

Accessibility, Quality, and Significance of Education for Educationally Deprived Children

Abstract

Raising a society's socioeconomic status is a crucial function of Education. A large part of India's urban poor live in slums and lack access to formal schooling. For various reasons, many slum children (those between 6 and 14) do not attend school. Children from low-income families living in slums are the target population, and this Study aims to examine the variables that affect their access to and satisfaction with educational opportunities. Opportunities, access, and equality in local Education are the foci of this research. Accessibility, the role of teachers and parents, the physical environment, essential elements, and the importance of Education were among the main characteristics gathered by this tool. Frequency analysis and the chi-square test examined various variables and their potential correlations with educational attitudes. It is crucial to investigate if the educational opportunities, equity, and access provided to children in slums have any positive results. A significant discovery emphasizes the vital role of parents. Parents influence their children's opinions on the value of Education by their example. According to the report, parents should be empowered via awareness programs and support structures. Despite the importance of expanding access, the Study shows that more is needed to provide access; quality must also be improved. Because of this, funding for schools, their resources, and specific programs to educate teachers are all urgently needed.

Keywords: Accessibility, Role of Teachers, Role of Parents, Physical Environment, Essential Elements

Introduction

Education is a continuous and perpetual journey of personal development and maturation. Humans acquire new knowledge continuously, every day, and every second. Education is a fundamental element of human capital and its growth. Throughout history, Education has been recognized as a potent tool for driving economic growth, alleviating poverty, enhancing individuals' earning capacity and empowerment, fostering healthy populations, and cultivating competitive economies (Hanushek & Wossman, 2007; World Bank, 2006). Education is universally recognized as crucial for forming people's personalities and

contributing to developing a global community. Insufficient Education combined with severe poverty often results in dire living circumstances, usually seen in metropolitan areas as slums. A large percentage of the impoverished urban population in India lives in slum areas. Based on the 2011 Census, around 17% of India's urban population resides in slum areas (Mishra & Banerjee, 2020). Slums are areas with poor housing, high population density, poverty, adverse environmental conditions, and limited access to utilities. Children in slums face educational deprivation, including limited educational options, access, and low educational standards.

The Indian government has introduced several programs, regulations, and projects to tackle socioeconomic, gender, and regional disparities. Nevertheless, the difficulties inhabitants face in urban slums have mostly been ignored. Diverse approaches were suggested in several policies and five-year plans to enhance and advance rural, isolated, and undeveloped areas. No unique plans or policies were created to address the educational difficulties experienced by underprivileged and marginalized children in urban areas. Urban slums often have far worse circumstances than rural areas. In 1999, the Government of India forecasted that metropolitan areas would have greater poverty than rural regions. Recently, administrators and policymakers have recognized the need to meet the educational needs of a neglected population segment that has faced exclusion and marginalization for an extended period.

Global education policy talks now focus on providing high-quality early childhood education to all children. This technique aims to boost the retention of pupils at the elementary level and improve their academic performance. This subject has been thoroughly examined and debated by scholars like Bendini and Devercelli (2022), Gove et al. (2018), UNICEF (2019), and Zhao et al. (2022). India is a nation that wholeheartedly upholds the idea of ensuring equal opportunity in all areas, including equitable access to Education for all individuals. Article 45 of the Indian Constitution mandates that the state provide Universal Primary Education for all children aged 6 to 14. The 86th Constitutional Amendment recognizes elementary Education for children aged 6-14 as a fundamental right (Agarwal & Chugh, 2003).

Individuals living in slums have the lowest rates of enrolling their children in schools, and their children exhibit the most pronounced academic underdevelopment, with the highest rates of failure, grade repetition, and dropout. Moreover, they have the lowest rate of advancement to more advanced levels of schooling. Most kids in slums do not have access to

schools with adequate facilities and instructional resources. Teachers need more resources to teach these disadvantaged and vulnerable youths. Children in distant, rural, and poor locations have challenges such as severe weather conditions and mountainous terrain.

