

Abstract

Education is one of the most powerful instruments of society. The simplest meaning of education is that it is the process of development of the individual. Today, global community accepts that education is one of the best places for the investment of human resource. Education not only benefits those who receive it but also carries external effects or neighbourhood benefits.

Similarly, Equity and efficiency are crucial concepts in education system. Both are the concerned parameters in educational quality index. An equitable education system can create social cohesion and an efficient education system can create economic growth.

Privatization on the other hand in the field of education is growing by time. It shows that outcome of public school is less satisfactory than private aided schools. Although Governments have provided various initiatives to develop public schools and make the elementary level of education accessible to every child. But it is yet to be fully accomplished. People in recent times showing interest in sending their children to private schools. This raises many questions on the present education system. Therefore the present study is an attempt of the investigator to study the equity and efficiency of public and private schools in Chirang district of Assam. It emphasis more on the internal efficiency that the cost effective external efficiency. This paper set three objectives for the study. These are -

- i.** To examine the equity in public and private schools in Chirang district.
- ii.** To examine the efficiency of public and private schools in Chirang district.
- iii.** To make a comparative analysis of equity and efficiency between public and private school education in Chirang district.

A total number of 8 null hypotheses are framed to make the comparative study effective. This study is delimited to the under SEBA Board and SCERT curriculum elementary schools. Where, the study area is confined to the Chirang district only.

This study followed descriptive survey method. It is a quantitative research. For measurement of equity and efficiency the investigator has designed specific measuring models separately. An interconnected chart model of dimensions of equity and an efficiency cycle model are developed for measuring equity and efficiency. The population of the study is both public and private elementary schools in the district, students and parents. Where, 142 school, 1005 students and 100 parents of those students are selected as the sample of the study through Stratified Random Sampling technique. Data are collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data are collected through questionnaire and interview schedule provided to the sample through the investigator's personal means. A special test, "Basic Competency Test" is conducted to study the academic outcomes of the students. On the other hand secondary data are collected whenever it is needed. Quantitative data are analysed by using various statistical techniques like- percentage, t-test and ANOVA.

Objective No I: To Examine the Equity in Public and Private Schools in Chirang District

In this study, dimensions of equity are - Access, Opportunity, Treatment, Learning Capacity of the Student, Promotion Rate, Stagnation Rate, Dropout Rate and Choice of School. Based on these dimensions the study indicates that both the public and private school in the district are not completely equitable. Due to the free support system in elementary education the public schools are more accessible than the private schools. Private schools are not accessible to everyone due to its high cost. On the other hand private schools provide better educational environment which lead to higher learning outcomes. Private schools provide either class wise or subject wise teacher. Similarly pre-primary education is highly emphasis there. But students in public schools deprive from all these facilities. It is revealed that in Chirang district total numbers of 74 primary

schools are running with single teacher. Besides these education for CWSN is absent in Chirang district. The children who are unable to be enrolled in mainstream schools deprive from receiving education.

While, study of opportunity reveals that public schools in Chirang district are lagging behind in providing adequate educational opportunities to the students. According to the findings of the study, public schools are unable to offer adequate opportunities that they can explore their potentialities. Private schools have gained a step frontier in this case. But meanwhile it is observed that in both public and private sector educations is operate mostly on theoretical concept.

As per the result, private schools provide greater level of treatment than public schools. Private schools provide remedial classes for needy. Individualized care is given stress in private schools while it absent in public schools. Finding shows that just 20 per cent of public schools in the district provide students with adequate care. Similarly, 20 per cent indicated that they occasionally provide some treatment, but it is irregular and insufficient.

The learning capacity of the students is largely affected by the access, opportunity and treatment of the schools. The findings of BCT reveal that the overall performance of the private schools is 88.2 per cent while public schools concluded with only 48.68 per cent. It is observed that vernacular language public schools' students have difficulty in English language.

The UDISE reports reveal that the stagnation rate and dropout rate in elementary schools are gradually decreasing since 2015. Even it is not affected by serious imposition during outbreak of Covid-19. Meanwhile it is obvious that the promotion rate is trending toward improvement.

Choice of the schools affect on equity in education. It sometimes creates line between classes in the society. Out of the 100 sample, 14 parents choose public school,

32 parents choose public while 54 parents could not decide whether public or private school is good for their children.

Objective No II: To Examine the Efficiency of Public and Private Schools in Chirang District

Efficiency in schools in Chirang district is studied by Efficiency Cycle Model based on the dimension. The dimensions are skill operation, resource management and outcomes of the students. The data shows that private schools perform better than public schools in skill operation. Private schools are utilizing the individual skill at highest level. Various opportunities such as ICT classroom, co-curricular activities and project or practical work are made available there to explore the skill of the teacher as well as the students. In contrast it is observed that in public elementary schools, education is based on theoretical concept only. The system has failed to provide a life related education system.

Study on another dimension of efficiency reflects that only 45.65 per cent of the public schools observed to be well resource management. In spite of enormous resources provided by the government, performances of public schools are poor due to mismanagement of resources. On the contrary private schools are performing well in resource management. Private schools perform better than public school with higher level of management and deliberate resource utilization.

The analysis on academic outcomes of the elementary schools' students in Chirang district reveal a sever differences in outcomes of the students. It shows that private schools are outperforming the public schools. Public schools students have failed in achieving the expected marks of academic outcomes. The reason behind it can be observed that private schools are providing greater opportunity, better treatment as well as they have optimum skill operation and well resource management which lead higher outcomes. At the same time the data reveal the actual condition of public schools which affect the outcomes of the students. However, it is claimed by the teachers that parents'

less support and participation on students' education are another main reason of low outcomes.

Objective No III: To Make a Comparative Analysis of Equity and Efficiency between Public and Private School Education in Chirang District

Significant differences between public and private schools regarding equity, efficiency and performances of the students are observed from the data. Where, no significant difference is revealed between the equity and efficiency in respect of medium of instruction, locality on institution and gender.

Summary of the Study

Findings of present study deny the total development in elementary education in Chirang district. The public elementary education in the district is not completely equitable. It has failed in providing adequate access, opportunity and treatment to the children leading to lower level of outcomes. Many necessities for an equitable education are not facilitated in Chirang district. Similarly it has failed in enhancement of an efficient education. Low level of skill operation, insufficient supply of resource and ineffective utilization of resources available are the main causes behind the unsatisfactory outcome and inefficient elementary education in the district. On the contrary private sector schools are a step developed than public schools. Private schools are facilitating almost all the necessary requirements like good opportunity, treatment, greater skill operation and resource management to bring good outcomes. Meanwhile both the sector needs some reforms. Therefore, the state government must take necessary actions to develop public elementary school so that they can compete with private schools and provide every child with a quality education.