

National Institute of Open Schooling when envisaged this survey, it aimed to elevate educational status and thought to underline the role of the National Institute of Open Schooling in eastern Uttar Pradesh. But, when research team surveyed different districts and tried to explore different aspects of social, cultural, economical and educational status, conditions were found extremely bewildering. The study included eight districts (Ballia, Deoria, Gorakhpur, Ambedkar Nagar, Amethi, Sultanpur and Faizabad) among which few were newly formed districts whereas few were old.

In terms of physical facilities Ballia and Gorakhpur were found to be prosperous districts where as Amethi, Ambedkar Nagar and Deoria appeared relatively backward districts. Although, out of these two districts which are newly created Ambedkar Nagar and Amethi, came into existence in 1995 and 2010, but they have been constituency seats since, independence of India. In terms of politics, people of Amethi, has elected many famous leaders to represent their parliamentary constituency in Parliament of India like late Sh.Rajiv Gandhi, late Sh.Sanjay Gandhi, Mrs.Sonia Gandhi, Captain Satish Sharma, Mr Rahul Gandhi and Dr. Sanjay Singh. Late Sh.Rajiv Gandhi also has held the post of the Prime Minister of India. In spite of this, there should have been rapid development of this region, which did not happen. The region supported by strong national leadership, natural resources and human resources, is still waiting for its development and had been looking for the causes of their backwardness, which raises a big question on the whole system.

Even from the academic point of view, conditions do not seem to be different. In all only two universities in the eight districts one at Faizabad and other at Gorakhpur are located. In addition to this, one engineering university, one medical college and one polytechnic college are also located in these districts. Though, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which is going through the whole country since decade and a half, and the 'National Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan' which is also committed to upgrade education system in India since, last so many years. Right to Education Act, 2009, is also doing sincere efforts and trying to give compulsory education to all, from the age group of 8 to 14 years. However, when the survey team surveyed the area, found that schools are not according to plan, mainly they are closed and the conditions of the schools are indescribable. That was the case of higher education too. Surprisingly, at some places students are enrolled in government schools just for mid day meal and scholarships, but studying in public schools, which results in mismatch in the number of registrations, due to registration of single student at two different schools. Educational scenario of Amethi is of the most important concern. The region have been long led by the top ranked leaders in the country's parliament, however, this area has not reflected the spirit of educational development. Lack of schools in nearby areas and transport facility for girls are not available. Local residents of Amethi shared their concern about the status of education with the research team. They said, "Conditions are so bad that they are compelled to provide education to their children by

making some alternative arrangements in other nearby districts. Of course, few individual efforts from some villages have helped girls to attend schools, but in the absence of good roads and transportation they face many difficulties. Even today, girls in this area take care of domestic animals, do agricultural related work and work as labour in fields. Several such issues are raising a big question about the development of the region.

Based on survey conducted in this area, it was clear that (Deoria, Amethi and Ambedkar Nagar, especially Amethi), the real cause of social and economic backwardness in this area are absence of no political willpower and lack of education. Based on the experiences of the past several decades, and after talking with the citizens of the region it seems people of this area have been emotionally abused more often, either by politicians or by religious people. It is important to note the area which is naturally rich and prosperous, how it can be economically and educationally poor? Although many central and state governments, public sector enterprises, are established and functional, but outcome of these enterprises have not helped to raise the standards of society and education at all. These public sectors units which were opened has no connection neither with the land nor with the people living here, but it had political interest that is why in spite of such enterprises neither these units flourished nor people of this area. When compared to other surveyed districts, in terms of development, it is clear that strong political will was there for development of the other districts. For example, we can compare Ballia, Amethi and Gorakhpur. In Amethi, eleven (11) times, leaders belonging to the same family, who were related to the country's largest party, represented the Indian Parliament. But, this region remained most underdeveloped on all aspects. However, Gorakhpur and Ballia which was represented by leaders who represented Indian Parliament for longer time, but rule of their party was very less as compared with former, this area are far more developed than Amethi. The people of this area play an active role for the development of their districts. During the survey it was found that most developmental questions were asked from the people of these districts. Naturally, if society questions, options of solutions are also available with them. But if society does not questions, than it is also not part of the solution. Leadership in Amethi failed to sensitize the people for asking various questions, which resulted in no development. Education that develops critical consciousness and paves the path to enlightenment (*sa vidya ya vimuktye*), in backward area like Amethi where education scenario is very poor, no leader is talking about development, literacy, poverty and unemployment which may pave the path for liberation. This survey is also important because about 23 million people live in these eight districts which is about 1.9%. of the total population of India. Surprisingly, about 59 countries around the world have a population of about 23 million. Most of these countries are highly developed or in state of state achieving so. If education would have not been neglected than this area would have also achieved developed stage.

In such circumstances, eastern Uttar Pradesh, especially in, Amethi, Ambedkar Nagar and Deoria districts, National Institute of Open Schooling will need special efforts to improve educational and social scenario through its secondary, senior secondary and vocational education. National Institute of Open Schooling will need to create their own access to all villages and will have to reach target group using various modes of information communication technology.

NOIDA (UP)

February 10, 2016

Findings in the light of Primary and secondary objectives

Findings of the study arranged as per order of primary and secondary objectives, can be expressed as below:

- It can be concluded that after studying the various districts in rural areas of eastern Uttar Pradesh, main target group for the secondary and higher secondary program in most areas are girls, because in almost all the districts boys are able to avail the opportunities of education at least up to class 12th, but due to long distance to school from residence, poor economic conditions of parents and early child marriages, girls remain deprived of secondary and higher secondary education. Many parents do not prefer to send their grown up daughters to schools on their own, as a result girls are remaining deprived of educational opportunities. Boys have been found as main target for vocational programmes in these districts.
- When we talk about educational and vocational interests of girls, study reveals that almost all the girls, relate secondary and higher secondary education with income generating or employment oriented vocational education. It can be inferred that National Institute of Open Schooling need to relate secondary and higher secondary education with vocational education. When we look to vocational interests of the girls, team found that most of them have shown their interest in stitching, sewing, embroidery and beautician courses whereas, some have shown interest in computers and teaching. At some places girls have shown interest in subjects like nursing as well.