Conversely, children living in slum regions face obstacles, including congested roads, high traffic, railway lines, and temporary barriers. The school may be closed, yet students may have to cross a busy road with heavy traffic or a railway crossing. This impedes their capacity to go to school and jeopardizes their safety. In urban settings, the constraints on resource availability cannot be overcome only by focusing on physical closeness. Settlement structure, social hierarchy, and dense population significantly impact the provision of facilities and services. A critical administrative concern is the need for more distribution of schools in the necessary areas.

The issue of school overcrowding is a significant concern in metropolitan regions, especially in schools that serve the urban poor and disadvantaged communities. Many individuals living in slums are first or second-generation migrants. Therefore, their original language or the language used at home may vary from those used for Education, such as Hindi in government schools or English in private schools. Hence, addressing the distinctive educational obstacles faced by slum children requires the implementation of appropriate techniques and interventions. A lack of an adequate home environment seems to be the main reason for low IQ and academic underachievement among children living in slum neighborhoods. The intellectual potential range of these youngsters is anticipated to be comparable to that of other children. Scholars like Bernstein (1961) suggest that lower-class children's difficulties in school mainly stem from their insufficient linguistic skills. This is due to ineffective verbal communication in households where parents are uninformed and lack the time and capacity to develop their children's language abilities via discussion, answering inquiries, and explaining different occurrences.

The Study is focused on investigating the educational opportunities available to children living in the slums of Lucknow. The main objective of the Study is to investigate the educational resources available in slum areas and evaluate the academic achievements of pupils at various levels of primary schooling. The research intends to investigate the factors influencing the Accessibility of educational facilities, the quality of Education, and the significance of Education for underprivileged children living in slums. The Study strives to understand educational opportunities, access, and equity at the local level. This Study will

provide a novel viewpoint on educational equality due to the limited research on the topic. It is essential to examine if the educational opportunities, access, and equality offered to children in slums lead to any beneficial outcomes.

Literature of Reviews

Research on the educational attainment of slum dwellers has been carried out in India on occasion throughout the last twenty years, according to a review of relevant papers. Kalita (2021) found that students from slum areas in Guwahati, India, had an average level of educational aspiration, but there was no significant difference between slum and non-slum students. This suggests that factors other than family background may be more critical in shaping educational aspirations.

Rahaman (2018) focused his investigation on the slum inhabitants of Kalyani Municipality. The Study noted that Education enhances an individual's potential levels. It also functions to surpass limitations. Moreover, they should expand their range of benefits and options to achieve a lasting enhancement in well-being. Residents of an informal urban community mainly inhabit the slum. A high-density population and poor educational attainment typify it. Most individuals have a poor literacy rate. School dropout rates are high in the slum region due to the unsatisfactory economic situations of the residents. Child work is prevalent due to poverty in slum areas, hindering schooling. The research aimed to analyze the demographic composition and educational achievements of the slum population in the municipal area. They identified noteworthy discoveries on individuals and their educational attainment inside a slum community.

In Guwahati's urban slums, Lahon (2017) discovered that only 40% of kids consistently attended school. Factors contributing to this situation were inadequate school facilities, limited study areas at home, and a need for more knowledge about scholarship opportunities. 95% of the children said they lack time and room for studying at home, while all the youngsters reported receiving no assistance from their parents. Students did not earn scholarships due to their lack of awareness of governmental rules.

Ippolito and Schecter (2012) conducted a study experiment in two public schools in Ontario to track the differing paths in positioned engagement. The project was conducted with a structured set of goals. The goals were to enhance educational equality for immigrants, pupils with language variety, and their families. The research presented two distinct forms of

educational supply in the schools: an enrichment approach and a remedial technique. This technique was based on an intellectual discussion of the shortfall.

Khan and Azid (2011) identified the factors contributing to malnutrition in children of primary school living in urban slums. The primary goals of the research were to develop policies to improve the nutritional well-being of youngsters. The research demonstrated that the likelihood of anthropometric failure rises with age and birth order. The research also found that female children were more susceptible to anthropometric failures. Parents' educational level, especially women' Education, was closely correlated with the child's nutritional health. Malnutrition was strongly correlated with the number of family members per room in this research. The presence of power, clean drinking water, and a drainage system was shown to correlate negatively with children's malnutrition. The research found that children living in slums are more prone to anthropometric deficiencies.

