. Muneswara who belongs to ruling Congress party has never asked any questions relating to school equitation in assembly from past two years; whereas MLA of Shidlaghatta Mr. Bhosjana form Janata Dal has asked three unstarred questions relating to educational infrastructure facilities and one question relating to teacher shortages in his block (SIO, 2014).

As informed by the CRPs, the amenities in the schools in their clusters are present as per the prescription of 2009 RTE norms and they feel that, the available facilities are sufficient to provide good quality education. Teachers at the selected schools do not have clear idea about the material, financial and infrastructural facilities that they need it for proper job performance. SSA has an endowment of Rs 2000 per annum as school grant for primary and upper primary schools for replacement of non-functional school equipment and Rs 5000 per year for maintenance and repair of the school building. These grants have been utilised completely as per the utilisation registers present in the selected schools.

In both the villages (Kannamangala and Mogenaullahi) for the year 2012-2013, Rs 10000/ is being spent on the repair of the school wall and flooring area; but teachers do not agree about any repair activities taken place in the school premises for that particular academic year. Functionality of these facilities is at great stake; none in the system is concerned about the functionality aspect whether it is a toilet or drinking water facility (refer Table-2 for details).

In Kannamangala School, head teacher has complete control over the physical resources where as in Mogenaullahi it is SDMC president who has greatest say in the matters concerning the facilities at the school. Such control of authority for both the individuals is derived from their status being upper caste Okkaligas.

### Table 2: Comparison of Facilities and Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Mandate as per RTE 2012 rules for Karnataka</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (2) Building</td>
<td>All weather building consisting of:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) at least one class-room for every teacher and an office-cum-store-cum Head teacher's room;</td>
<td>2 Building Blocks in in dilapidated conditions, 2 classrooms needs major repair work, only 4 classrooms in good condition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) barrier free access</td>
<td>There is a restriction for the children to access the school premises in the morning hours</td>
<td>2 building blocks, 2 classroom needs major repair and only 3 classrooms are in good condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) separate toilets for boys and girls</td>
<td>Toilet is Present but locked</td>
<td>Present but locked and no water facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children;</td>
<td>No water source, Dalit boys and girls has to fetch water to the tank</td>
<td>No water source at the school level. The junior teachers have to stand for filling the tank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) a kitchen where midday meal is cooked in the school;</td>
<td>Cooked in the school premises, no separate facility</td>
<td>Separate kitchen facility with unhygienic surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) playground;</td>
<td>Not present</td>
<td>Present but lot infested with lot thorny weeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or fencing</td>
<td>Present and protected the school premises</td>
<td>Present and protected the school premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (5) Teaching learning equipment's</td>
<td>Shall be provided to each class as required</td>
<td>Most of the materials are prepared locally by the students and teachers. Materials supplied by the department are not provided to the students. Occasionally teachers for demonstration prepare some TLM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (6) Library</td>
<td>There shall be a library in each school providing newspaper, magazines and books on all subjects, including story-books</td>
<td>Present, some 150 books are present most of them are purchased by the youth groups. Regular lending borrowing arrangement is made by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (7) Play ground, games and sports equipment</td>
<td>Shall be provided to each class as required.</td>
<td>Only football and cricket bat is provided. Both indoor games (carom, chess) and outdoor cricket, football equipment's are provided on every Friday for planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The walls in both the schools (Kannamangala and Mogenahalli) are painted with animals, leaders of national importance, trees, and places of historical importance in Karnataka. Taluk Panchayath has invested Rs 40000 in Kannamangala and Rs 28000 in Mogenahalli for this purpose (during 2012-13).

The head teacher in Kannamangala feels this as a method to use school building as learning aid. Similar initiatives have been carried to use school as building aid during the DPEP time and promoted extensively during Lok Jumbesh programme in Rajasthan.

Case studies from Kannamangala and Mogenahalli about how the school sites have been used and what it entails for the learning of the children and micropolitical climate.