Boys have shown interest in vocational areas and they were quite excited for admission in vocational courses. Boys have preferred areas like computers, mobile phone repairing, electrician, motor mechanic and paramedical.
- When we talk about access, opportunities, reach and expansion of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in eastern Uttar Pradesh study reveals that reach of NIOS is almost all negligible. General public has not even heard the name of the organization and very few people know about it. Because of limited availability of facilities of general education and difficulty in reaching the remote villages there is a lot of scope for National Institute of Open Schooling. There is lot of scope of expansion of not only prevalent traditional secondary and senior

secondary programmes, but also good opportunities for development are available in vocational programmes. For all, NIOS requires a specific action plan and detailed strategy.

Findings of the study, based on the secondary objectives are as follows:

- Study of different districts in eastern Uttar Pradesh, has made it clear that socio-economic structure of rural areas is more or less the same. Feudal caste system and alike thinking still prevails in all the districts. Only people of higher castes are able to get the benefit of almost all the welfare schemes. Social discrimination also appears in disguised form which can be easily witnessed. Adjectives like “*Babu Saheb*” are still in vogue. Condition of villages with majority population of backward/ under privileged and scheduled castes is pathetic. Villages which are “Ambedkar Village” only have basic infrastructure. There are no drinking water and toilet facilities in these villages. Conditions of villages which are located by the side of rivers and having population of “*Nishads*” and other backward classes is almost the same. Some villages do not have even any means of transport because of poor conditions of road. On the basis of study made in eight districts, Ambedkar nagar, Deoria and Amethi have been found most under developed. In Amethi district some people still live on water of Gomti river and even use it for drinking. At few places there are no bridges over the river to reach these villages directly. Therefore, to reach there one has to travel several extra kilometers. There are no means of education and health centres.
- Data has been collected from boys and girls of age 14 -19 years from identified districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Socio-economic condition of most families is very poor. Many children have attributed the reason for dropping out of school as inability of their parents to pay the school fees and bear other expenses on education. Even today they live in houses made up of mud. They have many siblings in their family. Most of the parents work as a labor and live their life but even then, their enthusiasm and ardour for education was seen.
- It is important to note that in spite of poverty everyone was in possession of a mobile phone. Foods are still being cooked on stoves with the help of coal and woods. Most of the houses were not having toilets. It was also observed that some

rich families are in possession of concrete houses, tractors and cars parked at their houses but they had not constructed toilets in their house.

- In several villages, it was found that many children are enrolled simultaneously in government schools as well as in private schools near to their place of residence. Parents informed that studies do not take place in government schools. Further, they said, there are only one or two teachers in government schools, who are more often busy in doing other official work and those who are Shiksha Mitras, their most of the time are being consumed to get mid day meals prepared. Schools are generally closed after mid day meals. In big villages many farce private schools on the name convent school are opened, where children go for studies and pay fee of Rs. 100- 200 per month, but it was observed that in such schools, number of boys are higher than and girls. Since, these schools are away from villages parents do not send their girls to these schools. From the survey, one thing can be clearly said, that the common people of rural areas has lost the confidence in education system and in particular Government Schools.
- In identified districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh, boys and girls over the age of 14 years are having almost same educational requirements. Along with need of secondary and higher secondary education, girl's needs employment oriented vocational education too. Whereas, boys of these districts need vocational education which can give employment to them.
- In identified districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh, boys and girls over the age of 14 years are not aware of vocational education and many do not know about lot many other vocations which can provide them employment. Their understanding of vocational education is limited to training given in ITI or training in computer institutes. Girls showed their vocational interest in sewing, embroidery, beautician, computers and in teaching. Some girls also shown their interest in subjects like nursing. Boys showed their vocational interest in computers, mobile repairing, electrician, motor mechanic and paramedical etc.

Suggestions for National Institute of Open Schooling

To meet the requirements of the target group in Academic and Vocational education, following suggestions can be given to National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS):

- In eastern Uttar Pradesh, National Institute of Open Schooling has to establish their identity and their access for the people of these area, by taking help of local promotion system and must resort to a publicity campaign which should run smoothly.
- In eastern Uttar Pradesh, National Institute of Open Schooling need to establish at least one regional center which may be opened at any remote and backward districts like Deoria, Ambedkar Nagar or in Amethi.
- National Institute of Open Schooling has to work out something new from their traditional methods to reach and provide various new opportunities to villages and for this opening of new study centers located in urban areas does not seems to be very reasonable.
- National Institute of Open Schooling has to ensure awareness regarding admission among girls in all villages, ensure their admission and has to make special provisions and efforts for Self Learning Materials, so that it reaches them. In addition to this, personal contact programmes may be arranged at Gram Panchayat centers in place of far flung study centres, through the radio, television, or if possible through the mobile video vehicle.
- Those who are taking admission in vocational education programs, their practical training should be ensured and if possible arrangements should be made for residential training sessions for 15-21 days.
- National Institute of Open Schooling should try to break its negative image of "Board which passes failed students" and to mark their presence, NIOS, has to develop strategies to provide quality education and access to it.
- In the context of the above mentioned action plan, in eastern Uttar Pradesh, this as a whole can be operationalized as a "project" and can be monitored from headquarters from time to time for evaluation of its internal and external system.