Tsujita (2009) found that children living in slums have high rates of being older than expected for their grades and dropping out of school. Delayed enrollment in school is a prevalent cause of students becoming older than their peers. Late admission is caused by demand-side factors (migration from rural areas to slums) and supply-side factors (limited school capacity or inadequate infrastructure, short admission periods, and requirements like birth certificates). The proximity of schools does not account for the high proportion of uneducated or out-of-school slum children. Economic concerns are a primary factor for children not attending school.

Chandrasekhar and Mukhopadhyay (2008) found that those living in metropolitan regions, excluding slums, are not always better than slum inhabitants. On average, slum inhabitants are poorer than residents in other urban regions. Hence, it may be more practical to create policies aimed explicitly at improving ghetto development. Developmental programs did not effectively reach the poorest residents in both slum and non-slum sections of central and small cities.

Aydin and Kepenekci (2008) conducted a study to explore the perspectives of elementary school principals in Turkey on the organizational justice practices among teachers regarding distributive, procedural, interactional, and rectifactory aspects. School administrators were divided on justice issues such as leave of absence, rewards, performance evaluations, student placement in courses, and curriculum planning. Principals faced challenges in distributing

justice due to variations in teachers' views on fairness, school size, and constraints imposed by the Ministry of National Education policy.

Dhanalakshmi (2008) did a situational analysis of primary Education in the slums of Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation of Andhra Pradesh. Significant findings of the Study are as follows: A majority (90.5 percent) of the men are heading the families, more than half the heads of the families are illiterate, and among the educated, most of them had primary and secondary Education. Most of the respondents are in the married category, except 14.1 percent of all other families belonging to deprived sections of the society, such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other Backward Castes. More than 50 percent of both parents are illiterates, of whom the percentage of mother illiteracy is higher than that of the father. Most of the parents' occupations are casual, and they work as daily wage workers. Most of the children belong to SC, ST, BC, and cast and belong to the Hindu religion. Of most of the primary school-going children, 29.3 percent are studying in municipal corporation schools. The children's ages ranged from 5 to 14, and 16 percent of the children were ten years old.

Khasnabis and Chatterjee (2007) studied enrolling and retaining slum children in formal schools. They discovered that India still needs to achieve the goal of universalizing elementary Education, which aims for 100% enrollment and retention of children in schooling facilities in all areas. Although the government aims to attain this objective via the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which specifically targets female children, pupils from underprivileged backgrounds still need to attend courses consistently.

During the literature analysis, the investigator discovered a lack of research focusing on the educational challenges faced by children living in the slums of Uttar Pradesh, particularly in Lucknow. Uttar Pradesh accounts for 9.5% of the total slum population in India. Therefore, there was a need to investigate why children were not enrolling or dropping out of school while living in poor circumstances in slums.

Rational of the Study

Despite this deliberate and decisive attempt to level educational prospects in the nation, the general image remains, regrettably, of widespread inequality, as pointed out by Naik (1975). Those from lower socioeconomic status have been unable to make full use of free public education opportunities at all levels due to factors such as poverty, a lack of educational

background, or a different way of life. The sad situation is illustrated by the leading indicators of inequality, which include unequal enrollment rates for disadvantaged social groups and classes, low transition ratios at different stages of Education, high attrition or wastage and stagnation rates, low levels of educational attainment (i.e., number of years of schooling), and academic achievement. For many reasons, the current Study is significant. The Indian government is deeply committed to ensuring that all citizens have fair access to quality education, as stated already. One of the most fundamental tools that could guarantee opportunity of any kind is equitable educational opportunity. Providing universal primary Education to all children in the age bracket of 13 to 17 years and defending the educational and other interests of socially weaker groups of people are goals India is dedicated to achieving. Children in slums reflect the most marginalized and overlooked communities in cities. Thus, the nation is uniquely obligated to ensure their welfare and Education.