In Mogenahalli the HT Mr. Kempanna wanted the school walls to be painted with icons such as Kuvempu, Ambedkar, Rani Chennamma, Vivekananda. One of the teacher Mr. Venkatesh raised his voice saying that, the wall needs Basavanna in the first place; that could be followed by other leaders. The issue became a meeting agenda for the SDMC to decide whose pictures to be painted on the walls. Mr. Venkatesh mobilised the Lingayath community leaders in the village to convince about having Basavanna’s painting; Mr. Kempanna mobilised Okkatiga leaders and sought the support of few Dalit leaders to paint the pictures of Kuvempu and Ambedkar.

The matter has been documented in three consecutive SDMC meeting notes in Mogenahalli. Finally the resolution was passed to have the paintings of Kuvempu, Ambedkar, Vivekanandana, Chennamma and Basavanna. Each caste leader wanted the icon from their community to be represented on the walls of their school. Even though this whole process never had, any positive influence what so ever on the learning of the children with respect to understanding the contributions of these leaders. However, this process has created sufficient caste conscious feeling among the students community. Available physical space at the school is a bargaining ground for the visible identity of the ‘castes’. None of the students (Class 7) from the upper caste background during focus group discussion agreed Ambedkar as an ‘icon’ of national importance. They say he is a leader of ‘Dalits’ and SC children in the village worship him as he has given scholarships for them. These type of caste based identification of national leaders, icons and places are most of the time becomes the discussions in school meetings. These discussions are extended integration of identity politics at the village and community level.

The infrastructure in the village more than providing space for the learning opportunities, provide a fertile space for negotiations of the community identities. During the Valmiki Jayanti in the village, the ST parents gifted Valmiki photo and eight sets of Madhvalmiki Ramayana printed by Geeta Press of Gorakhpour to the school in Kannamangala. Nayaka community leader Ramanjani insisted that, the teachers should read the Ramayana and then they should make the attempt to teacher the same to their children.

Teacher Devargi has kept these bulky books in the library, he tries to read it, but he feels it is very difficult to understand as the compositions are in Sanskrit and even after the summary readings; Children are not interested in the Ramayana stories. The Ramayana books have occupied half of the library space without any relevance. Every time during the SDMC meeting Ramanjani asks about the progress made in Ramayana reading.

In Kannamangala village Mudduveerappa (aged 56) who proclaims the land being donated by his father for construction of school building has mobilised the villagers to build aGamesha Temple in the school premises. He has also taken Rs 58000/ help from the Synfosa foundation to build this temple. Some amount of contribution has also been provided by Gram Panchayath for providing the water facility. The teachers Kalaadar complains- the temple have become an obstacle for the children games; even though all teachers requested to build the temple away from the school so that, children can have space for playing. Mudduveerappa insisted for having the temple on his ancestral property. He even got the clearances from BEO and took the matter until Mr. Kawwageri the then education minister (during 2011). SDMC was just a mute spectator in the whole matter and agreed whatever orders Mr Mudduveerappa provided to them. Now temple has a regular priest who comes daily and performs pooja before the opening of the school. No children are allowed to enter their school premises until the priest and upper caste households perform the pooja.

In the same school after the incorporation of ‘Ksheera Bhagya’scheme (providing 150 ml of milk to the government schoolchildren between the age of 6-14 years), the CRC brought few posters from the state education department to be displayed in the school. No children are allowed to enter their school premises until the priest and upper caste households perform the pooja.

In Kannamangala GP an average of Rs 30855 is spent for the civic amenities purposes which included an average spending of Rs 24227 on educational facilities. In Kannamangala and Mogenahalli GP, the CRC brought few posters from the state education department to be pasted on the school walls. This move was opposed from the supporters of local MLA Rajaanna who belonged to non-congress fraction. This was a common stress factor in all the schools, as most of the people who supported the MLA never wanted the pictures of Chief minister Mr. Siddaramaiah on the walls of their school premises.