The Study's overarching goal is to assess Lucknow's success in providing these kids with the necessary resources and achieving educational equality. As a second point, while the gap in educational opportunities between rural and urban areas has long been a hot topic, the gap between low-income and more affluent neighborhoods within cities has remained hidden. However, discrepancies can only be eliminated if these differences are determined. Thirdly, children from slum areas have problems just like children from other disadvantaged groups. However, when put in the context of the extreme environmental deprivation, degradation, and social pathologies caused by the glaring differences between the wealthy and the poor, their problems take on a much more serious tone. Living in a slum makes kids even more disadvantaged, which means they cannot make the most of any educational opportunity that comes their way. It would be illuminating to learn about the obstacles to schooling in slum areas, whether physical, social, economic, or psychological.

Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem for this Study is “Accessibility, Quality and Significance of Education for educationally deprived children living in the Slums of Lucknow City”.

Definition of the Key Terms

Accessibility: Distance to nearest school within walking distance and availability of school transportation.

Quality: Average teacher-student ratio, presence of lesson plans, variety of teaching methods used, and availability of instructional materials.

Significance: Student agreement with statements about the benefits of Education.

Slum: Densely populated and illegally built settlements are known as slums. These temporary dwellings often need better construction and more basic amenities. Beyond overcrowding, they often need more clean water, adequate drainage, and limited space for personal hygiene. For this Study, areas with a population of 1,000 or more were considered slums, regardless of formal notification by authorities. This included officially designated "notified slums" and any densely populated settlement within a sampled urban block, even if not officially recognized. Therefore, our definition encompasses all slums, notified or not, within metropolitan areas.

Education: Education, in its broadest sense, is the process by which people acquire new information, abilities, and traits by various means of learning, including but not limited to self-study, official or informal educational institutions, etc. It is essential to think about the student's educational level here. In this place, the levels are never maintained.

Delimitations of the Study

The following are the main delimitations of this Study.

1. The research can only be applied to the slum residents of Lucknow, India. Hence, it cannot be used to compare other populations or places.
2. The researcher relied only on self-reported surveys administered to parents to gather the data. This approach depends on the reliability of participants' memories and whatever biases they may have.
3. It is possible that the 40 students who participated in the Study do not reflect the full scope of the Lucknow slum population.
4. The Study relies heavily on chi-square testing and frequency analysis, which can help understand associations but only sometimes tell the whole story regarding causal correlations.
5. Other aspects, such as the children's learning outcomes, mental health, or social mobility, are disregarded in favor of Education's Accessibility, quality, and importance.

6. It primarily investigates how variables are related to one another rather than how things work or how to intervene.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the main objectives of this Study.

1. To study the factors affecting the Accessibility of Education facilities for educationally deprived children.
2. To estimate the Quality of Education for educationally deprived children.
3. To evaluate the Significance and importance of Education for educationally deprived children.

Hypothesis of the Study

The following are the main hypotheses of this Study.

H1: There is a significant association between Accessibility and Quality of Education for educationally deprived children.

H2: There is a positive and significant correlation between Accessibility with acceptance and the importance of Education for educationally deprived children.

H3: There is a positive and significant correlation between the quality and significance of Education for educationally deprived children.

Research Methodology of the Study

Research Method: A quantitative approach was chosen for data collection and analysis using surveys and statistical analysis.

Population: Educationally deprived Children living in the Slums of Lucknow City.

Sample: This Study's sample size is 40 children living in Lucknow City's slums. Purposive sampling was chosen for convenience and Accessibility.

Tools Used for Data Collection: The data was collected from the parents living in the slum using quantitative and survey methods. The researcher visited these villages in person, established a good relationship with the participants, and conducted a self-designed

questionnaire. This tool collected data on essential factors like access, the role of teachers and parents, the physical environment, essential elements, and the importance of Education.

Statistical Techniques Used in this Study:Frequency analysis, Correlation analysis, and chi-square test.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Socioeconomic Status of Slum Residents

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Per cent |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------|
| Family | Joint | 5 | 12.5 |
| | Nuclear | 19 | 47.5 |
| | Single parent | 16 | 40 |
| No. of Family Members | Zero to Four | 4 | 10 |
| | Five to Seven | 13 | 32.5 |
| | Eight to Ten | 23 | 57.5 |
| No. of Children | 0 to 1 | 6 | 15 |
| | 2 to 4 | 19 | 47.5 |
| | 5 to 6 | 15 | 37.5 |
| Educational attainment | Illiterate | 13 | 32.5 |
| | Literate | 27 | 67.5 |
| Monthly income | 3,000-5,999 | 10 | 25 |
| | 6,000-6,999 | 6 | 15 |
| | 7,000-8,999 | 15 | 37.5 |
| | 9,000-11,999 | 9 | 22.5 |
| Occupation | Daily wage labourer | 5 | 12.5 |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|----|------|
| | Self-employed | 8 | 20 |
| | Contract worker | 13 | 32.5 |
| | Domestic worker | 10 | 25 |
| | Salaried employee | 4 | 10 |
| Education of head of household | Government | 9 | 22.5 |
| | Private, paid | 9 | 22.5 |
| | Government dropped out | 12 | 30 |
| | Private, dropped out | 10 | 25 |

The findings from Table 1 are as follows:

Family structure in slum areas is primarily nuclear, with 47.5% of inhabitants living in such homes. Single-parent households comprise 40% of the population, while joint families account for 12.5%. These findings indicate that individuals living in slums tend to dwell in smaller households due to financial limitations or a scarcity of housing options. Most families in slum areas consist of 5 to 7 members (32.5%), followed by 8 to 10 people (57.5%) and 0 to 4 members (10%). These findings indicate that individuals residing in slums often dwell in more spacious houses, possibly due to extended family cohabitation or financial constraints preventing them from obtaining separate accommodations.

Most families in slum areas had between 2 and 4 children (47.5%), followed by 5 to 6 children (37.5%) and 0 to 1 kid (15%). These findings indicate that individuals living in slums tend to have a more significant mean number of offspring than the overall population, perhaps leading to increased pressure on family resources. Among slum dwellers, only 67.5% are literate, while 32.5% are illiterate. The results show that slum dwellers had lower levels of Education than the general population, which might make it harder for them to obtain work and earn a livable wage. About 77.5% of people living in slums earn between 3,999 and 8,999 monthly rupees. Based on these results, people living in slums have difficulty affording necessities and finding a place to call home.

Living wage laborers (12.5%), self-employed (20%), and salaried employees (10%), on the other hand, are less common among slum dwellers than contract workers (32.5%) and domestic workers (25%). These results show that people living in slums are likelier to work in low-wage or informal jobs. Heads of households in slum regions had a somewhat lower educational attainment rate, with incomplete government education accounting for 30%, partially private Education at 22.5%, partially finished government education at 22.5%, and finally completed private Education at 25%. Parents in low-income neighborhoods are likely to have lower levels of Education, which may limit their opportunities for gainful employment and the money they might earn.

The data in the table indicates that individuals living in slums have several difficulties, such as economic deprivation, inadequate Education, and restricted job prospects. These obstacles might hinder slum dwellers from fulfilling their fundamental requirements and enhancing their standard of living. It is crucial to emphasize that the table alone presents a momentary depiction of the socioeconomic condition of slum dwellers. Further investigation is required to comprehend the intricate elements that lead to poverty in slums and to formulate efficacious treatments to enhance the well-being of slum dwellers.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: There is a significant association between Accessibility and Quality of Education for educationally deprived children.

Table 2. Chi-Square Tests

| | Chi-Square | df | Asymp. Sig. |
|-----------------------------|------------|----|-------------|
| Accessibility | 55.05 | 26 | 0.001 |
| Quality of Education | | | |
| Teachers' Role | 25.067 | 7 | 0.001 |
| School Physical Environment | 82.767 | 6 | 0 |
| Parents Role | 53.5 | 9 | 0 |

Among the variables under investigation, there is a significant difference (observed and expected frequency) or association found in the Accessibility of Education (55.05), with less than 1% level of significance found in the relationship with quality of Education, including the role of the parent (53.5), the physical environment of the school (82.767), and the role of the teacher (25.067).