In Kannamangala GP an average of Rs 30855 is spent for the civic amenities purposes which included an average spending of Rs 24227 on educational facilities. Kannamangala GHPS received an average of Rs 5691 every year. The school has no record of spending the same but the GP has proper records, bills and spending on the items relating to drainage facility to school, repair of compound wall, repair of toilets, drinking water facility etc., Most of the activities shown on the book of accounts (from 2005 to 2013) relating to the repair and construction activities. School authorities deny any such spending and complain about misutilisation at the Panchayath level itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>On Civic Amenities in Kannamangala GP (Health Educational facilities)</th>
<th>On School education</th>
<th>GHPS Kannamangala</th>
<th>On Civic Amenities in Mogenahalli GP (Health Educational facilities)</th>
<th>On School education</th>
<th>GHPS Mogenahalli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2005-2005</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>14500</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>8600</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>49000</td>
<td>35550</td>
<td>3400</td>
<td>18800</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>3490</td>
<td>19800</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>16000</td>
<td>6370</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>13145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>6700</td>
<td>26000</td>
<td>17273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>5600</td>
<td>18990</td>
<td>16990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>19000</td>
<td>6760</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>14237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>39700</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>2300</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>19832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>46000</td>
<td>39000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Amount Spent in 9 years</td>
<td>277700</td>
<td>218050</td>
<td>51220</td>
<td>209590</td>
<td>154077</td>
<td>43500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Money Spent in 9 years

30855.556 | 24227.7778 | 5691.1111 | 23287.7778 | 17119.7 | 4833.333

Table 03: Allocation of money from CAC-GP, Source: Book of accounts for standing committees
School buildings in both the villages are in dilapidated condition and do not have functional drinking water and sanitation facility. However, they have water tap, water storage tank, and toilets constructed in the school premises. They are not functional and none of the children uses them. As for the other villages, the school building is maintained by Education Department with minimal assistance from Gram and Zilla Panchayath.

As per the Section 55 of Karnataka Panchayat Rai Act of 1993, the decisions at the Panchayat meeting shall be displayed within three days from the date of the meeting on the notice board of the Grama Panchayat; along with the details of the names of the members voting respectively for or against the resolutions passed in the meeting. However, during the course of field immersion only Mogenahalli Panchayath used to display such information rarely; the Kannamangala PDO always complained of problem with the printing machines to display such proceedings on the notice board; though he used to circulate the proceedings to all the members. He declined to display any information to the public through the notice board and have not sent any intimation of what is so ever to the School head teacher. On the contrary, in Mogenahalli the HT was informed about the repair and construction works undertaken by the panchayat in school premises.

This lack of accountability could be attributed to the factor about the co-option of the members in SDMC through the GP members. In addition, influential political leaders of the village selected most of the members of GP and SDMC. These political leaders are close associates of gram panchayat members and MLAs. None in both the villages remembers about election conducted in GP for the position of CAC or for the position SDMC memberships.

During the group discussions head teacher blamed GP, community for distancing itself from the school activities and on the other end SDMC members blamed head teacher for keeping them away and uninformed about the school matters. However, on panchayat account books, SDMC records the routing of the money for the construction purposes have been shown. PDO in Kannamangala informed that the attendance of the SDMC members is mostly proxy signatures. Most of the GP and SDMC members in these villages are illiterate and hence not interested in reading the meeting proceedings or any notices. An analysis of participation of Dalits in the decisions related to school infrastructure and other facilities of Kannamangala and Mogenahalli yielded a 'Matrix of Dominance' as shown in Table-2, demonstrating 'Caste System' as an important contextual factor in deciding the educational outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of participation</th>
<th>Response opposition</th>
<th>Strategies of control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Provides access to voice</td>
<td>Prevents access to voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Particularly prevent the participation of parents of scheduled caste children in schooling activities.</td>
<td>Stifle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequent insults in the schools by the upper castes</td>
<td>Insulation, concealment and secrecy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Formal committees, meetings and working parties</td>
<td>Structuring, planning, control of agendas time and context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher weekly staff meetings, SDMCs meetings, Gram Sabhas</td>
<td>Setting meeting agendas, writing of meeting minutes, discussions and voting on the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinated decisions of delaying the works due to discretionary powers provided to them in SDMC bye laws,</td>
<td>Channel and delay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Informal chats and personal consultation and lobbying</td>
<td>Fragment and compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biases towards the teachers of same age, gender and caste</td>
<td>Private performance of persuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praising each other during CRP, BRP visits</td>
<td>Confront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public meetings and open debate</td>
<td>Public performances of persuasion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per the Section 58, Clause (ii), (iii), (v) and Section 58, Subsection (2) of Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act of 1993, every three years after every election of the Grama Panchayat for any accountability in this regard and CAC do not send any intimation about the release of the money.