The primary results from the table above are as follows:

The quality of Education for disadvantaged children is closely linked to its Accessibility. This finding corroborates hypothesis H1 and indicates that enhancing educational access alone may enhance the quality of Education obtained by these youngsters. The parent's role, the school's physical environment, and the teacher's function all show substantial correlations with the quality of Education. These elements are essential in influencing the connection between Accessibility and quality.

The school's physical environment had the most significant impact on the quality of Education, followed by the parents' part and, finally, the teacher's role. Improving the physical environment of schools may significantly influence Education for disadvantaged children, with family participation and teacher effectiveness measures closely followed. The results emphasize the significance of Accessibility as a fundamental aspect of high-quality Education, especially for vulnerable groups such as educationally disadvantaged children. Nevertheless, they stress that more than just expanding access is required. The quality of Education at easily reached schools is just as crucial.

The finding that the school's physical environment has the most significant correlation with excellence is remarkable. Investments in infrastructure, cleanliness, and school resources may greatly influence children's learning results. Parents and teachers play vital roles. Enhancing parental participation and teacher effectiveness via specific training and support programs may improve the quality of Education for disadvantaged children.

H2: There is a positive and significant correlation between Accessibility with acceptance and the importance of Education for educationally deprived children.

H3: There is a positive and significant correlation between the qualities and significance of Education for educationally deprived children.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

| | Accessibility | Teachers' Role | School Physical Environment | Parents Role | Essential | Importance |
|-----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Accessibility | 1 | .212* | .325** | .411** | .797** | .777** |
| Teachers' Role | | 1 | .442** | .583** | .282** | .362** |
| School Physical Environment | | | 1 | .468** | .273** | .354** |
| Parents Role | | | | 1 | .462** | .463** |
| Essential | | | | | 1 | .840** |
| Importance | | | | | | 1 |

All the variables that were examined and that have an impact on the Accessibility, quality, and significance of Education have been found to have positive and significant correlations. For example, Accessibility was found to be positively correlated with teachers' role (.212*), the school physical environment (.325**), parents' role (.411**), essential (.797**), and importance (.777**) of Education; similarly, teachers' role and the school physical environment (.442**), parents' role (.583**), essential (.282**), and importance (.362**) of Education were found to have positive and significant correlations. Positive and significant correlations were found between the school physical environment and the parents' role (.468**), essential (.273**), and importance (.354**) of Education; similarly, the parents' role and essential (.462**), critical (.463**), and importance of Education (.840**) of Education were shown.

The primary results from the table are as follows:

The results highlight the interdependence of several variables that affect the educational experiences of disadvantaged children. The Accessibility of Education, including teachers, environment, and parental involvement, is essential for making Education acceptable and increasing its perceived importance for these children. Likewise, quality education with committed teachers, a supportive environment, and involved parents greatly influence the

importance placed on Education by these children. The strong link between how parents view the importance of Education and how their children value it highlights the crucial influence parents have on their children's educational development.

Conclusion

The research examines the educational obstacles underprivileged students encounter in Lucknow, particularly their low enrollment rates and frequent dropout occurrences. The findings suggest that Accessibility and quality are closely linked and crucial for fostering positive educational outcomes. Investing in Accessibility via dedicated teachers, supportive environments, and engaged parents is essential to ensure that these children embrace and value education. Enhancing school quality via facility upgrades, hiring competent teachers, and promoting family involvement reinforces the significance of Education in students' lives. Parental influence is essential. Parents' perception of the worth of Education significantly impacts their children's views, highlighting the need to empower parents via awareness initiatives and support structures. Enhancing Accessibility is crucial, but just granting access is insufficient without concomitant improvements in quality.

This emphasizes the essential need for investment in school infrastructure, resources, and specific teacher training courses. The findings indicate the need for a thorough plan focusing on Accessibility and quality, recognizing the vital role of parents and educators. By combining these elements, we can create an environment where disadvantaged children can access school and see it as necessary, fulfilling, and an absolute path to a brighter future. Concrete measures are required to assist the substantial population of disadvantaged urban children living in slums who are facing inequalities in socioeconomic and educational domains. For the 'Education for All' effort to succeed, stakeholders, including the Government, School Administrators, teachers, and NGOs, must address the significant challenges of non-enrolment and dropouts among slum children.

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