Table-4: Participation and types of talks in school decision-making (adopted from Ball, 1987)

Schoolteachers feel such processes as unnecessary but these bargaining processes are necessary for the school infrastructure. However, on panchayat account books, SDMC records the routing of the money for the construction purposes have been shown. PDO in Kannamangala informed that the attendance of the SDMC members is mostly proxy signatures. Most of the GP and SDMC members in these villages are illiterate and hence not interested in reading the meeting proceedings or any notices. An analysis of participation of Dalits in the decisions related to school infrastructure and other facilities of Kannamangala and Mogenahalli yielded a 'Matrix of Dominance' as shown in Table-2, demonstrating 'Caste System' as an important contextual factor in deciding the educational outcomes.

**Commentary:**
"The wastage in educational effort is immense and most educationalists are of opinion that there is no solution to this problem of wastage in educational effort in India, but comprehension. The total wastage of educational effort and its concurrent dissipation of educational funds in the primary classes is about forty per cent of the total energy put forth."

Panchayath politics also has a distinct orientation toward material benefits, and its elected leaders are the media for channelling the material benefits (Narain and Pande, 1972). Politics under PR for schools is treated as a case of "link politics" for its intervention rarely; the Kannamangala PDO always complained of problem with the printing machines to display such proceedings on the notice board; though he used to circulate the proceedings to all the members. He declined to display any information to the public through the notice board and have not sent any intimation of what is so ever to the School head teacher. On the contrary, in Mogenahalli the HT was informed about the repair and construction works undertaken by the panchayat in school premises.

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### ii. Micro-Politics of Curriculum and Teaching – Learning Materials

Learning systems in rural schools are dominated by the 'Text book culture' (Krishna Kumar, 1988). Textbooks have taken the centre stage of Indian curriculum and teaching methodologies. In this process, they impose hegemony on the community by discarding the local learning systems. The entire standard quality assessment framework tends to measure the impact of textbook culture in schools. They invariably ask questions from the text books to validate the children knowledge and understanding on the parameters of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The curricular change supposed aimed at indigenisation in post-colonial educational policy, resulted in Brahminisation as a key defining feature (v i. NCF 2005)

An analysis of textbooks from class 1 to class 5' covering subjects such as Kannada, English, Social Science, and Environmental Science in the selected schools has demonstrated the following issues;
The children from Madiga community in Kannamangala have no fear for the Graama Devatha “Maatangi” who is next to their house; but they are scared to curses of Tirupati Balaji and are praying to the blessings of Saraswathi for good marks in class tests. But they observed during the class room transactions it is beyond doubt that the curriculum has served as the mediator of ideological dominance and hegemony evident in the sectioning of the knowledge, pedagogic practice and weak and distorted representation of subaltern cultures, groups and ideologies. Any attempt to bring the synergy between the local knowledge systems with the state sponsored curriculum would be strongly resisted by the 'brahminical value system'. Hence, teachers only end up delivering the lessons from the textbooks derived from Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. However, Teachers in GHPS in Kannamangalur tried to mould hierarchical knowledge creation and dissemination. They started thinking about the:

a. Creative ideas to integrate some innovative methodologies to teach the syllabus prescribed by the state;

b. Alternate learning methods to integrate the creativity of their fellow teachers and create supportive learning spaces in the school.

Block education officer (BEO) Mr. Hanumanthappa, once during his visit to this school observed these works and encouraged teachers Kaladhar and Devravy to carry out more such innovations. He started speaking in different teacher forums about these two teachers and started demanding for such creativity in the work of teachers. This was the starting point of problems for these two teachers as many teachers in the neighboring schools criticized this initiative as waste of time and school hours. Both of them never gave up and further built a, colorful magazine "Maatangi" which was written by the students to carry the voices of the students. This model of GHPS was adopted by the neighboring schools.

REFERENCES: